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The Crux

April 2001

Three

You can't be friends with some people. There's a scale, and if you're at one end, and the person you're talking to is at the other, it's completely hopeless. Have you ever been talking to a person, perhaps a friend, or someone you are at least friendly with, and they'll start looking all around them? It doesn't matter if you're talking, or if they're talking, these people will look behind them, over your shoulders, anywhere, just so long as their eyes are moving, and they're not on you.

You will feel worthless, which is understandable, because this person is above you. They are above you because you are the kind of person who will keep trying to think of things to say that will win you their undivided attention, and you'll maybe look back over your shoulder to see what they're looking at. It's easy to figure out. Anything but you. We will call these people the Divines. When you meet a Divine, you had better hope you're one too, or you should be prepared to accept the fact that these people care a lot more about their feelings than they care about yours.

You are easily replaceable, and you will know that. So you'll try to earn their attention by performing as best as you possibly can. Some time later you'll stop trying to impress the Divines, and you'll have a good laugh about what a prostitute you were.

Then there's the other end of the spectrum. We will call these people the Clammies. You can tell you're dealing with a Clammy when a person looks at you, and your eyes turn down to the floor, then up at the clock, and then back to them, and they're still looking at you. These people won't go away.

At first you'll try to be polite. You'll make up excuses explaining why you can't talk to them or hang out with them anymore, you'll make pleasant conversation with them, you'll pretend you care about anything they might have to say. The faster you realize that what you say or do doesn't matter, the faster you can move on. You can say horrendous, awful things to a Clammy and he or she will quietly respond with "I know. I'm sorry." And you will want to punch this person in the face. If you were to do so, you may find the Clammy will try to time the pursing of his or her lips so that they might smooch you on the hand before they are knocked to the floor.

Insults won't work, because this person already assumes that you don't like them. An insult is a "put-down" and is called so because it puts the victim in a lower status position than the offender. But how can you put down someone when they're already below you? They want to be below you. The Clammies like it on the floor just as much as the Divines like it on their pedestals.

The only effective way I know of shaking a clammy is through consistent, steady avoidance. That's the thing that's nice about ending a relationship with a Divine; when you decide it's quitting time, they're already

They're like little black holes that walk through the halls anxiously fixing their hair and watching everyone out of the corners of their eyes, sucking innocents into their vacuums of despair.

The Divines are on TV, and the Clammies are sitting on their couches, eating Cheetos. Neither can stand the other, but they depend on each other to exist.

If the world were divided up into two sections like that, with one section for the Attractors and one section for the Attractees, I'd probably be sitting in the Attractee section. It's impossible for me to play hard to get, I've tried. I can't go five minutes without trying to start a conversation going with someone I like.

Actually, at this time, I'd like to take this time to divide the world into not two, but three groups. There are Clammies, Divines, and Cambodian New Year Celebration Planners.

Now, the actual ceremony, I mean the actual ceremony with the Cambodian music and dances, that was fine. Sure I would've enjoyed it more if I hadn't been forced to watch it, but it was entertaining enough. I don't even want to talk about the "Asian Boys" and their pop interlude.

But when I got to listen to the Asian Women Speech, I wished I were on a different planet.

People seem to have this crazy idea that if you tell someone not to be racist, or sexist, or whateverist, they'll see the light you've directed them to, and you'll have cleansed their souls. If I'm going to be forced into an auditorium with hundreds of other kids, and we're going to be told not to be racist or sexist, there better be some amazing performance art. Yelling isn't performance art. First of all, the people who are being yelled at don't even know that they're the ones being yelled at. There were plenty of bigots who were clapping and cheering right along with the rest of the crowd. Second of all, was it necessary to wear such a short skirt? Doesn't that imply that the speech would've been less effective if a less attractive, less showy, less Asian, or less female person had given it? I don't want to listen to a speech about sexually objectifying Asian women who don't want to be sexually objectified by someone who has just sexually objectified herself.

If your pissed off, go break a window, or save it up and beat your kids later on, or start writing an arrogant, self-congratulatory newsletter. Don't yell at everyone and make them listen to it.

Also, if I'm not mistaken, wasn't one of the stereotypes that was listed in the speech saying that Asian women like to have sex? Perhaps I misunderstood this my whole life, but don't most

sending you negative "get the hell away from me" vibes anyway. They always are. But the Clammies, there's no easy escape there.

people like sex? And if Asian women really don't like sex, then how come there're so many Asians?

Possible Alternate Titles to The Crux

-I Never Asked to be Born, Mom

-Why is Everyone But Me So Stupid?

-Will You Go Out With Me?

Three Important Things to Think About

1. Did you know that there are tunnels under the school? Ever notice that there are certain faculty members that you've never seen entering or leaving the building? Thought it was noteworthy.

2. Who would win in a fight, Mr. Goldman or Mr. Wehrli?

3. What's the difference between a catfish and a lawyer? One's a scum-sucking bottom-feeder and the other's a fish.