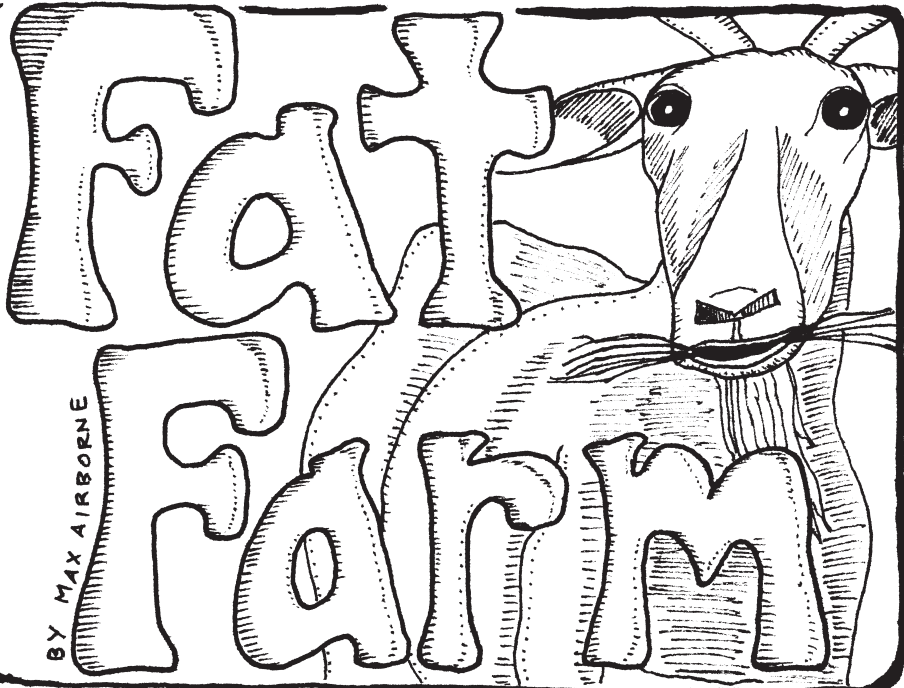


BY MAX AIRBORNE



by Max Airborne, 2003

memories  
of

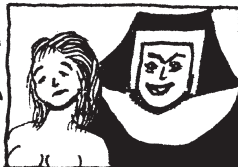
# Sixeast

E P I S O D E 1 by Max Airborne



mean knows best  
and i will do as she  
says

**E**ver since I saw  
"the Magdelene Sisters"  
I've been flooded with  
memories of having been  
locked up in a mental  
hospital for a year and  
a half, when I was a  
teenager (ages 13-15).



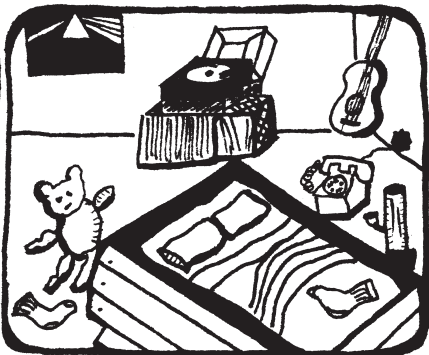
**T**his one I'm about to tell you  
now starts with me here, in  
this moment, sitting at my desk  
writing writing writing the same  
sentence over and over again.  
See, i fucked up the other day. But  
that's not what this story is about...

*pp* "Your hands  
look thinner.  
I can see the  
weight coming off."



**What?!** I'd spent  
the weekend frantically  
transcribing song lyrics  
I wanted to learn,  
into the wee hours  
until my hands ached,

so STIFF I couldn't drop the pen. I'd been at my mom's on a weekend pass, revelling in luxuries like record players, my well-loved record collection, my waterbed with rainbow sheets.



"What!?!?" I asked, incredulous.

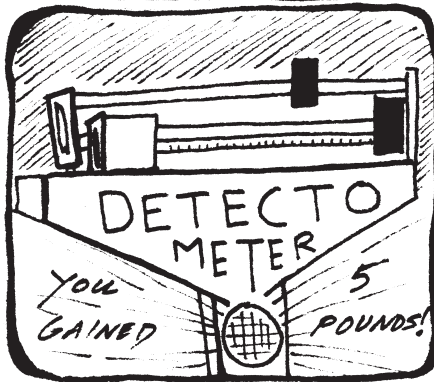
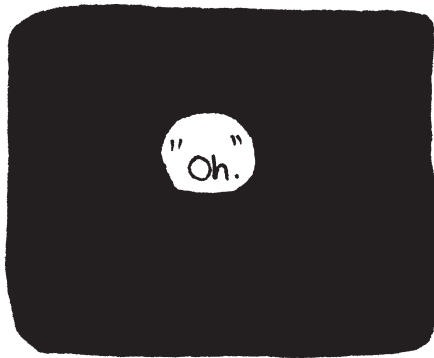


"Your hands. They're looking nice. They're getting thin."

The doctor's comment took me by surprise.

I HATED HIM.

Yet ... in his twisted way he was expressing pride in me, and I wanted it, which pissed me off.  
@\*!m & ?!@\*?!\*!@?!@?!@?!



"... **B**ut, the scale tells a different story. You gained weight over the weekend. **WHAT'S YOUR EXPLANATION, YOUNG LADY?**"

MY  
SHRINK.

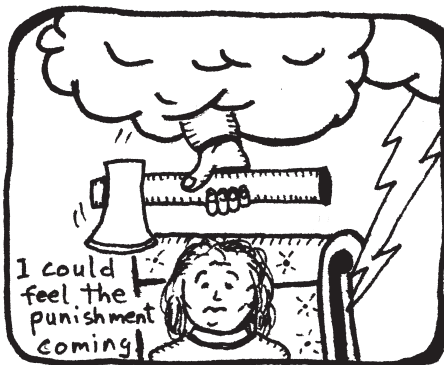


**H**e was so uptight you had to wonder if he ever took a dump. He was always hyper, authoritarian, and on the brink of being pissed off. **THERE WAS NO LOVE IN THIS LITTLE MAN.**

"I don't know."

**LISTEN YOUNGLADY!**  
"I DON'T KNOW" IS NOT A  
SUFFICIENT ANSWER. I KNOW  
YOU'RE LYING! WHY DID?  
YOU GAIN  
FIVE POUNDS  
OVER THE WEEKEND.





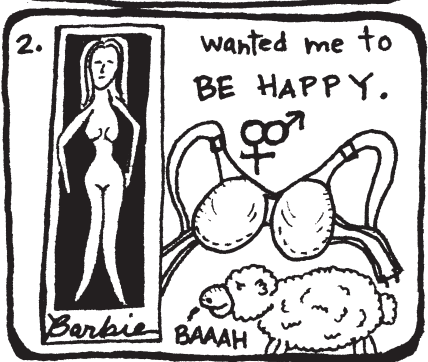
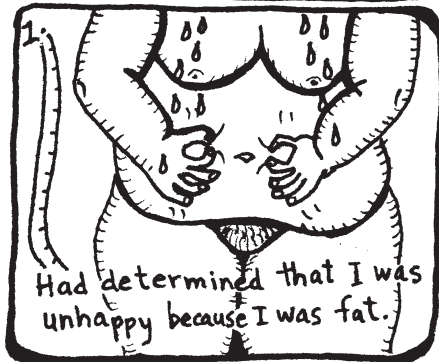
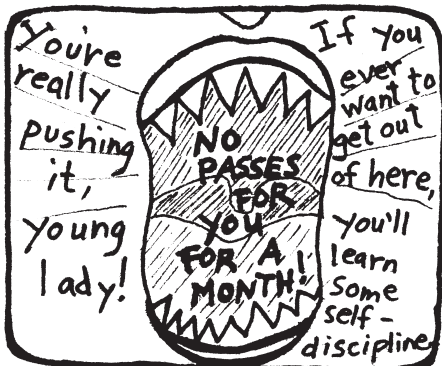
**Y**ou see, I was on a diet.  
**A BIG DIET.**

I was allowed 500 calories a day. Every privilege I had was contingent on the numbers revealed by the scale. The funny thing was, those numbers didn't always reflect what I had eaten.

**T**his weekend, however,  
I had been drinking.  
**AND HE KNEW,**  
he knew something.  
Bored with the game,  
knowing I'd lost,  
**I CONFESSED.**







3.



FATHER.



MOTHER.



STEP-MOTHER.



PSYCHIATRIST.

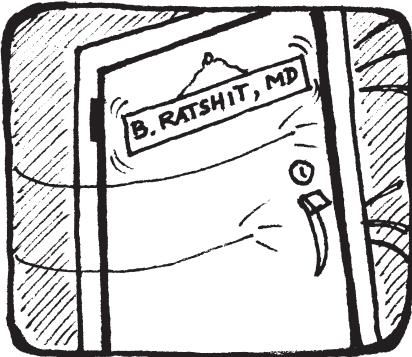
4. Kept me locked up and starving because they thought it would save me, because they could.



Because I was 13.

"FINE!"

I left and slammed the door behind me.



Outside the shrink's office, BERNADETTE was standing in the doorway of the nurse's station.



Hey Kiddo,  
Do You  
Wanna  
Talk?



She was the nerdy  
"MENTAL HEALTH WORKER"  
who REALLY  
wanted me to  
LIKE HER.

Hmmm...



"Buy me a  
Tab?"

I asked her, with a  
pathetic look on my face.

**I** knew she would. It  
was how she got me  
out of bed in the  
morning, her bribe,  
a cold can of Tab  
from the machine.

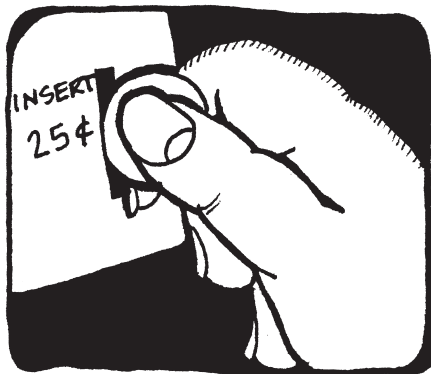




**N**ow, it was no secret that the bribe was mine. She'd seen me slam the door, and she'd seen me in a door-slamming mood before.

**T**he Tab was my implied agreement not to go there.





CLINK

She slipped  
the quarter  
into the  
machine.

With a metallic THUD,  
out dropped the thing  
that, in this place,  
felt like  
my only  
LUXURY.



to be continued



[maxairborne@gmail.com](mailto:maxairborne@gmail.com)