



LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME  
LOVE ME

BABYGIRL

I THINK  
I LOVE YOU

LOVE  
LONELY HEARTS CLUB  
0560417

we know i'm not much of a romantic, and i've never written a love letter, but i really do miss u...

But I can't sleep. The thought of seeing you in my dreams makes me too anxious to close my eyes, because I know when I wake up in my dorm room between a stranger and a photo of you taped on the cinder block wall next to my pillow, the longing will be too strong to pull myself out of bed. You're the love I want to drunk text my first weekend of college when there's a boy next to me in my twin bed whose name I don't even know who can never know me like you do and the city suddenly feels too big and too lonely.

PBR doesn't taste as good when it's not with you

Remember when we first met? God it was awkward... It was like learning to walk all over again. I remember my breath, heavy and hot, gasping as I learned your peaks and valleys. And you learned me. Your hands icy and unyielding as you gripped my thighs... hips... back... the curves of our bodies moving together, gliding... towards ecstasy. You showed me how it feels to fly.

I've never written a love letter

I miss you in the mornings. How you blushed with the early alpenglow, the sun softening your striking peaks. Everything bad in the world melted away when I watched sun rays break through your pinnacles. Somehow you made winter mornings warm. I miss how we danced in the early sun. My skin carved love letters into your couloirs, your thank yous melted off my hot cheeks like tears of joy.

I've never written a love letter

miss your rapturous, icy grasp. The way you held me and the world stopped. All that existed

was you

I

nothing between us and nothingness around us

Lone Peak I love you

I love you now and I love you forever

Read 12:15 AM

Janet Conklin

**A Love Letter to Lone Peak:**

an Introspective Commentary on Feminism, Sexuality, Spirituality, and the Natural World

[Collage](#): Late Night Texts to Lone Peak

[A Love Letter to Lone Peak](#): Craft Essay

[Letter \(Plain Text\)](#)

[Works Cited](#)

## **A Love Letter to Lone Peak**

A love letter to Lone Peak, the main massif in the Madison Range and the poster-child for Big Sky, Montana, astutely illustrates the complexities of being a young woman in a male-dominated ski town. The decision to write about Lone Peak comes from a previous research essay in which I examined the objective quality of life for locals in Big Sky. This piece, however, unpacks the intricacies of *my* life in the tiny mountain community. I knew I wanted to take a more poetic approach to writing about Big Sky, especially after writing a multimodal profile on my mother. These two aspects of individuality and creativity laid the foundation for this piece— a love letter presented as a series of late night texts to the mountain where I spent most of last year. The presentation and content delve into the complex relationship between self, femininity, sexuality, and the natural world.

I recognize the abstraction I've employed here— I think the reason I'm so set on poetic writing currently is because of my limited academic outlet for creativity. I feel as though the homogeneity of my course load neglects a part of my identity by not encouraging me to think and create critically about the world around me. The emphasis I've placed on my gap year and Montana in particular stems from the fact that I have yet to really reflect on the time I spent away from academia. Now, operating within an academic framework, I'm able to constructively look back on my experiences. Attaching larger themes of feminism, sexuality, spirituality, and the environment to my personal experiences allows me to perceive myself on a broader and more holistic scale.

The idea of a love letter was inspired by photos of Lone Peak. I am prone to personally romanticizing nature— the elation I feel in the mountains is only equitable, in my mind, to love.

On a larger scale, according to the spiritual ideology of the Divine Feminine, there is something undeniably romantic, and nearly sensual, about the organic perfection of nature. I've yet to stumble upon a cohesive explanation of the "Divine Feminine", but it's my understanding that there is a consensus among spiritual communities of the existence of an elusive but powerful feminine energy in the universe. An omnipotent presence of healing, compassion, and zeal. In *The Feminine Divine*, religious historian Barbara Newman identifies how feminine incarnations in traditional religious texts and their prominence has contributed to omnipotent feminine energy (Newman 42). She states, "the feminine divine is associated with the principles of theophany, exemplarity, immanence, and synergy" (Newman 46).

Furthering the romanticism of the natural world is how we, as humans in a developed society, interact with nature. William Cronon, a notable environmentalist of the modern day, writes about how we have constructed wilderness as "other" and apart from our everyday lives. In creating this dichotomy both actually and theoretically, wilderness has been romanticized for its assumed quality of otherness (Cronon). Think about the palpable romance of a weekend getaway to the mountains— the seclusion, beauty, and simplicity all add to the fantasy. Through such conceptions we have consigned sensual and romantic power to wilderness itself.

The intentional homoeroticism and sensuality of the piece work to reclaim and satirize my experience as a young woman living in Big Sky. The culture of a ski town, while it made my soul overflow with joy every day, was certainly riddled with adversity. I've always been interested in the relationship between feminism and action sports, being that there exists a particularly convoluted relationship between the two. Growing up, my time spent outdoors came with the fierce support of my father and brother. They successfully shielded me from the

adversity within the outdoors community that makes it an unwelcoming place for women and femininity.

This past year, however, I experienced first-hand and without protection how it feels to be a young woman in the action sports community. Sometimes life in Big Sky was scary. It is a wildly masculine place where your worth depends on how hard you ski, how much you can drink, and how many women you can sleep with. This conquistador culture made it incredibly hard for me to find my niche in Big Sky because I was a sexual prospect to near everyone I met. Simple conversations with men led to hyperbolic and fast-spreading rumors, while everyday verbal harassment by coworkers, supervisors, and guests became part of the job. I'm surprised how well I adapted to the blatant sexism and chauvinism. I feel as though, in a way, I didn't do enough to pave the way for other women to someday feel safer in Big Sky and the greater skiing community.

So this love letter, which I've crafted as a series of late-night texts, is an effort to reclaim my identity. It's a personal proclamation that I am and always will be more than the girl Big Sky defined me to be. I am more than how fast I ski and the boy I dated. The format of the "love letter" itself, being written as a series of late night texts, works to further satirize my experience of womanhood in Big Sky. The images, colors, and layout of the piece visually represent the intersections between self, divinity, sexuality, and the natural world. At the bottom is a photo of Lone Peak glowing in the early morning sun. The mountain's stark ascension behind the evergreen trees in the foreground and rosy, golden hue creates a heavenly vibe. I purposely placed photos of myself above Greek Goddesses Aphrodite and Venus to represent how feminine energy transcends the human and spiritual worlds. In addition to these actual depictions of the

female form, I included photos of flowers, which are traditionally yonic symbols based on Sigmund Freud's sexual theory (Rezaei, Seyyedrezaei). The religious overtones, in the forms of cherubs, angels, and a modern depiction of the famous hands of God and Adam from Michelangelo's "The Birth of Adam", further the otherworldly design. The remaining details, such as the delicately intertwined hands, quotes ("love me", "babygirl", "I think I love you", "lonely hearts club"), and glitter, work to fill white space as well as add to the soft, girlish optics. The aspects, when considered all together, form a cohesive image of womanhood, spirituality, love, sensuality, and the earth. The disordered presentation of such themes in the form of a crude collage symbolizes their imperfect intersections. This is an incredible amount to unpack from one brief piece, but I hope in elaborating within this supplementary text that a holistic understanding of my intentions can be gathered.



## Letter (Plain Text)

Hey...  
I miss u!  
Hope you're doing well:.)

Sorry, I know it's late.

We know I'm not much of a romantic, and I've never written a love letter, but i really do miss you...

But I can't sleep. The thought of seeing you in my dreams makes me too anxious to close my eyes, because I know when I wake up in my dorm room between a stranger and a photo of you taped on the cinder block wall next to my pillow, the longing will be too strong to pull myself out of bed. You're the love I want to drunk text my first weekend of college when there's a boy next to me in my twin bed whose name I don't even know who can never know me like you do and the city suddenly feels too big and too lonely.

PBR doesn't taste as good when it's not with you.

Remember when we first met? God it was awkward... It was like learning to walk all over again. I remember my breath, heavy and hot, gasping as I learned your peaks and valleys. And you learned me. Your hands icy and unyielding as you gripped my thighs... hips... back... the curves of our bodies moving together, gliding... towards ecstasy. You showed me how it feels to fly.

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I miss your rapturous, icy grasp. The way you held me and the world stopped. All that existed was  
you  
I  
nothing between us and nothingness around us  
Lone Peak I love you  
I love you now and I love you forever

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