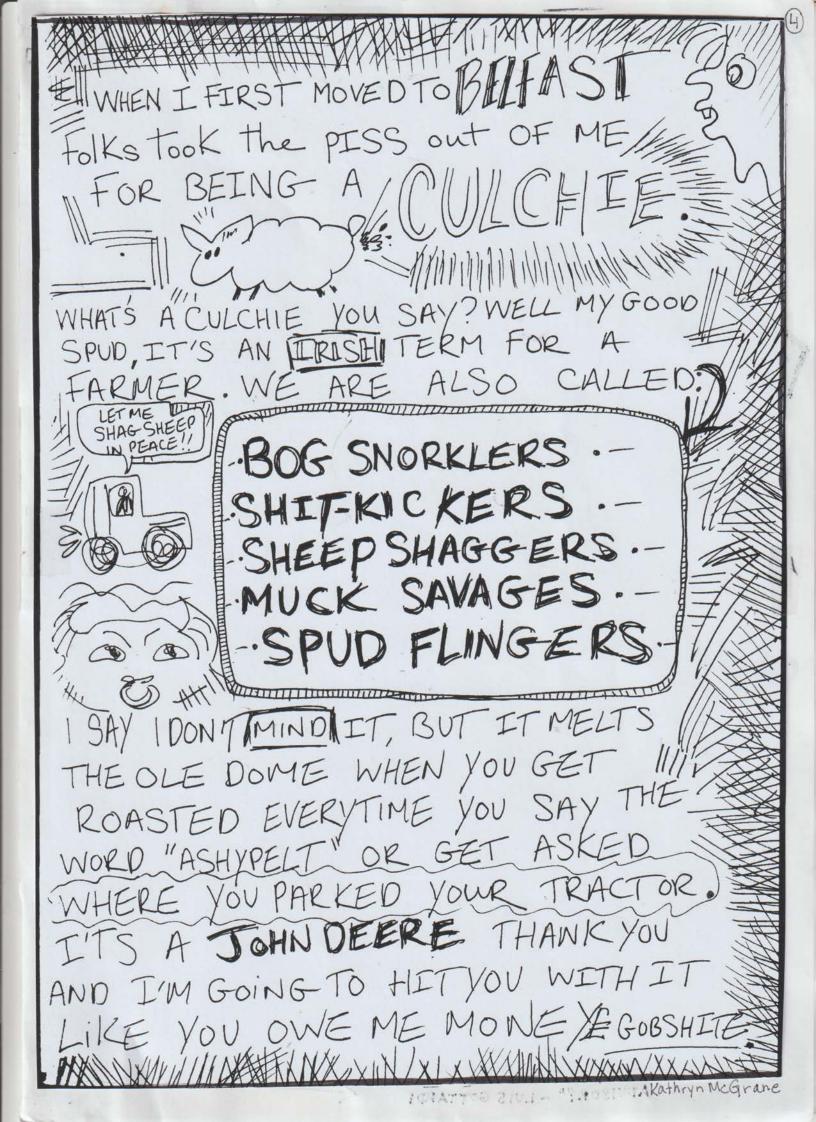
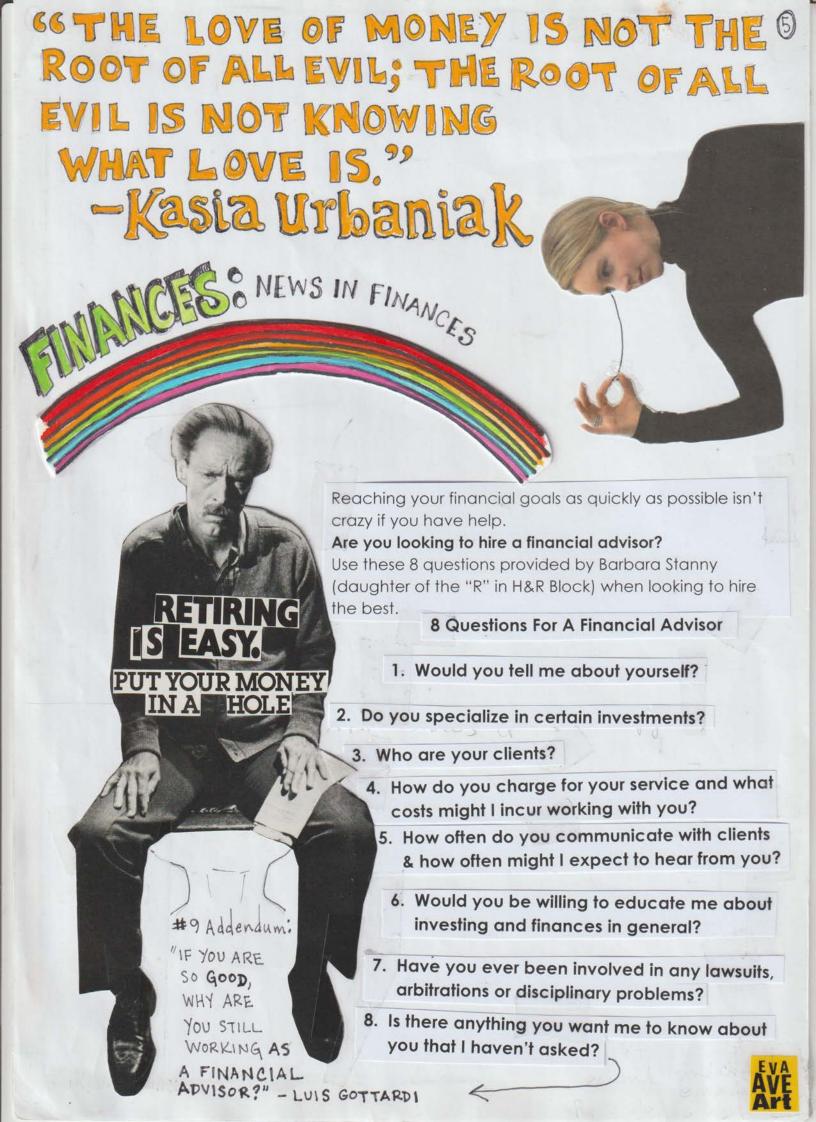


Ten Things I'll Miss About Belfast By @CoffeeAnthropology aka Chris LeClere 1. The pterodactyl-sized seagulls. On Florida's beaches, they're half the size and relentlessly lurking but here they straight-up mugged the chicken caesar wrap right out of my hand, working in unison like the two burglars from Home Alone. 2. The slugs - I love them. It's funny because you never see them during the day and all the sudden this magic moment happens and they just appear in multitudes out of nowhere and they're on bridges, houses, streets, on my living room floor, and they're just cruising along doing their little sluggy thing while leaving these glimmery shimmering fairy trails everywhere they go. 3. Getting mowed down by the kids on their bikes in City Centre as you're trying to walk into Oxfam. 4. Playing sidewalk hopscotch on Saturday mornings to avoid the vomit. 5. I'll definitely miss the Grand Central Hotel. I see it on the skyline everywhere I go and it's a comforting point of reference for me. 6. Value Cab. For 5 quid they'll fkn take you anywhere! Normally give you a little theatre performance monologuing from the front seat while they do it. 7. I know it sounds weird but I'm going to miss the sounds of flags flapping everywhere that I walk; that kind of nylon-flailing-in-the-breeze flutter. 8. I'd say the stroh violin guy but I haven't seen him in a long time. Busking is fairly illegal in the US. New York and New Orleans allow busking if you But a lot of the towns outlaw busking, pay for a permit. which is strange to me cause busking seems like the purest form of capitalism. To regulate it is non-capitalistic. Pure capitalism is an unregulated market. Pure capitalism says if something's bad for society, it won't exist. But there is no such thing as a pure capitalist market. The US is almost anti-capitalist. Look at how much we subsidize and regulate industry. That's not capitalism. It's government interventionism. Depends on which industry we're talking about. The United States spends over 20 billion a year for subsidies for the oil companies. I'm not arguing for pure capitalism, I don't think it's a healthy way to approach the market place and I don't think it's good for the citizenry. But busking is good for everybody. Except for that loud guy in City Centre who pops veins screaming his shite Nickleback covers. That's not good for anybody.





Sports Taught Me It Was OK To Be Normal

by Damian Garde

In my youth I had a secret shame. Sneaking away from bohemian parties, ducking out of conversations about Dada to sit, alone and free of judgement, in front of sports.

In American straight-male culture, spending hours consuming televised competitive violence is entirely normal; only those averse to things like grand slams, slam dunks, and debilitating cranial damage have to explain themselves. But if you've slipped into a subculture, one in which sports . represent only teenage oppression, how do you explain to your friends that. huge swaths of your personal identity rest on making guttural noises when Carmelo Anthony perfectly executes a turnaround jump shot?

You may come to memorize eggheaded talking points about the legacy of live, unscripted drama; the countercultural force that is the professional athlete; and something or other about tattoos. But you'll know that they don't understand, that to come clean is to risk being

"SPORTS HIPSTER" (THIS IS THE SPORTS SECTION

ostracized. There might be those sacrosanct little moments when you encounter one of your own among all the art people, trading secret signifiers like devotees of a banned religion (the foam finger our ceremonial garb, "D-FENCE" our incantation). But moments like that are rare and fleeting.

Better is to prepare for a life of small triumphs amid nagging shame. Stride proudly as you leave a party because it's Game 6 of the Eastern Conference Finals. Speak up when you ask the intimidatingly hair-cutted bartender if he wouldn't mind putting the game on. Don't dither when you explain how your replica jersey is actually ironic. You like sports, and that's OK.

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Nerves Before The Game

by Marcella Ortega

I'm going to a baseball game on Monday.

My boyfriend's company has season passes in the box seat. Or seats. I don't really know what the "box" means. I know all about his co-workers but they don't know anything about me. I'm not going to tell them I know anything about them. I'm nervous about getting hit in the face with a baseball when the batter hits it out of the field. I have no idea what to wear. I don't own a baseball hat.

I can't eat any of their processed concession food or drink any beer. Only water. Gluten gives my skin boils. Pretty much gluten, alcohol and refined sugar gives my skin boils. I don't know who the Northwest Arkansas Naturals are playing against. I'm really dreading the children, his coworkers' children in particular. I don't want to have to pretend that they're cute.

UPDATE: OK so the 'box' is actually a luxury room with glass walls and catering, so I can probably find something to eat, and I definitely won't get hit by a ball.

