

Dan Turkel

I hope I'm inspiring. Creative. That the colors of my clothes, picked colorblindly every morning, transgress against societal expectations. I hope I shock—with unnecessary vulgarities juxtaposed with a mathematical mindset and an artistic eye. Illegible handwriting, obviously. I hope that people think I'm smart because my work is incomprehensibly scribbled rather than neatly scribed. I hope they like me, God, I hope they like me.

I hope they think I'm approachable and friendly...but also mysterious and completely un-understandable. Socially devious. Cruel to be kind. I hope that when I speak quickly enough and with big enough words (polysyllabic) people assume that what I'm saying is profound.

I hope that people look at me and get angry. I hope I've pissed people off. I hope there are people thinking about me right now, some in a fiery rage, others, no doubt, in the throes of a lusty feat the Pope would advise against.

Espero que I get a four-oh in Spanish even though it doesn't matter. No me importa.

The person I want to be has time to listen to all the music he's illegally amassed. The person I want to be doesn't fall behind on the English reading. The person I *am* listens to the same hundred tracks—one track for each page behind I often find myself in the reading.

I remember crying when I was young (2001—the year, not years old) because when I found out my great-grandmother was going to die, I didn't cry. I hope cute girls will see me, look into my eyes, *divine* that story and think, "he's so complex." They'll think, "he's been through so much, and all this time he's just needed someone to love him as much as he loves her," and they'll throw themselves at me. I'll just shrug them off with a look of aloofness mixed with some sort of elitist grin as if to say, "don't worry ladies, I'm on this journey alone." They'll just figure I'm gay.

I hope they like me.