



# Have a Heart

~Where Truth and Ego Converge~



Dear Significantz,

February, 2005

*Yep. It's me, again. I can't help it. As soon as February hits, I just start typing, channeling something between Dorothy Parker and Andy Rooney. The result is often ridiculous, but this year, I hope you'll see glimpses of real emotion. In 2004, I wore my identities and ideologies more openly than ever before, and I wasn't struck by lightning for any of it. I think that trend will continue.*

*Of course, my biggest news is that the rock & roll-inspired novel that consumed my life for the past three years will be published this spring. I've never worked so hard on anything before, or believed in something so deeply. I'm still a college dean, and I confess that I keep myself awake some nights wondering why my intellectual passions didn't ignite over a book about social justice or a dissertation about transformative leadership. Luckily, I've had all of you telling me that it's okay to be smart and weird at the same time. And, who knows, it might even be profitable.*

*When it comes right down to it, I do see my quirky KISS groupie life as somehow embodying the ideals of the liberal arts, and I plan to preach that gospel whenever and wherever I can. I just find that gushing about the cultivation of humanity is more fun when you're wearing leather.*

*With real love,  
Colette*

## You Never Forget Your First Love

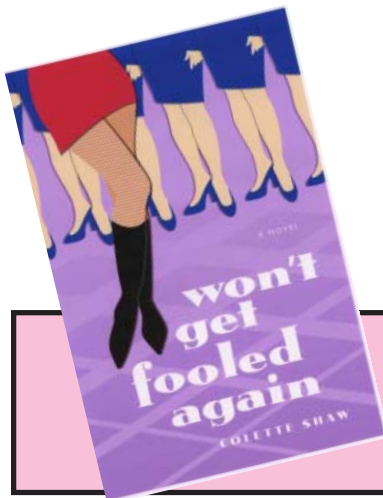
If you ask me, I'll tell you that I didn't fall in love for the first time until I was well into my 20s. A less jaded part of me knows a greater truth. I was a teenager when I met and lost my heart. In my most honest moments, I'd even tell you that I never recovered.

In March, I came face-to-face with my first and greatest love. I received the call asking if I'd be up to a reunion – all expenses paid – last winter. "Um, sure," I said, although I wasn't really sure at all.

I boarded a plane for Virginia, telling myself to prepare for the worst. A lot of years had passed, and I tried not to expect my love to look the same, or to welcome me back without judging the ways I had changed.

When I arrived in Norfolk and saw the great love of my life, all my cynicism lifted. We've both grown a lot since I was 18, that's for sure. But my affection swelled inside me. Looking back, I suppose it's obvious that every subsequent relationship in my life was just a failed attempt to replicate the first.

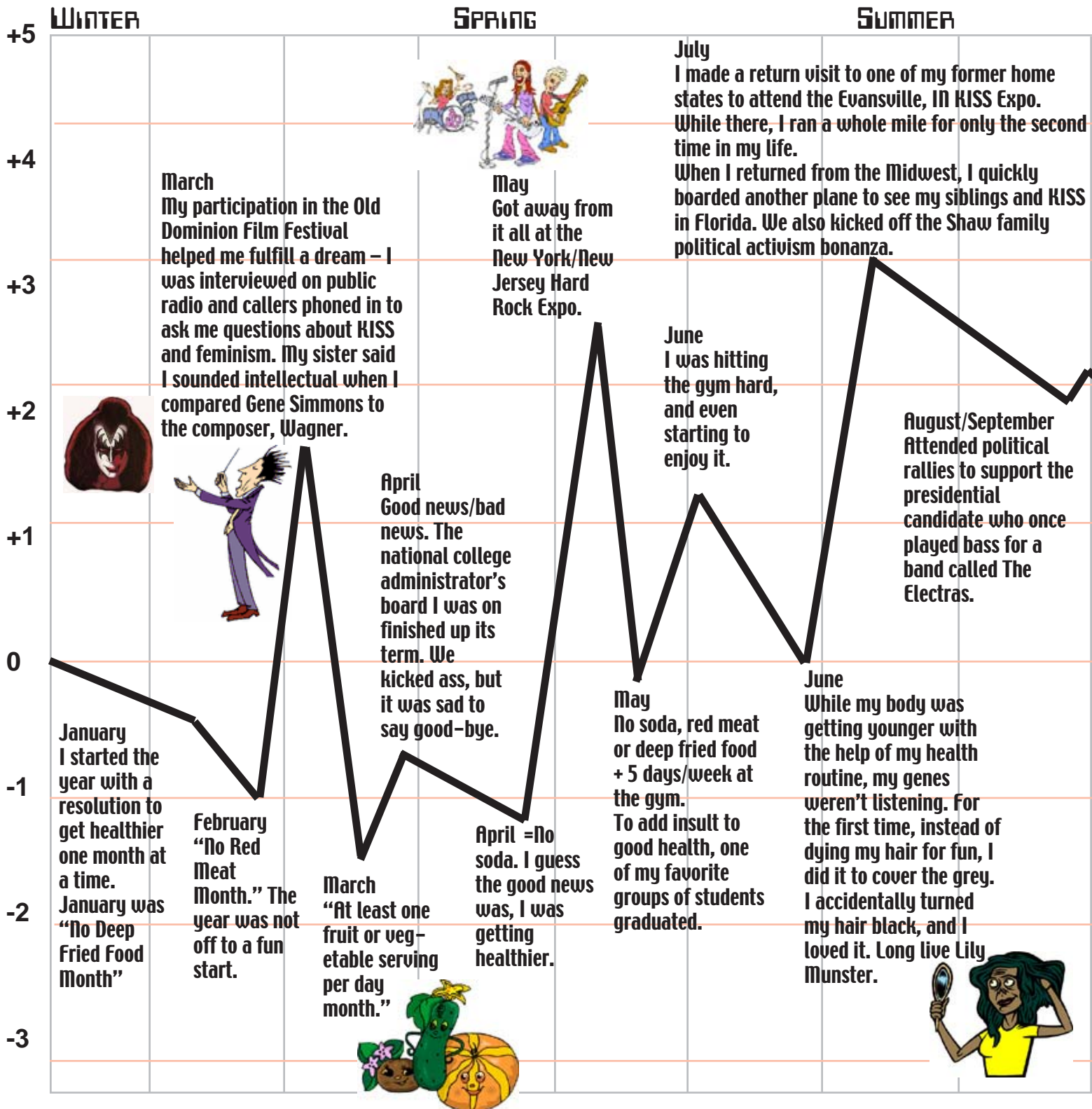
I was in love. But were the feelings mutual? (continued on p. 4)



Here's a peek at the cover of the niftiest little book you'll ever read about a woman executive trapped between her dueling identities. My publisher calls it smart and sexy. I just think it's a lot of fun.

# TAKING STOCK

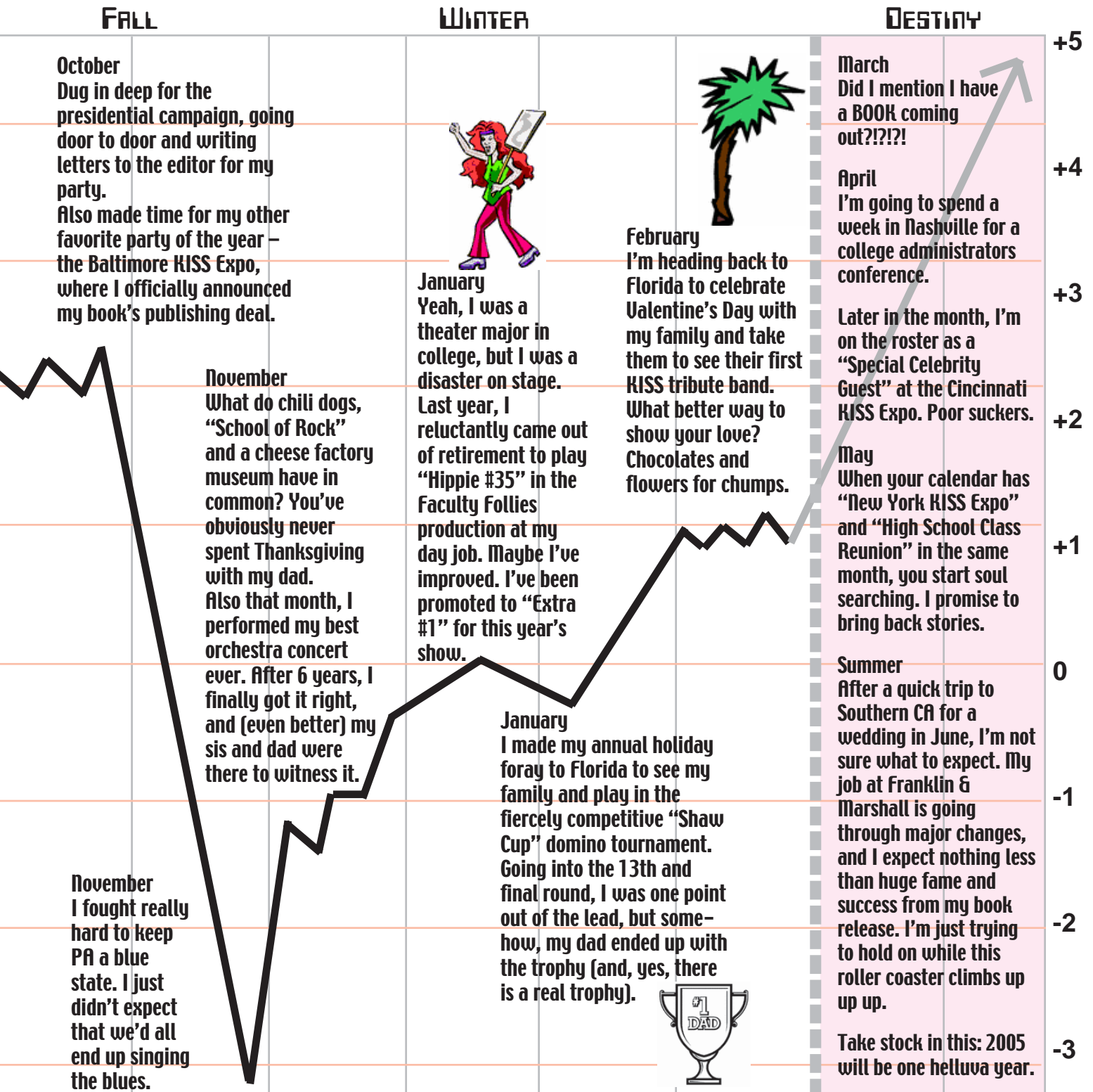
WHILE THE FATE OF SOCIAL SECURITY HANGS IN THE BALANCE, I THOUGHT I



# A OF MY LIFE



SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT THE HIGHS, LOWS AND PROJECTIONS FOR MY LIFE.



**(continued from p. 1) You Never Forget Your First Love**

Most of my friends think I'm pretty cynical about love, but deep down I think I'm someone who thrives on romantic ideals. Most notably, I've had lofty dreams about higher education since the first moment of my freshman year at Old Dominion University. The love was so deep, I decided to spend the rest of my life working in the liberal arts.

Despite my idyllic visions, 2004 was a rough year. Colleges were turning into corporations while our government wanted to make its citizens less free. I started to question what I once considered a steadfast belief in the power of education.

In March, I was invited back to Old Dominion to present "Living the Fantasy," a documentary film I had produced. I thought the trip would be a fun opportunity to promote my book, but I didn't expect such a profound emotional experience. As I joked on page 3, when I was a student, I was the most dreadful theater major to ever grace the stage. Luckily, at the same time I was trying desperately to survive my lack of talent, I had mentors and students from all walks of life who were helping me understand what really mattered – justice and opportunities to make a difference. Not only was I reminded of those people when I visited my alma mater, but many of them were in the audience when I showed my film. As I talked to the students that day about the boundless opportunities available to them through the University, I was able to thank some of the people who were most important in my life when I was an undergraduate. When I left campus, I knew I had a lot of work left to do in my career.

As my life came full circle in that auditorium in Virginia, my ideals came back into focus. I have a lot of decisions to make this year about how best to carry on the romance that began so long ago. My employer, Franklin & Marshall College, has been very generous and patient as I've begun to question my fate (ask me sometime about the crazy details). I have no idea what to expect, but I predict a happy ending. That's what shameless romantics do, right?



Keep in touch and don't forget to visit me at  
[www.ColetteShaw.com](http://www.ColetteShaw.com)

or

\ [Colette@KISSfiction.com](mailto:Colette@KISSfiction.com)