

mixtape

by

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ABSTRACT

I was advised to know why I wrote these stories during my defense. It doesn't really matter what the answer is, but I should be prepared for questions. That's fair. And I've already gotten these questions. My fiancée hates this collection. Earlier visitors to my bedroom have snooped and thought I was writing erotica. Exes think I want to make fun of them. Many others point out that the characters are gross, homophobic, misogynistic, and worse. And I'll admit, when I read *Lolita* and even my beloved *Catcher*, I don't really separate the authors from Humbert or Caulfield. Martin Amis has had this problem, I hear. If ever I am dually blessed and cursed with public exposure, I will have the same problem.

The reason I write anything is to see if I can make x happen, to see if x could be made plausible, sympathetic, even likeable. I think of a bad idea, and I go for it! I say YES!

That's my answer, I guess.

There's a good part of me that's nervous. I'm a child of the 90's, and I'm still living there in a lot of ways. It was cool to push boundaries. It's not right now. But the pendulum swings, and I'm not about to bother with such calculations to publish at the right moment that sales match the public collective consciousness. That's not my job.

My job is to write the stories. To make them the best I can. I did that, and now it's your turn to read and decide.

I do think you come out smarter and wiser for it. I really do think that.

But it's reasonable to disagree.

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Opening up and saying more,
to the love of my life