

Orange is the New Pink
By Nina Malkin

GOT JUICE?? Well, prove it. Enter the Readers Run Amok contest and win a chance to spend the entire summer in New York City, working at your favorite magazine. And I mean working! Planning stories, running photo shoots, interviewing the hottest new stars, and picking the coolest new trends—right here, at the preeminent voice of female youth culture. The girls who win will be the dominant force behind Orange's first-ever Readers Run Amok issue. But I'll be here too—so we'll have plenty of time to bond while you guys produce the best issue of Orange ever! See page 137 for pesky contest rules and regs, and start putting together an application that'll set my brain cells on fire.

Luv & stuff—

Izzie

Isabel LaPointe
Editor-in-Chief

WHY I BELONG AT ORANGE

An Application Essay

By Babylon Edison

Family legend has it that I've always devoured magazines. Literally. Take the episode in my terrible twos when I got sick, so sick, violently sick, seriously unpretty. No one could figure out what would make a child erupt like that. Until my mom noticed tiny little teeth marks all over what was left of her *New Yorker*. Oops! Sorry!

Not that I remember this. My first memory of magazine lust was *Garden Joy*. Don't cringe! I was seven, and in South Boston, where I'm from, it's cinder blocks and asphalt, not rosebushes and snapdragons. I'd escape into those petal-filled pages, wander through the colorful blooms, lie on the green lawns, inhale the perfume, butterflies and ladybugs landing on my shoulder—it was all in my mind, but absolute bliss!

By middle school I was fully over my flower phase but completely magazine obsessed. Every Thursday before recycling, the super in our building would give me my pick of the discard stack. I took it all: fashion and beauty, sports and entertainment, food, décor, travel, literary stuff, tabloid trash, even trade magazines for careers I couldn't care less about. The cool feel of glossy spreads; the way the layout tempted you, drew you in; how each magazine had its own flow, its own voice . . . it fascinated me.

My first year of high school, I turned conscientious rejecter and hated all things commercial—and what's a magazine but a vehicle for advertisements? So I started *Babyl*, my zine—as in my nickname, but also a clever homonym for babble, no? Putting it together was a blast, but *Babyl* was . . . limited, I admit. By me, for me, about me—a bit too much me, me, me . . . even for me! I dreamed of a magazine about girls like me and girls not like me and real girls, inspiring girls from across the globe who did all kinds of cool things. I craved killer content—straight-up articles about stuff that matters, that makes you think and feel. Plus, I wanted the whole package—awesome graphics and photography, a work of art you could carry in your backpack. And if it had to have ads, they should at least be for stuff I might actually consider purchasing.

Other magazines for girls my age? Most have been out since my mom read them. And no disrespect, but they're sort of silly and shallow and skinny-obsessed and boy crazy and girly and . . . in a word: pink.

And then: ta-da! It happened. Something better than pink. Orange. Finally. Yay! Orange is the new pink, for girls like me—girls with juice.

I have bought, read, savored, and saved every edition of Orange since its launch. And since I'm obviously fated to be a magazine editor one day (if partially digesting *The New Yorker* doesn't say something about my destiny, what does?), I'd die for a chance to kick things off at the best place for girl culture on this planet. My title? Think! Editor, of course—the one who makes those mind-expanding, heart-exhilarating and soul-stimulating real-life stories happen. I will work my butt off, make your masthead spin with brilliant ideas, do anything—except brew coffee. I am Babylon Edison, 17 years old from Boston, Massachusetts, and that is why I deserve a spot on Orange's first-ever Readers Run Amok issue.

See you this summer! Whoo!

Real-Life True Story

"I ABANDONED MY AWESOME BOYFRIEND!!"

Why in the world would a girl leave a cute, cool, sweet, and so-devoted guy? No, her brain was not jacked by zombies. . . .

Summer starts now, tonight, no matter what the calendar says. Here in Southie, the official summer kickoff is the first outdoor bash chez Quinn. Every neighborhood has one, a party house, and ours is the Quinns'. They've got the kind of parents who don't care what they do as long as it's done on the premises. Any wonder their place has a gravitational pull on people? The guest list ought to top out at six million. Fiona and I are about to make it six million and two.

On the way there, Fiona's in a mood. The freeze I feel off her, I should have brought a jacket, worn jeans but A) it's summer and B) it's a party, so a little skin – flirty top, denim mini – is essential. Besides, I know what's bothering her. I'm about to take off for the entire summer, and while she's happy for me – really, she is – she's sad for her.

For us: our foursome, Fiona and her boyfriend, Ben, me and my man, Jordan. Best friends, tight couples, the indomitable double date. With Jordan now the proud owner of a 1997 Volkswagen Cabriolet that actually runs, vacation was shaping up to be a whole lot of lazy—nothing to do, and a vehicle to get us anywhere we wanted to do it.

Only I had to go and spoil it all. I'll be spending the summer in NYC, living my wildest dream come true, thank you very much. Me, Babylon Edison. Think! Editor of *Orange* magazine. Sorry, but I am beyond ecstatic. Of course, there's no need to cram my excitement down Fiona's throat, so I try to defrost her by making silly small talk till we get to the Quinns', which we can hear bumping from a mile away.

"Feena! Babyl!" If it's possible to holler listlessly, that's how Teri Quinn shouts us out. "The keg's in the yard, just push your way through."

It seems like Teri's already had a few, judging by the way she hangs on us. I cut up a t-shirt for this event, slicing off the neckline to make it ultra-scoopy (pretty much the extent of my fashionista skills), and Teri's fumble moves it from sexy off-the-shoulder to embarrassingly off-the-elbow, pulling down my bra strap in the process.

Fiona scopes for our guys while I readjust my wardrobe malfunction, but I know Jordan couldn't possibly be here yet—he humps groceries at a fancy market in Beacon Hill, and doesn't get off till eight. Sometimes when we hang out, he comes by straight from work, but he'll want to shower tonight. He'll want to get close. Very close. Thinking of that, I can practically feel-smell-taste him. I'm going to miss that boy so much!

With a nudge from Fiona I'm back to reality, and we wiggle through the sardine can of kids. The guy on keg duty teases us, asking to see ID; we roll out

eyes and he pumps us foamy cupfuls. I'm taking it slow, sipping at the froth that tickles my lips, but Fiona gulps her beer.

"Oh, Babyl, I really do hate you," she moans. "I can't believe you're actually leaving. You are out of your mind, you know."

Much as I love the girl, I doubt I'll ever make her understand. Fiona's into *Orange* too—we've both been subscribers since day one—but to her, working at a magazine may as well mean spelunking on Mars. When I decided to shoot for the Readers Run Amok program, I suggested she go for it too—being a total jock, Fiona would've made a great Move! editor. Only she didn't even bother filling out the application. To me, it's a symptom of Southie—there's this pride of being from here, mixed with a dread that you'll never escape it, so you don't try. Unless you happen to be me.

But Fiona's upset, and I'm to blame. Beneath that bitchy exterior beats the heart of my best friend. She loves me, I know that; she just has to act tough, I know that too. Another symptom of Southie. Attitude is encrypted in our DNA.

"I never said I was sane," I say. "But you know I won't be able to keep from calling you on a daily basis . . . or at least IMing . . . and, watch, you won't even miss me."

Does this sound convincing? I hope so, since it is pretty hard to imagine an entire Fiona-less summer. Before she can make a face or guzzle another beer or take off on an anti-*Orange* tirade, Ben and Jordan roll up to otherwise occupy both of us.

The kiss comes first. It's our ritual. He doesn't utter a syllable, just takes my face in his hands. Then that gentle yet insistent pressure of his mouth on mine, held for a few meaningful moments, says it all. Tonight, it seems to say more than ever. He inches away, still holding my face, and I reach up to touch his cheek. That's been our thing, our silent ceremonial hello smooch for . . . wow, it's almost eight months now. First real crush, first real kiss, first real boyfriend – with Jordan everything always felt exactly right.

Of course, telling Jordan I got the gig at *Orange*—that I'd be taking off for two whole months—wasn't easy. It was fifth period. My lunch, his French, his custom to ditch French so he could be with me born out of Jordan logic. See, Jordan intends to be a cop—the McCormacks are a Five-O dynasty—and since he intends to join the force in Boston, not Paris, what does he need French for? Me, however, me he needs. And while ditching classes defies Babyl logic, I could live with him not conjugating verbs for a cuddle in the school yard.

"Uh-oh, what'd I do?" Jordan takes one look at me—staring through the chain-link fence, counting cars at the curb, cracks in the sidewalk, anything to avoid his true-blue eyes—and knows something's up. "Because whatever it is A) I didn't do it and B) I'm sorry."

Which one of us started that, the A) this and B) that thing? Did I get it from him, or did he get it from me? Doesn't matter—when you're a couple, in a lot of ways you're like one person.

“Nothing, Jordan.” I forced myself to look at him, put a hand on his arm. “You didn’t do a thing except be sweet to me,” I said quietly, succinctly. The succinct quiet before the storm. “Okay Jordan look you know that thing in New York at *Orange* magazine well I got it all expenses paid and my parents are down and don’t be upset Jordan please because it’s only for the summer and I’ll just oh I know how bad I’ll yearn for you but this is going to open so many doors for me I have to do it—“

“Wait, whoa, what?” If only he had it on tape he could have played it back slo-mo.

I dug in my backpack, pulled out the colored envelope vivid enough to make your mouth water. I took out the letter—more of a note, actually, causal, informal, friendly, and handed it to him.

Hey, Babylon!

Looks like we’re going to be working together this summer at our favorite magazine! That is, if you can slog through the paperwork that’s enclosed and send it all back by June 1st. You better!

Luv & stuff—

Jzzie

Isabel LaPointe
Editor-in-Chief

“Wow,” Jordan said when he finished reading. “Um, wow . . .”

I held my breath as he let it sink in. Then a smile broke across his face, and even though he had to coax it at first, once it was there, ear to ear, it was genuine. “Do you know how amazing you are?” he asked softly. “No, Babylon, do you know?” This is when he grabbed me and hugged me and kept whispering against my neck “Do you know? Do you know?” till I wasn’t sure exactly what he was asking. But when he released me, he started in with practical questions, questions I could answer.

“When do you leave?”

“July first.”

“How are you getting there?”

“They’re flying me in!”

“Where will you stay?”

“In the NYU dorm—the Readers Run Amok program is hooked up with their School of Journalism somehow.”

Then the sweetest, most wonderful, most Jordan question of all: “Can I come down and visit you? Take a long weekend? You could show me New York!”

“Of course! That would be so great! Of course, of course, of course!”

Throwing my arms around him, I knew in that instant how magical it all was. The best guy ever, the best summer ever, and the alarm clock wasn’t about to buzz me out of it. It was true, it was real, it was happening for me.

Tonight I have to focus on Being Here Now. After all, this is sort of my bon voyage party, and now that our guys are here, Fiona's mood is vastly improved. It's a beautiful night—cloudless and crescent-mooned. Since the Quinns never take down their Christmas lights, the backyard is illuminated just enough to make everyone look good. Jordan especially—his sandy hair and easy smile, the start of a tan across his swim-team shoulders. Music blasts, a lively mix. Everyone's busting loose, the freedom of summer a fever.

I'm doing my level best to catch it. Yakking with the girls. Hamming it up for a camera. Taking a swig from a bottle of truly nasty stuff, like breathing fire in reverse—so that's tequila. Now I'm letting Jordan propel me into a corner of the yard where the Christmas lights have conveniently flickered out, and I'm pulling him to me just as much as he's pressing against me. I'm giggling into his mouth as we kiss our special kisses and, as our hands wander, I feel as hot for him as I did the first time we touched. Yet just as I'm ready to completely surrender to the insistent sensations, I'm tugged by a portion of my brain that is not Being Her Now but Being Somewhere in the Imminent Future. It's awful but . . . I'm multitasking. Making out with my boyfriend while planning what I'll say when I meet Izzie LaPointe.

Soon as I start feeling a little guilty, as if I'm betraying Jordan by letting my thought run free as much as my hands and my lips, some girl I barely know comes stumbling over to the oak tree we're getting busy against, doesn't even bother with an excuse me, and loses her lunch a few inches away. That's when the banality of Southie reality hits me. And all I want, all I need, is to be out of here.