

# Ideas

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It was autumn once again and they were still trapped inside of their heads. They spent too much time indoors, realized many things, and kept a strict vegan diet besides eggs. They read many books, but only a few novels. They became Marxists.

Jeff embraced the change more strongly at first. He deleted his Facebook immediately and, for some reason, began asking people to call him “Michel.” He joined three reading groups at local coffee shops and stole a jacket and combat boots from the army surplus store. He traded ennui and irony for straight-faced righteousness.

Lou made no attempts to change his name. He kept his Facebook account, but changed his profile picture to a blank white image and captioned it with three paragraphs from Trotsky. He deleted old photos, wall posts, and interests. He unliked The Beatles and liked Yoko Ono.

At first their politics were largely theoretical. They continued to buy venti lattes at Starbucks and scoffed at criticisms of academic Marxism. But gradually their musings began to take on a bit of a wild side. Lou began to use the term

“logocentric” and Jeff/Michel started having sex with strange men in public restrooms. Lou wore only black and painted non-representationally on very large canvasses. Michel changed his major to Comparative Literature.

Eventually they began to wonder what all of this nonsense was leading to, so they joined an undergraduate activist group and began to exercise powerful rhetorical violence when they spoke. They enrolled in the same section of “The Continental Tradition,” then dropped the class after a week, lamenting “intellectual masturbation” and “the tenure-track hypocrisy of critical theory.”

And then, abruptly, they gave up on radical critique. Their thoughts grew absurd, their essays morally relativistic. They began spending most of their time writing poems about feelings rather than ideas.