

# Intertext

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## Pajammin'

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# Pa

*Ready for bed...*

A haze spiraled from the caved in wooden floor, up around the ankles of the perspiring 20-somethings, lingering on the ceiling of the attic, fogging up the window along the way.

A chill lurked among the concavities of the haze but it was barely felt by the sweat covered drinkers, bartenders, and mingling youths at 4:30 in the morning, in this garret-turned-late night China Town club.

A “New York Rangers” t-shirt and tie-dyed pajama pants may look a bit sloppy in public, but it is not an unusual outfit to wear when running across the street to the local store to buy a bottle of water and a bag of chips.

Posh. London is a city of varying classes, races, lifestyles, fashions, and people. Europeans in general have a unique air of

“posh” that cannot be found outside this continent. The thought of attending class in sweatpants and zip-up is terrifying and for many in Central London, the term “dressed down” simply does not exist. Even a bag of chips would plead for some polished attire.

**10:47pm** A gaggle of freshly arrived American students bearing MacBooks

# jammmin'

...and whatever else the night has in store

By Amelia Bienstock

Illustrations by the author

crowded the hotel lobby where we could use the free Wi-Fi to Skype home and make our friends jealous of where we were. This incredible city was so fresh and new.

“Annie, I’m running across the street to get some food, would you mind watching my computer for a few minutes?”

She didn’t mind.

I ran into Anna, my future at mate, who wanted to go buy chips as well. I should probably call them crisps though, we were in London after all and so we don’t have any confusion, since getting a bag of French fries does seem a bit peculiar.

*Ladies adorned in sparkly too-tight dresses danced amongst themselves in the corner of the club. Glasses clinked; the bartender poured overpriced pints of beer and cocktails. Re-mixed 90s hits bounced off the walls. A skinny blonde man performed an ecstasy-induced dance, alone, in the center of the room. Haze.*

**11:33pm** The convenience store was closed, and considering Anna and I have appetites that peak around 12am there was only one thing to do... go for some *ne dining* at Denise’s Italian Restaurant. We weren’t the only ones either; another group of hungry jet lagged American students happened to be there as well.

I am certain I got confused, judgmental stares for

being in my pajamas. This was London. Even the least classy person in London has a style that could rival the longtime editor in chief of Vogue, Anna Wintour’s. Well, maybe not. But you get the point. Somehow, though, I didn’t care. London. I know all too well that in big cities one maintains an anonymity that you cannot possibly achieve in a rural or suburban town. However, in New York a) I could run into someone I know, and b) On second thought, that wouldn’t matter because it is totally acceptable to go to a diner at 4 am in your pajamas in New York. But not in London, and London is different.

**12:02am** Well, after we de-hungri ed and started heading back to the hotel we ran into two acquaintances, Mike and Anthony, who wanted to go out. *Well, no, I can’t go out... I’m in pajamas.* I thought about it. Pajamas are de nitely a very odd choice of attire for a pub.

But this was London; it was time for change, for con dence. Screw the looks; I was going to wear my pajamas to the pub. Watch out world, an “I-don’t-give-a-shit-about-what-anyone–else-thinks-and–am-going-to-have-the-time-of-my-life-despite-your-opinion” attitude was coming your way.

Little did I know that a quick pint at Shakespeare’s Head wasn’t what the boys had in mind for the night but some club in...well I don’t quite know,





since I had just arrived in London, but it was in walking distance of Holborn.

“Guys, I can *NOT* go to a club in pajamas. A pub is one thing, but a club will not let me in!”

“It’ll be fine, just come, it’s funny!”

Well, I was already out, I had already developed this “who cares” attitude. “Might as well make the most of it,” I thought.

“Fine, let’s go.”



**1:34am** We eventually arrived at the club and it was hopping. In fact it was so hopping that it was at capacity and we couldn't go in. In addition, by law they had to stop serving liquor by 2:00am. (One liquor license that many British venues can buy, another popular one ends at 11.) London is definitely a city that sleeps.

A *kind young lad* was handing out flyers for a club on the South Bank. Apparently this place had a later license and the party would last all night long.





**2:00am** We got into a cab (they call them Black Cabs there), which was cooler than New York City yellow cabs anyway (there was a TV with channels, we watched the Office, the British one, and there was much more leg room) and we met Allan, the taxi's driver. We could see Big Ben, and the London Eye, and crossed over the river where we arrived at what appeared to be a warehouse engulfed by a plethora of nothingness. This was the club. *Life.*

Allan decided then, to give us tourists some useful information about the venue we had chose.

This isn't really the kind of club for you guys," He explained. We were then informed that we were currently outside of a black gay club. Great, but not exactly what we had in mind for the night. Not to mention it was in the sketchiest (pardon me— *dodgiest*) area I had ever seen. There was no tube (the London subway) in sight and no black cabs passing by. Even if we did go to the club we would have been stranded there. So Allan kindly drove us back across the bridge and into to Soho where our venture continued.

*Fivers exchanged, IDs shown. Passed the bouncer, each step creaked as the partygoers stumbled to the top. Stilettoes clicked, doc martins clomped, "trainers" pitter pattered until the nal step was reached. Haze frolicked down the stairs.*

Allan told us about two restaurants in Soho that are open all night long. Once again, the liquor law prevented us from enjoying the 24 hour locale at its full capacity.

**3:08am** Eventually we found ourselves down a few streets in what seemed like an entirely different world. Chinatown. We found this tiny club in yet another dodgy locale. This one was open until 5am so therefore everyone was keen. I don't remember the name of the club, but that's quite all right because I really have no intention of going back there any time soon. Or ever again.

The China Town Street where this little garret of a club was situated was completely silent. The rest of the neighborhood was blissfully at rest except for the occasional stream of lanterns from closing noodle watering holes. A bouncer stood at the door to check IDs and collect cash. Every now and then a couple or small group of friends would exit the club through the ornamented door.

Although a revisit to this club would certainly not be planned, this is not to say that we had a bad time. The cheesy techno beats were just what we needed on our first night out in London





town. We made lots of friends such as Blondie, the lady who wore skin-tight clothes with way too much confidence, the cracked out dancer, and of course Juan. Juan was in his mid 30's and way too close for comfort. At first his undying compliments to my "trousers" was funny, but unsettling quickly replaced that emotion when he moved on to talking about plantations and labeling us as racist, though I cannot fathom why. Seeing that I was being suffocated by this "trouser loving" man, Anthony tried to come to my rescue, to which our

dear friend Juan replied, "it's a free country" and continued to talk about plantations and us being racist, while kissing my hand.

*The haze hit its peak at 5am, and that's when it was time to come home. The sun was coming up, which is a miserable feeling when you have yet to sleep. The wind slapped our backs and we meandered down the empty streets to our hotel.*

**6:04am** Exhausted upon my return, I was pleased to remember that I was already dressed for bed.

