

Eastgate

Sienna
Gillespie

The day before I was born was a Sunday. On Sundays, "back in the day" when my parents still bothered to leave the house together, they would go to a movie. The Sunday before my birth was no exception, and my parents visited Eastgate cinema in Madison, Wisconsin that day as well.

I grew up just outside of Madison, about 11 minutes exactly from Eastgate. My dad was a huge movie buff, so many of my childhood hours were spent there as well. The first time I was introduced to "Harry Potter" was at Eastgate. The first time I saw "Mean Girls" or "Bridlesmaids" was there too. I spent so many hours there, without even realizing its importance. Before I worked there, I already knew Eastgate very well.

But I would grow to know Eastgate more, and realize her importance in my life. In October of 2011, I was hired at Eastgate Cinema. Okay, so this movie theatre is now my employer. Cool. It's a job. Whatever.

Except it wasn't just a job. It became everything. At first it was brand new to me; so many new faces and routines to master. I was sure I wasn't ever going to keep up. But slowly but surely, I did.

Two years after I was first hired, I still have a job at Eastgate. I've moved seven hours away to school, but whenever a break in school comes about, I'm right back to that popcorn filled palace.

Two years ago I wanted a job. I wanted to make a little extra money, so I got hired. Never, even in my wildest dreams, could I have imagined my life would change so dramatically because of ~~the~~ it.

To you, Eastgate means nothing. You've probably never even heard of it. Nor have you ever been there. And if you have, you don't think it's anything special. It's old and falling apart. It smells musty. It's cold in the winter and too warm in the summer. Popcorn is constantly being crushed under your shoes as you walk down the dim lit

hallways on soggy carpet. To you, Eastgate is a fading piece of the world that is unimportant and lacking some good house-keeping.

To me, she's all that too. But really so much more. Eastgate is my home. Really, she's the first landmark I see when I get back to ~~Wisconsin~~ Madison. Eastgate welcomes me back to the 608. Eastgate may be physically a mess, but emotionally she has created the strongest bonds of my life.

Becca and Tom both work at Eastgate. We grew up only minutes apart from each other. Our whole lives, we were in walking distance (all be it a long trek, it was still close!) of each other. We were even born in the same hospital! And yet we never knew each other, until Eastgate.

I met Becca first, in December of 2011. I didn't like her; I thought she was weird. But the summer of 2012 came rapidly, and with it one of the best friendships I've ever had.

Honestly, my friendship with Becca makes

no sense. We hardly spent any time together that summer, and in September of 2012 I moved to Indiana for school, so we didn't see each other then either.

Becca is living proof that distance makes the heart grow fonder, as our friendship really blossomed once I went away. We facebook chatted all the time, and texted and skyped. We called each other and wrote on each other's walls. We were inseparable, besides the fact that we were 350 miles apart.

It's so funny now to think how unimportant Becca once was. I almost didn't have her as a best friend. I applied to work other places too, but Eastgate was the first call back I received. Without Eastgate, there would be no Sierra and Becca. We almost weren't. My mind is blown by it. She means so much to me now; I don't know where I would be without her. I'm so lucky she's my best friend.

... And then there's Tom. He's not my best friend. I don't think I would even be friends with him at all if I

Wasn't in love with him. Oh wait, should I have built up the anticipation with that one? Sorry.

I write about Tom all the time. This Creative Writing class I'm in always gives prompts that relate to him! I SWEAR!
Okay, not really. I just cannot for the life of me get this boy out of my head.

I'm starting to annoy myself. There's really only so much you can write about love, and a particular boy you're in love with. But the words just keep flowing and my mind keeps racing back to him. I really don't know what it is, I'm hopeless.

The first time I saw Tom was at Eastgate Cinema, what a surprise. I was at the box office, and he was coming in for his interview. In case you care for dates at all, this was April 2012. And if you're even more curious, we started dating in April 2013.

He was dressed up. I mean obviously, he had an interview. But he was in a green button up and a tie. Maybe

to the tie, definitely to the button up.

He doesn't remember me. He remembers meeting me once he had the job, in the vending stand. This time, we were in matching outfits. Aprons and green bowties. So sexy.

I noticed Tom, I really did think he was cute. And I remember telling one of my friends outside of Eastgate that there was this new boy at work, and we had fun talking to each other.

It just blows my mind that I thought nothing of it when I met him. It was just another day. Nothing to write home about. But he changed me. He changed my life. He made the sun start shining.

I hate writing about him. I don't want to keep giving metaphorical sentences about how beautiful his eyes are and how he makes me feel.

But this is my first time being in love. I've dealt with that damn unrequited nonsense for years, but this is the first time I'm in a mutual place called love with someone. And I

want to remember that.

Thanks, Eastgate. you're awesome.