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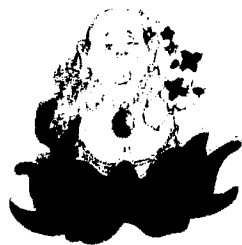
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A LOVE TO LAST

EVAN KOSEK
culture editor

Standing no taller than your average school locker, a tan and blonde Cassie attends classes on a daily basis. As she looks to the future on her mind as much as the past, she is hard-pressed to picture Cassie's future. True is this case for many of our people, we have a story to tell - no matter how small or significant, these stories manifest themselves through time. Though she had always told herself that she would get a tattoo without a "good reason," Henry was stricken at the beginning of the year when her younger brother died away.

Henry believes people should get tattoos that are meaningful. "I believe the closest person to me," she says, "is my brother, so I'm leaving up part of the body to remember him."

Henry's brother, Jared, was a big part of her life. He was such a big part of my life," Henry says. "So I got a big part of my body done to remember him."

Amidst her grief over her loss and her personal struggles, Henry at one point visited a spiritual medium. "I went to see [her] and before she even knew about my brother, she told me that Jared liked my tattoo."

The experience, as she described it, felt surreal. "She told her, in excruciating detail, that she had a premonition to his name, Henry said. It was broken - if only for a moment."

Not only did she invest in the experience, Henry went back months later to get another tattoo. This time, she got a tattoo of a butterfly.

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Make it meaningful.

DAN KJEM
staff writer

Tattoos are a great form of art; they can express how a person acts, what they believe in, and what they love. However, many people fall victim to the curse of the generic tattoo. Sadly, chances are the majority of tattoos that people sport fall under this category.

Tattoos are meant to be fun, and yes, they are still a slightly rebellious thing for a person to get (even if well over half the legal population in the U.S. has one), but they deserve more than an hour's thought. Just because a person turns 18, 22, 35, or whatever doesn't mean someone has to get a tattoo. If they don't have a good idea, then chances are it is for the best they don't commit to something just for the hell of it. There are way too many birds, lips, peacock feathers, wings, hearts, and stars out there.

It also doesn't help that people try and apply a false meaning to their tattoos. It seems to go over many people's heads that a tattoo can be for the simple fact you like it or it looks cool. It doesn't have

to be a "big" or "bold" message to get across how "free" someone is or how they think they want to live most of each day. A common clichéd tattoo is the "R.I.P." tattoo, often dedicated to a grandparent or family member. There isn't anything wrong with showing how much a person is missed, but chances are most of the people these tattoos are for would rather have a tattoo that is meaningful to them than a tattoo that is just a tattoo.

If you do not speak the language, then you look pretty stupid with it on your body. If you get a clichéd saying like "sky's the limit" or "seize the day" then you are bound to regret it. They are clichéd for a reason. If you have never been to church a day in your life, do not get a crucifix on you. Yes, they do last forever and no, dolphins don't look good on your saggy eighty year old flesh. Put some thought into your tattoos. Don't do it just to do it. Do it because you have something you want to say or because you really, really like something. It isn't cool, creative, or original if ten other people you know have a similar tattoo as you.

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Amanda Jon
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