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Who Would I Be Without Instagram?

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MY SENIOR YEAR of high school, I had three Instagram accounts: a public one, a private one for friends and internet friends, and a private one that was just for me. By this point, I'd had an online audience for six years or so: first for the [fashion blog](#) I started when I was 11, and then for [Rookie](#), the online magazine for teenage girls I'd started when I was 15 as an alternative to the getting-a-boyfriend-centric mainstream teen magazines that still existed in 2011.

Posts on my public account were mostly dispatches from my in-person life, which still consisted primarily of going to school every day in Oak Park, Illinois, and editing Rookie when I got home. The private account for friends was more of a place to voice frustrations and petty thoughts. And the private account that was just for me was like if my public one was more shameless: thirstier selfies, pictures with famous people at their homes and dinner parties, souvenirs from the world of wealth and prestige that I'd occasionally been granted access to through my internet fame. These photos felt too obviously desperate and social climb-y for my other accounts, but I wanted to know how it would feel to enhance them with filters, to watch the little blue bar advance as they uploaded, to see these moments framed—or blessed, really—by Instagram's interface....

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