



Haute Dish

The Arts and Literature Magazine of Metropolitan State University

Fall 2016/Spring 2017 Volume 13 Issue 1

Published two times a year, *Haute Dish* is dedicated to showcasing the literary and artistic talent of the students of Metropolitan State University in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Student work is published in Spring; Fall issue is open to students, staff, faculty and alumni.

CALL FOR ENTRIES – FALL 2017

Now accepting submissions from current students, staff, faculty, and alumni of Metropolitan State University for our full-color Fall 2017 issue. Submit your poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir/ personal essay, photography, illustration, or digital storytelling. We're encouraging submissions of multi-lingual poetry and prose. Express yourself as only you can. Metropolitan has wonderful writers from all over the world—and next door—here's a chance to get published.

For submission instructions and details about our selection process, visit hautedish.metrostate.edu.

Questions? Email us at hautedish@metrostate.edu.

Submissions deadline for Fall 2017 issue is midnight, April 15, 2017.

Want to join the *Haute Dish* staff?

Graduation is an achievement but means we need to find more students interested in working on the magazine. If you would like more information about joining *Haute Dish*, email us at hautedish@metrostate.edu

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Front Cover: **Caged** Denny Yang

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Editors' Note

Hello,

We are excited to present the combined Fall/Spring Issue.

We had our Fall Reading at Metropolitan State's St. Paul Campus. Alumni and those with work published in the recent issues of *Haute Dish* read their pieces and shared their artwork. It was a beautiful day, and we are so very fortunate to be part of the generous community of Authors, Artists, Digital Storytellers, and Photographers.

As Metro State students we come to the University with diverse backgrounds, skills, and knowledge. Stephanie and I are graduating and passing on the Managing Editor baton. Our time with *Haute Dish* has been rewarding in experience and friendships. If you have been thinking about submitting your work to *Haute Dish* but have not yet done so, we encourage you to submit. We want to thank everyone who has submitted to *Haute Dish* this semester and to congratulate everyone whose work was chosen.

Thank you to the editors and staff of *Haute Dish* whose contributions make the magazine and afternoons like the Fall Reading possible. They are a wonderful and talented group of people.

We hope you enjoy reading the combined Fall/Spring Issue!

Stephanie Grill & Christine Lashinski
Co-Managing Editors



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 **Digital Storytelling** Visit: <http://hautedish.metrostate.edu/fall2016/videos/>

Meet the Latino Economic Development Center, by Kevin O'Connor, was part of a social media campaign project for Communicating with New Media (MDST 485), where students worked with nonprofit organizations in St. Paul, Minnesota.

I Met a Girl

Goachia Thao

i met a girl.
she's cute, she's silly
she seems so secure with herself, unlike me.
so fun and confident
i bet she gets all the men.
she's inspiring, everything that i want to be.
funnily, she looks just like me.
smart and ambitious too
i'm prayin every night i can be apart of her crew.
i talk to her and she never judges
i'm starting to lean on her like some crutches.
we take pictures together; she teaches me how to pose
makes sure i look good and assesses my clothes.
she teaches me how to smile; she teaches me how to make my lips
purse
and she teaches me how to give that sexy smirk.
she shows me her body, tells me i'm the first.
i'm so close to her now;
face to face, i'm sure this isn't allowed...
i'm quite shy, i might back out.
she's staring at me and i'm staring at her
turns out she's just the girl in the mirror.



Number 55

Stephanie Grill

Twenty Steps

Christine Lashinski

Fierce winter descended upon us with no notice. No neighbors for miles. No one in sight. The storm dumped snow on our little home, burying it in its drifts, trying to wipe the world free of me, of mine. The wind rushes beside the house. Nowhere to hide. The cold gets in through the chinks. Little ones piled next to me like cords of wood in the bed.

I slip from the covers, trying not to let in the cold. They grumble, they stir, but they do not open their eyes. I shuffle through the room on the rough wooden floor timbers, limbs like brittle twigs. Stiff, I bend to throw the only log left, on the fire. My fingers won't stop trembling. The journey, only twenty steps. I've counted them, those steps.

Through the door is no world I recognize, though I've lived on this plot of soil since becoming his bride. Where is he? Snow blind, I lift my twiggy limbs to the fuming sky. The rough rope meets my fingers. I begin to count.

The wind robs me of my strength, freezes my lungs, but I struggle on. They count on me. The critters. The children. My love.

Twenty steps.



The Burnt Sky

Kevin O'Connor

It's Our Pond

Mohamud Isaq

There is a pond behind our huts,
but we are dying of thirst.
Our water is dirty.
Sometimes it is red, orange.
Yet everybody loved it,
cooked with it,
drank from it.
Now we are allowed few drops only.
A man patrols it,
we have to buy the water that is ours.
And he's not from our region,
He sees us as the living dead.

The Piano Lady

Sarah Fjellanger

“So, what needs doing?” were the first words Ellen heard that hot August day as her cousin Clare entered the house dressed in capris and a top dotted in paint spatters. The two of them, though ten years and two states apart, had remained close and now, when Ellen, an only child, was struggling to clean out the home her parents had lived in since 1958, Clare knew she needed to help.

Ellen’s dad, a meat cutter at the local grocery store and her mother, head night nurse at the hospital, had both retired twenty years earlier. It was her mother’s health that moved from bad to worse over those years and her dad, the faithful care provider, had cried when he no longer possessed the strength to continue. An ambulance brought her to the nursing home and, two months later, he followed; within another thirty days, Ellen was orphaned.

“I need a hit of coffee to start my heart. Where’d you hide the pot? You did keep it out, didn’t you?” Clare said as she weaved in amongst the sorting piles and on into the kitchen.

“The pot’s in the back hall. I hadn’t planned on using it, but if you want some, have at it.”

Soon the aroma of egg coffee, made the way they’d been taught by their Norwegian grandmother, filled the space and stirred memories. In the late afternoon, the sputtering of a vehicle pulling up in front of the house caught their attention, its driver running full speed toward the door.

“Is it gone yet?” the lady said as Clare opened the front door.

Before her stood a woman with mismatched, coffee-stained teeth, electrified hair and a smell like a child left too long in wet diapers. A dried stain line on the rear of her orange flowered slacks continued on down the side. Her blouse, too large on her slight frame, drooped off to one side of her shoulder.

“Did you sell the piano yet?” the lady asked. “I’ve been lost forever and the truck is almost out of gas.”

“No...,” Clare said, “the piano has not sold yet, but...”

Before she could get another word out, the lady stepped inside and caught sight of the blonde instrument sitting in one corner of the living room. Without hesitation, she went over to it, slid to the center of its bench and stopped right in front of middle C. Skillfully, her fingers began to move across the keys as the cousins stood mesmerized by this woman with the dirty hands and nails. Then they watched

as her eyes turned dreamy, her chin lifted a bit and the random keys turned into melodies they all knew. Beneath the Cross of Jesus, and I Love to Tell the Story came first followed by a jazzed up rendition of Onward Christian Soldiers. When the last notes had sounded, her eyes took on a faraway look and for a time she seemed to conversed with some unseen person.

“How much?” the lady blurted out, the question jarring them back into the moment.

“Uh, \$150,” Ellen replied.

“I’ll take it, but I only have \$75 here. If you could load it onto the truck for me, I’ll come back with the rest.”

“The truck isn’t big enough and we aren’t strong enough,” Clare replied.

Turning toward Ellen, the lady pressed a stack of money into her hand and said, “Then, here...keep this and I’ll come back for the piano.”

Before another word could be spoken, the woman’s eyes began darting about as if watching for some hidden person. “I gotta go,” she said, then rushed out the door. Ellen stood with her mouth agape; eyebrows raised. “What was that?” she half whispered to no one in particular.

From the front window of the house, the two watched as the stranger struggled to start the rusty pickup. Its reluctant engine coughed out a clank, clank, clank before finally catching and issuing a cloud of black smoke from the tail pipe.

“I wonder if she’ll find her way home,” Clare thought out loud as the pickup pulled away from the curb.

Slowly the cousins returned to sorting and cleaning. It was Clare who decided to wipe away the tracks of dirt from the keys of the piano and in so doing, caught sight of the newspaper ad precariously perched on the edge of the stack of song books resting against one leg of the piano. It was wrinkled, worn, obviously had been crumpled and must have fallen from the pocket of the mystery lady. She knew then that they’d never see her again and a pall of sadness fell. The lady had entered with an air of aged confusion, and the apparel of disarray, but left behind the hovering memory of a joy she’d once known, songs she had played and sung somewhere in her past.

Fall's Sunrise

Tim Lindwall

Why do leaves turn colors in the fall?
I want to grow, I want to know
I'm wading through the fallen leaves
like the drifting snow, like the drifting snow
When I see the leaves fly'n from the trees
I want to go, I watch them flow.

How do the ancient oaks know it is autumn time?
I want to hear, I want to be there
I'm waiting beneath a full golden leafed tree
and the first leaf falls and the first leaf speaks.
When I hear the sound of a single leaf fall--
of a single leaf brush down to the ground
I want to wait, I want to watch.

Why must such rare colors and fair hues fade to brown?
I wanted to fly, and the colors had to die
I'm crushing the leaves-- between earth and feet
and the sound comes first, and the smell comes next
My brown colors will surely turn grey
I want to live, I want to paint
There is still time, I shall not faint.

Why do leaves turn colors in the fall?
The last leaf turned and the last leaf fell
and like the trees, I have a story to tell.

Why do I sleep through the early dawn?
when the stars close their eyes
while the trees study the skies
as the sun shows them
all the colors of the Sunrise.



Lighthouse

Betsy Salvatore

The Kangsê Strikes

Désirée Weins

The kangsê strikes.

I take a long, intentional breath
into my lower abdomen.
My side ribs rise as I pull
the air deep into my belly.
Water diffuses into vapor carrying
the essence of frankincense, lavender, and grapefruit;
it enters my nostrils, tingling my nose.
I am detached but struggle to
root myself into the moment.
I hear the refrigerator hum.
My dog lies next to me curled in a ball.
She breathes wheezily.
There are dishes over flowing in the sink.
The facet drips, drips, drips.

The kangsê strikes.

Industrial presence fills my ears.
Metal against metal clings and clangs
reverberating out into the cityscape,
reminding me of my disposition.
Kamikaze car wheels speed through
the streets below my window. Outside, overhead,
airplanes fly through vast spaciousness
to faceless destinations.
I feel space in my chest;
My dad is dead.

The kangsê strikes.

Sorrow and grief swell inside
the marrow of my bones and
breaks the surface at my face.
My lips quiver. I whimper.
Tears swell in my eyes and
roll down my face, leaving their
salty remnants on my lips.
They leap from my chin and
collide into my chest:
splash, splash, splash.
He escaped death many times
but the inevitable moment
my mom never wanted
finally arrived.
Finally happened.
Finally official.

The kangsê strikes.

I look to the back of my eyelids
for peace that was lost, but it
only reflects the heavy darkness I feel.
There's a pile of dishes in my sink,
but my mother needs me
more than I need myself.
I lie in bed attempting to
be present with this moment, but instead
I crawl up into a ball and
pull the covers over my head,
bringing my dog into my arms.
I let the grief do its job and
allow the tears to consume me.

The kangsê strikes.

Oh my God,
I call on Thee O Spirit, Oh Lord of the Dawn,
I beseech thy most hidden Light in
this most hidden moment.
Hold my heart and my hand.
Deliver me and my family from
the depth of our idle fancies
and vain imaginings; cleanse us of
our pain and sorrow; make us into fruitful trees.
I call on Thee O Thou my Soul,
O thou evoked by all, O Succoring One.
Thou the Sufficing,
Thou the Healing,
Thou the Abiding,
O thou Abiding One!



Spirit Island

Kevin O'Connor

Flatulence

Alex Jaffe

Once there was a man named Flatulence. Flatulence was known for his ability to emit loud clapping thunder from his backside. Gaining fame around the known world for his ability to make thunder at will; he claimed he too deserved a place among the deathless gods as Flatulence the Thunder Maker. This angered loud thundering Zeus so Zeus set off to find Flatulence who was playing at the local amphitheater that day. After the show Flatulence was approached by Zeus disguised as an old man.

“Why do you think you are better than all powerful Zeus?” asked the old man.

“Well,” said Flatulence.

“Can he do this?”

Flatulence then emitted a thunderous roar. He knocked over three giant oak trees and caused a cow to faint. Zeus, realizing he could not compete with that, put a curse on Flatulence to cause his loud thunder to appear at the least appropriate times: wedding, funerals, Bar Mitzvahs, and even with his lady friends. Zeus’ anger was so great that now all men have the curse of Flatulence.

Cooked

Désirée Weins

1. Raw Meat

Fall infiltrates summer. The echoes of silence on the empty streets of the Minnesota Fair grounds are broken by the gossip of carnies that permeate it. Twelve days of pure consumption abound: gluttony at its best.

2. Medium Rare

Smiles are exchanged as you head to your food joint. You walk through a thick blanket of smells that embody the comfort of novelty-fried foods, baked goods and sugar found only at the fair. The streets are crowd-less and peaceful.

The grills are on low; the meat slowly cooks. The gates open and fairgoers arrive in waves. Get em in and get em out – grab that money – is your mantra. The sun is shining and cool breezes relieve you of your sweat. Out your window, you notice Sweet Martha in the hands of her fans.

“You! Steak or sausage: onion, peppers, mushrooms, or cheese? Seven-fifty. Fifty makes eight, two makes ten, and ten makes twenty. Next!”

The customer is confused. “Didn’t I give you a 20?”

“Oops! That ten must have turned into a five. Thought it was my tip?” A smile extends across your face. “Sorry, sir, you know how it is these days. College is expensive.”

Brendon, serving next to you, overhears and pulls a five out of the cash drawer and puts it on the counter and chimes in. “You’ll have to excuse my friend, sir. She’s on probation. Gotta keep an eye on this one. You know what I mean?” Brendon shakes his head and puts his hand up to his mouth as if he is whispering to only the customer. “She’s

on the work release program. Got deep pockets. Just don’t know what to do with her, you know? But, she’s a good kid.”

The customer laughs.

A lady wearing a fuzzy, troll-like, neon pink wig approaches from the side window. You take a jab before she speaks. “Whoa! Did you lose a bet?”

She laughs.

“Seriously, did you get a free bowl of soup with that hat?”

She knows how silly she looks. She asks for directions to the dairy building.

“Sorry miss, the farthest I get is the bathroom.”

Outside your joint, the crowd flows seamlessly. Everyone is smiling and aware of the space that surrounds them. Fathers carry their children on their shoulders and their children carry stuffed animals on top of theirs.

The line tip builds and you crank the grills up. Clouds of smoke propagate from cooking meat. You get by on your jokes, poking fun at fairgoers.

3. Medium: Continuously Flip

Same shit: different day. Fourteen-hour days wear on your body like twenty. Your jokes diminish; the same smell of fried food nauseates you. The same screams echo from the midway. The same crowd with different faces is eating. And eating. People mindlessly T-bone each other, focused on their gluttony. You start resenting Sweet Martha.

4. Medium-Well

"You! Steak or sausage: onion-pepper-mushroom-cheese?"

Customer laughs at himself as he extends his hand over the counter, trying to touch the cooking 10lb steak, with his finger. "Can I just get that one on a stick?"

You've heard this a thousand times.

You slap his hand with your tongs, deterring it. Stabbing him with your eyes, you say, "Sir, you can't touch that. Please, keep your hands on the other side of the counter."

You're so gross. You're breaking health codes and putting people's health at risk. Your joke is not unique. When you walk away, we're going to mock you.

You smile. The customer thinks you're humoring him. You're satisfied you hit his hand.

The line grows and announcements start. "Folks have your order in mind and your money ready!"

A man wearing glasses balancing roasted corn and a pickle on a stick in one hand with cheese curds in the other steps up. With a line 30 deep you know he has been waiting for at least two minutes; long enough to read the menu board that's less than two feet above your head; with only two options: steak or sausage.

But yet he still asks, "What are yah selling here? Is that armadillo?"

Your eyes widen. Every muscle in your body

tenses. You imagine gouging his eyes out with your fork. *Did you leave your common sense and literacy at the gates?*

"No sir, it's London broil and Italian sausage."

"Do you sell any cotton candy?"

You're screaming inside. Use your fuckin free education! Somewhere a family is missing their idiot.

"Only steak and sausage; just like this lovely sign above my head states."

"Oh. Well. Why don't you give me one of those steaks on a stick, then."

You force a smile. You're not funny; you're slow and you're fucking up my pace.

Your hate becomes an extension of the growing line.

You can barely see through the burning haze of sweat droplets that have rolled down your forehead pooling in your eyes. Eyes burn: you can't see; you're immersed in a white carbon cloud. Your clothes are sticking to you; your throat is dry and your voice is hoarse from non-stop talking.

Captain Obvious appears through your smoke signals.

"Cooking up a storm in there, aye? Looks really hot in there. I bet it's hot. Isn't it hard to see with all that smoke?"

You're Cooked.

Revenge Never Smelled So Sweet

Renae Edwards

Elisha pushed through the glass doors, took two steps, and gulped in the frigid air. The cold air leached away the heat of humiliation from her face. As she reviewed how she might have done things differently at the meeting, her stomach began to grumble.

The all-to-familiar twisting of her guts had her eyes darting about as she searched for a safe place to end her intestinal discomfort. Staying where she stood wouldn't work. Someone could come through the doors any minute, and she couldn't chance the embarrassment.The thought of Jed being the next to exit the building tempted her, but the way her day had gone, it would be someone else like their boss, and she just couldn't take any more humiliation today.

She glanced around for a possible safe spot to ease her discomfort but found none. A pedestrian strolled down the sidewalk from her left, the apparent winner of a 'who can walk the slowest contest.' Elisha mumbled, "Stupid Jed."

To the right an older woman hobbled towards her. Even as the thought, she shouldn't be walking in this. It's too slippery. entered her head, Elisha knew she couldn't offer to help the woman as she should.

"Poop on a Popsicle stick, I just can't catch a break today." Elisha grumbled as she stepped off toward the company parking area. A groan slipped out as another wave of pain clenched her intestines. Stupid IBS. Jerkhead Jed. Why did he feel the need to call her out in front of everyone? Did it make him feel better about himself to embarrass others? Probably.

In his typical way, he hadn't noticed that she'd arrived nearly an hour early to help set up the conference room or that she'd made sure they had a small snack for the hour-long meeting. A snack she'd paid for. However, he was quick enough to accuse her of printing out the wrong version of the document he'd sent her at least ten versions of over the past two days.

She'd been trying to be nice. It wasn't her job to print out his crap or to proof it for him, but she did it to be nice, just like she brought Janice her favorite coffee once a week and gave Simone a ride home on Fridays. Helping others made her feel better. Having her kindness used against her, however, made her want to point out all the things she did for others, but she couldn't. Reminding her co-workers of what she did would be too close to bragging.

Another cramping pain started the mantra, "I just need to get to my car. I just need to get to my car..." The car all the way in the back of the lot where the employees were supposed to park. The same lot now dotted with people trying to leave before the roads became too slick.

A quick survey of the customer parking area confirmed her suspicion. Jed had parked in the customer area. “What a jerkwad. He shows up late and then blames me because he decided to go with version seven of his proposal instead of version ten and then expected me to just magically know that.”

Her feet headed in the direction of his vehicle; an expensive foreign thing that looked more like a box than a car. Just like Jed, the KIA seemed to put on airs. Could cars think they were better than other cars? The steel blue beast in front of her seemed to.

Elisha whispered to the pretentious car, “I wish I had some soap or toilet paper,” as she grimly noted the tinted windows, specialized hubcaps, and a ‘vote for Trump’ bumper sticker. “I’d show you what it feels like to be picked on then. You and your owner.” Her rant trailed off as she saw a way to get her revenge and remembered Jed complaining a few days back that he needed to take his car back to the dealer because it didn’t give a reminding beep when he exited the car without locking it.

With a shake of her head, she mumbled, “I couldn’t.” But a cautious look around confirmed that no one she knew was near.

Her naughty side said, “Do it. You know you want to, and you are never going to make it to your car before you explode.”

Her good side tried to remind her that she only did nice things for people, but she could barely hear it over the rumbling in her guts.

With another glance around the parking lot and back toward the building, Elisha lifted the car’s door handle. She tensed, waiting to hear an alarm go off, but it didn’t. Apparently, it only armed if the doors locked. Gaining confidence, she slid into the driver’s seat and pulled the door shut.

The car still had a bit of the new smell. Inhaling deeply, Elisha grinned, “We can fix that.” Unclenching her butt cheeks, she allowed the pain-causing gas she’d been holding in to ease out in a silent fart. With each release of noxiousness, the pains in her stomach eased until she finally felt complete relief.

The foul odor that filled the car made Elisha want to run away. “It’s bad when you can’t stand your own gas, isn’t it car?” Patting the steering wheel, she eased back out and gently closed the door. “Here’s a gift I look forward to hearing you complain about, Jed.”

She continued her stroll to her car in the back lot feeling lighter. Her smile returned as the clouds began to part and the sun peeked out.

The Scavenger

Mohamud Isaq

Look for the hyena,
Over the rifts and valleys,
It may save your people.

Queen-Sized Bed

Ryan Patchin

soon it will be winter, and you'll be walking
alone
it'll be new-something to get used to
it'll probably hurt. You'll notice all of it
look straight ahead

walk

go to that diner. table for you
don't talk with your mouth full
to no one
a waiter, a store clerk
they start seeming like friends
they speak that way to everyone-
you're grasping at straws; things that aren't
there

your phone can't fix this
put it down
don't look at the empty shoe-rack
get rid of the empty shoe-rack

walk

half as many footprints as before
look straight ahead
twice as much space in your queen-sized bed.

Adolescent Woes

Carmen Perez

There was a stain on the yellow couch that was sitting out on the curb, a dark, red stain about the size of a plate, right in the center of the 3-seater. My mom threw away our old couch because there were too many Kool-Aid and piss stains on it. It had lost most of its cotton and the springs were sticking out, stabbing our lower backs and thighs. She was looking for another one, but couldn't afford a brand new couch so she went all over the neighborhood looking for free couches and chairs. We chose not to pick up that crappy yellow couch.

Being poor isn't good. But it's all I've ever known. I wanted to have those long sectional couches, I'd seen one at Menards and pretended that it was my living room; I felt rich. My mom was only there renting a pick-up truck to haul out our old couch and beds even though she hadn't bought any replacement furniture. She just wanted the house to smell like a house and not a port-a-putty. My brother Brady said that public restrooms smell better, he tries not to spend time at home. When you're the oldest, you get to leave the house when you want, I guess. When you're the middle child, you need to stay at home because who else would take care of the younger ones while mom is at work?

Having siblings is rough. I wish I was an only child. Then there wouldn't be piss stains on our beds, couches and chairs. There would be enough toilet paper for me in the morning, instead of having to hold it while walking to the store to pick up more. It is worst when you don't have enough money and have to spend time looking under dressers and behind bookshelves and even digging through mom's dirty laundry to see if she has any change to afford \$2.79 plus tax for hard, thin toilet paper, that won't even last 2 days.

My mom had 5 children, but she lost one when he was a baby, he was the oldest brother before Brady. She named him Kurtis Allen Glenn. He never took a breath of air nor opened his eyes, he's buried next to my grandmother. My mom says things get better for those who are patient. She was told she couldn't have any more children, even though she was only twenty years old at the time. Her boyfriend left her and she quit school and went to work as a hostess at a downtown bar, where she met my father. She had Brady a couple years later and I followed three years after Brady, the twins weren't born until I was six. By then my mom and dad had divorced and she was engaged to another man, but he left too when the twins got too much for him to handle.

Boys are dumb. My brother comes and goes as he pleases and never shares his food from McDonalds with us. My dad avoids our phone calls, and we have no idea what happened with the twins' dad. The boys in my classes call me names and only like the girls with the pretty long hair who wear skinny jeans and leggings. I am chubby despite being hungry on most days. I get a free meal at school, but I'm afraid to eat in front of Jasper and Greg, even though Greg called me ugly last year, I still have a crush on him. I usually take my tray and eat behind one of the pillars in the cafeteria, hoping no one sees me stuffing the chalk-tasting pita bread in my mouth.

I don't want to be twelve years old. I don't want to wear a bra but my mom insists because I'm growing. And fast. She said she was an early bloomer too. She said I should keep thinking the way I do about boys and not waste any time on them.

Hanna said they would want to waste their time on me if didn't wear a bra though. She's my friend from around my neighborhood and she knows about this kind of stuff. I think I will start getting used to it, but I don't like it when the older men at the bus stop and gas station whistle at me, they never used to do that. I still

put my hair in pigtails, even though some of my classmates call it childish. I look different when I wear it out, Brady said his friend thought I was fourteen or fifteen, so he told me to put on longer gym shorts...and a bra.

My birthday's in June. I will be one year closer to being a teenager. My mom is getting nervous about it, I know because I overheard her talking on the phone with my Aunt Peyton, she's my mom's only sister. She also has 6 brothers, some older and some younger. Peyton is the oldest, my mom listens to her every word, so she decided that I should be put on birth control once I start 7th grade. As a precaution, she says, I am her oldest daughter. She thinks I'm beautiful, but she's my mother, of course, she would say that.

Pretty or not, I don't think I should be forced to take a pill every day for sex I won't be having. I don't think boys like me, there won't be any invited to my party. School will be out, so I don't have to embarrass myself handing out invitations to classmates that won't attend. I did that last year, my eleventh birthday and it was a disaster, so I'm glad my mother doesn't want many people there this year. What a terrible idea to try make more friends before going into middle school.



Her Many Children

Denny Yang

Backyard Bully

Christine Lashinski

It all came to a head one warm summer day. From the inside of the house, I heard a racket. What sort of shenanigans were my kids up to now? From the window, I saw my son running up the driveway, the rooster hot on his tail.

But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself. How did this cantankerous creature find its way into our lives you ask? My son brought home three chicks from school. Two chicks were hens, but one chick, he grew into a doozy of a rooster. He picked on the hens more than he protected them.

With no loyalty whatsoever to the boy who had rescued him and fed him, the rooster patrolled the perimeter of our home. His wonky eye was always watching, warning of the danger of stepping a foot outside.

Our extended family was not the only victim of the rooster. The meter reader was tough, with his turf being in a rural community. When

my husband found him, gaze darting about the backyard, he asked, "Are you afraid of the dog? I can lock him up."

"The golden retriever," he said, a quizzical look on his face. "No. I'm afraid of the chicken."

Back to my son's desperate flight. He began to lose speed. In his older brother's pants, with the jeans sitting catawampus on his hips, each step brought the jeans further down his legs. He stepped on the inside legs of the pants. He tripped face planting into the moss covered front yard. The bird leaped onto my son's back, its ugly yellow claws clenching the t-shirt for traction.

With my child in danger, I grabbed a broom and raced outside. With a battle cry, I swung. Time seemed to slow as the broom traveled through the air. My son's eyes opened wide, revealing irises encircled in white. The rooster flapped to safety. I shattered the broomstick against a tree.

His gaze on me, my son screamed in terror. He leaped to his feet and left the pants, me, and the chicken behind.

Like a red cape, the rooster's comb swayed, beckoning me to continue the fight, as he strutted away. At my hesitation, his protruding eye conveyed a smug cockiness. I fantasized about chicken dinner. My husband intervened. No more free-range chicken for us. It was into the coop hoosegow for the bird. Undaunted, his sideways one-eyed gaze pierced the kitchen window to taunt me. The roosters end, much fantasized about, came from old age rather than a pot.

Our sense of safety in our backyard is gone. The fear though – the fear cannot be squeezed away. A shadow glimpsed from the corner of my eye, leaves that scuttle across the snow, low riding jeans or a glimpse of a "Beware of Chicken" sign and the memories come rushing back.

Oh, For God's Sake; Not Again

Renae Edwards

"Oh, for god's sake; not again," I mumbled staring at the cat sitting on a branch that dipped and swayed under his weight. It was the third time this week he'd climbed up and couldn't or wouldn't bring himself down.

Daryl asked around a much chewed piece of straw, "Did you say something?"

I looked at him and let out a sigh of long suffering. "Yes, I said please go get the ladder."

As usual, confusion lined his features. Most things confused him. I found confused people frustrating, but to be fair, I find most people frustrating and if he were anyone else I probably would have sent him packing, but Daryl had the body of a god and he could work. All I had to do was point him in the right direction.

Only last week I had sent him to work a section of fence. He worked it and more. I didn't think anything of it until night fell and he still hadn't returned to the house. At first it irritated me he was taking so long, but then I grew concerned. When the candles burned down and super turned colder than a beer on ice, I threw a coat over the lacey black negligée I'd planned to greet him with and stomped out to look for him.

I started at the section of fence I'd told him to fix. He wasn't anywhere near there. I studied the ground with an old Coleman's flashlight for signs of a struggle or animal attack. There weren't any, but I did find his boot prints following the fence line off to the west. I followed them and found him almost a half mile farther on, working on another section that needed fixing. I knew better, but I asked. "What the hell are you doing out here after dark?"

Daryl's face immediately shifted to confused. "I'm fixing the fence like you told me."

Sometimes you know you should stop, but you can't. That was me. I knew I should stop. He'd given me an answer that was reasonable to him. I could take him home clean him up and enjoy the one thing he could do without ever getting confused, but my mouth decided to keep working even as my brain said, You don't really want to know. "But why are you still doing it after dark." I pointed at the repaired area, "It's not even big enough for anything to get through."

He scratched his head, mussing up his long black hair. "But you told me to fix the fence and not come back until I finished. I still have a long way to go to get it all fixed."

Pointing back at the original area, I said, "I meant you only needed to fix that spot."

His face filled with a big O. Then he laughed. "That's a relief, I was afraid I was going to have to sleep out here for a few days. That made me kind of sad."

I raised an eyebrow, "It did?"

His cheeks blushed as he smiled, "Yeah, cause then I won't get to have sex with you." There was nothing I could do for it. I grabbed his hand and told him to leave the tools until the morning and took him home.

Daryl startled me out of the memory, "Here's the ladder."

"Put it up against the tree then climb up and get the damn cat."

You Would Have

Sarah Fjellanger

You would have wanted to climb that mountain. It stood there so proud and serene. Draped in robes of white, its peaks pointed heavenward. You would have wanted to climb it.

You would have soared as you leaped from its pinnacle, arms outstretched, torso straight as due north. You would have felt the cold, icy breath of air weaving you in patterns slowly down into its meadows. You would have soared.

You would have skimmed its face, caressing it with the waxy surface of your skis. You would have dodged the pines, the boulders, the crevasses. You would have raced the avalanche and won. You would have skimmed its face.

You would have sung and heard the echo. You would have marveled at the wide spread wings of an eagle, the queen of the sky's currents. You would have mimicked her cries, you would have heard her sing to her babies as she dropped them from the nest. You would have gasped as she dove to snag them from deaths' grip, raised them up and dropped them again until they learned to use their mighty wings. You would have sung.

You would have watched the bear swipe a trout from the stream as he gorged himself for the winter's sleep. You would have heard the guttural sounds of males sparring for leadership. You would have cheered the female who fought for her cubs and won. You would have watched them.

You would have loved the deer, the fox, the raccoon and rabbit. You would have fed them, taken pictures of them. You would have been mesmerized by the fawns in spring, enchanted by the fox running across the grassy knoll, laughed out loud at the raccoon's chatter and cried at the rabbit's death scream. You would have loved them.

You would have slept under the stars and seen Orion, the Big Dipper and Northern Lights. You would have cherished them all, known them by name. You would have howled at the moon with the wolves echoing then wished on a falling star. You would have slept there.

You would have wanted to be there, forever watching the grasses rise in spring, feeling the heat of summer, seeing the leaves turn color in the fall, then watching God spread a snow blanket in winter so all would stay warm. You would have wanted to be there; I know you would have and oh that we could have been there together.

His Beating Heart

Désirée Weins

81 Beats

Many shades of grey hung low on that rainy melancholy day. It was urgent mom said; you were calling everybody in. You were preparing to cash in your coins; Lady Luck was ready to drop you for all the love and value you stole. You no longer wanted residence in tenure held hostage by your crippled body. You were ready to receive your promised slice of pie in the sky.

63 Beats

Peeling wallpaper, growing mold and pictures of vacations you never took with us surrounded you as you lay helpless on a hospital bed in the living room. The air mattress arithmetically released the pressure underneath you; sounding like a respirator. Your face was sunken in, hands and hairless arms looked like velvet from the dryness that sucked all the moisture from the air. In the other rooms were low tone random conversations about nothing dealing with you. Outside, I hear the neighbor's phone ring; crickets serenade, rubbing their legs together, preparing for your departure.

54 Beats

You were always a man of stoic presence with few words that needed to be uttered. But, today, you had no problem confessing your desire to transition with hopes that your Creator would re-invent you with legs, which come with convictions of the New Kingdom.

45 Beats

Somewhere in the fragments of your thoughts you were having figments of conversations inside your mind no one else could hear. Outside your mind you asked for my forgiveness for the second time. You pleaded with me to change my ways for Jehovah's new system of things. I thanked you for your gift and reminded you: God is everywhere.

36 Beats

The corners of your mouth drooped, you starred off into space; constantly tonguing the inside of your lower front lip. Helpless on the bed, I saw a man who was coming to a prideful and stubborn end. Finally you were ready to surrender to the death that's been lurking in the dark dusty corners of the musty room you've been saturated in for the last decade. Outside, crows beckoned your soul.

9 Beats

At a 104 degrees, the pneumonia finally took hold and allowed other infections to proliferate. Your mouth was hanging open and your tongue was black and crusted. You couldn't look me in the eye, but I patted your head with a cold wet rag. I spread it out over your forehead so the cool could seep into your skin. I joked with you and told you that you looked like an Israelite – You briefly looked at me and in an almost undecipherable mumble, you told me I was beautiful. The ambulance was almost there; your olive tone skin was flushed out and transitioning into colorless shades of pale. I couldn't help but notice the lack of wrinkles on your smooth textured face. You out lived your siblings but were still only sixty-five. Before I left, I took your nose for safe keeping; hoping to steal a smile.

0 Beats per minute

White penetrating neon lights reflect off the sterile marmoleum floor and make a path towards your room. But the Dr.'s face said it all before entering. The red words on the monitor screamed: ALARM at 12:40pm; your heart went flat. At 12:45pm mother collapsed. We missed your departure by a mere five minutes. A shock wave of tremors rippled through my body; I fell to a seat the same time I tried to comfort mom.

And you never got your nose back.

The Manifesto

Jonathan Hiatt

Andrew shrugged his shoulders, indifferent to the news he had just received about the merger. Bank of America stock would now skyrocket after the split but he had cashed out his 401k and was looking to diversify into precious metals. Coins were hard to come by as people began to hoard following an announcement on MSNBC that austerity measures would be taking place. Due to the condition of the economy, many banks were taking precautions. Everyone expected a run on the banks. Federal Reserve Chairman Janet Yellen opposed an audit of the Fed's books. Gold was trading at \$1,450 an ounce. Honda acquired and privatized Amtrak. Insider trading was on the rise. Japanese auto manufacturers were ecstatic. Knowledge is power.

Laughing out loud, Andrew looked at his watch. Movado classic style. NASDAQ was down 20% so this could not simply be a market correction. Obama gave a speech. People were growing suspicious of Big Pharma and Pfizer Inc. stock was now trading at ten cents per share. Questions remained about the long term solvency of the Chinese. Rand Paul had been assassinated. Sony Corporation stock was hurting, too. Time magazine issued a special edition. United States of America: Bankrupt. Vatican dissolved.

Whoever controls the media, the images, controls the culture, according to beat poet Allen Ginsberg. Xenophobia was now on the rise, following Donald Trump's nomination. You never know which narrative is the correct one. Zimbabwe didn't have enough money to print more bank notes and neither did the United States.

A few minutes passed. Back at the New York Stock Exchange, the bell rang. Currency traders were nervous. Dow had been holding steady at 17,760 the day before but had fallen 1,776 points in the last five minutes of trading. Election officials were nervous. Forget about your passport. Greece had been bailed out—again. Homeland Security officials issued another terror alert. India was still a socialist country. Japan's Nikkei index had fallen 1,945 points. Korean automaker, Hyundai issued another recall of Sonata sedans. Libertarians still extolled the values of free markets and voluntary association. Microsoft Corporation issued the latest round of security updates for Windows 10, only to be thwarted by Chinese hackers who had taken control of the

company's servers and changed the company's landing page to a picture of Mao Zedong. News Corp., owner of FOX News and HarperCollins had declared Orwellian Newspeak to be protected by intellectual property law. Obama was still looking at the teleprompter, dodging questions from the press corps. Partisan discord in Washington, D.C. grew as exit polls predicted a Clinton victory. Questions remained. Rigged election? Secession? Texas could be the first. United States of America, still bankrupt. Victory? Why did the Brits vote for "Brexit," anyway? Xenophobia? You never know. Zealotry can be dangerous.



Zen
Betsy Salvatore

Modified Generation

Désirée Weins

What would you have done without me in the New World? You forgot that I allowed you to survive and prosper. Without me, you would have died and I would have gone extinct. Columbus sang praises to me. I was your greatest success story. And now, you will reap what you sow.

Remember when you discovered all my useful carbons and all their adaptive uses? You recognized my potential early. I helped you produced food, fast, in small patches on your new native soil that I became well adapted to. But now, you will reap what you sow.

Eventually, you saw my genetic variability. You made a home for me in capitalism and devised me into two: food and commodity. Then you made me your intellectual property. You employed your agenda by mutating my genetics. You turned me into snickers, cereal, and hamburger. You rendered my annual seeds unworthy, until biologically engineered for the next season. You no longer allow me to reproduce as my mother intended. But I adapted to your industrial world and increased my yield,

grew stiff and upright in very confined space. Eventually, your appetite for me transitioned into fossil fuels. Yes, you will reap what you sow.

I have lost my diversity. Don't you know that my bio-diversity was a measurement of our land's ecological vigor and your health? The edifice of variety and choice is now constrained to a monoculture expressed in a thousand different manifestations of our former selves that create the great canyons of your supermarket shelves, and suits all your fast food needs, in your fast food nation. You will reap what you sow.

You domesticated me and now I've domesticated you. I am your most important cereal crop. I dominate your land all over the world. My isotopes are now in your flesh and hair. Our relationship has changed and we no longer have a balanced symbiotic connection and your health is in a state of chronic decline. I now abet you in your species' demise.

You are reaping what you sowed.

Contributors

Alex “Jaffe” Jaffe is a senior at Metro State, majoring in Criminal Justice. Before transferring to Metro State, Jaffe attended Normandale Community College and was the Public Relations Coordinator for Normandale Student Senate, Vice President of the Gay/Straight Student Alliance and Secretary for the Metro South MSCSA. In addition to being a student favored by all of his professors, Jaffe is a stand-up comedian, performing all over the Twin Cities. He is a proud quarter finalist in the 2015 House of Comedy’s Funniest Person With A Day Job competition. If you stay up late enough to catch repeats of the cancelled show *On The Fly with Tony Fly* you’ll enjoy the unique comedy styling’s of the soon to be infamous...Jaffe.

Betsy Salvatore is majoring in Technical Communication. She enjoys working on content development and design for print and digital media, as well as capturing images with her camera. She will graduate in May 2017.

Carmen Perez is an aspiring writer who hopes to make it big in the publishing field, and get her name out there as well as raise awareness on Native American contemporary issues through her work of fiction and creative nonfiction. She often writes themes of poverty and loss, but can be humorous at times. She is majoring in Creative Writing and anticipates to graduate with her bachelor’s degree in December 2016.

Christine Lashinski is a writer who lives in the woods with her husband, two boys, and a slew of pets that her in-laws never let their son have. She knows all the details of a fictional character’s life, but can’t remember her neighbor’s first name. She is addicted to good tales and chocolate.

Denny Yang is a Technical Communication graduate student who is in his last semester. He is an avid creator of many things digital, an occasional photographer and videographer, and a movie fanatic.

Désirée Weins is a native of the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul and in the Individualized Degree program. She is trail-blazing an uncharted academic path in Creative Expression in Media and Food Studies, while seeking solutions to the food supply and consumption dilemma. Her spare time is spent in leisure with the gift her cat rescued and dragged home: Cheeky, the Chihuahua.

Goachia Thao is a sophomore studying chemistry at Metropolitan State University. While her focus is in science, she has a wide array of hobbies such as photography, coding, business, and menswear design.

Jonathan Hiatt is a senior in his first year at Metropolitan State University, majoring in English with a minor in Advertising. He previously attended Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, and is an aspiring freelance writer and editor. Jonathan enjoys writing creative fiction and nonfiction, playing percussion, and spending time with friends and family. His favorite television show is *Better Call Saul* on AMC. A native of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, Jonathan now lives in West St. Paul.

Kevin O'Connor is an Organizational Communication major with two semesters to go.

Mohamud Isaq, pronounced as Mah-mood, is from the city of Woodbury. He graduated from Harding High School in 2013. He is planning to major in Education- Social Studies, and teach high school History. He enjoys soccer, reading, and is a nature-lover.

Rena Edwards is a Liberal Arts student working towards her Bachelor's degree in Creative Writing. She prefers writing sci-fi and fantasy, but has recently expanded into memoir.

Ryan Patchin is currently pursuing a creative writing degree at Metropolitan State. He works in St. Paul as writer/copy editor. Ryan lives in Minneapolis, with his five year old son, Harper.

Sarah Fjellanger is a senior at Metro State and will soon be granted a degree in Creative Writing. She likes writing short pieces and is currently working on a novel of historical fiction.

Stephanie Grill is working on her last semester at Metro and will graduate in December 2016 with a Bachelors in Technical Communications and Professional Writing. She is currently one of the co-managing editors for Haute Dish. She enjoys traveling, her 3 cats, photography and meeting new people. This photo was taken at a friend's farm. Her love for animals is strong and cows are one of her favorites.

Timothy Lindwall is a senior at Metropolitan State University finishing his degree in Human Services with an emphasis on Adult Training and Development. He currently works with teen boys coming out of juvenile detention centers at Mapletree Group Home as the House Manager.



Focus on Metro

Kevin O'Connor

Haute Dish is published two times a year and is dedicated to showcasing the literary and artistic talent of the students of Metropolitan State University in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

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The deadline for submissions is midnight, April 15, 2017.

To view detailed submission guidelines and for more information about our selection process, visit us at hautedish.metrostate.edu

For other questions, email us at hautedish@metrostate.edu