

Haute Dish

The Arts & Literary Magazine of Metropolitan State University



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Haute Dish

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Editor's Letter

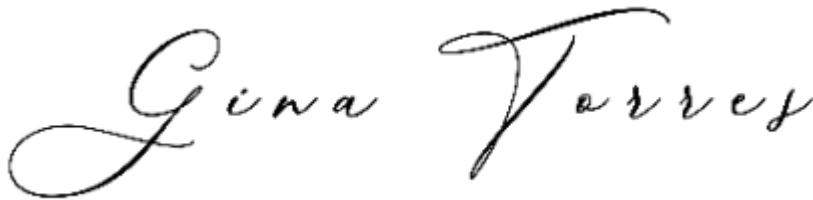
Welcome to the Fall 2020 issue of Haute Dish - The Arts and Literature Magazine of Metropolitan State University. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together!

We know that 2020 has been an interesting year, but I am thankful to have a family like Haute Dish. The support and hard work of every member have been essential for this organization to move forward while staying healthy and safe.

If your work is in this issue, congratulations! You've been selected from a group of very talented contributors. Thanks to the students whose submissions were received, volunteer editors, the faculty advisor, and YOU who read our magazine regularly for making Haute Dish a successful production. This issue would haven't been possible without any of you.

For future editions, we would like to continue to represent the diversity that exists within our organization. I'd like to encourage students, staff, and alumni of Metropolitan State University to submit multilingual or cultural work. Diversity is what drives our mission.

Finally, please don't forget to share this issue with family and friends. Now grab a cup of hot cocoa, sit back, and enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gina Torres". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Gina" and "Torres" being capitalized and prominent.

Gina Torres
Managing Editor

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Perseverance

Erick Suchy



Wander

Sarah Schenck

Wander through the night
Feel the cool air on your skin
Goosebumps confirm life

A Movement of Love

Arien Mormul

I want something more. I want something more than this.

I want my words to start a movement.

I don't want to waste away a talent that everybody else saw.

I don't want to do nothing.

Produce nothing, when I could make something that means everything.

I want to produce fruits that explode in your ears,
of tasteful sounds that drip and linger ever so sweetly.

Words you won't forget. Words you can't forget.

Words you'll always remember every time you hear a faint smell of it.

I don't want to speak just for me but for all of you.

I don't want to just be heard; I want to be understood.

Since so many of us are forgotten and so many of us are unable to be heard.

I want something more. Don't we all want something more?

I want to start a movement that quakes the people on this earth.

That breaks the plates beneath the crust that separates us.

To bring us back to unity.

What you're going through we've all been there.

In some way, in some form, don't tell me you haven't heard all of this before.

I want you to be heard. I want to be heard.

I want you to be understood. I want to be understood.

I want to start a movement. That brings us back to life.

I want us all to finally to be able to breathe with ease.

I want us all to remember who we are.

What we are. Why we are here.

I want us all to move in love.

The movement of love is what I want to start.

I want to start a movement.

Where the earth quakes with people who let the walls of hate crumble.

Then the seeping lava of love can consume us all.

To bring us back together to who and what and why we really are.

Here and now.

Here right now, let's start a movement of love

Tremors

Sarah Schenck

Tremor
Shake
Convulse

Tremor
Awake
No pulse

Tremor
Revive
Scream

Tremor
Alive
Adream

Figure

Mikala Schanz



The Little Girl

Brenda Marcos

the little girl the little girl that sits in the corner
the little girl with her knees drawn to her
the little girl with her head buried in her knees
the little girl lost with no one to love her (not even herself)
the little girl looks up with tears in her eyes when she hears someone walking toward her
the woman reaches down with her hands held out
take my hand little girl
the little girl looks to see who this woman is
the little girl has hope In her eyes
because she sees it is her older self saying **“please take my hand I can now love you! we can love each other!”**

In the Mirror

YaTonya Branch

In The Mirror

Beautiful you are & beautiful
you'll be.

Always keep that head up,
and appreciate and love
That reflection you see.

Beauty you bring out
Beauty must be within

That's why you love hard
with family and friends.

Sure, you've had challenges
Life is not at all easy,

Bumps & bruises you'll take
to strengthen you & your faith.

You let go & let God.

Allowing Him to heal you
from the pain & hurt.

Look how far He's brought you.

So, keep smiling Chile!

Yours is always so bright

Always willing to bring a
smile to someone's face.

Keep on encouraging

Yes, especially You.

Keep motivating & inspiring
others,

that they can make it too.

It's a gift that you have,

and it's something you love to do.

That's one reason you should

Admire that reflection of you.

You are Strong!

You are Beautiful!

You are Amazing!

You are Unique!

You too, are someone special.

Yes, so special you'd have to
care.

You are loving & truly different,
One of a kind.

So be true to you!

Believe in you!

Gon' right ahead

Be You! Uniquely You!

Don't be ashamed!

Look at you & love what you
see.

Face you, BEAUTIFUL YOU!

YES! Be proud of that reflection.

You've come a long way,
accomplished much.

YES, LOVE HER!

In the mirror

Portraiture

Jazmin Castaneda



Come Along with Me

Arien Mormul



Hourglass

Jillian Van Hefty

On the shore of Lake Superior, my sons sift through tons of rocks, trillions of specks of granite and eons' worth of pebbles to find juuuuuust the right one. Except for small variances in color, they all look virtually the same to me: black, white, mauve, salmon-colored, fifty shades of grey (maybe even a thousand shades of grey).

I don't know what they're searching for. They may find specialness in its shape — a heart, piece of pizza or the state of Oklahoma. Perhaps uniqueness resides in its layers, pockmarks, or the miraculous way it sparkles even as the light dims. Maybe they're intrigued by the impalpable fragrance — dead fish, stale dampness, or moldy driftwood. Most likely their quest is founded purely on the hope and joy of finding a treasure that has been overlooked and trampled upon decade after decade by other adventurous boys like themselves.

As the sun begins to set and we depart the sand, their pockets are plump with tangible proof that for today, anyway, life is rich, and they found what they were looking for. My heart is heavy knowing that although childhood is magical, the loveliest of absolutely everything, these moments of beauty won't last forever — unlike the stones.

HERS

Leanna Suarez

Five fingers, five toes
silky soft skin
curly black hair
with a blue bow

Still can't believe
She is mine
and I am hers

Asleep against my chest
each of us breathing,
drinking in our scent
discovering each other again

And in the stillness
of this hospital room
I can finally rest,
the easy part is done

For tonight I can
revel in her weight
the miracle she is

Fantasy Blue

Gina Torres



Someone

Louise Reed

Sharing your life with
someone isn't just
about the never ending love.

Sharing your life with
someone is the late night
talks, the ones
that leaves you breathless.

Sharing your life with
someone is the shoulder
bumps with each other
in the kitchen.

Sharing your life with
someone is being left
speechless after each
kiss.

Sharing your life with
someone is the feeling
of butterflies in your stomach
when he holds you.

Sharing your life with
someone is also
the screaming matches,
the misunderstandings,
the heartbreak.

Sharing your life with
someone is ecstasy,
but also agony.

This Place is No Longer Anyone's Business

Zach Murphy

Morton and Rosa slow-danced in the street as the shoe repair shop that they owned for 31 years went up into flames.

"This probably isn't the best idea," said Rosa.

"Nothing is ever the best idea," answered Morton. "But let's keep dancing."

Dominique



Fido, Fifi, and Unconditional Love

Elizabeth Wadsworth Ellis

“Don’t feed the feral barn cats!” we were scolded. “They need to stay hungry to be mousers.” I was raised on a dairy farm. “Don’t anthropomorphize! Animals act on instinct,” I was lectured, i.e., survival is innate. I was told only humans were capable of original thought and free will, but as an adult I was told I was pitied for living alone. I shouldn’t live alone, I should have a companion animal. Why not fool yourself that these animals love you when no one else will. Is it love when you’re still the food source, when they’re still slave to your schedule and your impulses.

On the farm animals was a working partner who earned their keep, their room and board, paid for their own funerals. Dogs and cats became friends in urban life, became companion animals capable of unconditional love when they move indoors. I knew a man who kept his hunting dog in an outdoor kennel all year. She was a tool. So were our yard dogs.

Speaking of don’t feed the cats when I got home from kindergarten one day I tried to share the table scraps (bones included) in Ginger dog dish near the front step outside. She bit me in the cheek. The scar is still there. The policy in my upbringing was to put down dogs that bite, but us

kids’ knew who the culprit really was.

Picture this: “Old McDonald’s Fat Cat Farm” where big belly cats in lounging chairs are served by mice in dinner jackets.

When my kids were growing up we had companion animals in the house. Pets (gerbils, parakeet, fish, kittens, dogs) were supposed to be good learning tools. My grandson once told me, “Mom and Dad like to clean up dog poop.” One night I overheard my daughter in bed crying. “I want a puppy.” We would visit the rescue kennels on weekends, choose, and then name: Greedy Grey, Muffin Pamela, Dulcita, Paquinia and Frisky. There were several failures along the way. I remember “Shadow” and “Abby” were my responsibility, my friends in the front seat but that daughter who wanted a puppy would complain of dog hair and cat pee in her shoe. When the one of our cats Greedy Grey was hit by a car my sons and I bawled. My daughter dead-panned, “Get a shove.”

Shadow and Abby

I know women without a man in their life have a companion animal in their home. I was told I should have one too, but I resist this giving

up on fellow human beings. I believe American we anthropomorphize companion animals for their unconditional love. Witness jeweled collars, grooming salons, little jackets, Science Diet. When women are fed up with miscreant men they transfer their affection from men toward their companion animals,

Abby, my English Springer Spaniel, was like me. All she ever wanted was affection, not to get left behind, and to lay down beside me. All she ever needed was food. They claim the way to a man is through his stomach, but they're not alone. Animals are the same. When Abby died of a tumor I bawled. I received a greeting card with deepest sympathy in the loss of your companion with a handwritten note, "I know she meant a lot to you and your family."

When I worked in an animal shelter the rule was don't date the inmates.

"Loyalty is the desire to be with the loved one, to be where one belongs, a veterinarian [A. Schoen] wrote. In my bedroom with my husband my English springer spaniel continually barked coitus interruptus, but R.A.Thompson wrote, "Somebody said that when you make love the dogs don't bark." I once witnessed a third dog bark at 2 dogs locked in coitus.

When my daughter's Jack Russell Terrier crawled into my lap dog I told her, "He likes me." "Don't kid yourself," she told me. "He's seeking warmth." Small people can use the calm "Monte" our Golden Retriever was lumbering, soft-shoe calm

rug kind of guy; however, when a neighborhood dog attacked Monte's roommate he came to the rescue.

I read somewhere that some dogs lean as a way of expressing affection. My dog leaned into my side when I cried as a child who could not tie her shoes. Dogs run, scamper, and dodge to hedge their bets in open spaces. When dogs meet they wag their tails to show who's boss. "Contact induces great peace and calm in the animal; expressing affection and eagerness to nuzzle and cuddle." [Schoen]

In Edward Koren's cartoon a dog is asked, Do you promise to love, honor, and in particular obey? To sit, stay, heel and roll over? I knew a man who said when he returned from his military service his dog growled at him. Another man told me, "The dog did all the work," guarding the perimeter during his tour of duty in Viet Nam. After a man fed a female Rottweiler she refused to leave his car [Washington Post.] Somebody said of Bill Clinton, "That's a hard dog to keep on the porch." When Clinton took his dog Buddy in to be neutered a cartoon showed the nurse come out to where they sat together and asks, "O.K., who's next?"

Dogs don't lie about where they've been last night; but then dogs don't talk.

&&*&

Was a Preacher's Son

Elizabeth Wadsworth Ellis

When the foundation is established the scaffolding can be taken away." --Alan McGlashan, b. 1898.

Men are like fence posts. We lean on the sturdy ones. You'd recognize this one, the calm workhorse, the load-bearing wall. He'd shovel, haul and install; attend meetings, dig, and plant, garden; repair, bend, plan and build. He gives rides, time, energy, presence, strength or muscle when others plead, and when the naughty copier misbehaves he rights the wrongs. These were his verbs. His preacher-father's said, "If you're thirsty don't go to the well so often."

Back in the day a couple would purchase monogrammed linen embroidered His n' Hers to display their fealty. We did not have these proper nouns. We had verbs. "One can give me nothing whatever, but yourself," James Baldwin wrote. I do. I did. Washed his clothes washed his back, sorted his mail, drove his car when he asked. Vacuumed his carpets, pulled his weeds, watered his houseplants, ironed his pants, sewed a button back on his coat, cut his frayed cuffs and mended his torn pocket when I didn't even mend my own. On my knees on the carpet at the foot of his bed.

I watched him dress while he put on his

sport coat and shot his cuffs. Watched him shave the whiskers that poke me at night.... Rubbed his toes. These were my verbs. When I answered his midnight booty call he lay down for 45 minutes of sleep, muttering, twitching a foot or an arm. Stuck still as stone in mud, I would not jostle him. His legs cramped and his back ached. Sciatica pain startled him awake. (He pops Ibuprofen the way other people pop M&Ms.) I snuggled my body up behind his, this favorite of friend's body, suitcase to his soul that he granted. He was my chocolate chip cookie.

When I saw his brother I knew the rules:
Don't ask. Don't tell.

"Just don't leave any marks," he said. Arms wrapped around me he slept like boulders, tapped out. When the alarm clock blew I brought hot tea, the cup wobbling in his hands.

He wasn't so much obedient to clocks. Clocks are on a fixed income; however, his attention veered toward the important. Clock keep ticking. The meter was always running. I cursed clocks, pinched each grain hard as it passed through the hour glass. Time was a delicacy I licked --honey off a spoon.

“Tell me a story,” and he would say this woman cast a charm, gave him peace. Peace was the word he used because unwanted stress came to him in the rest of life. “Call you later,” he would say. Later turned into weeks. I never knew when he would be back or even if he would.

Affection unharnessed torrents the way falls over the dam at the hydroelectric plant. Thread his silver sewing needle through me, twine his thighs in mine. Science credits cuddle to oxytocin and the morphine-like calm to endorphins. My Pheromone Cowboy atop his mustang looped me in his lasso lashed with chemical secretions. I was Lewinsky to his Clinton.

We were verbs, a sentence incomplete, children hiding in the closet from the house fire, his hot LZ, a burning birthday candle without a cake, RPMs in sync, (“It feels so good!” “It do. Donut”) puppies rolling and tumbling, treachery to the woman he was supposed to be verbing with.

A new relationship --like a pregnancy-- you don't announce it 'til you're sure it's gonna' take. Affairs are easy to tumble in than out of. The tumble is pleasurable. “I know we can't be lovers someday,” he said as if I were a coupon with an expiration date when I was a cruet waiting to be filled.

“You deserve better. Booty call. That's disgusting.” Sharing “works better not having your nose rubbed in it.” –Robert B. Parker. He wouldn't park

in my driveway.

A man in a dream once said, “So, you're the Night Thief.” “Whore!” a bedraggled man on the street shouted at me.

When we walked across the parking lot he told me not to hook my left hand in the crook of his arm, He said that when some people see other people together they tell people I saw So-and-So together.

Intimacy so long ago there might be dust bunnies down there. The vagina is a tight-fitting sheath that embraces the penis. When we asked men what intimacy means they usually said sex; women never said that, a research professor reported.

I wished he would take me for a walk around the lake or out to eat at a restaurant. This was not a game, I was neither ruttish nor estrus. I was poaching. My last man practiced his militancy on the bar stools; this man practiced his activism in board rooms. There is something solitary and unknowable about each human life, Peter Hessler wrote. There were no nouns I could give him. This man had more than one job, more than four vehicles, more than one woman, more than one project at a time. How many pair many pair shoes? Twenty-seven? He was a condo I time-shared, I was a waste of his time. “A plurality of affections is not so bad if there is enough to go around,” Freya Stark wrote. I knew his breathing in repose, rooted in

rooted in the arch of his groin, what I didn't know resembled a mound of spilt pick-up-sticks. He was silk touching my cotton, never harsh never a poke with a sharp knife. My OFC (Orbito Front Cortex) assessed and analyzed outside my conscious awareness and drew me to him. My NAcc (Nucleus Accumbens) generated neurons of ardor. The ground hugs the shovel, "Dig me!" The leaves shout, "Rake me!" Once, when he told me he would be away for a while, I said, "Oh, where?" and he said, "You don't need to know everything." When he was going out of town on the open road a tumbler fell in place. He could become road kill that day any day every day. "Who would not be devoted knowing he were to be beheaded next day," Freya Stark wrote. He scrapes me off his full plate, a late guest to his program, This is Your Life. I buried my face in the lining of his coat, rooted for his fragrance, his pheromones. Who has not known faintness at the sight of a lover's hand? Barry Lopez wrote. I pressed my ear to his chest to listen to his heart. (No holidays, weekends, coffee breaks for Cardiac? And if I stopped paying attention would his heart stop? Just to show off? Just to piss me off?)

The lies and deception are the culprits that destroy.—Ossie Davis.

From his corner stool in the boxing ring in New Orleans, on 11/25/80, Roberto Duran said, "No mas." On a different day I slipped a note under the windshield wiper of his vehicle parked in front of her house addressed to him signed by me with

two words. "No mas."

Fishermen mend their tangled nets. They do not throw them away.--Blue Highway. When I was a little girl and the grown-ups went fishing they put the fish they caught on a stringer. When the fish were too small, or the stringer too full, they threw the fish back. Throw me back.

Cloud

Katherine Pemberton



Carry Your Weight - Excerpt from Conversations with an Idiot

Louise Reed

My day is literally the same as it is every day: I wake up, get yelled at by Catherine for taking too long in the bathroom, then I get my drink from the fridge and drive in my little car to my job. My car is probably the saddest thing anyone has ever seen. I bought it used—very used—when I first got my license after moving to London. I’ve bumped it into things, stationary objects, not pedestrians or animals or anything. The interior is perpetually sticky because I’ve spilled energy drinks in every possible crevice. Then there is the smell. It’s not a bad smell, just pungent, like someone sprayed five years-worth of cheap cologne in there.

I work with probably the most terrifying people out there, in one of the most terrifying places out there. Granted, this is a part time job while I write my book, not my life-long career objective. Most of the employees have criminal records, mostly petty theft or minor drug possession charges, so I’m the only one with a clean record.

“Aye, Dan. Wast goin on mate?” This one guy Elliot would say as he walked up to me, his pants sagging, but he never makes eye contact with me. He just kind of eyes me up, like he’s deciding if it would be worth his time to mug me.

“Fine,” I’d respond quietly and let out a nervous sort of chuckle, trying my best to act casual and hoping he wouldn’t shank me during lunch break.

The only person who I can actually tolerate at my work is Evie. Her accent isn’t as thick or incredibly annoying as my other coworkers. She’s around my age, but as tall as a twelve-year-old.

“Dan,” Catherine brought me back to reality. “I asked you how your day was.”

I nodded. “Right, right. Well, normal I guess. I got to work late again. No one was there as normal. We probably had one customer. So Evie and I took R-rated movies and put them into the cases of PG movies. Pretty typical day, I guess.”

Catherine giggled. “Dan, that’s so mean!”

I took another swig of my energy drink, “And funny.”

“It’s really not.”

“C’mon, Cath. Imagine, a family putting in the movie hoping to watch some movie about a talking pig and then they put it in and—boom! They figure out it’s some slasher movie and the kids get scared for life.”

“I think traumatizing children qualifies as mean,” she said.

“What else am I supposed to do?”

“My job entails literally staring at a cash register for hours on end. That’s actually my job title: GUY WHO STARES AT CASH REGISTER. I get paid seven pounds an hour to look at a screen. What else am I supposed to do?”

“If you finished at university, you would have a better job,” she replied, trying not to make eye contact with me.

Catherine stood up banging her hands against the table. “I did, but I’m sick of supporting you after seven years. In high school you told me you wanted to be an author and it seemed exciting, but ever since you quit university you have gotten nowhere.”

Silence filled the room while the two of us sat there eating and avoiding eye contact. If you can just get through this awkward dinner between you two, Danny, you can have as much ice cream as you want, I told myself. I realize that bribing myself with ice cream is silly because I’m an adult, not a three-year-old. I can get ice cream whenever I want. But sometimes being in the presence of Catherine makes me feel childish.

After the gut-wrenching silence Catherine looked at me and took in a breath of fresh air, preparing herself for whatever she wanted to say.

“Dan. I got a job offer.”

I was relieved and confused as to why she was so nervous about that news. “That’s great, Cather!” I exclaimed.

“But there’s a tiny problem.” She took another breath. “It’s in New York.”

I choked a little and spit out the remaining

energy drink onto the table. “What-where? New York?” The last part came out with more of a judgmental tone than I had intended. “You’re leaving me here. All alone.”

“Seriously, Dan? This position is at one of the greatest firms in the world. It’s a once in a lifetime experience! You can’t just be happy for me?”

“You can’t leave me here all alone.” I repeated as if she didn’t hear me the last time I said it.

“You’re just mad because there won’t be anyone here to carry you anymore!” she yelled.

“It’s not like that at all,” I ran my hands through my hair.

“Really, Dan? Really?” she asked rhetorically. “All you are is a lazy procrastinator who has to be carried around because all you care about is yourself and you have no interest in bettering yourself.”

“It’s not like that at all,” I ran my hands through my hair.

“Really, Dan? Really?” she asked rhetorically.

“All you are is a lazy procrastinator who has to be carried around because all you care about is yourself and you have no interest in bettering yourself.”

Her words cut through my skin and plunged deep into the depths of my heart. I imagine this is what Elliot’s knife feels like when he shanks you, but worse.

“You said, and I quote,

‘Danny, I will always be there for you and support you so you can reach your goal,’” I mimicked Catherine’s voice in a high pitched tone.

“And I will support you—or was willing to—but for someone who calls himself a writer, you watch way more Netflix than you do actual writing, and you haven’t published anything.”

“Life...you know...just got in the way,” I argued.

“See that’s your problem,” Catherine pointed at me. “You can only blame your problems on the world for so long.” Tears started to build up in her eyes. She walked to the bedroom and slammed the door behind her. I was left alone standing in the kitchen regretting everything.

To Rosie

Tessa Schmitz

Hello, my Little Bean,

Do you feel different today? Do you feel older? When I asked you as much, you paused, tugged your ears, scratched your nose, and said, “I still feel little,” and raced away, your nightgown flailing up and down along with you. But as I watched you trumpet over our tiny living room, knocking over blocks and opening books only to run away from them, your maturity exposed itself. Your rich espresso brown hair has grown down to the middle of your back, your legs and arms have thinned, but your belly and cheeks are still balloons of beautiful baby fat, and your smile is toothy and proud. Today you are four, no longer my Little Bean.

I wasn’t sure how to make today special or how to make it any different than your third birthday. Not that your third birthday was elaborate or memorable for you; much of the day was spent in tears over the wrong kind of birthday cake. Strawberry cake was not good enough for turning three, you said, because mama had it when she turned old last month, you said. You weren’t wrong. I did turn old, and we did have strawberry cake. The cake was supposed to be Funfetti, you said. The online grocery delivery did not list an option for Funfetti, only the measly strawberry. You screamed and screamed that you hated the online grocery delivery. You screamed that you hated not going to the store to find the Funfetti yourself. You screamed that you hated it here in our tiny apartment. That evening, between ugly sobs and pitiful monologues of matronly failures, I took it upon

myself to eat the entire silky, sprinkled strawberry cake alone on the kitchen floor after you’d finally collapsed in your bed.

This year my goal was to merely get through the day without tears from either of us. At 4:30 in the morning I tiptoed into your room and hovered over your bed. Your blankets were sprawled out onto the floor, your body displayed like an X along the mattress, your head smooshed into your tattered unicorn pillow. Don’t you dare cry, damn it, you can’t cry before she’s even awake. I bit my lip and rubbed your back, brushing your hair down it through my fingers.

Four years of watching this hair cascade longer and longer down your nimble body. Four years of tucking you under all of your covers only to have them all on the floor by morning. Four years of sliding into your room to catch these last moments of your blissful sleep. Do you ever know that I’m here? Can you feel my lips grace your head as I whisper my love?

“Rosie,” I sang and sang in a jovial, morning bird melody. Your head tossed back and forth into the pillow before turning towards me. Two almond eyes sparkled back at me as you smiled and stretched into an upward dog position. I tickled your toes and whispered, “Do you know what today is?”

In an instant you shifted onto your feet, jumping up and down on your squishy little bed.

"I'm four! I'm four!" You screamed and leapt into my arms. I could've held you just like that, your heavy breath hot on my neck, your legs wrapped around my stomach, all day. But the sun would rise soon, and so would the rest of New York.

As I zipped up your rain jacket and crunched your feet into your boots, you babbled away about all of the things we were going to do at the park. We had to climb up the big rocks, you said. We had to visit the penguins in the zoo, you said. Everthing, you said, nodded along while the pit in my stomach churned with a fervent ticking clock. Manhattan would be awake before we could do everything, everything.

Bean, let me tell you, it is nearly impossible to rush a toddler out the door on their birthday. Like I said, you had to open up all your books, prance across the room, and hop over imaginative puddles before we could leave. At 5:15, you seemed to have completed your routine. We chanted our glove and mask song, you remember it, I'm sure. Mask on. Germs out. Hands wrapped. Virus zapped. It was horrid, I know. But I had to somehow get you to wear them. With our equipment secured, we flew down the hall, to the elevator, to the main entrance where Ellis stood behind his plexi-glass station.

Happy birthday, Ms. Rosie." Ellis bowed to you, and you went up to the glass and placed your hand to meet his. He oo'ed and ahh'ed as you explained everything, everything that we were going to do before New York woke up. "You better get to it," He said, and pressed the button to open the doors.

West 90th St rested until the sun rose, the residents settled in their time without the anxiety of reaching other people. Without the cabs, the bustling medical and healthcare workers, the nan-

nies and assistants skirting the bodegas and shops to retrieve essentials, you could leap and play hopscotch and be a four-year-old on her birthday. Boundaries did not exist at this hour. New York was ours, and the invisible force that kept us isolated, that kept us confined to our 650 square feet apartment, disintegrated.

This was all you knew. New York, to you, was asleep whenever you stepped into it. The city operated as a playground before the sun was high above the skyscrapers. Our neighborhood coiled into their apartments, making the streets and our side of Central Park yours. It only exploded hours later when you stood behind our lengthy window that faced the park, essential workers pouring out of the cabs and buildings, ambulances and police forces jolting past like meteors, the action just missing us. Everyone was equipped with identical masks and gloves, like we're all being the same thing for Halloween, you said. And this is how you knew the city. This is how you knew the world. Behind our window on the third floor of Prewitt Commons on West 90th.

"Can we get croissants?"

Sadie's Snacks parked on our block's corner, the very edge of it always visible through your bedroom window. On occasion I'd allow myself to sneak down to Sadie's, telling myself these were essential and making sure you were watching me all the while, and grab pastries. The croissants, always wrapped in tedious layers of sanitary plastics and World Health Organization precautions, were your favorite. Underneath the outer annoyances, the croissant gleamed, golden and delicate, falling apart with the slightest tug. Together, we'd eat thin layers of it piece by piece, basking in its buttery, flaky abundance.

After I purchased three croissants (we can pretty please split the last, you said), we skipped hand in hand to the park. The sun was perching itself higher above, a lugubrious magnet taunting us back to our apartment. We wouldn't be able to do everything, everything. And, my Little Bean, it drives daggers into my heart to say this, but I do not know when we will ever have time to do everything, everything. I do not know when the city will be limitless again. I do not know when the isolation and detention will diminish. I do not know when you'll see the world I saw when I was four years old.

When I let go of your hand to run down the dark pavement shadowed by the park's omnipotent trees, my mind played the rest of the day. A Zoom party with your best friends, Rori, Kara, Lexington, Sam, even Eddie would join, his mom said. Your best friends you've never hugged, never created a handshake with, never had in the apartment for a tea party. A birthday song while you blow out the candles of a chocolate birthday cake, Grandma and Grandpa cheering through FaceTime. Class with Ms. Rafael, who's allowed all of the students to have a virtual dance hour with music of your choice. Bean, do you remember creating this playlist? You wanted everyone to hear the electricity of Tame Impala and the groove of Nina Simone. Your words. Not mine. After that, you'd call Dad and he would cry. He would pretend not to cry, though, and his voice would rise five octaves. He would lower his mask for one moment so that you could see his smile, the same toothy, proud smile you radiate. "I'll see you soon," he'd say. And when you'd grin right back and tell him, "It's okay, Daddy. You're saving the world," he'd lose it. Barbaric wails escaping him, the camera quickly falling to his feet. And then we'd say we love you, we love you, we love you, and we'd hang up.

"The rocks!" You squealed and pointed ahead to

the hill with boulders etched into it, a checkerboard to hobble across. I ran to catch up to you, and together we scaled the hill, the sky turning to a rusty orange. When we reached a rock that you claimed as ours, we plopped down and I unraveled the croissants. I lowered our masks and removed our gloves, spritzing our dry hands with sanitizer, and we nibbled away. My stomach lurched again as the buttery bliss of sitting and eating your favorite treat on a rock in Central Park with you, my Little Bean, had to end. But you tore the croissant apart like a pianist tickling the keys, stringing each piece along like a beautiful note sweeping into the next. You graced one bite at a time, relishing in the gooey bread. Birds chirped all around us, and you mimicked them in a serene, harmonious tone. You wormed onto your back, holding your croissant close to your heart, examining the sky above. It was burning into a light yellow, a facade of caution. New York would be awake so soon.

You have to go. Just tell her. You have to go home now. But I couldn't. Instead, I joined you, lying down beside you, our heads together. You sang to the birds and caressed your croissant, and the world dissolved around us. My goal of getting through the day without any tears crumbled. Tears stained my eyes, wading on skin before trickling down to the rock below us. My four-year-old. My Little Bean. This, right here, was everything, everything.

With Love,
Mom

Four Admittances for Alex

Walker James

1. I had not thought of you in two years

Then you appeared in my Dell computer screen, blue ghost with a tail, circling my iris for the next month each time I crossed the street and saw your shadow leaning on lamp-posts – the ones by the Mississippi, off the 3rd Ave Bridge, that look like movie sets. Each bike without its wheels, the useless metal frame still chained to a stop sign – I wondered if that is the price of admittance, if Charon checks under your tongue for black rubber. If I stare hard enough at the Mississippi, I swear I see his crooked shape in a rowboat, dull orange lantern swinging in the fog.

2. Nobody has ever told me they didn't want to be friends in as graceful a way as you did.

It was the bracken-sound of brooms against concrete, the angled floor of St. Anthony Main movie theaters, all the popcorn and bottles rolling down to the bottom edge of the screen. We made minimum wage, and I liked how echoes bloomed in the canopy dark, as if light was too much of a wall for our small voices to penetrate. We were wearing black polos and name tags. It always surprised me that someone cared enough to print my name on a little plaque. You told me our memories make sense, that what we remember makes sense when we consider who we become, and that we could not remember anything else even if we tried.

3. I imagined kissing you once or twice.

I thought then it was an aberration. Everything becomes about me and my body and my tongue when I look back through the door's peephole, to the past, the long hallway rented by a landlord who doesn't print our names on the mailboxes. I feel like I'm taking advantage of your wisp, so let's describe three things. 1) your pale, skeletal wrists were quick with the coffee machine like blue fire. 2) your voice was how I imagine grass sounds. 3) your lips were so vivid, like postcards from your genealogy; I wanted to be that bold, too.

4. I don't think I will miss you, but the thought of your skull frightens me.

I imagined it splitting apart into six pieces, wobbling inside your skin like a bloody bag. I imagined it snapping like a firecracker under the semi-truck's enormous wheels. I don't want to think of you in this way, to ruin the statue of you, but this is the result. I remember watching you cycle off in the middle of a bad winter, wrapped head to toe like an embalming, a bright circle shining in the middle of your forehead. I locked the doors of the movie theater and saw your halo glowing down the bridge, reflecting off the icy river. "Alex was always so safe," everyone said, their arms linked at the protest, neon green vests flashing against the gray matter of Minneapolis. I stayed at home and saw it on the Star Tribune's website. They gathered for you, Alex. They gathered and sang.

Contributors

Tessa Schmitz is a Creative Writing Major and Ethnic Studies Minor. She's got a head full of dreams, most centered around writing fiction and creating film. After graduation, Tessa hopes to be a published author of short stories, children's books, or screenplays - all of which have stories that give platforms to otherwise overlooked social issues in popular media. Above everything, Tessa strives to show her daughter that women can and will do whatever their dreams compel them to do.

Zach Murphy is a 2012 graduate of Metro State's Screenwriting program. His stories have appeared in *Peculiars Magazine*, *Ellipsis Zine*, *The Bitchin' Kitsch*, *WINK*, and the *Wayne Literary Review*. He lives with his wonderful wife Kelly and loves cats and movies.

Living as a first-year student, **Louise Patricia Reed**, is a writer of rom-coms, eater of pizza and cat enthusiast. When she isn't shoving her head in a book, she spends her time advocating for LGBT and Women's rights. You will most likely find her scouting for the tastiest latte at some of her favorite coffee shops or curled up with her cat.

Elizabeth Wadsworth Ellis is a library kid--not a barstool girl—who studies in order to understand and to write as well as the writers she respects.

Jillian Van Hefty is a writer and stay-at-home mama from small town Minnesota. Her work has appeared in *Eat, Darling, Eat*, *The Minnesota Women's Press*, and *Prometheus Dreaming*.

She was a finalist in the 2020 Erma Bombeck's Humorist-in-Residence competition and also the Erma Bombeck 2018 essay competition.

Arien Mormul likes to do free lancing photography ever since she had taken a course within highschool. However, her artistic ability doesn't stop there. Arien has been writing for 12 years and has created more than 300 writing works consisting mostly of poetry along with some short stories. It is Arien's dream to become a writer one day and be able to touch the lives of others through understanding. It is her goal to heal people with her words.

Sarah Schenck is a Junior at Metro State University in MN. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree for Accounting. Sarah has been writing poetry for over 25 years.

Leanna Suarez has been writing stories for almost her entire life, ever since she first read Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and wanted to be just like Jo March. After taking the time to raise her kids she has gone back to school to earn a Bachelor's degree in English. She has a daughter about to graduate high school and a son finishing his freshman year, and two Boston Terriers that keep her busy and full of story ideas.

YaTonya Branch is a student at Metro State who is pursuing her BA in Creative Writing with a minor in Screenwriting. YaTonya has always been passionate about writing since childhood. She enjoys writing Poetry, Fiction, Inspirational & Motivational pieces. She is a Mother of five and in her free time she enjoys writing, bowling, cooking, laughing and hanging out with the kiddos.

Brenda Marcos: I am working with my inner child healing for the sexual abuse I suffer from my biological dad for age 9 to 17. This is how I always saw my little girl, in the corner hiding and feeling like it was her fault for the things her dad did to her. I was laying in bed and I saw here there crying!!! I walk over to her, at that moment when she took my hand I new it was not her fault and I love her and there was no more HATE.

Mikala Schanz: Much of my work encompasses nature and landscapes as well as animals and people. Throughout my daily interactions with the world I am often presented a mental image that I then sketch back into existence on paper. Although these kinds of themes are most comfortable to me, it's the challenges associated that provide me with the most meaningful type of finished work. As I believe art is supposed to, I often make these themes slightly less realistic and a little more abstract. My hope for the audience is their ability to relate to the artwork—visualize themselves within in—and its realistic attributes. While I often only think of the way my art makes me feel, I can only hope my audience feels their own different, but personal attachment to it as well.

Dominique Hlavac: I'm an English major here at Metropolitan State and the design editor for The Metropolitan Student Newspaper. I took the new Introduction to Digital Arts (ARTS 203) class this semester taught by Professor

Amy Sands. I wanted to challenge myself to learn about the various digital tools available to artists. For this assignment, we were to use Photoshop to created a self portrait using layers and textures. In my self-portrait, I took two photos and cropped them, putting them side by side: one of me and then one of my shadow. I cut out the shadow and placed a photo of my dad and I when I was little. I also have overlaid a photo of my mom's hands playing the piano in the bottom right hand corner. Lastly, I took a marked up page from my beloved Shakespeare book and faded that over all of the other photos. This project showcased my home, my parents, and my literary passions: all of which had a part in shaping who I am.

Gina Torres is currently pursuing a degree in Computer Science at Metro State. She is passionate about technology, innovation, art, and nature. Her home country is Colombia, a place with the best coffee in the world and home of many Nobel prizes in Literature. Gina is the current Managing Editor of Haute Dish, an incredible magazine that has allowed her to interact with the American Culture and grow professionally as a Digital Media Communicator.

My name is **Erik Suchy**. I am a student pursuing a bachelor's degree in creative writing at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota. My aim in life is to live as a novelist in the horror genre. However, I am also trying to branch into other areas such as thriller and dark fantasy. I have currently begun writing a manuscript entitled "Breeding Ground," which I hope to complete by next summer. Following this, I plan to have the final, edited work ready for publication within the next year and a half. I look forward to crafting the kind of stories I would like horror lovers to read best.

Haute Dish is published two times a year, spring and fall semesters, and is dedicated to showcasing the literary and artistic talents of students, staff, faculty, and alumni of Metropolitan State University.

Categories include Poetry, Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, Memoir/Personal Essay, Visual Art (Photography, Illustration, Focus on Metro), and Digital Storytelling.

Who May Submit? Current students, staff, faculty and alumni of Metropolitan State University are all welcome to submit their work for both the Fall and Spring issues.

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