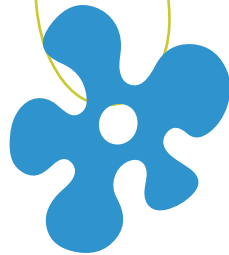


# THE TRAVELER

60th Anniversary Edition

Volume 57



# THE TRAVELER VOL. 57

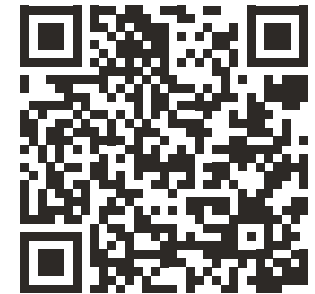
The Traveler is a student creative arts publication produced by the Art and English Departments of Glendale Community College. Readers should be advised works that appear in this publication are not censored in any way and some content may not be appropriate for all ages.

The experience of being a Glendale Gaucho for each decade in time. While we think the 1960s may have nothing to do with us,

the experience of being at this special place ties us together. For this edition we researched our predecessors to find the similarities and differences in campus life. Each chapter represents a different decade in the design style as well as rhetorical visual elements. There is a running timeline in the front and back cover that calls out some of the significant points in GCC and US history. Each new section starts a time period with icons representing symbols pervasive to the college experience.

## Join us in celebrating GCC's 60th Anniversary!

Watch as our GCC Administrators, Faculty, and Alumni reflect on what Glendale Community College has meant to them over six decades.



1964-1965



GCC palms planted by faculty

1968



The first Traveler

1970



Earth Day Created

1981



Arcade introduced to GCC Student Union

1984



Mac Computer Invented

1984



GCC Automotive Center Opening

1987



High Tech 1 Opened

1987



First Science Olympiad

1960

1970

1980



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HIP!

# FICTION



## Facts about GCC in the 1960s:

GCC's Main Campus Opened in 1966 with a class of about **2,800** students.

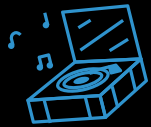


Early degree programs included degrees in **Agriculture, Business, Journalism, Electronics, Secretarial, Drafting, Police Science, and Home Economics.**



There was **no tuition** in the 1960s.

The first **Traveler** was released in 1968.



FLOWER POWER!

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# THE ASSASSIN

by Bryannah Stevens

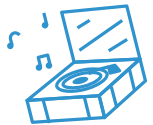


First Place



**The forest hated when outsiders entered into its domain.**

From the moonlit meadows to the wind-swept waterfall, the forest's territory stretched, and it abhorred the presence of anything other than the plants and animals native to its lands. Unfortunately, for outsiders, no one ever comes out alive from the forest's boundaries. Backpackers disappear into the bushes that surround the forest, sucked into an abyss of emerald and thorns, never to return. Researchers are never to be seen again, cameras left abandoned on the moist and dank forest floor. No one knows how or why these people go missing—no one but the forest and its inhabitants. See, the forest has a secret.



60s

It was on a balmy summer day when the man entered into the thorny wood. Trees towered like haunted shadows, and sunlight dappled the forest floor akin to stars. A syrupy sepia colored the air around the man as he huffed and puffed through the forest's domain. The trees groaned and moaned like petulant children, branches swaying to and fro as he entered deeper into the dreaded territory.

This poor man had not heard the stories. He had not witnessed the horrors.

He simply wanted to explore. Poor thing...

Strips of ivy gripped at the man's feet as he walked. A desperate attempt to prevent his curiosity, however he simply stomped their leaves into the ground. The ivy cried in pain as it was trampled into the damp floor, and the forest grew angry.

"Please," the trees whined, "Oh dearest assassin, please take away this ignorant human child."

The man heard nothing but a foul, choked hissing sound. His head whipped around, yet he saw nothing but the bitter bark of trees



GCC students walking from Student Services Center to the Central Mall at the GCC Campus in the 1960s



HIP!

and bushes. Perhaps he was hearing things, he wondered. Yes... he was hearing things.

Yet the forest, oh the forest preened as its prized possession finally came to protect the leafy greenwood.

The man continued his exploration, humming a jaunty tune under his breath as he approached the babbling brook nestled deep within the woods. Water crashed upon the shoreline as he crouched next to it, enraged that another human had found its way this deep within. It swirled and twisted in defiance, waiting for the man to be taken care of.

Please, the brook babbled, take him away.

He watched from up above. No, not the man. Him.

Up above he sat, crouched on the balls of his feet on the thinnest branches of the tree, closest to the bright, sapphire sky. The forest's prized possession, the forest's assassin.

The human crouched next to the brook, unaware of the eagle eyes resting on his back, a target drawn in imaginary lines on his spine. He was but the size of a small animal to the assassin nesting high in the trees, and the assassin's blood boiled as he watched the human.

"I hear you," he whispered to the trees, so quiet even the wind could not hear him, "he will be taken care of."



FAR OUT!

Around the two beings, the forest laughed in joy. The tree's branches danced to an imaginary song, and the bushes shook with laughter. The assassin preened, a gentle smile resting upon his lips.

From below, he watched as the man whipped around at the sudden sounds, fear abundant. The man stepped back from the brook before he turned back the way he came, his face downcast and worried. As he began his journey to the beginning of the forest, the assassin jumped down branch by branch, following the man on his final journey.

He kept quiet, the assassin did, keeping in pursuit. The man was none the wiser, not even suspicious as the trees and plants opened a path for him to travel on. His steps echoed in the quiet forest, bouncing off the trees which now seemed to curve in on him.

Up ahead, he saw the forest open wide, creating a path straight towards the honey sunlight. Urgency filled the man's steps, and he began to walk faster towards

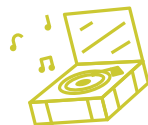
the edges of the wood. It was here when the assassin dropped to the ground, creating enough noise to alert the man of his presence.

The man jumped as he heard the sounds, his steps speeding up into an awkward run. The assassin licked his lips and pulled a silver dagger from his belt. Oh, how he delighted in the chase.

Predator and prey. Cat and mouse. It was the assassin's favorite game. He chased after the man, his heart light as he leapt over familiar rocks and cleverly placed branches. The man tripped over these obstacles, the trees laughing as he bumbled to the open entrance. With one powerful leap off of a moss-covered rock, the assassin gripped the man by the back of his collar and wrenched him to his chest.

The forest mocked the man, and let him watch as the bushes and plants snaked forward to cover the forest opening, the warm sunlight abandoning the forest floor. His pulse fluttered under the assassin's touch, eyes widening as a silver dagger was run across his cheek.

The assassin pressed his lips against the man's ear, and he relished in his catch as the body beneath him froze at the touch. He caressed his prey's face, leading the knife down towards its neck. A few seconds passed, and he watched as the prey's face inherited a ghost's complexion. He smiled, tongue brushing his prey's flesh.



"W-who are you?" the man whimpered, eyes shining with silver tears never to be shed.

The assassin smiled, his dagger brushing softly against the flesh of the man's Adam's apple. He whimpered in fear, and the assassin's eyes rolled back into his head at the sweet, sweet sound of terror.

Quickly, the forest hissed, hurry, dearest assassin.

The assassin snapped out of his euphoria, and adjusted his grip on the dagger. The man whimpered again, feet scrambling for purchase on the damp dirt.

"Hush now," the assassin whispered into his prey's ear before the dagger at his throat dug cleanly into the flesh.

Warm, dark ichor covered the assassin's gloved hands, and the body dropped between his feet. The forest rejoiced as the man was finally gone, and the plants shook in excitement. A deep breath left the assassin, his dagger dropping to the ground, covered in red and brown. The assassin knelt down next to the body and began to position it into the fetal position. Blood soaked into the ground, becoming a scarlet, mushy mess. The assassin drew a circle upon the man's forehead in blood, shading half of it with the flat of his thumb reminiscent of a half moon. He took a seed from within his pocket, and placed it gently inside the man's mouth.

Finally stood up, and bowed towards his new creation—head first, knees down, hands placed palm

up to the sky. From below, a hole opened up beneath the body, and it was swallowed into the forest floor. The assassin watched as a single sprout grew up from the ground, pushing its way through the bloody dirt, soon to become a brand new tree.

The assassin pressed a gloved hand to his lips and licked the fresh blood from his fingers, smiling softly at a job well done. In the next second, he was gone, as if he had never existed in the first place. In his place sat the young sapling, and the forest delighted at the idea of teaching a young, new soul the ways of their life.

The life of souls, the life of the forest.



UNREAL!

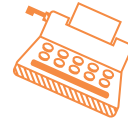


# INARTICULATION

by Ashley Lowell



Second Place



BOOGIE!



**I'm terrified that falling in love will mean the end of the world, but I know I'm already starting my descent, and I can't save her.** When I say the world will end, I mean it in a literal, biblical sense, consumed by one big holy flood that drags the pious folks up to that spa in the sky and leaves the rest of us to drown.

Sitting here, while she's missing from my side, I'm tempted to throw it all away. What's the world even done for me anyway? I don't think the earth is a particularly beautiful place, but when I see her smile, god, I love that smile, it makes me remember why I can't possibly love her. Because this rancid blue orb has her on it and I could never hurt her.

I could write essays about how perfect she is. All of her art, the beautiful paintings of fantasy creatures that I could never dream up. The way she nerds out for hours on end about her favorite books and video games, how she read my first manuscript and wasn't afraid to tell me how terrible it was. How I could grin like a fool for days just because

I think of all the times she's asked me to pose as her muse.

But what if she never understands that loving her means the end of the world?

It's just not something people usually believe. Would you believe it if one day the girl you've been dating for a few months tells you that capital-G God came down to earth and decided for her to be the tipping point of a potential apocalypse?

It's more likely that she thinks I'm some jerk, trying to break up with her only a week after she confessed her love to me.

Now, I'd like to clarify, the God that I met wasn't really one that any major religion managed to describe, It'd be near impossible

for holy-folk to adeptly ascribe the whims of a being which very few people have met. They're some big imperceptible mass of light and flesh that I'd imagine looks like a thousand pounds of ground beef mixed with the world's brightest flashlight, yet I still feel like that description is insufficient of how abysmal they looked. I probably would have puked if they hadn't made it physically impossible.

Originally, I saw the big guy in a dream-like state, half-asleep, half not. When I saw their holiness, their meat-flesh creased in what I could only imagine was a scowl. They claimed that they had been overtaken with a disease. A disease that's the killer of enthusiasm, excitement, and joy. The staled of diseases only known as one thing: boredom.

It is true when they say that God has a plan for each of us, but they rarely care if any of us follow it. Apparently, it's rare for even the people who do follow their plan to get into heaven.

Anyway, when I saw the big mass of skin and sinew, they didn't exactly have a voice. It was more of an inner monologue that echoed through my head, an earworm I can't stop from playing over and over again, like a Chappell Roan song.

They showed me their plan for me, I was supposed to marry a wealthy man, become a housewife, have three-point-five kids, white picket fence, the whole shebang. But there was one main problem with that little scheme, it turns out that I am a raging lesbian.

Normally they wouldn't care about this divergence from their plot, at least that's what they said. But they summoned an ephemeral top hat full of eight billion names, and somehow drew mine to be the one that entertains them.

They said, "Entertain me by following my plan and maybe I'll see that the world is worth saving!" or something like that. It was a few years ago, I don't completely remember.

A notification dings on the plastic brick in my hand, illuminating the screen with Alice's face on my phone background.

From Alice: "Hey Mel, I know we're not exactly talking right now, but I just want to check in that you've been taking your meds. You don't have to text back, but I'd appreciate it."

And my heart breaks in two, even as I mentally chastise myself for forgetting my medicine.

GROOVY!







GCC students making phone calls using payphones in 1967.



What was it again? Ris-something. I search through the mess of my bathroom sink, finding the little rectangular box. Risperdal, that's it.

Alice has always been good with that, taking care of me when I don't take care of myself. Even when I started ghosting her a day ago, which made me want to rip my own heart out of my chest.

It probably wasn't right to start this relationship knowing that it wouldn't last. And it definitely

wasn't right to let it continue for so long.

Maybe I should message her back? But what if she asks me why I ghosted her?

Wait, what was I doing? Oh right, taking my meds. I pop the pill out of it's foil cage and into my mouth, washing it down with tap water.

One time I tried to tell her about my whole Godly situation, but I just froze up completely. I was like somebody with a fear of heights trapped alone on the tip of mount Everest, at some point the poor guy's either got to find a way to leave or just submit to death.

Personally, I'm not one to just sit around and submit. The hulking mass said that I was supposed to

find my man when I'm twenty-six, which by my count is in three weeks. It's not exactly the birthday present I'm looking forward to. Especially not when Alice has big birthday plans for me.

A day of shopping for an outfit in the city, then a trip to the botanical gardens, dinner at my favorite restaurant, and finally strangely enough, ballroom dancing to end off the night. I haven't ever really had the urge to go ballroom dancing, but she talked me into it when she said she'd be wearing a pretty dress. I get to wear an old-fashioned suit, like a prince would wear, which is strangely euphoric in a way I'm not entirely sure I'm ready to confront yet.

There are times when I doubt whether my whole God experience was real. Those are the times when I'm most hopeful, but then I remember how it felt. The visceral scent of rot that filled my lungs as I looked upon the horrendous maker of filth. How the tears streamed down from my face in an instant, burning like fire against my face. How one tear singed the skin of my chin enough to leave a third-degree burn. A third-degree burn that everyone claims I've always had, but that nobody can remember me getting. Then I lose my hope in an instant.

Three weeks, I have three weeks left with her. Somehow that doesn't feel like enough, even though I know it's more than I was supposed to ever have.

I'm thinking that as if I hadn't just tried to cut her out completely, which I essentially did. I might not even get those three weeks

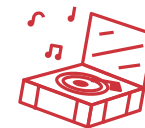
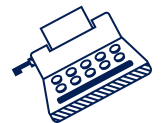
I want more than anything to be open with her, to let her help me, to give myself to her fully, but I can't. If I would stray away from the God's will, then I would lose everything, not just her.

My family were almost always my strongest supporters. They helped me get into my high school boxing team, then a year later, they did the same when I joined the school newspaper, supporting both my writing and fighting. They even came down and helped me when I moved halfway across the country to Los Angeles, which was definitely a twist for those red blooded Floridians.

Though I've never told them that I'm a lesbian, or even queer for that matter. I know that they'd try to support me. But with everything I'd heard from them over the years, I doubt it'd be the type of support I



HIP!



want. I remember when one of my friends from middle school said she liked girls, how my parents talked about her like a disgrace to the school behind closed doors. Then my brothers, they just don't care at all, which isn't exactly a bad thing, but it's not like they'd stand up to my parents for me.

Then there's my childhood friends, most of them are deeply religious in exactly the same way, so coming out to them isn't an option either.

Alice never minded the fact that I was still closeted, since LA is a big city, and neither one of us really sticks out. She took time to see things from my perspective, even if it wasn't easy. Even when we do fight, she never lashes out, never gets too angry. It's strangely refreshing, especially compared to my parents who would get in screaming matches every other week. They always just stuck together because it's what they thought that God wanted them to do.

It's selfish, but part of me wants to abandon this notion I have that God will punish me if I embrace the feelings I have for this woman. But every other little part of myself is too scared to let go, to stop grasping onto it like it's the only thing keeping me afloat in a tidal wave that threatens to push me under.

Even if the dream that I had wasn't real, then what does it mean for me? Do I just lose the fear of coming out to everyone? Am I suddenly going to be able to shout

from the rooftops about how much I love women? Or am I just going to continue being the same person I am now until the end of time?

My phone pings again.

From Alice: "I'm getting worried, answer the door, please."

I finally pull myself up from the bathroom floor and march into the hallway. My shaky hand twists open the front door's silver knob, and it creaks open achingly slow.

"Mel, baby, are you okay?" A siren's song wafts through the air, ensnaring me in Alice's sweet embrace as she pulls me tight enough to crack a rib.

"I think..." I talked to God a few years ago and now I'm scared to lose you? "I need help. I need your help so badly." The tears soak my cheeks before I can even register that they've fallen.

And as she holds me tighter, I know the only truth that matters. Even if I wake up three weeks from now six feet underwater, my love will persist.



**FAR OUT!**



# RICHARD PRICE

by Mary Gross

 **Third Place**

## It was all about the Crocs.

They were too small for his feet and orange. It's the detail I remember most from that evening – Richard Price and Ronoula's Crocs. Ronoula was a Grecian beauty, assigned to be my roommate at random in Co-op Hall. We never got along, as I often found her boyfriend in my bed after they argued, his sweat stains destroying my cheap green sheets.

Ronoula had a thick accent and drank a lot of coffee, her desk covered with the remnants of her caffeine addiction. I was just as messy, but in a different way, leaving piles of my dirty clothes in the middle of our shared room. The most disgusting thing, though, was the trash can. We never invested in anything large enough to hold the waste that college girls could produce. She confronted me about it once, telling me it was indeed "disgusting." In turn, I sang to her – The Beatles All My Loving – to which she cheerfully applauded. I never used the trash can again, making sure to throw my panty liners away in the larger one in the hall. I was ashamed.

I first noticed Richard Price because of his sweater vest; it was

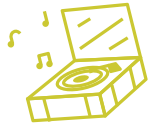
**FLOWER POWER!**



argyle and well-fitting. I would later learn that he was from Switzerland and his mother had committed suicide when he was 12-years-old. He had never agreed to be my boyfriend, though I insisted he was. I was in a Walgreens when he reminded me of that, staring at some garish Halloween mask, distorted.

Richard was a year younger than me, but seemed much more mature. I frequently searched up his old flame, Bryn Forrester, because his Internet presence was so slight and I needed information – pictures of them in a stone hallway in Venice, their heads pushed together, laying down in a field of grass, a selfie, old beer bottles (foreign), a table with wine, some breadsticks.





Never a status update, though; I didn't dare add her as a friend in fear of seeming overbearing, or worse, creepy.

I obsessed about him briefly before meeting him at a house party at Woodham House, the house where the floor would later collapse due to the frantic dancing of college students to Macklemore's Thrift Shop. I was already drunk and had stolen rum from the freezer. It was tucked tidily under the puffer vest I hastily threw on in a semblance of a Halloween costume.

Perhaps it wasn't Woodham House where I met him and perhaps the puffer vest and rum is a false memory. It could have been in the woods at the Hash and I was wearing faux sheepskin. Despite all of this, I remember the feeling, the mood of our first meeting. I must note, we didn't kiss, sparks didn't fly, and it definitely wasn't love. I commented on his Warby Parker glasses. He mentioned he had noticed me from across campus because of my boots. We both liked the way each other looked and we both wanted to write.

Our next meeting was in Reese Library where I wrote the poem about leaves crunching beneath my feet and wanting to be buried on the Quad. The poem read as follows:

Being here all day can be overwhelming.

You are confined to this bubble,  
Alive, but static

With organisms and organizations.

Day in and day out,  
You forget that you are growing  
So large that your eyes might

pop out,  
So large that your clothes won't fit any more,

So large that you fill up your own soul.

Your heart begins to beat faster and faster,

Dizzying, fervent palpitations,  
Until it stops,

Until you reach the place where this hold

Becomes your home,  
A place where white chairs  
On green spread

Become your resting place.

I posted the poem on Facebook and only three people liked it. My cousin asked me if I wrote it and I replied with a simple "Yes." Years later, my mother would come across it and call me worried, asking if I was "Okay." I insisted I was. At the time, this was a lie.

We both sat with our computers on a raised Japanese Tatami on one side of the library. The air was chilly and the sky was overcast. I didn't have my daycare job that year, so

my afternoons were free. I hated studying in the library, but here I was. Sometimes, when I am at Walmart I notice a brand of coffee called Richard Price's. I wonder if it is the same Richard Price that wore Ronoula's Crocs that night.

Our study session is the most vivid memory I have of him. He still looked boyish and his mop of curly dark hair was perfectly hipster for 2012. Like I mentioned, he was well put together – for a boy he had absolutely great clothes. This is what maybe attracted me most to him, that, and the fact that he was from Switzerland.

He would frequently remind me that he only went to school in Switzerland, that he was actually from Michigan. After one year at Oberlin College, he would return to Grand Rapids to study English at a state school. I, too, would leave, after the death of Leonor and me being labeled as a social pariah, never to return. The rustle of the leaves on the Quad was only a distant memory, bubbling up briefly throughout the years, but only for a moment.

"What's in the bowl?" Mick Hoffman asked me, directly.

I balanced the bowl carefully between my arms and chest. I replied, "Lemonade."

"Really?" He asked again, wholly unsure.

"Yes. Do you want to smell it?" I asked, brazenly.

"No." He took a step back. "Are you telling me the truth?"

"Yes." Anna looked at me skeptically, in disbelief we were about to get away with this.

I was a good liar.

"Let's go." I motion to Anna with my head. We still had three buildings to walk through with the bowl of Skip N' Go.

Hop, Skip, and Go Naked was the official name of the drink in the large blue bowl I carried through Wright, Roberts, and Wills Halls. It was a truly vomit-inducing drink, made with a six-pack of beer, a half-handle of vodka, and a roll of frozen lemonade. Apparently, the frozen lemonade was enough to cover the smell of alcohol, as Mick never paid us a visit that night in the dorm room we partied in.

That night was the homecoming dance. I wore a borrowed dress over a black bodysuit as the November evening was frigid in Oberlin, Ohio. It was already dark by the time I put my makeup on, probably because I had spent the day in bed hungover, negligent to the beauty of a sunny, autumn day. When Richard appeared at my door, I chuckled. We were both dressed in dark blue



BOOGIE!



with many layers. In ways like this we were alike.

The dance the year before had been in an abandoned warehouse, but this year it was in a dated wedding venue with floral border print wallpaper. It reminded me of my own home and that of my grandmother's just down the street. I don't recall dancing, only sitting at one of the circular, table-clothed tables feeling utterly awkward in his presence. It was still all about the Crocs.

When we returned to my dorm room, I moved the pile of clothes to my bed. It wasn't the first time we had had sex. In preparation for this evening's escapade, we drank the Skip N' Go and sucked on marijuana lollipops. By the time we returned, after the border print venue, I felt completely vacant. I wanted to be wanted by Richard.

My bed was off-limits for the night, even though Ronoula wasn't there. I was on my period and I didn't want to stain my already soiled sheets, so we opted for the floor – a pink shag rug next to a small bookcase of all of my beloved

paperbacks. He often laughed at my collection of novels, as they were mostly movie tie-in editions, even the Shakespeare. They were some of my most prized possessions, especially my copy of Eugenides' *The Virgin Suicides*, the cover graced with the face of Kirsten Dunst.

I propped my body up against some throw pillows from my bed. I don't remember completely undressing myself, though with all of the layers, I must have done so. The borrowed dress next to me would be one I would never return.

"You're bleeding," he told me.

"I know. It's fine." I could see the trepidation in his face.

The act itself was exceedingly quick and unmemorable. Again, I felt nothing. His face distorted for a moment and then he relaxed. He was never fully on top of me. Instead, he was kind of to the side, awkward like at the dance.

"Uh oh." I had closed my eyes for a moment as exhaustion from the substances took over.

"What?" I sat bolt upright, momentarily terrified.

"It's... it's broken."

I could tell he didn't think before he stood up. Before I could get a word out, he was dressed and leaving the room, though I noticed he left his shoes – fancy dress shoes. Instead he departed into the night wearing the orange Crocs, sliding grossly off the back of his heels, barefoot.

"Wait." Was all I could say before the dorm room door slammed

heavily. Leonor would die several weeks later and I would no longer be able to stand this sound. BANG. BANG. BANG. I returned to my bed and pulled the covers up close over my face, waiting. I sucked more on the marijuana lollipop in my dark room. I was completely alone.

For a few moments, I slept. He had left his phone on my bedside table, realizing this after I tried to call him. This was before the iPhone, my fake Samsung Blackberry lightweight in my hand. Because of this, I have no pictures of this time except for the ones glued into my memory – a picture of the woods, the river, a photo of me wearing a dress from New York City, snow, a coffee cup. I frequently dream of that phone, making phone calls that are answered by no one.

When Richard finally came back to the room he was disgruntled and I could see the fatigue in his eyes. He looked at me wordlessly, and held out his hand, expecting me to do the same. I was confused, but only for a moment, before I understood what he had done.

"Here." He finally said. Our hands touched briefly and the trade was complete.

I set what he had handed me next to his phone on my bedside table. He quickly grabbed his phone, and his keys, yet again he departed without his shoes. He was still wearing the orange Crocs!

I glanced to my left and he had gotten just enough. I had had to take it before, so I knew how much



GROOVY!



it cost. It had never been like this, though. Fifty dollars, a silent exchange, a midnight ATM run, a dirty condom.

I don't ever remember going to the pharmacy to get the Plan B. What I do remember was the second period I received that month and trying to bum a cigarette off of him while I was drunk behind Grundy Hall after Leonor died. His friends laughed at me.

I thought I was salivating too much, so I must be pregnant. I bought a test. I thought briefly that I would have his baby. I sung my lines in *Into the Woods*, backlit by the stagelight:

Do you know what you wish?

Are you certain what you wish is what you want?

I never spoke to Richard Price again, but think of him every time I go to Walmart and see the Richard Price's Coffee brand. I Googled it and it's not the same Richard Price. He isn't on Facebook, either. I wonder if he's in Michigan? Or Switzerland. I only wish him well.

60s



\$0.35

# A SNARK PAGE FOR DEAD PETS

by Mary Gross



Honorable Mention

**Lillielovestravel was the worst of the worst.** With 650,000 Instagram followers one would think she would have more tact. Deborah checked her page religiously for her nonsense, subsequently entering the world of Reddit snark to chat and gossip about the said travel blogger.

Lillie had lived in Europe illegally for two years and had somehow managed to make her way back. Her comment section had turned into World War III over this revelation, Motherroad8518 commenting, “What visa are you on? Didn’t you get kicked out of Germany?” and

Dandyman\_45 echoing the same ideas, “WHAAAT??? You’re back? How did you manage? Are you working with a lawyer?” Deborah failed to ever comment only out of fear of being blocked.

Deborah didn’t follow Lillie either, stalking her Stories and posts like a mouse to mousehole, enveloping herself into Lillie’s deranged little world of travel half out of jealousy and the other half out of pure, unadulterated vitriol. Lillie had everything Deb had ever wanted - namely a husband, who seemed to do all of the research and planning of the trips, which put Lillie as the ghastly face of Lillielovestravel.

Her mouth was often agape in the Reels she would post, over a variety of things of course - namely Christmas Markets, Croatia sunsets, and sometimes the fall leaves in Vermont. Her teeth were white and straight. Of course she had an affiliate link to the toothpaste she used. And the mascara. It all gave Deborah a sick sense of excitement

to dislike someone she disliked as much as Lillie.

One day, a day in which Deborah checked the snark page almost fifteen times, Lillie made a question box asking for people’s assumptions about her character. “You’re nice!” a question box Lillie had reposted read. Lillie’s definitive answer was, “NO! People wouldn’t call me nice.” So Deborah had it right in her disdain for the influencer. She couldn’t even call herself nice; she deserved the Reddit page.

Deb poured herself a cup of tea and cozied into her favorite corner of the couch in her little flat. She opened her phone and clicked on the Search bar in the Instagram app ready to check on the pages she didn’t follow. Lillielovestravel didn’t show up. She then manually typed her handle into the Search bar. Nothing. Her heart momentarily jumped. Was she blocked? Had Lillie somehow discovered her game? Influencers often blocked “lurkers” - accounts that didn’t follow their page but frequented their stories or left nasty comments. Had this happened to Deb?

She opened Reddit to check the snark page. Phew. It wasn’t just her. Flatoffer1993 had also been axed by the blogger. She scrolled through the comments and it seemed like Lillie had gone dark, not posting at all that day or the day prior. This piqued her curiosity and she quickly reopened the Instagram app, switching to her finsta page. She couldn’t access Lillie’s account

GOOS



there either. Out of frustration, Deborah left her spot on the sofa to stand in front of the window in her kitchen. She took several deep breaths. This was all simply too fun to be coming to an end.

That evening she heard the sickening mew that she dreaded most. She tried to ignore it, but it only came closer and closer to her bedroom, louder and louder. It stopped and she knew what was to follow. A wretch, a gag, and then the clearing of her cat’s throat signaled to her that the deed had been done. She wriggled her way from underneath the cover of her duvet and marched annoyingly into the hallway. Cat sick. Disgusting. She continued to her kitchen where she gathered some paper towels and the vinegar and dish soap concoction she used to clean. She hated doing this and in one fell swoop and a quick spray, managed to wipe up the mustard-colored substance. Never again, she silently prayed, never again.

The cat seemed fine the next morning as she brewed a cup of tea



BOOGIE!



and ate her overnight oats. “Here kitty, kitty,” she called as her tabby sidled up against her leg. This was comforting to her. “Good kitty. No more messes, all right?”

One thing Deborah was not was a dog person. Her cat had been her constant companion since her uni days, moving with her from flat to flat, living with her and her boyfriends, acting as a warmer for her feet as she fell asleep at night. She had only once considered getting a dog, while she was with Gerald, after her friend Colleen sent her a picture of a poodle named “Sprinkles”, but actually called Peter.

The story behind Peter was quite funny, making Deb chortle as she sat at dinner with her friends in London one Friday evening.

“So the dog’s not actually called Sprinkles?” she asked Colleen.

“No, I only called her that to get you to adopt him. Didn’t work though.”

“Why’s he called Peter then?” Deborah leaned in, genuinely curious.

Colleen looked over to their other friend Michelle, “You tell her.”

Michelle looked taken aback. Deb knew she had been having a rough time and she had been silent most of the dinner. “She was my dad’s and some stupid rescue allowed a literal Dementia patient to walk away with a poodle.”

“Peter the poodle!” Deborah exclaimed, throwing her head back in laughter. Michelle didn’t seem amused.

“Deb, he called the dog that because he has,” she paused and looked at the table seriously, “Dementia.” She slumped back into her seat and Deborah knew not to mention Peter the poodle ever again.

Several days later Hugo died.

Did you see? Lillie’s dog Hugo passed. I feel so sorry for her.

I know! Losing a pet can be so hard!

RIP Hugo.

No wonder her page has gone dark. She must be grieving!

Deb dared not comment, as she knew she had nothing nice to say. She opened the Instagram app, this time standing barefoot in the middle of her kitchen, desperate to again gain access to Lillie’s portrayal of her reality. She could look at a friend’s phone. That was it! The next time she was out with the girls she could ask one of them to borrow their phone and sneak a peek at Lillie’s page. She could wait for the weekend to do that. That wasn’t crazy, was it?

Throughout the week, she continued to check the Reddit snark



60s



\$0.35



UNREAL!

page for updates, but there was little news. Eulogies to Hugo abound, Deborah found herself doing more productive things in the meantime - coloring, reading People articles about Tom Holland, and watching old episodes of Eastenders. She checked Instagram less compulsively and generally felt peaceful. It had been one of the best weeks she had had in a long time, just herself, her cat, and her simple office job.

The weekend came and went. Deborah had even forgotten to ask Colleen or Michelle to borrow their phones. Come Sunday evening, Deb had felt like she had done a very good job at self control. She was proud of herself!

On evenings when Deborah couldn’t sleep right, she often found herself moving to the couch in an attempt to change her environment. She enjoyed the glow of the twinkle lights scattered over her mantle and would stare lovingly at family photos and the little trinkets she had collected from her trips abroad. She found herself thinking about Lillie, wondering if she had such trinkets?

Did her Eiffel Tower keychain mean as much to Lillie as Deborah’s did to her? Did she have a beloved African mask hung above her record player? Deb laughed. She doubted Lillie had a record player. She knew she lived in an Airbnb thanks to Reddit sleuthing. Lillie had affiliate links, but did she have anything that really meant something?

She glanced down from the sofa and she saw it. More cat puke. “Kitty!” she called up to her cat. “Kitty!”

The cat bounded down the stairs with an expression of guilt, as much as cats can have expressions. This time the mess was on the carpet and would be harder to clean. Deb could already begin to smell the putrid aroma of half-digest kibble and wet food. The cat mewed.

It was the second time in as many weeks that this had happened. The cat often got out and got into little things - grass and so on - so Deb wondered if that’s what this was. She didn’t think too much about it. She slowly drifted off to sleep.

She stepped in cat sick at least five times the next day. Needless to say, Deborah’s cat was, well, sick. Before she did anything about it, she waited. She didn’t wait weeks, not days - just a few hours. Just a few hours was enough time for her to notice a splotch of mucousy vomit in her laundry room. This time she wiped it up with a dry paper towel. It was pink and tinged with blood. She had a sinking feeling and did what all grown women who are

secretly still fourteen do in times such as these. She called her mom.

“Hola,” Her mom answered.

“Why do you always answer like that? You don’t even speak Spanish and you live in Dorset.”

“Don’t give me a hard time.”

She ignored this comment and replied, “Cat’s sick. Throwing up blood. What do I do?”

“You need to take her in.”

Deborah buried her head in her hands, as she knew this was going to be her mother’s answer. She felt immediately sad. She didn’t want her cat to die. Who would warm her sleep as she drifted off to white noise every night? Who would live with her and her next boyfriend? If she didn’t have anything else to take care of, she would finally have to start to take care of herself. Deborah didn’t want to be alone.

The lobby of the emergency animal hospital was brightly lit and uncomfortable. The benches were long, long enough to house a large sleeping man waiting for his pit

bull to come out of surgery. He was snoring lightly. The TV displayed the newer version of The Grinch, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as the Grinch. Deborah sat opposite the man, her arm sitting gently on the cat carrier she had used to bring her feline in with. Traveling with a cat on TFL was no joke.

As she sat there, she watched as a whole slew of other animals were triaged quickly, like that which had been done for her own cat - a dog with a broken leg, another dog that had had a seizure, stray kittens being brought in by a bewildered looking elderly woman, many many poodles. She briefly thought of little Peter, wondering who had ended up adopting him.

Again, Deborah waited. She brewed some coffee that had been set out in the lobby by the receptionist. She drank several bottles of water from their mini fridge. She played a game on her phone. Yet, no one came out to speak to her about her cat. Deb’s mom called to come check in on her. She could not give her any updates.

Apparently, Deb’s cat was being exceptionally hostile. “She doesn’t like being here,” a tech came out and finally told her around 10 PM. She had already been there for about six hours. Deb didn’t really like being there either. She wanted to tell them that this was an atrocious place, and a sad place, too. She had already watched two families come in with pets and leave without them, faces tear-streaked

HIP!



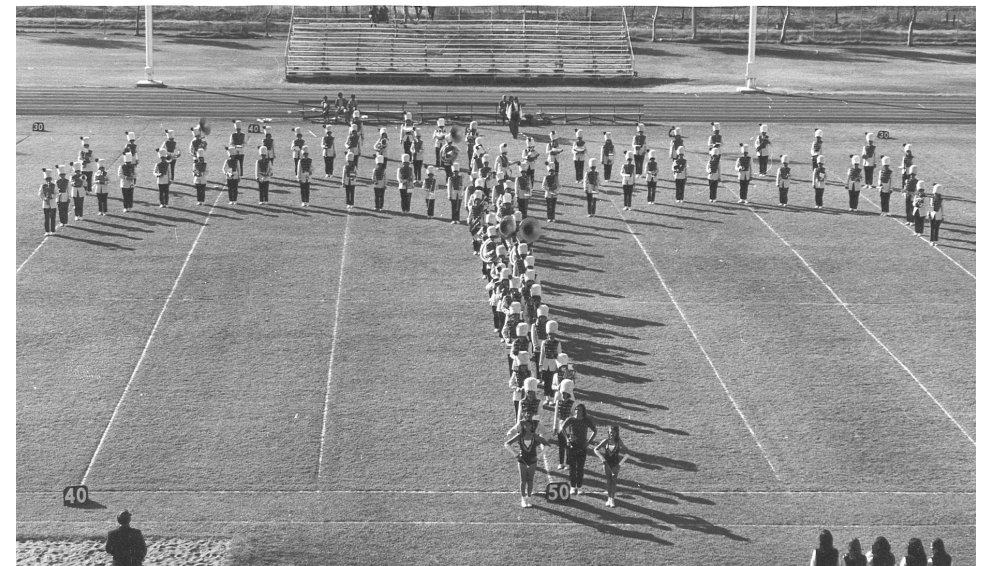
and tissues in hand. Frustrated, Deb still feared that that would be her fate.

For a moment, Deborah related to Lillie. She always thought of losing pets as something that happened to other people and not herself. For a moment, Deborah felt bad for thinking that Lillielovestravel deserved to lose that dog, when she was suddenly struck with inspiration! She didn’t know why she didn’t come up with this idea sooner! There were other apps, other platforms, and if anyone knew anything about influencers is that they diversified. It’s how they made money and grew their audience.

So as Deborah’s cat slowly faded in her kennel in the emergency



animal hospital, she downloaded TikTok and watched approximately ten videos of Lillielovestravel walking the Cotswold Way. 100 miles alone. A huge accomplishment. She could catch up with the snark now without being confused. She wouldn’t need to take care of herself after all.



1960s GCC Band Students in palm formation in the GCC stadium.

# Creative Nonfiction



*Out of Sight!*

## Facts about GCC in the 1970s:

Student numbers swelled as **12,420** registered for classes in 1976.

*Good Vibes!*

The most popular majors of the time included: **General Studies, Business, Art, Electronics, Automotive, Administration of Justice, Education, and Nursing.**

The tuition costs in the 70s were **\$20 per credit hour**, plus fees.



In 1976, GCC excelled in some non-traditional sports such as **archery** and **women's field hockey.**

**19 70**

*Bomb!*



*Slammin'!*



*Funky!*



\$0.65



# Five Things You Can See, One Thing I Can't Say

by Ashley Lowell



**“Ashy, you’re being quiet again.”** I blink as I hear his soft, sweet voice. If I could wrap myself in it like a warm blanket, I would. I shake off what I was thinking, trying to be present, even if it’s only a phone call.

“Sorry Aiden, just zoned out for a little bit. What were we talking about?” My posture slumps lightly as I lean against the wall of my bedroom. The room itself was awfully empty, only populated by numerous moving boxes and the mattress which I sat on.

“Halloween plans, it’s next month, you know. We should do a couple’s costume.” “Like what? I think those are mostly made for straight couples.” I could probably come up with a good gay couple’s

costume idea if I really tried, but that’s too much effort. “We could be the guys from Brokeback Mountain.”

I can hear him holding back laughter on the other side of the phone. “Neither of us have even seen that movie. Besides, I don’t think I could pass as a cowboy. You look damn good in a flannel though.”

A grin spreads on my face as I get up from my dingy mattress and go to one of my boxes that was set separately from the others, full of folded-up clothing. “Yeah, I suppose it wouldn’t be too radical of a change from what I usually wear, would it? So what’d you have in mind then?”

“We could do one of those that’s like a sexy cop and boring prisoner. But, you’d be the sexy cop, it’d be funny.” My eyes widen and I can feel my heart start to beat faster. Why am I getting so anxious from the idea of wearing a dress? At least, I think this is anxiety. It feels similar.

What did my therapist say? Five things you can see. Well, the walls are a dark purple color, I don’t know the name of it. There’s my phone, a few years old with a Spider-man case. Its screen is bright with the call interface, both me and my boyfriend’s icons on display, gone dark with inaction. There’s the bed that I’ve had since I was twelve, I don’t doubt it will serve me for many more years. Oh, there are a ton of boxes, from moving into this-

“Hey, you alright? We don’t have to do that if you don’t want to. It was mainly just a joke.” Aiden’s voice breaks my train of thought and forces me to confront just how long I was silent.

“I’m fine. Sorry for spacing out so much.” My hands busy themselves with unfolding and folding various shirts, setting them down in a neat pile on another box, most of them are single color or flannel.

“It’s alright. I was just worried you didn’t want to be seen with me.” I freeze immediately. Was I acting like that? I had no idea.

“No, that’s not it at all. I just mean it’d be weird for me to wear one of those outfits, with the skirt and all that.”

His laughter fills my ears and it feels like needles taking root underneath my skin, slowly twisting. “Yeah, I’d never want to see you in a skirt. I don’t know why your mind immediately went to the ones with skirts.” The needles twist deeper, I close my eyes and take a deep

Out of Sight!



breath, hoping they’ll be gone in a moment. They aren’t.

“Haha, that’s weird, isn’t it? Anyway, I don’t know what we should do. Keep in mind that my family is like super evangelical right now, so I can’t exactly go sexy for a costume. And I’m also not out to them yet, so take that into consideration.” I run my hand through my chin-length hair, readjusting my glasses slightly as I look around.

Four things I can touch. I run my fingers over the soft fabric of the now-folded shirts. To the right, I see one of my old stuffed animals peeking out of a box, it’s a little dog that’s been well-loved enough for its color to age to a tan hue. There’s the friendship bracelet on my arm, green and red, both of our favorite colors. Finally, the cardboard of the boxes, each marked with their own purpose. The ones in front of me were books, clothes, and action figures. I always used to say action figures specifically because my parents told me that calling them dolls sounded gay, little did they know at the time that I would eventually call them action figures and also be a raging homosexual.

“Oh, yeah. When were you planning on



coming out to them again? You've met my family, it's about time that I should meet yours." I hear his voice, but it's lost its softness, now I only want to hide from it.

"I've told you before, I can't. It's not safe. Hell, my brother found out that I was an atheist and tried to have me crucified. I can't imagine what he'd do if he found out I was gay." Something told me that my words fell on deaf ears.

"You could always just go no contact with them and come to live with me if things go bad." His insistence causes the needles to dig deeper, sending a shiver down my spine.

"It's not that simple. I can't just cut off my family. I swear, I'll work on coming out to them, okay? But it needs to be at a point where I feel safe. Besides your mom doesn't like me enough to let me stay for that long."

"It could be that simple if you stopped being a coward. Plus who cares what my mom thinks of you?"

After that, I don't think I can speak. I don't know what to say or how to say it. Any word that comes to mind doesn't sound right. I'm saved by a knock at my door. "I gotta go, someone's knocking. Talk to you later, baby."

I hang up before I can hear a response. Then I rushed to the door, swinging it open to reveal my brother looking at me. He's about an inch taller than me at 6-foot-1, so I have to look up at him slightly.

Mark's dressed in jeans, a grey polo shirt, and his hair is combed ever so slightly. It's at this moment that I remember that today's a Sunday. "We're heading to church. Are you coming, Luke?" I wince at the name, the needles replacing themselves with swords.

"Ah, no. I've still gotta unpack. You crazy kids have fun." I try to act casual, shooting finger guns, wait, why am I shooting finger guns? I look like such a dork.

Three things I can hear. Well, I can hear Mark scoffing under his breath. I can hear the pitter-patter of my dogs' paws as they follow around my parents, probably getting ready for church. And I can hear the message notification on my phone go off.

Then I hear my brother barge into my room and notice my phone on one of the boxes. "Who do you have saved in your phone as 'Baby' with a heart next to the name? I didn't think you had a girlfriend."

I shrug, trying to play it off. "I don't, it's just an inside joke with one of my friends. You know, it's like gay chicken, whoever chang-



70s



Good Vibes!



es the contact name first has to give the other twenty bucks. I'm winning." I only used this excuse because I've seen how his friend group acts gay with each other as if there's something funny about it.

It's obvious he's judging me with the religious fervor of a man who really thinks he's better than everyone. "Yeah, whatever." He walks past me, back to the door. "Have fun in hell, Luke." The door slams shut as he walks away.

If I had to rank all of our interactions in the past month, I'd have to say that was one of the more enjoyable ones. Suddenly standing feels too exhausting, so I sit down on the floor, my knees drawn to my chest and my head held in my hands.

My palms suddenly feel much more wet than they did a minute ago, but boys don't cry, so I'm not crying.

Or maybe I'm just not a boy.

That thought scares me more than anything, no matter how much I play into it unintentionally. When I met my boyfriend, I gave him a fake name. I'd stolen it from Ash

Williams of the Evil Dead movies, but I told him that I got it from the Pokémon character.

I think if I was a girl, I'd like my name to be Jessica. It's the name of my favorite comic character, Jessica Drew, Spider-woman. More specifically it was the name of the Ultimate universe version of her, who's a female clone of Peter Parker. She has a whole monologue about having the memories of a boy, of feeling like she grew up as a boy, but deeply feeling like the woman she was. I remember how I questioned my gender for the first time after reading that comic.

But I'm too scared to transition.

Not only would I have to come out to my family, but I'd have to come out to my boyfriend. Though maybe it's time, I should be honest with him before we go any further. I don't think I'd be able to say it over call, so I'll send him a text.

"Hey baby, I know I've been zoning out a lot lately, and I know that honesty's kinda the biggest thing with us. So uh I guess here's the reason. I think I'm trans. Like, I'd like to be a woman. But I just wanted to make sure you're cool with that."

Two things I can smell. I can smell the lavender candle that I lit in here a little while ago. I can also still smell the overwhelming scent of drying paint that I was trying to drown out with the candle.

I don't know how long I stared at my phone, waiting for a response, but at some point, I fell asleep.

The store was endless, filled to the brim with racks of clothing. I felt overwhelmed by it all, really. Looking through the racks, I noticed one similarity, they all only had dresses. A hand creeps onto my arm, sending a shiver through my body. I look back to see a tall blonde woman in a hoodie and jeans. My shoulders relax as I look at her. “Oh, Hey Cassie. What’s up?”

She doesn’t speak but she grabs me suddenly, spinning me around to see a mirror that must’ve been twice as tall as me. My reflection showed a girl with shoulder-length black hair wearing a dress that was too beautiful to ever fully describe with words.

“You’re a gorgeous woman, Ashley.” Cassie’s voice echoes

through the store and before I know it, tears are streaming down my face. Boys don’t cry but I’m not a boy, like she said, I’m a gorgeous woman.

My phone buzzed with the sound of incoming text messages, jolting me awake. My hands shook as I picked it up. Tears still soaked my shirt but I didn’t care to dry them. I feel like I’m floating in the air. A slight hope stirs in my chest as I open my phone.

“I’d prefer it if you stayed a guy. I only want to date you if you’re a boy and I think you’d make an ugly woman.”

One thing I can taste is the salt of my sobs gracing my lips.



GCC Archery Team during a competition in 1978.

by Haley Ybarra

 Second Place

## My Horror Story with a Happy Ending

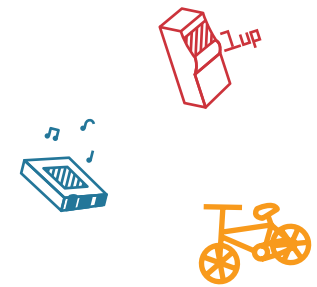
**My childhood consisted of walking on fragile eggshells, where at any moment, the slightest misstep could unleash my father’s unpredictable fury.** I never knew my biological father growing up; it was just my mother and I for the first nine months of my life, until she met Andy, the man who would eventually become my guardian. I always looked up to him as a father figure, though I remained just a stepchild in his eyes. Andy had endured many devastating brain injuries from a series of car and dirt bike accidents, leaving my mother to bear the weight of our family’s financial burdens. My mother and Andy married in 2006, and from that point onward, the atmosphere in our home grew increasingly chaotic. While a parent’s divorce often brings a profound sadness to a family, for me, it represents a glimmer of hope. An opportunity to escape into a healthier, more nurturing environment.

My days consisted of early mornings getting ready for school,

which would also be the only time I was able to see my mom as she was getting ready as well to work two jobs. “Will you be gone all day?” I asked, my voice filled with a mix of hope and disappointment, already knowing her answer would be the same as always.

“Yes”, she replied, “someone has to put food on the table”. She had a smile on her face, but I could sense the exhaustion.

After school, I would tackle my father’s list of chores while caring for my younger brother and sister. The rest of the day, I’d retreat to my room, hiding for hours until bedtime. Some days, my father would act as if I didn’t exist, while on others, he would unleash his anger



on me. The abuse varied between physical and verbal, and I often told myself it was the drugs causing him to act like this, but deep down, I knew he was simply cruel. I remember lying in bed, tears streaming down my face, asking, “Why is this happening to me?” I believed there was something inherently wrong with me, that this was my punishment. Yet as I grew older, I came to understand that this was all his doing and one day, he would face the consequences of his actions.

Years passed, and nothing changed. My mother would engage in shouting arguments and even fistfights with my father to defend me. I hated myself for dragging her into it, always feeling guilty that I was the reason their marriage was unraveling. The final years of their relationship were a blur;

sometimes he’d be home, and other times we wouldn’t see him for weeks. I remember my mother confiding in me about the real reason for their divorce, something I’ve never shared with anyone out of sheer embarrassment. Still, it felt like the best news in a way, even though my mother was crushed. She would lie in her darkened room, often not leaving her bed or eating for days, consumed by heartache. Eventually, she realized it was time to move on and be strong for her children. We packed only the essentials and left the only home I had ever known. We were starting a new chapter of our lives.

In the end, leaving my chaotic childhood was more than just a physical escape; it gave both my mother and I a second chance at life. While the memories of my childhood still linger, I no longer allow them to define who I am. My mother has since remarried, and even though it isn’t his job, her new husband is healing my inner child by being the father figure I had always dreamed of. While divorce can be a terrifying experience, it can also pave the way for healthier, more nurturing environments.



**Funky!**

*“You may say I’m a dreamer / But I’m not the only one / I hope someday you’ll join us / And the world will be as one.”*

*John Lennon, 1971, “Imagine”*

## A Mirror of a Broken Seashell

by Angel Marie Arguello

 **Third Place**

**An angel gently and mindfully kisses my nose, one here, one there, oh, and one more.** It knows to give special attention on the bridge of my nose. A small bump in the road. My face is a map, reminding the world of my ancestors who have loved and lost and loved again. Sweat, tears, and blood. My nose, fragile and oddly skinny, has a slight bump to keep me humble. In middle school, I was teased for it, but eventually, I grew into it. Although it left a dent in my confidence it was replaced with self-awareness and something most people don’t know: kindness and relatability. I was molded to love and never to judge. I inhale and exhale; it does the job. Why would I want to be friends with someone who cares so much about what I look like? My bottom lip pouts on its own, and my eyes sleep on their own. Deep, cool swirls of brown liquid, if you could swim a little further, you’d meet my soul. She doesn’t look like my shell; I think she’s prettier than you could ever imagine, the eighth wonder of the world.

I kneel, squeal, feel, fall ill, peel, and I personally wonder if he will ever see me in everywhere puddle or hear me in every love song and most importantly if every girl that is not me. I waver between confidence or insecurity. What is it? And why is it? My spine contests with all the bumps in my life, but with the dips in between, I lay gently, surrounded by soft hums from wind chimes. I sleep peacefully in the sun, 15 minutes, to be exact, because vitamin D is an acquaintance.

With every step, my feet stand firm, latching onto the ground underneath, because like my personality, I go all in, flat footed. My left hand, bottom right corner,



**Slammin'!**

the Sun, and my father is Saturn. I Will never be good enough. Nothing ever will. With Saturn's spins, here comes the rage. With fire comes flowers as a reward. With every negative or positive experience, there is me. Made and modeled by my soul, from God. Adam and God. Fingers barely touching to show how close we are to etherealness, realness, and flaws. My Creator and I.

Life path number 9. An old soul. The last life. 9 cat lives. This is my last physical shell. Black hair with some hidden natural highlights of golden hues. Dark, glossy eyes, a secret but my pupils are wide. Left handed. A southpaw. A family lineage of boxers, a secret all the men are gone, either dead from drugs or mentally damaged. The stains on my soul are reflected on my body; stretch marks, cellulite, freckles, moles, and deep indents on both sides of my facial cheeks. I believe your spirit is your shell shaped by your family lineage and ancestral stories, as they traveled from one place to another. I travel. I seek change, peace, rage, love, food, water, and a connection something greater than myself. Maybe that's why God didn't make me 5'9. God, angels, monsters, good, evil, nice, sweet, bitter, and fingertips. Peeled skin around the nail, the skin hanging backwardly and awkwardly, like palm tree leaves.

Garden Grove, California where I was born and blessed with the name Angel Marie. The sea salt, like

has a mysterious mole, like the one on the left side of my face show, shyly beneath my nose but evenly above my

naturally pouted lips. A mole like the one and only Marilyn Moore's. The Gemini to my Sagittarius. Will I suffer the same fate as her? A misunderstood women.

Don't judge me. I'm not ugly. I'm smart. I'm genuinely quiet shy. I can dance. I'm not who you think I am. I'm not even sure who I am. Like the waves, I shift and turn, entertaining others. No. It's true that no one has really seen me for who I am. Just a honeymoon phase. I'm sure I could love forever, maybe. Love. I am love but maybe others are afraid to stay forever and might be afraid to see themselves in me. My eyes are glossy enough for reflections.

I am self-deprecating but vain. Confusing, yes, I know it's just how I am. I suppose, maybe wolves shouldn't raise lambs. My mom is

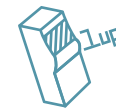


A photo of the GCC Speech team with their trophies and plaques in 1974.

brown sugar is sweet to me. The coolness and remnants of the 60s latched onto me, planned all along. The coast and its breeze relax me. My grandmother's presence. Disneyland and the iconic pink castle, my imagination.

December 10, 2003, at precisely 6:48 PM, I was born with dark,

lush black hair, pale skin with rosy cheeks, and a sly dimple and the futurism of my pout, barely able to open my eyes. Here I was, my physical self.



**Bomb!**

**Good Vibes!**

# 1980s

## POETRY

### Facts about GCC in the 1980s:

Enrollment was about **17,000** students by 1986.

GCC had a wide variety of majors during the 80s, including studies in **Biology, Chemistry, English, Counseling, Music, and Psychology**. With the advent of computers, classes emerged in **Computer Information Systems** to train students in these emerging technologies.

STELLAR!



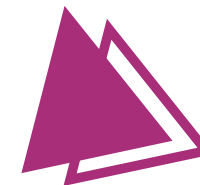
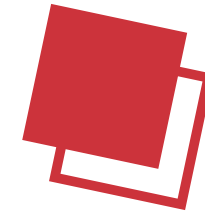
DEADLY!



RAD!

In 1986, tuition was **\$28** per credit hour, plus fees.

GNARLY!



TOTALLY AWESOME!



# NOW WE KNOW

by Ruth Claire Brown

 First Place

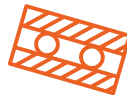
Now we know about illness,  
 which is not such a bad thing  
 but a hard thing nevertheless.  
 Maybe it's better now  
 we know about oxygen,  
 the cost of medicine,  
 the fragility of a single hour  
 when a prognosis is not a stable thing  
 but hangs from a black string  
 swinging this way and that.  
 We're just starting out  
 but maybe its better we know these things now,  
 and can carry it with us like  
 scars on our bones -  
 like already knowing the light  
 at the end illuminates  
 a room in surgical brightness -  
 the hard metal table,  
 the thin tissues  
 awaiting their salty communion.

80s

RAD!



TOTALLY AWESOME!



A GCC student checking out books at the GCC library in 1985.



# ONE TIME I RODE MY BIKE AT NIGHT

by Ruth Claire Brown



Second Place

**One dark night,  
humid with early April rains,**  
the cockroaches squirming  
between the floorboards  
to get out of the damp.  
The green light from the telephone  
swirling into darkness,  
left forgotten and blinking on its hook.

Me at 15, rushing on bent toes,  
willing myself to gulp air and not let it out  
till I am through the torn screen,  
knife in my pocket,  
knees skidding on the wilting, dripping grass.

I ride my bike into streets that yawn,  
grotesque in their familiarity.  
I ride all the way to the hospital annex.  
I park my beach cruiser under skeletal stairs,  
swaying this way and that,  
attached to the wall by the rustiest of nails.

Inside, our friend is skulking  
in the loosely drawn curtain,  
the downward twist of a disappointed mouth,  
the drip of iodine bottles.

Now I am on a lighted stage—

every scene a careful placement,  
every shadow an ocean under harsh, fluorescent light.

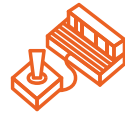
You, hooked up to wires,  
the suicide monitor sitting squatly in the corner.  
Me, making chains of crepe paper  
linked together by rows of careful staples,  
waiting to be next.

After, I watch the nurses smoke cigarettes till dawn.  
After, I ride home.  
I never see you again,  
although our friend  
sometimes still calls in the night.

STELLAR!



80s

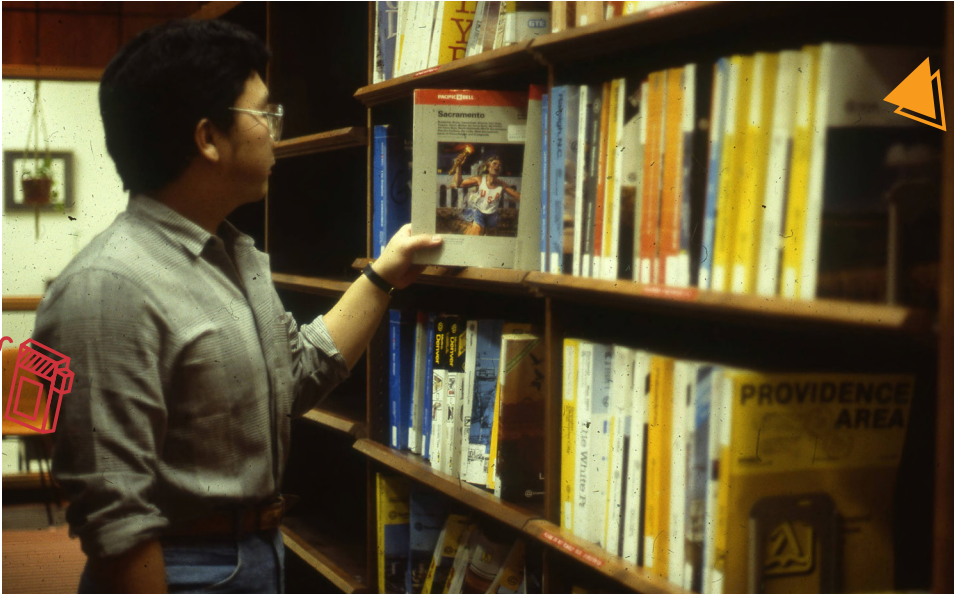


DEADLY!

GNARLY!







A student finding a book at the GCC Library in 1985.

# MY WIFE AND I DISCUSS DEATH WHILE EATING POPCORN ON A TUESDAY NIGHT AND THIS IS JUST WHAT WE DO NOW

by Ruth Claire Brown

3 Third Place

GNARLY!

## **Last night my wife and I discussed death for the first time**

since that year she lay on the kitchen floor nearly dying and I stabbed her with one of those nifty orange pens with the brilliant marketing scheme and the cost of roughly a used car.

What we had to say was nothing new – how we're going to hold on, love, breathe, become new and strive forever to be better, better, better.

But in her eyes I saw the reflection of the eternal footman holding not a coat but one of those sleek vests she used to wear when we were young and so unafraid we walked at night through the oil-slicked streets of New Orleans.

She asked me if we had just been lucky or if somewhere out there

RAD!

In 1987, the High Tech Center was built, expanding computer usage on the campus.

80s

her grandfather was still alive  
and catching all the prayers  
the god of my childhood never could.

RAD!

So we pray, and let them drift into dreams  
laid out between us like the last few  
kernels of popcorn  
left forgotten in the 600-threadcount sheets.



A GCC computer lab filled with working students in the 1980s.

# I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE

by Adrian Castillo



Honorable Mention

## I Can't Do This Anymore

Walk through discomfort of the steps leading up to our fate  
The girls on canvas portray the colors that she'd evade  
The chemical imbalance guides the heavy words that she'll say  
Her eyes secreted when the meet the gesture of repose

Tonight was not our night

Unfinished puzzles and the sketches collect dust again  
Depart the little things to never see the light of day  
But feel the pressure of silence after the words are said  
Our happy endings, avowals both share the same bed

Stability decreases, grab the pieces, keep your face  
She had her reasons for being sequestered from her date  
Can't hear, the tears are relieving the screaming in her head  
Her body loses groove, forgets the way she used to move

Tonight was not our night  
Don't let your faith falter, now  
This is the face I'll remember now  
How long will our place stay around?  
Will we finally feel the same ground?

Do you wish for me to stay down?  
Will you rescue me if I drown?



In 1981, Arcade video games  
like Q\*bert and PacMan were  
introduced to the GCC Student  
Union.





Oh Snap!



# 1990'S D R A M A

including classes on **Web Publishing and Design**.

The **first GCC website** was launched in the mid-1990s.

In the 90s, the famous architect **Paolo Soleri** visited the GCC campus and designed the amphitheater.



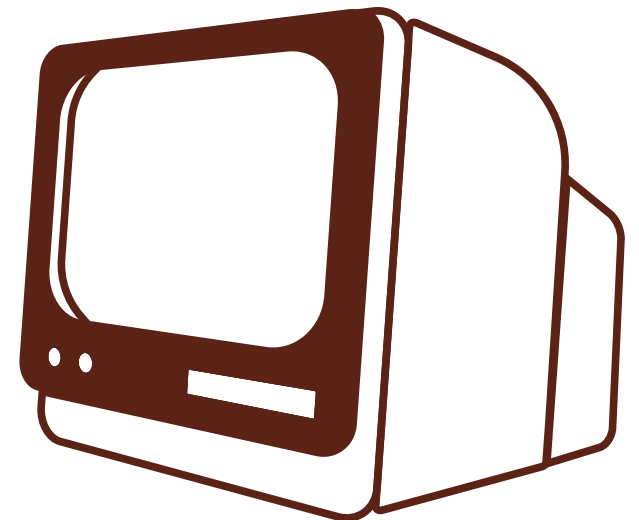
## Facts about GCC in the 1990s:

About **18,000** students were enrolled by 1996.

It was **\$34** per credit hour, plus fees, for tuition costs in 1996.

A number of classes were added on account of changes brought forth by the internet,

Da bomb!



90s

FYI



Allright!



# SILENT WAR



by Angel Marie Arguello

First Place



**Da bomb!**

FADE IN

## INT. MIKAEL'S FAMILY HOME IN IOWA - AFTERNOON

Aiyana aka Mikael's mother, in her thirties, slender, gap tooth, dimples, and sad beautiful eyes. She is an immigrant from Ethiopia. She speaks enough English but has a broken accent.

Loving laughter emanating from Mikael's mother as she plays with him as a newborn, with warmth and sunshine peeking through the blinds. She speaks to him in their native tongue, Amharic. Mikael Tesfaye lies in his crib, with a music mobile hanging over him with hummingbirds spinning above.

DISSOLVE

## EXT. CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Mikael Tesfaye (18)

A fresh young Marine, passionate and confident man with bright pearly teeth, beautiful eyes, buzzed head, and fairly tall and athletic build. He is dotted with freckles all over his body and face.

The hummingbirds from the mobile come alive and fly in the blue Californian sky.



Daisy (17)

She is the middle child, tall, girly, sensitive. She also has a gap between her two front teeth.



Zala (13)

The youngest, extrovert but sensitive. Her hair wild and free reflecting her personality.

Mikael's family drops him off at Pendleton. His duffle bags lie neatly on the street floor. His mother gives him a big kiss while tearing up; his sisters try to fight back their tears. He hugs them back tightly.

## EXT. CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA - LATER

The family settles back into his mom's Honda Civic and he watches as they drive away. He waves high and mighty while a single tear sheds from his left eye. He smiles. Once they drive away, he picks up his duffle bags and makes his way to where he will be staying for schooling.



A photo of students attending the 1992 Career Expo.



**Oh Snap!**



**Booyah!**



**Sup?**

INT. SQUAD BAY- AFTERNOON

Rows of bunks in a single room, a few windows, lockers, poor A.C., distasteful over-head lighting. It's hot and the room is filled with boys who are now men. Fragile but strong. Some are scrolling on social media, facetimeing their loved ones, or organizing their spaces.

While Mikael unpacks his belongings a tall boy with no shirt on introduces himself.

Tanner Jackson (19)

Half white and Mexican. Skinny, wears his dog tag around his neck. Nicely tanned with blonde short hair and dimples.

TANNER JACKSON

What's up. I'm Tanner but you know my last name is Jackson.

He chews on a toothpick.



TANNER JACKSON (CONT'D)

I'm your bunk mate. Sorry, I took the top bunk. You snooze; you lose.

Tanner laughs awkwardly while Mikael stares at him trying to read him.



MIKAEL TESFAYE

I'm Mikael but you know last name's Tesfaye.

Tesfaye looks at him and laughs. He shakes Jackson's hand. The boys break out in laughter.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD BAY - EVENING

The camera shifts to the stern, imposing figure of Sergeant Bates, who embodies a poisonous authority.

His toxicity stops the room. The overhead lights cast harsh shadows, emphasizing the deep lines on his forehead and the roughness of his skin.

Bates introduces himself.

SERGEANT BATES

Good evening, faggots... I'm Sergeant Bates.



**Aiiright!**





Students performing experiments in the 8th Annual Science Olympiad in 1995.

Until...

**INT. SQUAD BAY BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Mikael steps into the dimly lit restroom, the air is thick with tension. As he approaches a stall, he freezes. In the corner Sergeant Bates lurks, his presence disturbing.

The screen goes black, all that is heard is dripping from the faucet.

Mikael walks back to his bed in shock and Bate's threatening words replay in his head until he falls asleep.

SERGEANT BATES (O.S.)

Tell anyone and I'll have a surprise waiting for your mother and little sisters the next time they visit.

The room feels tight, and the shadows close around him.

**FLASHBACK**

Mikael as a toddler, running through a sunlit room. He finds his mother, sitting on the floor, tears streaming down her face. He rushes to her, wiping her tears with his tiny hands.

MIKAEL TESFAYE

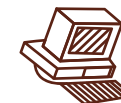
It's going to be okay mama.



90s



sup?



He eyes Mikael as knows that is his next victim. Everyone knows Bates is a jerk but no one knew the severity of his actions.

Weeks pass, Mikael is settling in, and he is doing good in schooling.

Mikael is the first to finish all the swimming tests. A great swimmer, he loves the water.

The camaraderie with Tanner grows; they share laughter during breaks, stealing moments of joy in the chaos.

INT. SQUAD BAY - MORNING

An alarm clock BLARES, Mikael is awake and in shock. The bright light of the morning floods the room, but it feels harsh against his troubled mind.

As he gets ready for the day, his mind races with uncertainty. Should he tell someone? But the fear of Bates's retaliation keeps him silent. He takes a deep breath.

Tanner approaches Mikael with a smile. Mikael is staring off into the distance. Immediately, Tanner feels something isn't right.

Suddenly, Tanner appears beside him, concern etched on his face.

TANNER JACKvSON

Hey, if you need to talk, I'm here.

MIKAEL looks at him, the weight of his secret pressing down.

MIKAEL TESHAYE

What? I'm good are you good?

TANNER JACKSON

Yeah.

Aiiright!



FYI



Booyah!



INT. SQUAD BAY - AFTERNOON

Mikael sits on his bunk, his phone pressed to his ear. He speaks softly, the warmth of family evident in his voice.

MIKAEL TESHAYE (WHISPERING)

Mama, I miss you.

Aiyana is in the kitchen, laughter spilling over as she cooks. Daisy and Zala play nearby, the sound of their joy puts a smile on Mikael's face.

AIYANA (SMILING)

We miss you too, my love. Remember you are smart. You are strong. You are brave.

INT. SQUAD BAY - NIGHT

THE CAMERA FOCUSES ON MIKAEL'S FACE AND HIS TEARS

Mikael lies in his bed in the dark. He wipes away his tears, taking a deep breath. He decides to tell a therapist tomorrow morning.



**Aiiiright!**



**90s**



#### INT. SQUAD BAY - MORNING

Mikael wakes up super early and makes his way over to the therapist's office.

#### INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mikael stares at the door he is nervous and does not want to be seen by anyone.

It is frowned upon in the military world to talk about your feels, especially to a therapist.

As he stares at the door, he starts to overthink; he hears a noise and flees immediately.

Mikael feels trapped.

In that moment he decides to push it away and pretend like it never happened.



Until...

#### EXT. CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Mikael runs into Bates. Goosebumps spread across his body and his spine shivers. Bates smirks at him. In that moment, everything unraveled. Mikael was angry but defeated. That smirk was evil. Mikael speed walks to the bathroom.

#### INT. SQUAD BAY BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He vomits into the toilet. All Mikael wants to do is go back home.

Suddenly, the sounds of laughter from the recruits outside filter in, a stark contrast to his internal chaos.

#### FLASHBACK

Mikael with his sisters, playing in the sun. The laughter feels distant, echoing through the darkness.



**Booyah!**



**Da bomb!**



His memory is interrupted by Tanner.

*Da bomb!*

TANNER JACKSON

You alright?

Mikael forces a smile, but it doesn't reach his eyes.

MIKAEL TESFAYE

Just tired, man. Schooling is rough.



TANNER JACKSON

Yeah, I get that but hey if you need anyone I'm here. I care about you.

MIKAEL TESFAYE

Thanks.

*Sup?*

Mikael walks away to clean himself up. Tanner narrows his eyes, unconvinced. He feels a knot in his stomach, a worry that something deeper is troubling Mikael.

The next day...

**EXT. CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA - DAY**

The boys are training with new machinery. While training with guns, Tanner feels something is off, and sees Mikael's face go blank. Mikael aims the gun at himself knowing it will get Sergeant Bates attention. Tanner, frightened, tries to stop Mikael, however, a gun goes off. The screen goes black for a couple of seconds.

*Oh Snap!*



The National Chemistry Week Celebration in November of 1997.



*FYI*



JUMP CUT TO:

**A FLASHBACK**

**EXT. A BEACH SOMEWHERE IN SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA - AFTERNOON**

**FLICKERING OF LIGHT AND WATER DROPS**

It is the day after Mikael's boot-camp graduation. Aiyana saved enough money for her and the girl's to visit Mikael in California (they have never been). They're all on the beach, laughter fills the air, beautiful sunset colors paint the sky, they're all running and chasing each other. Water splashing and sea rising.

The song Clair de Lune, L. 32 plays over the montage.

FADE OUT.

THE END

*90s*



# 2000's

## Facts about GCC in the early 2000s to 2025:

In 2000, tuition costs were **\$41** a credit hour, and there were **20,000** students enrolled.

Today, in 2025, it costs **\$97** a credit hour, with an enrollment of nearly **14,000**.

The **GCC North Campus** opened in 2000 and was significantly expanded in 2007-2008.

The **Life Science building** opened in 2009 and **Public Safety Science Building** opened in 2010

A

R

T

Lit!

OMG!

High Key!

2000s



2000s



Yeet!



# I Shall Not

by Paul Dameron

1 First Place



# Content I

by Michelle Villarreal Pina

2 Second Place



High Key!



# Windows

by Akie Clark

 Third Place



# Infrastructure

by Tyrin Clay

 Honorable Mention



Yeet!



# Brighton XII

by Danielle Gantt



Accepted



Lit!

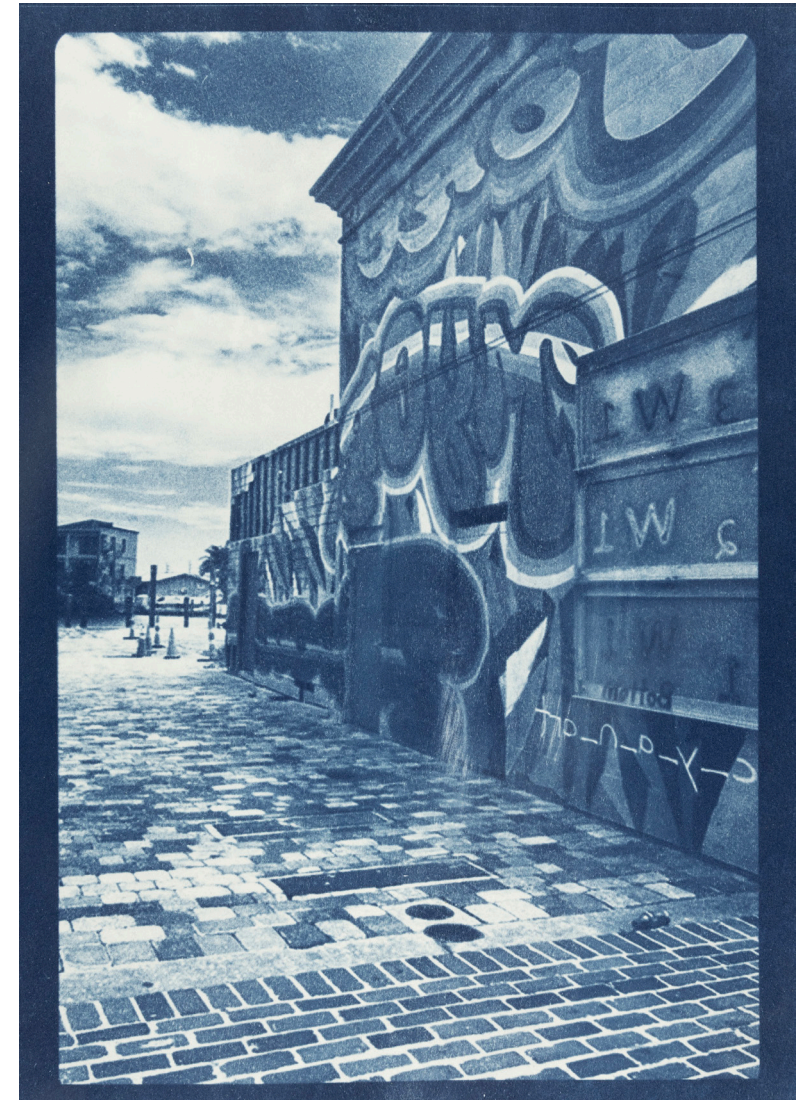


# My Blue Daze

by Frankie Espinosa



Accepted



# July

by Savannah Martinez



Accepted

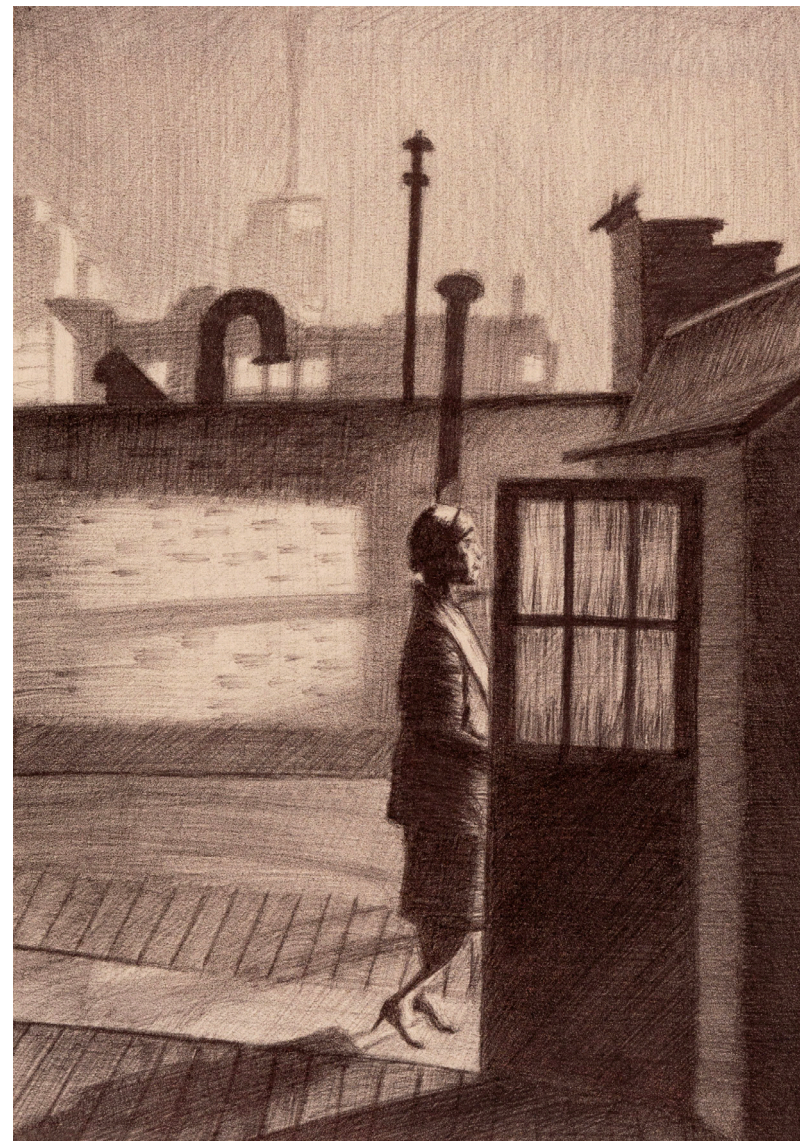


# Scenery

by Caro Ravelo



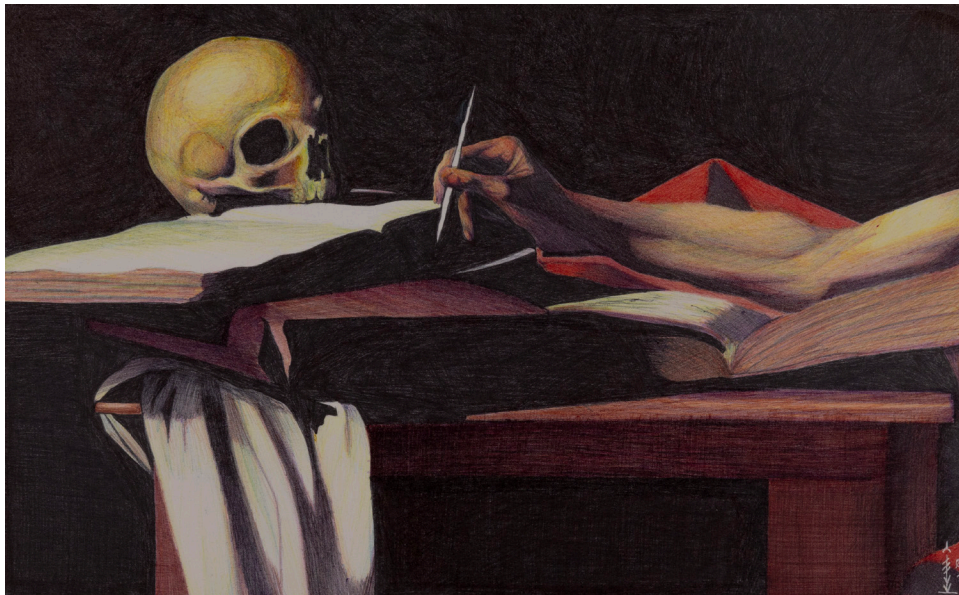
First Place



# Caravaggio Master Copy

by Alondra Mora

2 Second Place



# Wine Kit

by Miguel Villicana

3 Third Place



2000s



Sick!



## Pattern

OMG!

by Kenya Pacheco



Honorable Mention

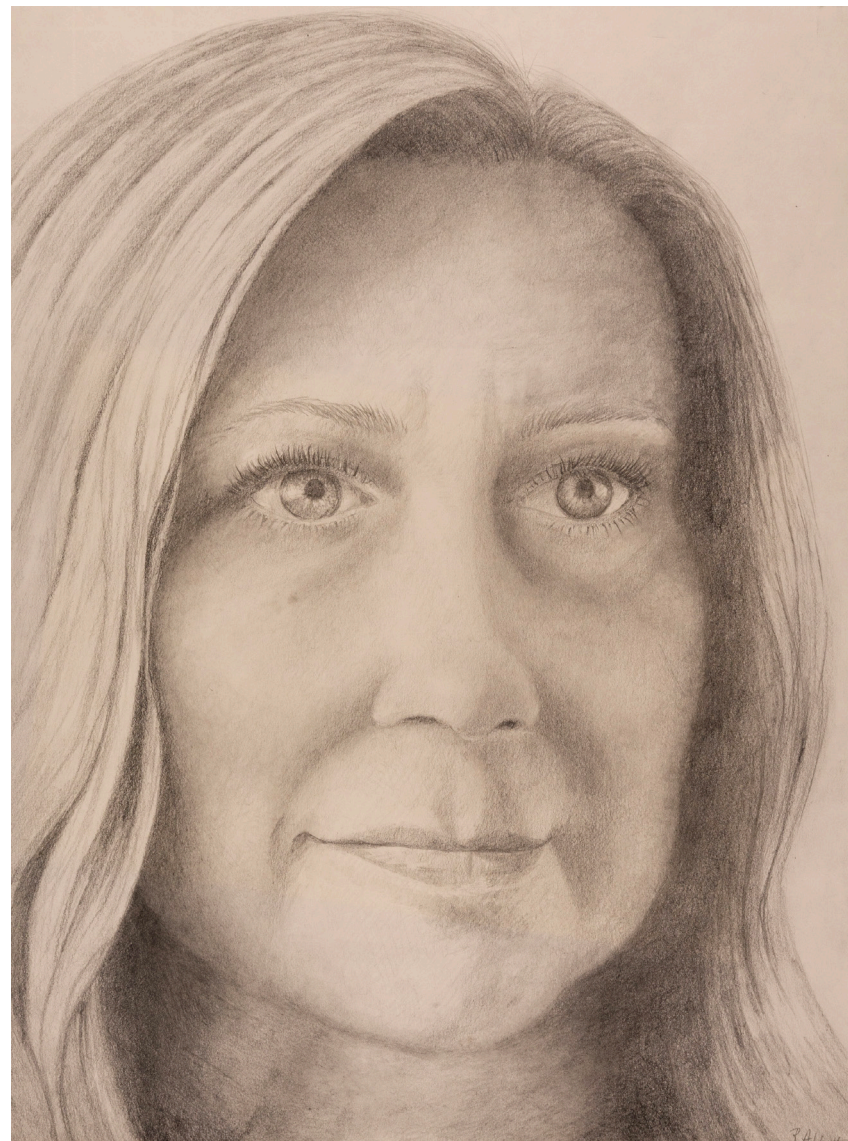


## Sanguine

by Rebecca Abbott




Honorable Mention





## Spirit

by Caro Ravelo

 Honorable Mention



## Curiosity Killed My Sanity

by Alondra Mora

 Accepted



# Unabashed

by Rebecca Abbott

 Accepted



*High Key!*



# High Spirit

by Allan Hopka

 First Place



# Starburst

by Mary Worel

2 Second Place



# Southwest Reactive

by Wendy Retzer

3 Third Place



# Full Moon in Hawaii

by Allan Hopka

 Honorable Mention



*Sick!*



*2000s*



GCC paramedic students practicing on a manikin in 2010.



*LOL!*



# Green Emerald

by Wendy Retzer

 Accepted



# Green Plate

by Kimberlie Sweet

 Accepted



## Chicken Soup

by Alondra Mora

1 First Place



Yeet!



## Hannibal Lecter

by Alondra Mora

2 Second Place



# Cactus Flower


by Deb Coons

 Third Place



# Marbles

by Lisa Frick

 Honorable Mention



Lit!

# “Sushi”

by Symara Davis



Honorable Mention



# Queen NKiruka Mbah

by Rebecca Abbott



Accepted



2000s





# Tulip Garden

by Rebecca Abbott



Accepted



# “Disfigurement of Mother Nature”

by Eryn Lewis



First Place



# Cardiology



by Kimberley Boege

2 Second Place



# Air Mail

by Kimberley Boege

3 Third Place

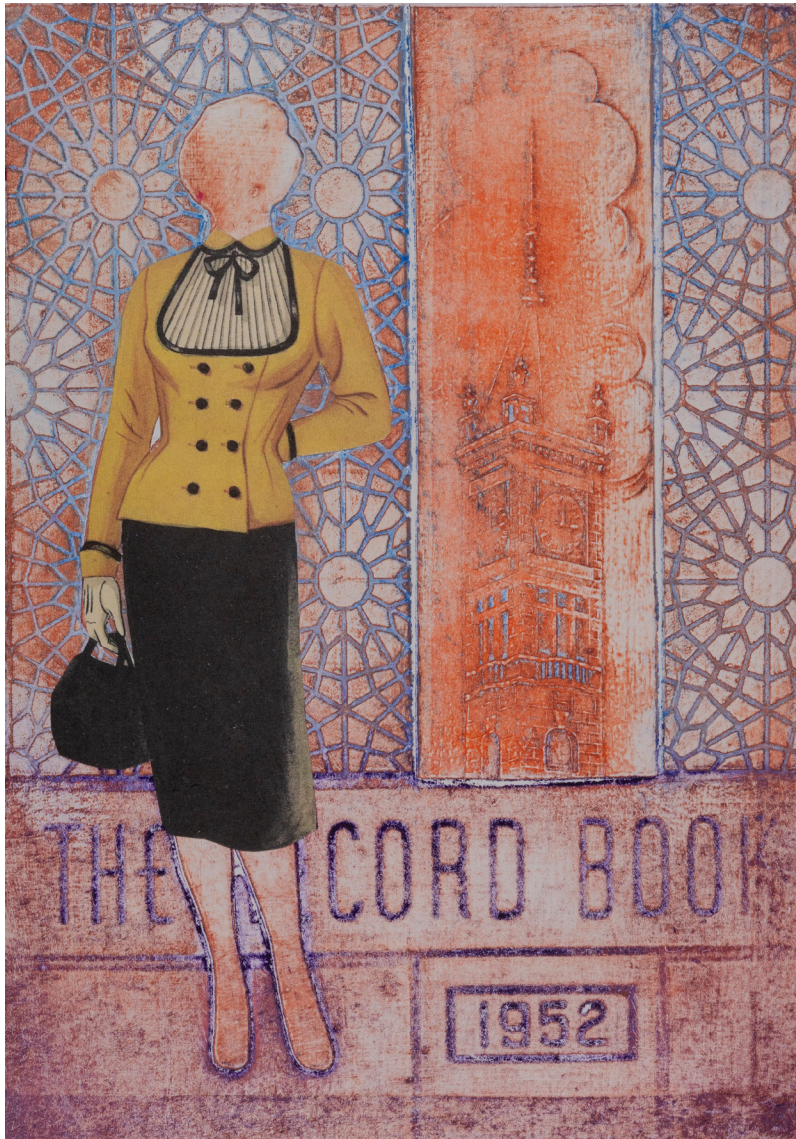


# The Record Book

by Erin Shaeffer



Honorable Mention



# Vole, Petit Oiseau

by Rebecca Abbott



Honorable Mention



High Key!



# Safe Beside Me

by Rebecca Abbott



# Old Mill

by Sherri McClendon



# Alcyone

by Deborah Hodder

1 First Place



# Jar

by Rafiq Majeed

2 Second Place



High Key!

## Woman with Mask


by Rafiq Majeed

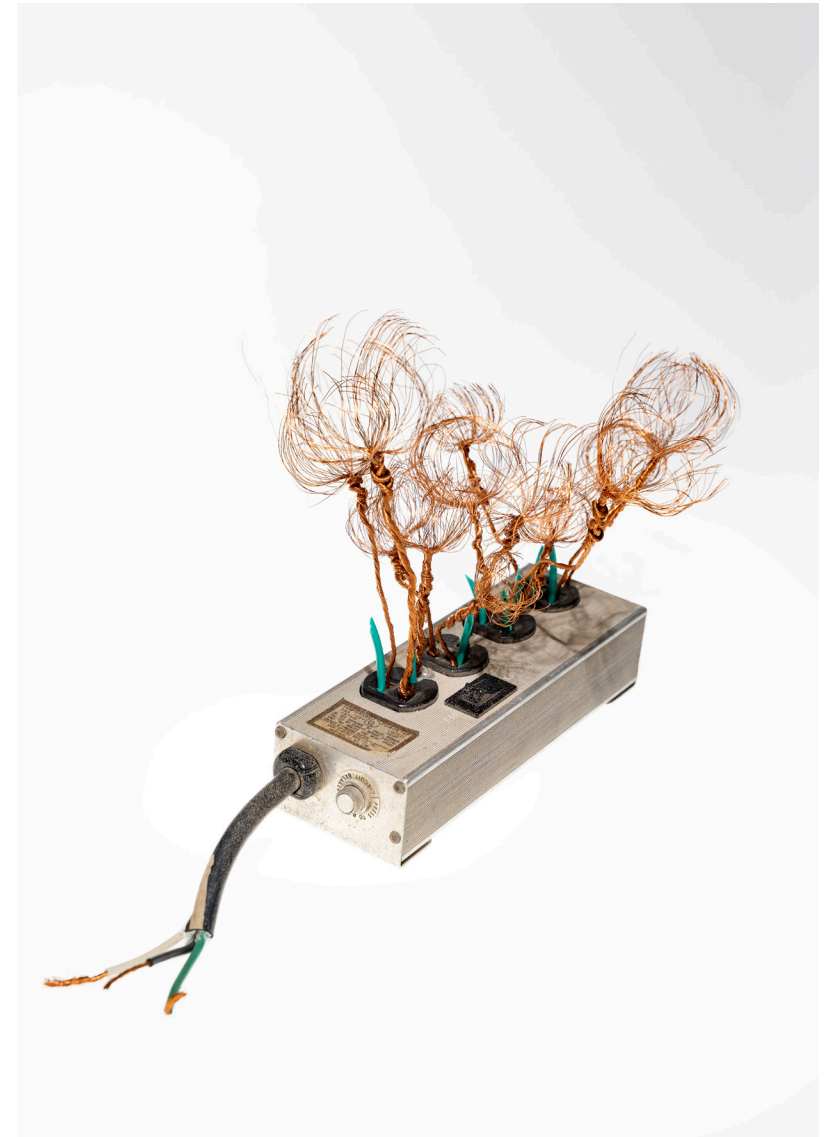
 Third Place



## Life Finds A Way

by Clyde Tripp

 Honorable Mention



## Nerikomi Kitty “Blue”

by Rumi Poling



Accepted



## Ocean Reef

by Yasmine Rodriquez



Accepted



*High Key!*

## Tree Family

by Harold Knoer



Accepted



## Water Etched Cup

by Erin Shaeffer



Accepted





# Isis

by Krystal Johnson

 Accepted



# A Clockwork Owl

by Serena Cordova

 Accepted





# Works Cited

# Credits

## GCC Historical Photos

Historical photos are owned by Glendale Community College and were retrieved digitally from Glendale Community College's Flickr page and the Arizona Memory Project website.

Glendale Community College's Flickr page: [flickr.com/photos/gccaz/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gccaz/)  
Arizona Memory Project link: [azmemory.azlibrary.gov/](https://azmemory.azlibrary.gov/)



## Design Team

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Nicholas Ramirez  
Pierre Fernandez  
Megan Verdugo

Project Manager, 80s decade design,  
cover art and layout design  
70s decade design, book cover design  
60s decade design  
90s decade design  
2000s decade design

## Faculty Advisors

Michelle Blomberg, Book Design and  
Production

Jeff Baker, Literary Coordinator  
Gaylen Stewart, Art Contest

## Faculty Judges

Justin Burns      Chad Merrell  
Jayme Cook      Jeff Sanger  
Roxanna Dewey      Lori Walk

## Student Readers

Dawn Gibbs  
Sydney Morgan

## Community Volunteers

Patrick McCarthy, Community Reader  
Elizabeth Grajales, Community Judge

## Special Thanks

Sean O'Brien, *Librarian and GCC Historian*  
Dr. Tiffany Hernandez, *GCC President*  
Dr. Brandon Cleworth, *Art and Humanities  
Chair*

Meg Ruff, *Program Coordinator*  
Saeeda Espinoza, *Student Worker*  
Angela Adams, *Photographer*  
Savannah Martinez, *Photographer*

## Student Jurors

Alexa Delgadillo      Korbin Ottley  
Alondra Mora      Leanne Kamben  
Carolina Ravelo      Nannette White  
Erin Shaeffer      Rebecca Abbott  
Kailee Frey      Tyrin Clay

1990



Hubble Space  
Telescope

1996



Soleri Amphitheater  
Opening

1997



First GCC Website

2000



GCC North opens

2010



GCC becomes a hispanic  
serving institution.

2015



Phil Randolph Auto  
Center opens

2020



Online classes  
due to COVID19

2025



GCC Celebrates 60  
Years!

1990

2000



