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Editor's Page

Chimaerid (K-EYE-MI-RID) The chimaeridae are a group of fish, named after the Greek mythological beast the chimaera, a monster put together from the parts of many animals.

Co-Editors-in-Chief: Emma Bianculli, Moriah Mikhail

Written Contributors: Wendy Xie, Moriah Mikhail, Marie Klepacz, Emma Bianculli, Eleanor Ruscitti, Charles Chen

Media Contributors: Lauren Moghavem, Nicholas Mohler, Mallika Walavalkar, Sarah Garsten, Mikayla Betancourt, Giancarlo Lobo, Taylor Jones

Faculty Advisors: Professor Regina Hansen, Professor Stephanie Byttebier, Academic Adviser Heidi Chase, Professor Rick Cole, and Writing Center Director Paul Thur

Special thanks to Dean McKnight and all of the professors in the Rhetoric and Humanities Divisions who encouraged their students to submit to the magazine.
A meditation under a tree
Hiding away from the crowd that came up to you
You sway
And glide in my vision
In the bushes of spotty colors and strikes never diluted
Glowing in the whistling wind of the warmest January
Your leaves are saturated with iridescence
Rosy pink—grassy green—leafy yellow—indigo purple—blueish gray—cherry jade
Spectra of your shine spill over my dreamland
Layers upon layers
Une gâteau crêpe d’Arc en Ciel
Rich as a bonanza
Bright as a supernova
Up! Up!
As you stretch your arms to touch the vault of heaven
I am out of this rainy, saggy place
Swaddled in the radiation from the laurel of your silvery foliage
I leap into the ripples of your vibrant breaths
In your acrylic, oily light
I lose myself
Reveling in the color palette
Knocked over by the hand of god

Wendy Xie
History of How I Was Born
Moriah Mikhail

I was born in a city
My mother and her sisters swaddled me
In the Egyptian cotton their
Black brothers had picked from the plantations of my white ancestors
My father floated me down the Nile River
Where the sun burnt my skin golden olive
Under my eyes grew the baggage of my people's struggles
The Nile brought me to the rivers of Jamaica
My hair curled with the waves of the waterfall
Where I fell
Back to the city I was born
See, my blood is older than this skin
Coursing through generations of
Struggle, family, war and love
Into this body
Mixed isn't as black and white as black and white
Many rivers flow through these veins
So ask me again my ethnicity
And with firm humility
I will recount to you the history
Of how I was born
A (Limited) Approach in Theory
Wendy Xie

short is the wind
secant to that wing
fractioned is the sun
tangent to that cloud
willing to draw the shortest line
from me to you
on the plane of space-time
—if that would connect us two
willing to fight against Euclid
for conjuring two paralleled lines to meet each other
and annihilate
—if that would join us too
willing to watch the whole universe sinking
into the vacuum of time
and space
—if that would bring us close
hark that cloud computing—
my heartbeats discrete
my words fragmented
my dreams indeterminate
une deux trois
—towards no limit
yet all my calculations and hypotheses would be null
—without the proof of your love
A Blip is Not an Explanation
Marie Klepacz

A mistake is a word mispronounced
it rolls off a thoughtful tongue in a careless wave
prefaced by nothing, a mistake is an inconsistent blip in a calculated mind
It’s a shoelace tripped on
and a drink spilled on a counter
It’s when you speak too loudly in a quiet room
but it’s not the words you say when you do

A mistake is not an answer or an explanation
for the time you decided what you had wasn’t enough of what you wanted
You can’t call your intentions a mistake, and you can’t call a person one either
A mistake is not the time you spent holding someone’s hand
and it is not the time you fell in love with a person who made you weak
Because even though you may try
to replace the word decision with mistake
they are not interchangeable lyrics in the songs you sing
and decisions are not pieces of paper you crumple up when they don’t look quite right
Decisions are the composite of honesty and choice
impossible to scratch off of the tree you etched them into

When people tell you that they made a mistake
it should be a word mispronounced
or spoken too loudly
a shoelace tripped on
and a drink spilled on a counter
It should not be the way they looked at you
the words they spoke to you
or the reason they left you
Ruminating on Fallen Figs and Adolescence Lost

Emma Bianculli

I spat pearls into my hand as a child
And carried them with me everywhere

Till suddenly my throat ran dry
And they melted from my fingers
They formed a pulpy pink mass at my feet
I pressed my lips down
And found them stuck together with once-sweet syrup gone sour

Two years passed
I pried my mouth open again
I found a pearl stuck under my tongue
I fought to keep it in my fist for good

Still I sob myself sick for grieving
To feel those same pink pearls pressed into my palms
#MeToo Speech

Eleanor Ruscitti

To my fellow terriers, it is 2018 and we are in a bit of a predicament; a cultural dilemma if I dare say. We have just witnessed a cultural watershed moment of social accountability; the #MeToo movement. Your social media has been flooded with thousands of passionate and insightful posts, from women and men alike; some stories even akin to those of your own experiences. Businesses are revising their HR policies, all-male social groups, such as ‘A Call to Men’, have started their own hashtags like #IWILLSPEAKUP, and once powerful men – men who undoubtedly abused their positions of power and authority – have been knocked off their pedestals. What female activist Tarana Burke started, more than a decade ago, as a vehicle for those who felt unjustly oppressed and silenced by those who maintained relative control over their livelihood, the #MeToo movement has created an atmosphere to allow those who were once victims to feel empowered; for those who were once victims to have the ability to stand up and leave the conference room without the fear of losing their job or stunting their career; for those who were once victims to finally have justice. But, what happens now?

The movement is not fundamentally about punishing men, to its core, it’s about giving those who feel, as Hamlet says in his soliloquy, ‘…the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune’ the ability ‘to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them’. It’s about creating a public forum where men and women are able to voice their stories, and hold those accountable for their actions, and even inactions. The consequences, however, may be that when some women have exposed the inappropriate antics of oppressive men, these men become social outcasts and typically even lose their once powerful positions. But, that’s not what I’m interested in. I’m interested in the aftermath. In the wake of all the chaos, man, after man, after man has been accused of misconduct, even assault, and flushed out of the system. But how do we, as a society, move forward. How do we, as an intellectually and ideologically diverse community, talk about the movement? How do we, as family and friends of victims or perpetrators, make sure to continue to love, support, and care for them unconditionally, yet hold them accountable for their reprehensible acts?

These philosophical questions are profound; a single, concise answer will most likely not be found. However, I ask that we, as a community, regardless of our political ‘leanings’, try flesh out the main concept through an example we may all comprehend. Are we allowed to love Kevin Spacey and Woody Allen movies and TV shows in light of their actions?

House of Cards is one of my favorite TV shows. I’ve always had a knack for politics and melodramatic acting, so of course I was drawn to the series; Spacey’s
portrayal of Frank Underwood is some of the finest acting on any size screen. Upon hearing the accusations—sexual assault of multiple men and sexual misconduct with a minor—I was in shock and disheartened; for both the victims and Spacey. However, I also felt a faint tint of optimism for the future. The male victims shined light on another facet of the #MeToo movement: sexual assault and harassment is not limited to men on women; it is inclusive of all genders binaries. We, as a society, are progressing. We are progressing in the sense that we are creating an environment in which all victim’s stories are being well received, regardless of gender; however, we have not fully progressed.

Spacey’s fall from cinematic grace included Netflix firing him from House of Cards, as well as other productions cutting him from projects. In response, his representative released the statement: “Kevin Spacey is taking the time necessary to seek evaluation and treatment”. And thus, within a matter of days, Spacey was branded with a scarlet letter, stoned with defended acquisitions, flushed out of the system, and discarded down the public opinion drain.

So, what now? This is not an occasion for criticizing but more so an occasion for taking action as a civilized and rational society, and ask the question: “Do we allow the masses to effectively censor our interest in these fallen icons and their body of work?” These artists were once valuable contributors to our society. Am I not allowed to hold Woody Allen’s masterpieces as great works of art— even though I am disgusted by his actions. Does indulging in these men’s work result in injustice for the women and men assaulted by them? What do we do with their collective body of work?

Unfortunately, there is no one answer; there is no one protocol to follow moving forward. It’s unrealistic to discard their art or boycott watching Spacey’s films. But, what is realistic is how we, as a society, treat one another, and how we as a culture learn and ultimately change in the wake of this movement. How and if we learn to be respectful towards one another regardless of gender binaries, socioeconomic class, and race. Anita Hill says, “Sexual assaults and sexual harassment is something that happens to women of all races, all ages, all sizes, all backgrounds, all religions, and until we can believe that all women, every woman has value, none of us will really be seen as equal”.

So, to my fellow terriers, the male terriers of this room, this is a call for help. This is a call for some interpersonal work. This is a call to learn how to empower women. To turn enablers and bystanders into allies – we have to encourage others to come forward and stand up to what they know in their hearts to be right. We need to create an environment that allows people to be able say “hey that’s not ok, you need to stop”. Remember, there are various forms of harassment: it could be over text, spoken, physical, the list goes on.

This is a call to hold yourself accountable for your own actions, and to not stand silently in the wake of the chaos, because in the end, that is just as bad as being the
perpetrator; a bystander will always be complicit. Remember, revolution seems improbable beforehand, and inevitable afterward. What will you say when you are asked “What did you say during the #MeToo revolution?” Say something.
Something Missing
Charles Chen

A stack of overdue bills lay scattered across the tiny coffee table. The surface of the table was pitifully chipped, one of the legs slightly tilted, and here and there the table sported blotches of light green tinge that grew larger every day. The table could have once been a beautiful craft—a masterpiece—but its value was stolen by the envious time. It was like any other furniture in the dwarf of an apartment—nauseatingly sad.

The beige walls were decorated with lively illustrations of a bright future that could only have been done by the innocence and naivety of a child. The air smelled of stale cheese and forgotten dreams. There were four rooms in total: two bedrooms, a toilet, and a multipurpose room used for cooking, eating, and relaxing.

5:00 A.M. An antique alarm went off and the sound reverberated around the bedroom but that was not what woke up the young woman who bared the name of Maribel. No, what woke her up was the yelling from the old widow that lived in the apartment right underneath.

“Get your *ss out of bed and shut up that stupid alarm!” bellowed out the coarse voice caked with years of smoking anything that could be smoked.

The Maribel from six years ago would have muttered out a stream of profuse apologies but this was Maribel now and the Maribel now was not sorry at all. She ignored the bitter old lady and started her daily routine. Maribel had small dark smoldering eyes that were evenly spaced apart. They sat just below her perfectly trimmed eyebrows. In less than a minute, she slid into her work clothes; a blouse she bought in a sale at Macy’s and a secondhand designer pencil skirt she got off of eBay.

She rustled up eggs and bacon for breakfast in a hurry but finished just in time for 6:00 A.M. Another alarm rang and this time a 12-year-old girl walked out of the second bedroom, sleepy eyed, clutching onto a teddy bear with her petite little hands. The girl was a bit on the chubby side, unlike her mother who had a slim figure.

“Mommy, I don’t feel very well. I have a terrible headache. Is it okay if I don’t go to school today?” questioned the little girl.

“Honey, come here,” Maribel, the single mother working two jobs, said to her daughter.

Placing a hand on the little girl’s forehead, she replied, “Oh honey, it’s nothing. You don’t have a fever. Take an aspirin for the headache and go to school, okay baby?”

Maribel had bigger things to worry about—the overdue bills, the nearly empty fridge, and the overdue rent. Thanks to her “special treatment” for the landlord, Mr. Saul, they had avoided eviction. Glancing at the clock (6:20 A.M.), she gobbled down her breakfast and left for work, which didn’t start for another hour but it was better to be early than to be late. After all, she couldn’t afford to get fired.
Her daughter finished her breakfast in silence; she wished her mom would eat breakfast with her once in a while but money was always the first thing on her mind in the mornings. Afterwards, she washed the dishes and proceeded to the bus stop where she popped a few more aspirins—*goddamn headache*—and waited for the school bus.

It took forty minutes on the D train line for Maribel to get to Central Perk, a cozy coffee shop in downtown Manhattan. The familiar smell of the café’s renowned espresso greeted her as she walked into the shop. The sweet aroma instantly replaced the lingering acrid smell from her nightly activity.

The loud EDM music blasted through the speakers of Verdant. It was one of the hottest nightclubs in the city. She got there around seven, as soon as she got off her shift at Central Perk. She hated everything about it -- the loud music, the smell of alcohol and cigarettes, and worse of all the people there, not only the customers but also her co-workers and especially her boss, Mr. Gavin. He was a huge sleaze ball and a pervert. The only reason that she endured that god-forsaken place was because of its decent pay. The money was great, it really was.

“Karma, you are up, there is a V.I.P requesting for you by name.” Mr. Sleaze Ball aka Gavin called. Maribel hated that name, it represented everything that she hated; it reminded her of how desperate she was for money.

“Coming Mr. Gavin,” Karma aka Maribel replied, her voice filled with sarcasm.

She walked over to the dimly lit room labeled “Private”. She knew the structure of the room by heart; a huge black leather couch sat in the middle of the room, a round glass table placed in front of it and a painting of a naked lady hanging on the velvet walls. In the middle of the couch, sat a man. At first glance, he was your ordinary Wall Street broker who needed to blow off some steam, but there was something off about him. Call it a woman’s intuition but there was something more to him than met the eye.

“Karma is it? I am Dominick, but call me Nik for short,” the man introduced himself.

“Well, hello there Nik. I am Karma and I am going to rock your world tonight.”

Maribel purred seductively. She pulled him closer by his tie and bit his earlobe playfully.

Nik was pleasantly surprised, he knew from his research that Maribel was one of the best that Verdant offers, and that she was in serious financial trouble.

“Say Karma, what is your real name?”

“We don’t divulge private information in this business.”

Nik took out a Benjamin and put it in her thong. Maribel purred again in appreciation. “Aren’t you a charming man? Well, if you insist, it’s Maribel.” She began to trail light kisses.

“Maribel,” he let it roll off his tongue a couple of times as if he was tasting it. “What a beautiful name,” his eyes slowly traced down her face and settled on her chest shamelessly, “…for a beautiful girl”.

His ogling did not bother her in the slightest seeing as to how she just received a
hundred dollar bill. “By the way, what do you do for a living?” she asked happily.

“I am what you would call a scout. I scout healthy women who deserve more, and
find
them a job that’s more...suitable.” Nik replied.

After blowing his mind and something else, Nik left a more than generous amount of
tip.

“Maribel, I really believe that you deserve more than you are getting right now, I can
help you get a new job that pays much more and that is more proper for you than this,” Nik
offered.

“I am sorry Nik, you seem like a really nice guy, but I don’t know you...”

“Okay then, if you ever change your mind, or if you ever need a few extra bucks, call
me,” Nik interrupted as he hands her his name card.

“An espresso and two donuts please, excuse me! HEY!” a customer said
impatiently.

That snapped Maribel out of her memory and back to reality. The events from
other night still lingered in her mind, making her ask herself, “Is this finally my
chance to become something more? Can I finally afford to give my baby girl a
comfortable life?” She didn’t expect any tip from the customer but he left a
five-dollar tip. God Bless. She took out the card that Dominick left; it was a simple
card, frosty background. Dominick Torreto was printed in big black font in the
center, and below it read Scouting Agent, with his number, 235-345-6842. She felt a
vibration in her pocket. She took out her phone to see that it was from her daughter’s
school.

“Hello, is this Mrs. Maribel?” the prominent urgency in the caller’s voice got
Maribel worried.

“Forget,”

“It’s about your daughter, she fainted in class today, we got an ambulance to
get her to St. Mary’s hospital—”

Maribel didn’t wait for the assistant to finish her sentence; she rushed out the
door as soon as she heard where her daughter was being held. Her baby girl—the
only light in her dark world, the only reason for her existence—After what seemed
like an eternity, she finally got to the hospital. Her daughter had Reye’s syndrome. It
was an extremely rare diseases that affect children, one of the causes is the overuse
of aspirin. The treatment for it was extremely expensive, there was no way she could
afford it, even if she sold everything she owned. Just then she felt the business card
left by Nik in her pockets. She knew that there would be serious repercussion, but
she was prepared to give up her life if that is what it took in order to see her daughter
live another day.

“Hello,” a husky and menacing male voice answered.

“Hi, Nik, this is Maribel, we met last night?” she timidly inquired.

“Oh, hey, I wasn’t expecting a call from you so soon,” his voice suddenly
sounded cheerful.

"Yeah I was never going to call you, but something terrible has happened and I need your help," she said with urgency.

"Whatever you need sweetheart," he cooed.

"I need some money, scratch that, I need a lot of money. I will do whatever I can to pay off the debt," she said desperately

"Ok, let’s talk more about it over dinner—"

"But I need---"

"Dinner. Tonight. 7. The Rainbow Room. Be ready."

"The Rainbow Room? I don’t think I have the proper dress for that."

But the line went dead before she could finish. How on earth was she supposed to dress up, put make up on and plaster on a fake smile while her daughter was in the hospital fighting for her life.

For my daughter, for my daughter, she kept repeating that phrase as she rampaged through her wardrobe trying to find the sexiest undergarment to wear. She finally settled on a black lacy bra and matching black panties --- the type that barely covered anything---just in case. Next, she put on the most expensive dress she owned, which was probably cheaper than the dinner they are going to have tonight.

Upon entering the 950 square feet of wraparound grandeur, tension built up in her guts. The elegant chandelier that hung from the marble ceiling, the classic music playing on the background — not from the speakers but an actual person playing the piano— hell, even the air made her nauseous, this was not her scene.

"Excuse me, Miss, may I help you?" asked a waiter as if sensing that she was lost.

"Hi, yes, do you know if a Mr. Dominick is here?" she asked nervously.

"Oh yes, Mr. Dominick. I presume it is that gentleman," he said as he pointed a table by the window.

She felt her heart beating faster as she approached—not because she was falling in love, but because she felt afraid—the man dressed in all black. He cracked a smile and motioned his hand, signaling her to come.

"Ms. Maribel, I have to say, you look stunning tonight," raved Dominick. She couldn’t tell if he was being sincere.

"Hi Nik, thanks for taking time off your busy schedule to hear me out. But I need a lot of money and I need it now. My daughter is hospitalized and I need the money to pay for the treatment," she said directly skipping the pleasantries and the flirting.

"Straight to business, are we," Nik started, "The lady and I will each have a glass of Henri Jayer Richebourg Grand Cru, Cote de Nuits aged 50 years start," he said to the waiter as if to get rid of him, "Ok, look Maribel, don’t worry about it for tonight, let go of all your worries and fears, I will take care of the money tomorrow, but for now, it is just you and me," he finished.
Waves of relieve washed all over. Only one thought occupied her thoughts—my daughter is going to live. The waiter returned with two glasses of wine. She had only heard of it before, the most expensive wine. The first sip was organismic, the contact between the wine and her tongue made her taste buds dance in joy, she could taste every individual grape used to make this ridiculously overpriced wine. After her first glass, she got tipsy; she had a surprisingly low tolerance for alcohol for someone who worked at clubs. After her fourth cup, everything became a blur. The fifth one tasted different, it was stronger, but as soon as she sipped it, she felt heavy and sleepy. She finally gave into her body’s demand to go to sleep.

It was a warm day. Summer had just left and autumn was making its entrance. It was one of those simple yet rare moments when your mind was truly at peace and happy. Not because you had a big tip the night before, or because you had a full fridge, but because everything was right. Just right. She was sitting on the steps of her apartment watching her daughter play with her friends. She turned, smiled at her mother and went back to playing.

"Put her under again, she is starting to gain consciousness." She was in a room, a brightly lit room. There were pipes running all over her body, wires connecting to a machine showing her heartbeat. Did I get sick after one too many drinks? Is that someone cutting open my stomach?

Her daughter was running towards her with a drawing in her tiny hands. It was a picture of a tall woman and a girl standing in front of a small apartment. An arrow pointing at the taller woman read, "Mommy", another arrow pointing at the girl read, "ME!" The title of the painting read “Mommy and ME, Forever” in big bold letters.

"Almost done, just a few more stitches, are you sure you want to do this? It is risky you know. Leaving traces and all that," an unknown person said.

"I know what I am doing. Take what we need. Clean this place out, we are leaving in ten," a husky and demeaning voice said.

When she finally came to, she realized that she was in a bathtub of a dimly lit bathroom. The smell of iodoform, antiseptics, and disinfectants mixed with sterilizing agents filled the room, making her nauseous. Not a single sign suggested that a serious surgery took place. It was clean except for a balled up receipt lying on the floor a few inches from her. She reached for it; it was a medical bill for her daughter’s treatment. She was naked. She felt numb all over.

She got up from the bathtub. The ice was still doing its magic but it still hurt like hell. Every breath she took was hard. It was as though air was running out. There were stitch marks across her stomach and down her sternum. It started to bleed again as she walked out of the bathroom, it was a pretty run down motel room. A lone telephone sat by a newly made bed. Its wooden frame creaked as she sat on it to make one last call to the hospital.

"Listen carefully. I know how much time I have left. I'm the mother of Anna Gomez," every word was hard to speak.
“Excuse me miss, do you require medical attention?” the nurse replied alarmed.

“NO! Just give me my daughter, NOW,” time was running out for her and this F’*king nurse was wasting it.

“Ok, are you sure you do not require medical attention?” The nurse continued.

“Yes, no I mean yes, I do not need medical attention. Now give me my daughter,” Maribel cut her off impatiently.

The new white sheets of the bed are now soaked in her blood, thanks to the loosening of the terrible stitches. The magic of the ice was now gone. The pain was ineffable.

“Hello? Mommy?” a tiny voice said over the phone.

She no longer felt the pain.

“Baby? Angel, listen to Mommy. Mommy loves you loads, but she has to go away. While mommy is away be a good little girl ok?” her voice small, but full of emotion: happiness, relief.

“Mommy don’t worry about me, I can take care of myself. Where are you going? Don’t be long ok? I miss you every second you are gone so come back as soon as possible,” Anna’s innocent voice begged over the phone.

“Oh my dear angel, mommy is going to a far, far place. She is going to be gone for quite sometime. But know that mommy will always be thinking about her angel, okay?”

“Okay, mommy. I will be good I promise.”

“That’s my girl. I love you.”

“I love you too Mommy.”

Central Perk was bustling with customers; it was the time of year where their renowned espresso shielded the customers from the freezing weather outside. One customer caught the eyes of the young cashier; he was dressed in a dark grey business suit, typical New York broker, but something about him just made him seem different. It wasn’t his grey hair or the fact that he looked fifty, those things made him even more attractive, no there was something else.

“Hello beautiful, a cup of espresso, two sugar, no milk, to go please,” he said flashing her a flirty smile.

“Hi, Mister, that will be six-fifty please,” she replied, blush evident on her cheeks. It wasn’t like she has never been hit on before. Sure guys her age had hit on her countless times before, but this was the first time a man had hit on her.

“Anna, is it,” he said looking at the nametag, “what a beautiful name, you remind me of someone I used to know.”

“Oh, thanks, and you are?” she asked the blush deepening as she handed him his espresso.

Without saying anything, he handed her what it seemed like his business card, “Call me if you ever need anything.”
It was a simple card, frosty background. Dominick Torreto was printed in big black font in the center, and below it read Scouting Agent, with his number, 235-345-6842.