

Fall 2022

The Pacific Sentinel: Fall 2022

Portland State University. Student Publications Board

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/pacificsentinel>



Part of the [Journalism Studies Commons](#), and the [Publishing Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Portland State University. Student Publications Board, "The Pacific Sentinel: Fall 2022" (2022). *The Pacific Sentinel*. 39.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/pacificsentinel/39>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Pacific Sentinel by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible:
pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

The Pacific Sentinel

FALL 2022



CONTENTS:

5

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

by Dan Cbilton

6

STRANGED WRITING

by Sarah Samms

8

ROCK BAND HELP FINDS TIME TO BREATHE THROUGH THE CHAOS

by Jeremiah Hayden

10

TITANE

by Matthew Hull

12

HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF

by Sarah Samms

14

THE WORK TO RESOLVE HOUSELESSNESS

by Jeremiah Hayden

16

DOCTRINE URBI SERVIAT

by Dylan O'Hara

18

NOTES FROM BEHIND THE BAR

by Dan Chilton

20

A VERY MODEST PROPOSAL

by Dan Chilton

22

COMIC

by Astrid Luong & Camden Benesh



STAFF

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Dan Chilton

FEATURES EDITOR

Jeremiah Hayden

ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR

Sarah Samms

OPINIONS EDITOR

Dylan O'Harra

PRODUCTION EDITOR

Astrid Luong

FEATURED THIS ISSUE

Camden Benesh is a creative from Scottsdale Arizona. He is pursuing creative writing at Portland State University. When he's not in school, he's thinking of new places to travel to and biking around town.

Dan Chilton was born and raised in Portland, Oregon where he now studies English and Creative Writing at Portland State University. He's a poet, essayist, and fiction writer.

Jeremiah Hayden is an activist-writer and drummer living in Portland, Oregon. He typically writes about art, politics, social justice and climate change.

Matthew Hull grew up in the Chesapeake Bay area where he joined the U.S. Coast guard as an aviation mechanic. He received a BBA from Northern Arizona University and is currently working on a MS in Finance. He has a passion for reading, watching movies, and all things finance.

Astrid Luong is currently a junior majoring in Graphic Design. Fun fact: She can speak three languages.

Dylan O'Harra is a writer, musician and actor originally from Anchorage, Alaska. He is pursuing Creative Writing and Classic Studies at Portland State University.

After many years of traveling, playing music, and hiking mountains all over the world—**Sarah Samms**, our Arts & Culture Editor, has returned to school in pursuit of proliferating her creative writing career. When Sarah's not writing or at school, she's foraging medicinal herbs, painting, playing music, or hanging out with her pet kids. Check out her other works at www.sarahsamms.com and her online magazine, www.travelinwithbones.com

WHO ARE WE

The Pacific Sentinel is a student-run magazine that seeks to uplift the diverse cast of voices here at Portland State. We offer a space for writers and artists of all skill levels to hone their craft, gain professional experience, and express themselves. We are inspired by publications such as The New Yorker and The Atlantic. We advocate for the underrepresented and the marginalized.

We are always looking for new students to join our contributor team as we can't do it without your help. If you're interested in working with us, visit our website at pacsentinel.com or contact our Executive Editor at editor@pacsentinel.com.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Readers,

As another school year begins, I feel a breath of life flow through the streets of Portland. It breezes over the choppy shores of the Columbia river that separates us from our neighbors in Vancouver; down 33rd avenue where countless struggling Portlanders still crowd in broken down motorhomes after being swept by the Portland Police, cordoned by Mayor Ted Wheeler; through the standstill traffic of I-5 and into downtown where students are simply one of the many people packed on city buses and max lines; to the campus park blocks where laughter and shouts of freshmen and faculty alike drift skywards to a congregation of crows hunting for scraps from the treetops; all the way down to the sub basement of the Smith Memorial building where the Pacific Sentinel staff, both new and returning, toss fresh ideas around the shared office space, intent on bringing an electrifying new presence and perspective to the magazine that mirrors the new energy we all feel coursing through the veins of Portland. We feel this energy bursting from the classrooms and out into the city. And we're here for it.

In this issue, you'll find articles both new and old. A representation of a time that was and a time that is. Articles from the end of last year that only just now saw the light of day and those new peaking through the living room blinds, taking a fresh look at the world. From an analysis of Portland's houseless epidemic, fueled by our city's out of touch leadership, to a gaze into the city's current art scene in the wake of pandemic, to personal narratives of un and misemployment, this issue is an amalgam of what feels to be a turning point. While we look forward, curious of the possibilities that lay in wait and always remembering the dark nights behind us, we invite you to feel with us and desire for better.

As I step into the shoes of those before me, I feel both immense pressure of what has to be done and immense excitement at the possibilities ahead. I was born and raised in this city and I believe in its people. Even now, as Portland blinks her sleepy eyes, awaking from a three year long coma, I know that our fight is never ending. Especially for all of us threatened by the all-consuming grasp of corporations and millionaires buying up homes and skyrocketing rent prices. Those of us at the frontlines of yet another wave of gentrification happening in St. Johns, NE Portland, and beyond. I feel for my fellow students, my family and friends, my brothers and sisters, who fear they'll never own a home in a city they'd lived in their entire lives; trapped by greedy landlords and greedier businessmen, enforced by corrupt policing institutions and a faulty justice system. Those of us struggling to maintain basic human rights. Those of us afraid that stepping out of line to defend our rights will end them up in the back of a squad car, or worse.

Just know that I am with you. The Pacific Sentinel staff is with you. We are in this fight together. We exist as a representation of your stories and struggles and experiences. Though we are stepping into a new school year full of excitement and newfound energy, we still face the reverberations of last year's nightmares. And we will continue.

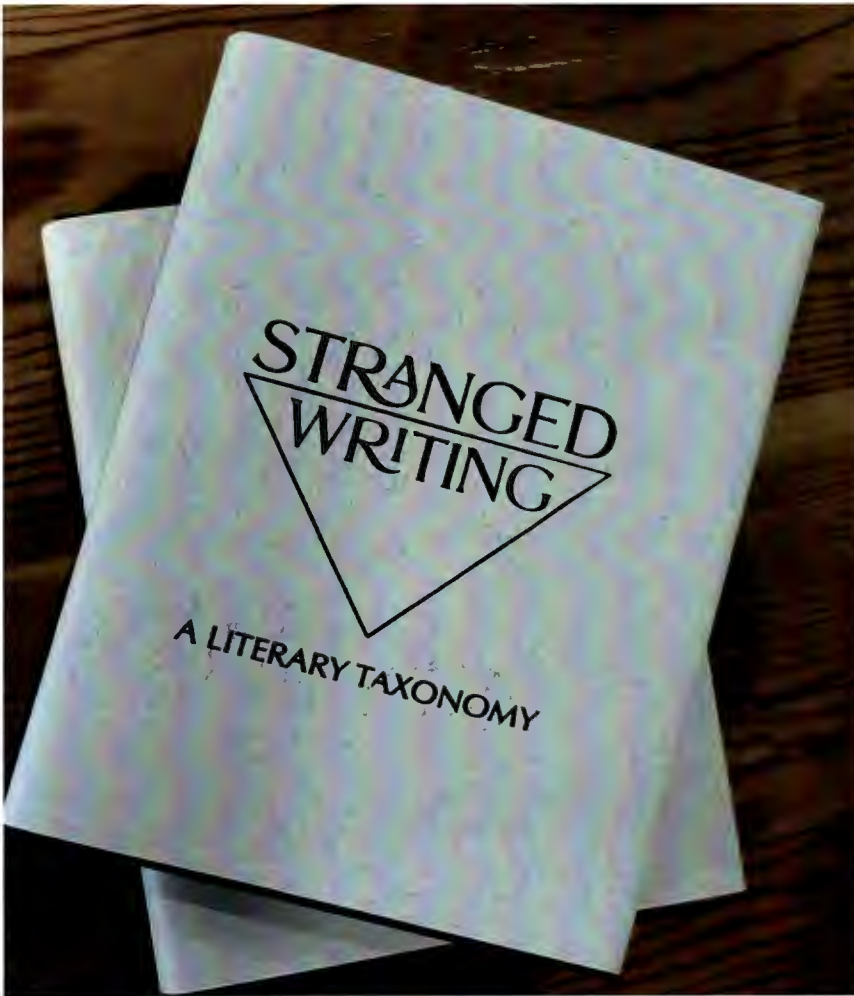
From all of us here at the Pacific Sentinel, thank you for your support. Whether you're finishing your grad program, a freshman still figuring the layout of campus, a faculty member bored from grading papers, or an off campus friend or family member interested in our work, we can't do this without you.

With respect,

Dan Chilton
Executive Editor
The Pacific Sentinel

STRANGED WRITING

SARAH SAMMS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH SAMMS



A LITERARY TAXONOMY

On a warm fall day, October 14th 2022 to be exact, I had the pleasure of strolling into the Stacks Cafe—welcomed by an impressive community library decorating the walls; a smiling barista; and parsed out members of the local Portland literary community. Primarily, those conceived by the Portland State University's MFA in Creative Writing program.

The gathering quickly grew quiet as Thea Prieto, editor of the literary magazine *The Gravity of the Thing*, approached the microphone and introduced the newly released compilation piece: *Stranged Writing: A Literary Taxonomy*. The compilation, offered at the merch table managed by editor Matthew Robinson, is packaged in a hardcover bound book with a prestigious locally screen printed black and white cover. Thea held it in her hands as she read an excerpt from a contributor

that was unable to make it.

Next up was Josha James Amberson, a Two Plum Press published author and creative writing teacher. Amberson read us his enthralling excerpt from the compilation that explored the idea of human relationships and eye contact. In the middle of his reading, he asked the audience to make eye contact with the person next to them for the duration of the rest of the excerpt. This powerful exercise not only brought the audience's undivided attention to Amberson's reading, but it seemed to foster a connection between those sharing the space.

Lucie Bonvalet, originally from Dordogne, France, but long time resident of Portland, Oregon—shared her nourishing and soothing prose to the audience as we all intently paid attention to her literary art spoken so gently to our ears.

Ben Kessler, Portland State University's very own creative writing professor and published author, soon took the stage after. Sharing part of his excerpt from the compilation depicting a story of life under the unique structure of 'how to build a box' instructions.

After about an hour of assorted readings from various excerpts of the book, the reading was concluded by Prieto's closing that detailed the interwoven network of local authors, artists, and literary community that connected to cultivate this well-thought-out, piece of literary art, titled, "Stranged Writing."

You can find your copy on their website, thegravityofthething.com.



HELP FINDS TIME TO BREATHE THROUGH THE CHAOS

JEREMIAH HAYDEN

You'd be forgiven if you heard the latest record from Portland band Help and assumed it was inspired by a riot. The nervous breakdown of society has needed a soundtrack, particularly in a city like ours where, if you watched the news you'd be convinced that people drink their morning coffee with a side of Molotov Cocktail. But "2053", the full length follow up to their 2019 eponymous EP is much more than that.

"The frustration of growing up religious and being fed a bunch of bullshit down your throat is a big source of my frustration; the guilt I felt growing up, for doing things that for everyone else seemed like it was okay and normal to do," Ryan Neighbors says. Neighbors is the three piece band's sole guitarist and lead vocalist—a ranty, cathartic staccato that calls up the influence from his formative years listening to mewwithoutYou, but is more aptly described as tapped into the vital chaos found in Mike Muir's tirades on Suicidal Tendencies records. Those personal themes of religion and control are where the lyrical content begins for Help songs, then drummer collaborator Bim Ditson connects them to challenge wider systems of control.

"One node is the old world type of shame as a tool of control, and centralization of the church," Ditson says. "The other node is want and desire as a tool of control and consolidation—you know, capitalism. Ryan is coming from his background, and processing it directly and saying, 'here's how it feels to be me' and being vulnerable, and then I'm coming at it and going, 'me too,' just for these totally different reasons."

One does not need to look far to find signs of an impending apocalypse in any part of the globalized world—rising rents, labor strikes, houselessness, mental unhealth, and crumbling infrastructure are in the news daily; and leaders worldwide have abandoned everyone who isn't an LLC to follow the gleam of war. "2053" imagines a not-too-distant future where civilization has

declined into chaos. The opening track, "Ultra-Violent Ones" nods to the 1962 Anthony Burgess novel and Stanley Kubrick film "A Clockwork Orange," in which the wealthy elite enjoy safe distance from those stuck in the day to day violence of the collapsed remnants of society. Neighbors rants in the second verse:

Okay okay,

If you really think you deserve to hoard all of the beautiful gifts of the universe I just gotta ask you one question

It's all ME ME ME ME WANT WANT WANT ME ME ME WANT WANT WANT Well go ahead and take it

Take my money, take my dignity

Just come back around one more time and put my outta my god damn misery

"2053" is a heavy record, but moments of beauty found their way onto the recording as well. The luxury of time gave this batch of songs the chance to mature before being recorded live at the Map Room Studio, with former bassist Boone Howard and producer Sonny DiPerri. "That album took absolutely three people to write—four with Sonny," Neighbors says. "It took fighting, and pushing, and arguing." There is something to be said for putting in the work and time required to create something new and inspired. The first EP—also recorded at Map Room—was written and recorded quickly. Studio time was booked before the songs were even finished, and some lyrics were wrapped up while in the studio. This time around, however, the three members could pass around demos and throw out songs that didn't work well.

"I'm way more proud of the songs on the record that have grown on me than the ones that I initially liked," Ditson adds.

The extra time to create depth and purpose pays off on tracks like "Fire and Ashes and Shit," a

track with a chord progression befitting Neighbors' electronic project Hustle and Drone—a new angle for the guitar and feedback heavy direction typical of Help. That track is dark; personifying wisdom as knocked out and death as a subject caught gazing into the mirror to watch itself burn and melt. There is something beautiful found in the why—"so he can see himself breathe and see you breathe," tags the verse. There is catharsis and truth in finding connection in the midst of chaos, metaphorically and physically. Asked what gives him hope, Neighbors responds: "playing shows again, and coming together with people that I have missed seeing and really care about, has done a lot."

Bim adds that "the whole thing is rooted in real space and real talk—the live thing is what it's all about, and the rest of it comes out of that."

Over the weeks and months since March 15, when 2053 released on Nadine Records, the band has had plenty of opportunities to build connections through music. Help celebrated the record's release in Portland at Bunk Bar on March 18, and played a string of dates along the West Coast in March before heading to Treefort Festival in Boise at the end of the month.



**THE BAND'S LATEST
RECORD 2053 RELEASES
MARCH 15 ON
NADINE RECORDS**





A FRENCH HORROR MOVIE THAT SHATTERS EXPECTATIONS

MATHEW HULL

ILLUSTRATION BY CAMDEN BENESH

Titane is a French horror movie that shattered my expectations. I found it scrolling through Hulu for a good international movie. I am a sucker for any foreign movie because of the innovation and original ideas coming from overseas.

Titane grabs your attention from the very beginning—with a car crash that ends in the main character having her skull melded with the steel of the car, hence the name *Titane*. If you are disturbed by horror movies like *my wife*, who could only get through the first act, you won't last long in this one. Whoever had the idea for this film combined a bunch of stories together. Including one of my favorites, *Christine*, by Stephen King. Just the pure imagination involved defies my psyche.

The main character doesn't speak much but when she does, you are hanging on to every word. Is it because she is part machine and calculating every move? I was never able to differentiate if her psyche was created by her environment or the car crash that damaged that emotional side of her brain—or if she just doesn't feel comfortable interacting with other humans. *Titane* didn't have many spoken lines, but the ones heard were

powerful.

The writer has woven a metaphor between man and machine throughout the entire movie which is, *are we thinking machines? Or is there an emotional base to our consciousness?* I believe that emotions still rule most of our consciousness, it is hard to overcome shame, fear, and anger.

The movie has no heroes, no villains, only humans that sometimes do bad things. No superheroes, no super powers, no magic. Just a human obsession with tools and machines. And what happens when accidents turn into life-changing events?

Fast forward to our main character working nights as a seductive car model. From here it takes a dark turn when a man approaches her after a show. Just when you think it is about one thing, it pivots into something else. This uncertainty made it even more exciting for me. I'd already lost my wife and there was no getting her back to the movie, but it gets better and it becomes a father/daughter/son story.

In the second part of the movie you meet a father who lost his son in a fire. He mistakes,

or wants to believe, that our main character is his long-lost son even though she's female. He is an aging fireman who introduces the main character to his "crew." What engrossed me about the character is how far he will go to continue to live the lie. Or does he know it's a lie and continue anyway?

I don't want to give away more spoilers, but if you stick with it, it will disturb you for at least a month. I had trouble believing her as a boy towards the end, but that was my only complaint. I had a visceral experience with some of the scenes and had to turn away. I dare you to watch the trailer and not load the movie.

Just as a warning, you will be affected in some way by this movie, it's just a question of when in the movie that will happen. *Titane* will keep you on the edge of your seat. It's graphic, violent, and disturbing. What else can you ask for in a good horror flick?



THE EVOLUTION OF HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF

SARAH SAMMS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY CAMDEN BENESH

Hurray for the Riff Raff has evolved greatly over the years seamlessly without many growing pains to be told. The first time I saw Alynda Segarra on stage with the stage handle Hurray for the Riff Raff, it was a decade ago in the McMenamans basement venue Al's Den in front of maybe 20 people or so. Segarra sat in a chair, dressed in a dress that's design was inspired by the 1920's era and sang into the microphone as if her heart could leap out of her chest right there and make us all cry at the sight. That night Segarra appeared somber and apprehensive to be on stage. Singing lyrics off her album *Look Out Mama*: "I'm a heavy headed gal. Full of sorrow, don't ask me how- I got this way. Cause it's been too long, to tell. But I'm getting tired, going down this road, all by myself." A song reflected in her backstory that's rooted in train hopping and traveling.

Alynda Segarra is of Puerto Rican descent

who grew up in the Bronx of New York. Alynda landed in New Orleans in 2007, a place where many train hoppers and travelers go to retire or rest their heads for long periods of time. The first Hurray for the Riff Raff album was titled *It*

**WATCHING HURRAY FOR THE
RIFF RAFF EVOLVE SEAMLESSLY
WITHOUT GROWING PAINS IS
AN ABSOLUTE PLEASURE.**

Don't Mean I Don't Love You and was dedicated to the doctor who performed Alynda's abortion at the age of 19. Some would say, their music was birthed from sadness. The following album *Young Blood Blues* was released in 2010. The

album's title song is composed of therapeutic melodies that resonate with the internal sadness that rests deep in all of our souls, singing lyrics like: "My best friend in this whole world, is a man who is dead and gone. Now I'm bound to wonder, with nothing but his song. And he walked out of this world, as lonely as he came. You can rest assure you won't see my man again. I've got the young blood blues." Hurray for the Riff Raff wasn't signed on to a major label until the release of *Small Town Heroes* signed to ATO records in 2014. This album integrated old-western tones into her blues and folk traditional spirit of music and illuminated any room it played in. Nevertheless, the lyrics of this album are still wistful. The title song beholding lyrics that say: "She was the queen. She got all her drugs for free. She walked up to her daddy's door. He said, you don't live here anymore. She wanted love, she wanted love. Oh, but she just couldn't get enough. . . Now what's the

point in a wedding ring? 'Cause we might not be here when next year comes. Well, I guess you gotta watch your back and carry a gun." When sung to your ears in person, these lyrics have a profound effect on your psyche, bringing tears to your eyes and a lump to your throat. For those who have lived on the dark side of reality, Hurray for the Riff Raff's music was your go-to when life was tenebrous and you needed someone to relate to. Someone to sing to you the feelings you couldn't quite articulate as dim as they truly were. Segarra changed things up a bit in the 2017 album release *The Navigator*. This album has a few songs that are a break away from the tenebrous tones, where they integrate some of Segarra's Puerto Rican roots with shakers, Bomba bass lines and vernacular lyrics. Who knew that this would be a stepping stone to an entirely new sound and Riff Raff experience?

Hurray for the Riff Raff stepped on the Wonder Ballroom stage in Portland on 3.31.22. The stage was embellished with flowers that lined the mic stand, the drum set, the debuted synthesizer and other musical equipment. Just below Segarra's table that held the lyric book was a Himalayan salt candle; an amiable touch. When Segarra came on stage, they resonated a fresh yet familiar persona and certainly was not wearing a dress design that belonged in the 1920's like the Segarra we all had been familiar with. They rocked soldier boots, camo pants, an army green shirt and a radical 80's style haircut. The crowd was taken back as Segarra walked on stage in their new skin, anticipating what the new album *Life on Earth* would sound like.

The debut show was an absolute excitement to be told. At first, watching Segarra in a shag and camo pants singing on stage in a combative dance to a synthesizer had most of the crowd stunned. No one knew what to think. Segarra went through all of the emotions in this album and even sang into a megaphone with a synthesizer and beat maker going along at one point. *Life on Earth* is composed of tones that reminded me of David Bowie, Portishead, and the Talking Heads. Fog machines poured mist on the stage as bright lights and a disco ball shined the packed venue. Segarra sang positive lyrics in a dance and an inspirational tone, "*Monarchs in flight, dawn's early light. Life on Earth is long. And the sun in the west and one you love best*" breaking song and telling the crowd "I LOVE YOU PORTLAND! I'M SO GRATEFUL TO BE HERE!" As if Segarra survived something great and finally found their way out of the darkness. It was a shock, a complete innovation and evolution for the band. It took most of the room about 3 songs into the

new album being performed for us to come to terms with what was happening. Then, heads started bobbing, this then turned into people dancing, and eventually into people cheering and celebrating Segarra and the band's new skin.

To witness someone evolve from a dismal person who seemed uncomfortable on stage to a bold, edgy human screaming lyrics that praises

and celebrates life behind fog and disco lights is galvanizing to say the least. Though, I'm sure many country western fans would not say the same, I personally think the evolution of Hurray for the Riff Raff gives hope to many of those who struggle with mental health issues and shows us that we too, can evolve.



In an effort to drive people experiencing homelessness from the city of Portland, Ted Wheeler recently announced a proposed resolution to ban camping within city limits. The plan, however, could be more aptly described as a plan to make a plan—something the mayor has done repeatedly since first running for the office in 2016 when he promised “a new approach” to the houseless crisis. What makes him ineffectual is that rather than doing any “capital-w” Work to approach the crisis in a way that addresses root causes to produce better outcomes for people in poverty, the mayor and his hive mind repeatedly take shortcuts that benefit the wealthy business class. Wheeler fails because he wants to start at the finish line.

Resolution 929, titled “Connect mental health and substance abuse recovery services to unhoused individuals,” states that the City of Portland hopes to partner with Multnomah County to create three sanctioned camping sites, or “campuses” that serve between 150 and 500 people per site. It also proposes a ban on what it calls “self-sited unsanctioned encampments,” which appears to mean anywhere the city chooses to enforce the ban. At the time of this writing, there was no funding for the plan.

On November 3, 2022, the day of the final city council vote on the resolution, Street Roots and the ACLU sent a letter calling to delay the vote—dismissing the plan as taxpayer-funded “political theater.” That letter was ignored and the resolution passed 4-1 with JoAnn Hardesty as the lone “no” vote. The initial announcement of the resolution came roughly three weeks prior to a midterm election in which homelessness was seen by 94% of Portland voters as “a very big problem.”

Ostensibly, Portland’s business community envisions their ends as a thriving city, devoid of encampments, flush with tourists and the money they will inevitably shell out when they visit. When ground broke on the thirty-five-story Ritz-Carlton Hotel in 2019, it gave a concrete sense of where priorities lay for investors who hope to siphon what they can from wealthy and middle-class travelers alike. Through a contract with the city, Ritz developer Walter Bowen is obligated to put \$8.1 million toward affordable housing units—a payment that he has delayed making despite the fact that Portland needs to build more affordable housing to address the crisis.

In July of 2017, just seven months after Wheeler took office, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) installed forty-five signs near various parks throughout the city that read “No Camping,” and similar signs prohibiting parking near parks at

night. The “No Camping” signs included a short list of city ordinances intended to ban camping in these areas. In November of the same year, at the behest of Columbia Sportswear CEO Tim Boyle, Wheeler’s office directed PBOT to post signs downtown warning of Portland’s Public Sidewalk Management Plan, which had gone into effect that August in an effort to ban anyone other than a pedestrian from using the sidewalk. At that time, Portland Police began regular patrols in areas where people were likely to camp, most notably in areas that affected members of the Portland Business Alliance—which includes Columbia Sportswear. Despite these measures, people experiencing homelessness did not suddenly become housed, and the crisis continued.

Marisa Zapata is the Director of the Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative (HRAC) at Portland State University, which she describes as “an interdisciplinary research center focused on developing and promoting applied research that answers the questions of how we solve and prevent, and resolve homelessness.”

The research suggests that the most effective way to do just that is to provide housing. The model known as “Housing First” is an approach to quickly and successfully connect people experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions or barriers.

“The idea is that by offering somebody a safe and secure place to live—that is housing, meaning that there is actually a bathroom and plumbing and so forth—they are given the best chance to feel supported to get some sleep,” Zapata said. “If you see a mental health care provider, one of the top questions is ‘how much are you sleeping?’ because we know how much sleep regulates our bodies on many levels, and particularly in terms of mental health.”

The Housing First model operates on the simple concept that the solution to homelessness is housing. But it doesn’t end there. Proponents of Housing First recognize that no two people experiencing homelessness have the same stories or the same needs as one another, and long term support structures are necessary to keep people permanently housed.

“It really requires thinking about how we want to invest in one another, in order to allow people to be able to live their best lives,” Zapata said.

That includes connecting people with social workers or addiction treatments when necessary. But in many cases, their most effective strategy is to help people reconnect with friends, family or faith groups who can offer loving support. The model removes judgmental barriers like

sobriety or drug treatment that typically derail any movement toward solving a crisis for an individual. Research suggests that the solution to homelessness is far less complicated than it may seem—a sort of paradox that allows society to justify the conditions we see by viewing them as too complicated to solve.

“If it’s such a simple solution—which is providing housing—why haven’t we done it yet?” Zapata said. “That’s a very uncomfortable place for people to sit.”

In September of 2018, in response to a 2009 lawsuit brought by six houseless people in Boise, Idaho, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a city cannot prosecute people sleeping on the street if they have nowhere else to go. That decision effectively removed any ability to enforce the Portland city code that intended to prohibit camping in public rights of way. But in the first year of his second mayoral term, Wheeler again proposed banning camping and sending people to “high-population outdoor camping zones”—an idea that was quickly rebuffed by Dan Ryan, the City Commissioner in charge of Portland’s Housing Bureau.

Then, in 2020, the Center for Disease Control issued guidance on sweeping encampments in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“One of the important things that have happened is that the CDC recommended that we not move people during the early stages of a pandemic,” Zapata said. “The general idea was that moving people could be detrimental to everyone’s health, and it was better to leave people in place.” For the most part, Portland did in fact follow that guidance and pause sweeps, during the heightened period of COVID-19 measures.

When COVID-19 first made its way to the United States in 2020, it was all-hands-on-deck for helping the American people to stay afloat. President Trump signed the CARES Act in December of 2020—a \$900 billion stimulus package that addressed the financial ruin that many Americans were facing due to job loss. Then in March of 2021, in his first big success as President, Joe Biden signed the American Rescue Plan—a \$1.9T stimulus package from Congress that included \$22 billion in rental assistance, \$5 billion in homelessness aid and nearly \$10 billion to help homeowners pay mortgages.

Between the Trump plan and the Biden plan, this aid was a lifeline for many people, but as time wore on and attention to the struggles people were experiencing decreased, that attention was turned to bringing the economy back at the expense of anyone who couldn’t hang on. In May 2022, Biden



even went so far as to urge cities to send unspent COVID relief funds to police and public safety.

"I think we definitely have seen an intensity and the discussion coming out of businesses that are downtown around homelessness," Zapata said. She added that there is a conflation between the impacts of COVID and the perception of homelessness and crime in downtown. While the center of the city does appear less populated generally than it may have a few years ago, it is important to keep in mind that fewer people are commuting into the office than did prior to the pandemic. But in 2022, the media has no incentive to focus on the spectacle of remote workers not going into downtown offices.

"Maybe it's not that it goes back to what it was before," Zapata said. "There are different futures to imagine in a central city. Nothing gets resolved by banning people from sleeping outside, and then forcing them into a camp or arresting them. In fact, everything gets made worse in terms of ending or resolving homelessness."

The City of Portland geared up again in February of 2022 with the announcement of an emergency ban on camping along roadways—the same month that disgraced former mayor and Wheeler-appointed "Director of Strategic Innovations" Sam Adams floated an idea to create shelters to house 3,000 people, guarded by unarmed National Guard members and graduate students from PSU's School of Social Work. In a scathing statement, the dean of the program Jose Coll pushed back on the idea, stating that

"this proposal contravenes social work values and is not being considered by the SSW. The school was not consulted about this plan, and we with PSU government relations are handling this matter." That May, the city swept twenty-one encampments in Old Town in just a few days, and a total of 206 encampments that month. Yet another announcement came from Mayor Wheeler in June, saying he intended to implement that same strategy citywide.

"We know that sweeps are harmful to people physically, they lose their belongings, and this erodes trust between people who are living outside and people who serve them or work with them," Zapata said.

She noted that while pods are not housing—because they do not have indoor plumbing or a kitchen—the power of the village pod concept is that it was possible to deploy them rapidly. But the latest resolution from Wheeler kicks the can down the road, with an explicit goal of opening the first of four proposed campuses eighteen months after the city secures funding for the project. In the November 3 vote, Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty proposed moving that goal to six months. But despite their public calls to address homelessness as an emergency, no other commissioner seconded her amendment.

"If they're going to take three years to get put in, we could have built housing on any of that property," she said. "We could have at least put the staff time into getting housing to happen instead of staff time into making the villages happen."

TED WHEELER WANTS TO START AT THE FINISH LINE

The latest resolution from Mayor Wheeler shows that his office understands many of the issues that people living outdoors face. The official city council document cites the need to address access to services, sanitation, safety, and long waitlists for services—all things that many people who experience homelessness would recommend, according to Street Roots. But the resolution goes on to inadvertently state the ineffectiveness of its own ban and sweep strategy, stating that "unsanctioned encampment removals increased by 2844% from September 2020 to September 2022, and despite the substantial increase in removals, the number of encampments has risen to over 700."

If removing unsanctioned encampments does not reduce the number of encampments, then why does Wheeler continue to implement more of the same strategy he has attempted for six years? It is a strategy that will continue to fail, and the only solution is to start at the beginning, and do the proven work of housing people first, without judgment or requirements that create barriers and force people to live in the streets.

DOCTRINA URBI SERVIAT

Privilege of Aversion

DYLAN O'HARRA

ILLUSTRATION BY CAMDEN BENESH

"You're all zombies. Staring at your phones. It's sad."

The person sitting across the aisle from me on the Blue Line MAX spoke in a steady, calm voice. I had just taken a seat towards the rear of the car, facing backwards, and the MAX rumbled awkwardly through a left turn. I was, in fact, looking at my phone and making a concerted effort not to acknowledge the speaker. Using our public transit system, it's a tactic derived from experience. You have to trust your instincts and know when not to engage.

The voice continued. "There's a whole world out there. I'm sorry you're all missing it. Look at you. Zombies." There were four or five us in the scope of the passenger's criticism: zombie-commuters on a rainy Saturday, in rain jackets and with bags, staring at our phones and riding backwards. No one responded. The human on the other side of the voice was close to me, a couple feet away. But the tone was too familiar; bait for a conversation that already felt like a confrontation.

I don't like ignoring people. Even out of a desire to avoid conflict, it feels dehumanizing. I don't want to have to keep my defenses up in

our city. I wanted to turn and meet the speaker's eyes—but what could I say that would be sincere or kind or reasonable? Something along the lines of: "Hello—you're right, my phone has turned me into a zombie. I should be noticing the world, instead of avoiding the people around me"?

I closed the opened app on my phone and, not wishing to draw attention, turned my eyes out the window. The speaker was right; outside of the sinkhole that is my phone, autumnal Portland was misty and filled with vivid detail. I took in the sight of the Saturday Market at Skidmore Fountain. The vendor stalls were bundled in extra tarps and tapestries to keep the goods dry. It was bustling, despite the chill. Seeing the market stirred memories of my first summer in Portland, back in 2007. I had never been to a street fair like this when I first arrived. The market was novel for me then, and I loved listening to the buskers. I haven't visited in a decade. A shirtless man with drumsticks thumped on an array of buckets, punctuating the connection between memory and the present.

The MAX lurched along NW 1st Avenue and, as we passed under the Burnside Bridge,

I watched a mural of a man's face roll by. It was beautiful and haunting. The space beneath the bridge was busy with people, too. Some standing, some walking, some lying down. I felt a knot in my stomach. A bridge as a living room; a sidewalk as a dormitory. Where can you go in this city without the expectation of spending money for access? When a society commodifies every possible aspect of being alive, public space is the last vestige of free living. The MAX line becomes a gathering place—and even here there is the threat of fines for riding without fare. No explanation can make sense of the divide between empty office buildings and the human beings without adequate shelter along the sidewalk.

"Maybe I should get off here," the voice said. It was the Old Town/Chinatown stop. As the passenger disembarked, they raised their voice and directed towards someone behind me.

"Hey! Better hide that bubble, buddy. Your meth pipe. I got your back, hide that bubble..." The doors closed.

I never got a glimpse of their face. Instead, I have the lingering timbre of a disembodied voice, reaching into my mind with dispassionate honesty.

I imagine the voice following me through my routines, waking up with me in the apartment I share with my partner and two cats. I imagine the voice floating beside me as I travel to campus and to my job and back. I imagine the voice monitoring my screen time and calling me out for drifting too far into numbness.

"You're not paying attention. Your homework

takes so long because you waste time daydreaming. College is just practice for a job, you'd better learn to manage your tasks efficiently." The voice chides me as I stare at the vocab glossary of my Reading Ovid textbook.

Sitting on my bed and setting the alarm on my clock app, I calculate the minimum sleep required (six hours) before I will return to campus to finish

homework. The disembodied voice catches me off guard. "Why aren't you playing bucket-drums at Skidmore Fountain?"

"I don't know," I say aloud. My partner, in bed already, looks up from their phone.

"What?" they ask.

"Nothing," I reply.



NOTES FROM BEHIND THE BAR

Quitting Time.

DAN CHILTON

ILLUSTRATION BY VIVIAN VEIDT

Like most, it started when the unemployment ran out.

We were at this dive down the street from our place. Some bar and grill that had been recommended to us for its steak. I ordered the chicken. We sat on one of those scratched up picnic tables on the sidewalk. The kind that every dive has all marked up with pens and stickers. Me and my lady.

Sitting there in the early sun of late Spring, Portland just coming back to life from her long comatose, I was waiting for my chicken and thinking about my bank account. I hadn't stepped foot in a kitchen since the last one I'd worked the line at had laid everybody off when we'd gotten the news that the world was going to the shitter. And I didn't mind. But now the unemployment checks had stopped and I wasn't eager about returning to the scene.

The bartender comes out with our food and he's wearing one of those plastic face shields with nothing underneath. As if that's accomplishing anything.

He places our food in front of us and then sits down at the table nearby and lights up a smoke. We get to eating and talking. We talk about unemployment running out and the jobs and the never ending pandemic. I'm halfway through my meal when the bartender inserts himself.

"If any of you needs a job, we're hiring right now."

I don't want to but I ask him about it. Seems the right thing to do given the circumstances.

"Yeah," he says. "The last guy up and quit and now we've only got one person working the kitchen right now."

I tell him that I've worked in plenty of dives but I think I call it something nicer. The point being, I have experience. I tell him that I'm not particular about getting back into the industry. Even though unemployment is up, I still have some savings I'm sitting on. I say that I could use the time to find something else.

Then he gets real close and I can smell the artificial mint of his cigarettes. He talks in a

whisper.

"I shouldn't tell you this, but the owners are willing to pay under the table. They're real desperate right now."

Tips too?

"Tips, too."

So despite all of my aversions I was back at another dive. They told me to come in the next week for training and I spent the majority of that week telling myself that I should look for something else. A week goes by and I ride my bike to the place and introduce myself to the lady tending bar.

"I'm so happy to meet you."

She said this with the kind of desperation I'd seen at other bars I'd worked at and I believe her.

"Chef is running late but why don't you go back and get yourself acquainted with the place."

The kitchen was one room. Two if you count the dingy staff bathroom that looked less sanitary than the staff itself. I wandered around the place, checking the line and refilling some tomatoes that look like they'd been sitting for a while too long. I looked over the menu and it was all fried food, minus the burgers. A proper dive.

She showed up an hour later. Hungover and grumpy. She must have been in her sixties. White hair and all.

"Hey there, looks like you're my new line cook."

I tell her that I guess I am.

"Well, let me get myself together and I'll show you the place."

She showed me the ropes over the next couple of weeks and tried to pressure me to stay by sweet talking me with that old lady charm. Telling me how good I was at the job. How I was gonna be her number two. I would tell her that there was only two of us and she would laugh and keep talking.

I did end up staying. The pay was decent and it was close to my apartment and most days I was back there by myself with time to spare. Since it was still mid pandemic and a recent shooting had happened just across the street, the place was a ghost town. So once I got in, heated everything up, got the fryers going, and all, I'd spend a lot

of time reading or writing. And all on the clock. It wasn't too bad.

The guy who hired me, he'd come back and try to shoot the shit with me as if we were old friends. As if he did me a favor.

"When the government is offering money to take the vaccine, that's how I know you can't trust it," he'd say.

I think that maybe the incentive is because people are being stubborn but he doesn't seem the guy to listen to that.

"We're all gonna catch it someday anyhow," he goes on as he grabs a plate from my line and starts working out a small plastic bag of white powder. "May as well not worry so much about it. I don't know how you'd trust what's in that thing anyways."

He makes a line on the plate with his ID, rolls up a wrinkled dollar, and hits it.

"You want some of this?" he asks. "Got it from this stripper I've been seeing. They get the best stuff."

I tell him maybe later cause I know the owners are due soon. Or because I don't trust his cocaine. Either way. Snorting, he walks back out front where a couple has wandered in off the street and greets them with an overenthusiastic welcome.

The owners were ok. An elderly couple who had been running the place since the 70's and had changed the name a couple of times. They came in on the odd days to check inventory and, I ventured, to apply the pressure to their staff. The woman barely spoke any English, or perhaps just barely spoke it to me. Her husband always tried to get buddy buddy with me. About my classes at the university or his niece who was doing the same. Or just about the kitchen in general. I'd keep myself busy while they were around so that they didn't feel like they were paying me to loaf.

When they'd leave, I'd get back to writing or reading or just wasting time. If I felt bad about being on the clock while doing this, I'd remind myself that it was deader than dead and it's not as if they were offering me benefits or job security or anything besides a small paycheck. I was there

until I wasn't. So may as well make the most of it.

Some days the lukewarm regulars would make their way back to my line. I think this started from the lady in charge being overly friendly with them and I was too nice to tell them to stop. This old guy would come back and he'd be there asking me to make his burger in this specific way and he'd give me a fiver. I knew he wasn't paying the bartender but since he was paying me, I didn't care.

"I'll be out at the slots," he'd say. "Do it like the last one you made. That was the best burger I've ever had here and I've been coming here since 1986 even though I don't drink... I just like the vibe and the owners, they know me... so does the chef and..."

And he'd just go on talking like that for a while until he burnt me out. Then I'd make his burger and take it out to him at the slot machines.

"Wow, that was fast," he'd say. "Like I said earlier, I've been coming since 1986... or was it 1985... no no, it was definitely 1986... anyways, I'm not used to the burgers coming out so fast and your burger is the best burger I've had since that one chef left a few years back... what was her name... Kate? No no... Maybe Maurice? I can't quite remember anyhow... No, it had to have been Kate..."

Then I'd amble my way back into my empty kitchen, the old guy's voice trailing away, and wait another hour before a new ticket showed up.

This is how most of the days there went. It was boring and full of dry spells that were occasionally broken by short rushes that usually happened right before closing time. But overall, it was boring and I was ok with it since I was writing and reading a lot.

Things went on.

It was summer and it got hot. I told the owners that I would need to cut down some of my hours when the school year started back up. I didn't mind the continued work, but I just wouldn't have as much time come September. They seemed to sympathize and when there was work to be done, I was good for it, so it seemed we were at an understanding.

One night, it must have been late July, there was the usual last minute rush. I was throwing pots and pans around, keeping the fryers full. The vents had stopped working a few days before and the place was like a damn sauna. I had the door wide open to the sidewalk but it only did so much with all that heat from the grill and the boiling oil.

The guy who hired me, he comes back from the front all worked up and grabs some bottles from dry storage. Before bringing them up front, he pulls his plate from below the counter where he kept his line and his ID and got one nice and clean for himself and hit it. He offered me some as usual but I was slammed and didn't have the time. He grabbed his bottles and grumbled his way out front.

When things finally died down, the last of my tickets finished off, he found his way back again.

"So the owners just told me that you're gonna go on call while they train someone new."

I ask him what he's talking about.

"This is just what they texted me. They want you to be on call cause they're training this new guy and he's gonna do your shifts."

I curse or something and ask what this is all about.

"I don't know anything more, man. They did tell me to make sure not to let you quit though

cause they like you and your work."

I'm still confused and angry at that point and he explains it all over but it doesn't help. From what I was gathering, they were replacing me and they hadn't the guts to come tell me to my face. Instead, this guy got the honors.

I thought about ditching and leaving the kitchen a mess. I cleaned it anyway. Cleaned out the line. Turned off the fryers. Bricked the grill. All while thinking that these people were getting the better of me. Even though I showed up for every shift and then some, got the food out on time and all proper looking, they were replacing me. I assumed it was because I'd told them that I had to cut back my hours when school started back up. Or maybe because I was getting my own work done on the clock. Not as if it affected my ticket times.

I finished up back there and got myself a free drink and sat at that scratched up picnic table and tried to enjoy it despite feeling like I'd been given the short end of the straw. I nursed my drink for a while, thinking things over. When I finished I brought the glass back to the guy at the bar.

"Don't go quitting," he said from behind that flimsy, plastic mask.

I wanted to ask him what the hell he thought that thin plastic was doing. But I knew his answer.

I never came back. I sent a text saying that I quit to the guy since I didn't have the owner's number. He never responded.

After only a couple months of work, I was back to where I was. Good thing I wasn't the only one calling it quitting time. I walked into the next place I saw with a desperately worded "Need Workers" sign out front.



A VERY MODEST PROPOSAL

A LETTER TO THE MAYOR

DAN CHILTON

ILLUSTRATION BY CAMDEN BENESH

To the honorable Ted Wheeler, respectable heir to Willamette Industries, upstanding Police Commissioner, Pontifex Maximus, & Mayor of Portland in His Second Remove,

Dear sir,

It seems that we have a blight on our hands. An affliction. An uncleanliness that we can't simply sweep away—as preferable as it would be. This scourge that I'm referring to, one that you're amply aware of, is the sin of sloth, as it were. Or, better known to the public as homelessness (or even the more outlandish "houselessness"). Yes, it's true. Look out any window at any angle of this city of roses and you'll find a stain upon the beautiful landscape of our home. Women selfishly sleeping on the bare concrete of the sidewalk; dishonest men dozing off on public transportation, thieving space that would otherwise be occupied by hard working and honorable citizens; displeasing tents loitering beneath proudly erected freeway overpasses; trash strewn carelessly to the wind rather than properly disposed of in designated landfills, hidden away from the public eye. This blight, this unseemly reality, bears no easy solution. Yet, I wish to make a very modest proposal to our

city's leadership that, perhaps, has not yet been discoursed for fear of reprisal.

There is an unassuming island on the most Westward side of the State of Hawaii called Niihau. Unlike the larger islands of Maui and Kauai, it appears that this island offers little-to-no value to the greater United States. Whereas Maui, for instance, offers a tropical escape for the respectable and hard working citizens of our country, this small island offers none and only houses a small population of Natives only interested in their own livelihood (rather than the Greater United States). This, I propose, offers an opportunity. An opportunity that perhaps you and yours, given your family's venerable and truly American history of respectable dominance, may be more familiar with than I.

Yet, before I commence this letter, I feel the need for a quick deviation in order to elaborate on this issue. You see, while those few selfish enough to avoid being an honest part of society get to live in relative ease, those of us upholding the basic tenets of civility are yet always restless and entertainment is a much deserved pastime of the American family. Yet, as I'm sure you're aware, there's a distinct lack of quality entertainment outside the confines of football season. I know,

good sir, that you're wondering as to my final goal in this regard. For these two ordeals seemingly have little in common. But, I ask, what is more patriotic than the honest sweat of your brow and the right to a good program?

I digress. Here is what I propose in all of its modesty. The city will invest a reasonable sum (a sum that will surely return tenfold) to gather—with the help of the honorable police department and those vigilantes so willing—all vagrants, sloths, and nobodies. From here, the city will ship them to the island of Niihau where they will be met with a receiving group prepared to meet their basic needs (for we are decent men, after all, and not monsters). Once the city has been cleared of this blight, displaced to this unhusbanded isle, the next step shall commence. Video equipment, at the behest of our greatest artists, will be scattered about the island and placed in undisclosed locations. Food and water will be dispersed sparingly at key points. Finally, hunting equipment will be left for those willing to find it. When all this has been accomplished, the city's staff will be evacuated from the island to return home to their grateful families.

And I hear you, sir, and your thoughts of the island's inhabitants being unhappy about, or



perhaps even unwilling to accept, the arrival of such unsightly vagabonds. Yet, I believe that there will be little said of the matter from those back home (especially once they realize the benefits they're to reap and the order to commence in the then-clean streets of our beautiful city). Those to be sent and those already present have more in common than they differ. That is, in their unwillingness to produce such fruits that add to the overall wellbeing of our great nation.

I return to my explanations of entertainment. For we cannot simply move these creatures from our beautiful city to the tropics of a picturesque isle without some form of compensation for our labors. The second part of my proposal is as follows. Those

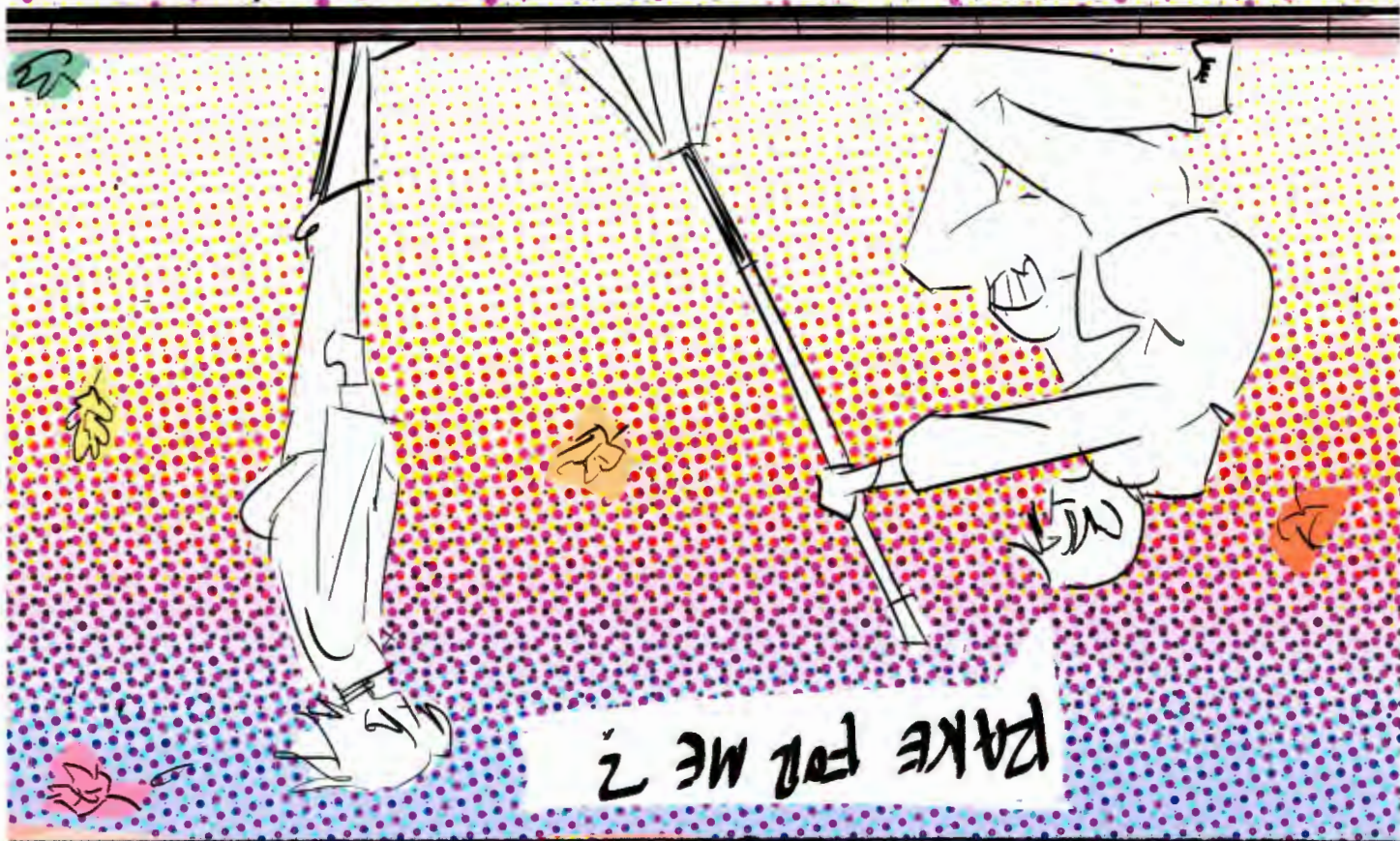
to be sent (and those already there) will participate in a new form of entertainment to earn their way in our society—just as we (and perhaps you in particular) already have. Each week, laughing and chattering family's will tune in around the dinner table to cheer on their favorite characters as they survive the cutthroat life on the island. Food and water will grow sparse. Healthcare, mental or physical, will be absent. A game of life or death will commence and, like the Romans of old, only the strong will survive. Perhaps, when the performance grows in popularity, as it surely will, further supplies will be scattered on the island to maintain the interest of our audience. And those who survive will earn their place and a trip back

home where they can once more contribute to a healthy and productive Portland.

I know, Mr. Wheeler, that you and yours will find this proposal in perfect alignment with your ideals as a great American man. I can only hope that this letter reaches you before it becomes too late and the blight of our city turns to a raging flood. And if all else fails, I have heard that we are in short supply of fresh sausage.

With all the respect a man can offer,
A Concerned Citizen

WAA C K K U

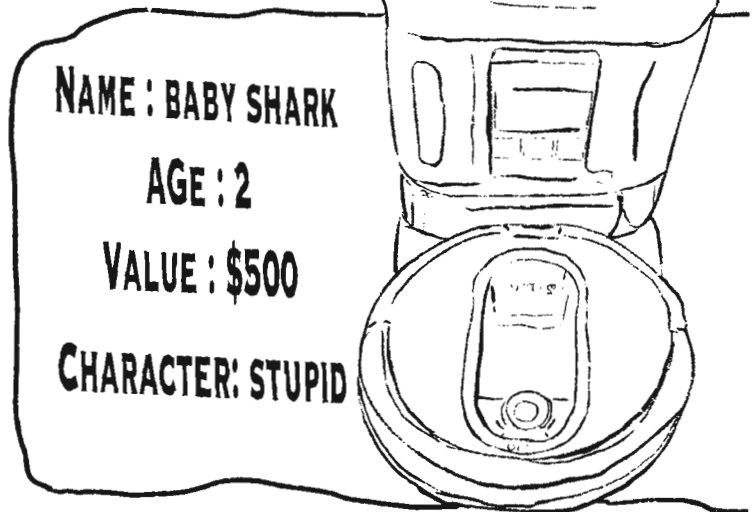
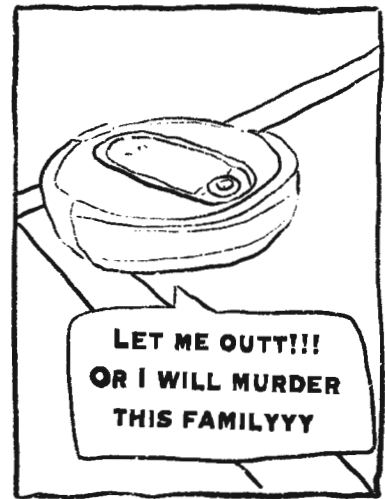
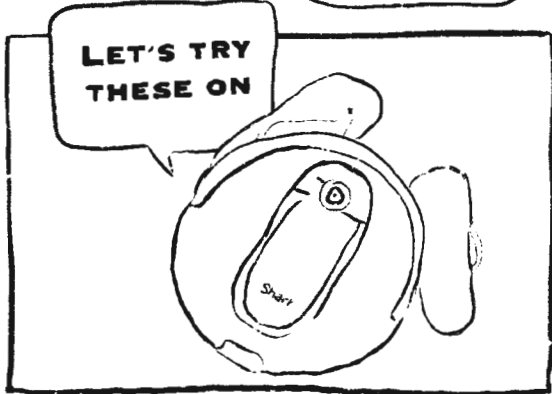
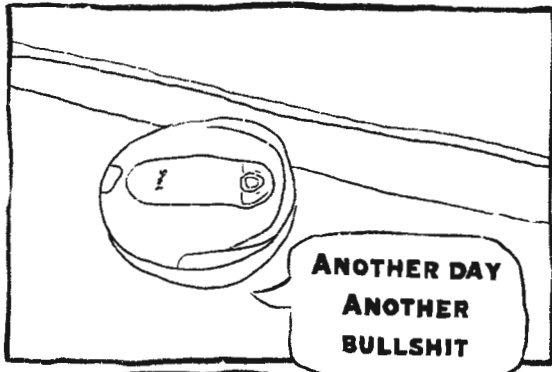


RAKE FOR ME ?



WILL YOU...

WHAT MY STUPID CLEANING ROBOT WOULD SAY



ASTRID LUONG

JOIN THE PACIFIC SENTINEL

AND EARN WHILE YOU LEARN!

WE'RE HIRING

MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

WRITERS

ILLUSTRATORS



THEPACIFICSENTINEL.COM/JOBS