



The Pretentious Press

April/May 2020

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“Follow The Money, Not Your Dreams” - Vice Dean Polinez

By: Rachael Summers

I remember it well. I was at the Society of Fellows meeting presenting my inorganic chemistry research. Vice Dean of Students Horatio Polinez was making his rounds, and I was blessed enough to have him stop by my poster.

“What’s dis all about den?” He said, faking a British accent for some reason.

“My professor and I took Nitrogen-containing ligands and combined them with various metal complexes in order to get original crystal lattices,” I said, reciting the script I memorized a few hours before.

“Oye mate, is this what you want as a future career?” He said, now doing an Australian accent.

“No actually, I want to do comedy writing.”

Vice Dean Polinez then erupted into a fury so explosive, it was felt across all 5 boroughs of the city, except for Staten Island.

“Comedy?!? You’ll never make any money in that! Stick with chemistry. That’s where all the money is. You have to make money you stupid idiot!”

Vice Dean Polinez spit in my eye.

He then took my poster and started beating me with it. “Owl!”

“This will teach you to ever have dreams!”

I laid there on the floor of the Bianco room in shock and pain. I prayed for Crab Girl to come avenge me, but she was busy inventing some virus that would cause a worldwide quarantine.

Vice Dean Polinez towered over me. He wasn’t done with his great speech, “You should always follow things. Never lead. But most importantly, follow the money, not your dreams. If I followed my dreams I’d be an astronaut earning nothing. Now, I’m the Vice Dean of Students and I’m a fajilian-aire!”

One of the science department nerds interjected, “Atchually, that’s not a number.”

“Silence science bitch!”

Polinez then reached into his pockets and started pelting us science bitches with quarters.

“Money is the source of all love. Money is what got my first wife to marry me. Money is what got me off the hook for her murder. Money is what runs through our veins, not blood!”

Thunder bolted outside, or maybe someone ate too much cheese at the welcome luncheon. Vice Dean Polinez then disappeared in a cloud of quarters.

The room was silent. The nerds were in shock at what just happened.

“Haha that was so funny Rachael!”

“What?” I was confused.

“That was such a funny joke, about you wanting to do comedy!”

“Mhm... maybe I AM funny.”

“No. Keep presenting your research.”

A single tear fell down my face.

I came back to my room and decided to sell my life-size cardboard cutout of Tina Fey. Maybe I could use the money to invest in some blue chip stocks. But that would take a while. I needed to be rich now. Vice Dean Polinez’s powerful words echoed in my mind, “Follow the money, not your dreams.”

Then, it hit me.

Meth! Why didn’t I think of that sooner?

I failed almost every single one of my organic chem tests, so how hard could it be to make Meth? I smiled to myself thinking of all the money I could make. Hopefully the FDA never catches me. So long comedy!

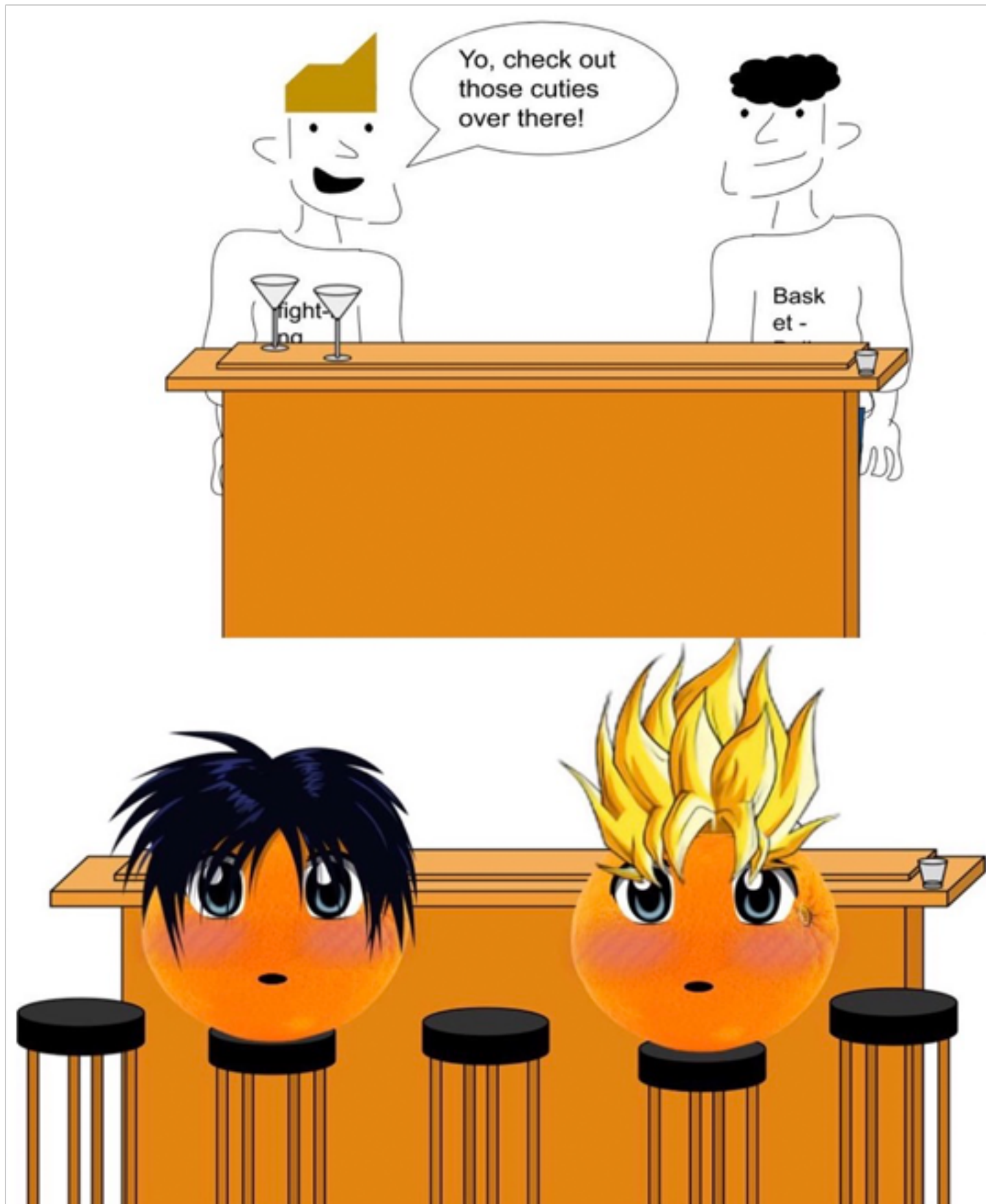


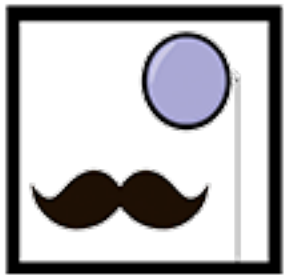
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This Month's Comic

By: Jack Brady





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Not Giving Up, Just Giving In

By: Isabel Fontanals

There are so many cool types of people in the world, all holding different values and having separate thoughts. I find myself intimidated by that. I don't know who I am. I may never know. What if I don't get my heart broken while studying abroad, or join a cult and get assigned a personality? What if I never discover myself on a hallucinogenic trip, or have a life vision during a meditation class? I've decided instead of finding myself, I'll just lose myself in a lifestyle that I have the utmost respect for. The craft of Conartisy.

Basically, what I am trying to convey to you, my sweet reader, is that I recently watched *American Hustle*. Since then, I have been desperate to drain myself of all these stupid morals society embeded in me. Watching Amy Adams fall in and out of a British accent and in and out of love with Christan Bale (featuring a comb over), was the best 138 minutes of my life. I couldn't help but think, "I could do that." I could love Christan Bale. I could be a loan shark. Why shouldn't I be the next Frank Abagnale and have Tom Hanks chase me around for a while?

So, I've decided to stop trying to find myself, and start pickpocketing. Con artists all start somewhere, and that seems easy enough. A young gal out on the streets just going to meet a girlfriend for coffee, "Oh! Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry to bump into you like that! I'm having a bad day, my cats made a suicide pact and all killed themselves. Sorry again sir, have a nice-" bam, I have his girlfriend's husband's watch. It's as easy as that people.

Oh just a weak woman student going to class, nothing to see, "Ouch!"

"Oh, it's no big deal ma'am I wasn't looking up either."

"Haha, no proble-" wallet in my hand. So many pictures of his younger son but hardly any of the older. Older son must be a nerd. Look out people, this is real. I'm here to manipulate the system. Just an idiot young person looking down at their government spy box while crossing the,

"Oh shit!"

"Dude you just hit me with your car."

"Fuck bro what the hell."

"Yea I might need some help up."

"Jesus bro."

"No, I feel fine but fucking watch out next time alright."

"Yea we're good. For real we're good we're good."

"Okay bro, have a good on-"

I stole his entire identity in that conversation. Stay woke you little shits. I won't need to look out for danger when I am the danger.

I'll start small and work my way to the big leagues. The cops'll try but they can't find something if they don't know what they're looking for. My name from now on is spoken only in whispers. Instead of painting the blank canvas of who I am, I'll stick other people's prints of work on it. I'm freed of my own personality, whatever that would have become. I now live on the surface of life, becoming whatever kind of person I need to finish the job. I would like to say thank you to those who got me to this point, but real sincerity is unfavored in my profession so I won't. Goodbye.



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Avatar: The Last, Chapter 2

By: Seinfeld_Jerry

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Major Character Death
Categories:	F/F , F/M , M/M , Multi
Fandoms:	Avatar: The Last Airbender , The New York City Subway System
Relationships:	Aang/Zuko (Avatar) , Sokka/Yue (Avatar) , Aang/Katara (Avatar) , Azula/Katara (Avatar) , Azula/Ty Lee (Avatar) , Korra/Asami Sato , Frank Sinatra/Brendon Urie , Katara/Zuko (Avatar)
Characters:	Aang (Avatar) , Zuko (Avatar) , Ozai (Avatar) , Katara (Avatar) , Sokka (Avatar) , Katara's and Zuko's Child(ren) , Combustion Man , Cabbage Man (Avatar) , Azula (Avatar) , Ty Lee (Avatar) , Bill de Blasio , Saturday Night Live Cast , Appa (Avatar) , Yue (Avatar) , Iroh (Avatar) , Zhao (Avatar) , Lu Ten , Ember Island Players , Guru Pathik , Mai (Avatar) , Jerry Seinfeld , Peter Parker , Sans (Undertale) , Andrew Cuomo
Language:	English

Summary: Water. Earth. Fire. Air. Staten Island. Long ago, the five boroughs lived together in harmony. Then, everything changed when Manhattan gentrified Brooklyn. Only the Avatar, master of all five boroughs, could stop them, but when the world needed him most, he vanished. A hundred years passed and my brother and I discovered the new Avatar, an airbender named Aang, and although his airbending skills are great, he has a lot to learn before he's ready to save anyone. But I believe Aang can save New York.

Previously on Avatar:
Katara was flustered, "Are you... an airbender?"
He answered, "Word."

Zuko stood in a crowded J train cart, pressed up against a window.

"Uncle I don't understand why we couldn't take an Uber, this is urgent business."

"Zuko relax. I'm sure it was all nothing. And when you're done buggin' out we can sit down and have some jasmine milk boba tea."

"I don't need tea, uncle! I need to find the Avatar!" Zuko's outburst was so loud that people started to stare. Luckily, it was their stop.

Zuko emerged from Fulton Street station wearing khaki pants with a chain and Gucci sweater that's just a red sweater. There's no label on it. You just have to *know* that it's Gucci.

Directly behind him was his dear uncle Iroh, rocking some classic old man sneakers and a belt that holds his cell phone.

Upon exiting Fulton, it wasn't long before Zuko spotted a suspiciously dressed kid floating in the air. The Avatar! No wait... False alarm, just a street performer. He wasn't sure where to start his search so his uncle just dragged him into the nearest bubble tea shop.

And just by fate, inside that boba shop were two water tribe kids and a twelve year old boy with strange tattoos and bald head. This had to be him! Zuko, the dishonored heir to Manhattan, was now face to face with the Avatar, heir to New York.

"I just wish we lived in a part of the Bronx that had access to the subway!" the girl said.

"Katara, would you deadass choose this kid over your tribe, your own family?" her brother replied.

"Hey." Zuko interrupted them. And like true New Yorkers, they completely ignored him. "Hey, my dad's the fucking mayor. I need that kid, hand him over."

"Bet. You wanna catch these hands?" Sokka gets up. He pulls out a boomerang, to which Zuko replies, "You can't just pull out a weapon in a public place like this. The hell is wrong with you? I'm gonna call the police. I'm gonna call my lawyers. They're going to financially destroy you."

Aang approaches Zuko with caution, asking, "If I go with you, will you leave them alone?"

Uncle Iroh finally receives the tea he ordered and asks Zuko what he missed.

Zuko, still lacking an inside voice, answers, "UNCLE, GET AN UBER TO THE UPPER EAST SIDE, I'M DEADASS GOING HOME."



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An Unexpected Friend In Quarantine

By: Sophia Tan

It goes without saying that in the past several weeks, we have experienced too much time at home. And sure, while our pets may be living the dream of our nonstop company, I recently came face to face with another being that wasn't so happy with this circumstance.

One day last week, I sat alone as my family finally made an outing to the grocery store without me. While I sat on my sofa, I heard footsteps arising from the basement. I was in complete bewilderment when it was the face of someone I'd never seen before -- a pale and disheveled man, a modern-day Boo Radley. I was too paralyzed to scream.

"Damn. I thought everybody left," He said.

I looked at him in shock.

"The name's Dennis. I've been vibing in your basement for about 5 years now."

"You were vibing unsupervised?!?"

"I got kicked out of my house a few blocks down so I snuck in through your basement window. I've been living in the closet where you guys keep your skiing equipment."

Of course! We haven't been skiing in years!

"But ever since the quarantine started, you guys never freakin' leave, and I've been having to live off of old scraps I collected for weeks," he huffed and puffed in anger.

"Man, what is this *Parasite* shit?" I exclaimed. We literally live in a two story suburban house in the middle of nowhere. I guess that explains why sometimes my snacks were missing from the pantry when my family swore they never ate them.

"You know what, I like your face. Let me take you to my crib."

I followed Dennis down into the basement and he opened the closet with our skiing supplies.

"This is the party pad!"

Dennis somehow defied the laws of space and time to create a mansion in our closet. The grand hall was beautiful and lined with gold. He showed me to the backyard where he had his own pool, and handsome lifeguard. We then rode the elevator up to the master bedroom where Dennis had not one, but two Nintendo Switches. We took a slide down to the kitchen where his chef cooked us filet mignon.

"I don't understand... Why do you need to ever come upstairs?"

"Oh it's simple really. You guys always have a full stock of Cheez-itz."

I was kind of pissed and freaked out that this guy had been hiding in the shadows and mooching off our Cheez-its for so long. But also, I felt kind of bad; he seemed pretty shy, as if he didn't want to intrude upon my family's life.

"So, you've been quarantining yourself for 5 years?" I asked.

"Yeah," responded Dennis. After I explained our situation, he was in disbelief that people couldn't quarantine for more than a week without going crazy. I didn't really know where to go from there. I suppose I had no choice but to integrate him into the household, despite what my family was going to think. I mean, was I just going to chuck him in the streets with nowhere to go? What kind of person would that make me?

Since then, I've paid a few visits to the skiing closet. Dennis and I have been enjoying some quarantine activities such as baking banana bread and participating in at home yoga workouts. He no longer lives in fear of hiding. When this is all over, and we're finally released back into the world, maybe he'll come too.



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This Month's Art- Café Terrace at Night

By: Jack Brady





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The Mentor of My Heart: Part Three: The Squeakquel to The Squeakquel: The Lost Chapter

By: Sarah Baker

Author's Note: You all remember the story of The Mentor of my Heart -- Regina was so excited to get sold to her Honors mentor, Brittany. But lo and behold, there were really strict rules about touching at the Honors event. So, Brittany suggested that they run away together. They ran away to the Honors Lounge, where Regina learned that she was what the Honors College calls "convergent," so she must save the school because half of the population are aliens and nobody knows how to tell who's who.

But what you may not know is that Chapter Three: The Squeakquel to the The Squeakquel was lost, never to be found. Until recently. We at the Pretentious Press were quarantining in our private homes when a carrier pigeon flew in my window and dropped a message in a bottle in my bed. I couldn't believe my eyes when I opened it and found The Squeakquel² - what we'd been missing all this time. I now present to you The Mentor of My Heart: Part Three: The Squeakquel to The Squeakquel: The Lost Chapter.

Brittany, I don't know how I can do this. I'm so dizzy," I said. I was sweating in the girl's bathroom as Brittany gave me paper towels to wipe off my face and sprayed me with her perfume, Wonderstruck by Taylor Swift.

"Maybe your knee-high Converse are too tight, Regina. But I know you can do this," Brittany replied. She squeezed my hand and kissed me on the cheek. My heart fluttered and suddenly I knew, in that moment, we were infinite. And I could do anything she said to do.

I ran back into the Honors Lounge. I ran straight up to Jamie, who was polishing her bow and arrow.

"Jamie, I'm ready for any task you have," I declared. Jamie smiled.

"Good work, Brittany," she said. "Come with me."

She took me into the offices, and behind a desk there was a secret door that I had never seen before. We went through it, and suddenly, we were inside of a timeless void. "Where are we?" I asked. No one answered.

After some time, Jamie finally responded. "As I said, Brittany, that was good work. The one with the power to stop us is now trapped in our void. Good luck, Charlie!"

She and Brittany left the timeless void and suddenly I was alone in there.

"My name is Regina!" I screamed. No one could hear me. I couldn't believe the betrayal. I could hear my heartbeat in my ears. Tale as old as time, I thought. The first time I fall in love, and she betrays me. She tricked me. I was fooled.

I spent four years quarantining inside of that timeless void. One day, I heard a noise at the door. When I looked up, I couldn't believe my eyes. I thought I was hallucinating. But standing there in front of me was Brittany. Even though she had bamboozled me, I still loved her after all this time.

"Regina, come on, let's get out of here. You knew I would keep you safe, right?" she said.

"Well, yeah, Brittany, but I've been here for four years," I declared.

"Umm, Regina, it's been 45 minutes." She gave me a big kiss with tongue. "Let's go, Regina. The evil has been defeated."

THE END



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Majoring in Computer Science Made Me Hate Technology

By: Eren Sari

I've been coding since I was 13 and founded my first startup, a lemonade stand, when I was 13 ½. Throughout all the years of hard work, I can't even remember how many times I've written the "Hello World!" program. But now, I'm tired. No longer can my poor eyes endure staring at blue light for 20 hours straight. My laptop has burned through my optical nerves, and also my bedding. It was overheating one day and my sheets caught on fire. I was afraid to tell my parents about how many hours I had been spending on the computer, so I lied and told them the burns were from smoking opium.

Nevertheless, I'm done with these beep-boop machines! This "Computer Science" thing has corrupted my very being beyond repair, and to be honest I am still having a hard time understanding "Hello World!". I knew I needed to go back to my roots, so I've left New York to become a simple farmer. By the time you read this, it will be too late- I'll already be farming root vegetables. I can finally put my debugging skills to use, removing actual physical pests from my crops. If all goes well, I will be able to live out my true dream of co-founding a radish startup. Obviously that's a joke- one can't start a company on such an off-trend plant, I'm going to focus on a more popular fruit, the apple.

Shortly after I made my departure from Pace, I let my professors know what kind of business I was trading my education for. I thought they would be disappointed after spending countless hours teaching me asymptotic computational complexity and how to print "Hello World!" Despite watching me throw all that work all away, my professors couldn't be more elated!

At first they thought I got an Apple-internship, but I explained it was a real full-time job and investment in apples. Much to my surprise, they invited me to come back and give a presentation to the School of Computer Science! I'll see you guys in the Seidenberg lounge I guess! You better have the ~~opium~~ good pizza there for me when I visit.

While I spend time at home, my apple orchard will start small, just a couple of guys in their parents' garage. But eventually, we'll evolve into a trillion-dollar corporation, revolutionizing the apple field. Of course, I'll likely acquire pancreatic cancer along the way and perish before I can see the fruitful product of my labor. But it won't be in vain! As long as my macintosh apples have a place in every home in America, I will know that I've made my mark.





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Babushka Advice Column: Anything BUT Quarantine Edition

By: Selini Athena Drakos

The advice column from your favorite Russian grandmother is back! And she's here to answer all your questions that are not quarantine related!

Hi Babushka, big fan! How fast should I eat a meal?

As fast as you can. You never know when wolves will eat it first. They are watching, always watching...

Earlier in the week, there was a thunderstorm and I was sitting at home but it was really scary. How will I protect myself from another thunderstorm?

There is simple way to protect yourself from storm. When it starts, go outside. Puff chest out and scream "YOU WANT PIECE OF THIS?" If scary enough, storm will leave. If not scary, RUN.

Hi Babushka. I'm graduating this semester and I'm not sure what I should do next. I'm not ready to go to grad school yet and I don't have a full-time job. Is there something I should do with my time?

Yes, find yourself nice husband.

Hey there Babu, got any good music recommendations? Don't call me Babu, respect your elders. Go on YouTube, look up "buranovskiye babushki – party for everybody." You won't regret it.

Now that the school year is almost over, any plans to continue the advice column in the fall?

Sadly, all good things come to end. It has been wonderful helping you all. The youth are clearly misguided, I am happy to do part. Now is time to travel world. Where I will go, I do not know. Maybe I will be Tik Tok star. World is oyster and sea is toilet.



A Senior's goodbye-

A big thank you to all Pretentious Press readers. I'm honored to have been writing for this paper for over a year now and I can't thank you enough for (hopefully) enjoying what we've created. This has been my second favorite (gotta give my first to Model UN) experience at Pace and I've made the best memories with this amazingly weird group of people.

Love you all.



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A Love Letter to Discord

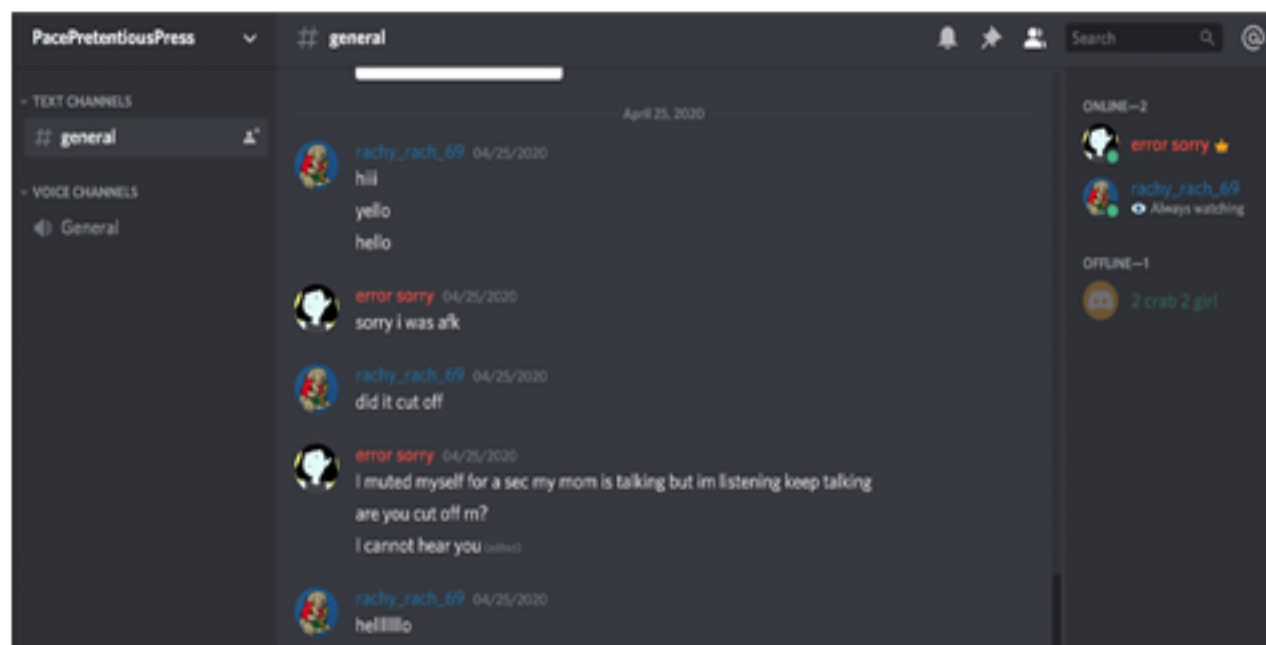
By: Sasha Sackichand

Oh Discord, no matter how annoyingly fast you pop up on my laptop immediately after turning it on, I still value you. Not only are you a blessing to the bored and lonely, but also an amazing companion during this time of social distancing. I've spent countless nights letting out delirious 4 am giggles through your servers, messing with your bots throughout the day, and jumping to discussions pondering the metaphysical landscape encompassing Caillou in your vocal chat options.

Even though your Rythm Bot may not always process my demands to play "Fuck Brandon" for the fourteenth time in a row, I still appreciate your efforts in keeping me sane. You are constantly updating and fixing your features, giving me more reason to love you, like that time you disabled my microphone for two days. At least I still have the option to mute Brandon when he leaves his mic on and takes his computer to the bathroom.

Your addition of group video call that crashes my entire application, may not be on par to that of Zoom, but that is not why I came to you. You allow me to stare at all my friends' blank expressions as they work on call AND listen to "bass boosted fortnite default dance 10 hours". Not to mention, I know you would never cheat on me by bringing anyone else into our server. Except for that one time a man claiming to be a Nigerian Prince exposed himself to all of my friends. You're loyal to me and treat my right by respecting my privacy. Whatever late-night cries you overhear I know are safe with you.

I understand you're dealing with a lot of stress right now having to cater to more people using your services due to Coronavirus. But know that I appreciate you for giving me an outlet to socialize, and to have my ears assaulted by the mic on Brandon's cheap gaming headset. I know you're worried that you'll be forgotten once quarantine is over, but I promise I'll come visit you whenever I am bored enough to.





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Quiz- Build a Mythical Creature and We'll Tell You Which Chain Superstore You Are

By: Selini Athena Drakos

1. How many horns will you have and where?

- A. 1 on my forehead
- B. 3 on the top of my head
- C. 6 on my back like a stegosaurus
- D. Dozens covering my body

2. What is your magical power?

- A. Cloning
- B. Flight
- C. Invisibility
- D. Storm conjuring

3. Choose one of the following:

- A. Hooves
- B. Wings
- C. Rabbit ears
- D. Snout

4. Where will you live?

- A. A cave
- B. In the clouds
- C. An enchanted forest
- D. The pits of hell

5. How will you breed?

- A. Eww that's a perverted question
- B. Eww that's a perverted question
- C. Eww that's a perverted question
- D. Through sex

THE RESULTS:

Mostly A's: Costco – Your strength can be intimidating to some, but your high ceilings will strike fear in the hearts of anyone who dares to set foot. However, once someone gets to know you, you are the designated “mom friend” with your free samples and bulk supplies!

Mostly B's: Target – With your aesthetically pleasing commercials, your style game is always on point! And red is definitely your color!

Mostly C's: Albertsons – What the crap is an Albertsons?

Mostly D's: Walmart – You are always up for a good time. Your aisles are so plentiful that my Republican father can spend ten hours shopping and hide under a cash register during closing. Some people may describe your energy as “chaotic,” but the correct word is “charming.”



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This Month's Pooh Um- Going Out

By: Rachael Summers

Maybe I'll try tonight, put on a dress
There are so many stupid things to do and I want to do them best
The night is young
So am I
That's why I have a fake
I'm too old to not try
I'm going out tonight
I'm going to wear heels
A dash of makeup, a tight shirt
Something that reveals
I'm going out
I've adjusted my hair-wash schedule so
It's a Saturday night
I want to spend it with 3 friends and a bunch of strangers I don't know
It's a Saturday night
I want to be crowded in a hot small space
I want to get home at 4 AM
I want an unkempt stranger breathing in my face
I want to wake up and apologize
For I'll have had too little to say that much
I want to lower my Uber rating
It was his car and there are some things I shouldn't touch
I'll get out of bed at 2 pm
My stomach and I won't agree
My feet will hurt
I'll have some memorable pictures
It's all part of getting a degree

Keep Up With Us Over The Summer!

Thank you all for a great year! We can't wait to resume in the fall. To read old editions or apply to be on the team, check out our website: www.pretentious.press

For other inquiries contact us at pretentiouspress@gmail.com

Instagram and Twitter @PacePretentious

Staff: Jack Brady, Isabel Fontanals, Kaylie Leitner, Sasha Sackichand, Sophia Tan

A special thank you to our graduating seniors: Sarah Baker, Selini Drakos, Lesley

Vaysman, Selena Ma, and Rachel Cregier

Editors-In-Chief: Eren Sari and Rachael Summers

Faculty Advisor: Jonathan Danziger