



A Few Frigid Pigeons

A Poetry Chapbook

A few Frigid Pigeons

A poetry collection by the University of Detroit
Mercy's creative writing class

A few Frigid Pigeons

Forward by Dr. Nicholas Rombes

Including works from:

Delaney Alward

Nicholas Blakey

Heba Elbazzal

Emily Forth

Morgan Grundy

Equiella Harris

Jake Leslie

Menachem Roetter

Santana D. Scott

Mina Spryszak

Emily Tarchala

Dominic Turcott

Jessica Turner

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Department

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Forward

A Few Frigid Pigeons represents the work of the students in English 2050: Introduction to Creative Writing at the University of Detroit Mercy during the Winter semester, 2020. The title refers to pigeon that joined the class on a cold February evening, perched on the windowsill during our poetry workshop. She seemed to want to join our group and, in our imaginations, at least, she did.

This chapbook was completed during the alarming, unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic, a few weeks after the students' lives changed drastically and they packed up, leaving behind the campus, and the place where we would meet once a week in the Briggs Building to share and critique our work.

So we completed the chapbook virtually, and so much gratitude goes to Santana Scott, who designed, edited, and in Detroit's DIY spirit, literally made *A Few Frigid Pigeons* come to life. Without Santana, there would be no chapbook. The English Department and the Dudley Randall Center for Print Culture also provided support.

We hope you enjoy and find nourishment in these poems. They are a snapshot of words, experiences, and feelings from the weeks before we knew about the scope and devastation of the pandemic.

We believe that words can sustain us and we hope that these poems—even if it's just one or two lines—speak to you and sustain you, reader, whomever you are, wherever you are.

Prof. Nick Rombes
April 2020

Delaney Alward



- ◆ Year: Sophomore
- ◆ Major: Psychology
- ◆ Minor: Leadership
- ◆ Favorite Food: Buttered Noodles

Delaney Alward is from a small midwestern town called Gladwin, Michigan. You can find Delaney either boating, riding horses, running, swimming, or just basically doing anything outdoors. Alward enjoys history in addition to her love for psychology. In regards to her seemingly critical poem to Mr. Maslow, it is worth noting that Alward highly respects those who have made strides in the field of psychology (such as Mr. Maslow) but also wholeheartedly believes that beginning any and every situation with love in mind creates the strongest foundation for positive development.

Dear Mr. Maslow

a hierarchy of needs
set to explain human nature
with love third on the list
following basic needs
and safety
clinically this makes sense
psychologically it makes sense
but to me
love first
love others
love yourself
yes, food and shelter and safety are important
but
had love come first
love would provide
we can provide all other needs on the list
I challenge you:
start with love
lead with love
and watch the rest fall into place

Nicholas Blakey



- ◆ Year: Junior
- ◆ Major: Cybersecurity
- ◆ Minor: N/A
- ◆ Favorite Food: Ramen Noodles

Nicholas often writes in fantasy & fiction, but his occasional dabble in poetry is always well received. Over the last three years, as a hobby, he has been constructing the first book in a novel series called “Enigma.” Look for it on shelves later this year.

Falling

I'm Falling again
in a split second of obliterated but heightened consciousness
with the bothersome noise of that same
mahogany clock that I've owned for so long, ticking
away,
into that same unknown and unfamiliar world
of mystique and whimsical wonder.
I've descended into these depths many times,
and every experience is further detached from the last in
familiarity.
What will be shown to me?

Will it be the flowing lavender rivers of blooming ethereal roses
that soothe the mind?
Or the scorching embers of my past that have shriveled and
withered
away,
from memory?

Or will the terrifying unreal take hold
revealing its bare and gluttonous teeth
to show my sensations that my inner and darkest fear is
inevitable,
inescapable?

A hallucination's best friend,
Even when the experience,
the absurdity,
the certainty, is unascertained,
I cannot do without this collapse
for when my feet will leap
into the air, into these unpremeditated depths,

My Fall will be remembered.

Heba Elbazzal



◆ Year: Sophomore

◆ Major: Nursing

◆ Minor: N/A

◆ Favorite Food: Seafood

Heba Elbazzal is a sophomore at University of Detroit Mercy in the nursing program. She's been an avid animal lover with snakes and a lizard for years and enjoys taking care of them all in her free time. Besides that she loves watching horror movies and eating her favorite foods—seafood or pretty much anything sweet .

Backpacks

One five subject notebook. Two Pencils. Three Nutri-Grain Bars
Six wads of crumpled paper. One melted lipstick. AirPods.
Work apron, name tag, and one planner.
Be there on time.

Six pens. Three Binders. Burt's Bees chapstick.
Two highlighters. One MacBook. Three Adderall pills.
An Apple pencil, an iPad, and a PB&J sandwich.
With love, Mom.

One pen. Two binders. One notebook.
Seven take out receipts. Two pregnancy tests. Five food wrappers.
Four As on exams. Six bucks.
Stop sleeping in class.

What won't be found amongst these bags
Is something they have in common
A life lost.

No matter how organized or cluttered they may be,
They'll just get emptied out at the end of the day.
Forgotten about, dismissed, and disregarded.

Send silence packing.

Emily Forth



- ◆ Year: Junior
- ◆ Major: Biology
- ◆ Minor: Leadership
- ◆ Favorite Food: Vegetables

Emily has always been passionate about science and art. Due to her education at Detroit Mercy, poetry has become her favorite writing style. One of her greatest accomplishments at Detroit Mercy has been becoming president of the chemistry club. This summer she will be applying to dental school in hopes of continuing her education at Detroit Mercy's School of Dentistry.

Leo

My life was compact
Yet had enough opportunities to reach
From the end of my telescope to beyond
The stars.
My tasks changed
With the phases of the moon
Each time I became wiser.
My thoughts called the Church's ear
Like the rings of Saturn
Calling out heresy.
As my days came to a close
And illness stormed my universe
I know people will remember my findings.
That is what is
in fact, keeping them
grounded.

Morgan Grundy



◆ Year: Senior

◆ Major: History

◆ Minor: N/A

◆ Favorite Food: Chocolate

Morgan spends most of her time in class, at work, or studying. In her free time, you can find her skiing. She enjoys being outdoors and traveling. She loves to write about her adventures. She also enjoys writing poetry about going on adventures and nature—especially about winter.

She Believes

I was late.

Lights had dimmed.

But still illuminating my feet
as I settled into my seat.

So I see this woman leap off the pages onto a screen.

Power seeped through the chairs as
if smoke were filling the air,

Choking us

With inspiration and amazement

For the warrior's bravery.

Bullets fly pass her, but she is brave,

Confident in every way.

A woman on a screen,

Representing me

Or someone I can be.

The cold leather of the chair could not comfort me.

I was intrigued, amazed, and inspired.

She fights for others

While being a woman.

Adding strong, confident, and protective into its definition.

The theater is alive.

Her armor shines as

She leaps off the screen,

landing on her feet.

My breathe caught in my throat,

And then she spoke:

“It's not about what you deserve; It's about what you believe.”

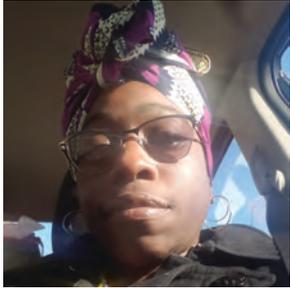
Her name:

Diana.

And she believes

in me.

Equiella Harris



- ◆ Year: Unknown Transfer
- ◆ Major: Psychology
- ◆ Minor: Leadership
- ◆ Favorite Food: Chicken Schawarma

Equiella is a urban fiction writer and poet. She does write other genres such as; dystopians, scientific fiction, fantasy and murder mystery. She has been fortunate to publish called THROUGH THICK & THIN—BY IFE ORISHA. Ife Orisha is her pen name. Equiella enjoys writing specifically realistic fiction or fiction that touches on real life events or conspiracies. She looks forward to publishing at least one other book this year (hopefully two). She is really am looking forward to having one of her books displayed on the big screen someday. She hopes you will enjoy her poem, #RELATIONSHIP #GOALS

RELATIONSHIP # GOALS

You instantly feel when we enter
The room
A black love so power that
You
Are a coon if you try to deny it.
They shout at a “Relationship Goals”
Because our souls have
Intertwined
Forming a circuit, creating a frequency so intense that it causes
paradigm shifts and paradoxes

See, the love that we have
defies all laws of time
Or maybe even the laws of the universe
Creating the phenomenon called a big bang
God can't even dismantle what we create
So they stand in line
Waiting on their turn to ride
This love rollercoaster
That gives us many thrills
Have us pumping adrenaline like heroine
As we ride
The wave
Of emotion
Like an addiction
And those haters out there
Are the bias therapist that tries to infiltrate the bond that our
souls have made

But they can't
See,
To sever our connection

Would cause a ripple effect which could possibly lead to
generational curses increasing bitter divorces all because of those
poor choices those envious forces made when they tried to
extinguish our twin flame

Naw, there ain't no reason for us to separate
But they why our souls have binded together makes us
inseparable anyway

But they do still try.

So you see,

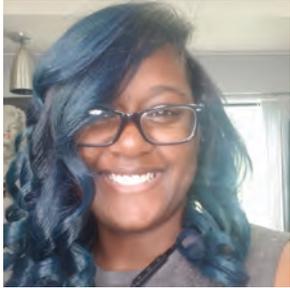
By our deep connection

And tight connection of our souls

Makes us the blueprint of

Relationship Goals

Tajena Horne



- ◆ Year: Sophomore
- ◆ Major: Psychology
- ◆ Minor: Sleeping
- ◆ Favorite Food: Shrimp Alfredo

When she had the time to do so, Tajena usually writes fiction. She doesn't dislike non-fiction, it just isn't something she often reads or writes about. She does, however, like reading poetry and seeing how creative people are, but personally dislikes writing poetry; she feels that her poetry just seems boring compared to everyone else. She likes to write fiction because it really lets her mind roam free.

untitled

On the road
looking for an adventure.
Clear skies
clear mind.
I'm in for a treat.

Cruise control
taking control.
I'm just going with the flow.
Wind wrestling with my hair,
listening to my favorite song on repeat.

One minute I'm in the city.
Seeing people airy and carefree.
The next I'm in the wilderness.
Noticing the jovial animals as I pass.

Stopping occasionally to reload,
then continuing on my venture.
Freedom being redefined
and not knowing what lies ahead.

I'm on a good roll
with good vibes in tow.
It's pretty nice to go anywhere
while the sun beams from overhead.

Jake Leslie

- ◆ Year: Sophomore
- ◆ Major: Computer Science
- ◆ Minor: N/A
- ◆ Favorite Food: Ice Cream

Jake Leslie is a computer science student from the metro Detroit area. he has a fondness for writing non-fiction poetry and listening to good music.

Back Seat of the Car

sitting in silence, with brief whispers
we sit in the back, as the car drifts across the road
we are hot, we want to be freed
it is July, and you are mad
all we hear is other conversations, that are not our own
when we get to whisper, it is not who we really are
the new car smell, is nauseating
the hour long ride, is even more nauseating
a recurring feeling, there is nothing I can do about it
we sit in the back, longing for the end
and when it does, we wish it did not end
knowing that it will be long, and strenuous
as it is so hot, filthy where we get out
yet we trek on, because we know
that it would be a waste, after all of that
but at least, we get to be who we really are

Menachem Roetter



- ◆ Year: Junior
- ◆ Major: Addiction Studies
- ◆ Minor: Leadership
- ◆ Favorite Food: Pizza

Menachem is a 25-year old who enjoys life to the fullest, despite his personal struggles. He often writes whatever topic is closest to his heart, not concerned for genre. He has a cat named Pumpkin and loves her dearly. Aside from going to school full-time, Menachem also works in a local kosher restaurant named Kravings.

Sad Laughter

I stand by a grave in a cemetery,
where
I'm told your body slowly
decays into dust during these dark and desolate days.
Crying, yet oddly
smiling, with sad tears slowly streaming down
as I begin to laugh like a lunatic.
I marvel at memories that will never
continue. Yet conveniently, will never cease to cause the
confused
broken brother that buried the body,
to smile and laugh until the end of his days.

Written January 9th, 2020 — 3 days after 10 years...

Santana D. Scott



- ◆ Year: Senior
- ◆ Major: Mathematics
- ◆ Minor: English
- ◆ Favorite Food: Crêpes

Santana often writes epics, although he also enjoys technical and mathematics writing just as much. He enjoys typography, and in addition to writing the following poem, he designed and edited this chapbook.

irony of linguistics

Purple large silk French fancy hat?

Fancy large purple French silk hat.

Mina Spryszak



- ◆ Year: Senior
- ◆ Major: Psychology
- ◆ Minor: N/A
- ◆ Favorite Food: Ice Cream

Mina usually writes fiction. She typically writes short stories and novels. These topics of these works ranges from everyday life experiences to supernatural occurrences.

Migrant

A woman flees her home country,
In search of a better life.
She's told to cross the border **here**.
At the fence.
She does what she's told.

She's captured.
She asks for help in all the ways her tongue will permit her.
"Illegal crossing of the border. Misdemeanor."
This is her charge.
The woman is put in a prison jumpsuit.

She lives confined among other migrants in this place.
Different colored jumpsuits advertising their "crime."
Blue, the color she was assigned: misdemeanor.
Orange and red: felonies.

But one must ask,
Did any of these migrants truly commit a crime?
Did this woman who fled her country,
Commit a crime for doing as she was told?

Who would dare argue with a coyote,
Who has done this route hundreds of times?
A coyote who has gotten you this far.
No, you do what you are told.
He gets her into America.
Except it seems all for naught as she sits in her misdemeanor
jumpsuit,

Thinking about how she was caught.

She awaits her trial.
She waits to be deported.

Death waits for her at home.

Emily Tarchala



- ◆ Year: Senior
- ◆ Major: I/O Psychology
- ◆ Minor: Women & Gender Studies
- ◆ Favorite Food: Breakfast Food

Emily usually writes poetry and she's been writing since she was in high school. She personally believes poetry can affect everyone as it relates to everyone in some way or another.

Meditation from the Man Cave

Smoke grazes the air
Rolling slow like a dying balloon
You croon over the cheery well-wishers
There is no seat reserved for the downtrodden
Our coats cast aside, we sit snug
Velcro shoulders only parting between
Passings of glances and fits of laughter
You take drags from your cigar
Trading places so the fumes wouldn't
Poison my eyes, how chivalrous, I thought
The haze already blurring my vision
Dull any harsh lines I had drawn from before
The door swings open like flipping a channel
We begin a new cycle of greetings
I graze the ceiling and bounce
As I slowly float to the floor

Dominic Turcott



- ◆ Year: Senior
 - ◆ Major: Psychology
 - ◆ Minor: Leadership
 - ◆ Favorite Food: Pizza, Yellow Mustard
- Dom has a history of writing that focuses around his love for the great outdoors. He has worked with different publications, such as Hooks and Bullets Magazine and Michigan Outdoor News, showcasing his passion of catching fish around the mitten. Poetry is something that he has worked with in the past and plans to write more of in his future endeavors. He shares with those reading this in the future how important it is to actively protect our water systems and environment so other generations can appreciate them for how Great they truly are.

untitled

My brother had never been so comfortable.
The look on his face was perfection.
He's off of Burnside and Oliver.
You'd have to look for his place,
but you'll know when you see it.
I wish there were more trees around,
but he's doing just fine.
It doesn't bother him like it does me.
He always talked about moving up north,
far up north, with the trees and rivers.
We settled on hosting him on the other side of the township.
Just north of the grocery store.
Driving by has gotten easier.
After seven years, I'd hope so.
He doesn't need me.
He's doing just fine.
We've grown to work like this.
Since Matthew won't come to me, the responsibility is mine.
Right driveway.
Five stones over.
Four stones back.
Until the end of time.

Jessica Turner



- ◆ Year: Sophomore
- ◆ Major: Criminal Justice
- ◆ Minor: Leadership & English
- ◆ Favorite Food: Mac n' Cheese

Jessica usually writes poetry but also enjoys writing memoir and non fiction. She is from Evansville, Indiana. She plays on the women's lacrosse team at Detroit Mercy and also rides horses competitively.

In the Eyes of a Fool, He's Gold

Bloodshot eyes,
Uneven lies,
Evil chuckles,
Swollen knuckles,
Reoccurring fears,
Cruddy tears,
Late evening,
Heavy breathing,
Quiet screams,
Broken dreams,
Dripping sweat,
Sun has set,
Blood seeping,
Baby sleeping,
Rattled heartbeat,
Accepted defeat,
Locked door,
She's done for,
Sheets pulling, suffocating,
Head burning, exploding,
No escape,
Yellow caution tape,
Abusive,
Inconclusive,
Never got caught,
No mugshot,
Just another case gone cold,
In the eyes of a fool, he's gold,
He's hypnotic,
He's psychotic,
Someone should have noticed,
Covered bruises and welts iced,
Family destroyed,

Can't avoid,
He moves on to another,
She's just a dead mother,
Stay aware,
Let's say a prayer,
For those we've lost,
For those who were crossed,
And for those who are gone,
Your legacy will live on,
Thanks for the lesson,
We'll try to fix the tension,
May you rest in something close to peace?
We'll warn others, your daughter, your niece,
Amen,
It'll happen again.