

*2020: The Year
Togetherness Was
At Rest*

By Danielle Simon



Denial—

At first, it was just strange. My life became a dream. But not the fantasy kind of dream. The type of dream where everything seems fuzzy and just cannot really happen. A dream that's just real enough to lose the capability to distinguish the imaginary from reality, yet not real enough to lose the anticipation of a morning alarm.

Zambi's April

Everyone's home,
where they belong.
We can play fetch all day.
Until I decide it is more fun
to watch the ball roll away.
Then we can take a long run.
And chew a big bone.
And when we are done,
feel free to go back to school
so I can have the couch back
and cover it with drool.

Inspired by Mark Strand's
poem "Eating Poetry"



Anger—

The alarm never went off. Eventually, I realized it wasn't going to, but I badly wanted it to. Staying in four walls all day got dull quickly, and I soon wanted to punch those four barriers away. As school closed permanently and quarantine became more and more indefinite, the flame inside me rose. Listening to America's leaders did not calm my rage; their words only heightened my fury.



The Call of the World

I'm tired of the news.
It only brings blues
and a sigh and a frown.

I'm tired of this ghost town.
All the open signs are flipped.
It's been a while since anyone has skipped.

I'm tired of the quiet.
Although, I never liked the riot.
Yet, I yearn to hear voices
and miss making choices
That I hadn't cared about before
but nothing is the same anymore
now that I'm tired of the news
that only brings blues.

Inspired by Alexander Posey's poem
"The Call of the Wild"

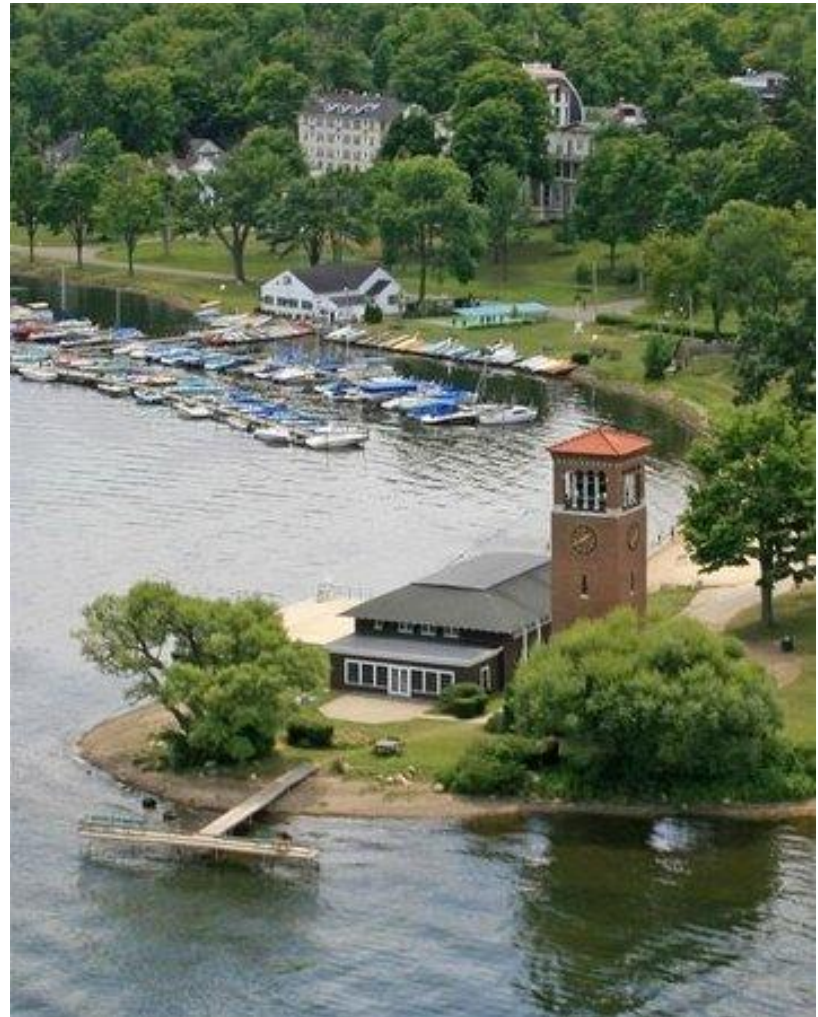
A Place I Know

I know a place,
That comes alive in the summer.
Where the big steel gates always open
Three days before Memorial Day.
Where worries can't journey,
And even the rain can't drown out the joy.

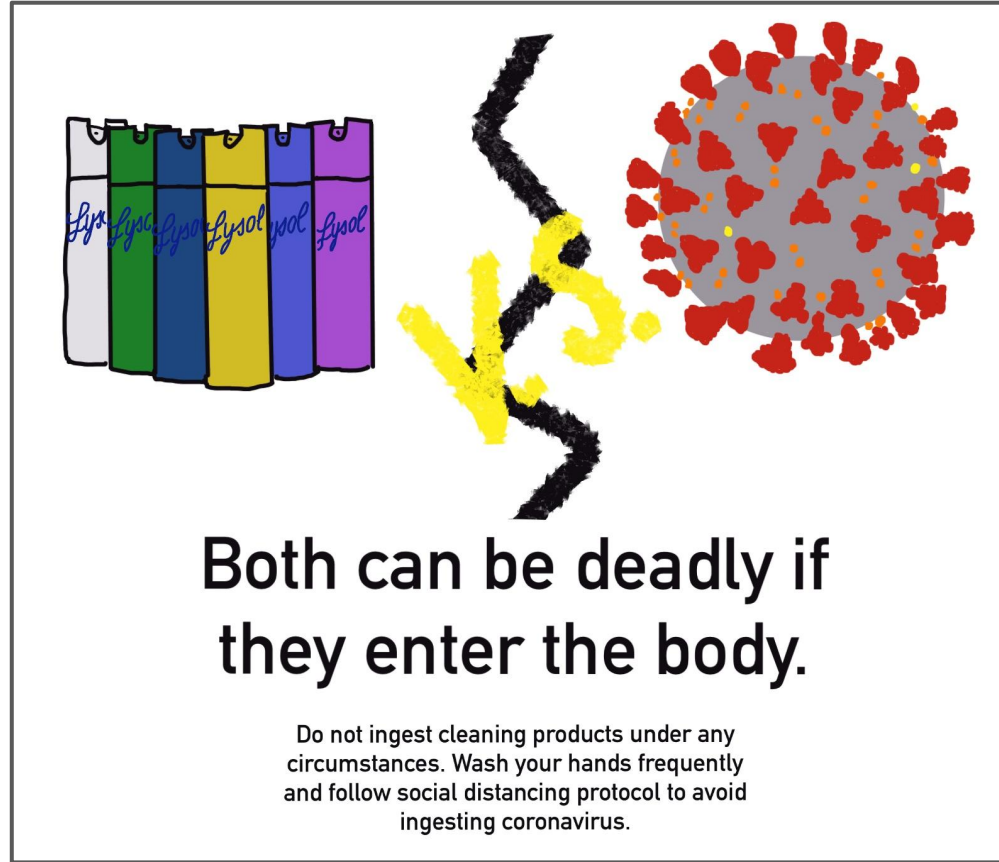
I know a place
Where the foamy green waves rush up to the sand
And kiss the beaches, like a baby learning to clap.
Where people are all smiles,
And sprinkle kindness with their steps.

How sad it is that the gates won't be opening
And the people won't be roaming,
But at least the waves will keep returning.

Inspired by Robert Duncan's poem "Often I Am
Permitted to Return to A Meadow"



Poison vs. Poison



In response to the news article “Trump claims controversial comment about injecting disinfectants was ‘sarcastic’” by Allyson Chiu, Katie Shepherd, Brittany Shammass and Colby Itkowitz

Bargaining—

There was no way to bargain with a global pandemic.

Depression—

Eventually, the red flame died down and was replaced with a big gray cloud that loomed over my head. Everywhere I went, which was never far, a feeling of despair accompanied me. I began to wonder if the old ways of life would every return, and if the doors to the world would ever reopen.

What Happened To the Days Spent Together

By: Anita Rao, Danielle Simon, and Olivia Theodosakis

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when 6 feet, was nothing more than two yardsticks?

When awkward hugs were standard routine?

And our sweaty hands would tingle from a strong high five?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when we basked in the glory of each other's company?

And teenage life flourished?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when we counted down to days off school?

And longed for time apart?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when our bodies would tremble side by side---

Worried about the way we looked

---Our next test---

Not about the thousands of deaths flashing on our screen?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when masks didn't cover smiles we now only see through Zoom screens?

Back when hand sanitizers weren't hoarded like holy water;

The grocery store didn't used to be a thunderdome?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when for a brief---A BRIEF---moment...

We were making progress towards peace among the races

And weren't on the brink of another Cold War?

What happened to the days spent together?

Back when poor communities already had enough problems without a virus?

Back when hospitals already had enough need beyond spare ventilators?

When the world—at capacity— couldn't seem to handle one more crisis,

And never expected one this deep to arise?

What happened to the days spent together?

When we thought living together was a rite of passage...

And not a privilege?



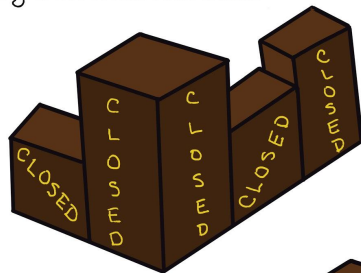
Click on the icon to listen



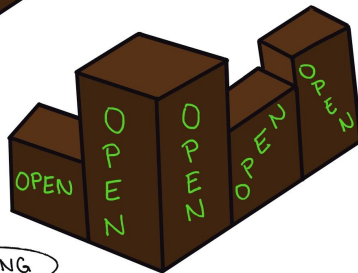
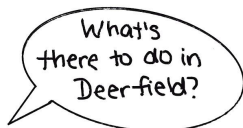
The Deerfield I Know

By: Danielle Simon

Now my town looks like this...



But it didn't always...



We were wrong...

Good Food
(especially breakfast)



Upper Crust
Bagels

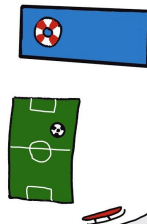


The Cherry Pit

Lots of Parks



Outdoor Activities



Inspired by Laura Gao's comic
"The Wuhan I Know"

Acceptance—

As I longed for the doors to the world to reopen, I realized that I am lucky to be behind such safe doors. I learned to appreciate what I still have, even though I am used to so much more. I tightly grasped hope that things will get better, and, when they do, I will remember the historic time I am living through.



Rain

And then there was the rain.
It came with the clouds
and shoed away the sun.

It poured down for hours,
which soon became days
It washed the streets,
and turned them into lakes.

The rain keeps people inside
and leaves the world for the wildlife.
The worms come swarming
as the grass turns greener.

And when the rain is finished,
it returns the world to the people.
You walk outside to admire the greener grass
and feel the sun's warmth again.

You see people.
People in groups
and people too close.

And when you remember,
that groups of people aren't normal,
you miss the rain
that covered the sun
and gave the world to the wild,
but kept the people safe.

Inspired by Ariel Gamals' poem
"Baobab"

Things I Didn't Know I Like

It's 2020 March 30.
I'm sitting up in bed.
The sun is high in the sky.
I never knew I like
Getting up before the sun
To rush off and begin a long day.

I didn't know how much I like
the bright blue, orange, and green spinning chairs.
Even if they didn't spin, or couldn't move,
I didn't know how much I like
The feeling of a classroom
with ideas and explanations flying across the room.

I didn't know how much I like talking.
People say I'm quiet.
People think I don't like to talk.
Now, I realize they are wrong.

But, it could be so much worse.
I didn't have to realize
how much I love food.
My family's pantry is still full,
and our Instacart is filling.

I didn't have to realize
how much I love my family.
We are all here together.

I didn't have to realize
how much I love employment.
Investments and health care research continue,
limiting the worries brought into my home.

I am very lucky
That I get to realize so little.

Inspired by Nazim Hikmet's poem "Things I didn't know I loved"



Thanks

Thanks for the wind
that blows the germs away.
I don't know why it chooses
to keep my house safe.
Thanks for the strength
inside those I know.
I am glad they could fight
longer than the attacker.
Thanks for the knowledge
that may soon save us all.
It's good there are brave people
watching the danger so closely.
Thanks for the hope
that this will get better.
It gives me a reason
to look forward to tomorrow.
Again, thanks for the breeze
that keeps my home clean.

Inspired by Yusef Komunyakaa's
poem "Thanks"





Still I Rise

You may keep me confined
With those fears of great size
You may slash my strong bonds
But still, I'll rise.

Does my strength upset you?
Why do you wish I would fall?
'Cause I can hold the heavyweights
Don't think that I just bawl.

Just like truths and like lies,
Like heat from a flame,
Still, I'll rise.

Did you want to see me sink?
To the ground, hand reaching up?
Unable to stand?
That time hasn't struck.

You may infect my great big world,
You may close the whole thing down,
You may kill the only life I know,
But still, like dough, I'll rise.

Looking at a world of empty streets
I rise.
Tightly gripping hope
I rise.
Bringing the gift of a heart and a smile
I rise.
I rise.
I rise (within these walls of course).

Inspired by Maya Angelou's
poem "Still I Rise"



Click on the icon to listen

The Word On the Street



Inspired by the artwork in the article “Coronavirus inspires world graffiti” by a variety of artists

The Future

In fifteen months I will be moving,
moving to the next chapter of my life.
My mindset will be moving, my goals will be moving,
even my home could be moving.
but my memories will stay, and I will remember.

In five years I will be thinking.
Thinking—the one activity I can never finish.
I will be thinking about decisions,
and thinking about possibilities
and opportunities the future may bring.
But, I will keep thinking of my memories, and I will remember.

In ten years I will be working.
Working where, I can not say.
Hopefully, working on important yet intriguing tasks.
But, also working to recall my memories, and I will remember.

In twenty years I will have a bigger family.
I could have children, nieces, and nephews.
I could have sisters-in-law, a father-in-law, and a husband, too.
But, I will also have memories, and I will remember.

In seventy years I will talk.
I will talk to friends.
Perhaps over games of canasta or during walks.
I will talk to family
because I will demand that they visit.
But, I will also talk about my memories, so others will
remember.

Inspired by Raven Rumbolt-Lemond's poem "Give me Nine
Years"

Return—

Unlike most periods of grief, there's a sixth step when mourning the loss of togetherness. Now that I have finished denial and realized that this strange situation is reality... now that I have moved on from anger and my fire inside me died down... now that I overcame depression and wiped away the last tear... now that I have accepted changes and gained a positive outlook... now I know that the final stage is soon (the final stage of grieving the loss of togetherness—not just the final stage of Pritzger's reopening plan) togetherness will return. Togetherness never truly died; 2020 was just the year that togetherness was at rest.

Works Cited

Alter, Lloyed. "The View from My Desk through Recycled, Restored and Relocated 100 Year Old Windows." *Treehugger*, Narrative Content Group, 26 July 2018, www.treehugger.com/green-architecture/why-you-shouldnt-replace-old-windows-except-when-you-should.html.

"Flame-Ed." *Advanced Veterinary Medical Imaging*, Advanced Veterinary Medical Imaging, www.avmi.net/resources/client-resources/hyperthyroidism/what-should-i-feed-my-hyperthyroid-cat/attachment/flame-ed/.

"Gold Script Thank You Note – Crane Stationery." *A Pen Lovers Paradise*, Pen Lovers Paradise, www.penloversparadise.com/product/gold-script-thank-you-note-crane-stationery/.

Heizer, Jeffery. "Koa News5 Southern Colorado." *Koa News5 Southern Colorado*, Scripps Media Inc, 8 July 2019, www.koa.com/weather/weather-science/the-science-behind-rainbows-and-how-they-work.

"Homes By Marco RE/MAX Suburban." *Homes By Marco RE/MAX Suburban*, Homes By Marco, www.homesbymarco.com/cities/deerfield_il.

Moran, Tim. "Patch." *Patch*, Patch Media, 4 Aug. 2015, patch.com/illinois/deerfield/deerfield-ranked-among-best-places-live-illinois-0.

Sadin, Steve. "The Shops at Deerfield Square on the Right and Deerfield Village Centre to the Left Help Form the Heart of the Village's Central Business District." *Deerfield Review*, Chicago Tribune, 16 May 2019, www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/deerfield/ct-dfr-deerfield-downtown-survey-tl-0523-story.html.

"Shutterstock." *Shutterstock*, Shutterstock Inc, www.shutterstock.com/video/clip-1012707926-digital-alarm-clock-waking-6-am-close-up.

"Smilebox." *Smilebox*, Smilebox, www.smilebox.com/blog/how-to-write-a-death-announcement/.

"Tripadvisor." *Tripadvisor*, Tripadvisor, www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g47452-d246789-Reviews-or5-St_Elmo_Accommodations-Chautauqua_Chautauqua_County_New_York.html.

"Www.RealEstateNorthernIllinois.com." *Www.RealEstateNorthernIllinois.com*, Allyson Hoffman and Paul Wells of RE/MAX of Barrington, 20 Apr. 2015, www.realestatenorthernillinois.com/Deerfield-Illinois-Real-Estate-and-Community.