

SCRIPTUS

Issue 26



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Dear readers,

Guess who's back with a brand new issue and a new board!

It's one and only Scriptus.

Started from creative pieces finished with controversial topics, Issue 26 offers everything you every wished for.

Are bike shops near our dorms safe? Read more on that inside.
Are you a newbie? and also a foreigner? Read Ralitzza Petrova's debut "The Immigrant Diaries" and make yourself home. Want to know more about AUC life? Anne Oort will provide you with some interesting insight into OnStage's Musical - Under Pressure. Tired of AUC? Want to read some fiction? Don't look any further, in this issue we offer creative pieces from Floortje Carlier, Elizabeth Schippers and Mya Berger, which will be continued in next two issues. You will love the cliffhangers.

Other must reads include a profile about one of AUC's favorite professors Jonathan Gill, an insight into Mohammed Jaouna's project Changemakerz, a film review by Vinicius An and an article about Petition against UvA.

And bonus! The first time in history, Scriptus features a comics about our loving DUWO. So relevant almost want to cry out of laughter.

Happy reading!

Yours Truly,
Tekla Tevdorashvili
Editor-in-chief



Disclaimer:
Scriptus is written, edited and designed entirely by the students of Amsterdam University College. The news magazine does not reflect or express the official views of AUC. Comments, questions and criticisms are welcome at scriptus@auca.nl.

The Immigrant Diaries: The Top 5 Things I Learned During my First Two Months at AUC

-Ralitza Petrova

1 Find a Designated Dutch Friend. Seriously. They're good for just about everything - from reading labels for you at the supermarket and guiding you through the complex world of Dutch bureaucracy, to helping you find your way around the city and giving you insights on questionable Dutch culinary practices, like putting apple mousse on your potato wedges. The sooner you get a Designated Dutch Friend in your life, the better.

2 Yes, silverfish are a thing. They might not exist in your country of origin, but at your brand new DUWO housing they are well and thriving. Importantly, however, they are not cockroaches. Don't let your friend or your mom on the phone convince you that they are, and try not to spend the following two weeks sunken in a quiet depression thinking that your new dorm is ridden by a disease-carrying, undestroyable menace. As it turns out, silverfish are completely harmless and fairly easy to get rid of. Phew. Next time you encounter strange crawling creatures at your place, try asking the aforementioned Designated Dutch Friend for advice. They'll probably know what to do about it.

3 If you're not a fan of camping, group sports activities and sharing a room with eleven other people, you might not love Intro Weekend. In fact, you'll probably hate it. And you'll come back with a sore throat, a runny nose and an illimitable hate for grubby public bathrooms.

4 In life you do get an A+ for effort (unlike in your Academic Writing Skills class). Even if you can't effortlessly work out for two hours a day and live off of green juices, while simultaneously aceing all your tests and smiling at strangers, doing your best is good enough. Make yourself a healthy meal. Try exercising for twenty minutes. Spend an hour working on your assignment and then go out to have a laugh with your friends. You're doing great. Keep going.

5 Life is like a walk through Flevopark: some days there's sunny weather. You stroll amongst crowds of happy, smiling people and you sit by the lake on a perfectly green patch of grass while the warm, amber sun rays melt on your skin and fill you with endless joy. Other days the wind pierces through your skin. Your sneakers get covered with muddy chunks of grass, and your legs freeze when you sit on the cold metal benches, whilst a creepy guy with a strong accent and loud hip-hop music blasting from his MP3 walks past you fifteen times asking you if you're okay. Both are fine. Both are part of the ebb and flow. Don't let the gloomy days make you forget about the sunshine. Just keep doing your best and you'll be fine.



Small Investment

-Big Impact

-Vivienne Wong

Dutch news media often negatively portray Moroccan youth in the Netherlands. With numerous news reports on crime rates of the Moroccan diaspora, the general public often associate people of Moroccan background in the Netherlands with a pessimistic outlook. The Dutch media also plays a significant role in shaping how Moroccan youths view themselves in Dutch society. Along with quantitative research on their subpar performance when compared with the native Dutch and other ethnic groups, they are influenced to question their self-worth in Dutch society. During the Who's in Town Lecture held on November 8, Mohammed Jaouna and his team challenge this stereotypical view of Moroccan youth and switches the conversation about the Dutch Moroccans to an active platform for them to connect and interact with AUC students for better integration into Dutch society. They aim to change our mindsets on Moroccan youths and actively reshape the lives of Dutch Moroccans by facilitating discussion for opportunities of collaboration between AUC students and Dutch-Moroccans.

Meet 36-year-old Mohammed Jaouna, founder of Changemakerz – a personal coach and mentor to many Moroccan youth in the Netherlands. Born and raised in Amsterdam, he is familiar with the Dutch education system and has been frustrated with the scarce opportunities for young Moroccans in the city. 4 years ago, he decided to transform his frustration to inspiration and started his own company Changemakerz to create an environment for Moroccan youngsters to realize their potential.



A strong believer of informal education, Mohammed hopes to make a difference in the lives of young Moroccans by giving them access to field trips, gap year programmes abroad and business networks. Mohammed along with fellow peer coach Saber El Majdoubi, youth coach Biba de Jongh, junior entrepreneur Abdellah Achaaoui and 3rd year AUC student Domiziana Turcatti, reached out to the AUC community to share the Changemakerz' initiative to provide better opportunities for Moroccan youth in the Netherlands. AUC students and Moroccan youth had a chance to interact and network with one another on shared interests.



"Small investment, big impact," summarizes Mohammed Jaouna's confidence in his initiative Changemakerz. He strongly believes in the power of networking and hopes that the AUC community could play a role in shaping the lives of Moroccan youth through means of collaboration. He is desperately in need of funding for his project to become a reality.

Profile: Professor Gill

-Ana Tavadze

Jonathan Gill was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in the year of 1964, when The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed into law. Gill was the first white baby to be born in a newly established mixed-race delivery room.

From an early age, Gill moved around the country a lot, which, along with his Jewish background, added up to his multi-cultural experiences. His Jewish identity still plays an important part in his life.

"As a Jew, it's still always different, because there's always this one special place for us, even if you don't live there, it's still this one place that somehow our hearts are attached to," he says. He grew up in Baltimore, then moved to San Antonio, and then to New-York. His first year of college was at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. After a year, he transferred to Columbia University in the City of New York. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts in English and comparative literature. After graduating and working as a journalist for five years, Gill stumbled upon a realization that changed his life.

While working as a journalist between college and graduate school, he realized that work is for fools.

"We have one chance in this life and you're going to spend it working? C'mon!" he says. He quit his job, traveled all around the world for two years, met his wife, and realized he was never going to

work again. Gill was in Israel when he realized he should go to graduate school and become a professor. He now has a Master's of Arts in English and Philosophy and a Ph.D. all from Columbia University.

"I love to read and write. I love talking about literature. So I thought, why don't I do that for the rest of my life? I don't consider what I do ... work. I love it."

Even though he vowed he'd never work again, Gill has worked as a security guard, as a cleaner, and as a movie extra.

"It is important to remember that I have done all kinds of work to get money and of course, get where I am," he says.



A big part of becoming who he is was journalism. For Gill, working as a journalist was a noteworthy training in writing.

"Sometimes one has a problem with getting started, when you're a journalist writing for a daily newspaper, for example, you can't have trouble getting started because you have to be finished in an hour. Working as a journalist was really good for just not worrying about what's going on the page, you just had to get started because you knew you could always fix it later," he says. Learning about this helped him in other areas of life, such as the beginning of his journey as a professor. Being a professor is an

utterly different experience for Gill. In his opinion, being a professor has three aspects – teaching, scholarship/academic work, and the service.

"I am a tutor as well and it takes up an enormous amount of time. But I was not put on this planet for me. I was put on this planet for you. That's why all of this is a really important part of what I do. Imagine, I get paid to help your dreams come true – that's a blessing. I am a lucky man," he says. "To even think that he thinks about his students with so much love and care, gives me goosebumps," says Lily Sannikova, a second-year Social Science student in Gill's counter-culture class.

Inspiringly, even Jonathan had his own Jonathan. One of the first teachers that inspired him was his second-grade teacher who he's still in contact with.

"Her class was full of plants and she would play music in the classroom. She had little jars of different airs from all around the world and she did this amazing thing – she treated us like people," he says.

As of today, he is happily married to his wife Evelyn, whom he's been together with for 26 years. As described by Gill, this is how his perfect day goes: He wakes up really early every single day, so that he has hours before anyone else wakes up. Every Friday, at 10:15 in the morning, he does yoga with his wife. After yoga, they drink tea and they talk. They fulfill their daily plans and then go to the synagogue in the evening.

"I am involved at Amsterdam's only progressive egalitarian gay-friendly synagogue," he says. As his eyes shined while talking about his and Evelyn's life, he answered a question: "What color is love?" he repeated, "Love is green, because it grows, and it has to keep growing..."

Petition Against UvA

-Tekla
Tevdorashvili

On September 22nd, 2016, a petition was created on Change.org that accuses the University of Amsterdam (UvA) of “psychological/verbal abuse of and discrimination against a rape survivor.” The petition, which has already garnered 1838 signatures and counting, states that “it is not accusing the University of Amsterdam of rape or sexual abuse.” The creators of the petition (also known as Emily’s supporters) decided to stay anonymous because of the topic’s controversy.

In September 2010, Emily (pseudonym) came to the UvA for a Master’s degree. One year later, she had to give up her studies and leave the country due to rape trauma. After spending three years back home with her family, she went back to the UvA to complete her studies and decided not to share her past with her classmates, “I wanted to start from a new chapter” said Emily.

According to the petition, “the director of her program (the only person who knew her from the previous time six years ago), approached her in class and made impudent and condescending comments about Emily’s private matters and health in front of her classmates.” This was followed by her exclusion from a project of her choice for wellbeing concerns in October 2014. “Emily was told that because of her health, she wasn’t allowed to participate in a project of her choice, but she was allowed to participate in any other projects that were not full,” stated Emily’s supporters. However, later on, she was informed

that her exclusion was caused by budgetary constraints. Emily felt like her privacy was exploited as a pretext for budgetary issues and she “requested that the university rectifies the issues and ensure her that it [disclosing her confidential information or using it for arbitrary and unilateral decisions] would never happen again.” According to Emily, during the hearing ensuing her request, it was falsely stated that her professors and classmates had been concerned about her mental well-being. At the hearing, she didn’t know it was a false statement and only after talking to her classmates, she found out that they were never informed about their ‘testimony.’

According to the petition, in July 2015, Emily got a letter that informed her that she had been banned from conducting any fieldwork project “out of a concern for her well-being.” According to Emily, when she went to the dean, she found out that the director of her program wrote the letter on behalf of the dean. Emily’s health status is confidential and according to Emily, it was illegal for the professor to access the information. As Emily’s supporters said: “either the professor somehow illegally used Emily’s health record, or it was entirely his/her imagination of Emily’s health.” When Emily “told the dean to accuse the professor of forgery, the dean refused and decided to take the false blame,” said Emily. When Emily submitted an appeal against this decision, the Dean apologized for misunderstandings but denied any unfair acts, which meant that Emily wouldn’t be able to participate in the fieldwork. As UvA’s spokesperson, Yasha Lange said: “Emily first filed a complaint with the independent complaints commission, which was considered unfounded. She subsequently appealed with the independent Board of Appeals for Examinations (BoAE) and these appeals were considered unfounded and inadmissible.”

The petition states that UvA canceled all of her earned academic credits on the cause of making no academic progress in the past year. “Over the past years the university has tried to help her extensively in finishing her studies”, Lange said, “but she did not make use of those possibilities.” According to Emily’s supporters, “the university is stalling the case and waiting until Emily and all the problems are gone.” However, according to Lange “at the last hearing of the board of examinations, again she was given a possibility to finish her field work and to finish her studies.” As Lange said: “The only thing she had to do was to deliver the plan of studies for that, but she didn’t do it.” However, according to Emily, BoAE found her complaint inadmissible because the



decision of her exclusion was ‘fake’ to begin with. Emily added, “I was excluded and that was the reason why I lost my credits.” So, Emily had to submit a study plan, because she dedicated less time and effort to her studies. However, as regrettable that she choose not to make use of the possibility to finish her studies’. Emily explained it was caused by the long process of her complaints examination and providing a study plan without solving the issue didn’t make sense to her. As Lange states, “the University considers it On June 2nd, six months after Emily submitted the case, she had a hearing. However, the dean whom Emily was accusing, left the university on March 1st, 2017. Thus, another person provided testimonies, which as Emily’s supporters said “did not match Emily’s clear recollections of the events”. The Board of Appeals considered Emily’s case unfounded and as a result, Emily’s student visa will be terminated by the end of November. Meanwhile, according to Emily’s supporters, the UvA hired a private law firm and threatened Change.org into editing and altering the petition. However, Lange explained that Change.org was contacted to edit the petition because “it started to hurt some of the employees of the university.” According to Lange, the members of UvA staff were individually approached by different individuals and were asked questions about how was it possible that they [the staff] had something to do with the traumatic experience of a student. “That for us was really crossing the line” added Lange. Although, the petition states that “It is not accusing the University of Amsterdam of rape or sexual abuse,” according to Lange, “people reading the petition had the impression that traumatic experience had something to do with UvA and the university was trying to cover that up.” According to petitioners “The university made defamation threats against Emily on February 20th, 2017 saying Emily was making a false rape accusation.” A week later, a line was added to the petition, stating it “is not accusing the University of Amsterdam of rape or sexual abuse.” However, petitioners added “the university continued claiming our petition is a false rape accusation and tampered with our petition.”

Signatories believe that the content of the petition has been manipulated without their consent. For this reason, a new petition was created on 29th of April, 2017 in opposition to the University of Amsterdam’s petition tampering called “University of Amsterdam: STOP PETITION TAMPERING AND SILENCING EMILY #JusticeforEmily”. The petition was created by an account called “Pissed Off UvA Students”, who have been “outraged by the fact that [a] fellow student has been treated in such a horrible way.”

'Dear All Vagina -Wielding Humans', Be Aware

-Tekla
Tevdorashvili

Disclaimer: events mentioned in the article took place over the course of three years.

Until October 18th, 2017, vast majority of Amsterdam University College student didn't know how many people have been affected by the same man over the course of several years. Sophie Valcour was the one who started a discussion around the topic when she uploaded a photo of a man holding a bike on 'AUC Girls' group. The post said "DEAR ALL VAGINA-WIELDING HUMANS: has anyone else had a troubling/traumatizing experience with this man before??" The post quickly attracted students' attention. In the following three days, over 100 current and graduated girls wrote about their troubling encounters with the man on the picture. Most of the students described their experience as unpleasant and 'creepy.' According to Sophie, after he pumped her bike when they shook hands, the man held her hand between his hands and didn't let go until she got angry and pulled it away. "As I was leaving I said something like don't do this to women or learn how to leave us alone and he just kind of giggled at my anger and said "the best part about you leaving is I get to watch your ass as you go" and then stood there while I got on my bike" said Sophie. Some students also stated that he followed them home with his car.

Based on comments, most commonly the man would ask for his client's number and assured them that he needed it to update them on the bike. But, instead of using it for business purposes, he often harassed AUC students via WhatsApp calls and messages. Several students uploaded screenshots of his messages, and as it turns out, he sent a variation of same standard texts to every girl. Some students refused to give him their number, but he still managed to get it. As Tina Christofidi remembers, other employees of the bike shop couldn't find a bike that would suit her, so they told her to go to the storage with him. "It was in a basement, so we go down, and when we go in, he locks the door behind us," said Tina. After finding a bike, which was over her budget, he offered her a discount. "Then he asked for my number again with some stupid excuse which I tried to refuse giving him, but he insisted and I think I was a bit scared because the door was locked. So I finally gave it to him, and I remember he called immediately to make sure I gave him the right one and then he kept on telling me we should go out and I kept on saying no" she added. According to Tina, only after he got a long uncomfortable hug, he opened the door. Tina was not the only one he tried taking to the back of the shop for a broader choice. "He was already very touchy at first, and I just stepped back," said Eva Kagenaar. When he asked her to go to the back of the shop for special price, and she refused, he took it as a joke. He tried again and got a solid no, after which as Eva said, he seemed personally offended and made an inappropriate comment about her appearance - "he told me I wasn't that beautiful anyway" said Eva.

Several students also wrote that he complimented them and gave them a discount. As AUC alumina Anastasia Yakunina wrote "he gave a discount cause he said I was "sexy and beautiful girl" and wanted me to hug him as a thank you." Sometimes he would offer a discounted or free services, in exchange for a date or a kiss. "He offered a bike for a discounted price but then stroked my face and kissed me on the cheek very close to the mouth," wrote Ellen Ackroyd. He also took emotional advantage of girls who were in a vulnerable state as Dian Nathan-marsh. After a stressful day, Dian was a little teary when she went to the bike shop and as she said "in that state he pestered me for my number telling me how lonely he was in the 19 years he had been here, when I stated that was my age he replied this was good enough."

As the discussion continued, more people started telling their stories. As it turns out he also touched some students inappropriately, as an exchange student, who decided to stay anonymous, wrote: "he literally squeezed my butt and tried to kiss me." Unfortunately, this was not the only time he tried forcefully kissing a female customer. As one of the students stated in the comments, he took another exchange student to the basement to find a suitable bike, but instead, he grabbed her by the wrists and offered a good deal in exchange for a kiss. "He was very insistent and was holding on to her before she said she would shout if he didn't let go," stated the comment.

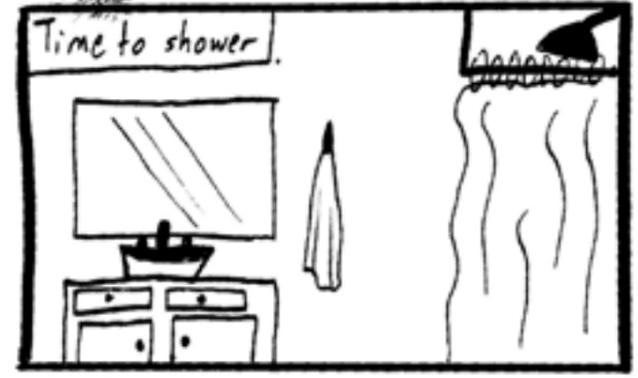
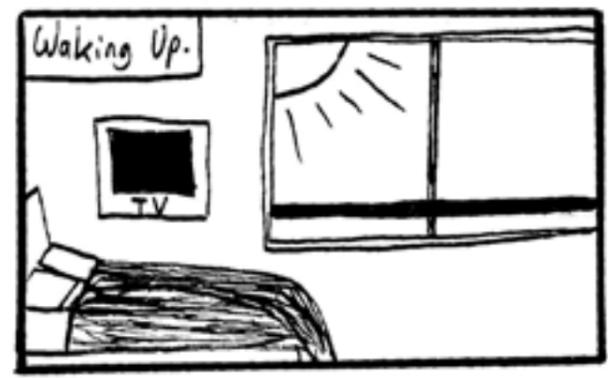
According to the google reviews of the shop, there were several complaints of sexual assault against this guy. One of the users wrote "This man is dangerous, he is a known sex offender! Girls, please watch out, this man likes to 'hug' you and give you kisses, even if you tell him not to do that!" Several reviews also stated that bikes they bought were stolen couple of days after purchase and some write that employees never actually fixed bikes, but instead added damage to it. The shop is permanently closed, but unfortunately, the guy in the picture is still employed. Several AUC students claim that they have seen him in a different bike shop on the opposite side of the coffeshop Stud.



DUWO STORIES

-Nelly Clausen

I

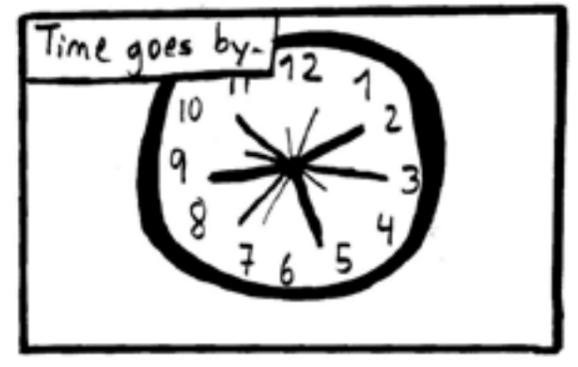


II



From: DUWO@DUWO.nl
 To: peasant42069@auc.nl

Dear peasant,
 we will repair your firealarm on Wednesday the **25.10.17** at **9am**. Be there or you have to pay **1,000€**.
 LOL,
 DUWO



Wreckage

-Floortje
Carlier

“Old fashioned? Don’t argue with Bob tonight, they lost the game and he’s had a few.”

I nodded as I sat down at the bar. I glanced over at Bob, who was sitting at the far end surrounded by a few empty pints, accompanied by a full one in his hand. Pathetic bastard. I wasn’t much better myself, but at least I had no wife or kids to come home to. Paddy placed an old fashioned in front of me. I let out a sigh as I tossed the slice of lemon to the side like I did every night. Every fucking night. You would think that Paddy would know by now. I didn’t know if Paddy did this to torture me, if he derived some kind of pleasure from it, or just because Paddy was so fucking stupid. Either way, I didn’t care to ask, or mention it for that matter. I sipped my drink and glanced over at Bob who was now shamelessly staring into the cleavage of one of the shipwrecks who offered herself to the miserable souls here on Thursdays. The final remains of her lingering beauty just enough to lure worthless sailors like Bob into the void of her deep desperate waters, to love her above the surface for just one night. I ran my hands over his temples: “Another one.”

Bob had now managed to get the shipwreck to sit on his lap and was playing with the bow that held her skirt together. His stumpy fingers attacking the bow greedier and greedier with every try. She giggled, exposing one of her many chins and whispered something in Bob’s fleshy ear. I took a big sip. However much I wanted to stop coming back to this dreadful place, I couldn’t. I had tried though. To sit at home with a TV-dinner. The shipwreck was now bashing her voluptuous prow into her prey, who did not seem intimidated at all, rather, Bob seemed to encourage her behaviour by vigorously bouncing the ship up and down on his lap.

I took another sip. That TV-dinner didn’t seem too bad right now. If it wasn’t for the thoughts that would wash over me. Wave after wave, thoughts that ruined me, pulled me down to lonely ocean floors. The thought of his thighs, his hair, the peach fuzz on his upper lip, his shoulders, his passionate tongue, his paper on Bright Star, the emotion that washed over me in my study as I graded a paper that pulled me up from ocean floors and spit me out on the shore. But those were forbidden thoughts, destined to be washed away to the very back of my mind by an old fashioned or two. Bob and his shipwreck were now passionately kissing one another which meant that a lot of flesh and tongue was on display for the entire bar to see. Bob’s hasty fingers, ready to board the ship, tried to find their way inside. “Enough is enough, Bobby. Go home to Emelia.” Paddy hit the bar in front of the shipwreck and her conquest with the iron fist that ruled the bar. Bob shrugged as he forcefully pushed the ship off of his lap. The shipwreck attempted to salvage the damage that had been done to her fading glory. I shook my head, sipped my drink, massaged my temples, and wondered again. I had to stop coming here. But I wouldn’t. For after all, I’d rather watch the battles at sea every night, than battle the ocean tide on my own.



The Diner

-Elizabeth
Schipper

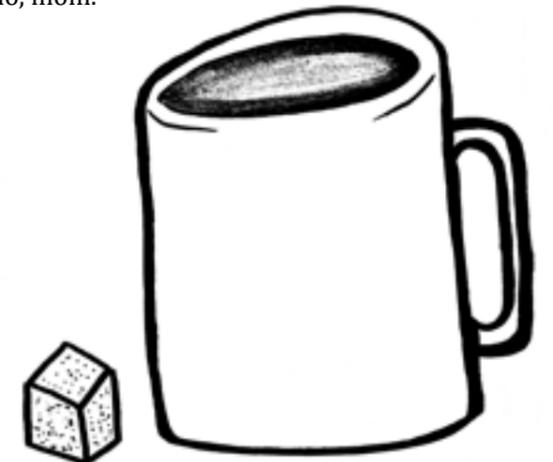
‘Have you heard about Suzy?’ Paula asks me as she puts a fresh cup of coffee in front of my nose. I look up to the round, middle-aged waitress as I shake my head. The woman quickly looks around the diner, places her elbows on my table and leans in to tell me what I am sure will be another very juicy gossip about one of the 84 people that live in this town. I must admit that I don’t really care for gossip, or about any of the 84 people that live here, for that matter, but Paula gives me free refills, so I feel obliged to act like I am interested. I moved here only two weeks ago, making me the 85th resident of this tiny town - a place so insignificant that people forgot its name long ago, referring to it as “the Town” instead- but she already acts like I am a local, greeting me whenever I enter the diner and bringing me up to date with the latest gossip. The fact that I have no idea who Suzy is doesn’t really matter, I suppose.

A few minutes into Paula’s story, I cannot help but let my eyes wander to the doors of the diner. I had strategically chosen this spot the first time I went to this small, old-fashioned eatery, and have come here every

day since, always around the same time, picking the same spot whenever it was available. After a few days, people would save my spot for me and smile knowingly as I’d sit down. They must think I am a creature of habit. I couldn’t care less about habits. I tear my eyes off the entrance as I feel a pat on my shoulder, and smile absently at Paula as she tells me that she has to take care of the other guests. I take a sip of coffee and resume my staring contest with the door.

My heart skips a beat when she walks in. It has been fifteen years since I last saw her, but she is as beautiful as the first time I held her in my arms. She is a woman now, in her mid-thirties, her hair is shorter than it was before, but there is no doubt that it is her. She takes a seat at one of the empty tables near the door, her head turned towards the kitchen, allowing me to look at her profile. She has the same, sharp nose that I remember so vividly. The same, furry eyebrows that she used to hate, but has, judging by the unkemptness of the lines above her eyes, apparently -hopefully- learned to love. The same beautiful smile that she now offers to Paula as she takes her order and pours her a cup of coffee. I watch her as she drops in two sugar cubes. All these things have stayed the same.

She lifts the cup to her lips as she looks around the diner. I feel my heart racing in my chest as her gaze comes closer to my table. The cup makes an abrupt halt halfway through its journey as our eyes lock. Slowly, she stands up, placing the coffee cup back on the table. My heart races in my chest as she walks towards me and takes a seat on one of the chairs opposite me. I look at her, unable to speak a word, my mouth and throat suddenly dry. I consider taking a sip of my coffee, but I don’t trust my shaking hands to bring the cup to my mouth without spilling hot liquid everywhere. We sit there, in that small diner in the Town, in a moment of silence that seems to last a second and an eternity. Then, she opens her mouth and speaks. ‘Hello, mom.’



It's nicer outside

part 1

-Mya
Berger

“There’s a time and place for everything. Mommy is looking at me with her eyes. Eyes. Daddy is next to her. Smiling. They are both standing next to a tree, waiting for their picture to be taken. Rayan is jumping around, taking photos. Amir and Tamara are in the background.”

Ring-Ring.

Eloise wakes up and gets dressed as quickly as possible. She looks at her hands. Eyes staring at the translucent skin. Blue veins, little bloody explosions on the surface of her flesh.

She doesn’t know what to do today. What to do. What to do. What to do. Go out, hear the Tap-tap of the drums in the parks where all her loser friends smoke weed. Tap-Tap. Looking over her shoulder at the library, hearing the computer drizzle. Tap-Tap. Glasses of beer shaken off tables. Tap-Tap. Her heels on the streets, long dark boots stepping on concrete. Tap-Tap. The sound of the water coming out of the sink. Tap-Tap. A little hand knocking on the door. Headache. Reality check.

“Is mommy coming back soon?” Rayan, her brother, slipping his head through the half opened door.

“Good morning to you too Rayan, did you sleep tight?” Eloise said, turning off the sink. Crr-Crr. The water stuck in the tap.

He laughs and disappears down the corridor. Tap-Tap his bare feet knocking on the wooden floor. Boom-Boom, he hits the kitchen counter with his hands. Giggles.

“Are you hiding again?” Eloise sighs.

“Nooooooo.” Rayan laughs, coming out of under the table.

“What a strange kid, do you know where Dad is?”

“Good morning to you too Eloise, did you sleep tight?” Rayan says, becoming serious all of a sudden.

“Stop it”. Their parents both left one morning. No explanation. No news. No answers with the Click-Clicks nor the Ring-Rings of the phone. She is over eighteen. And for now, she can take care of her little brother, as long as nothing really bad happens to him. Real bad. Clueless. In front of that tiny little guy, as savage as they can get. She washes her face. Sigh. Dark brown eyes looking at her. Distant.

She turns around, ready to cook some good-old-nice-breakfast for her monster. Fresh coffee and toasted bread. She’ll send him off to school in twenty, and head to the shop in thirty. Mommy and Daddy have been gone for two months now. And Eloise has been working at the bookshop for one. They left some money and no note. No note. But they used it all up already. She does the dishes and prepares lunch for her brother. Rayan gets dressed. They put their shoes on at the entrance. Rayan laughs because Eloise lost her balance and fell to the ground. Boom.

Tap-Tap-Tap-Tap of the shoes on the sidewalk. She kisses him on the forehead, despite his protests.

“Sis’ do I have school tomorrow? Cos’ I was thinking we could go to the park or the zoo or the swimming pool.” Rayan asks, pulling her away gently.

“No, it’s Friday, you don’t. But I have to work, I’ll see with my boss if I can try to finish early so we can do something, okay?” Eloise says, still holding on to his head.

Crack-Crack. The rust on the locks and casing of the school’s doors. Crack-Crack. The little rocks on the ground of the school’s entrance. Crack-Crack. Her brother’s knuckles. Crack-Crack. He walks close to a tree. Crack-Crack. He rips some bark off the tree. He looks at her, all smiles. “Look!”

She leaves him right in front of the fence, before the other ones come. Ruffled hair, subject to the wind and that stupid expression boys have before they turn 23. This “tall-little-manish-boy of only 8 years old”, when she talks about him to her friends. Tap-Tap on the streets. Keys in the door of the bookshop. Enter. Blank. - End of the day. She left the shop-owner to his strange books and fake-vintage pictures. Walked. Stopped. Got two sandwiches at the nearest restaurant, as an apology for the next day, as she has to work. Waiting in front of the fence. There is this noise. The parents in the background, chatting. Bzz-Bzz. And the kids inside, screaming and laughing. Ahhhh. “Make it stop”. Ring.

- Rayan in a courtyard, plum plum, there is water falling on him. Saturday. He steps on the grass and smiles at the sound, the squeaking of his shoes on the mud. “Oh man, mommy is going to be so pissed”. He doesn’t like thinking about it that much. She will forgive him, in a day or two, in a year or two. His clothes are sticking to his pale body, leaving veins of fabric on the skin. And his face with brown eyes, and brown hair, and brown brows, and brown everything, his I’m-a-guilty-boy face is directed towards an inexistent sun. He thinks about the clouds, and where are his sisters? And

his brother? And why is it raining, eh? They are not here. And it’s raining, plum plum, drops on the ground. “Oh, man did I get lossst?” Plum, Plum, the sound of his beating heart. Plum plum, rain on the windows around him. Oh, there are windows around him. Wait, he’s at home. The big tall gray buildings surrounding him, that’s his home. And mommy is going to open one of them and scream for him. “Rrrayan wherrrrre are you?” But she doesn’t do that. She’s not home today. Nor tomorrow.

- “What would you do if we left one day?”

Their Mom, one morning, two summers ago. Mom, with her full blown happy-fifty-year-old-mother face. She said it as a joke, tired of Eloise’s attempt to put sunscreen on her brother’s back. Mom thinks they don’t need her.

Mom, at sixteen, smiling at the camera, framed in the kitchen. Mom had long blond curly hair and pale green eyes. She had those rosy cheeks you get from too much laughing. They used to call her Tara. What a strange name for Mom: Tara. Mom, at twenty, photos of her in the old album. Bum-Bum laughs Rayan. She is sitting on a chair, looking up at the sun-bathed plants placed around her. Dad is behind, checking on one of the cacti. He was maybe twenty five on this picture, nobody knows how old he really is. Dad had brown hair and brown eyes and the same I’m-a-guilty-boyface as Rayan. Dad’s real name is Nathan. He doesn’t have the face of a Nathan. Nobody calls him by his name anymore, anyways, except from Mom. He couldn’t stop moving, never.

Dad fidgeting in the kitchen, Dad fidgeting in the car. The Tap-Tap of his finger on the different surfaces. The Boom-Boom of his feet when he would suddenly get up at a dinner to jump around. And the Clack-Clack of the boxes from the frequent moving-out-to-a-better-house plans. And Mom, with her quiet face and violent words. Mom who never really minded

moving. Mom, still, smiling at the plants, is pregnant with her first son, Amir.

Amir lives in a little town in France. Amir is happily married to his baker-of-a-wife, and they have two children and a dog, Rex. Amir, the accountant. Amir, who hasn’t seen Eloise nor Rayan since he stopped talking to Mommy and Daddy five Christmases ago. “The-hell-with-you”. Amir, who doesn’t send a letter or call or anything because he might just be too busy being happy. And Amir, who doesn’t know that the parents are gone, that he won’t have to worry anymore. But he talks to their other sister, Tamara. The one who left for Morocco a few years ago. Nobody really remembers where she lives exactly. Somewhere in the mountains, doing some research on Berber tribes. Or the Amazigh ones. Does it make any difference? She sends postcards, once in a while. With lots of kisses and love, but no invitation.

Rayan wakes up. It’s Sunday, he is pretty sure of it. Time for the big big breakfast. And then they might go to the zoo. Or the swimming pool. Or the park. Or anything. Might be fun. Right? Friday he fought with one of his friends and he has a large bruise on his thigh. The teacher wasn’t happy. She called at home. And then was very very not happy. Because nobody answered. Mommy has been on a trip for the past month, and Dad too, and Eloise is at work, “So there is nothing you can do now, sorry, try again in a week or two.” Eloise is not happy either. She saw the bruise when he was running from his room to the bathroom. And she doesn’t think it’s very nice. But today is Sunday, so everything is fine. Rayan washes his hands and face at the sink and walks to his sister’s bedroom.

“Is Mommy coming back soon?”

“Good morning to you too Rayan, did you sleep tight?”

Rayan runs out, laughing. He hides behind the kitchen table, waiting to Booh his sister. Booh. She jumps up, goes to the coffee machine. Routine.

“Are you hiding again?”
“Nooooooo.”

“What a strange kid, do you know where Dad is?”

“Good morning to you too Eloise, did you sleep tight?”

Eloise sighs. She prepares the big big breakfast in silence. Fresh coffee and toasted bread, with orange juice and strawberries. And there is even Nutella on the table. And Rayan’s face is soon going to be painted with it. And she’ll have to clean him up. Rayan doesn’t care. He could be living with chocolate stains on his cheeks and the top of his nose for the rest of his life. Once, he even got some on his forehead and wanted to keep it. Achievement.

They eat, laughing about that one time at brunch when “Tamara decided to go vegan and Mom and Dad got soooooo pissed they made only meat-based food.” Eloise looks out the window, Rayan behind her. And they think they can see Mom’s and Dad’s car, but it’s one of their neighbor’s. And summer is coming soon, and Rayan will have to sign up for middle school. And Eloise doesn’t know how to do that.

Scratch-Scratch. Rayan’s Nutella-stained hands on her back.

“Can you make me some hot chocolate, please? I’m still hungry, my-dear-sister.”

to be continued...

OnStage Musical:

Under Pressure

-Anne
Oort

Once again, we can see our fellow AUC students shining on stage. This December, the three directors, Rebecca Scarratt, Afke van Egmond and Neele Dijkstrawill show us their original musical, Under Pressure. Scriptus was lucky enough to get an exclusive insight behind the scenes of Under Pressure, talking with Rebecca and Afke.



Thank you for meeting with me! To start off, could you give us a quick sneak-peek into the musical?

Afke: It's about a performing arts school. There are all of these students who are either dancers, singers or actors who are going to get in. However, they slowly start realising how much pressure is actually on them in this school and it leads up to a big climax. In the end they have to learn how to deal with the pressure.

Sounds kind of like AUC as well...

Rebecca: Yeah, it is something that everyone can relate to, so we hope people can actually take things from it.

How are you liking directing so far? Is it going well?

A: Yes, it's really fun! I've done other theatre things, but I've never been a director myself, so it's a learning process for me. But it's been great!

I can imagine! Is this the first production you have worked on?

R: We were in the first play as actors last year, so that's how we got to know OnStage and how things worked. I was also the assistant-director for the musical

that took place in March which was really fun, I learned a lot.

It must be quite different going from actor to director?

A: Yes, definitely. I have acted in things before, but I realised that that wasn't really my thing. I have the creative view of how I want things to look, but I'm not really good at actually doing it myself, so it's fun to be on the other side!

You are writing this musical yourself, how has that been?

R: Yeah, it's been a challenge, we're still finalising act two, so it's taking a while, but we're really happy with the story!

Do the actors write as well or is it mostly from you?

R: No, it's mostly from us. Obviously, they do have input, like in how they feel their characters should act, and how they see them. We write the words, but they decide how to show them.

What has been the biggest challenge in directing?

R: Ehm, I think writing the script, as it is still not finished haha! That's the most difficult thing to do. Directing wise it has been good actually. I mean, you always notice small things that you would do better next time, but in general it has been going really well.

A: And it's nice to have the actors interact with you, and see them come up with cool ideas themselves too.

R: We also have an amazing group of people! They are all really energetic. Sometimes a bit too much haha! But they just bring the whole piece alive.

How many people are playing in Under Pressure?

R: Around 15 actors. We also have a live band and we're hopefully going to enrol 6 other dancers as well, partly via SlayUC. We have five main roles, some teachers and some students and then



we have an ensemble group of students, who don't have as many lines but who are in lots of scenes as a group.

Is it mostly second or third years?

R: Mostly first years actually. I think first years are like, new school, let's try everything! When you get into the higher years you become busier and something like this is quite time consuming. Also, being in a play gives you a good group of friends, because obviously, you spend a lot of time together during the rehearsals. So as first years it's also a good way to meet new people.

What kind of music will you have?

R: We are going to have songs like Another Brick in the Wall by Pink Floyd, Under Pressure by Queen, Fame...

Sounds good! It's nice that you are using a live band, I'm always a big supporter of that

R: Yeah, there are so many talented musicians at AUC, that we should use the people we have.

You did auditions for this musical, what did you look for while doing these?

R: In this case, because it's a musical, it's good if they have a feel for music and can sing, and obviously that they can act, because that's kind of the point haha

A: We already had a bit of an image for each role, so sometimes someone would come in and we would immediately know whether

or not they would fit the part.

R: That made things easier!

Do you always perform at AUC or do you use other locations?

R: It changes, depending on the production. This year's second production will be in a big theatre, so ours will be in AUC. But it makes sense, since it takes place in a school, so it's a good fit.

How did this musical come to be? Did OnStage initiate it?

R: Under Pressure is our own project, but it is looked over by OnStage. They provide the funds and check that everything is going ok.

So could I, being just a general student, propose an idea as well?

A: Yes you can! If you have something, you can pitch your idea to OnStage, we did this as well.

R: If you are subscribed to the OnStage newsletter, you find the pitch link at the bottom of each one. You can submit an idea at any point during the year. We have a spot in June, so maybe then, or the next year. We have Theatre workshops that are going to start happening, which was also an idea from a student.

What kind of come up are you expecting?

R: We are expecting at least 65 on both nights, but we have more seats available in the audience.

A: The turnout last year for both of the productions was pretty good, better than expected, so hopefully it will be the same with us.

What are the prices for the tickets?

R: It's five euros for AUC students and there is special ticket with better seats, the Right2Education tickets, which are 7,50. So the extra 2,50 goes Right2Education.

That's a really good initiative! Are any other committees involved with Under Pressure?

R: We are also going to collaborate with Peer Support, in the sense that in the week that we are going to be doing the performances, they are also going to be doing a Livingroom Session about how to deal with pressure. We are trying to bring in other committees, but that is still a question mark. And SlayUC of course, for the dancing!

Are you looking forward to performing?

R + A: Yes, definitely!

A: The idea that we are actually going to perform is both really stressful but also really exciting. I can't wait!

R: I'm sad I can't be in it haha! Just today we were rehearsing a dance and I so wanted to be there with them dancing on that stage.

Finally, why should people come and see the musical?

R: I think if anyone is wondering why you should come and see it: it's really fun, the actors really enjoy doing it, we enjoy making it happen and I think people would really enjoy watching it at AUC. It will really make the AUC building come alive!



CHUNGKING EXPRESS

-Vinicius
An

During the turbulent filming of Wong-Kar Wai's third feature *Ashes of Time*, came about his most famous film, *ChungKing Express*. Quickly shot as a sort of breather in regards to his most expensive and later doomed wuxia epic film, *ChungKing* progressed as an opening or even closing door from his gangster Scorsese-esque films to embark on more melancholy inclined atmosphere with features that became synonymous with Wong-Kar Wai films. *ChungKing Express* is a story of two Hong Kong cops in or out of love, one having recently broken up and making use of expired pineapple cans as a mechanical cope, the other cop experiencing an inevitable end, thus transforming any applicable objects in his apartment to cry or cope what he refuses to do in harsh and fast paced reality of Hong Kong. The film is about romantic longings, whether they are forever stuck or hopelessly romantic is beyond us, what's important is the given chance the film provides for such characters who have made use of objects like in a dream, which are then condensed into multiple meanings and associations.

A distorted cramped chase ensues through what seems to be a den of the marginalised, a cop is after something or someone. When one engages with a Wong Kar-Wai film one will expect hopeless romantics lurking with uncanny tendencies to remember or never forget past failed relationships. Immediately arresting attention the distortion of images, and slow shutter speed heighten our necessity to chase or seize something far from our reach. The following first chapter falls what seems to be an homage to gangster films from the 50's, a cop whose soul purpose is to search is to find expired pineapple cans from the date of his breakup. Truthfully, he remains enacted with an emancipated love to remain forever in debt to this outdated, exhausted and unconditionally inhumane love. Let me stress, this is no way pessimistic or a valid opinion, one should learn to love forever to this cinematographic truth. It is not so much that characters in Wong Kar-Wai films are hopelessly romantics, they wish to be a memory a seed of life that can be taken to somewhere much befitting rather than face the harsh assault of reality. One must carefully be inclined to seize all feelings and perceptions when engaged with love, it can endlessly be ingrained onto whomever senses another lonely soul. As this will be the major focus of the last story of *Chungking Express*, we have another cop this time dealing with a breakup who stubbornly refuses to believe his girlfriend left him. He relishes himself to a snack bar, never escaping fully to it yet he locks himself to a clinging memory soon to fade, unaware or blinded by the fact the new employee has been starstruck by him. She somehow gets hold of his keys to his apartment, and proceeds to "improve" his home, which he has taken upon himself to let his toys and towels to cry for him. Endless prolonged obsessions of these romantics is not because they have lost hope for progress, but faithfully throwing themselves to become a distant but efficiently cherished memory. A collection of dreams free from the harsh realities, that is the very essence of *Chungking Express* and it's uncanny cinematographic truth.

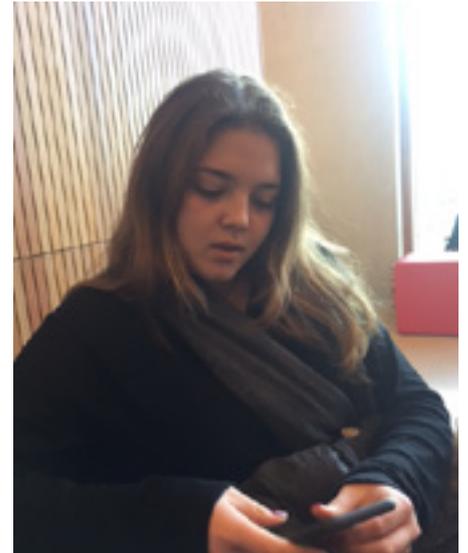


We Ask You

*What song
do you listen
on the way
to AUC?*



Domiziana Turcatti
"Ses Etme" - Athena



Josephina Neess
"Was du Liebe Nennt" - Bausar



Stefanie Saddey
"Soy Peor" - Bad Bunny (remix)



Ana Chaloska
"Angela" - The Lumineers



Wino Carter
"Grey" - Kölsch



Nelly Clausen
"Mi Gente" - Conor Maynard
(cover)



Dorian Buijse
"Ready for it" - Taylor Swift



Carolina Maienza
"Banana Pancakes" - Jack
Johnson