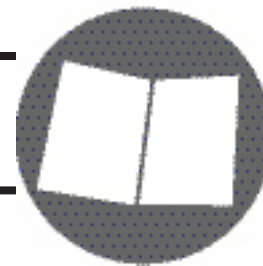


more prose



acqua alta

fiction by | ricola suave

we were both sitting in a gondola. the man with the oar was not singing. because of that, we could clearly hear ourselves talking. it was hot and the water was a mirror.

“did you just pay thirty dollars for your meal?”

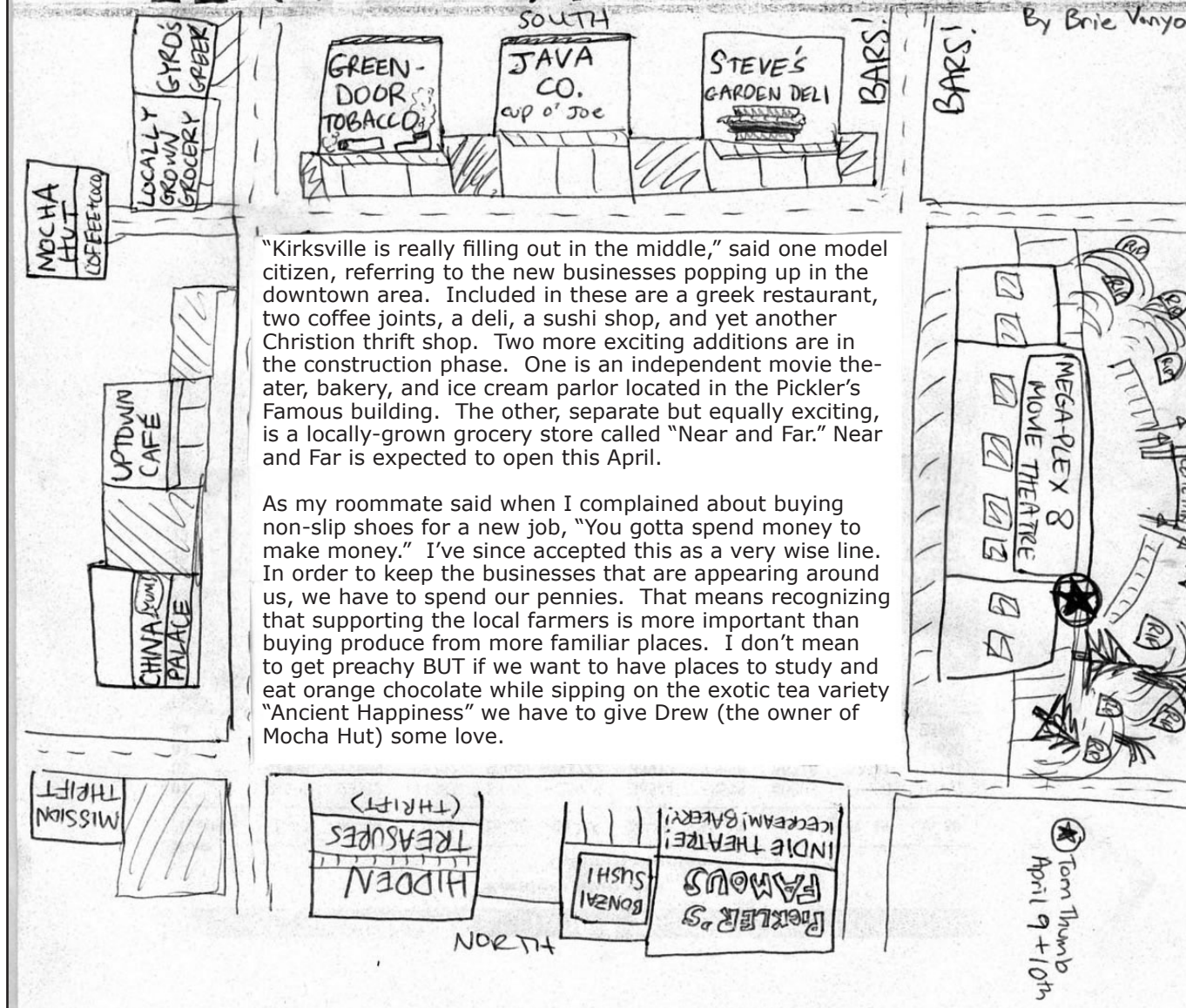
“it was more like forty euros.”

“that is the same thing.”

“but this money is prettier, so it is more worth mentioning.”

when we got to our destination and when it came time to tip the gondolier we gave him a ten dollar bill. the tip was in our currency. he did not look amused, but we were not trying to amuse him. i didn't know how to say 'don't be insulted, this is actually a good tip,' so instead i smiled and nodded insistently. that was all i had in my pocket. when we turned back i saw the ten floating in the water. it took every ounce of self-control i had, we had, not to jump in and grab it.

“KIRKSVILLE AINT SQUARE”



“Kirksville is really filling out in the middle,” said one model citizen, referring to the new businesses popping up in the downtown area. Included in these are a greek restaurant, two coffee joints, a deli, a sushi shop, and yet another Christian thrift shop. Two more exciting additions are in the construction phase. One is an independent movie theater, bakery, and ice cream parlor located in the Pickler’s Famous building. The other, separate but equally exciting, is a locally-grown grocery store called “Near and Far.” Near and Far is expected to open this April.

As my roommate said when I complained about buying non-slip shoes for a new job, “You gotta spend money to make money.” I’ve since accepted this as a very wise line. In order to keep the businesses that are appearing around us, we have to spend our pennies. That means recognizing that supporting the local farmers is more important than buying produce from more familiar places. I don’t mean to get preachy BUT if we want to have places to study and eat orange chocolate while sipping on the exotic tea variety “Ancient Happiness” we have to give Drew (the owner of Mocha Hut) some love.

rejection letters

feature by | michael kitzman

Dear Abigail,

We cannot process your student loan request. You were wrong to think that you could get ahead in the world, stop trying. Our decision was based mostly on how attractive you are, which is clearly not enough. We suggest you get a large paper sack to cover your whole body.

Furthermore, after consulting with your parents we have determined that you are a disappointment to everyone you ever met, especially your Grandmother, who never loved you. We are informing you of this as a courtesy, in the hopes that you will continue to store the few dollars earned from your pitiful, dead end, minimum wage job in our trustworthy hands.

Formally,
Customer Service Representative #859-23-4788

Dear Stephen,

Your Graduate School Application was lost in the mail, but that didn't matter. There's no room in your stupid choice of a major. Why did you ever think it was good idea? Also, even if there were room in the program you selected what makes you think your pitiful ideas are any good? This institution questions your right to exist based on the poor grades, and even worse letters of recommendation.

However, if you would like to apply again in a couple of years when you've all but given up on your dream of becoming a successful person, we'll gladly accept your application for processing. Fair warning though, everyone younger than you is smarter and better trained at what you want to do; also they are better looking and have WAY MORE sex.

In all honesty the thing that made us reject you was the fact that you cry yourself to sleep at night. We don't associate with babies.

Signed,
The Graduate School You Always Wanted To Go To