

CHESS MATCH IN BROOKLYN

G.H. MOSSON

Two chess champs slip past
ducking their rent.
I check the book for what's due
and plot my moves.
Play a grin, pass a wink,
no mate without a check.
In the game out here, debts
trigger new rules.

*Six flights of crash pads
with a concrete façade
where youth bed like rats
to reach king of the board
and lean-tos of bagged trash
pause on curbs by the cars.*

Slip me a hundred—wink—
but not the back rent.
Will you miss this sass
that stages your exit?
After intermission and barking dogs,
curtains rising on stained furniture,
a check might stall the end game,
but not this pawn's advances.

*Sherriff knocks, posts an eviction notice.
Checkmate, bit actors.
Landlord's books are zeroed clean.
A fork lingers in the kitchen
near a chessboard without pieces,
a vodka of the heart.*

EL PORTAL

Volume 79. Number 2. Fall 2021.

Editor

Tiara Bollig

Assistant Editor

David Lerner

Assistant Editor

Audra Bagwell

Graphic Designer

Kaytlyn Johnson

Editorial Assistant

Sara Kinard

Faculty Advisors

Dr. Michael Rizza

Dr. Lindsay Tigie

Faculty Advisor for Graphic Designer

Scott Golem

Front and Back Cover Photos copyright

© 2021 by Linda Sumption

Eastern New Mexico University's Literary Journal
Portales, New Mexico

to graduate in December of 2021.

ELLIS BLACKSTONE

Ellis Blackstone is a first-year student attending ENMU. She is currently majoring in anthropology with an emphasis in archaeology. She hopes to one day work as an underwater archaeologist. Ellis likes to spend her free time travelling, taking pictures, and watching movies. She is originally from Westerville, OH, where her family still resides. She has two supportive parents and three adventurous siblings, as well as a zoo's worth of pets! Ellis looks forward to her time at ENMU and can't wait to see what life has to offer.

LUCY MARTINEZ

Lucy Martinez is a fourth-year student at ENMU. As a poet and woman, she hopes to connect to people through culture and emotion so that they can feel less alone in the world. She is from Gallup, NM and comes from a large family. Her ultimate career goal is to produce a popularly studied poetry book and to add to the academic sphere of literature and English.

DIANE WEBSTER

Diane Webster's goal is to remain open to poetry ideas in everyday life, nature, or an overheard phrase and to write. Diane enjoys the challenge of transforming images into words to fit her poems. Her work has appeared in Home Planet News Online, North Dakota Quarterly, Talking River Review and other literary magazines.

G.H. MOSSON

G.H. Mosson is the author of five books and chapbooks of poetry, including Family Snapshot as a Poem in Time (Finishing Line, 2019), and coauthor of Simultaneous Revolutions (PM Press, 2021). His poetry and literary commentary have appeared in The Evening Street Review, The Tampa Review, Smartish Pace, Rattle, and received four Pushcart Prize nominations. An attorney and writer, Mr. Mosson enjoys raising his children, hiking, and literary endeavors. For more, seek www.ghmosson.com.

JIM BEANE

Jim Beane's writing has appeared in numerous literary journals. His story "Jeanette" saw print in Akashic Book's anthology by DC Noir. His short story collection, *By the Sea*, was published by Wordrunners eChapbooks in 2018. In 2019, The Baltimore Review published Jim's