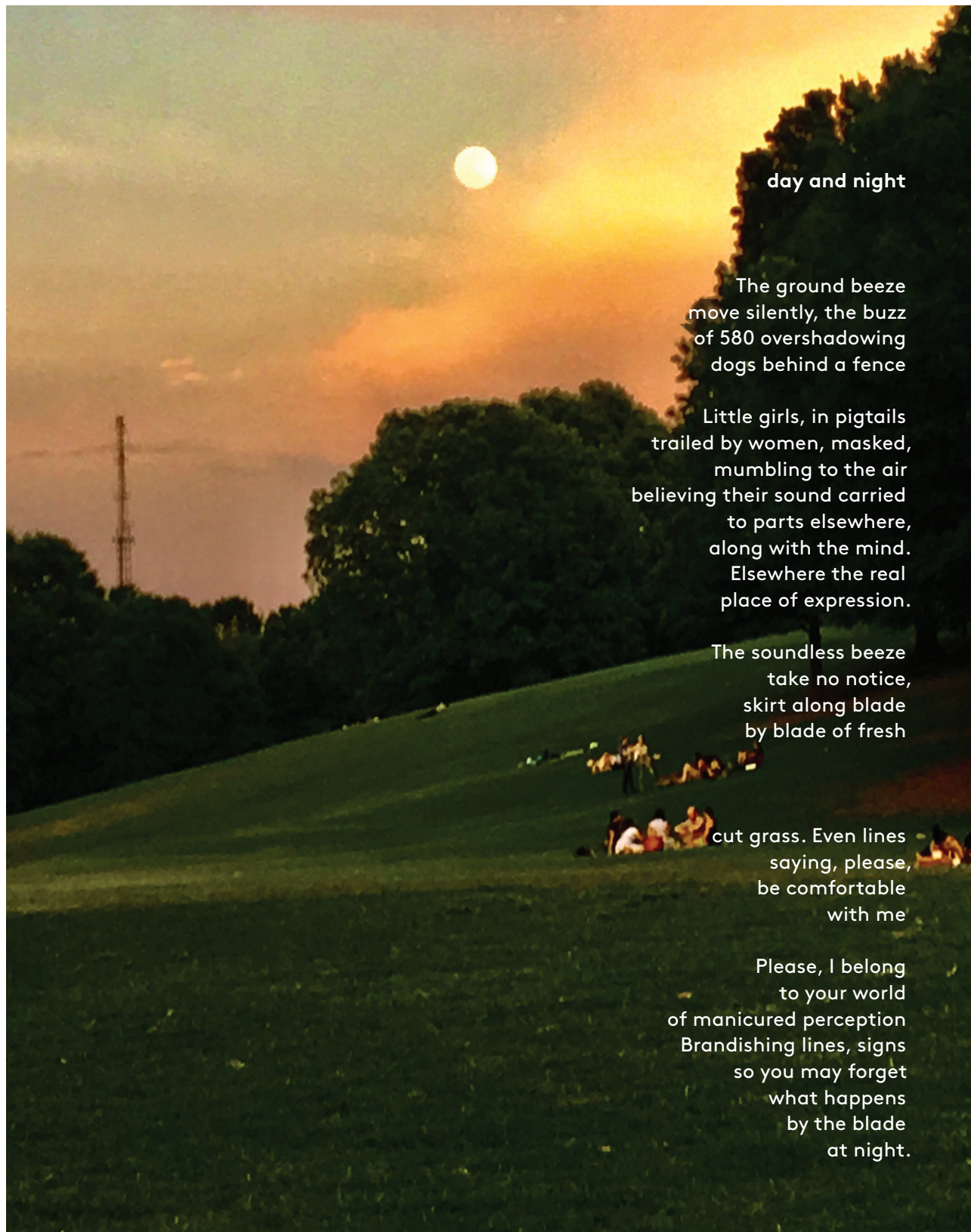


MFA @ Home: "Poems from the pandemic"

by Rachel Parish



day and night

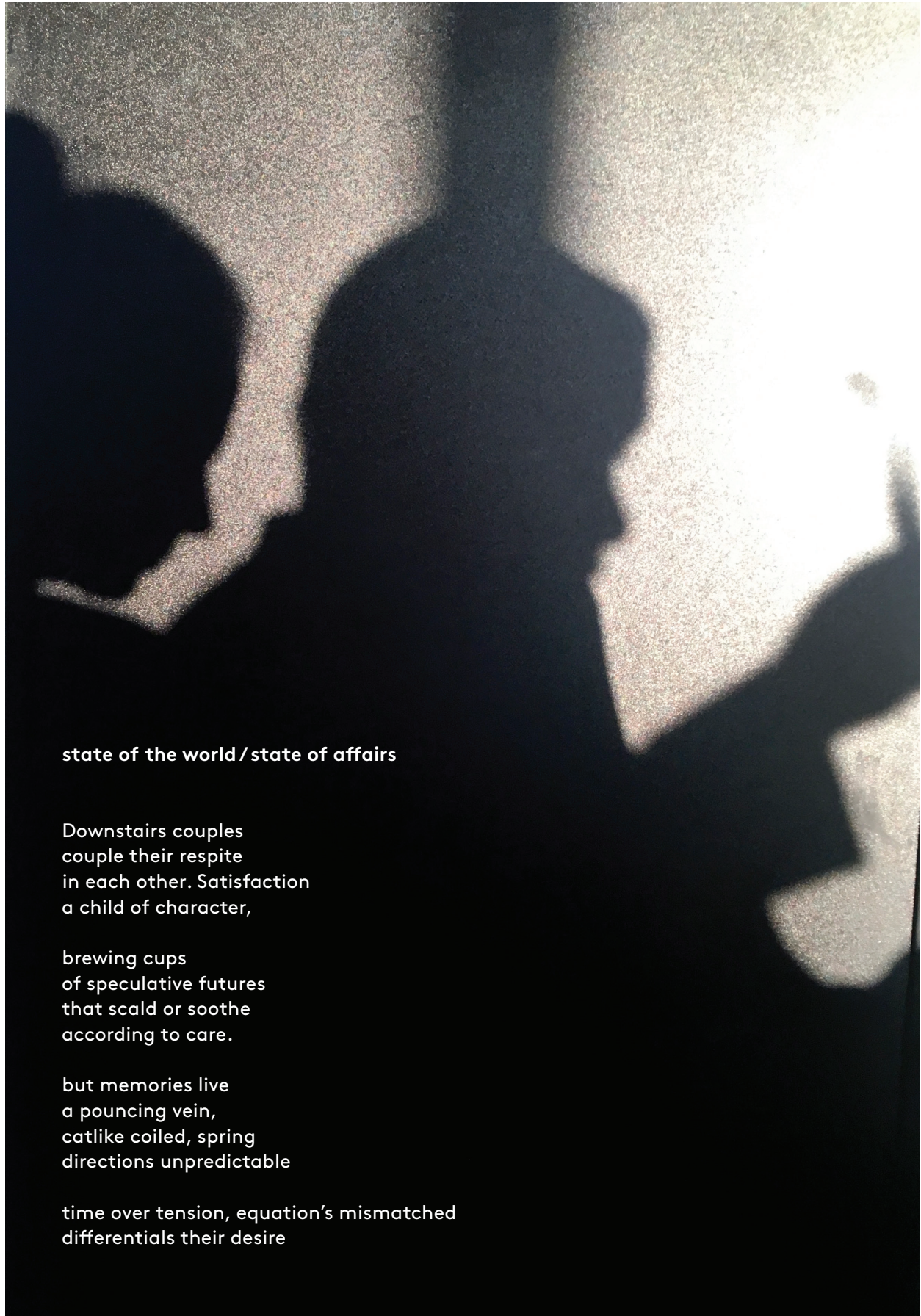
The ground beeze
move silently, the buzz
of 580 overshadowing
dogs behind a fence

Little girls, in pigtails
trailed by women, masked,
mumbling to the air
believing their sound carried
to parts elsewhere,
along with the mind.
Elsewhere the real
place of expression.

The soundless beeze
take no notice,
skirt along blade
by blade of fresh

cut grass. Even lines
saying, please,
be comfortable
with me

Please, I belong
to your world
of manicured perception
Brandishing lines, signs
so you may forget
what happens
by the blade
at night.



state of the world / state of affairs

Downstairs couples
couple their respite
in each other. Satisfaction
a child of character,

brewing cups
of speculative futures
that scald or soothe
according to care.

but memories live
a pouncing vein,
catlike coiled, spring
directions unpredictable

time over tension, equation's mismatched
differentials their desire

More Success

It got a little weird just now
with Rex on the tech support hotline

a failed attempt at installation
enshronds our relationship entirely—
a four hour universe of effort to secure
a connection for our family's next dwelling

I'll tell you straight, we failed.

No solution came forth,
the house remains
a point with no orientation:
a standard monument to compassion.

We began with a series
of dropped, garbled calls,
delays, processes
and communication malfunctions

With each redial, he was there,
the same voice. Young,
late millennial seeking utility
in human-to-human tech relations

Rex, he tried, three times
"one more time"
to unravel AT&T's
web of lies
while I, lulled into reverie
by Coldplay's purgatorial croons,
considered the virtues of Rex,
having been there, constant,
throughout the day.

When we reached the end of this well worn road,
I had to tell him, "I appreciate you"
With ease he says, "we're all in it together"
and I'm struck by the truth in his heart
and I think of the man I fed my son's lunch
and I thought of the lying installer
and the landlord who said she wouldn't forget
and I look at the road and the tent housing complex
and I'm filled with such appreciation for this person
for someone who will keep his connection.

It got a little weird just now with Rex on the phone,
as I extolled his utterly unnecessary virtues.
told him too many times
of the care he displayed
in the execution of his function.

We're all in this together, but it's easy to forget.
We both wish we would have more success.



This piece is part of a series of reflections by graduating MFA students on their experience of completing school at home.