



# LES EXHIBITIONNISTES

by Matthew Leslie

**I**T was a month ago, early on a Sunday when I flashed for the first time. The church bells were ringing as I whipped open Steve's trench coat and shook my stuff for some old guy in a pinstriped suit who had just walked out of the *dépanneur* on the corner. When he pushed open the door I almost balked, but instead I shouted, "*Bonjour, monsieur!*" in a high-pitched singsong, yanked open my jacket, and jiggled my bits.

The man's expression was a flipbook of emotions: shock, outrage, wonder, allure.

I counted to three and then spun on my heel and sprinted across the street, my exposed skin electric with goose bumps. I clasped the trench coat shut and shivered, but not from the late autumn chill.

I had heard about the flashings on the news. How a group of men were roaming the streets of Montreal in overcoats and boots, exposing themselves to unsuspecting women all over the city. Shaking their junk in front of grandmothers and teens alike. I found it crude and depraved. *What type of person would do such a thing?* I wondered.

My name is Geraldine Shaw. I'm an elementary school teacher. I teach History and Geography to twelve-year-olds. I take pictures of my food and post them on Instagram. I knit scarves during the winter and sell them on Etsy. I binge-watch TV shows like *Game of Thrones* and *House of Cards*. I drink two glasses of wine and that's enough. I'm reading the fourth of Elena Ferrante's *Neapolitan* novels and I never want it to end. I do Hatha yoga once a week at the gym and feel uncomfortable when Andre, the instructor, adjusts my form. I say "what the eff" instead of swearing. I don't have any tattoos. I'm twenty-eight but I feel much older. I wear plaid pajama pants around the house. I drink chamomile tea. I think flashing is obscene.

But I did it again five days later on Friday night. After the first time, I told myself it was just a lark, a one-time thing, simply a way to prove to myself that I wasn't as Plain Jane Lane as everyone (well, mainly Steve) thinks I am, and to maybe get out of the funk I've been in over the last few months. Steve believes that people are incapable of real change, and maybe part of why I flashed that first time was just to spite him, as he lay in bed snoring like a walrus and sleeping off his weekend of beer and hockey.

But the second time I flashed was completely influenced by the expressions on the old man's face—that quick collision of contrasting emotions.

The whole thing had happened so fast, I felt like I didn't really get to properly experience it, and all I knew was that it had created such a mix of emotions in me, too, that I felt compelled to explore it a bit more.

Steve had gone out for a *cinq à sept* with some of his co-workers, and there was a Habs game on, so I knew his happy hour drink would continue well past seven o'clock.

I walked north a few blocks from our apartment towards a little *marché* that sells cheese and wine and local craft beer. As I approached the store, I saw two guys at the counter paying for a six-pack and a baguette. They

looked no older than twenty. My skin started to tingle and my heart pounded as I unbuttoned Steve's trench coat and waited for the boys to come out of the store. Again, I wanted to flee, but I forced myself to stay. The door chimed as they walked out.

*"Hey, salut, les gars!"* I shouted, opening the jacket wide and wiggling my works. I looked back and forth at the eyes of each boy, two deer in headlights.

I saw a brief moment of shock on one face, but mostly thrill on the other. By the time I had counted to five they both had grins on their mugs, and so did I. I quickly turned and ran away to shouts of: "Oh my God!" and *"J't'aime comme un fou!"* and *"Tabarnac, t'es belle! Épouse-moi!"*

I ducked down an alley to catch my breath, and started giggling uncontrollably. Steve's coat was still undone and I looked down at my boobs and the flash of my white belly and thigh. My body looked unfamiliar, enticing, refreshed. As I started buttoning the jacket, I ran a hand over my left nipple and trembled violently. The tremor coursed down my spine, like lightning striking my nervous system, and stopped firmly between my legs. I exhaled in a moan. But the sensation wasn't about lust or sex or desire—it was completely removed from the carnal—instead, there was something nostalgic about it, innocent, like a rediscovery of my

youth, and forgotten emotions. My hands didn't feel like my own, they were the soft young hands of Jason Morley, my first love, the first boy I ever let touch my body.

I heard the shuffle of feet behind me and saw a woman with a little black dog turn down the alley. She was tapping out a text on her phone and the dog sniffed my boots as they walked by.

*"S'cusez-moi, madam? Avez-vous l'heure?"* I asked.

*"Ouais,"* she said, looking at her phone. *"Il est neuf heures moins quart."*

*"Merci beaucoup!"* I shouted, yanking the jacket wide. The woman was so surprised she gave a start and the little dog yapped at me. *"Bon weekend!"* I said, slowly turning around and walking away.

That weekend, *The Gazette* ran an article about the flashers in the Saturday paper. One of the men, who went by the name Jean Jeudi, contacted the paper for an anonymous interview. He said the group was called *Les Exhibitionnistes*, French for *The Flashers*, and that their name was a double entendre, because each instance of *exhibitionnisme* was also part of a magnificent art project.

Jean said he wanted all those who were exposed to take photos and videos of the moment and put them on social media to be part of this

“great collective artistic adventure.” He even asked people to add the hashtag #lesgrainesmtl to their posts, which I was surprised the paper actually printed, because *ma graine* is Québécois slang for c\*ck (pardon my English).

When the reporter asked him how he could possibly consider public indecency an art form, Jean Jeudi, the anonymous flasher, paraphrased our Prime Minister and simply said: “Because it’s 2016.”



I started flashing more often. On weeknights when Steve was out playing hockey with his beer league, but usually early in the morning before work because I knew it could potentially be dangerous in the dark (although I think the risk was part of the impulse, part of the thrill). And every time I flashed I gained more confidence, more grit, and what felt like vital energy or *élan*.

I usually wore a pair of big sunglasses to hide my face, but as Jean Jeudi noted in his interview, “a flasher’s nakedness acts as a shield for his true identity” because whenever the “victim” was asked by police to

describe what the flashing fiend looked like, none of them ever seemed to be able to give any clear details.

“...umm, brownish hair, late twenties, maybe thirties, a tattoo of a bird or something on his chest.”

It probably didn't help that the men were tying neon ribbons to their genitals and writing #lesgrainesmtl on their stomachs.

My name is Geraldine Shaw. I talk to my Mom on the phone at least twice a week. I get as excited as my students do at Christmas time. I sleep with a night guard because I grind my teeth. I blush easily. I think cat videos are the best thing about the internet. I love Cool Ranch Doritos. I like gardening and flowers. I've been with Steve for eight years. I've only had sex with two other men. I think I might be gluten intolerant, but Steve says I'm just a hypochondriac. I can't fall asleep without a pillow between my legs. In general, I don't like the way I look. I hate my hair, hate my clothes, hate my skin, but I do think I have a nice smile. And my boobs are all right too, mainly because they're big. I find pornography and flashing offensive.

Two days ago, I slapped a boy in front of the entire class when he called a girl a “stupid sl\*t.” My reaction caught everyone by surprise,

including me. This foul-mouthed boy told his parents and now I have a meeting with him and his parents and the principal on Tuesday next week. I haven't told Steve about it yet. Steve thinks I'm a pushover, but I want to tell the parents that it felt good slapping their son. That the look of fear and injustice on his face satisfied me. Earlier in the year, I caught him showing his friends a sex video on his phone. Twelve years old and already a misogynist. I bet his father is just lovely.



Steve and I met when we were undergrads at McGill. I was studying Education and he was in Computer Science. I thought he was so funny and attractive back then, even if he was a bit abrasive and moody. We were in a lit class together and he seemed like the type of guy who demanded respect because he came off as well-read and intelligent, name dropping writers like Joyce and Franzen and Wallace and Pynchon. Over coffee or beers, he'd quote Gramsci and Chomsky and Naomi Klein and seemed just as passionate about social justice and politics as he was about sports and video games. He wasn't jaded yet or apathetic. He was eager but still

vulnerable, and he was so thin. This was before his job at Ubisoft, before we became “adults” with “careers,” before he started to shut down, before he stopped believing in us, before he stopped loving me.

When we first started dating, Steve used to look at me—I mean really look at me—his gaze searing through my skin, x-ray vision to my soul. It would make me blush and shiver. We were soul mates, I really believed that back then, and I think he did too. And for those brief seconds of exposure when I flash anonymous men, it feels like they’re looking at me the way Steve did when we were in university.

When we moved into our first place together, a little one bedroom in Mile End, we were so proud; we felt so mature, even though everything we owned either came from Ikea or Craigslist. But it didn’t matter because we had a place we could call our own. In my memories it was always summer in that apartment, the harsh Montreal winters a blip, because sun was always trickling through the kitchen window, because Steve and I were so happy.

He would come home late from his old job tending bar, and even though it was past two in the morning, we’d open a bottle of cheap wine and sink into the couch and laugh and chat for hours, about our friends, about the future, about us. We were BFFs. Patient, sympathetic, caring, and

in love. But we've drifted apart, no longer friends, barely even lovers, we're split ends that keep on splitting.

Steve is a man boy, forever twenty-two, stubbornly unwilling to compromise or talk to me about his godd\*mn feelings. About a year ago, I realized that when I think of Steve, I don't think of nice things anymore. Instead, I feel anxious and bitter. And I think of Steve this way: cold and distant, always annoyed, a passive-aggressive bully, and a drunk.

And then I got pregnant.



I made the paper this weekend. A grainy black and white photo from a security camera outside Laurier metro station and the headline: *Montreal's Flash Flood of Perverts Breaks the Glass Ceiling: Woman Flasher Added to the Mix.*

You couldn't tell it was me. I was any woman in a trench coat, I was everywoman, but seeing it almost made my heart stop. Steve and I were at the kitchen table having breakfast and when I saw the image, I gasped. Steve looked up from the sports section and grunted "Yerr aiight?"

“Ouch, yeah I’m fine. Just cramps,” I said, knowing he wouldn’t tolerate any chatter about my cycle this early on a Saturday. Steve was a grump in the morning and didn’t speak in full sentences for the first hour he was awake. If he didn’t have an early squash match at the Y, he’d probably still be in bed.

*Video footage and complaints of a series of flashes in the Plateau by what appears to be the same woman has the mayor of the borough in a daze* read the article’s first line. *“I implore this woman and the men to stop immediately! We’ve had enough! This is not art, it’s a sickness!”* I giggled to myself and started to turn the page—I’d wait until Steve was gone to read the whole article—but Steve slapped his hand down on the paper.

“Holy shit, kinda looks like you,” he said, tilting his head to look at the photo.

“That is me,” I said, the admission making my heart beat as fast as it did when I did the thing I was admitting to. “Look, I’m wearing your old trench coat. I had just flashed two men in suits on their way to the metro.”

Steve laughed so hard he had a coughing fit. “Yeah, that’d be the day,” he said, pushing his chair away from the table, still chuckling, leaving his empty cereal bowl and coffee mug for me to bring to the sink.



Pregnant. *Enceinte*. With child. If anything was going to make or break us, it was a baby.

I knew I was pregnant even before I missed my period. I was super exhausted and kept falling asleep at my desk during lunch, plus my sense of smell was out of this world. Suddenly, I could smell each and every student in the class—their halitosis, sweat and funk, their shampoos and deodorants, hand creams and lip balms. I couldn't tell what was worse, the body odours or the chemicals that masked the body odours, but both of them made me mildly nauseated.

A week and a half later, when I mentioned to Steve that I hadn't had my period, and I thought I was pregnant, he laughed it off and said it was probably just stress.

“So you're a few days late, big deal.”

“I'm almost two weeks late.”

“Well then, I'm sure it'll happen any day now.”

“Or not. I know my body, Steve, all right?”

We continued to argue until he went to the pharmacy to buy a pregnancy test and prove I was being irrational.

“Waste of ten bucks if you ask me,” he said, tossing it on the kitchen table.

The next morning, I peed on the stick and it was positive.

“Are you sure you did it right?” was Steve’s response to the news.

“Uh yeah, pretty sure, Steve.”

He didn’t hug or kiss me, just looked at his phone, said he was late for work, and left me sitting on the toilet. We had a huge fight that night. Steve was in denial, convinced the test was a false positive. He drank a six pack in two hours and started to slur his words. He left the apartment to buy more beer and came back with a half-drunk bottle of wine and another pregnancy test.

Next morning, same result. But it still wasn’t real to him.

“Are you sure we even wanna keep it?” he asked a few nights later in bed, in the dark, so he wouldn’t have to look me in the eyes.

It wasn’t until I left a pregnancy book in the bathroom (where I knew he’d skim through it) that it finally started to sink in for him.

“It says the baby is now the size of a blueberry!” he said a week or so later, affectionately touching my belly. “Can you believe that? A f\*cking blueberry! And it says it’s starting to grow arms and legs!”

I started to picture us as a family, a tired but happy Mom and Dad duo, pushing a stroller through Park Lafontaine on a sunny afternoon. And Steve started to see it, too.

“A boy, it’s gotta be a boy,” he said. “We’ll get him playing baseball in the summer and hockey in the winter. He’ll be a scrappy little right-winger just like his old man.”

Even so, Steve started partying more, getting in his “quota” of beer-fuelled nights, since as he said, “the good ol’ days would be over soon.” So instead of hanging out with me, and planning out “the good *new* days” (aka our family’s future), he was at the dive bar down the street watching the Habs game with *les boys*. It made me angry, but there was a deadline I told myself, there was a due date, so I’d call my Mom and chat with her instead.

One night during my eleventh week I woke with cramps. I went pee and noticed I was spotting a bit, a splash of bright red in the toilet. I was a little worried, but was so exhausted I decided to just go back to bed and see how it was in the morning. Steve was passed out and snoring. He had

stumbled in after midnight, smelling like beer and cigarettes. I tossed and turned for a while, managed to fall back asleep for another couple hours, but then I woke up with really bad cramps and a lot more spotting.

“Steve, wake up!” I said, giving him a hard shove as I got out of bed. “Steven! I need you!” I shouted. “Wake up!”

I rushed to the bathroom and sat on the toilet gripping my stomach. Something wasn't right. I bit down hard on my night guard. I was pouring sweat and shivering. I couldn't see anything; my vision was static on an old TV. I yelled Steve's name again as a hot flash of pain raced through my belly. I was losing our baby.

Afterward, I pitched over on the bathroom floor, my head on the cold tile. My entire body and mind tingling, numb. I was in shock. I stayed there for a long time, listening to Steve's snores from the bedroom in between my sobs.

Steve got up to pee a few hours later and found me asleep on the bathroom floor, a damp towel wrapped round me as a blanket. I was still bleeding, so he took me to the hospital. On the drive as I told him what happened, I swear I saw a flicker of relief in his eyes.

It's been six months now and whatever family ties had kind of been binding while I was pregnant are long gone. I had just gotten used to thinking of myself as Geraldine, Mommy to be, and in a flash it was taken away.

Steve seemed to act like nothing happened. I know he was grieving in his own way, but I needed him to be there, to talk things through with me, and be the man I fell in love with nearly a decade ago. And comfort. Just a little bit of love and comfort was all I wanted from him. But he wouldn't give it to me. He pulled away so far. Started working more, drinking more, and didn't want to talk about it. He flat out refused to even discuss the possibility of trying again.

Since then we've both been withdrawn, our backs turned in bed at night. We know the relationship is dead, but we've both been too chicken sh\*t to call it quits, both hanging on to memories or sentiments that aren't there anymore. I've tried to stay positive, to see the sunlight trickling through the kitchen window, but even when it does, it's so fleeting.



Although there was video footage of me and the mayor had stated in the article that I “would be arrested as a sex criminal if caught,” I didn’t want to stop. I couldn’t. As weird as it sounds, flashing was making me a better person and I couldn’t give it up now. I’d just have to find a way to be more discreet.

The trench coat was too suspicious so it had to go. It was almost December anyway, time to update my look for the season. I bundled up in my big winter parka with fur-lined hood, scarf over my mouth and nose, wool knee-high socks, boots and mitts, all but my eyes exposed, looking like any winter woman, looking like every winter woman, yet underneath it all I was perfectly, powerfully naked. The parka had snap buttons, which would be great for the reveal. I practiced in the bathroom mirror a few times and found the effect quite appealing.

“I’m looking fine,” I said, realizing this is something I don’t think I’ve ever told myself before.

It was just after seven o’clock on Monday night. Steve had hockey and wouldn’t be back until ten or eleven. My meeting with the principal and the parents was tomorrow morning and I didn’t want to think about it, so I ventured outside. There was a light dusting of snow on the ground, but we still hadn’t had our first big storm yet. I started walking north and

considered going into the *dépanneur* on the corner and flashing the Vietnamese man who worked there, but I saw a young dad pushing a stroller towards me on the sidewalk and decided he'd be a good start. I quickened my step and gripped my parka tight, excited to snap it open for this cute young dad in the cold air, when someone called my name behind me. As I turned to look, a man I didn't know quickly linked arms with me.

“*Viens avec moi,*” he said, pulling me across the street. I started to resist. “Relax, relax! *J'vais pas t'faire mal,* okay?” he said in a harsh whisper.

“Who are you? How do you know my name?”

He didn't reply, just kept his arm linked tight with mine, leading me to the sidewalk on the other side of the street.

“I swear to God I will scream rape if you don't tell me who you are right now,” I said, trying to get a look at him, but he had his face turned away from me.

“Okay, okay, *calme toi, j'm'excuse...* I am one of *Les Exhibitionnistes.*”

“Jean Jeudi?” I asked.

“*Non,* I am Luc Lundi.”

“Luc Lundi?” I said with an uncontrollable giggle.

“Yes, Luc Lundi. Why is this funny?” he asked, steering me down an alley a block away from my apartment. It was the same alley where I flashed the woman with the little black dog.

We stopped and he let go of my arm. I took a step back so I could get a look at him. He was quite handsome.

“Do you all have such silly names?” I asked.

He seemed surprised by the question. “It’s not my real name *le*, but uh, *ouais*, I guess so? There are six of us in the group.” His French accent was strong, but he spoke English well. I didn’t have a clue what was going on, but I no longer felt scared for my life

“Why were you following me?” I asked.

He didn’t answer, just pointed at a telephone pole. “Look up,” he said. “You see that?”

I didn’t see anything at first, but then I noticed what looked like a camera on the wall next to the pole. I remembered how the dog barked at me when I flashed its owner. From this angle, the camera would have caught it all.

“Last summer there was a guy who sold drugs out of a garage down the alley, *là-bas*,” he said. “So we installed a webcam to catch him in the act. He’s in jail now, but the camera it’s still working.”

“Who’s we?” I asked, my heart starting to pound in my chest again. “How the heck do you know my name?”

He shook his head at me as a reply. “Listen, you must stop your flashing, okay?”

“Why, because I’m a woman?”

“*Non, non, non, c’est pas ça, c’est juste que tu*, uhh, it’s just that uh, you are messing up our art exhibit.”

I laughed at him. “How?”

He sighed. “Just as our name *Les Exhibitionnistes* is a double entendre, so is our art. There are two sides to it, okay? *Le physical et le digital*. And you, you are ruining the digital.”

“I don’t understand,” I said. I felt like I was in some sort of prank video. A *Just for Laughs* gag or something. Luc was wearing a backpack and he took it off and pulled an iPad out of the front pocket.

“Okay, *regarde ça*,” he said, showing me a map of the Plateau on the screen. “We started doing this exhibit over two months ago, and all of our

locations in the city were chosen in advance.” He flipped to a second map of the Plateau, this one with red dots signifying each place someone was or would be flashed. “These are the locations of every time someone called in a complaint or used our hashtag. And now if you connect the dots, you will see the real work of art, a piece of digital graffiti. *Et voilà!*” Luc said proudly, as he flipped to a third map.

The dots connected to form a giant penis, the sort of crude drawing one might see in a public bathroom.

“And every time *you* flash someone and he tags your location, you mess up our art. This is why you have to stop.”

I started to laugh again.

“It’s not a joke, okay? *Les Exhibitionnistes* we are *artistes*, but we all have day jobs, careers, and you’d be surprised at how much power we have. If I catch you again, you will be arrested. That’s it, that’s all,” he said.

“Are you a cop or something? Is this for real?” I asked, but he just tucked his iPad back into his knapsack. The entire thing felt completely absurd. “A bunch of grown ass men that are still obsessed with drawing d\*cks?”

*"It's art!"* he shouted. "And there is a reason why none of us have been arrested."

He did kind of look like a cop. Good posture, broad shoulders and strong arms that stretched the fabric of his trench coat.

"Well, it might be art for you guys, but it's much more than that for me," I said. "This might sound stupid to you, but for me it's like therapy. I'm sorry, but I'm not sure I can give it up that easily."

"I'm afraid you must. We only have a few more locations to do before our installations are complete."

"Are you on the job right now?" I asked, pointing at his trench coat.

"I was earlier."

"Who did you flash?"

"A group of young women going into a restaurant on Saint Denis."

"Did they enjoy it?"

*"Mais oui.* I think so."

"And how did you find me?"

He stared at me for a second probably considering if he should tell the truth. "We pulled your print off the bench you were sitting on outside of Metro Laurier. We've been watching your apartment for a week now."

“What? So you really are cops?” I asked incredulously.

“We are *artistes* with day jobs.”

“This is absolutely insane. You know that right?” I said. Luc Lundi merely shrugged his shoulders. I laughed and he smiled at me. Looking at him standing there in his trench coat and rubber boots, I had a sudden urge to see if things couldn’t get any weirder. “Okay fine Luc, I will stop flashing, but only on one condition...”

“*Quoi?*”

“Flash me and I’ll flash you. Let’s double flash in front of the camera right now and I won’t do it again.”

“This is a promise?” he asked, glancing up at the security camera.

“*Oui, je te promets*, Luc Lundi,” I said.

“Okay, why not? On the count of three then,” Luc said, undoing the buttons on his jacket. “One... two... three!”

I unsnapped my parka with a flourish and so did Luc, our naked bodies like magnets in the cool air. I took a step towards him and he took a step towards me. I looked at his body, at the neon pink ribbon tied around his penis, at the hashtag written on his flat belly, but mostly I stared deep into his eyes. Luc Lundi did the same. He checked me out, up and down,

but met my gaze and didn't let go. I saw joy in his eyes, but there was a sadness too, as visible as the goosebumps on his skin.

We took another step towards each other. He was so close I could feel his breath on my face. His eyes were green with flecks of brown, his eyelashes as long as a girl's.

“Luc Lundi,” I whispered.

“*T'es vraiment belle*, Geraldine Shaw,” he whispered back, his face moving even closer to mine.

A car honked loudly from the street, and Luc blinked, snapping us out of our magnetic trance. He took a step back, closed his jacket, cleared his throat.

“I will send you an invitation to our exhibit in the new year,” he said, quickly turning from me and walking away.



The next morning, I met with the parents and the principal. I wore a blazer and a blouse that accentuated my boobs. I saw the father and his son take note. I saw the principal steal a glance too.

The principal told me I wasn't allowed to say a word at the meeting. And I probably wouldn't have, if I didn't receive a text from an unknown number a few minutes before it started.

It read: *I shall call you Valerie Vendredi. Montreal's first flashing duo is born! Que penses-tu?*

Without a second thought, I texted back: (o)(o)

And then he texted: *Té tellement intéressant, Valerie! It won't be tonight, but very soon. I look forward to it already. LL.*

Followed by: <==3

The old me would've probably sat and taken it, let the principal and the parents shame and shove the pushover. I would have been guilted into apologizing to the kid, which would have justified his awful behaviour and made me powerless in front of my students. I would have been reprimanded by the school board, possibly suspended without pay, and forced to speak with a counsellor once a week for the rest of the year.

But I was transformed, both Geraldine Shaw, the teacher, and Valerie Vendredi, *une exhibitionniste*. So I cut the principal off mid-sentence and said: "In my classes and at this school I promote equality, sensitivity, and decency. And when your son called Melanie D'Ambrosio, a twelve-year-old

girl, a stupid sl\*t, I reacted. I didn't think first, my gut took over, because what he said was uncalled for and disrespectful. Already this year, I've had to discipline him for showing his friends pornography on his cellphone, and the values he currently lacks are the ones that are 100% necessary in my classroom. I will not apologize for what I did without an apology from him first, as well as a verbal promise to the entire class that he will treat girls with the respect they deserve."

As I said this, I imagined tearing open my blouse and flashing them all.

The principal's face was purple with rage. I looked at the parents. Mom was frowning at son while Dad elbowed him and said, "C'mon dummy, tell her you're sorry."

Head down, he mumbled an apology.



*Les Exhibitionnistes'* anonymous #lesgrainesmtl exhibit was held at the SAT Gallery on Saint Laurent Boulevard during February and March. There were three giant touchscreen maps on three separate walls showcasing the group's "magnificent collaborative digital graffiti."

Three ten-foot long phalluses traced along the streets and parks and alleys and sidewalks of *la belle ville*.

You could touch any of the dots on the maps and a bilingual info bubble would pop up, detailing what day the flash had happened on and to whom, if it had been tagged or written about on social media, if there'd been a call to the police, and which one of *Les Exhibitionnistes* was the flasher.

I stood next to Luc at the gallery, one hand linked with his, the other tapping a dot on one of the giant maps. A penis-shaped info bubble appeared on the screen.

It read: *Rue Drolet and Rue Dante. 20h30, Thursday 3 Dec 2016. First snowfall of the year. A retired couple out for an evening stroll near Jean-Talon Market are flashed by Luc Lundi and Valerie Vendredi. The husband notified the police saying the two flashers were "twisted perverts that seemed to be enjoying themselves far too much."*

It was our first double flash together. The sky had been a soft pink colour and the snow created a hush on the street. Our jackets stayed open long after the couple had disappeared.

Luc smiled at me and wrapped his arm around my waist. I tapped on the screen again and the penis-shaped info bubble disappeared. We walked slowly around the gallery, taking it all in. We were there not as Luc Lundi and Valerie Vendredi of *Les Exhibitionnistes*, but as Luc Gervais and Geraldine Shaw, a Montreal police officer and an elementary school teacher. Just two people interested in the arts.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Leslie's fiction has been published in *The Fiddlehead*, *Riddle Fence*, *Echolocation*, *Qwerty*, *Misunderstandings Magazine*, and more. He lives and flashes in Montreal. Check out his blog at [mattleslie.org](http://mattleslie.org).

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