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VENDOR PROFILE

Jacob C.S.

BY SOPHIE OUELLETTE-HOWITZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“Me, personally, I am a writer,” Jacob C.S. said early into our conversation. It’s more than just a hobby for Jacob; it’s a way to create worlds where he can hide. He also tries to be a voice for people who go unheard.

“Those like me who choose to just shun everything to prevent getting burned or hurt. There’s a logical explanation for that,” he said. “It’s commonly viewed as irrational, but in my view, it’s completely rational.”

Writing offers Jacob consistency in a life marked by tumult. He was born, and primarily raised, in Portland. During early childhood, he lived with his mother, who moved him to Northern California for a few years.

“Some families are not...” Jacob trailed off. He raised his hands in front of his face, fingers touching, then pulled them apart, splaying his fingers as he did. “My parents were not supposed to be together in the first place.”

Jacob sometimes has trouble remembering things. Sometimes, he struggles to remember how to spell his

own last name.

“My intellect was worse off at a younger age,” he said, and his mother was not equipped to raise him. Around age 13 or 14, he said, he went to live with his father.

“He re-taught me everything I know,” Jacob said.

He no longer has contact with his mother, but he talks to his father and paternal grandmother, both of whom live in Portland.

Now, Jacob “tends not to get used to things,” he said, and he has difficulty trusting others. He has a place to sleep indoors, but still feels the need to look over his shoulder. “For certain street lives,

On the streets, “having friends is a liability. If you want to keep your stuff from growing legs, don’t have friends.”

you have to put up a mental wall. And for some, it’s not a wall; it’s what they become. Having friends is a liability. If you want to keep your stuff from growing legs, don’t have friends.”

Inside the small circle of those he trusts, however, Jacob is known for his generosity.

He describes himself as inventive and says he’s a gamer and a comic fan. He loves his cat, whom he named Magneto. When he reads, he finds himself drawn to dark narratives; his favorite book series, which he returns to again and again, is Lemony Snicket’s “A Series of Unfortunate Events.”

Jacob’s writing style tends to be dark, too. As is true for many writers, getting words on the page sometimes feels grueling.

“It attacks the nerves to no end,” he said. “I’m happy one second, depressed one minute, snapping at people the next minute.” One of his first published pieces appeared in Write Around Portland’s spring 2017 anthology “Illuminated by the Words/Illuminados por las palabras.” Jacob’s piece, in keeping with his bleak worldview, was titled “Human Stupidity.” He’s also published two pieces in Street Roots, “Heretic” and “Confusion,” as well as another in the spring 2018 Write Around Portland anthology, “A Wonder I Can Hold,” titled “Hour Glass.”

Titles are an important part of Jacob’s writing process. “I have no patience,” he explained. “If I give it a title, I will be going back to it.”

Jacob is still discovering what he likes. Selling Street Roots is part of that.

“How I see things, if I get one sale, that’s me thinking, OK, I can actually stay at this spot and see where this goes – just from one sale.” He sells the paper at the Starbucks on Northeast 45th Avenue and Glisan Street, just down the road from the first place he remembers living.

“The beauty of that spot,” he said, “is that I’m the one that put it on the map. No one had thought to use it.”



Answers to Page 15 Puzzles

R	E	D	E	D	G	E	S	O	R	E	S	T		
A	C	E	C	O	N	O	Y	T	H	R	E	S		
L	I	S	I	R	I	D	E	S	C	E	N	C		
U	N	S	W	E	P	T	W	E	E	W	I	T		
T	R	E	A	D	T	S	A	R	P	A	P	A		
S	E	C	S	S	I	R	S	E	P	A	L	L		
I	V	E	H	O	M	E	M	A	D	E				
F	O	R	W	A	R	D	T	H	I	N	K	I	N	G
N	O	N	E	M	B	A	T	T	L	E	T	O	N	
T	E	S	L	A	I	I	I	I	S	A	R	I		
I	L	L	S	R	U	H	R	S	I	R	E	N		
M	B	A	Y	A	M	O	N	T	H	E	G	O		
M	I	N	O	R	L	E	A	G	U	E	T	I	P	
A	D	A	G	I	O	P	L	O	T	I	R	E		
D	E	C	A	M	P	S	A	N	S	L	E	D		

F	O	N	H	U	S	R	L	U	T	H	E	R		
M	R	U	U	L	U	D	F	O	R	D				
L	E	W	E	L	U	M	A	R	L	Y	X			
A	V	E	S	T	E	R	P	E	A	N	P			
A	H	E	I	S	T	E	R	O	T	B	M	F		
G	O	D	E	R	X	L	E	H	A	R	A	C	U	
L	E	O	R	T	I	Z	B	E	N	E	T	L	H	D
B	A	R	E	N	S	K	Y	N	D	I	S	O	M	R
B	T	W	O	U	S	A	R	L	A	C	A			
O	L	E	S	W	A	R	B	A	U	G	L	R		
D	E	U	A	R	I	O	S	T	D	C	B	E		
I	K	C	V	E	R	N	I	O	N	O	E			
M	R	E	G	E	R	E	M	O	N	N	G	P		
M	E	R	U	L	A	J	O	N	G	E	N	Y	Z	

3	8	1	6	2	9	4	7	5
2	9	6	4	7	5	3	8	1
7	5	4	3	1	8	2	6	9
8	7	9	5	3	2	6	1	4
6	1	2	9	8	4	7	5	3
4	3	5	7	6	1	8	9	2
5	4	3	8	9	7	1	2	6
1	6	8	2	5	3	9	4	7
9	2	7	1	4	6	5	3	8

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