

Admission

Sitting at the small table, suspended over the frozen street by the transparent floor and wall-sized windows of the second story hotel restaurant, we must have looked like a couple to the passing pedestrians below, his salt and pepper beard opposite my round, young face. My father slipped the thin stem of the wineglass between his ring and middle fingers, cradling the clear curve in his palm, *I understand why you love women*, he said raising his eyes from the cup to meet mine, *I love women too*. Then he asked me to join him in the basement bar on Sainte-Catherine where he'd go with his college buddies to drink beer and fold dollars into the dancers' G-strings. As I imagined us from outside the glass gallery, our faces filtered by silent, stark flakes, I understood his invitation to be an offering, a sign of acceptance, so that I too could sit with my legs wide open, stalk a room with my eyes, be counted among the powerful.