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## Editors' Note

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*"[Milo] looked around slowly at all the friends he'd made...But mostly he looked at Tock and the Humbug, with whom he had shared so much—the perils, the dangers, the fears, and, best of all, the victory."* - Norton Juster, *The Phantom Tollbooth*

With Dartmouth's schedule sending students off-campus throughout the usual academic year, we've become pretty accustomed to goodbyes. Yet, Spring and Summer term are particular times when we seem to say them the most to the people and places we care about, as we usher one another off towards new adventures.

As writers, we say other goodbyes - ones which we tell our characters when we send them into the world, relinquishing them from our control and allowing them to speak for themselves. Oftentimes, the first goodbye to a piece is daunting, no matter how many times we have said them to other works before.

One night, this past Spring, we decided to hold our meeting outside. We sat under the stars, still sort of in the glow of Baker Tower, where countless students have sat before. That night we did one of our Round Robin exercises. Every few minutes, you received a story, written by the person to your left, and where they had broken off, sometimes mid-sentence, you would continue until the next time to pass off. At the end, when we read aloud our finished products, we laughed at our own messy prose and smiled at the turns in the plot we never expected, always surprised to see how our words had inspired someone else.

It is moments like these which best encapsulate *Humbug*. The irony struck us, as we sat down to condense *Humbug* for you, to paint it with words and put it in a frame, that *Humbug* has been just that, a series of feelings and spaces and people who are very difficult to define and frame. It is the feeling in the room when a new member has just gathered the courage to share their work for the first time. It is the welcoming quiet of our dear old Poetry Room and the silence before someone reads the first word of a poem that no one else has ever heard. But ultimately, *Humbug* is the company of friends and strangers all gathered in mutual agreement that stories are special and that sharing ours may be daunting, but believe that if you fall, you will get back up again. As Milo knows, it is the friends, written and real, with whom you share the perils, the dangers, the fears, and the victory which make the hardest goodbyes of all.

To Isabelle and Madeleine, thank you for entrusting us with this lovely legacy of words. We would also like to add our gratitude for Emily, who has become a good friend this term and helped run meetings from the other side of the fireplace. Finally, we want to acknowledge that certain group of new members whose attendance and enthusiasm has been unfailing. You are why *Humbug* exists.

Yours,  
Katherine Carithers and Caroline Cook