

2021

## DIMENSIONSHARE

Adam Frost-Venrick  
*Denison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Frost-Venrick, Adam (2021) "DIMENSIONSHARE," *Exile*: Vol. 67: No. 1, Article 19.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol67/iss1/19>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

## DIMENSIONSHARE

Adam Frost-Venrick

*LIGHTS UP on a rented office space. It is a very shabby place. The window is cracked. The fluorescents flicker. There is a coffee maker plugged in that just rests on the floor and on the desk, there is a small fish tank with a dead goldfish inside. On the wall, a poster is hung crookedly that reads: VISIT NEW YORK. The door opens with an imposing and terrible SQUEAK and a salesman enters, leading a middle aged couple. The salesman is named MR. JARMINGUS (age ambiguous). He has an old suit, a bad toupée of the wrong color and he wears a St. Christopher medal. The couple are MR. AND MRS. HANOVER. Both of them are middle aged.*

JARMINGUS: I don't know if you folks like ribs, but if you do, there's this cute little place just off the interstate that makes the best ribs I think I've ever tasted, I mean (*Chef's kiss*) they just *fall off the bone*.

MR. HANOVER: Oh, that sounds nice. You know, we really don't have enough ribs, Annie.

MRS. HANOVER: Well, I don't really like ribs.

MR. HANOVER: Oh stop it. You love ribs. She loves ribs.

JARMINGUS: Oh, I imagine. Please have a seat, both of you. Can I make you both some coffee?

MR. HANOVER: Yes!

MRS. HANOVER: No thank you.

*Mr. Jarmingus crouches down by the coffee maker and begins to prepare coffee.*

MRS. HANOVER: That's a very shiny medal, by the way, Mr. Jarmingus.

JARMINGUS: Oh, thank you. Got it at a pawn shop after they won the last Super Bowl.

MRS. HANOVER: After who won? St. Christopher?

JARMINGUS: Who? (*Looks over the medal.*) Isn't this Tom Brady?

MRS. HANOVER: I don't think so.

JARMINGUS: Oh. Well anyway, go Pats. Now... we were going to talk about vacations. Should we talk about vacations? I think we should talk about vacations. How long's it been since you two had any?

MRS. HANOVER: *Any?*

JARMINGUS: Any vacations, that is.

MR. HANOVER: Oh, it's been a while. My wife and I are both very busy. I have the dealership and she works in accounting. You know how it is.

JARMINGUS: Oh, I know precisely how it is, Mr. Hanover. I see several car dealers and accountants each and every day. And most of them leave with a smile. You're both here because you've been told about what my service does?

MRS. HANOVER: We've read about you, yes.

MR. HANOVER: We're just desperate to try something different, Mr. Jarmingus. The last time we went anywhere was our second honeymoon in Italy.

*Mr. Hanover takes out his phone and begins showing Mr. Jarmingus photos.*

MR. HANOVER: There's the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

JARMINGUS: Oh, very nice. Very pretty.

MR. HANOVER: And there's another one at the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Tried to straighten it.

JARMINGUS: Oh, very strong.

MR. HANOVER: And there's the tower. And... that one's of the Leaning Tower. And... ope, there's a seagull.

MRS. HANOVER: Honey.

MR. HANOVER: And there's the Leaning Tower of Pisa!

MRS. HANOVER: Honey, he doesn't need to see all of this.

JARMINGUS: Oh, it's quite alright, Mrs. Hanover. It's my job to make sure that you and your husband are satisfied. But then, of course, this won't be some mere Plebian Italy trip. This is a little bit different, our service isn't so much about time spent in another country. You could take your vacation right in this very room if you choose. Though I think you'd be depriving yourself of something fun. The company I work for, RealiTech is now able to offer you a chance to vacation -or *vacay*, as they say -not just in another place, but in another version of a place.

MR. HANOVER: So it's true then?

JARMINGUS: Oh, it's true. The brochures we've sent out are *right*. We have a machine, a marvelous machine, a well-built, American-made machine. And this machine, marvelous as it is, *allows* one to be transported, for a time, to a parallel *universe*. Any universe one might want.

MRS. HANOVER: And how does it work? This machine?

JARMINGUS: What?

MRS. HANOVER: I mean, if it's so marvelous and if your company makes it, you must know how it works.

JARMINGUS: Well I know more about how to *sell* it than to operate it.

MRS. HANOVER: You must know something. I'd really like to know how a machine works before I climb aboard. I mean, is it going to give us cancer?

JARMINGUS: That's a very good question. "It's very good to be health conscious. And on that note, should you choose to go to a reality where things are more humid - and there are several such realities - you should be sure to get vaccinated against any mosquito-carried illnesses.

MRS. HANOVER: We'll be sure to do just that!

MRS. HANOVER: What did you say your name was? Mr. Jenkins?

JARMINGUS: No, Jarmingus. John Jarmingus.

MRS. HANOVER: What sort of a name is that? It sounds almost made up.

JARMINGUS: I can see you're not buying this, Mrs. Carter. May I call you Madeline?

MRS. HANOVER: You could, but my first name is Annie.

JARMINGUS: Irregardless, I get the sense that you probably don't *trust* this experience. Let me show you. Let's test it out.

*From under his desk, Mr. Jarmingus takes out two contraptions, both the size of a pug-dog's coffin, with wide slots at one end.*

JARMINGUS: Stick your hand in and find out.

MRS. HANOVER: I beg your pardon.

JARMINGUS: This is how it works. One sticks one's hand in and the machine transports their life essence to a parallel dimension. Left hand works best. It's the one closer to the heart. You might consider any reality you'd both like to visit. Perhaps one in which you look the way you've always wanted to look, perhaps one where you have more money. Or perhaps one in which... I don't know, everyone speaks nothing but French.

MR. HANOVER: But we don't speak French.

JARMINGUS: Oh, sir... it is the classiest of languages. I think we've arrived, sir, with this one. Stick your hands in and you'll be off living *des bonnes vies*.

MR. HANOVER: What does that mean?

JARMINGUS: It means just insert your hands.

*They do. Mrs. Hanover sighs as she does.*

MR. HANOVER: Oh, this is surprisingly nice. It's like petting a jellyfish.

MRS. HANOVER: Ed, that's filthy.

MR. HANOVER: Well it is!

MRS. HANOVER: Why is it squishy?

JARMINGUS: Because of all the matter. Now close your eyes and press the big red button on top.

MRS. HANOVER: Why do we have to have our eyes closed if we're pressing a button?

JARMINGUS: So you don't go blind during the matter transfer.

MRS. HANOVER: But how will we know what button-

JARMINGUS: There's only one button!

*They both close their eyes and press the red button on top of the boxes. Mr. Jarmingus reaches over and turns the lights on and off. Then he presses something on his phone and we hear the sound of pops and clicks.*

MR. HANOVER: It's happening! *It's happening!* We're flying! We're flying!

JARMINGUS: *Levez les yeux.*

*They open their eyes.*

JARMINGUS: *Bonjour, Monsieur et Madame. Bienvenue à cette univers. J'espère que tu es biens. Est-ce que vous voudrez un boit du café?*

MR. HANOVER: What's he asking?

MRS. HANOVER: He's asking if we want any coffee. But he conjugated a verb incorrectly, if that's of any interest to him.

JARMINGUS: *Non merci, Madame.* I should know. In this universe we speak only French. You just have to adjust to it.

MR. HANOVER: *(Completely amazed.)* I think I just did. Oh... did you hear that, honey? I understood that perfectly. I... I must be able to speak French. This machine is *amazing!*

JARMINGUS: Indeed. You are speaking French now. As am I. *Formidable.*

MRS. HANOVER: It sounds like we're speaking English.

JARMINGUS: That is because your brain has just adjusted to being in our universe. But I understand from my colleague in your home universe that this was just a demonstration, so... back you shall go. *À dieu.*

*He pushes the boxes forward again and they repeat the process with the buttons and the lights and the sound effects.*

JARMINGUS: So... did we have a pleasant time in France-land?

MR. HANOVER: Yes! I'd like to try another one.

JARMINGUS: Well in time, you can. For four weekends a year.

MRS. HANOVER: Four weekends a year?

JARMINGUS: Yes. During those weekends, you'll have access to these machines.

MRS. HANOVER: Sounds like a timeshare.

JARMINGUS: It's a dimensionshare, actually. In that you share these dimensions... for some time. Think about it. Four blissful weekends a year, you could go to the universe where John Lennon was never shot and his career took an unfortunate nu-metal infused turn. Or... the universe where you never aged and you can remain in those halcyon days of childhood.

MR. HANOVER: I would like to go back to those Raytheon days of childhood. Oh, honey, you always see the worst in people. Mr. Jarmingus is just trying to help us. May we see another universe?

JARMINGUS: Well... in a moment.

MR. HANOVER: Nooooooooo... *noooooooooooooowww!*

JARMINGUS: Well... what would you like to see?

MR. HANOVER: I want to see a place where dinosaurs still walk the earth... er, no, one where I'm skinnier, er... no, no, one where I'm famous.

MRS. HANOVER: Honey, this feels like a scam.

JARMINGUS: Yes, but in the famous universe, you're famous.

*Mr. Carter immediately puts his hand back in the machine. Mrs. Carter grits her teeth and does the same. They repeat the matter transfer process.*

JARMINGUS: Hello?

MR. HANOVER: Are we here? Did we make it?

JARMINGUS: Yes, you... oh wow. Oh my God. I don't normally do this, but... are you Ed Carter? Oh jeez... I just *love* your movies.

MR. HANOVER: *You do?*

*Mrs. Hanover buries her head in her hands.*

JARMINGUS: Gosh, when they said a famous person would be arriving today, I had no *idea* it'd be you.

MR. HANOVER: (*Clapping his hands.*) I wanna go again. Show me a universe where ducks are in charge of everything!

MRS. HANOVER: Ed, honey, we're on a very tight schedule, we were supposed to have lunch with my sister at noon.

MR. HANOVER: *SHOW ME A UNIVERSE WHERE HER SISTER IS DEAD!*

JARMINGUS: Put your hands in.

MRS. HANOVER: I don't wanna see that universe.

MR. HANOVER: Don't be such a buzz-kill. Stick your hand in the box and let's kill your sister.

*Mrs. Hanover sighs and they do. The process repeats.*

JARMINGUS: Welcome to this universe. I'm sorry to inform you that your sister is dead.

MR. HANOVER: I want to buy this. I want the dimensionshare.

MRS. HANOVER: You do?

MR. HANOVER: Honey, for four weekends a year... think what a steal. We'd only be sharing this beautiful machine with twelve other couples.

JARMINGUS: It *is* surprisingly affordable. You could write a check today if you wanted.

*Mr. Hanover immediately reaches for his checkbook.*

MRS. HANOVER: Ed, I don't think we should.

MR. HANOVER: *You never support me!* Not when I wanted to get my old band back together! Not when I wanted to take up white water rafting! Not now! You're just mad because of your sister. How much?

*Jarmingus leans in and whispers an amount to them. Mr. Hanover takes out his checkbook and writes a check. Mrs. Hanover just sits looking shocked.*

MR. HANOVER: (*As he hands over the check.*) I wanna start now! I wanna go back to France-land!

MRS. HANOVER: Dear, I want to go back to *our* universe.

MR. HANOVER: Oh come on, darling. You've always wanted to see Paris. Wouldn't you love to treat your sister to a French lunch?

JARMINGUS: *A dejeuner.*

MR. HANOVER: Yeah. A dejoiner.

MRS. HANOVER: (*Sighs.*) Don't we need to sign some sort of contract?

JARMINGUS: I'll mail it to you.

MRS. HANOVER: Do you have our address?

JARMINGUS: I'll get it from the "me" in your reality.

MR. HANOVER: Duh. Of course. Now then, back to France-land.

*He sticks his hand back in the machine. So does she. The process repeats.*

JARMINGUS: *Levez les yeux.* Welcome to... France land. I hope you will have a pleasant stay. Do be sure to clean up after yourselves, we'll likely have another family coming in next weekend.

MR. HANOVER: Of course. Thank you, Monsieur Jarmingus.

JARMINGUS: You're most welcome. And by the way, you speak impeccable French.

MR. HANOVER: I always thought I might. Didn't I, honey?

MRS. HANOVER: ...

MR. HANOVER: Anyway. Is it true that in France, it's customary to go about stark raving naked? I read that somewhere, I think.

MRS. HANOVER: You couldn't possibly have.

JARMINGUS: Of course it's true. Clothes are optional.

MR. HANOVER: Then bid me fond *adieu* and farewell. I shall never come home.

*Mr. Hanover runs out, followed by Mrs. Hanover. A minute later, Mr. Hanover's clothes are tossed back into the room. We hear him skip away.*

MRS. HANOVER: (O.S.) Ed, put your clothes back on!

MR. HANOVER: I am speaking impeccable French! I am speaking impeccable French!

*Mr. Jarmingus' phone rings. He picks it up.*

JARMINGUS: Discount Insurance. This is Bob Roskis speaking.

CURTAIN.