

Poetry

on

Toronto's

streets



Chik chik chika chik chik
chik. DING! Ziiiiiiiiiiip. Chik,
chika, chik.

It's a warm nostalgic feeling, hearing the sound of a good old, obsolete object being brought to life in today's digital age.

The sound is 23-year-old Kaile Glick typing away at her 1950s Smith Corona typewriter outside on a street in Leslieville. She writes custom-made prose on the spot for any person who stops by and gives a pay-what-you-can donation. Sitting at an elementary school style table with a cigarette hanging loosely from her mouth, there are no pauses as she types, creating her 100th and something piece of prose since she started her gig last June.

Chik chika chik chika chik.

Her eyes behind the black thick-rimmed glasses don't look up from the scroll of paper, rolling up her words until the prose is completely done.

A green knit hat sits comfortably on her disheveled red hair. A self-made sign on the table next to her, propped up against a chair, reads The Spontaneous Prose Store.

Her customer, Ellie Arscott, a Leslieville resident, waits patiently a few minutes while Glick creates her personalized prose. Glick works diligently, moving her invisible ideas scattered in her imagination into meaningful black-coloured words typed on white paper.

With her work finished, she hands it to

Arcscott, who smiles while reading it to herself.

"I find it pretty amazing how creative and how much of a story was told in just the beginning of a sentence. She took it to a whole different place," Arscott said after reading it.

"I think she's made a little cozy nest that she could create these amazing prose."

Glick's typewriter, stool, sign and table creates a relaxing nest where her life-long dream of writing pretty words for money is now possible.

"That was my big dream so I went about it in the most direct way possible," Glick said, while smoking outside.

She does admit The Spontaneous Prose Store was an idea from her years living in San Francisco. She first saw a man at Fisherman's Wharf operating the store, and thought it was a neat idea.

"If you want a job, you've got to treat it like a job. So, I've been working hard to just write as much as I can for better or for worse I guess," Glick said.

It might not seem like a lot of money, but it's a start. Most people give her a few bucks, but in Yorkville she gets billfolds- no change. Now she says, it at least pays for breakfast. Usually

she'll operate the store until she makes enough money to go to the bar.

Although the writing business is known for being difficult to break into, Glick is has still plenty of creativity and perseverance.

She is Toronto's (and Canada's, as far as we know) only Spontaneous Prose Store writer.

She first started the store at the corner of Bloor and Brunswick, but after

a while went exploring in other neighbourhoods. Setting off with her trusty typewriter on her bike, riding through the streets of Toronto, makes her feel like Don Quixote.

"And then it just became an addiction," Glick said. "It's fun to inter-

act with people that way, to challenge myself like that. It's like travelling without going anywhere."

It's opened her to a world of interesting characters right in her very own hometown.

She remembers her favourite title she's ever had requested: "I came to the parade but I got so embarrassed because I keep getting caught staring at boobies."

Mersiha Gadzo is obsessed with the 50's for their typewriters and fashion.

