



*Eagle's Eye*  
2021

*Unterm*

*Eagle's Eye 2021*

# *The History of the Eagle's Eye*

By Mr. John "Tommy" Tompkins, Advisor 1964-2015

The first issue published at Dalat was on August 1949, underneath the name Pine Echoes. By 1958, the name of the publication changed to Pine Hill Echoes. In 1962, the issue was titled Bamboo Beacon. The first issue of Eagle's Eye was from 14 October 1964. I, John "Tommy" Tompkins, served as collector/facilitator/formatter from 1978-2015. Copies were produced quarterly for parents and alumni; eventually, these publications went from print to online. My favorite aspect of publishing these updates was to receive letters of appreciation from alumni and parents. The most common article type in Eagle's Eye was feature writing. Occasionally, one of the students would write an editorial giving an opinion on a topic or a poem. There was also a "Dear Abby"-style column called "Dear Gertrude." Lastly, there were point/counterpoint columns where kids wrote on two sides of an issue.

## *Eagle's Eye: With A Twist*

By Miss Emily Grad, Advisor 2015-2019

A Collection For and By Seniors

In the spring of 2015, Eagle's Eye became an annually published literary magazine. Each senior submitted one piece that represented him or her as an artist, being within the discipline of writing or the fine arts; the heartbeat purpose is still to showcase student work. But the vision of the Eagle's Eye is expanded to the following:

- representing a Dalat tradition through a collaborative publication that hosts multiple art forms and spotlights creativity and personal flair
- empowering artistic ownership of senior students by providing a platform to engage in purposeful interaction
- serving the greater community by presenting a piece of academic excellence

This year's pieces highlight the following artistic expressions: poetry, creative fiction, essaying, news article, photography, painting, drawing, dance, and musical score.

# *Reflections on Untorn*

Untorn is a brave theme for the Class of 2021 to embrace.

They began the school year in August with over 60 members enrolled, and they will end the year with an even 50 students. The reasons for these losses were varied—some were kept out of country due to Malaysia’s border restrictions, some had to move due to family changes, and some parted ways with the class under discipline. However the losses occurred, loss is loss. We grieve the lost expectations and hopes and relationships and memories that come from unexpected goodbyes.

And we grieve the losses that those who remained experienced as well. We didn’t get to have sports seasons or trips. Sneak was delayed until second semester and happened in Penang. We didn’t get to enjoy live concerts or drama performances or art displays. We didn’t have Christmas Banquet or JSB. Campus closed at 4:00 most days. We spent 12 weeks of the school year online.

This would have been an easy year to have a broken spirit. And while there were certainly moments or days or even seasons when spirits were low, this was not a waste of a year.

These students continued to grow, to learn, to be mentored, to worship, to receive correction, to love. They wrote essays and did labs and completed service hours. They embraced on-campus class parties and challenged the high school to practice more kindness. They said thank you after class and proudly wore their class letterman jackets even in the tropical heat.

Although this has certainly not been an easy year, or a year that any of us would have planned or wanted, the Class of 2021 has persevered. We as a community love them, and I am proud that they have chosen to see themselves as whole, untorn, held together by the special bond of people who know the ups and downs of life and choose to love each other through all of it. My prayer for them is that they continue to embrace each other, knowing how loved they are by our school community and by their heavenly Father. And I hope that this magazine can serve as a tangible connection for members of the class to have with each other as they transition to new places and communities.

-Ms. Bethany Weidemann, Advisor 2019-2021

# *Eagle's Eye Literary Magazine*

Dalat International School

2021

Designed by:

Ethan Chan

Daniel Choi

Joel Kelley

Mandy Liao

Jia Yi Sim

With the help of:

Ms. Bethany Weidemann

# *Order of Pieces*

Min-Song Ko	Sharisse Leong
Kalia Brewster	Mikaela Yeap
Yumin Kim	Erica Jang
Tien-Erh Huang	Arpita Mathew
John Kim	Esther Yang
Sumin Lim	Ji Ah Choi
Zoe Seevaratnam	Amber Ruble
Mycah Winsor	Kris Chong
Yebeen Kil	Jared Douglas
Jeremy Kim	Onyou Kim
Esther Tse	Dorothy Koay
Tyler Ronning	Sean Park
Joshua Yeoh	Anya Kaloo
Mandy Liao	Daniel Choi
Annie Choi	Enee Crosslin
Lydia Geiman	Ally Kim
Jirawan Tritham	Liam Kuhns
Joel Kelley	Ziyu Moey
Jonathan Lao	Zoey Ong
Jia Yi Sim	Abby Owen
Seung Hwan Kim	Alice Yang
Alix-Andrea Stuart	Kevile Dolie
Abel Tan	Palmer Ford
Culles Mah	Meredith Johnson
Andrew Kaney	Jimin Park
Sieon Park	Ethan Chan
Kolaya Ronzheimer	Lydia Neeley
Zoe Grous	

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2006 - 2021

By Min-Song Ko

Blue skies and green fields  
crashing tides and soaring eagles  
trees with eyeballs and pockets with seeds  
Yellow swings with black tires and white tables with chess boards  
This is my school

A girl who was once on stage,  
dancing with hats, performing with masks, and singing with  
mics has finally come this far to count her last days in Dalat  
A girl who had once held her preschool diploma  
Awaits the day where it'll be that day again  
For her name to be called.

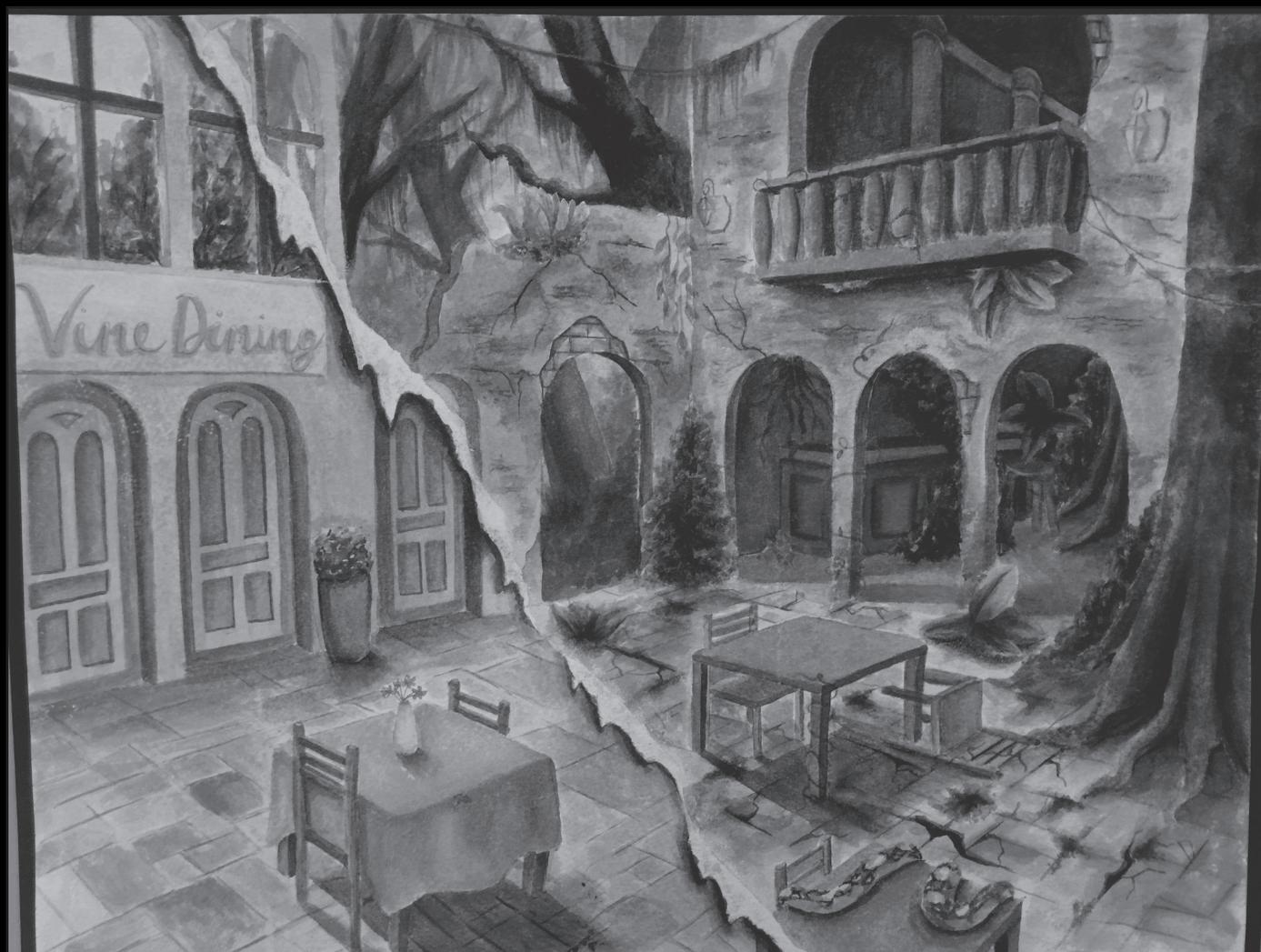
the blink of the eye  
the blink of time  
every picture is worth more than a thousand words  
to describe a time that has now become the past  
there's a nostalgic feeling of warmth  
that lies in me

as the first of the class of 2021,  
I'm happy to say that I have never regretted coming  
here I am gifted with a long, living memory,  
That my grateful heart will treasure forever  
Thank You for everything



# *Jungle Feast*

By Kalia Brewster

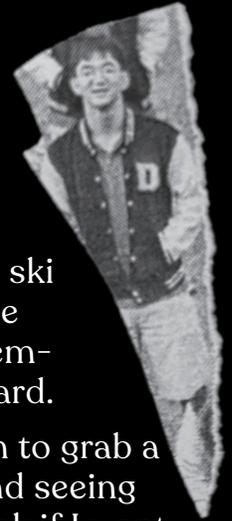


Everything has its time and place. I created this piece in 10th grade. Back then, it was simply a before and after piece. Now, it reminds me of my senior year: expectations versus reality. It feels like this year – this class – has been forgotten, abandoned, left for someone else to clean up. It is interesting how the meaning of art can change with the times.



# The Warm or Cold?

By Yumin Kim



Outside are the cold, snowy mountains; inside is the warm, peaceful ski resort room where my brother, uncle, and I hibernate. Waking up to the room's hotness, I spot my brother and uncle still napping; I then contemplate whether to join back with them or get some fresh air with my board.

Not being able to fall asleep again, I at least wander around the room to grab a snack and sit back. Looking out the window, staring at blank space, and seeing people ride their skis and board, I stuff my mouth with snacks and think if I want to go out there and enjoy myself. Seeing people enjoying themselves in the snow made adrenaline rush throughout my body; part of me says just go board, while the other is telling me I'm tired, and I should just let this one go. It's pretty rare for an indecisive person to make decisions, but this one was pretty easy, and I'm glad I made the decision.

I finished my snack and put on my gear needed to go snowboarding. As I put one gear by another, the excitement and adrenaline grew stronger. Double checked my essentials and rushed out the door running my body to the snowy outside platform. Arriving at the entrance to the snow, I knew this decision was not a regretful decision, unlike many others; it just felt different to stand there and ready to go out to the cold. I put all thoughts behind me, marched my way to the lift platform, and ascended to the designated place.

I was pleased with myself for deciding to come out and enjoy the ride; I didn't regret a single bit and enjoyed every minute till the step back to my room. This whole process was a source of peace and rest for me; I got to be alone and do what I enjoy doing. Looking back at what I've done, it was a great decision. and I don't know why I hesitated at first. The whole purpose of coming here was to enjoy and play in the snow; it was wasteful and wrong to lay back in bed and let the hours go by. My decision made me realize it was worth coming to this trip and every single moment was enjoyable. The process of boarding downhill was a fresh start to this winter break, and I experienced freedom while being alone and doing what I love.

Nora and Ms. Linde, in *A Doll's House*, also make decisions for good by themselves. They both chose to leave their husband and be a free woman, which was scandalous back at the time. Both Nora and Ms. Linde made tough decisions for themselves, but not a single bit of the decision was regretful to them. It was tough for me to decide whether to go back to the cozy bed, enjoy my deep sleep, or go outside and put my body in the cold for an enjoyable time. I'm glad I didn't miss a moment and opportunity to enjoy myself.

This moment helped me make my decisions that were to come in the future. If I'm contemplating whether to do something or not, I should just go right ahead and do it because I may never get this chance again, and who knows, maybe it'll turn out good. I realized it's better to go for it and give it a shot rather than bailing out and possibly missing out on a life-changing experience.

# *A Sky to Remember*

By Tien-Erh Huang



It was Sunday at 6:58 AM, 2 minutes before I start my training in the cold, calm swimming pool. It was too early. All I could think about was that I didn't want to jump into the cold water. Little did I know that I would be missing the early mornings and afternoons of training for many months. I sat down on the bleachers and looked up to the sky and saw the beautiful colors of the sunrise. At that moment, I forgot about all of the negative thoughts and wished that time could stop right where I was.

## *An Introduction*

By John Kim

John Kim be my name,  
Also Yohan, but it's all the same.  
The smallest and youngest Kim,  
Why doesn't anybody else love to swim?  
Born as the only clown,  
Are my genes from down-town?  
I may be short, stubby, and thick,  
But lucky me, I rarely ever get sick.  
A sports jock who loves to joke about,  
But also a realist no doubt.  
Loud, obnoxious, distracting also describe me,  
When you come near, it's not very hard to see.  
Gaming has always had a place in my heart,  
I enjoy it so much I don't know where to start.  
Sleep is overrated and insignificant,  
Life is a mental game, all this freedom at night is magnificent.  
Animals are wonderful and few I hold dear,  
My cat, Caramel, I hope will never disappear.  
Not much more to say here,  
I don't like beer.  
I guess I'll go now,  
Ciao.



# *Bitter Sweet Harvest*

By Sumin Lim

*Bitter-Sweet Harvest* was written by a Malaysian author named Chan Ling Yap in 2012. She was born in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and was educated in Malaysia and the UK in Economics. She published economic textbooks in Malaysia and published papers while studying at the University of Malaysia (Home). She also wrote several novels about Asian cultures and for her evocation of Asia and won the Popular Readers' Choice Award in 2014 (Whichbook). In *Bitter-Sweet Harvest*, Chan Ling wrote about the racial tensions that had surfaced in Malaysia between the Malays and the Chinese in 1969. The author effectively includes her personal experiences as a Malaysian who lived in the era of the racial tragedy that happened in 1969 by reflecting her experiences through writing about the outcomes brought to many families during this period in Malaysia.

The main character, An Mei, was a well-educated Chinese Malaysian who studied in the UK before moving back to her hometown of Malaysia. Much like the main character in the novel, the author was also born in Malaysia and had traveled to the UK to study for her Ph.D. in economics. With her personal experience in living in different countries, the author effortlessly integrates further cultural insights into the main character's story as she travels to different places in the novel. The time setting on the main character was also somewhat the same time period that the author lived through. By selecting this time period, the author was able to integrate a deeper understanding of the tension that arose between the Chinese and the Malays in 1969. We can see an example of this early on in the book: "Kai Min immediately stepped between them. She pushed Hussein away. "Hey, this is my house. Remember your manners. Who do you think you are? An Mei, go in." Addressing Hussein, she said.

"You can come in only if you behave yourself."

"Aiya, he is a Malay boy, Mistress," said the maid disapprovingly, her upper lips curled into a sneer.

"This is what happens when they go overseas. Mo-Kah gow. They lose all their family teachings" (Marshall 75). This quote was from An Mei's family members as they mistreated An Mei's fiance because they were Chinese, and he was a Malaysian.

The most significant influence in the book is the cultural difference between the Chinese and the Malays. Although there was tension, An Mei, a Chinese Malaysian, decided to marry Hussein, a local Malaysian. By marrying Hussein in this time period, it brought issues between their families and to their relationship. The barrier between their love for each other grew as they got to know each other because their families both came from different backgrounds and religions. The author purposely made the characters come from different backgrounds to show the effects of the racial tensions that she experienced. For instance, An Mei's mother, "disapprovingly looked at Hussein and immediately thought of her brother, Ming Kong. He certainly would disapprove of his hairstyle! And a Malay! Even if he was the son of an important man, a Datuk. I bet my brother would say, those titles were a dime a dozen, she thought to herself. She frowned at An Mei" (Marshall 76).

An Mei's whole family disapproved of her having a Malay boyfriend because of the tension and rumors that they had with the Malaysians. Coming from a similar background, the author was able to accurately display how the characters felt in the story because she shares the same culture with the characters, especially An Mei.

Not only did the characters have cultural differences, but they also had religious differences. Religion is a significant factor in the identity of many people groups. Almost every government and country's base is based on religion to guide how the government will form. In this book, the Chinese and Malays come from completely different religious backgrounds. Hussein was from a Muslim Malay background, and An Mei was from a Chinese Christian background. An example of their religious beliefs clashing shows before An Mei and Hussein got married.

Hussein's father told him: "You are a Muslim. You are entitled to four wives. She should know her position. And I expect you to take at least another wife, this time a true Muslim girl, a Malay girl, preferably someone with good connections. You can divorce An Mei after you tire of her. So have her, if you must. It seems that this is a price I have to accept in order to get you to focus on your career" (Marshall 130). The clash between the beliefs of the Christian An Mei and the Muslim Hussein brought suffering to both ends of their relationship. Hussein believed that marriage wasn't so important, whereas An Mei took it very seriously because of what she believed. The author was able to tell the story from both sides of the characters because she lived through the aftermath of the riots and got to experience how her country changed.

In conclusion, the author effortlessly incorporates her personal experiences and emotions into her writing so that readers get a sense of what it felt like to live in that period. An-Mei and Hussein were two characters that expressed the stereotypical Malay and Chinese families at that time. The author expressed both sides of the story in detail, offering thoughts and emotions to the readers and allowed the viewers to see how An Mei's life reflected the author's experiences.

#### Works Cited

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# *Blank Canvas*

By Zoe Seevaratnam

I am a blank canvas  
Patiently waiting for the artist to begin  
Stroking the wet paintbrush across the smooth canvas  
The artist takes His time as He gently orchestrates a masterpiece  
Each stroke of color is saying I'm His  
Each swirl made on the surface is saying I'm proud of you  
Those thoughts penetrate deep into the canvas  
Causing the painting to become alive, vibrant, rich  
He puts me on display in a room filled with masterpieces  
All with exquisite beauty  
Yet amongst them all I know I am His.

He is the composer  
I am the music  
He determines the notes in my life  
And in which beat to play them  
As I began uncertain and unsure  
I began to realize a melody occurs  
A sweet melody that creates a pleasant song  
I began to realize my composer cares for me after all.

I am like harden clay  
Full of cracks  
Unmoldable  
Good to be thrown away  
But He is like the potter  
Who pours the water  
And molds me into something divine  
He molds me into who I am today.





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## Decisions

By Mycah Winsor

During the summer between my sophomore and junior year of high school, I went to Europe for a football trip. Between the three age groups, there were about sixty guys plus coaches and some parents. We spent a couple of days in Barcelona before going to Scotland to play against academy teams. I even got the chance to train with some academies in my last week there. This was a very impactful trip because it completely changed my perspective of myself and my goals regarding football.

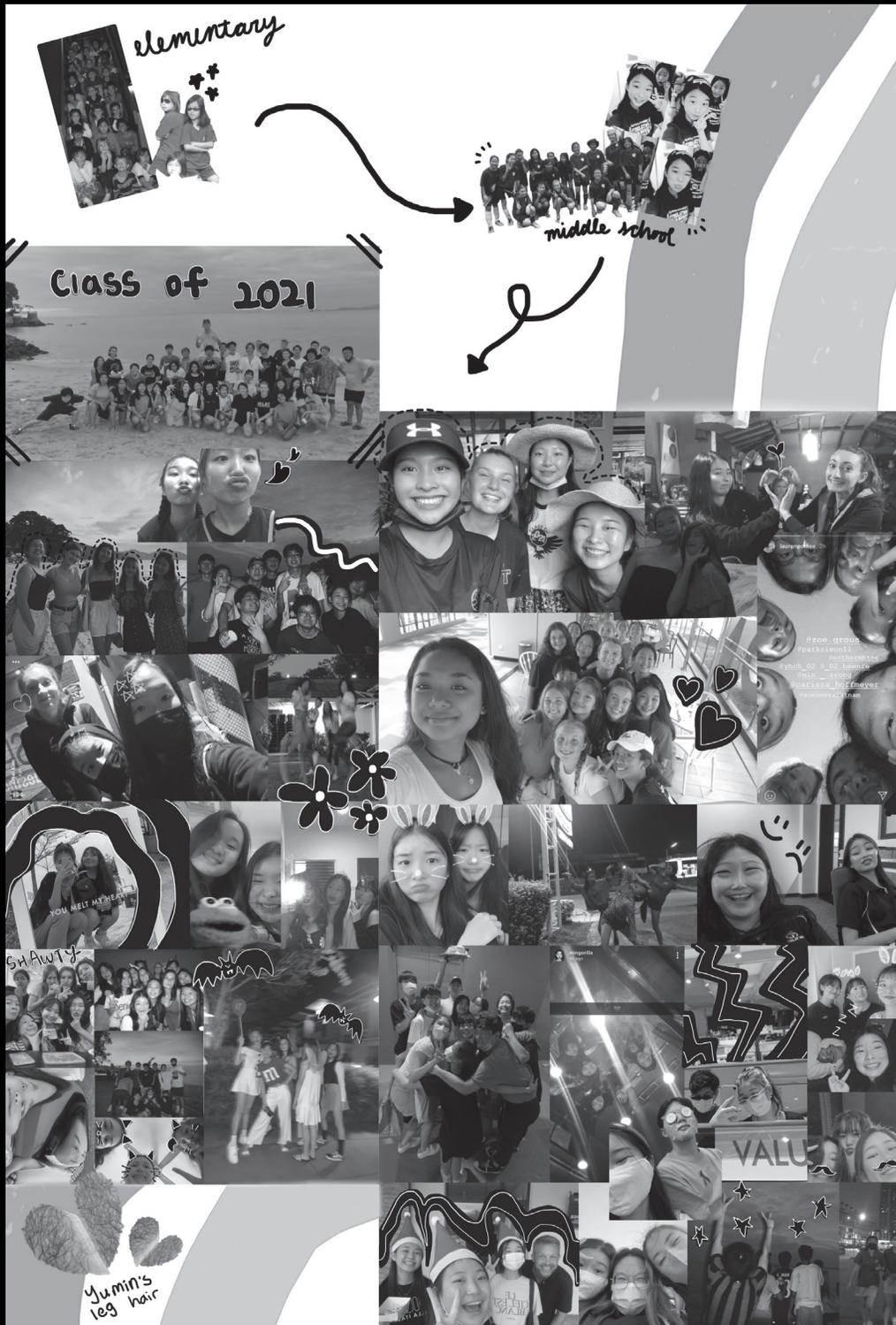
I have always loved football and known that I wanted to make a career out of playing. Moving to Malaysia, however, changed that for me. I lost hope of ever playing for a living and began falling out of love with the beautiful game. While I was processing through adjusting my goals and aspirations, the opportunity to go to Scotland to play against academies came up with my parents. My good friend's dad takes kids on football tours around Europe, and he had mentioned it to my family. The idea of traveling across the world for three weeks to play football sounded like an unrealistic dream to me, but my parents were willing to sacrifice the money, knowing how impactful this could be for me. Just precisely how impactful it was going to be was something not even I knew.

Those three weeks of football brought back the passion and hopefulness I had begun to let go of. The trip made me realize that I could play beyond the level I was at and reminded me how much I wanted that. I came back from the trip motivated and excited to start working hard. I set myself the goal of playing in university and hopefully playing the CPL (Canadian Premier League) after that. I have now committed to playing at a university in Canada and will hopefully move on to even higher levels. These were both goals that I only set for myself after this pivotal trip to Scotland.

In some ways, my decision to go on this tour is similar to Nora's decision to leave Torvald. The longer Nora stayed with Torvald, the more she realized just how greatly she wanted something different. She longed for a new perspective and lifestyle. Had I not gone to Scotland, I don't know what my goals would be now. If I had not taken the opportunity to see a new perspective and experienced something different, I don't know where my relationship with football would stand. Nora took a chance to experience a fresh newness. Although my decision had far less drastic consequences, I took a chance to experience this newness too, and it redirected my life.

# Eleven Years

By Yebeen Kil



Hiding behind my mom, I still remember my first day here. I could barely lift my head, but now—after 11 years—I'll be leaving this place. The nows turned into unforgettable memories, and the future turned into nows. Many of us will go down different paths in these new chapters to come, and some of us might never even see each other again. I'll miss every single one of you, and I hope for the best. Thanks for being a part of my life.

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## *A Doll's House Decision Paper*

By Jeremy Kim

Ever since I was young, I have always been underweight, and I wouldn't say I liked it. While people complained about being too fat, I constantly struggled to gain weight. For me, being skinny was as bad or even worse than being overweight. Every time I would meet my relatives on my visits to Korea, they would tell me how thin I was and that I looked as if I would break any moment. My parents would worry when I would play sports because they thought I would get pushed around easily. After hearing all these comments about my body, I began feeling stressed out and insecure. Eventually, I decided to start gaining some fat and muscle to stop others from commenting about my body.

My attempt at gaining weight, however, was not something new. I wanted to gain weight but always gave up quickly. Those results were because of the unrealistic goals I had set for myself. For example, I told myself to work out two hours every day, which was not going to happen, eating three rice bowls each meal, and all sorts of unrealistic goals. Also, I focused on doing other things like hanging out with my friends, going to school, and doing sports. I was still young, and I didn't know where and how to start this journey to build my body. It wasn't until the beginning of last year that I decided to try to put on some weight. This time it was different. I didn't make unrealistic goals I couldn't achieve but instead decided to start easy and work my way up. I decided to start by drinking protein shakes every day. It wasn't hard to do, and although I didn't expect much from it, I found myself keeping up with it.

Starting with that, I made smaller decisions. The smaller decisions led to more significant decisions, and by the beginning of this year, I now had a whole schedule for myself. I would work out every day except Sunday, eat six meals a day, and take pictures of myself to see my progress. Slowly and very slowly, I began to put on some weight and started looking slightly healthier. Others began noticing the difference as well. From being fifty-eight kilograms to sixty-eight kilograms, I was able to gain ten kilograms in total. And all of this was possible because of a simple decision I made-- drink a protein shake every day.

This decision led to bigger results, however, bigger than my initial goals of overcoming my insecurity. Through this process, I did not only change physically but also grew as a person. Trying to reach my goal of gaining weight, I learned to be more patient and responsible as I kept up with my schedule and diet. And most importantly, I was able to realize that what others said did not matter.

My decisions relate to Nora's conclusion from *A Doll's House* in that both of our



choices were able to change us positively. Drinking protein shakes was something I never knew would eventually affect me in a positive way and change. Nora started as a character who was treated like a child by her husband, but throughout the story, she grew to be a more responsible and mature person. She managed to free herself from being looked down on by her husband and becoming an independent woman. Similarly, I grew from an insecure person and became a more confident person. While I cannot say that drinking protein shakes directly influenced my growth as a person, it did influence it.

What started as an insignificant decision led to significant, unexpected results. Small things can lead to big things both positively and negatively.

Overall, decision making is an essential part of our lives. No matter how small the decision, it can result in various positive and negative outcomes. Although the outcome could take short or long periods to show its outcomes, what matters is our motivation and perseverance.

# *Face to Face with Him*

By Esther Tse

We are the molded clay,  
And He, the creative Potter.  
What an astounding art, he displays!  
God, the mighty and benevolent creator.

We are the growing vine,  
And He, thee mighty Branch.  
He has a purpose for us to shine!  
To His strength and provision, we attach.

His Love is like fresh water flowing  
In the river, refreshing our souls.  
Springing forth truth and joy within,  
Feelings of lost, he consoles.

Understanding that He is the Light,  
Leading and guiding us to a better way.  
Showing us what is good and right,  
that we may not go astray

We are like helpless sheep  
In the midst of hungry wolves.  
God is the Shepherd, ready to upkeep.  
He is always there and overlooks.

God's Word is like a gold mine!  
Inside hearts, we treasure and conceal.  
The kingdom of heaven is like a fine  
treasure hidden in a barren field.

God created us to reflect  
His image and goodness.  
Sin intruded and made us imperfect,  
Sending His Son to cleanse us.

Breaking His relationship with Jesus.  
He loved us so dearly  
That He gave Himself up for our sins,  
Showing his mercy clearly



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# *The End of the Giants*

By Tyler Ronning

Habia una vez una gigante. El nombre de los gigantes es Gorgoth, él es el héroe. Solía cultivar plantas hasta que su hermano los mató. Él era un buen gigante que era diferente de sus hermanos y hermanas. Su hermanos y hermanas tomada un chico y lo cocinado y se lo comieron.

En la noche Gorgoth vio una chica en su campamento. Gorgoth agarró la chica y trajo la en su cueva. Su enemigo, Caca, sospechaba de lo que olía, el caminado en su campament y vio la chica en una cama al lado de Gorgoth. Caca cocinó a la chica en un estofa.

Gorgoth se levanté y olía la estofa, lleno de ira corrió a una grand montaña. Oro a los dioses para darle la fuerza de mil gigantes. Los dios le dio gran fuerza. Gorgoth levanto la montaña y tiró a sus hermanos y hermanas. Ero su enemigo no murió y corrió hacia a Gorgoth. Gorgoth peleó con su enemigo y la batalla ahora es una leyenda. En el fin Gorgoth es fue muy valiente y golpeó Caca en su cara y Caca murió. Los dios mataron Gorgoth por que fueron muy celos de su fuerza. Los dios transformar la montaña a un volcán.

El fin

# The Clouds

By Joshua Yeoh



I look out into the darkened sky  
Only to see that the clouds are crying.  
There are days where it goes on for a very long time  
And others just for a short while.  
When the clouds are sad,  
They also make others sad.  
Outings and such are canceled when clouds cry.  
Clouds can be good for you one day,  
but will be horrible the next day.  
The tears of the clouds bring life to plants  
While sadness to humans.  
When clouds are sad,  
Horrible things can happen.  
House will fall  
Trees will tumble  
Dirt will crumble.  
But in the end,  
The sadness will eventually turn into happiness.

Metacognitive:

Why did you choose the subject: purpose/message?

I can relate with the clouds about emotion

How did you personify it?

Give the clouds sadness

What is the mood? (is there a mood shift?)

Very sad and dull

8.

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## *The Ocean from the Balcony*

By Mandy Liao

The sea remains calm  
I stare hard at the surface  
Daring it to flinch

The waves are restless  
Shimmering with the light of  
the gold setting sun

The dark mist gathers  
The sea that glittered topaz  
is silvery blue

The moon drips  
Rippled waves of ivory  
bleaches the folds white



Ever since I was young, I'd stand by the beach and stare at the horizon, hoping to catch some dolphins leaping or perhaps even a faint silhouette of a whale's tail. Yet, I've never encountered such luck. The ocean is a master at concealing its secrets underneath; it does not reveal its chaos, beauty, and life beyond the calm surface. That is why I love staring at it from my window; it gives me so much peace.

I especially adore sunsets, when the ocean glitters with the same brilliant colors as the sky. As the sun disappears under the horizon, I would watch the color of the ocean change, from vibrant shades into darker tones, each gradient beautiful in its own way. Every night, before bed, as I look down one last time, bidding goodbye, the bright moon above illuminates the rippling surface, reflecting the light into my tired eyes.

Staring at the sea from my balcony is a daily ritual that brings me joy and reminds me of bittersweet memories of my time at Penang. These simple and straightforward haikus are an honest reflection of my feelings towards this wondrous creation and my experiences here.

# *Pink Pajama Hero*

By Annie Choi

Swinging the teddy bear's hand to combat the dinosaur, I loafed around my room as usual. In a flash, however, a strange uneasiness crossed my mind. My mom should have arrived from the grocery store before the long needle made a full trip around the clock. That day, the needle had traveled more than it should have before she came back. My long-awaited desire for a rainbow colored ice-cream turned into a black cloud of worries that my mom might have been kidnapped by a bad guy on her way back from the grocery store.

I flung the teddy bear and the dinosaur down on the floor and scooted to my dad. I tugged on the book held in his hands and whined for my mom, but the book had already gulped his attention. Realizing that my dad wouldn't be much of a help, I decided to leave the house and go on an adventure to save my mom—all by myself.

I armed myself with the tiny plastic sword seized from the teddy bear's hand and prepared to sneak through the living room without catching my dad's eyes. I was ready.

Leaving the house without my dad noticing me was an easy job. His eyes were devoted to the words on the book, which muted the surroundings and blinded him from everything else. I tiptoed on the stealthy tip of my toes to the front door. Gently closing the door, I sprang down the stairs that were as high as my knees, dashed through the gate, and darted down the steep downhill that led to the crosswalk in my fresh pink pajamas.

It was early summer, with spring just leaving. The wind pierced through the thin layer of my pajamas, and my cheeks flushed in the chilly air of the afternoon. As I stood in front of the crosswalk, waiting for the light to turn green, people whispered among themselves and gazed at me, a five-year-old girl in her pink pajamas, holding a toy sword, standing on the street all by herself. Nothing could stop me from my great venture to save my mom; I ignored the stares and the harsh wind and scurried towards the grocery store.

What awaited me, however, was a firmly shut door with the "Closed" sign dangling. I yanked strenuously on the door, but the harder I pulled, the stronger the door resisted. It was my mom's yell that put an end to my skirmish with the door.

She shouted out my name and grilled me as to why I was out in the street all by myself. More than I was freaked out by her angry and startling words, I was glad to see her safe and alive—not kidnapped by a bad guy.

This was my first and last so-called runaway. The incident itself could have been dangerous. Even so, it shows how much I loved my mom and the pure bravery I had as a child. Loss of this boldness came with growing up, and I miss the daring spirit of my five-year old self sometimes. That makes this memory utterly precious to me.



# *Mother, Daughter, God*

By Lydia Geiman



This one of my favorite pictures that I took during my time in Malaysia. I took it on vacation with my mom in Langkawi. We found a family of monkeys while at the Langkawi Sky Bridge, and, of course, I pulled out my camera. This photo means a lot to me because it signifies the last vacation I took with my mom. I also feel like it was ironic that one of the best pictures I took on my last vacation with my mom was of a mother and daughter. This picture also reminds me of how amazing nature is. God created so many beautiful animals, and I rarely ever give them a second glance. Whenever I look at this picture I am reminded of my relationship with my mom and of God's amazing work in the world.

# *the end of our days*

By Jirawan Tritham

i remember the days i felt like an abandoned airplane in a lifeless airport. the feeling of being lost never leaves, and it grows stronger with every call of dazed eyes and sleepless teens.



there's beauty in the journey, no? with june approaching ever so soon like a herald of separation, we're frantically scrabbling for broken fragments of happiness and memories. yet i hole myself up in this room, feeding myself every day the belief that i don't need anyone. who was ever there for you anyways, a sinister inner voice sneers, when you stumbled under gossip and academic expectations? you guys aren't cruel and holding the knife—my brain is.

however, as i slowly tread over the memories of eight years here, to my surprise, my backpack becomes filled. this place taught me gentleness and patience. it showed me people with good hearts and pure minds. and so maybe ignorance is really bliss, and our floating in this bubble of purity really better than knowing the world's darkness. i've learned to love this place as i await the end of my days here.



## *A Third Option*

By Joel Kelley

"To celebrate Tim going into fourth grade, I made cinnamon rolls," Tim's mom said.

"Wow," Tim's dad said. "These are really good."

"Dale, save some for your son for pete's sake," his mom retorted, which was clearly something she enjoyed doing.

Tim's dad looked up at his son and grinned. "No, I'll just let him starve." Tim grinned and began giggling. As soon as his mother gave him a plate, his dad looked suspiciously at it, the inner workings of his mind preparing a plan for thievery, but Tim's brain was working as well. He was trying to think of how best to protect his wonderful, sugary breakfast.

"How about this?" Tim proposed. "A game of chess. Winner takes both cinnamon rolls."

“Where did you learn to gamble?” Tim’s dad asked.

“The 5th grade boys do it with lunch money, but I don’t because I was never too good at it,” Tim answered.

His dad laughed. “Well, that’s probably for the best. Go get the chess set.” Tim’s mom glared at his dad, but he just looked back, smiled, and said, “Don’t worry. Just watch.”

Tim ran and searched for the chess set, returning once he had found it. His dad packed his bag as he set up the game.

“The king and queen in the middle... The castles on the side...” Tim said out loud so his father could correct him if he made a mistake. “Is this correct, Dad?”

“Perfect. You take the first move.”

Tim looked at the pieces. He visualized the knights preparing for battle and arming themselves. He visualized the soldiers fortifying the castles. He visualized the bold king of the black pieces being on the front lines and the lovely queen being heavily guarded in the castle. Once he had that image firmly and vividly burned into his head, he moved the first pawn. His father moved a pawn. Each turn went by with not too much time but with very much thought. Not a move was unintentional. Not a move was mistaken. Every turn was carefully plotted and thought-out.

“And... Checkmate,” his father said, a grin on his face.

“Wait, what? No. I can move this here,” Tim said. “No wait, I can’t. But I can move this here,” Tim said again. “No, no. That doesn’t work either. Oh man, you really did win.” Tim relented and then pushed his plate of cinnamon rolls toward his father. But before the plate had reached him, his father stopped him and pushed the plate back toward him.

“What are you doing? That’s not how it works. I lost, so I need to give you my cinnamon rolls.”

“Not everything is black and white, Tim,” his father said, turning to smile toward his wife. “Things don’t always work out the way they are supposed to. For example, the rules of the game state that those cinnamon rolls are mine, however, as a father, I can’t eat double my fair share for breakfast and leave my son waiting until lunch. There will always be multiple perspectives to view things from, multiple sets of rules to be considered, a third option. You have to remember that all are necessary perspectives, but some are more important than others. So here, eat your breakfast.”

Tim looked at the cinnamon rolls and then back up at his father. “Thanks, Dad.” He put on his biggest smile and chomped his way through his breakfast. His dad laughed, his mom scolded him for being messy, and his morning started out great.

# *A Horrible 5 Minutes*

By Jonathan Lao

It's 5:10 in the morning. All is orderly in this ragged, old windmill. The sun rises ever so slightly beyond the horizon to shine a visible ray through my window. I hear the cogs of the windmill grind and turn in mechanical harmony as the wood fan creaks with every rotation. I do need to evaluate the efficiency of that fan. As I climb the ladder down, the foginess of mind clears from just waking up. I notice the odd crooks and dents in each part of my abode: the windmill.

I've always noticed the particular of what can and will happen. The moment my boot lands on the stone floor, the morning routine begins. I spend three to four minutes, sweeping the dust from the mill. Any trace of the previous substance grounded down to a sand-like product is swept away to leave space for a new, pure product. The farmers often bring flour and wheat for the sole purpose of grinding it into powder. They pay me to operate the machine, so our relationship is nothing less than mutual. I check the gears of the mill, simple as it may be, to ensure maximum efficiency for the day. I soon find five gears rusted and chipped that maintain the mill's turning mechanism. I will replace them with new gears and place the five rusted ones in vinegar. This part of the routine takes only ten minutes. It is now 5:24, and a particular crow should be flying through the window on the second floor. I will then hear the incessant sound of cawing along with a recognizable clunking noise as it proceeds to throw a rock on the floor.

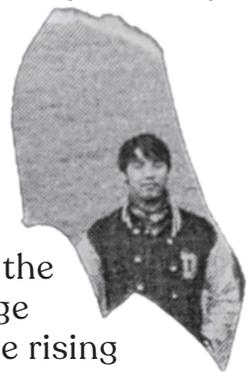
One minute has passed, and the events have proceeded as expected. I soon hear vigorous flapping along with an object being dropped onto the second floor. I feel a pebble drop on my head as the crow caws in what I assume, ill-considered enjoyment of such an act. The black, feathery mass lands on the coat hanger and cackles in glee. I can only ignore the incessant noise as I must follow the routine. His pitiful crumbs of bread can wait until 5:30. "You beg and beg for food while I toil away with work, and you find time to drop rocks in my mill. Can't you find your food?" I complain.

"CAW!"

"How belligerent of you," I reply.

The windmill begins to awake from a deep sleep. According to my pocket watch, all is well and on time. I've fed the bird three crumb pieces of my morning bread, and the windmill is ready for the farmers to bring their flour and wheat. The crow decides to indulge the crumbs, so I leave him to his pleasures. I go outside to see the rising sun across the horizon. Brilliant rays of light shine in many angles onto the town the mill on the hill oversees. The town is slowly stirring from the night, along with the people.

I see Barnes opening up his bakery across from the candy parlor. The smell of fresh bread wafts across town with a delightful stench. His crude routine every morning leaves him open to any way to start the day. One day I'll see him passed out in front of his door from a drunkard's challenge. Other days, he is found having breakfast with his wife on time with the sunrise. Barnes is not a man of order or discipline, but his value as my customer has made me overlook his carefreeness. A



jolly man with no sense of direction; befitting of a baker.

Down the cobblestone road, a human mosquito buzzes to each store. Henry, the tax collector, strolls through town collecting the monthly dues. Large-bellied and sickly, his presence is unmistakable for the jingles and jangles of coins in his void-like pockets. Greed would have a competitor as not even a continent full of gold can sate his desire for money. He takes, but he never finds time to organize what he has. That is profoundly the only aspect I find undesirable. Beneath that blubber and voracious appetite of wealth lies a real heart of gold. Henry's sin is greed, but his virtue of integrity keeps him from falling further. He'll never take more than what is owed and is willing to extend the deadline if one provides a good enough reason. Now he comes closer to this mill of mine.

I already have twenty gold coins ready for payment. I ought to walk down and greet him halfway on the hill, and so I do. There, some free rocks along the dirt path connect the mill and the town. Each one is of different sizes and shapes with ways to follow when rudely moved. One is particularly spherical. The rock is placed precariously on the edge of a curve on this path. Henry closes the space between till we both stand an arm's length, with the rock in between.

"So how goes it, scholar?" Henry asks. His hand grasps mine, and I can feel the grease of coins and skin in his hand.

"My taxes are in this pouch. Twenty shillings," I reply, tossing the ragged bag to his clumsy hands.

"You sure know how to end a conversation fast."

"I'm not one for long discussions if it intrudes on my work."

"You know, I once met a fella just like you. It was back when I had two safes of gold..."

Not this again, another long story that no living thing cares for. His voice turns to an echo as my gaze is now focused on the peculiar rock. There is nothing special about it. It is not a fossil, nor is it a gem. The only interest it has is its potential.

I've always seen what can and will happen, and I tell you that this rock is a harbinger of chaos. If the stone were to be pushed off then it would proceed to roll down the hill. At the foot, there is a wobbly broom by the vegetable shop that will fall onto a tomato. The tomato would then be swatted into a gutter, thus rolling down to a merchant's stand. His shop is unfortunately positioned very crudely with a leg in the gutter. The slight contact of the tomato against the leg will cause his shop to lose the braking mechanism the support provided, and thus the mobile shop becomes free. The cart will roll dangerously, arousing disorder within the town, to a light pole that is five feet away from the bakery. A crash ensues, and the pole will fall onto the fresh bread Barnes had just made in front of his store. In the end, the merchant will acquire a substantial debt for the passing of Barnes's fresh-baked loaves, along with an urgent request from Barnes for more flour.

I could push it off, and Henry would still ramble without any suspicion. Barnes would then come to me to grind more wheat and flour, and thus create more profit for me. To do that, however, to a man who has shown the town such simple acts of kindness is conflicting. There have been countless times where he has given me bread on days I could not afford to buy it. I've never been so conflicted before. I want to get more money, but Barnes is a good man.

My conscience debates on this opportunity, then I hear wings fluttering. I look up

to see my feathered leech glide down to the rock. It glances at both me and rock. I could see the mischief in its empty eyes. It pecks the rock on the curve and initiates what I have predicted. The stone rolls further away from us to its next destination. The rock hits an unsteady broom, and the tomato is swatted left. It bounces off a moving cart into the expected gutter. The people are unaware of what is about to happen. It rolls unsuspectedly to the leg of the merchant's cart and unhinges it. The cart proceeds to go down the road, causing many to retreat for fear of participating in a collision. At the end of it all, a lamppost stands as a final marker for this chain of events. A loud crash could be heard from the mill as the pole falls, ruining bread for about a month. What else could've happened?

Perhaps some of our actions can affect the lives around us. It also can be that we have no say in the matter. Even if I wanted to prevent it, I doubt the crow would leave without picking a rock. My thoughts recollect themselves as Henry's voice grows more audible. Barnes will come to me later on. I'll cut the price by half, as an apology for my hesitation. It is now 5:35 in the morning. The day has only begun.

# *Down Memory Lane*

By Jia Yi Sim

First day at Dalat.  
People rapping English words  
I can't understand.

An awkward silence --  
I need a new lunch table;  
I don't fit in here.

Someone made a joke.  
Kimchi flew out of her nose;  
we can't stop laughing.

New shoulder partner.  
I don't bother to greet him;  
Life's a solo war.

Swings creak as we soar,  
Cafes, hiking, and deep talks,  
I hope they last long.

Faces on the screen.  
Conversations lessening;  
We're too tired to speak.

One meter apart,  
We chat and laugh our heads off,  
Hanging onto time.

Seven whole years here.  
Memories I won't forget.  
Thank you for it all.



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## *Mohsin Hamid's Story Through Changez*

By Seung Hwan Kim

Mohsin Hamid, a British-Pakistani, is a well-known novelist for many of his phenomenal pieces of writing and other contributions to the literary world. Some of his works include *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*, and *Exit West*. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2007, tells the story of an American-Pakistani named Changez. The story takes place during the 9/11 crisis as Changez experiences active racial discrimination in America. Changez gets tired of being unfairly treated based solely on his skin tone, and therefore, leaves America to start a better life for himself. Despite the ongoing raging conflict between Pakistan and America, he still believes that both countries can go back to being civil with one another. Changez and Hamid share many similarities. Mohsin Hamid's struggles with his identity, encounter with racism, and beliefs surrounding migration are reflected through the protagonist of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Changez.

Hamid struggled with his identity because of the two drastically different cultures he grew up with. He was born in 1971 in Lahore, Pakistan, and he spent most of his childhood there, and then a few years in California. Mohsin Hamid went to Princeton University initially and then Harvard Law School. He graduated with the highest distinction achievable, *summa cum laude*. Changez has a very similar background. He was a Pakistani from Lahore who lived in America and attended Princeton University just like Hamid. Hamid had a good understanding of both Pakistani and American culture but was conflicted between the two cultures. In an interview, Hamid admitted that he acted more "Pakistani" in Pakistan and more "American" in America. He later realized why he wasn't just working as himself and why he was having trouble identifying with either. Hamid believes that society pressures people to pick a side as it is wrong to identify with both. Society can also push people to choose one side over another ("ABC Q and A," 00:02:20 - 00:03:30). Hamid's struggle is reflected through his book as Changez is faced with the same problem. Changez explains, "I lacked a stable core. I was not certain where I belonged—in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither..." (Hamid 168). Hamid uses Changez to elaborate on how he felt conflicted about the different cultures he grew up in.

Mohsin Hamid's experience of dealing with racial discrimination can be illustrated in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Most of this discrimination resulted from the tragic September 11 attacks that happened in 2001 when two planes crashed into the Twin Towers by an Islamic terrorist group. Many people began to fear Islamic people and discriminated against them. Mohsin Hamid explained, "Islam is not a race, yet Islamophobia partakes of racist characteristics. Most Muslims do not 'choose' Islam in the way that they choose to become doctors

or lawyers...” (Hamid, *Islam is Not a Monolith*). Mohsin Hamid experienced discrimination because of his race and religion. Hamid’s experience is reflected through the book as a form of racism, and it was a significant factor that made Changez suffer. Changez’s experience accurately portrays how Pakistanis and Muslims were treated in America. Changes conveyed:

Once I was walking to my rental car in the parking lot of the cable company when I was approached by a man I did not know. He made a series of unintelligible noises— “akhala-malakhala,” perhaps, or “khalapal-khalapala”—and pressed his face alarmingly close to mine. (Hamid 133)

As these racial allegations and discrimination continued on and on for Changez, he suffered endlessly and decided to go back to Pakistan in hopes that he would become happy.

Mohsin Hamid believes it is a human right to migrate and longs for a world without borders. Hamid possesses both a Pakistani and British passport and had an American green card. America has growing numbers of immigrants, and many of them illegal. Hamid says:

They were everywhere, and they numbered in their millions: illegal immigrants. How, I wondered, was such a thing possible? Surely all Americans were immigrants. Yet legally, it now seemed, not all immigrants were Americans, and as the caste of “illegals” swelled in the closing years of the 20th century and initial years of the 21st, the overall inequality of American society began to grow, too. (Hamid, *Why Migration is a Fundamental Human Right*)



Mohsin Hamid questions the law and restriction of migration as people are all migrants both historically and personally. Changez also questions the same problem as he directly experienced these restrictions. When he quit his job in America, he was no longer able to live there. He wasn’t able to go back again because Pakistani people were banned from the U.S airlines. Changez believed that everyone is the same and should not be categorized or exiled because everyone has rights.

Mohsin Hamid’s experiences and beliefs are clearly shown through *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Hamid sets up Changez to almost have an identical background as him, therefore facing similar problems Hamid faced in his past. Although it is a fictional book, the detail and accuracy of what American-Pakistani felt during 9/11 was more accurate. Hamid uses his experience to enhance the story with detail, making it realistic and emotional. Mohsin Hamid uses Changez to tell his story and deliver his beliefs.

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# Monkeys and Dragons

By Alix Stuart

Expectations. You expect something from this page. Drawing from what you know about me could spark some expectations, or the title might give something away. Either way, whether you are conscious of them or not, the expectations are there. They are drawn from any number of things, some valid, some absolutely ludicrous. Expectations hinder your ability to see circumstances as they are. Tear them up.

You are going to graduate, or you are now a high school graduate, or you are graduating from college ready to get a job or a masters degree. Wait, I must keep my own expectations in check. Do I expect you to read this page from this magazine four years from now...not really. Still, the ideas here would continue to be helpful. Think back to eighth grade. The expectations for high school were limitless. Choosing classes, playing varsity sports, making new relationships -- all of those expectations have the potential to enrich or cloud real experiences. Tear them up.

You have expectations for whatever the future holds. You expect to go to that amazing university. You expect to make new friends and keep up with old ones. Expectations are just imagined renderings that do not contain responsibility to uphold themselves. If those expectations are not met, its your wellbeing in the cross fire. Tear them up.

Sometimes outside sources of expectation interfere disastrously. Your parents have expectations for you. They cannot help it. They want the best for you. Still, they are not you. Their expectations will not be bad, but other people's expectations for you cannot withhold you from God's plan for you. Tear them up.

God doesn't have expectations. He is perfect with a perfect plan. His love is unconditional. There is nothing you can do to lose it. The ruler of the Universe wants you to follow His plans. Expectations are puny and inapplicable when a plan like that is in place. Tear them up.

If you expected to read about monkeys and dragons from the title, I succeeded in creating a small set of false expectations for this page. If you love monkeys and dragons, this message would have been unbearably disappointing, but a brilliant demonstration of the tiny imagined renderings in your brain that are failing you. Tear them up.

If you didn't remember, our class theme is "Tear It Up." We must follow our class theme as participants of the class and tear it up. Tear what up? Tear up your expectations and expectations you may think others have for you. I am giving you permission to tear out the large word at the bottom of the page along the line. (Careful, don't ruin anyone's art work.) Rip it out and tear it to pieces! Think about the expectations while tearing it -- and TEAR THEM UP! Do not give them another thought and leave your self free of expectations to follow God's plan.



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# EXPECTATIONS



# *Four Seasons*

By Culles Mah

Spring gently gives birth to life,  
Renewing things from old to new  
Giving hope to broken souls,  
Awakening things from down below

Summer smiling,  
Teeth shining bright like the stars.  
Gleaming down from afar  
Keeping everyone in his warm embrace

Autumn brushes her hair slowly,  
Letting the elegant colors  
Fall slowly onto the ground below.  
Giving a sigh, the end of another season

Winter wearing crystal shards  
Which fell from her freezing body  
Standing gracefully tall,  
Laid a white sheet across the Earth

# 6.

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## *Papaya, Prison, and Peace*

By Andrew Kaney

My first few days in Indonesia went by in a blur. I was trying to get used to a 12-hour time difference, get adjusted to the tropical climate of East Java, and take in the sights of my new home. Rickshaws rode by my house loaded with sugarcane and coconuts on the way to the market. Rice fields stretched as far as I could see. The smell of mango, papaya, and spicy curry wafted throughout our neighborhood.

Before I knew it, it was the first day of school. When I noticed that my brother and I were the only non-locals at the school, I realized it would be much more challenging than I had thought to make friends in a different culture. Having just arrived, I couldn't speak Indonesian, and I felt disoriented in such a different environment. Kids were dropped off at school on motorbikes. They ate fried rice and played soccer during lunch instead of basketball or baseball. Everyone did math using different symbols, and Chinese was a core subject. All of these differences left me feeling like an outsider.

I tried to make friends with the other kids, but due to the language barrier and the lack of commonalities, it never worked. I was left eating lunch by myself, and my attempts to speak Indonesian were met with laughs and insults that I couldn't understand. Soon, I earned the nickname "bule," meaning "foreigner." When we picked soccer teams, I was always picked last and told to play goalie, the position no one wanted to play. As I got pushed further and further away from being accepted, I grew to resent the new home that had been forced upon me.

My anger and bitterness continued to grow until my parents told me that we were leaving Indonesia. We moved to Malaysia, where I went to an international school with kids from all over the world. Despite my initial concerns, kids were much more accepting at my new school, and I quickly made friends.

Although I had moved from Indonesia and found a new place to call home, I still resented Indonesia for the pain I endured for so many years. I was angry about having felt so mistreated and lonely through no fault of my own, and I held on to this frustration.

It wasn't until my school sent out sign-ups for a service trip to Indonesia that I finally decided to process these negative emotions. Having been hurt deeply, I had to make the conscious but necessary decision to forgive the people who had wronged me and let go of the pain. The peace I felt through forgiveness pushed me to apply for the trip.

A few days later, I got an email that I had been accepted on the service trip, and within a few weeks, we landed on the same island where I grew up. There, our service team helped run a soccer tournament for boys in a juvenile detention

center. As we got to know the boys in prison, my perspective on Indonesia continued to change, and my bitterness began to fade even more.

My decision to forgive the people who had hurt me was tough but necessary. I recognized that harboring this bitterness wasn't helping me, and I decided to trust God with my time on the trip. We see a similar choice with similar outcomes when Nora, from *A Doll's House*, realizes that her relationship with her husband is not where she wants it to be, so she decides to leave him and her kids. Like my decision to forgive and apply for the trip to Indonesia, Nora's choice to leave her family was not easy, but it was necessary for her self-improvement. Although it is unclear in the end as to how her decision affected her, she made her decision, like me, intending to do away with something in her life that was holding her back from being the person she wanted to be.



# Haiku

By Sieon Park

I still remember  
The first day of my 9th grade  
Nervous yet eager.

Lunch bell resonates  
Vibrant laughter on the stairs  
Face the tranquil sea.

Numerous goodbyes  
Mixing tears and memories  
Now my turn has come.



# *A Tropical Rainstorm*

By Kolaya Ronzheimer

CLAP!

IN THE DISTANCE A FLASH OF LIGHTNING  
THUNDER FOLLOWS, A LOW RUMBLE



Looking up there are dark, ominous clouds in the distance  
Rolling in like a sturdy truck in low gear, slow yet persistent  
Until the whole sky is covered in a dark blanket

The air carries that distinct smell of rain  
Crisp, light, fresh, misty  
The air feels cool and humid with a light breeze

LIGHTLY SPRINKLING AT FIRST  
PEOPLE START TO MAKE THEIR WAY INDOORS,  
BECAUSE THEY KNOW WHAT IS COMING  
THEN THE DROPS GET HARDER UNTIL,  
A CURTAIN OF RAIN SWEEPS OVER EVERYTHING IN SIGHT  
INSIDE, THE SLOW, RHYTHMIC, MUFFLED SOUND OF RAIN,  
DRUMMING ON THE ROOF  
TIME TICKS BY...

*Sun peeks through the departing clouds  
Plants glisten with raindrops  
Their colors showing vividly  
Everything more alive than before*

# 2021

By Zoe Grous

To my senior class what a ride we've had  
We've persevered through the bad and thrived through the good  
Senior year has been like no other  
One we've all shared, and there is nothing I would have rathered  
Class of 2021, we are truly unique  
From class parties to trips—we've done it all  
These years have been wild  
Filled with memories and laughter  
Tears and hardships  
But in the end, we've come out stronger together  
Teachers, mentors, friends, and family  
This campus is one we can all call home  
I'm so glad I got to share this journey with you  
As good as these years have been  
I have to remind myself, that this is the end  
No more coming back to the campus we've all called home for so long  
Instead we are all off to new places  
To make new memories and strive  
I love you all, thank you for this ride



# *show and prove*

By Sharisse Leong

wear the wiry hair on your skin  
wear the rolls you once tucked away  
wear the angel scratches you once covered up  
wear those blemishes you once concealed  
wear them like you own them  
wear them like you are proud of them  
wear them because you love them

This poem was inspired by this generation's beauty standards. I took those traits that were looked down upon, and made them something to be proud of. I wanted to highlight the elegance in natural beauty—that it's not all about looking "perfect all the time". This poem emphasizes self-confidence and love.



# *to tell you the truth*

By Mikaela Yeap



to tell you the truth, i don't miss it anymore.

the fever heat of a basketball game, the entire gym sweating and throbbing to the same heartbeat. feet pounding and voices chanting in a primal frenzy. do you remember the raw power on their sweat-slick skin? the halo of glory round each panting hero? i can still feel the bleachers trembling when the teams raced down the court, the crowd surging to its feet all at once—the deafening roar when a champion sunk a shot. in the charged wake of the match, the teams slapped palms with the noble gravitas of men. it didn't matter if we won or lost. on game days, every eagle grew wings.

we never thought we'd lose it.

the lazy leisure of a friday night, cash in your pocket for dinner across the road and a boundless eternity till 10pm. the thud of balls on the field and the court, the giggles of girls on the swings. maybe there were mugs. maybe there was music. maybe there was monopoly. in the shining potential of a friday night, even your crush might end up next to you; you'd talk of mundane nothings while you tried desperately to memorize her smile. and when 10pm rolled around and your parents came to pick you up, you'd stare out the car window and dream of her grin in friday darkness.

we thought we'd always have it.

the choking grief of a worship night, a chapel swaying to guitar in the dim gloom of divinity. soft singing in the dark and air thick with tears. you didn't have to believe in god to break your heart each SEW; you only had to believe that it was broken. in prayer circles you sobbed because you felt anxious, depressed, worthless. solemn upperclassmen who would never speak to you again patted you on the back and beseeched the father for healing. afterwards you'd make a worship playlist and start reading the bible. you'd been changed through christ—a newborn lamb. and yet, by next SEW you were broken again.

we didn't know how much we had to lose.

what does it matter anymore if we make it to the wailing wall come june? there are only so many tears you can shed for friends who have become strangers. do you remember how, as naive middle schoolers, we promised to never lose touch? now i open discourse more often than my silent group chats. now the wrong side of sunrise is more familiar than my best friend's laugh. five remaining months is nothing to a class that has already lost ten.

dear god, i can't bear to miss it, i can't bear to remember. these things were mine so long ago that they feel like they happened to someone else. how will i say goodbye through a phone screen? how will i achieve closure through an email? dear god, i'm afraid we'll never have this again. dear god, i know we'll never have this again.

we're out of time. we're out of time.

# 5.

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## Relationship

By Erica Jang

“Stand up and introduce yourself, Erica,” my homeroom teacher said. As a transfer student coming into the beginning of the second semester, I expected myself to be showered with attention, but apparently, it seemed like I did not intrigue them as much as I thought. Moreover, because the school had begun quite a long time ago, my classmates had already divided into several groups and did not need more friends. The disappointment of not having a chance to make new friends overwhelmed me until a girl came and asked my name.

Perhaps she pitied my situation and came to talk to me because of simple curiosity. Yet, the moment she invited me to join her friend group was one of the happiest moments in my life. That happiness lasted until, one day at school, I realized that I was faking it to associate with them. I was afraid of being abandoned because I had no converging interest with them, and they were the only people I knew well in school. If they let me go, I would be left alone. However, as if erasing my true self and adjusting to their tastes were not enough, the emptiness and loneliness never disappeared.

At first, I could bear the exhaustion that I experienced. No matter how many times I inwardly shouted to myself to stop acting like an idiot, my fear didn't relent and somehow convinced me to perform like someone else who my friends preferred, again and again. The more I desired to maintain this relationship, the longer the agony remained. Eventually, I burst into tears. My friends ran up to me, hugged me, and patted me on the back with their surprised widened eyes, asking what's going on. I sincerely told them my feelings, and they helped me realize that everyone in the group is different and that they would not leave me. After that, nothing significant changed that year, but the new mindset I had became the foundation of my courage to get to know new people all by myself.

While watching a film, *A Doll's House*, I found a resemblance between Mrs. Linde's decision and mine. She decided to carry out her loveless marriage, and I decided to carry out a friendship without sincerity. We both carried out a relationship without its core element. Obviously, the motivation differed significantly; Mrs. Linde made her mind for others when I did it for myself. However, the result somehow resembles since Mrs. Linde independently looked for her job for herself at the end, and I found new relationships all alone. That is, we became more independent regarding making other decisions.



# Eleven Years

By Arpita Mathew



My phone told me it'd been nearly two years since these pictures were taken. It was the last major trip I took, the last time I was blasé about going outside, instead of it being a stressful ordeal. I wish I had taken a moment to register what it felt because it would be nice to remember that. All I can think of looking at these pictures is the safety of the world that existed when I took them, security I didn't realise was there. It's almost tainted now, labelled the "trip before it all went down." Now all I can use these pictures for is fuel, to give me the motivation to wait till it's safe and go back into the world so that the last trip I take is not just a reminder of how it used to be.



# *I Am...*

By Esther Yang

I am Esther Yang,  
A girl obsessed with pink,  
Who likes to be prink.  
I like my hair to be a kink,  
But after a while, it will sink.

Though I can not wink,  
I like to stare at the sky and blink.  
I am different from what people think,  
Though a quiet person is what they link.

I am a bubbly person who is afraid of the brink;  
My emotional clouds never shrink.  
Sometimes I can be serious and wit;  
I am honest and hates a trick.

As a soprano, I like to tink;  
Making harmony together makes me feel interlink.

If you want to say anything, grab me when I slink;  
But don't hold it for long, make it quick.  
When I go around to take pictures and be brink,  
Don't be nervous; I am not distinct.



# *Loss of Intimacy*

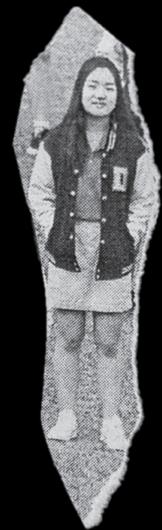
By Ji Ah Choi

Choosing between friends and family is a decision that one can experience some time during their life. As an adolescent, I valued my friends more than anyone else. Nevertheless, making a choice that could harm my family was not preferable. One occasion where I had to make a crucial decision was during middle school.

During middle school, I had to cope with the complication of school closure. I originally had planned to graduate from that school, but unfortunately, in September of 2016, I received the notification about the closure. Although I had already decided to transfer to Dalat, there was still another decision to make upon my departure – whether or not to communicate with my friends about it. For personal reasons, my parents didn't want anyone to perceive it. Despite my willingness to tell my friends, I ended up not informing them, and it is a choice I hitherto regret.

Of all the friends I met in my previous school, only a few of them remain in contact. I have lost connection with some of my closest friends. It may be the sense of betrayal, or it may be the feeling of perplexity that has motivated them to turn away. Even though I recognize my misconduct of not telling them, the distress of losing my friends has agonized me until now.

A Doll's House presents multiple instances where a character had to make a decision. Anne-Marie, the nanny of the Helmer family, is facing a similar matter. Due to her work, she leaves her family. Although she is still able to contact her children, their relationship seems to be superficial. The process differs, but the results we face are the same: a loss of an intimate relationship. Hence, I realized the consequence of the decision I made, and I became aware of the potential outcome that I would have to deal with in the future.



# 4.

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## *Home*

By Amber Ruble

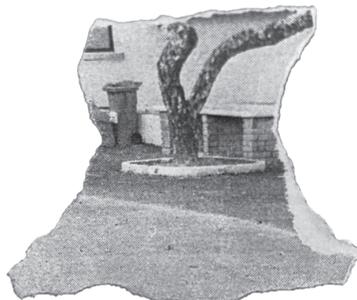
Years of roaming around  
Like leaves, we drift through the sky  
And are placed in special little spots where we find our lives to be.  
We call these places home.

Then a breeze comes  
We drift away to a new place to call our own.  
There's no difference between where we are and where we could be  
No place was made for us, nor we for a certain place.

Still, we call all these places home.  
Are they really all home, or are none of them?  
Does each place somehow hold a piece of our heart that we only discover upon  
landing there?  
Is each place just partially home?  
I like to think so—the people I love, the places I've lived—they're all home and  
became so when they became special to me  
They are all part of where I belong.

But one day, all of that will be pulled away,  
Yet something inside me says I will still have a home.  
On this earth, my home is in my heart; I take it with me  
My home is a God who calls me His and a place in which He lives.

One day, that place will be as real as day  
My heart will be complete in Him who calls it His  
Fractions of belonging will become whole.  
Meanwhile, here, everywhere will be home to me because, in everything,  
there is a reflection of this home-to-be.



# *A Boast*

By Kris Chong

To all in this Brit Lit class, students and instructor.  
My name is Kristoffer Chong, son of the Chong family.  
Mom and Dad both expect a lot from me.  
My father is a very experienced driver, but he ain't got no Malaysian driver's  
license.  
Singaporean, British, and a German driver's licenses are what he has.  
My goal while living here in Malaysia is to be just like him.  
To get my first driver's license; very soon.  
Practising helps quite a lot especially on public roads.  
Naturally I have some driving skills,  
To be a safe and fast driver at the same time.  
I look for opportunities to drive any car I could.  
Thankfully people are nice to me  
I have driven different cars,  
From electric to gas-guzzlers.  
Some way too powerful for most people.  
Audi, Acura, Alfa, Aston.  
Those are just some I mildly like.  
Go-karting is a fun activity.  
I always come first on the scoreboard.  
I shall beat everyone on the track,  
Even my very own father himself.  
Big bends, tight turns,  
It's really tricky to stay fast.  
When judgement day comes.  
Mr. Instructor will be impressed by my maneuvers.  
I shall receive my first ever driver's license.  
Freedom will be in my hands  
I would be gifted with a brand new car,  
Ready to drive to school on my own,  
And give myself a new feeling of independence.



# *Finishing the Race*

By Jared Douglas

Down I went,  
Smashing my body into the tarmac,  
My bike flying in the opposite direction,  
I begin to arise and realize what has happened.

Bleeding thighs and elbows,  
Ripped shorts and shirt,  
Bent handlebars and scratches on my precious frame,  
Time is ticking by.

People fly by me,  
Not caring what happened,  
Losing more time,  
The Adrenaline rush is subsiding, and the pain starts to kick in.

But... I dig deep,  
Get on my bike,  
Off I go,  
I start to pick people off one by one.

I finish the cycle,  
I still have 5km to run,  
I put on my shoes and off I go,  
Determined to finish the race.



# Reminder

By Onyou Kim



When I look back to my high school years, I want this collage to be a reminder. I want it to remind me of the love I received from the school community, for which I will be forever grateful. I want it to remind me of how much I enjoyed taking pictures, which made the gallery space on my phone constantly full. I want it to remind me of how much I loved wearing Converse and black clothes. I want it to remind me of my nickname and all the precious moments I spent with my friends.

# Where I'm From

By Dorothy Koay

I am from my dad's silent sacrifices,  
I am from my mom's nurture and harsh lectures,  
I am from a sister's selfless love that softens me,  
I am from the urge to protect my sweet brother,  
I am from my stubborn determination,  
I am from years of practicing perfectionism,  
I am from the sweat and tears of my achievements,  
I am from overcoming my stutter by mustering the courage to speak every day,  
I am from overcoming the fear of reading aloud in class,  
I am from my never-ending cravings for desserts,  
I am from the daily battles of listening to my body,  
I am from learning my past mistakes and changing my ways,  
I am from my friends' loyal support and encouragements,  
I am from my teacher's diligence, patience, and steady love for God,  
I am from making handmade envelopes and writing letters to the people I care about,  
I am from Sunday hikes and cycling where I have come to appreciate my body,  
I am from Treagles where I found love in running as a team,  
I am from a one-of-a-kind family called Dalat,  
I am from the unique clay that God's fingers are constantly molding me out to be,  
I am from the daily choice of blindly following a path called faith.

Life brings us to many destinations; with different places come different people and situations. In any type of journey, each one of us will inevitably enter a cycle of falling into mistakes, learning from the hard lessons, and hopefully, growing from them. As we, the Class of 2021, move onto this new and promising chapter of our lives, I pray that each one of us will have an open heart and strong will in everything that we do; most of all, I pray that we will have a firm memory of our origin and of the Dalat we made together in our time here.



# *Lost & Broken > Happiness & Joy*

By Sean Park



Fake light at first,  
Getting lost in the dark second,  
Resting up and healing on the third,  
Making memories was the fourth.

Starting my high school career in a new environment wasn't easy. Being a new student was very uncomfortable for me and I always wanted to go back to my home. I was frustrated and lost, I didn't know what to do. I wanted to escape. When my mind was chaotic, there comes the Approacher speaking up to me, asking what's wrong. Then comes the Supporter, helping me up. Then comes the Healer to help me recover. Then comes the Entertainer, giving me unforgettable memories. Like these, different elements contributed to help me and the result was outstanding. Now I don't want to escape but leave with happiness and satisfaction. All I can say is Thank You.



# *Searching for Hope*

By Anya Kaloo



Placement- 3D art portfolio. My portfolio tells my journey through many hardships, and I used this portfolio to understand my thoughts and actions through a negative situation. I did not have hope. I did not see it as being a part of my life. After reliving some memories and emotions, I realized that there were areas of my life where hope was evident, but I never saw it as hope or love from God but instead saw it as temporary luck. This particular piece visually represents my journey of finally finding a portion of hope expressed through the light. The figure represents my actions where I finally begin to accept the wrongdoings of my negative thoughts and instead learn from myself and begin my journey in searching for the Lord(hope). The driftwood is symbolic of how I see myself as not worthy of the Lord's love and, in turn, not worthy of the idea of hope. The whole portfolio goes into depth about my journey of finding hope and searching for the Lord coming from being lost, unique, and broken self which is seen through the use of driftwood.

# 3.

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## *Memories Unhappened*

By Daniel Choi

He woke up from his dream,  
His mind was a blur.  
His thoughts flowed in like a stream,  
Reminiscing, joy started to stir.  
He dreamed about the memories unhappened.

He opened his eyes in June,  
Confused and baffled, he began to stress.  
Thinking he must've slept to a mesmerizing tune,  
Still getting used to the beating in his chest.  
Oh gosh, what in the world had just happened?

In shock, he stood up and looked in the mirror,  
His hair was long and he looked at his watch.  
Eyes wide open, filled with horror,  
He swore when he slept, it was only march.  
A year and a half just happened.

For help, he tries reaching out to his friends,  
And finds himself on a wild goose-chase.  
Discovering that the path lead to a dead end,  
He yearns for at least one last embrace.  
But no, all he is left with are memories unhappened.



# Goals

By Enee Crosslin

Sunlight warmed his face as he slowly came awake, looking onto an endless plain. Seed heads of grass bent down, examining his motionless body with faceless curiosity.

“Who is this fool?” They seemed to whisper. “Surely, he is lost.”

He broke one off. Picking at its grains and letting them fall to the floor of his tent as the sounds of grasshoppers and a breeze brushed his warming ears.

“Poor fellow. Regret fills your face, boy.”

He broke another off, throwing it to the ground with a frown. Its cry of agony only heard through wind-dragged blades. Upon standing, the boy... man - what did it matter? - stared with downcast eyes at the flat horizon that persisted in every direction.

“This way, kid, there’s a place for you just over that edge.”

He slumped over the corners of his tent to remove the pegs and held up his hand to let them clink together for a moment, their dull chimes passing into the wind.

“What do you even have to regret, boy?”

He trudged on, in a direction indescribable except by saying that he went forward, for any other direction became forward once he turned. He knew no hint of East and West, for the sun never set, only faded and reappeared. It beat down on his head, but he paid no mind; not even a glance was returned to face its rays. So, he spent his hours walking in silence, eyes cast down at the path before him. Birds chirped, and grass swayed in sync, playing the mellow theme to his journey to the edge of his world.

“There is a new place waiting for you, do not worry. Even as you walk, you know you go somewhere.”

He stopped, looking back to see his progress. The grass shone radiantly, unimpeded by any sign of life without roots. It was all well, and he walked on. As the sun grew dim, his steps slowed. The sounds of the plain grew still, and his ears heard only the dull pounding of footsteps.

“You’ve earned some rest, brother. See how far you have walked this day.”

The grey glow of clouds chilled him as he slowly came to a halt, looking onto an endless plain. He knelt down to set his tent for the night. He wondered if tomorrow he would find the end of his world.



# *The True Story of Monsters*

By Ally Kim

In the book *Beowulf*, Beowulf is described as a hero who kills Grendel, the notorious monster in the story, and its mother. He stops Grendel from killing more people in the kingdom and shows Hrothgar, the king, the loyalty by saving his people. Although Beowulf is a definite hero for Hrothgar and his people, a reversed point of view would drastically change the plot. Grendel's mother, who lived for hundreds of years without causing any problems that her son has caused, is only a mother who seeks revenge for her son. Stories told from the villain's perspective often evoke emotional bonds to characters and even involve some "heroic" components. A Disney movie *Maleficent* tells the story of *Sleeping Beauty* from the witch's point of view, who, in fact, is a hero of fairies and displays maternal characteristics to the princess. Similarly, there is a case in which the mother kills a teenage boy in search of revenge for her daughter's rape. Compared to *Beowulf*, both these stories explore the heroic aspects of mothers instead of stigmatizing them as monsters. While *Beowulf* only emphasizes the monstrous nature of Grendel's mother, a shifted point of view would highlight her maternal characteristics.

The book introduces Grendel as a cruel monster that kills the people of Hrothgar. His brutal attacks left the kingdom empty of warriors and an absence of joy. The monster was so powerful that, as described in the book, "Our weapons made no impression on the beast's hide, and its strength, speed, and reach meant that any who tried to get close enough to grapple were shredded by its fierce claws" (Raven II). As the last hope of Hrothgar's kingdom, Beowulf kills Grendel with his bare hands and becomes an admired hero. Meanwhile, Grendel's mother seeks his son's revenge, and Beowulf plans for another fight with the mother. Since the story is written from Beowulf's side, Grendel's mother appears as a threat and another challenge to face to readers. The book never describes her revenge as a courageous decision for her son, nor does it highlight her grief as a mother who lost her child. With her power, Grendel's mother could have killed all the people in the kingdom at any time she wanted, but she did not. Although her son had caused some problems, it was nothing compared to the power they had. From her point of view, Beowulf is merely an ungrateful human who has killed her only son. The fight with Beowulf is the only time Grendel's mom attacks people, which she has a definite motive for. The book clearly mentions: "But now his mother had sallied forth on a savage journey, grief-racked and ravenous, desperate for revenge" (Heaney 1277-1279). The revenge for her son is the sole reason for her attack, which reveals a deep maternal love for her son. For Grendel, his mother is his only hero who seeks revenge for him and embraces him under any circumstances.

A well-known fairy tale *Sleeping Beauty* also has a twisted plot told from another point of view. A recent Disney movie *Maleficent* tells the story from *Maleficent's* perspective, who has long been recognized as an evil witch in the story. The movie sets the focus entirely on *Maleficent*, dramatically shifting the way viewers perceive her. Instead of describing her as a wicked witch, the movie shows the childhood of *Maleficent* and introduces her as a fairy and the protector of the village Moor. She becomes outrageous only when her lover, who's overshadowed

by his ambition, betrays her to become a king. For revenge, Maleficent curses Aurora, the first daughter of the king, when she was born -- the princess will fall into a permanent sleep on her 16th birthday when she touches the spinning wheel spindle. However, Maleficent comes to take care of the princess Aurora when other requested fairies fail to do so properly. As Maleficent watches Aura grow up, she notices the kind-heartedness of the innocent princess and develops a close relationship with her. She feels guilty and painful when she realizes that the curse is unbreakable. When Aurora falls into a permanent sleep, Maleficent says to her, "I will not ask for forgiveness. What I have done is unforgivable. I was so lost in hatred and revenge. You stole what was left of my heart, and now I've lost you forever. But I swear, no harm will come to you as long as I live, and not a day shall pass that I won't miss your smile" (Maleficent). As revealed, Maleficent develops a maternal love for the princess. In the story, she is no longer a wicked witch but a caring mother.

The movie emphasizes Maleficent's heroic characteristics which the original story never displays. By narrating the story from Maleficent's point of view, the movie successfully reconnects the audience with the antagonist of the original plot and even makes it debatable to claim who the real villain is. Beowulf, too, would have created a different story if it was narrated by Grendel or his mother. Grendel's mother's motherly love towards his son is indicated in many parts of the story, though it is not directly mentioned. In Grendel's mother's cave, Beowulf finds "another mound on the floor at the side of the vast, damp dwelling" (Raven 45), which is the corpse of Grendel. The book only claims how Beowulf brings its head as proof of his victory, neglecting to indicate a mother's mourning for her son. Both Maleficent and Grendel's mom grieve over their child's death and even feel guilty of their incapacity to protect them. Their reactions and emotions strongly illustrate their motherly love.

It is difficult to give an explicit definition of "monsters," and a firm meaning might not apply to every situation. The topic often gets very subjective in different contexts. For instance, the murderer of a teenage boy sounds like a definite evil monster, until it turns out that the teenage boy was a rapist of the murderer's daughter. Court documents revealed that Connie Serbu murdered an 18-year-old teenage boy who raped her daughter, with the help of her mentally disabled brother who was easy to convince. According to the article from a news website Time, Serbu states, "So I don't care, he raped my daughter ... she told me everything that happened" (Segarra). Is she a monster who brutally kills a teenage boy? Or, is she, just like Grendel's mom, a fearless mother who seeks revenge for her loving daughter? Although what she has done is certainly morally wrong, for her daughter, she is a hero who has risked her life to protect her. From her daughter's point of view, she is no different from Beowulf, a hero who risks his life to save the people of the kingdom. For both Serbu and Grendel's mother, their infinite love for their children was the primary driving force for their cruel actions. No parents in this universe would leave their children victimized, and they would risk anything to protect them -- just like Grendel's mother did.

The hero that saves people and the kingdom could be a ruthless monster who kills one's precious child and threatens the family; the monster that everyone fears could be the only defender of a lonely fighter. Unlike the book describes, Grendel's mother is not a reckless monster who attacks people for no reason, nor Maleficent and Serbu a born evil. Before judging them as cold-blooded monsters, one should look at their deeply wounded feelings and equally vulnerable hearts. Whether or not

their search for revenge is justifiable is a debatable question; however, they are all brave mothers who endure through everything for their children.

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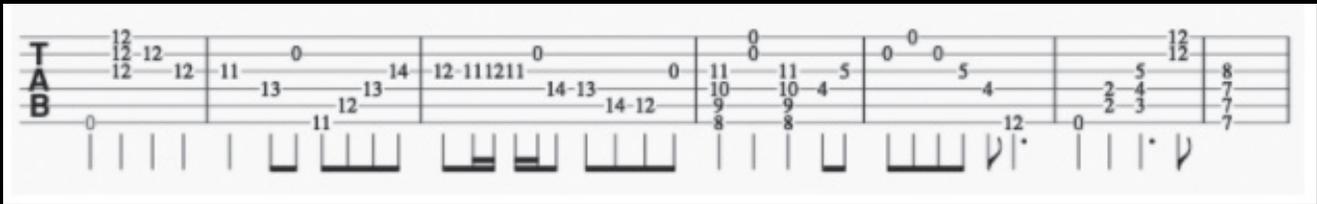
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# Brainwashed

By Liam Kuhns



I wrote this a couple months ago, it seems very unfinished because it is, and I can't exactly seem to finish it. Although this is true, I do think it is my best piece of musical writing I've done. I took heavy inspiration from my favourite band called Polyphia, where I love the technicality and uniqueness of every song they produce. I took the same intensity I feel when I listen to their songs and applied it to write this short piece, which to me sounds amazing.



# Routes

By Ziyu Moey

The boy stood at an interjection with two routes. At one, it was the path that he eventually didn't take. On the other, it was the one that he took. Now, that's all in the past but what if he didn't go for the route that he would eventually have taken? Would things have gone the same at the end? Would things still have a successful ending waiting for him? Only the mind can think of such a thought- it's impossible to grasp what could have happened.

However in the present, the boy couldn't shake away the thought. What if he hadn't made the choice that he had? The boy was curious.

Fortunately, the boy was grateful for what he had accomplished; he had no regrets to look back too. Unfortunately, he also had a feeling that he could've done more- could've experienced more things during the past four years.

Did I actually do anything? Have I really experienced everything that I wanted to have experienced? Those thoughts began to dwell on the boy.

These thoughts began submerging into his consciousness so much so that he took a pause. He then laid back, and began to replay his past four years: finally re-entering school, making friends, having fun. The boy knew that he had lived a normal highschool life, but something was there inside of him that just wouldn't leave, telling him that he could've done many other, great things. But that's all in the past.

What's done is done.

The only thing that he could do now is to look ahead to the future.

Now that he had realised the mistake that he had made, he starts planning ahead and hoping that he had learned from his past mistakes.

If the sun is shining, follow its rays to the future.

If the moon is lighting, follow its light to an even brighter one.



# *Don't Change the Circumstance, Change Me*

By Zoey Ong

All humans can overpower the lightning lit and striking streaks of a storm. Observe a hen that pecks defensively to protect its chicks; its persistence reflects on human's inevitable thirst to possess, to protect, and to succeed in life - that thirst lives in every soul. Yet often I find us conforming to normalities and timid in challenging life. We allow the tumbles to override and strip away the yearning desires of every burning heart, and we retreat, in fear of the giants in our life. Like a powerless marionette, humans live by the giants in life; I want to overthrow that analogy.

Barack Obama inspired me when in his Super Tuesday's speech addressed to his supporters in 2008, he said "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." Obama dazzled me to realize that unconsciously I victimized myself when defeated by an unfavorable circumstance. When darkness pressed into my life, my mentality became the greatest giant in life. So, instead of victimizing over the struggles, be variable and learn from the trials and tribulations. Instead of plotting to change the unfavorable circumstances pounding life, be composed and change the way of approach. Instead of pleading out of the circumstance, express an invitation to the hardship to increase in character. Amid the writhing and flailing, I will consume the rage and set up to overpower the levels of fear that manipulates my frame of mind.

Life comes in seasons, so always account for variable change. Once trapped by the melancholic tears of the sky, a girl hesitated to walk on drenching soil then a hand reached for her and looped her legs into two disposable bags. No longer locked in a fight between the slithering mud and her feet, she struck through the rain with the shields on her feet; my Dad taught me to account for variable change. Seasons swoop in and out resoundingly, carrying much joy, fear and contempt. But all in honor of the beauty that arises from the facets in life. A fiery summer can dazzle and warm up all wonders, but a storming winter anchors the roots deeper; fruition comes from the seasons.

As easy as infants give into temptations, sometimes I gorge on a devilish chocolate cake. Despite the seamless workings of my body, I am not perfect, nor am I invincible. The past eighteen years, I lived a fruitful life, where I savored the punch of bitter-sweetness; I dreamt, I tumbled, I persisted, and I came through - that is the charm in life. Be courageous, Be variable and Be composed; I will overthrow the giants in life knowing I seize a victory ahead of me. I will delight in my weaknesses, as I realize being in the eye of the storm may be the hardest to endure, the eye is the calmest part of the storm.



# Sparkling Minutes

By Abigail Owen

We were lighter  
floating on sunshine and swimming in moonbeams,  
Dancing on air.  
And when it rained we went out and sang in it—screaming life, firing joy  
as if daring anyone to challenge our happiness  
Knowing that this was it.

For a while,  
We exist  
And we think:  
“We’ll live forever.  
We will be the ones who never die  
because why would we?”

no monochrome filter.  
no coming of age background music.  
no montages or scripts.  
Just the beautiful but nebulous chimes of life

so we sang in the rain,  
playing music—too loud.  
Why would we want to hear the thunder?



# *A Story of All of Us: Cho Nam-Joo*

By Alice Yang

In 2016, as a former television scriptwriter and a mother to one daughter, Nam-Joo Cho published her third novel, *Kim Jiyoung, Born in 1982*, bringing profound impact on long-existed gender inequality and discrimination within Korean society. Taking this novel as an opportunity, she started to gain more recognition and fame with her new career as a novel writer. In *Kim Jiyoung, Born in 1982*, the author brought out a relatable story, character, and message from the book for readers to recognize based on her authentic experiences, emotions, and hardships living as a career woman with career breaks.

In the aspects of the story, the author created this extremely ordinary character, Kim Jiyoung, similar to the author herself, to represent herself and women living in Korea's patriarchal society. Nam-Joo Cho says, "I continuously feel like Kim Jiyoung from the book is living somewhere around us. The reason would be because Kim Jiyoung reflects many of my friends, colleagues, and myself, both inwardly and outwardly" (Cho, 177). Moreover, this shows how much the author feels deeply connected with the character she had created within the novel. Like Jiyoung from the story, Cho was also meant to be born as a male with high expectations from the family. Cho's uncle, who had no son but five daughters, even made a deal with Cho's father to adopt Nam-Joo as his child if she was born as a boy. Both the author and Jiyoung experienced discrimination even before their birth. As they grew up, they took these inequalities for granted, without even questioning it. Uniquely, by using real statistics of specific periods about birth rates, employment rates, and percentage of working women, the author further generalized this character "Kim Jiyoung" not only specific to her own experiences but everyone. Thus, this strongly implies it is not a story of one single woman but the struggle of all the women in Korea.

As a woman who lived in the time of prevalent abortion of females in the 1980s and early 90s, she created a realistic and reflective atmosphere of the Korean society in the book. Her trivial but specific and prevalent details of discrimination that women had undergone in the past and today solely brought out sympathetic and relatable reactions of readers regardless of their gender. Such as dealing with implicitly rooted superiority of men over women, unfair uniform regulations starting from middle school, and even ID numbers indicating men as one and women as two, those details all well depicted and well-voiced the author's passion for speaking up for gender equality with use of the character Jiyoung from the book. Moreover, in her writing, those details always lead Jiyoung to question about the event she felt uncomfortable and injustice, but yet mostly in a passive and intimidated way, resisting to speak up and make changes. This connects to how the author had felt about those sensitive issues throughout her life as a working woman. Furthermore, the author, in a way, expressed and created this reflective character Jiyoung who defines and represents her deeply rooted questions and emotions regarding those hardships. As Cho mentions, "but if I were born as a son, I think I wouldn't have been able to understand this life, the world that I live in, in the same way – living as a person on the weaker side, we see the world a lot more broadly," (Williams) living as a woman certainly impacted her writing due to her

experiences and deeply rooted doubts.

The author herself experienced society's inflexibility to change regarding gender equality, especially when she faced the harsh reality of returning to work with career breaks after giving birth to a child. Nam-Joo says, "But we grew up and lived in this certain way and did not have many ways to make changes. I was just like Jiyoung as well" (Cho, 177). Nevertheless, as the mother of one daughter, she strongly hoped for women to get more chances and opportunities in the future. Therefore, in the book, it is shown through Jiyoung's "mental illness" appearing at the very beginning of the book. Jiyoung keeps on taking on the personalities of other women around her, regardless of whether that person is dead or alive. When Jiyoung visits her in-laws, she suddenly slips into her mother's identity and speaks in a somewhat inappropriate manner for her place. However, she straightforwardly urges what she genuinely wanted to say in her heart. Though the book ends with an inflexible view of society to this issue, the author conveys that the problems and messages of change should happen in society to voice every unheard woman. Therefore, it seems like "the character of Kim Jiyoung can be seen as a sort of sacrifice: a protagonist who is broken in order to open up a channel for collective rage" (Shin). Besides, the author's strong passion for making a better future for her children created and impacted this work of brave novel and the story's setting of Jiyoung speaking up for her demand and opinion.

Kim Jiyoung is a prevalent and ordinary name. In fact, Kim Jiyoung is the most common name for women born in 1982. Thus, generality is the specialty of this novel. In the book, Nam-Joo not only depicts her own life experiences but also well expresses the hardships and problems that women face throughout every stage of their lives. She created this character Jiyoung, who has many similarities with herself, to express realistic thoughts and emotions that she felt and what everyone had felt in reality. Through the use of conflict (mental illness), the author shows her purpose and passion for the future generations, hoping them to live a better life for themselves, not for the sake of someone like old generations did. Cho hopes that "all the daughters in the world have bigger, higher, and more dreams" (Cho, 178).

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# 2.



## *A Tour of Middle Earth*

By Kevile Dolie

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**Rivendell:** Also known as the Last Homely House East of the Sea. The perfect place to enjoy elven hospitality and forget about your worries. Experience Elven cuisine and take a nature hike around Rivendell to see it's breathtaking scenery. Final resting place of the famous Shards of Narsil blade.



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My master Sauron the Great bids thee Welcome. -The Mouth of Sauron, Head of Tourism in Middle Earth



# Mosquitoes: Us or Them

By Palmer Ford

Mosquitos are, without a doubt, the most annoying, irritating, and lethal creatures to have ever coexisted with the human species. The sound they make is infernal, their bites are maddening, they carry some of the worst diseases ever, and if that weren't enough, they are masters at getting away. With all these crimes to their name, many people believe that the time has come to wipe these nasty little creatures off the face of the earth. But is that really a good idea? Earth's ecosystems are very complex and delicate. Removing even a single species could have significant and unexpected consequences. There are thousands of species of mosquitoes, and out of all of them, only a handful carry harmful diseases (Bland). To save the lives of millions of people, all disease-carrying mosquito species should be driven to extinction.

Every year, Malaria infects over 200 million people and kills over 400 thousand (World). Although Malaria is technically the cause of death, the real killer is the mosquito, or more specifically, the *Anopheles* mosquito that carries the disease in the first place (Mosquito-borne). The *Anopheles* mosquito, however, isn't the only killer around. The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito and the *Culex* mosquito are both also responsible for the transmission of several diseases such as Yellow fever, Dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, and the West Nile virus (Mosquito-borne). In total, mosquito-transmitted diseases kill more than a million people annually (Mosquito-borne).

Before the fate of mosquitoes can be decided, however, it is important to know how scientists would accomplish this. Eradicating an entire species of plentiful and highly tenacious organisms may sound like an impossible task, but there are some surprisingly easy ways through which people could achieve this. We have done it before. On May 8th, 1980, the World Health Organization announced the complete eradication of the variola virus, the culprit behind smallpox (Greenspan). This proves the feasibility of driving a very successful species to extinction. The difference is that while scientists eliminated smallpox through an extensive global vaccination program, they would likely eliminate mosquitos through genetic modification, specifically through a method known as a gene drive (Greenspan and Hegg). In simple terms, a gene drive is a "genetic trick" that causes all offspring of a modified male organism, in this case, a mosquito, to not only be exclusively male but to also carry the gene drive (Hegg). These mosquitoes would continue to spread their genetics until a lack of female mosquitoes caused the species to go extinct.

While it is true that the eradication of certain disease-carrying mosquitoes is not under a huge amount of debate, the harm they cause people far outweighing any damage removing them might cause to the ecosystem, what's to stop us from going all the way and just eradicating all mosquitoes instead of just the disease-carrying ones? Wouldn't a world without any of these blood-sucking vampires be better? Well, sadly, mosquitoes play a key role in many ecosystems around the world. The mosquitoes in the arctic tundra, for example, are so pivotal to their ecosystem that removing them would most likely spell disaster for hundreds of creatures (Winn). The larva of many beetles in that part of the world survive almost exclusively on the larva of these arctic mosquitos (Culler). "Mosquitoes serve as food for birds, bats, salamanders, lizards, frogs and other animals" (Winn). Many of these species would struggle if one of their primary food sources were to be cut off from them suddenly.

Some people, such as Joe Conlon, an entomologist from the American Mosquito Control Association, believe that mosquitos do not in fact “occupy an unassailable niche in the environment”. He believes that if mosquitoes were eradicated, “the ecosystems where they are active will hiccup and then get on with life. Something better or worse would take over”. While he may be correct that life would eventually move on, it is rather optimistic to believe that the impact on the environment would be as momentary and shallow as a mere “hiccup”. While there is the possibility that there would be minimal repercussions, the potential damage to the ecosystem is far too great to make that gamble worth it (Hegg).

On the other hand, some researchers, such as Catherine Hill, a professor of entomology at Purdue University, think that removing even a single species, regardless of how destructive or lethal they may be, would not be worth the damage they believe would most certainly befall the ecosystem (Winn). However, there has to be a point where the number of casualties outways the importance of a handful of mosquito subspecies. Besides, it is a known fact that when a species disappears, something is usually there to take its place, even if that “something” is worse. If that is true, then the creature most likely to fill the gap left by a disease-carrying mosquito would be one of the 3,500 other species of mosquito (Engber). After all was said and done, nothing would change except that the lives of over a million people would be saved each year (Mosquito-borne).

It is likely that driving all species of mosquito to extinction would greatly damage many ecosystems around the world. However, doing nothing will mean millions of more people will have to suffer and die annually (Mosquito-borne). To solve both these problems, only the mosquitos that can carry harmful diseases should be eradicated to preserve both the ecosystems of the world and the people who live there. Works Cited

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# Memories

By Meredith Johnson



This senior year has been like nothing anyone expected. It has had its ups and downs, and there have definitely been a lot of learning curves and unique experiences. I wanted to capture some of the highlights of this year, and represent the amazing, but crazy year I have had. Even though it isn't like a normal senior year that anybody wanted, there were so many beautiful moments that we all got to experience and remembering these is very important to me. All of these photos will always bring back many memories for me, and remind me of my last year at Dalat and in Penang.



# Magnolia Berry

By Jimin Park



You meet new friends, teachers, and people and you would have to introduce yourself to them. “Hi, my name is Jimin. I’m from Korea. I’m in 12th grade.” But these ordinary types of introduction have nothing special to it. It is too plain. So, I will introduce myself in a way that I had never done before. I am a Magnolia Berry, or you may know me more as the five-flavor-fruit.

When people meet me, it is like eating a magnolia berry for them. They eat me and they slowly get to taste the first impression of me. They could taste the sweet side of me first whenever I am happy or positive. I am energetic and outgoing and give a positive impact on people. I try to be kind to the people I meet and this is the taste that most people taste when they first meet me. They could taste the bitter side of me first whenever I am frustrated or pissed. I tend to get frustrated when I keep getting something wrong repetitively or when my grade doesn’t follow my expectations. This taste is seen mostly when you are in class with me, especially when we get our test score back. They could taste the spicy side of me first whenever I am mad or angry. This taste is rarely tasted unless you have known me for over 5 years or you have seen me alone with my sister, which is the time when I am most spicy. It is really difficult to taste the spicy flavor in the fruit. They could taste the sour side of me first whenever I am jealous or dissatisfied with the actions I took. I tend to get sour when I regret a choice that I made and this could be seen often if you talk to me regularly. I will keep on bugging you about the tiniest mistake that I made in an assignment or on a test even if it does not have a big impact on my grade. The sourness of the fruit tends to annoy a lot of my friends. They could taste the salty side of me first whenever I am being “salty.” This is mostly tasted when I play sports and start to get really competitive. The saltiness of the fruit often leads me to lose self-control over myself. Everyone’s first impression on me could be different just like everyone tastes a different taste when they try the Magnolia berry for the first time. But as time goes on you slowly get to taste the other tastes that you missed when you first tried the fruit. You start tasting the positive and negative sides, and the more secret or rarely seen personality of the fruit. Each taste takes time for you to taste and each taste gives you a different perspective about the fruit. Which tastes did you taste when you ate the Magnolia berry?

# *A review of Borderlands 2, nine years later*

By Ethan Chan

Borderlands 2 took the test of time to the face, and emerged just as pretty as it ever was.

My best description of Borderlands 2 would be ‘immaculately crafted chaos’. Having come back to the game just recently to sweep some dust off its digital cover, I was granted a heavy nostalgia inducing joyride back into one of the influential games of the last decade.

Immediately, the first thing I noticed was how well the graphics had held up. Despite the notable improvements made to the overall aesthetic of the game in Borderlands 3, the long awaited next entry in the franchise that released last year, the cartoonish cell-shaded art style seems anything but dated. This is made especially clear when put in comparison to peers launched around a similar time frame, such as Dishonored and Skyrim, perhaps in part to Borderlands’ intentionally unrealistic visuals.

In addition, the core gameplay loop remains dangerously encapsulating, as I quickly found myself drawn right back into the same core gameplay loop that had taken up so many hours of my life back when the game was initially launched. Showing off its insane replay value, starting the game over with a different playable character than I had used previously granted me an experience that was the same, yet different in all the right ways.

Unfortunately, a game could never emerge completely unscathed from a nine year blender of technological advancement. I was disappointed to find that cross platform co-operative gameplay was no longer possible between pc and mac, with changes to OSX having created a multitude of complications that nobody is getting paid enough to fix. This also highlights a larger shift within Apple’s development strategy to pivot the future of their computers even further away from the gaming scene than they had already been. Reasons aside, with co-op being such an integral part of what makes the Borderlands series as a whole so enjoyable, this does pose a significant issue for those who still hope to enjoy the game even after all this time.

For those who have yet to play the game though or are new to the franchise, I feel it would be a crime not to stress just how much value is packed into BL2.

The original Borderlands was released during a time when every other first-person shooter in the market was a real grit-your-teeth type hyper realistic sort of game. In a market that monotone, Borderlands really shined as something different, a hyper unrealistic, cartoony game with foundations set in witty humor and incredible quantities of loot. It popularized the ‘loot-shooter’ sub genre of games, which refer to games in which a sizable quantity of the game’s enjoyment is derived from finding and collecting weapons and other gear, often sorted by rarity. The gunplay revolves around this infinite loot system, with players using this infinite pool of wacky guns combined with unique abilities specific to each playable character to plow their way through hordes of enemies.

Borderlands 2 built upon the structure laid out by its predecessor, retaining all the central gameplay draws that had made it great, but made great leaps and bounds with the story and worldbuilding. With amazing performances from an incredibly talented cast of voice actors and excellent writing, the game took its humor to a level previously thought unimaginable. To put a cherry on top an already disgustingly sweet pie, the game is also ridden with easter eggs, featuring references to popular ip's such as Mincraft, Lord of the Rings, Lion King, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Star Wars, Bioshock, Donkey Kong, Snow White, Beowulf, Hamlet... you get the idea. This gives the game a sense of childish, immature unpredictability. Throughout my time in the Borderlands, I've been given a mission by a midget to shoot him in the face while he dances in place, held a gun that screams at me when I shoot it, and been subject to numerous calls from the game's primary antagonist who dials in frequently just to see how I'm doing.

Borderlands is a truly unique experience, and I can't express this fact enough. No matter just how high or low you scour the wide plethora of games available in this world, you will never truly encounter something quite like Borderlands. Fortunately for many, the 'Game of the Year' version of the game currently costs a mere 20USD, which includes both the base game as well as all the DLCs worth playing. While this is already a steal, to top it off the price frequently drops to 5USD on sales. If you're wasting away in your room in the midst of the current pandemic and need something to take all this newfound time off your hands, I'd argue that Borderlands 2 might just present what you're seeking.

Verdict

9.5/10



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# *Memories Unhappened*

By Lydia Neeley



I have mixed feelings about airplanes because of many reasons. For example, I'm not much of a fan of plane food, but I love watching movies. Airplanes either mean so much fun or a lot of sadness. Airplanes have in some way become part of my life. They have seen the tears when moving, but they have also heard the laughter of excitement for a new adventure. They bring back so many different memories. I chose this picture because it reminds me of all the memories that I have and all the unique experiences that airplanes have led to that I don't want to forget, such as those I've made in Malaysia.

*Class of 2021*



