2017-2018 Editorial Team

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A Letter from the Editor

Working on Cambridge Road was probably one of the most unexpected parts of my last year in high school, and, in solidarity with many of my fellow seniors, I can add it to my list of “things I wish I had started sooner.” I’d like to share the dual meaning of this phrase: first, I wish I had gotten involved with the lit mag my freshman year, and second, I wish we had finalized the print issue much sooner — the creation of this year’s edition of Cambridge Road took countless hours and effort from our editors and readers, but I hope I can speak on behalf of the CR team in demonstrating our pride in the Ireton community for producing an issue that exemplifies the heart of the community and its diversity in perspective: this year’s theme. Our goal as a team was to give a glimpse of various different walks of life, and I would like to say we’ve done so.

Gabby Baniqued, Editor-in-chief 2017-2018
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This year’s edition of Cambridge Road is dedicated to Ms. Cathy Melanson, whose dedication as a teacher and mentor allowed students to view life from new and different perspectives.
Poetry
The Dragon
Anna Johnson

She sets out on her vital quest
As she recalls those who could not be saved
A dragon is sleeping inside her chest

Dark corners of the world await
Where souls are held in the grip of fate
She embarks on her vital quest

Across the sea, they live in hell
While those around her comfortably dwell
A dragon awakens inside her chest

Though she knows she cannot even the score
Her heart calls her to the distant war
She embarks on her vital quest

Though her heart is faint in the dead of night
She can lose herself or join the fight
A dragon takes flight inside her chest

She views her past with disdain
The world maintains its fallen state
She embarks on her final quest
A dragon takes flight inside her chest
The Hug
(for Susan)
Brother Rick Wilson

Lying here at DaVita
my vagrant arms
tied to a machine
that hums: a-lone
a-lone...a-lone
My main line
scars and ostomy
a secret too deep
to tell.
Should someone come
---a delicate voice---
------pearl-like say,
Lord let it be Jacob’s
angel, ethereally real
just enough to soothe the aches
that leave seared scars---
The pleasant hug that tells me
“you are not alone down here.”
I feel the need to genuflect
for Christ has passed this way.
We can still see and touch
and make small tender gestures
toward the light:
This sacrament of our present
touching our past.

Br. Rick’s poems are from a forthcoming collection (2019)
"New and Selected Poems: Bleeding, Bruises, and Blessings."
Sunrise Symphony
(a work in progress by Ms. Meredith Tombs)

Listen to the sunrise
For you might just hear day's song
  Blinking wide her new eyes,
  And you'll want to sing along.

Past the sound of insects crying
  And the creak of tree limbs low,
Therese the call of night goodbying,
Dawn's curtain closing moon's bright show.

Some complete these sounds with speakers -
  Soundcloud welcoming the morn,
  But for all the beauty seekers,
  Much more music may be borne:

There's the bird that chirps so sweetly
  As he greets the morning sun;
The pitter-patter - though discreetly -
  Of some sneakers on their run.

Hear the breeze just whisper softly
  As the airplanes roar along;
Add the splashing of your coffee -
Seems the world has nothing wrong.

Catch the water gently waving,
Laughing soft against the shore;
The sunrise symphony's amazing -
I could never want for more.
I.
Two gray hickories
naked and mournful
on the mountain’s pinnacle
An owl
perched
a silent sentinel
in one of the forked branches
a jeweled moon:
gleaming
and reiterated
in the frozen amber
of the owl’s eyes

II.
Now the hour
is late
in the autumn
of my fear
My face
wavers
like flame
My voice
trails off
into smoke

III.
Barely visible
that rusty homeless
sky, those splinters
of the Shenandoah
kneels to the wind’s
vespers.

IV.
Why does a man
go lonely
into these hills
carrying with him
only his own frail
light, waiting for
a blessing in the dark?

The sympathetic turning,
the falling of leaves
the laying on of hands:
A Thomas, even, hating
his doubt

V.
The small dry hickory shells
scattered at his feet:
discarded memories
hard, empty tears.

Brother Rick Wilson

Br. Rick's poems are from a forthcoming collection (2019) "New and Selected Poems: Bleeding, Bruises, and Blessings."
Reflections in B Minor
Kathleen McNerney

Louder, softer sounds
any sound at all,
and I am overwhelmed.
Doubt is thicker than blood
but I know too much
that cannot be cut out.
I am overwhelmed.
Forget this,
forget you,
forget who you are
and where I met you
and what your voice sounds like when your first words in
the morning
are to me.
Am I me? Am I you?
Am I a third person voice reading her own adventure
aloud?
Why can I write only questions?
I used to write certainties.
Now my pen swerves and dots
to wonder if there are any.
Hong Kong Bistro
Declan Young

Roasted
Toasted
On a stick
Hot and sour, makes me cower
Orders brought back to the kitchen
Bosses yell, oyster shell

Triple Delight
Big tip
Pay raise
“you can leave early”

Sweep
Sweep
Sweep
Sweep

Veggie lo mein, hold the veggies
“see you Tuesday”
Gossip
Francesca Padilla

“It is revolting to hear them pass by
with poisonous words meant to harm others.
Vile rumors slip through air while some cry.
They destroy reputations to smother.
In mere seconds I’ve seen camaraderie
Ending on the basis of such cruel lies,
left in the halls with eyes watery,
watching as their friendship crumbles and dies.
It’s honestly something I cannot stand,”
I whisper to my friend behind my hand.
for the faint of heart

Emily Graham

Let not your resolve grow thin
Or trust the night to solve your troubles;
Find shelter from the light within.

As you ponder your world in need of a win
And your mind boils and bubbles,
Let not your resolve grow thin.

A subtle smile or quiet grin
Will strengthen the heart in doubles;
Find shelter from the light within.

Although the wild ones find it hard to begin
A merciless task that brutally humbles;
Let not your resolve grow thin.

To those with complexity wherein
Take part in the cornerstone that rumbles,
Find shelter from the light within.

And out of those barely akin,
A friendship that nearly befuddles.
Let not your resolve grow thin.
Find shelter from the light within.
Desk
Caroline Keir

Alone
You sit in the corner of the musty basement
Your brass knobs have lost their shine
Your chocolate brown varnish has faded
Grandpa’s tools are packed in cardboard boxes by the stairs
Photographs are strewn all over the stained shag carpet
But no one has come near you
As I make my way closer
Your details become more apparent
Blue acrylic paint is embedded deep within your grain
Her signature etched into your right corner
Between the cup of broken oil pastels and the lined notebook paper
A flash of color catches my eye
A bright pink box adorned with red and yellow tulips
I run my fingers along the cool metal edge
And open it
Letters
Drawings
Birthday cards
Years of them
All written by me
Saved by her
We Are What We Are
Jake Carlo

We are what we are
No matter what we do or how hard we try
We cannot change that fact about us
The rest of the world doesn’t understand
To them we are strangers, outsiders, and outcasts
They will never understand how we think
Why we do the things we do
We are alone in this world
But we are alone together
We don’t need the rest of the world
As long as we have each other
We will be okay
Encouragement
Sophia Campana

Before you walk
Onto the stage,
Let me talk to you.

No matter how well
You perform,
This is what
You’ve been waiting for:

A chance to shine
Amidst the darkness.

And remember,
Without you,
The spotlights won’t have
Anything to illume.

With that in mind,
Go on,
And light up the world

Like a star.
acquiescence vs. allegiance
AnneMarie Caballero

do you remember?
sun-dappled days, sprawled on the polyester carpets of middle school,
paging through piles of amateurish poetry and prose;
all invariably describing some fallen rose petal or ballerina’s pliè.

do you remember?
us matching down to the labels on the back of our chestnut jeggings,
evergreen-striped shirts, and torn-up old boots, perhaps bought that way.
two ponytails swinging down halls together; matching laughter trailing behind.

do you remember?
legs swinging off the harbor dock, fall’s cold breeze sweeping in,
chatting about some old crush or another, we’ve long forgot.
you joking about how I never make eye contact.

do you remember?
white dresses, floating on the slightly damp breeze of new May days,
cupcake-spattered bodies, soaked in rainwater and coca cola,
newly-minted children chasing each other down the street.

will you remember?
in some apple-smelling, New England liberal arts college,
with roommates and study buddies and a plethora of people more pertinent than me,
when you’re a stranger to whoever you were at thirteen.

every year, all our recollections occupy a smaller percentage of your memory
as you collect a thousand new experiences to hold close.
am I worth remembering?
Ocean Eyes
Thomas Tran

Your eyes remind me of the ocean
Because you and I are joint
I know they're not blue
Together, forever
That's true
We're two tiny droplets
But I notice how they're in motion
In this ocean of love
They change but stay the same
But we're still above
Your emotions are to blame
it all
Because they change faster
Ready to fall
than the tide
I don't know how much of a
And like a conceited sea captain
Ripple we'll make
You feel like you're the master
And if we'll disappear in a blink
Who knows how it's going to be
But for our sake
What's going to happen
Until it's done
You forget that it's more of a ride
But all I can say
I'm this way too
Is I think
At this point
Two is better than one
Am I talking about you
Or about me
I have no clue
Tribute
Sean Gibbons

Tough and weathered from too many nights out in the cold
You always let out a low groan each morning before finally
getting up
I loved you all the same
Despite others called you worthless and past your prime, old
Skin like grey leather, enduring endless torment merely to
survive
I loved you all the same
Inconstant airflow, laborious breaths, as if each moment was
agony
A constant dull rumble, reminder that you were still alive
I loved you all the same
Even before our first official meeting, you lurk in my memory
Short spine, cracked heels, cloudy eyes
I loved you all the same
Decades ended, twisted metal meant your demise
I will never forget you
1995 Ford Explorer
Memory
Miriella Jiffar

Just once more I say, but it will always come back
Just once more I say, when it haunts me in the black
   Just once more I say, when I push back
Just once more I plead, when I am caught unaware
   When it comes unnoticed from its evil lair

Only then do I feel the pain of loss engulf me
Only then do I let that painful memory seep into my
   heart against all despair

I wait and there it is,
   As black as a raven’s brow
The curse that awaits me for all eternity

As the dawn breaks the night,
Memory shall haunt me forevermore
Life’s Song
Olivia Hays

Blurry faces stand around, their voices
fading in and out, all listening to her pulse.
The one thing she can hear is her heartbeat,
Drowning everything else, it encompasses her,
Producing a clear, overwhelming rhythm,
and the rhythm was calm – nature’s way of composing.

But it was not always calm.
Like all great composers before
The tempo changed in pace creating
An ever flowing and beautiful melody.
She lay numb recalling those moments.

Dancing in her backyard, her father arrives home.
Running to him she feels a surge of happiness, then her heartbeat slowed,
She was safe in his arms.
Then running home alone in the dark, heart beating so fast
as she looks over her shoulder. The one thing keeping her alive,
warning her of dangers. Scared for her life she runs on.
Her pace stays steady then
She meets the man she is going to marry,
Her heartbeat so strong it seems to be
Screaming this is what you’ve been searching for!
But he dies, and life loses excitement
Her heart beats slow and soft, just enough so she knows
That even though it’s broken, her life will carry on.
Life moves slower now; her rhythm hasn’t changed for years.

“Funny”, she thinks “Life is supposed to flash before my eyes,
but I am listening to a song”
A song she knew had reached its climax,
A song with many ups and downs
A song where she felt the fullest in love,
And yet the farthest from it.
Her song has ended.
Six Forty Six
Sean Gibbons

“Text the keyword WIN to 200200 for your chance to-
A sigh, click, sudden silence
Squinting into bright sunlight filtering through tinted glass
Fingers drum along a perfect arc of leather
Dozens tensely perched
Lions stalking prey, waiting for the perfect moment to strike
All eyes are trained intensely on a single fixture
Then
The cold light brings them to life
Beasts spring to life with a dull roar
Barreling towards their destination
Momentum of a great behemoth
But lacking the primordial grace
Rubber veins pump fumes, not ichor
Another dull sigh, a slow grinding halt
The next light turns red and the radio flicks back on.
“-double pay work day! Again, text WIN to”
incongruence
AnneMarie Caballero

every day, it seems as if the ground shifts under my own self-perception: I gain new entries to the endless encyclopedia of memories and fears and observations.
but it demands a title change, a fundamental recognition of transformation.
yet, the events, the plot, your recognition of my change languish in their similarity.
sometimes it feels as if I’m an adult to myself and a child to the world.
I’ve become markedly different, but every change is invariably internal:
I carry few of the society’s determined milestones for growth.
my perspective is in constant flux, my life relatively stagnant.

there’s this moment when you’re talking about something,
and you step back to realize it’s completely unknown to your actual experience.
there’s the secondhand life we live in literature, music, and all the other entertainment we care to create,
but the actual presence of the moment,
in all its transience and fragility, is still a mystery.
you can’t capture falling in love and rewind it on a television set.
we may believe we’ve created life by proxy,
but the substance of life, the sense of significance we feel ever so often is entirely uncapturable.

so, while I realize my own encounters with the world have been so limited,
with vast swathes of the human experience I have never trod,
I still see my own personal terrain changing shape day by day.
I’ve become a sort of narcissistic professional — well trained to understand myself.

yet, one fear/hope/idea lingers with me:
when we venture out to connect with some small part of world,
when we become an adult in the eyes of all,
do you lose yourself?
by which, do you lose the self-concept your isolation from the greater experiences of life allowed you to create?
can we only truly know ourselves when we are not forced to change? to adapt?
to experience?
is stagnancy necessary for understanding?
Change
Katherine Burgess

We are the people who adjust to new life.
We are the world that loves reform.
We are aware of the true picture,
Observe beyond the small things.
See the generosity and love.
Crush the enmity a thousand times.
We leave hate behind.
We shun our old ideas,
And we always move forward.
We the people now
Adapt.
But have we really
Advanced?
We the people consistently have
Been stuck in the same pattern,
Approved our old ways.
We have joined hands with hate
Even when we attempt to crush it a thousand times.
Blinded by greed and envy,
We have a narrow outlook on life.
Neglectful of the things that matter,
The world struggled to change.
We the people have not
Advanced,
But we are always
Evolving.
We the people are changing.
The world grows with speed,
People caring about others’ needs.
We are looking over the wall
And building a bridge together.
Crushing the hurt and anger,
We all join hands as one being,
Looking towards the future, our future.
Nearing the promised land,
We are the people who can change.

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Wayfarers
Thomas Tran

When I’m leaving
I’ll think about
The people I didn’t touch
By not talking too much
Or just by not being a crutch
When needed
The people who I wanted
So badly
For our hearts to be near
But the love was never seeded
When I set sail on my journey
I left those people at the pier
And I never took a second look
back to see
The people swimming after me

But right now
I’m thinking of
The ones I took and will
take along the way
I hope they have my love
And when I’m gone
I hope it remains there still
And the people who have different
destinations
I hope it’s there to this day
And that they pass it, carry it on
to whatever locations
they may be
We’ll meet again; you’ll see
early on, billy joel streaming through our old honda odyssey.
my dad and I humming along on the way to kindergarten;
my mom wouldn’t let joel in the house — said he was overplayed.
the whole minute-long drive was summer, highland falls, and angry young man.

later, 99.5 was the order of the day
or 94.7 or 107.3, whichever one my sister felt like.
sitting in the backseat, all the controls were too far to reach.
a time pre-bluetooth and a world less designed for ourselves:
the tone of the day set by a random radio dj’s particular whim.

then, fingers smudging the residual condensation on the windows,
gazing at the endless greenery blending with suburban scenery,
in an ever-changing, ever-static landscape.
a dissociative state in which time and space faded behind notes and lyrics

eventually, your first clumsy drive,
clammy fingers gripping the steering wheel and jerking the gears;
not quite sure how a steering wheel works.
right is right and left is left and simple as that? not quite, you learn.

that time before you knew what the anti-frost was,
frantically swiping at the moisture accumulating on the windshield
the whole forty-five minute drive home populated with a subtle panic;
the hand smudges visible the next few weeks.

music floating through the car, your out-of-tune voice its accompaniment,
blinding sunlight pouring over the dashboard -- almost burning your face,
notes filling the empty space around you, for once not occupied by people,
a singular time, one with no silent specter of authority.

the smooth operation of sliding into the car, pushing down on the brakes, the
engine coming to life,
a syncrasy of countless drowsy morning drives and late night rushes
of hitting the brakes fast and adrenaline pumping to your heart
of long gazes at the road unfurling before you.
i still play billy joel sometimes.
Poems by Carole Beckhorn

Smile
A real smile, it’s in the eyes,
It makes you feel like you can touch the sky.
Like snow in July, and the twinkle in your eye,
Your smile makes me feel like I can fly.
And, I never want to say goodbye.

Dreams
Sky is the limit, they’re infinite,
They start as seeds, then flowers,
Hope makes them indefinite,
She says they’re flawed,
I say they are real,
And like the stars.
Nothing stops my zeal,
I stop and stare….
I am finally there.
The moment is here;
Years in the making.
No one can jeer.
I am on top of the world.
One Living Planet
Jake Carlo

We tend to think of the Earth
As a collection of living things
But what I will say might have some worth
That this rock to which humanity clings
Is one life, One being in existence

Every plant and animal is a cell
Contributing to this greater force
Each has a job to make this planet well
To make sure this planet is on the right course
Because together we are one life, one being in existence
The Duchess of Cambridge Road

With a glancing glimpse, you recognize her,
Yet you do not know her name.
She subtly grasps you, be not bitter,
Her face hints of some unrealized flame.

Her body varies deep in color, shape, size,
But her familiar soul is the most delicate prize.

Her sweet smile is an intoxicating lure,
That for millennia has been lonely man’s cure.

There is nothing quite like her laugh,
Such a joy, you are compelled to gaffe.

Plentiful as diret but treasured as gold,
The Duchess is true beauty to behold.
Fate is the officiant of the encounter,
Always destined yet never assured.

Duke of Cambridge Road
Suitcase

Anna Johnson

His suitcase was worn as I remembered
And scuffed on its corners
Inside, I see what I have never known
Adventure
His jacket smelled like music
And unfamiliar perfume
With a crumpled ticket in the pocket
And the last letter I wrote him
It is wine-stained but
Unopened
Beneath the jacket, a journal
Its entries are
Half-finished
His words quiver and bleed
A pair of boots, laces tucked in
I rub the toes, which have walked
Ancient city streets
They should have gone
Farther
Hidden in the corner
Tucked under a knitted sock
A pearl earring, but
I don’t know
Whose
Spilled ink stained my fingers
And I wished I didn’t have
What I was looking through
Because they found his suitcase
But they never found
Him
All for the Love of Annabel Lee
Jake Carlo

Based on Edgar Allan Poe’s “Annabel Lee” told from the perspective of the angels

We looked down from the heavens,
At the kingdom by the sea
We looked at the love
The love of Annabel Lee

We looked down and were envious
For no one had a love greater than we
But the love of Annabel Lee

We sent a chilling wind out of the clouds
And the chilling wind made us proud
Because it would be killing
Killing the love of Annabel Lee

The chilling wind killed Annabel Lee
But the love did not die you see
For this love was more than the love
The love of Annabel Lee

For it wasn’t just Annabel’s love
It was the love of the man that she loved
And even though we killed Annabel Lee
The love lived on in the heart of the man by the sea

Now the man wishes for his own chilling wind
So that they might reunite again
But if he should die we know what he’ll gain
Thus endless nights at her sepulcher, distraught and in pain
We gave him the curse of eternity
All for the love of Annabel Lee
My Favorite Color
Francesca Padilla

Roses stand out and with their potent red hues.
Flushed faces when attacking opposing views,
My heart swells with the revolution’s call,
With red flags fluttering, strong and tall.
How can one not be enraptured
By red, the color that captures
Every bold and fiery being and ideal?
Even without sight, red is something to feel.
But steady, my affinity for the color starts to crack
As my teacher sadly hands my test back.
Visual Art
“Red”
Ronie Altejar
“Abby and Madi”
Annie Mildrew
“An Alpine Flowerbed”

Alex Budzynski
“The Unseen New York”
Alex Tugbang
“Parisian Spyglass”
Emily Graham
“Horse in France”
Luciano Mateo
“The Climb”
Mia Olson
“Acrylic Still Life”
Meg Bonilla
“Perspective Piece”
Senia Cade
“The Old Man”
Mikayla Lazar
“Spiral”
Gaby Garcia

“flower boy”
Annie Mildrew
“Sampaguita Boy”

Nico Gavino
“Randyland”
Gabby Baniqued

“Portrait of Julia Hart”
Gaby Garica
“Jack and the Beanstalk”

Elizabeth Riccio
“Cotton Towne”
Thomas Tran

“hiraeth”
AnneMarie Caballero
Fiction
Train Doors: A Short Story
Javier Chiriboga

The door slid open easily enough at the first thrust of my arm. That’s just how train doors are, they stay open or they stay closed; they’re not meant to be in a state of flux. Honestly that’s how he was, like a train door. When I stepped through, whistling was all I could hear after that door opened. It whipped past my ears, drowning all other noise for that brief moment as I adjusted to my new surroundings. Once things quieted I heard him speak, “What took so long?” His voice was calm and his breath offensive; it was something I never could get used to. I never did like smokers anyway, but something about the scene made me think that I was in a movie. I stepped up to his right and leaned heavily against the railing. Dusk turning into twilight is my favorite moment in the day, when the orange dulls into purple, and the cold hues fade into black. I don’t really know why I like it, to be quite honest it’s a bit depressing. Even still, my eyes were fixated forward on the passing landscape, the fields passing like bullets in front of me. “I didn’t know you were waiting,” I said to him only half paying attention. He murmured something back but all I could do was nod my head and respond with, “yeah.” We stood there, him smoking and me staring. After what seemed like mere seconds, twilight took its final steps into night and I lost interest. The struggle wasn’t there anymore. It looked like the day had given way to the moon. I don’t really like night, to be frank, and I don’t really like day either. It’s that in between period that I love, that fight between what was and what is to be. I guess that’s why I don’t really like train doors.
The Dress
Gabby Baniqued

Her mother had sewn the dress. The ivory beading and lace aged it and the straps felt too loose, yet every detail about the gown seemed to represent Ruth exceedingly well, even its many faults and imperfections. Sharp pins sat between her focused lips as she bent down and performed the fruitless task of marking a hem on her own. Among the many regrets in her head, her failure to find a new tailor in time seemed to be the most relevant, for it was less than a week before the wedding and she was sporting an ill-fitting dress and dealing with the repercussions of her mother’s disapproval. Ruth always knew her mother to be confusing. Initially, Ruth perceived the dress as a representation of accepting a union that her mother had, for so many years, relentlessly rejected: a peace offering. Yet, the rolled eyes, tongue-in-cheek remarks, and familiar decrescendos of disappointed sighs remained, gradually clustering into a volatile ball of pent-up emotions to be unleashed at the perfect time: two weeks before the wedding.

Crooked pins constructed a shape that could barely constitute as a circle around the hem of the dress. The greatest loss that came with her mother’s abandonment was the sudden disappearance of a perfectly good and experienced seamstress. While the techniques were basic and easy to learn, the material of the gown was thick and coarse and to deal with it required knowledge beyond Ruth’s elementary school embroidery lessons. Ruth had hemmed a single pant leg by hand once in high school, so she foolishly concluded that this would be no different. A single glimpse at the dress in the mirror caused Ruth to resign and, with a huff, she put it back on a hanger with a roughness incompatible with the delicate nature of the gown. To Ruth, the dress was a symbol of her mother’s continued unreasonable grudge towards her soon-to-be husband, the expectations she could never meet or exceed, and the impossible choice between the man she loved and the mother who formed her. To Ruth’s mother, the dress was simply a symbol of her tireless devotion to her daughter, a devotion she believed Ruth would never understand nor appreciate correctly. On its own, the dress was only a few alterations short of
just right, but without the magic touch of its creator, would only serve to be an embarrassment at the wedding and a telltale sign that, as all of Ruth’s guests suspected, that the family was just as dysfunctional as they had seen it be even in the early years of Ruth’s adolescence.

Ruth’s father stood dumb amidst the entire situation. For years, he had piled band-aids on top of this ever-growing tear in the family, failing to properly mediate between the mother and daughter pair. Sentiments such as: “it will fix itself,” or “it’ll blow over” were common sputterings of words that her father repeated so excessively, eventually causing each syllable to feel alien in Ruth’s ears. Unlike her dress, her father’s suit for the wedding fit perfectly, for her mother had sewn and fitted the outfits for each groomsman, bridesmaid, in-law, flower girl; perhaps even the priest’s vestments were immaculately fitted before Ruth’s mother even thought about fixing the final alterations on the wedding gown. The dress, instead of a peace offering, was a tool of rebellion—the outspoken “speak now” to the arbitrary “If anyone objects to this marriage…” statement one hears at a wedding. Her mother would not forever hold her peace; instead, her truest feelings were sewn into each stitch of this garment, finished and unfinished. Her father would unfairly be sporting an impeccable suit, arm-in-arm with the bride who, in turn, would be adorned in an unfortunate excuse for a wedding gown.

It was clear to Ruth that her mother was pointing fingers, placing blame on her daughter. Yet it all seemed too late and ill-timed, for the wedding was surely happening, and Ruth would most certainly marry this man, irregardless of her mother’s presence or lack thereof. This full manifestation of disapproval had many opportunities to make itself known, and Ruth had always wondered why it has remained hidden away: silent for years. Ruth had known her fiance going on eight years now, and had loved him unconditionally for five. Ruth’s mother had an adequate three years to communicate any gripes she had regarding their relationship. Instead, Ruth’s mother chose a path of martyrdom and silence for those eight years, deciding that she’d let her daughter make her own mistakes, confident that, somewhere down the road, she would recognize that this man was a mistake, come back home, apologize to her mother, and live a better life. Ruth knew her mother was only doing what she thought was best
—what she thought to be right. She could never be angry at her for her mindset, one Ruth knew could never be reformed or changed. Truly, the only thing that Ruth was angry at her mother for, was her timely departure before the wedding, and her refusal to complete the dress.

With unresolved thoughts, Ruth bent down to the hem of the dress and began to remove the pins, restoring the dress both to its original beauty and its original unbearable length and fit. With the same decrescendo of disappointment she had inherited from her mother, Ruth let out a great sigh and began marking the hem again, forcing thin metal pins through the fabric. Almost immediately, a doorbell chime interrupted her, causing her to stick her finger with a pin. Grudgingly, she went to answer the door, finding herself face to face with a crudely dressed delivery man, a package of the utmost fragility held in his rough hands. The box itself was in pristine condition; as the stranger plopped it into Ruth’s hands and continued on with his day, her eyes traveled, searching for any indication of a sender. A fruitless search: only furthering Ruth’s curiosity.

Demonstrating a carefulness that the delivery man lacked, Ruth peeled open the coarse box, revealing a fresh, blindingly white wedding dress. Ruth’s thoughts immediately pinpointed one of her parents as the culprit, for she knew collaboration between the two was unlikely. If it was sent by her father, it was only another band-aid, temporarily holding the seams together. However, if the unknown sender were her mother, this new dress was her best effort at an apology—an attempt to stand firm by her beliefs but still, with gritted teeth as always, support her daughter. Her mother’s perfect knowledge of Ruth’s measurements was reflected in the perfect fit of the gown, yet the seams felt foreign and unfriendly on her body. The disappointment in the threads seeped into her skin and constricted her waist, creating a beautiful figure in the mirror, but keeping the bubbling up confusion and emotions tied down.

Yet, on its own, the new dress was the solution to a problem and the final piece needed to complete a ceremony which was the introduction to the rest of her life. Acknowledging she might never know and not seeking to find out, Ruth removed the new dress, placed it on a hanger, and left for lunch, deciding that she would let the problem fix itself.
I envied the pomegranate tree that shaded the damp hammock rope, envied it because it stole the attention of my mother. My father would often remark that she treated that tree as if it were her firstborn, and I would, through a gritted smile, mutter that if that were the case I surely would have received better treatment.

For the most part, the summer of 1957 passed unremarkably. Although I had many chances to sneak out of Hatten Manor, our three-story Nantucket summer home only three miles from the gray sand of Dionis beach, I despondently spent hours tucked away in my room, gazing at the stretch of sand and listening to the whisper of lapping waves, occasionally interrupted by my mother's humming as she sprinkled water onto the roots of the pomegranate tree. When I would yell from above that I could hear her, she'd shout back, “Oh, Maureen, mind your business! Read a book!” This advice was useless given that I had already reread the *Chronicles of Narnia* and *Nancy Drew* novels twice and wasn't riveted enough to give it another go. The view eventually soured after two monotonous weeks of silence, and it seemed my summer would become just as dreary as life at home.

That is, until I spotted the brown boy in the woods.

His name was Tobias Stuart Brown. He was from the Bronx, a borough which I only knew from the papers wailing HOMELESS RATES SKYROCKET and FACTORY RIOT ENDS IN BLOODSHED. Tobias would scold me for my ignorance when I would mention this, saying “They say anything to make people buy. I know newsies—they live worse than me.” He sheepishly rubbed the back of his neck, his coarse coils drenched in rainwater. We had been walking across the beach when it began to pour, and we ran hand-in-hand to the nearest gas station and waited for the pounding patter to cease. “But nothing’s been the same since that city planner guy kicked us out and bulldozed the place.” His parents were planning to move to Canada and were staying with a wealthy aunt for the summer to prepare for the move. “Hopefully we’re not given the bottom-of-the-barrel like we do here,” he sighed. I didn’t know what to say. As a sheltered, naive, scrawny fifteen-year-old, I could hardly relate to his predicament, but I knew how hopeless it felt to be up against something seemingly indomitable.

I had no friends in Nantucket, and wasn’t sure if I would ever make any until I met Tobias. Nantucket was scarcely populated at the time, the nearest police station several miles from the stretching shoreline Hatten Manor oversaw. Tobias lived the third house over, in a slightly smaller yet far more grandiose villa with a swimming pool and outdoor barbeque. Once, I was trekking through the woods behind the Manor, not aware that I had trespassed the border of the
house adjacent, when I noticed him patiently waiting for a white rabbit to pause and nibble on clover before pressing the trigger on his .44 caliber shotgun. The rustle of my foot crunching dried leaves alerted the rabbit to our presence, and it scurried off. Tobias looked at me. “I could’ve got ‘im, if it weren’t for you.”

I was surprised at his brash behavior towards me; I was used to unwarranted and often excessive amounts of respect from strangers due to my upbringing, so much so that it was difficult for me to have a real conversation without “Pardon’s” or “my lady’s”.

“Oh,” was all I could reply, smitten by his off-the-cuff behavior. As we continued our hunt for “tonight’s dinner,” I asked him of his heritage, bemused that he could be staying in one of the wealthiest summer estates on the Pacific Coast. Tobias explained that his great-granduncle was Lewis Latimer, “the guy who made the lightbulb actually work!” After he died, he allotted Tobias’ aunt his savings and future earnings off of his contributions. “It’ll set her for life,” he grinned, pleased as he plucked a pebble and threw it across the forest, listening for the echoing thud to cascade through the placid wind.

Tobias took me to a creek through which saltwater trickled through jagged rocks, ultimately pooling in a bank before being dispensed into the gray tides. He lay his palm into the water and scanned the murky stream, searching for wriggling tadpoles. “If you’re quiet enough,” he whispered, “something’ll wiggle into your hand and not suspect a thing.”

“What’s the use, though?” I asked. “Catching something if you’re going to let it go in the end? There’s no point.”

Tobias chuckled under his breath. “It’s the fun of it all, I guess.” He decided not to speak further on the issue and continued his task, inviting me with his glance to join him. We did this for an hour before breaking for lunch. Tobias brought me back to his aunt’s house for sandwiches. I remember his aunt having a welcoming smile with harsh wrinkles curving around her eyes and along her temples. “Hello, baby,” she greeted me as if I were her own kin, and offered me a glass of water. We all sat down on the patio that faced the beach and shared stories as we cracked open fresh oysters, and I was hearing things completely unfamiliar to me, stunned that I had never witnessed brawls over a seat in a crowded bus or chased rats out of my apartment. I followed the conversation uselessly, opening and shutting my mouth like a fish gasping for water, feeling as though I had nothing to contribute due to my limited experience.

Before I knew it, night had fallen and Tobias offered to walk me home. We took the long route through the woods, and with flushed cheeks and lowered gaze, I muttered, “This has got to be one of the best days of my life.”

Tobias gazed at me as if he were in a trance. “You’re very pretty, ya-know.”

My heart pulsed heavily as I met his gaze. And before I could brace myself, he gingerly took my hand and kissed it softly without hesitation.

Baffled delight cascaded through my chest and cheeks, and I shared a brief smile with Tobias, and as we walked back to my house his hand was clasped
around mine. We stopped at the pomegranate tree to say our goodbyes. “See you tomorrow,” I said. He grinned and walked away, looking over his shoulder every so often.

I sighed and rocked myself in the hammock, gazing at the ripe mauve fruit dangling from green stems. I heard commotion from inside the house but chose to ignore it, too engrossed in thoughts of Tobias to pay it any mind.

“Maureen!” I heard my mother call. Before I had a chance to reply, she stormed onto the lawn and grabbed my arm.

“Mother—”

“Who was the boy? I trust you to go off by yourself because I believe you’re grown...you’re fifteen, for God’s sake! And you go off with some boy! I told you explicitly to not talk to strangers, and of course you disobey me! Who was the negro boy?! I want names! For Christ’s sake, I’m calling the police I swear to God—you insolent little—I knew those neighbors were bound to start trouble...why, if I knew I would’ve...you’re lucky I’m not telling your father!”

Stunned from her outburst, I mutely followed her lead as she dragged me to my room. “Mom, stop!” I wailed as she threw me onto the bed. “I...I just met him, okay! I just want to have fun on vacation, that’s all! It wasn’t anything, I promise!”

“If I see you out of this house again,” she hissed, glaring at my blotchy red cheeks lathered in tears, “I will take everything dear from you. And you know me...you know I always live up to my word.”

My mother was high-strung and shrill and gravely serious when it came to promises. She was engaged to my father for four years before they got married because she didn’t believe in his fidelity. So it was only a matter of time before she took my chess board, my diary, my silver-haired doll Ophelia, my paints and canvases, and anything else I held dear. I was left with nothing to entertain myself but the echo of blue waves brushing against the shoreline.

That is why I despised that pomegranate tree: the one source of pleasure my mother secured from Hatten Manor aside from torturing me. The tree was in pristine condition, constantly being trimmed or watered or fertilized, its fruit perfectly ripe—heaven was tasted at the first bite as juice dripped down your chin, and the pink flesh softened, its cerise skin digging into the crevices of your teeth. How fair was it that my mother was allowed to enjoy life’s indulgences, yet I was imprisoned for wanting the same? The more I saw her delight in her yardwork, the more I loathed her, and this loathing drove me to madness as each day slipped by.

On one summer night in late June, my father announced that he would take my mother out on the town for their wedding anniversary. “Oh, Charles, that’s wonderful!” gushed my mother as my father escorted her to the car. They went to to the fanciest restaurant in Nantucket and afterwards sipped champagne on the beach.

It was only seven when they left, and I suspected that Tobias would still be
awake either having supper or foraging around the neighboring grounds. I scampered into the forest and followed the creek until I found the spot where we sat the day before but not a trace of him could be found. I ventured towards his aunt’s estate and boldly knocked on the door.

“Tobias!” I hollered, rapping on the door a second time. The mahogany door swung open, and Tobias, confounded at my sudden appearance, asked what I was going on about so late in the evening.

“I need you to help me,” I said, clasping his hand and leading him through the woods.

“Why didn’t you ever come back to the creek like you promised?” he asked.

“Because of my stupid, arrogant, idiot mother,” I groused in reply. “Listen, I don’t have time to explain everything. I just need you to help me.”

I could see doubt in the furrow of Tobias’ brow, but he nevertheless aided me in hacking away at my mother’s precious pomegranate tree. He winced every time a branch fell off, the rustling of the leaves and the squished fruit ached our hearts as if we were in mourning.

“Leave it as it is,” I said, brushing Tobias’s clenched fist that wielded the axe I had gotten from the shed with my fingertips. He dropped the weapon and held my gaze until I whispered “Go!” in a hurried fashion, as if they were going to be back any minute (when in fact they weren’t due to return for nearly two hours), and he turned and walked away hunched over and disconcerted.

That left me with enough time to ponder my grave error laying in the backyard. The sun set slower than usual, shadows dripping over shards of trunk like syrup. I even mustered enough courage to take a second look at the tree and inspect its fruit; nothing was salvageable, most of the pomegranates were punctured with its flesh spilling out or deeply purpled.

My mother was predictably distraught at the sight of what she held most dear destroyed. What truly broke me was how she tried to lie to my father about how her passion project was demolished. “These winds can be horrendous around the shore,” she said with a tight jaw. “And the tree... he was too young.”

She ascended from the patio to the house and went into the kitchen and brought out the wine, and in a languorous trod returned to the windowsill to listen to the June crickets play for the funeral procession.

Our vacation was cut short in the end, my mother feigning ill and refusing to see anyone else but her doctor at home. Of course I missed Tobias, but what truly alarmed me was lack of luster in my mother’s eyes. Perhaps her bliss varied with the seasons, but she and I both knew that the roots of that tree burrowed into her lungs, were watered by her tears, and shined on by her heart. She would never be the same, nor would I: our first loves remained in Nantucket, forever a memory baked in sizzling June’s rays.
“Untitled”

A Short Story
Grace Gordon

The hopeless serene birds watched from their painted positions of flight, as white strips of paper fell like delicate white feathers from the pale blue ceiling. Paper was falling halfheartedly, spiraling down towards the blazing orange flames. Each sliver fell gracefully and quietly, only to be quickly snatched from the hot stale air with a loud hiss. The orange tendrils stretched and reached for anything they could possibly attain, seeking to destroy. The coils of flame looked like the legs of a great luminescent octopus, swimming savagely through the air, curling around anything, living or dead – searing whatever it happened to touch, and burning it into a pile of black ash. The paper rained from the pale blue ceiling for only a minute, but to her it seemed an eternity. Everything slowed to a stop. She could almost make out the pattern of the shining black symbols on all the crisp white shreds of paper as they continued to gently fall. She squinted around the deteriorating room though her wet stinging eyes. The act seemed unfathomable. These weren’t just stories. These were worlds. These were dreams. These were people. The pale powder blue above was now being frantically seared a grotesque obsidian by the tips of thin burning orange paint brushes. The black spiraled outwards in all directions, consuming the painted birds ferociously. A tear traced its path through the dark ash on her cheek. The last-standing, grand mahogany case fell with a great crash. The fire cackled and roared in delight. The girl turned to the huge gaping hole where the remaining unhinged door stood, dead, at its post. Scattered books, jammed into, on, and under one another covered the marble floor before her and she ran. She stepped on worlds, kicking a dream up behind her. She tripped on a lie and ripped apart an adventure as she scrambled to get up. She regained her footing on a confession of love, and she ran. She ran on the pages of millions of books.
Non-Fiction
Apples and Oranges: A College Essay

Peter Murphy

Although, at face value, the answer to the posed question only decides which fruit to indulge in at any given time, the process by which that solution is achieved is far more rewarding than the juicy treat yielded by the initial inquiry. In accident, the two items are quite similar. They are both small, brightly colored, juicy, equally affordable, healthy fruits. Neither one possesses an objectively superior quality which would advance it in the hierarchy of otherwise equally delectable fruits. In essence, however, one may be much more preferable to its consumer. Although the decision between two good things ought to be easy, it is often, in fact, the hardest. As human beings with extensively complex consciences, decisions between an objectively good and bad thing are comparatively easier to make than those choices we make which have no impact on our moral status or those around us. There is no empirically accepted metric by which the average, non-citrus-allergic human being can inherently compare the meaningful goodness of two things as similar as apple and orange. Thus, human beings’ thoughts are far more susceptible to being hijacked by the contemplation of which fruit to omit from their salad than they are to struggle with Solomonic moral dilemmas regarding the splitting of babies. Therefore, the best way to analyze two similar and morally irrelevant objects is to assess their ability to fulfill their purpose relative to the individual affected.

Luckily for the indecisive and hungry thinkers of the 21st century who find themselves stuck between the ongoing internal struggle between red and orange, the German philosopher Edmund Husserl pioneered an appropriate framework which can be used to begin to assess such seeming equivalencies as
apples and oranges known as phenomenology. In attempting to achieve an objective determination, Husserl thought it was first necessary to not only acknowledge our own subjective biases which impact our decision making, but to embrace them, so as to strip away all the additives which contaminate our perception of an object’s or experience’s essence. Expanding upon this means of analyzing the world around us, I would argue that these biases, although menial when taken by themselves (orange or red, needs peeling or can be eaten whole, sweet or tangy), carry the most weight when acknowledged collectively according to the individual. By departing from the objectivity-driven quest for certainty pursued by the phenomenological lens of Husserl and those who followed him, in favor of a focus on those subjective qualities we, as fruit consumers, ascribe to our agonizingly tantamount produce, a relativistic structure of thought can be used to reveal the solution as to which fruit we ought to choose. Whereas Husserl’s phenomenological approach still attempts to yield an objective answer through acknowledgement and subsequent removal of subjective factors, I think that these subjective factors provide the most informative measure of a fruit’s efficacy to satiate the individual’s desire.

When picking between an apple and an orange, perspective is everything. Edmund Husserl’s phenomenological approach to analyzing the nature of an experience according to the extensive context by which it is observed can only get us so far when examining things of such little consequence as fruits. When faced with the crux of Granny Smith or Clementine, and after reducing either to a lump of its essence -- the sum of only its eidetic parts -- how could anybody enjoy either? If an object is only comparable according to its ability to fulfill its purpose as defined by its user, don’t let the question consume you; consume the apple (or orange if that’s what you prefer).
Maps: A College Essay

Gabby Baniqued

Whenever I dust off the cover of a world atlas and open its large, seldom turned pages, I get a whiff of childhood curiosity: my long search for my place in society as a Filipino-American. As a child, my parents gifted me map puzzles, pin-maps, and globes over video games to keep me occupied, building the foundation for what would grow from an obsession with identification of countries to an eagerness to learn everything about the world. While history was not a heavy focus in my Montessori curriculum, it drew me in with its promises of stories about mankind: who we have become, who we used to be. I soon found, however, the word ‘we’ was not inclusive. I still have a shelf full of picture books about the 1950s Civil Rights Movement that gives insight to my brief obsession with that part of American history; my mother claims I was once adamant on naming my future children Martin and Rosa. With an immature understanding of history, I saw these abridged glimpses into the American fight towards equality and tried to seek my own history within it, even once asking my mother where my family would sit in a segregated bus. The purely black and white focus in these books set me up with a flawed understanding of where I belonged as an Asian American, leading me to believe that I needed to fall under one or the other: black or white.

History textbooks mirrored these picture books in their inability to include other cultures. “World History” class meant “European History and Others” class – even past elementary school, my peers and I were spoon-fed a Westernized version of history that failed to mention other countries except in the context of colonization. While textbooks have recently gone through a significant change in content, I often wonder how
ignorant these textbook writers and editors could be to label any non-Eurocentric history as unimportant. “Unimportant” always seemed to be the word of the day – because I did not see myself in history, in media, or even in my school, after transferring to a middle school with only three other people of color in addition to myself, I began to feel unimportant.

In middle school, I expected theater to be an all-inclusive environment where teachers worked to make sure that no child felt left out. Unfortunately, it was not helpful that there was no precedent for my directors to cast against a character’s given race. If Dorothy had light, fair skin, the girl cast as Dorothy would have the same. In a funny way they eventually did so: casting myself as a black female character, and two young white boys as Chinese characters. The discomfort I, along with the few other people of color, felt during this musical only further ingrained into our minds the same repeated message we had always heard, “As a person of color, you are unnecessary.” The Garwood Whaley auditorium stage, where I perform today, was a monumental factor in changing how I viewed myself as a Filipina. For the first time, I had not only seen diversity among characters generally cast as white, but I saw a Filipino boy cast as a lead role in a musical. Reviews of the show praised his exuberance on stage and his reception of an award for his performance affirmed a truth that I had long been blind to: that could be me. My junior year was marked with my role as a lead in our spring musical as well as my nomination for best featured-female actress. That experience helped me recognize the importance of representation and the urgency for it; society is discouraging to people of color in many ways, and not only in the theater and film industries. Representation opens up doors with a resounding shout of, “Look, someone just like you can do this too, why not you?”
Two Trombonists Plumb New Depths of Expression

A Reflection Essay by Cathleen Ann Steg

13 April 1995

An overstuffed bowl of gorgeous white lilacs graces the top of my old oak piano; the ceiling fan lazily sends the thick, nostalgic fragrance throughout the house. I sip an iced drink and travel the keyboard contentedly with a languid blues in B flat, satisfied and relieved now that the pressure is off for another year.

Solo Festival is over in Fairfax, Va.; the student musicians who came to me for piano accompaniment or counsel have lived through their grueling moment before the judge, playing pieces they prepared for weeks or even months on their band instruments. Once again, I reflect on the personal growth in each of us, sometimes in artistry, always in character, as a result of this annual striving to bring out the best in young performers.

My two trombonists, a boy and a girl, are perfect examples of this growth. I remember watching the boy, recovering from a recent knee operation, limp slowly down the driveway with my music a month or so ago. His temporary setback brought back only too vividly the memory of the girl's first performance four years before. She had come to me with her arm in a baby-blue cast, having fractured her wrist just before the festival, but determined to learn new slide techniques and capture the top rating anyway.

When I read through the music this tall young man handed me, I almost despaired. It was a lush, overblown, fin de siècle piece, dripping with emotion. This boy's enthusiasm was for computers, diving, and an upcoming course in artificial intelligence. How could his teacher expect drama from this raw material?

By contrast, my female soloist had been struggling with her teacher for weeks over a piece. This ambitious young woman needed to choose something challenging, something so difficult that the line between failure and success would never be crossed until the actual festival performance. As her accompanist, I agonized to dig my
fingers into her music in order to begin searching for perfection. Although she seemed to thrive on the knife's edge, I did not. An accompanist needs to be solid, steady, predictable as the pendulum on a metronome.

When she finally wrenched a satisfactory solo from her music teacher's library, I was shocked at the irony of her choice. My two trombonists clearly belonged with each other's pieces. This girl, who, with her long blond hair caught up in a black-velvet ribbon, seemed suited for a romantic, melodic, well-behaved tune, presented me with a wacky modern Polish duet for trombone and piano that -- at first -- I thought only an artificial intelligence could love.

When I attacked my old Baldwin with this piece, I realized that I was at war with my own fingers. The jarring dissonances, random patterns, and constantly shifting rhythms caused me anxiety for the first time in all my years of accompanying students. If I couldn't learn to find beauty in this piece, the technical challenges would defeat me.

I began rehearsing with all my students several weeks before the festival day. Predictably, the girl approached even the first rehearsal with an image in her mind of how the piece should sound. There was no opportunity to make light conversation or to make light of mistakes. If the mood didn't work for her, she would silently place the trombone back in its case and curtly suggest that we try again on another day.

The computer wizard, however, brought an air of casualness, almost bemused detachment, to his rehearsals. His response to wrong notes was to stop, say, "That was awful," and look at his instrument as if it had a life of its own. Nothing upset him; he could practice the same measure over and over again.

Of all my students, he was by far the least temperamental, the least moody. In fact, my one concern as we moved closer to the festival was that he might not be able to put the moodiness in the piece that clearly needed to be there.

We began talking about the images his piece called up; I worked harder than usual on my own expressiveness. At last, the music worked its way inside him, and we started to create. This introverted 10th-grader, too busy being brilliant to have ever indulged in deep and meaningful talk about his feelings, suddenly began to find a soul in his
trombone and pour it out like stardust over the piano.

The girl and I discovered a different kind of soulfulness. Once we managed to master the technical difficulties, we began to find an athleticism, a sinewy, tough strength to the piece that only appeared when we played it together. Working together brought us closer together; she found more enjoyment in rehearsing, and I finally found a melody in the music.

Amazingly, by the time of the festival, we had merged our separate, bizarre voices into one harmony, and there was a haunting, breathtaking beauty to the sound we made. During our performance, the judge actually stopped following the score and stared in admiration at this determined young lady as she wrestled furiously with speed and staccato, and won.

My limping musician managed to surprise and conquer as well on festival day. We began with the brooding minor strains of the piano introduction. To my immense relief, he came in with a full arsenal of pathos to wow the judge. This piece had all the emotional excesses of a silent movie, with its attendant moods of unrequited love, despairing heroines, and slapstick comedians. He found all those moods in his horn, with enough energy left for a galloping, powerful finale.

We all knew that we had found our way to some beautiful, transcendent music. At the festival, however, there is still the hour-long wait for the scores to be posted. A lot of character can be built during that hour, wondering about one's score, and then having to accept it publicly -- in good grace -- in front of fellow students and parents.

The boy pulled off his tie and carefully rolled it into a little ball, stuffing it into a pocket. When the low-brass results finally went up and both trombonists spotted their superior ratings, the full, warm smiles on their faces belied any earlier attempts at nonchalance. I hugged them proudly; somehow, they had both become my children during the intensive and emotion-filled month we spent together.

--Cathleen Ann Steg
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Grace Machanic and Her Grand Finale

Gabby Baniqued

At the end of every great show you find an even grander finale. Now, “grand” does not always mean a happy ever after.

At the end of *Something’s Afoot*, we breathe a sigh of relief as the two characters stand triumphant at the end, but the writers of that tale decide to hit us with one final twist, one that leaves us wanting more, mouth agape. *Drowsy Chaperone’s* chaotic and insane theatrical performance is wrapped up with a sentimental and heartwarming goodbye – a rather open ending to a fantastic show packed with every crazy idea known to man. Even in *Godspell*, a show that Grace knew inside and out, the characters experience loss and have to deal with the aftermath of it all. During my sophomore year, our director Frank Shutts wanted to end the show with the death of Jesus and our exit, skipping the usual “Resurrection” that comes in combination with the final bows. As a cast, we had to truly place ourselves into the position of coming face to face with loss and making the choice to overcome the sorrow, letting the good memories and lessons learned fill in the void that that loss had formed. We didn’t really believe the adults when they told us that our experience with *Godspell* would be present in our lives forever.

So, to simply equate “grand” to “happy” is a sad demeaning of what theater is.

Grand means powerful, having a lasting effect, memorable – and each day of Grace’s life reflected the qualities of a beautiful show, so it makes sense that her final exit be just as impactful. Grand finales leave the audience wanting more, and Grace’s grand exit leaves us yelling “encore,” wanting her to be in front of us one more time, and then another time after that. Looking
back on the way Grace touched and changed so many people as she danced through life, I am not sure there is any way that the memory of her can ever fade away. She planted seeds in countless tiny dancers, aspiring actors, directors, fellow dancers, teachers, audiences, and those men and women, girls and boys, will carry bits and pieces of her with them in every dance step, in every encore, and in every grand finale.

For many of the people I have had the privilege of performing with during my high school years, this is one of the first encounters we have had with a loss this great. Today, our small worlds were rocked by reality and surely, our minds and hearts confused with why this had to have happened. Each year, we wave a tearful goodbye to a show that captured our hearts for a few months. We take our final bows and give great thanks to the hands that pieced together such a wondrous performance. When we say goodbye, we know that another year will come, and we will see each other again. We know we will experience the same laughs, stage blunders – and we know that we will see our beloved teachers and directors again. As we look back on the rich performance that was Grace’s life, we give her thunderous applause and a standing ovation, trusting that, while it might take a little longer than we expected, we will see her again.
The Best Views: Reflection Essay
Grace McCaffery

The best views are not seen from the peak of a mountain. Of course, the top is the destination: the reason why we woke up at 2:00 am and started hiking at 3, but the breathtaking view from the top didn’t compare with what I saw in the hours leading up to our final push to the summit.

At the top, we saw clouds that seemed to be just in our reach, mountains that expanded for hundreds of miles and faded to a deep blue, calm rivers, still glaciers, boulders that appeared smaller after having climbed up them. The euphoria of peaking the mountain was unlike anything any of us had felt before. Our noses and cheeks were red from the wind brushing past them and our lungs were hot from the altitude, and yet we didn’t feel anything except for pride and relief. However, although we triumphed that day, my most vivid memories come from our journey.

Around 4:00 am, while it was still dark, we stopped for a break, and instead of continuing our conversations, we stayed silent for one minute. We looked at the sky with its innumerable stars. I thought about how many people the sky might have seen at that moment and about the stories of all those people. I thought about the people in my life, how they were distant like the stars, yet how close I could hold them. The world felt so vast in that moment and I felt so small. I looked around at everyone else and wondered what they might be contemplating, but as I looked at their faces, I saw complete awe, serenity, and wonder, and knew that regardless of what thoughts ran through their heads, they were taking in the moment in its entirety. We were all here, on this vast earth, together. There is something so comforting and profound about being with others in complete silence, even more so when amongst the mountains. All at once, I didn’t feel so small. I was with my closest friends, experiencing something that I could never know at home in my
busy life, and I knew that even across the distance, I held those important to me in my heart. After the minute was over, a small voice broke the silence telling us that it was time to go.

That sight of everyone sitting in the dark looking at the same stars and sky, everyone being totally present, was beautiful and will be forever imprinted in my memory. While I cherished the time we spent at the peak, I treasured every moment between our beginning at the trailhead to our finish at the top even more. The conversations, the smiles, the laughs, the challenges, the falls and pickups; these are the things that give substance to our lives. The journey, not the destination, fosters our most valuable experiences and creates our fondest memories.

Later that morning, after the silence but still hours before we had summited, we watched from the middle of a drainage as a bright red sun slowly ascended over the horizon into a sky of yellows, oranges, pinks, and blues.

After spending a couple short hours in an overcrowded, stuffy airplane and another 45 minutes in a small van, I finally arrived in the remote backwoods of North Carolina with eight complete strangers. The sun was beating down on us and the bugs were incessant, foreshadowing the certain discomfort to come in the next two weeks. Although my parents had offered words of encouragement in my last call to them, I still eagerly anticipated my return home. I surveyed the expressions of the other kids, searching their faces for any indication of similar feelings.

At the beginning of my Outward Bound trek, our group learned the basics of camping, backpacking, and orienteering in unfamiliar geographical settings. A week into the trip, we started to work together like clockwork and began to appreciate each other's company. As the trip continued, I gradually stepped up as the leader of our group, planning
and executing the routes for the day, taking charge of set-up and clean-up, and generally helping everyone out with whatever they needed.

On our second to last day of the expedition, our instructors gave us full independence, meaning we decided everything from when we’d get up to what meals we’d have. As usual, I planned our route for the day, checking and double checking that the plan was fool-proof. The first part of our day went without a hitch – a climb up a drainage, followed by a decent 5-mile stroll on even ground. However, after those 5 miles, we became disoriented. At that point, we were within a mile of our ending campsite, the Outward Bound base, but we couldn’t figure out what trail to take. The climate seemed to get hotter and more humid as frustrations rose; a few minutes of confusion stretched to hours of distraught. When everyone looked to me for aid, I was at a loss for words. I joined in the chorus of whining and distress until a cool-headed person on our team piped up and offered a solution we hadn’t tried. Within the next 10 minutes, we found ourselves in a secluded opening jumping in a lake, sharing jokes and laughter, and eating the best mac’n’cheese we’d ever had.
Adapted from a College Essay

Isabella Diaz

They say that in college, you’re supposed to discover your passion - the thing that drives you, that you love so much that you couldn’t ever see yourself not doing it. How do you know when you’ve found it? What makes a passion different from something you simply enjoy doing as a hobby or a pastime?

When I was around eleven years old, my family went to see the touring production of *Wicked* at the Kennedy Center. It was one of my first experiences with live theater. I was dazzled by the entire performance, but the moment of the show that will always stick out in my mind is the show-stopping number “Defying Gravity,” which marks the end of Act I. I spent the entire number on the edge of my seat, leaning over the railing of the terrace where we were sitting, absorbing it all with excitement. Then, at the end of the song, Elphaba rose, suspended in the air on a broom, and all of the music stopped for one brief moment as the actress belted out her final powerful note.

My mouth dropped open.

It was one of those moments you almost can’t describe; I was so filled with pure awe and amazement during those moments of the song that I couldn’t do anything except sit and gape. It’s a feeling I’ve experienced quite a few times in my life, and I’m sure others have as well. Your chest feels a little like there’s something swelling inside of it; you either feel like bursting into tears or leaping out of your seat and cheering elatedly. It could be something big or something small, but regardless, you know that it’s a liminal moment in your life; that from that moment on, you’ve crossed some sort of threshold, and your life will never really be the same again.

That’s what I believe it’s like to find your passion. I want to go out into the world and discover more of those moments - the heart-stopping, breathtaking occurrences that make you want to repeat them again and again. I first discovered that feeling at that performance of *Wicked*, diving headfirst into what has become a passion for musical theater, but I hope I never have to stop stumbling upon those moments again and again.

I have a lot of goals for college, and I know many of them, from my intended major to the activities I hope to join, will probably change. I know one thing will always stay constant: I seek to fill my life with those “Defying Gravity” moments, where everything in front of me is so fantastic that for a moment all I can do is sit and take it all in.
Miscellaneous
A Song by Timothy App

[Verse 1]
Everyone's got a dream that they're trying to make real.
We're all trying to make progress spin its wheels.

Be it to save liberty, and justice for all,
or stop the gunfire that rings through the streets.
Some take a higher place, and let the hammer fall.
Others take the bottom and try to make the ends meet.

[Pre-Chorus]
We're all dreaming while we're wide awake,
and freedom will never be forsaken.

[Chorus]
I'm in America dreaming,
don't wake me up.
I'm in America dreaming,
in God I trust.
I'm in America dreaming,
where love's more than a feeling.
I'm in America dreaming,
and I'll never stop believing.

[Verse 2]
Do you want to be an outlaw that plays by his own rules?
Do you want to be a cutthroat man that uses people like his tools?

Or be soldier sent to fight for us,
take on the world so we can all be free.
And so what if it looks like a great disgust,
It's our mess, the way we want it to be.

[Chorus]

[Bridge]
And after it all, what lessons did we learn?
That if some good was lost, at least more bad was burned.
It's the American way to keep fighting another day.
It ain't perfect, but that's how dreams are made.

[Chorus]
Control: A Journal Entry
Claudia Klinck

The weight is crippling
No way to diffuse the emotion
No way to share the burden

Internal locus of control:

Its
All
On
Me.

No way to get away from myself,
To escape the thoughts in my head, going a thousand miles a minute...

Wish it would
STOP.

I take a breath.
I close my eyes.

I breathe again.
I grab your hand.
It'll all be alright.
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Lastly, to the Bishop Ireton community, we look forward to the continued support and submissions in the upcoming 2018-2019 issue of the magazine.

Please visit our new website https://cambridgeroad.org/ for further information and more content!