

LitMag

—ORACLE—

2025



litmag

Troy Oracle | 2024-2025

cover art by hanh dinh



featured film and music

thank you

The Oracle Staff thanks all contributors for submitting their works of art to this year's Literary Magazine.

Due to the volume of submissions, we were not able to publish all the pieces received.

lit mag team

Zoey Bahng

Kate Berger

Jenny Huang

Kusuma Kothamasu

Samantha Luo

Edyn Mai

Shailey Patel

Eileen Um

Victoria Yang

Kaitlyn Zhang

troyoracle.com/2025-litmag

Visit our website for digital mediums and additional artworks.



▲ **Geometry of Dreams**
Soham Dev, senior



spring


 ▼ Riya Kunatham, sophomore


▲ Minjae Jeon, junior



Picturesque



▲ Hanh Dinh, senior

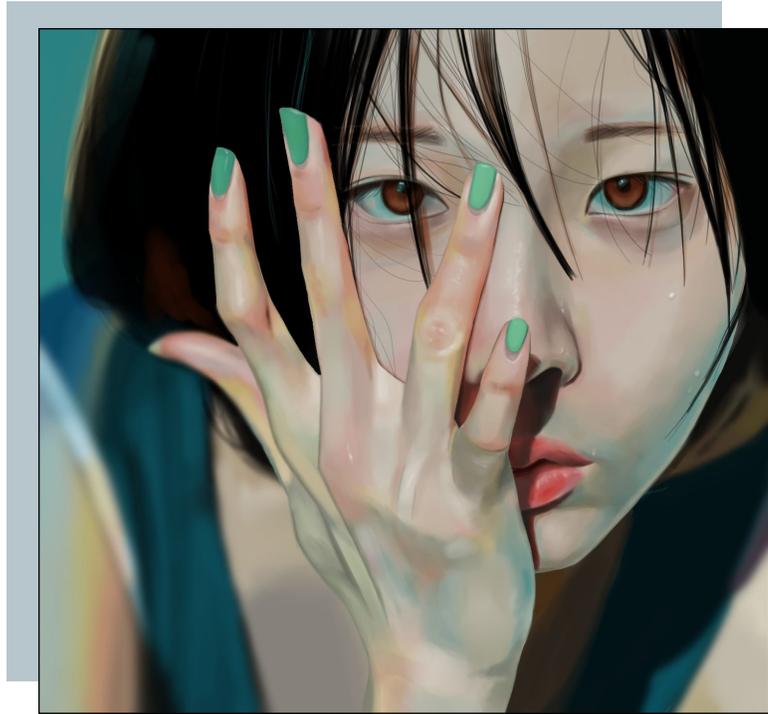


intertwined ties

i could find the longest string
 to tie down the time we had left
 before it flew away
 as it would never be enough
 for i'd spend it all
 just to get to know you
 day to night and dusk to dawn
 a brighter smile when you were by my side
 and a subtle glance no one else would notice
 but the hours stored safely in my pocket—
 the easy minutes to spend—
 flew away as wasted seconds
 that no amount of time in the world
 and no length of string
 could pull back down
 not fast enough
 before you found another kite in the sky
 and latched onto their string
 waiting for the moment
 it snapped




 ▼ London's Pulse | Rohan Jain, sophomore



The Girl ▼ Julie Liu, senior

the girl, she has a pretty face
with eyes like pearls and lips like lace
on dresses of those porcelain dolls,
her laughter rings like songbirds' calls,
i used to envy all her quirks,
her perfect curls and and sideways smirks,
i wish now i could take it back
and make her stay and tell her that
she's worth more than the pretty face,
the eyes like pearls, the lips like lace,
that she determines who she is,
not fate, not kings, not even magic,
but something got to her quicker than i
and then she was gone,
not a trace in the sky

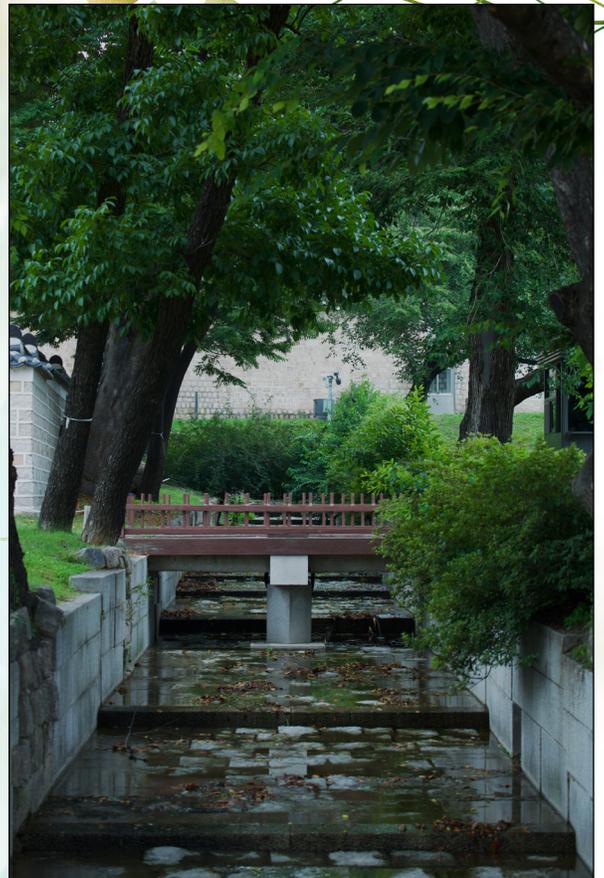
▲ The reflection my right eye sees | Elise Fu, senior

Dark Shop

▼ Haoyi Wang, senior



▲ The Train to Spring | Canran Jin, freshman



▲ Nathan Lim, senior

Our Place

SERAPHIC BLUE



▲ Katie Yang, senior

Media - the silent ocean that mumbles a roar
A monster who's devoured rationality from our cores
With no regard for our well being
It's taken our hearts to a world opposite of what we've been dreaming

The mind was supposed to guide us, like the sails of our ship
But it turns out they were too weak for the wind's whip
Everyday, we hear our name being called
And it makes us wonder if we're what the gossip's on

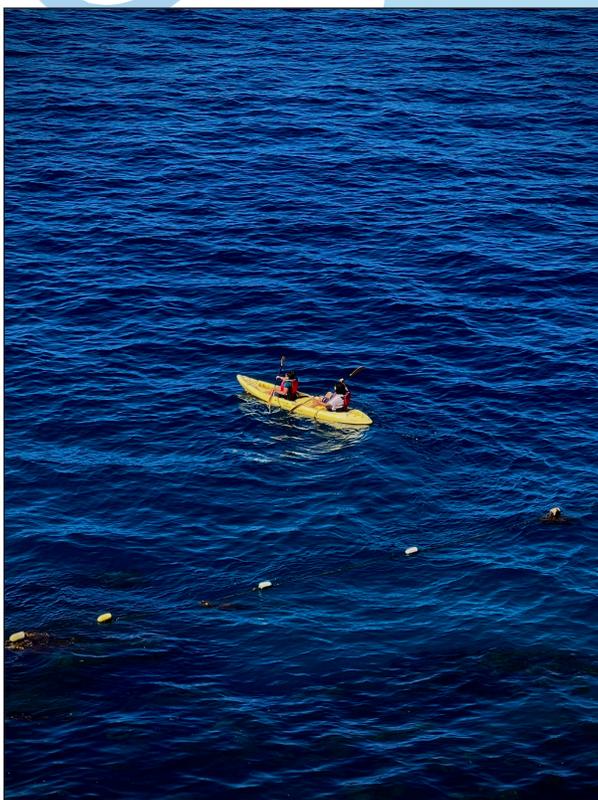
Everyday, the anchor of my judgement sinks deeper and deeper
Stuck between the comments left on every record
We cling so dearly to the garbage we find, heedless to its hazards
And thus we consume and choke, oblivious to the "riches" that we've gathered

We foolishly long for the perils of these unforgiving seas
In hopes that someday, we can also be the rainbow-scaled fish no one's ever seen
On this unceasing journey for an intangible treasure chest
We fail to realize that this hunt will never be for the best

So please, I beg, and so do the heavens
Get off your screens and release yourself from these underwater prisons
Don't be a shipwreck, and swim to the surface
What they show you on your screen are just filtered people who live without a purpose

▲ Shipwreck | Soahn Chung, freshman

▼ Ianna Lin, senior



▼ kayakers | Evelyn Le, sophomore



RE: D. LYNCH

▼ Aaron Shan, senior

He is very, very famous. When I meet him he is sitting back in his chair, wearing an OCBD, untucked, and corduroy slacks, looking like a cross between an Evelyn Waugh character and a page ripped out of *Take Ivy*. He leans back even further and lights a cigarette.

“I quit smoking, but I love the taste of tobacco,” he says. “How it feels in your hands and in between the lips, and the first breath.”

We both laugh. He’s not even funny. It’s all so surreal. I ask him what he thinks of the concept of the creative process and I ask if he has his own.

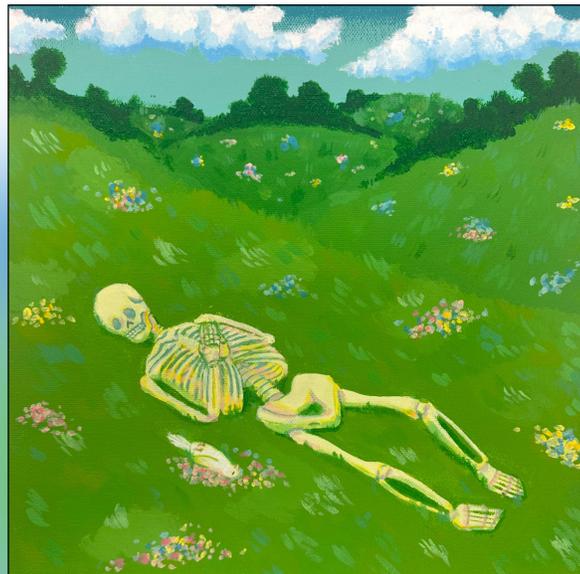
“The funny thing about that,” he says with shining eyes, “is how everyone gets it wrong. There is no creative process, at least, not for me. There are only dreams and fiction and stories. The question is not how but why.” He makes sure to wave his hands at the why.

We both laugh again, as if he knows something I don’t, not yet.

Later he recounts the current events of the day (a clear humble-brag to the fact that he still reads the physical newspaper), and as the sun is setting—as he snuffs out the cigarette on the table—he says to me solemnly:

“David Lynch is dead.”

▼ Died On That Hill | Harper Cabrera, senior



When Women Win

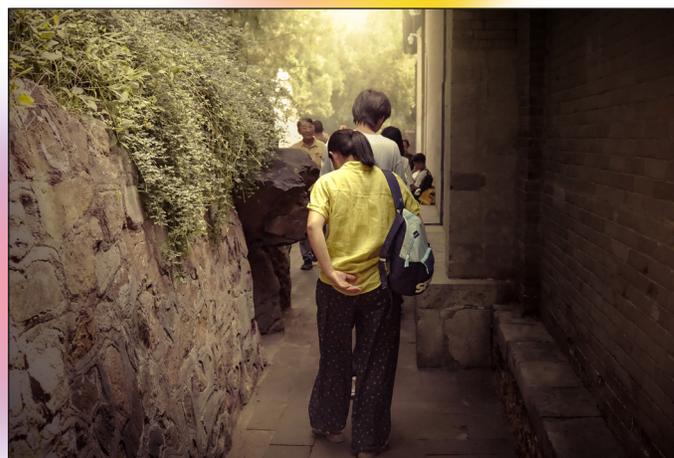


▲ Zoey Bahng, senior

Future Frames



▲ Zoey Bahng, senior



▲ Behind | Haoyi Wang, senior



▲ **Untitled** | Anonymous, senior



▲ Soham Dev, senior

Hidden Haven of the Hills

Sun Haiku

Ayden Jung, sophomore

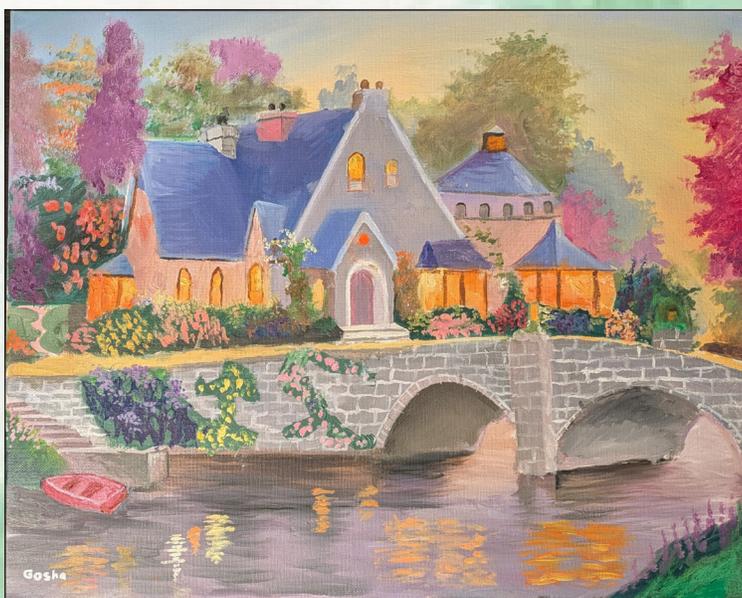
Rays pierce the still sky
Golden warmth on earth below
Life wakes in your glow



Poetry

Hikari Dao, senior

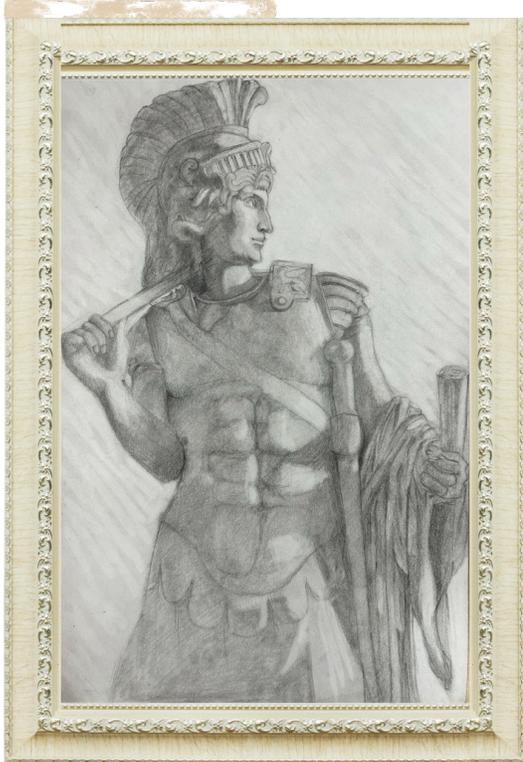
poetry doesn't always rhyme
it can have a deeper message
scribbled in its design
if you listen between each word
and draw between each line
you will find a whole universe
the dictionary could not define
but even if it rhymes
or only has one line
poetry is an art
woven into the books of time



▲ Gosh Rassokhin, sophomore

Cozy Cottage by the River

The Guardian



▼ Jason Shi, senior



Lion and the Lamb ▲ Audrie Kim, junior

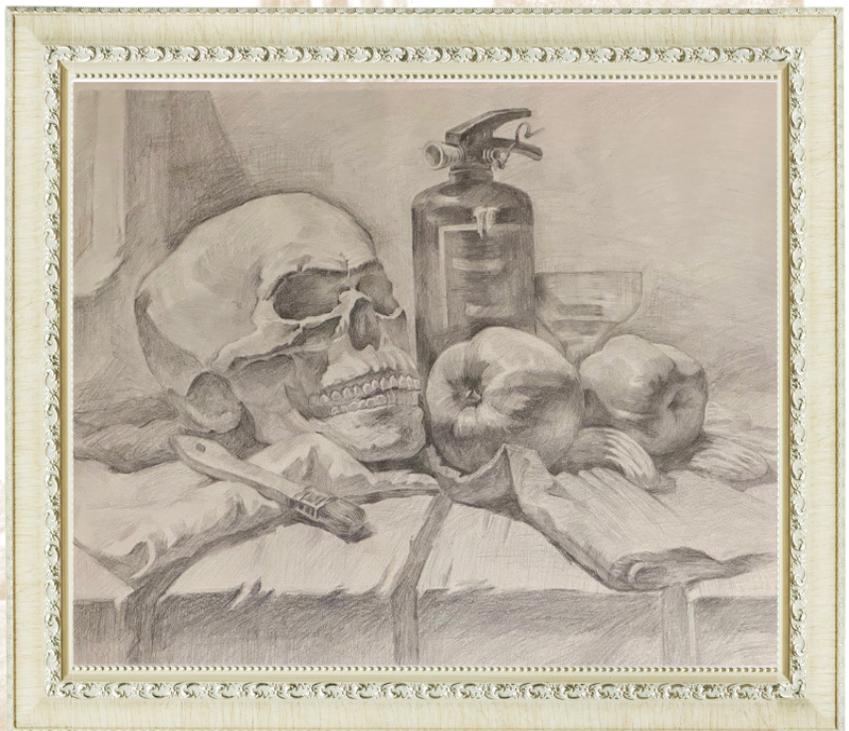
Walking through twisted
vines of life,
Finds crumbling leaves of
dust, broken twigs of strife.
In day and night does none
see its light,
Beneath the carcasses of
rotten spite
Dead are the once brim-
ming life of the forest,
Soot and thick ash covers
the life that once melodi-
ously chorused.
These tiny mighty ants
work to traverse the
ground,
Under leaves and rocks
they are to be found.
This hidden life begins to
unfurl,
Revealing the beating heart
of a world beneath a world.

A World Beneath a World

▲ Avni Patil, junior

Fruits of Mortality

▼ Yulin Chen, sophomore





▲ Untitled | anonymous, senior

The Little Things

A warm sunrise, the brightest glow,
The scent of coffee, nice and slow.
The sound of rain against the window glass,
A moment of peace that seems to last.

A favorite song played on repeat,
Early morning walks on a sunlit street.
A good book found on a quiet day,
The little things that come our way.

It's not the big things that bring us cheer,
But the small moments we hold dear.
In every laugh, in every smile,
It's the little things that make life worthwhile.



▲ Terra Dornoff, sophomore



Freshly Baked Cookies



▲ Daya Karthik, freshman

Summer Nights



▼ Nadia Park, senior



▲ Bow Bridge in Central Park | Evelyn Le, sophomore

Sunflower



▲ Anonymous, sophomore

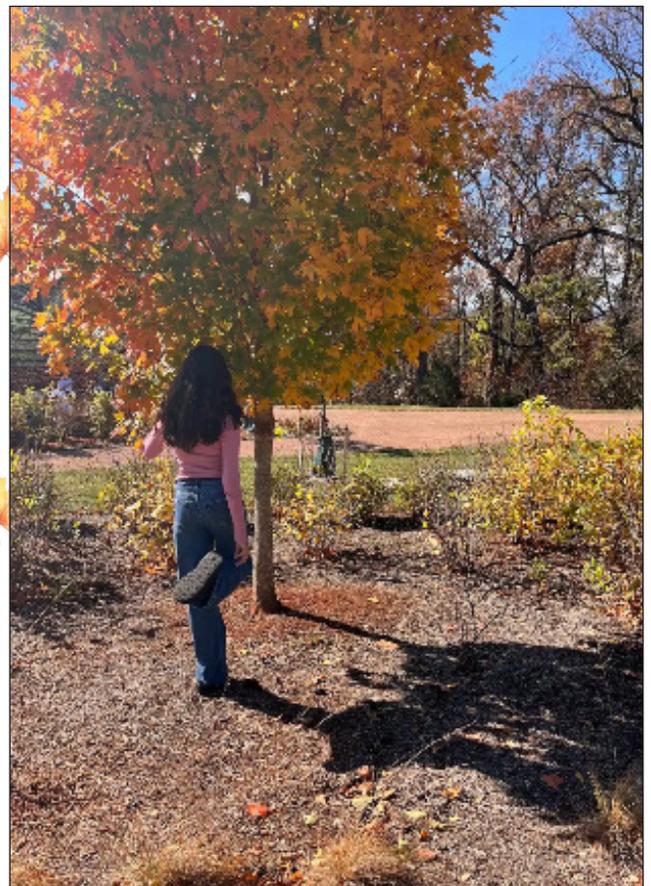


▼ Anonymous, junior

Winter Tanka

Our snowless winter
is wrought wet with misery—
and yet the falling
plum blossoms anticipate
the shuddering of spring
thaw

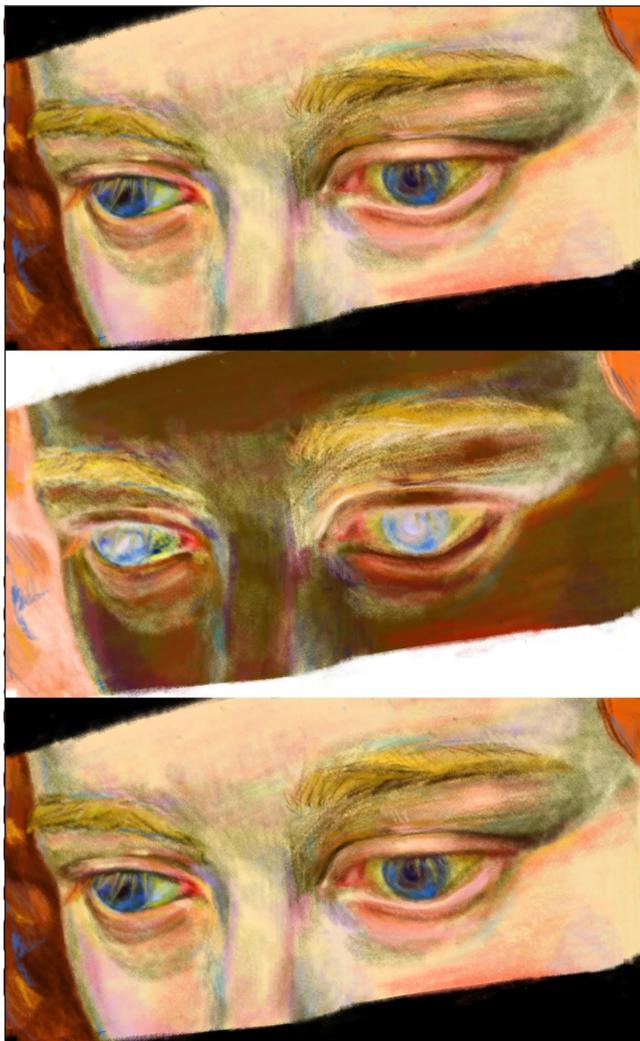
If I might find these
wild pinks blooming on
mountain-
tops, even if they are
buried in mid-winter's snow,
would you look over at me?



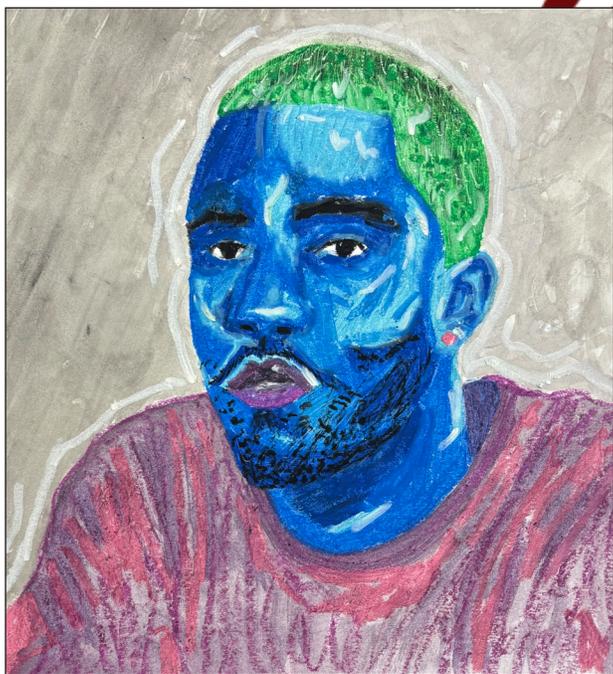
▼ Talha Baqai, sophomore

Autumn's Embrace

▼ Stare | Elise Fu, senior



▼ Ivy | Lilly Michael, senior



Ca Va Aller

▼ Elias Fritz, freshman

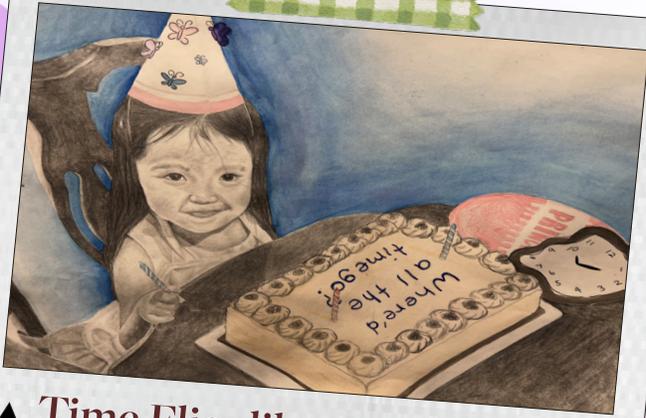
And then
All at once
It's just over.
Everything that could've happened.
Washed away in "I love you"
Separated
Pushed apart by empty hugs and kisses.
Little bits of nothing.
Snug tightly in romance.
Is that it?
Is that love?
Does it last that long?
And then
All at once
Is it just
Over?

▼ Drowning | Sophia Duarte, senior



▼ Pick Me Apart | Harper Habrera, senior





▲ **Time Flies like a Butterfly**

Zoe Abellar, sophomore



▲ **Scarab Says Hi, Oops, Scarab Died**

Harper Cabrera, senior



▲ **Princess**

Elise Fu, senior

The Clock Ticks

▼ Betty Chen, freshman

The tick and the tock of the clock,
The first sight—a newborn, a soft face,
Tick

A girl learns to walk on wobbly feet,
And then whispers joy in her first sweet words.

Tock

Her first day of school, crayon colors and giggles shared,
A friend found amidst playground dreams.

Tick

A golden-haired puppy, warm and cuddly,
A new soft pink dress.

Tock

Show and tell with treasures held tight,
Spelling bees, and proud little cheers,

Tick

Into middle school, she strides with grace,
Double braids bouncing, backpack adorned,

Tock

Her puppy, still by her side

In the sun's warmth, he rests, no longer in a hurry.

Tick

Graduation caps soar as wishes unfurled,
Amid cheers and joy, their futures in flight.

Tock

The soft pink dress, now faded and frayed,
Tossed aside for jeans and teenage dreams.

Tick

Then high school storms, where shadows creep,

The butterflies fade, lost in the night.

Tock

Home life feels quieter now—

No bedtime stories, no crayon masterpieces.

Tick

Now at the kitchen table, coffee warm in hand,

She recalls the girl in a soft pink dress,

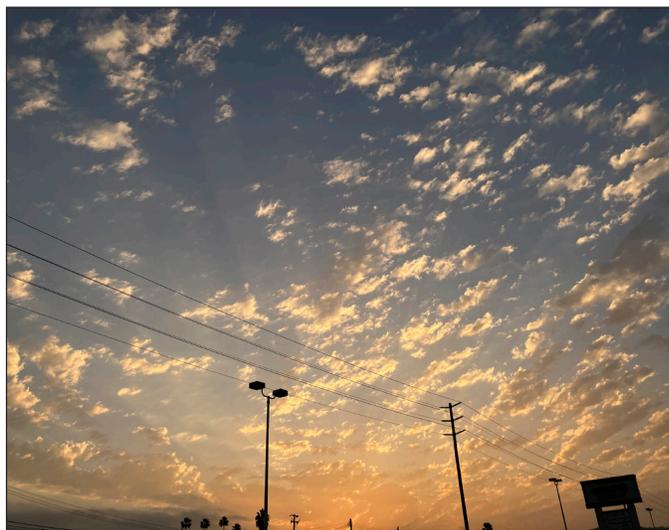
Tock

How tall was she? How joyful was her laugh?

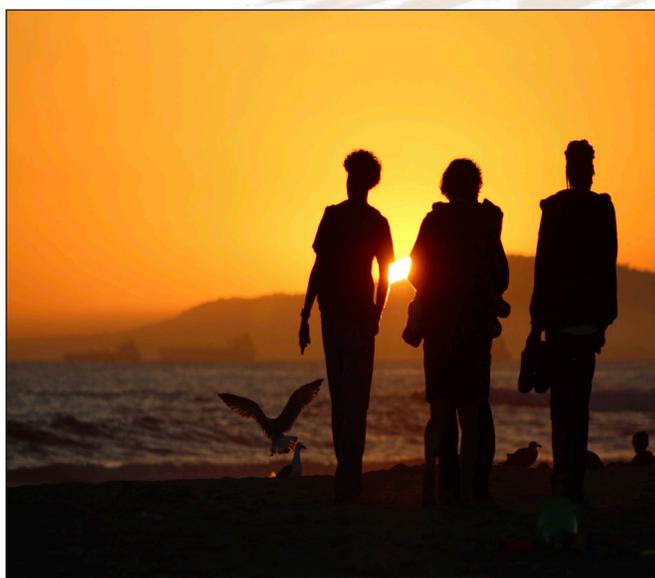
How does the clock tick on through memory's path?



▼ Betty Chen, freshman



● An Undrawn Painting



▲ Friends | Nicole Giacoletti, junior

Dream

Nina Jang, sophomore

A dream begins, so soft, so small,
A little spark that says it all.
It pulls you forward, shows what's true
The path ahead is shaped by you.
Through twists and turns, don't let it
fade,
Each step you take, a dream is made.
Hold it close and see it though
The world will shine because of you.

▼ Katie Chen, sophomore



The Long Road Ahead

Love

Mawaddah Shabeer, sophomore

In the embrace of love, our hearts en-
twine
Bound by the stars in an eternal glow
Together we stand, our planets align
Our love is a stream with a peaceful flow
In every sunrise and setting sun
Our love blooms like the flowers in
springtime
Through sorrow and joy, we will become
one
And watch as we light up from the sun-
shine
Cherish the warmth of love that never
dies
We will navigate this life, side by side
Where the stories lie in the sunny skies
We will not be lost with love as our
guide
As days go on, our love becomes a song
A sweet melody in thy heart so strong

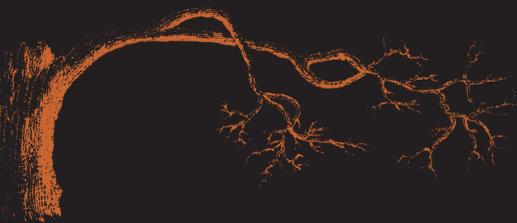


did i lock the door tonight

Did I lock the door tonight?
Every night when I go to sleep I hear that question in my mind.
Did I lock the door tonight?
Last night, I heard a knock on my door. The same one I locked before I went to sleep. Nobody ever knocks on my door. Not at night. I get a couple visitors throughout the day, but not at night. No, no. Something is wrong.
Did I lock the door tonight?
Yes, yes I did.
Did I lock the door tonight?
I hear the knock again. And again. And again. Every night now someone knocks on my door. I try, oh, I try, to ignore it.
Did I lock the door tonight?
Not tonight. I'm tired. I don't like the knock. I want the knock to stop. I open the door. There's people there. Many people. They're asking me questions. Weird questions. When was the last time I left the house? Last week, for therapy. When was the last time I ate food? Today, at dinner. Why am I not answering my phone? I don't have a phone. Why did I not answer the door? Because I locked it already.



Scan this QR Code to read more!



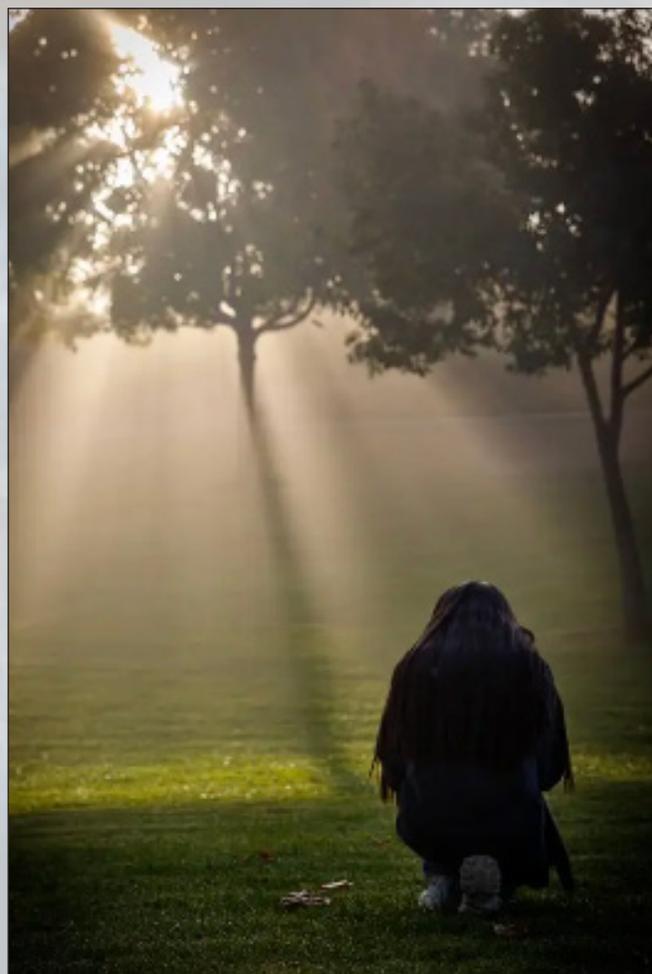
Fallen | Harper Cabrera, Senior

Solace ☾

▼ Jacob Pan, Senior



▼ Anastasia Efremova, sophomore



chemical defense



▲ Lilly Michael, senior

▼ Mai Ishikawa, senior

Finding Truth in the Echo

“It’s okay not to be okay,” they say,
and though the words feel distant,
I wonder if they’re seeds,
waiting for the right moment to grow.
For now, they rest in the corners of my heart,
soft whispers I’m learning to hear.

“You’re enough,” they insist,
and while I struggle to believe,
I start to think—maybe being enough
isn’t about perfection,
but the quiet courage to keep trying
even when doubt clouds the way.

I’m still here, and that must mean something.
The struggle is real, but so is my strength,
even when it feels buried beneath the weight.
Maybe these words aren’t empty promises,
but a reminder that hope
can still bloom in the most unexpected places.



▲ Elise Fu, senior

Watching Over You

▼ Tram | Haoyi Wang, senior



▲ sappho | Minjae Jeon, junior



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