

ECHO
2024





Prologue

As a butterfly flaps its wings, it moves in such a way that it creates a figure eight motion, or rather, the infinity symbol. Even after the butterfly departs from its chrysalis, it is still infinitely changing. We can apply this to all of creaturely reality- from humans to frogs, to salamanders and grasshoppers. Even after we have overcome our biggest obstacles, even after we think our metamorphoses have concluded, we are never done changing. Life is one long metamorphic process, and that is reflected in Echo's spread of 2024. All of our contributors have provided us with incredibly personal, vulnerable, and powerful pieces of poetry, prose, art, photography, and more. Even we, the editors, have taken part in sharing some of our formative stories and experiences. Everyone has given this magazine a beautiful sense of growth,

and we hope that our year of hard work exemplifies that. Our Echo team has spent week after week going through our own *metamorphosis*. In our beginning weeks, we moved slowly and began gathering ideas regarding things like dividing our roles, deadlines, PR, and more. Much like how a caterpillar views the world after it first hatches, we were ready for the journey to come and in need of sustenance. In our case, our sustenance was submissions. Like caterpillars spending weeks within the warmth of their cocoons, we spent our winter weeks within the computer lab and the library, hiding from the cold and snow. We sorted through pictures of beaches, still life drawings, and poetry written from the bottom of students' hearts. Thanks to the significant influx of art and writing that came along with the changing of the seasons, we were able to finalize our ideas and complete our spreads, and enjoy beautiful weather! Now, just as quickly as a butterfly emerges from its chrysalis, we have become ready to flap our wings and release our magazine to the world. Wooster's community will be pollinated with wonderful pieces of art and writing, and we hope that Echo's readers will be infinitely as proud and appreciative of the magazine as a butterfly is of its ability to fly and see the world.

Our Echo team leaves you with this message; *change leads to satisfaction.*

Staff

Felicity Gorman '24
Ja'Miyah Claxton '25
Kayla Falconer '25
Abbe Kanfer '25
Grace Littman '25
Jack Weinberg '25
Ella Moskowitz '26
Elina Ye '26

Front and Back Cover

Haenry Yao '25

Inside Front Cover

Maya Wood '24

Prologue

Kayla Falconer '25

Special thanks to

Nicole Cossitt-Levy
Lori Kriegel
Helena Smith

Colophon

This year's editors spent weeks choosing
from a variety of art and literature.

We went through each piece and
selected a vast assortment.

The echo staff met weekly to create
this marvelous collection of artistry.

We hope you enjoy it!

Contributors

Riley Andrea-Neuhuijs '24
Andalyn Bordoy '24
Felicity Gorman '24
Shayanni Holebrook '24
Kara Sciacca '24
Maya Wood '24
Gus Aspillaga '25
Cristros Chiotis '25
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Grace Littman '25
Jeremy Ortega '25
Malaiya Prosper '25
Henry Yao '25

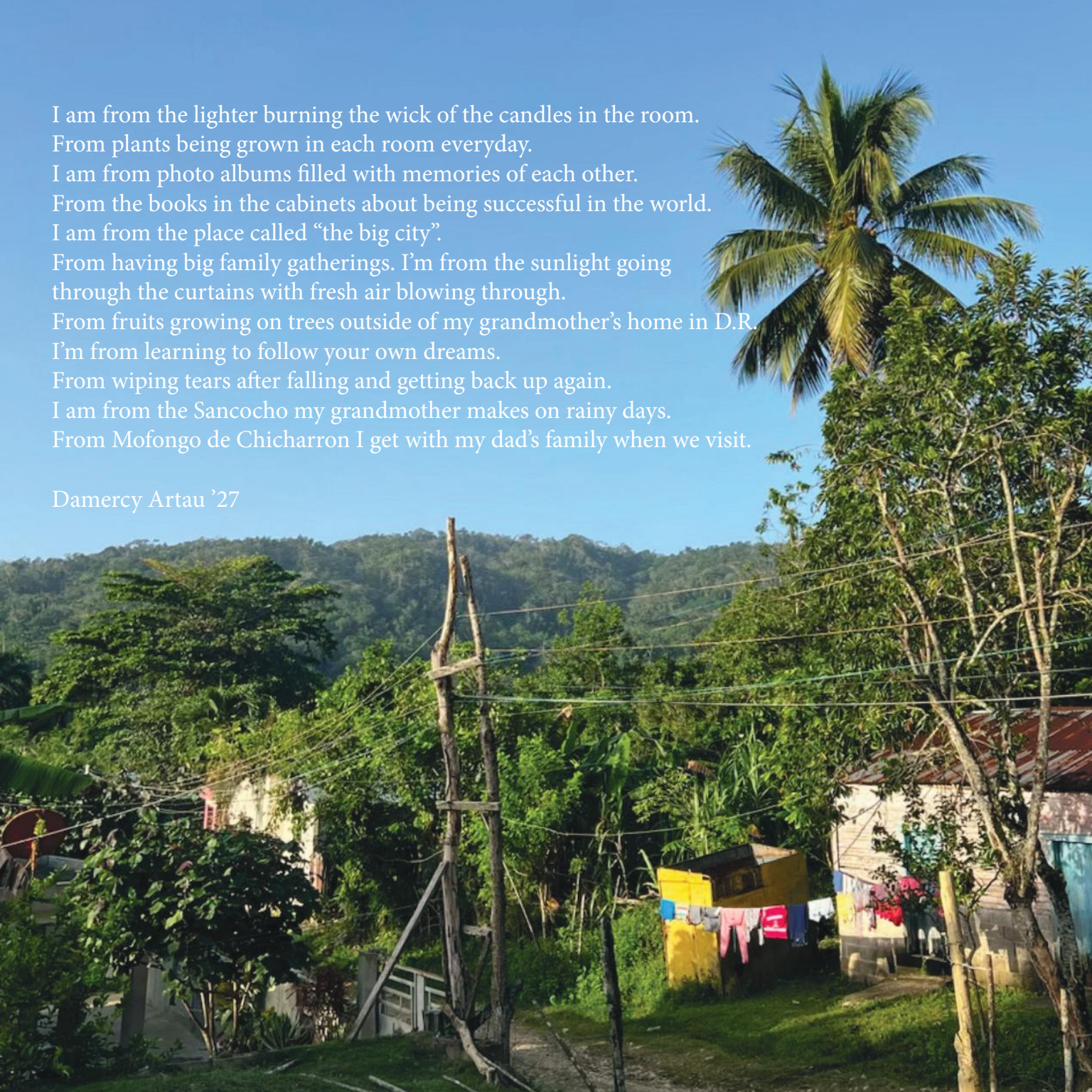
Jackson Beil '26
Lynx Herbig '26
Austin Kriegel '26
Liam Lu '26
Ella Moskowitz '26
Hannah Rogell '26
Kathryn Schade '26
Johanna Vail '26
Bill Xue '26
Damercy Artau '27
Simon Dong '27
Lil Havard '27
Alison Hu '27
Katarina A. Sorokin '27
Kayla F '28
Hugh F '28
Natalie M '28
Josh T '31

echo

Wooster School Literary Magazine
2024

A vibrant tropical scene featuring a tall palm tree on the left, a clothesline with colorful laundry in the middle ground, and a backdrop of lush green hills under a clear blue sky. The text 'Who I Become' is overlaid in a large, pink, cursive font.

Who I *Become*

A photograph of a tropical landscape. In the foreground, there's a dirt path and some greenery. A tall, thin wooden pole stands in the middle ground. To the right, a palm tree is visible. In the background, there's a lush green hill under a clear blue sky. A small building with a corrugated metal roof is partially visible on the right. Laundry is hanging on a line in the middle ground.

I am from the lighter burning the wick of the candles in the room.
From plants being grown in each room everyday.
I am from photo albums filled with memories of each other.
From the books in the cabinets about being successful in the world.
I am from the place called “the big city”.
From having big family gatherings. I’m from the sunlight going
through the curtains with fresh air blowing through.
From fruits growing on trees outside of my grandmother’s home in D.R.
I’m from learning to follow your own dreams.
From wiping tears after falling and getting back up again.
I am from the Sancocho my grandmother makes on rainy days.
From Mofongo de Chicharron I get with my dad’s family when we visit.

Damercy Artau '27

Untitled

My family is dying.

For over a year, and now more than ever, people who share the same blood as me now bleed it, hundreds of miles away. I do not know their names or faces; we refer to them as cousins, family from the old world.

I have love for them, yet I have never and maybe will never feel their embrace, hear their voices speak in the language of my ancestors. I see photos online, agonized expressions, grief beyond comprehension on both sides.

And what can I do?

I am a young girl with a phone, staring at the screen while my family and the families of others run for their lives. I do not know how to help my unknown family; just getting a text from a cousin saying that they are okay does not seem like enough.

Nothing is okay.

I have time to sit and write.

They do not.

I hope one day no one will have to bleed.

Please keep those in Ukraine and in the Middle East in your hearts.

It is through us their message is heard.

Hannah Rogell '26





Hannah Rogell '26



Everyone goes to heaven

When I was seven I was taught "Everyone goes to heaven"
No matter how big the sin, "Everyone goes to heaven"
But do they?

Does the man down the street who's full of dread, who relies on pills to clear his head...

"Go to heaven?"

Does the mom down the street, who can't even speak

"She's paralyzed," They said,
"She's a storyteller who lost her story"...

"Go to heaven?"

Does the man who's in the depths of his despair, a sinful man, indulging in vices,
his fate remaining uncertain...

"Go to heaven?"

"Everyone goes to heaven," they say as all three of them pass softly, same hospital, same
time, same day, "Unconscious," they said. The air drifted them up taking them with the night,
but are they "going to heaven?"

Now another sinful man, eyes white as days, would turn on the radio just to hear,
"Everyone goes to heaven"
"It's a cult," they said, "It's a cult, I know it."

Now his coworker, an overindulger, would go to the bar just to get drunk, leaving with a
pounding headache, that goes thump, thump, thump ... but does he "go to heaven?"

For in the lives of souls, only time will tell
If heaven awaits those who've stumbled and fell
So think of my words, let the questions come to mind
Do they go to heaven, in this complex world?
Do they go to hell, a place untold
Or do they go somewhere we will never know, a hidden place
A place calm and peaceful
A place we sadly might only get to see when our heartbeats stop and
we take our last breath, and the air finally brings us up to peace.



Redbone

It's a crisp Friday evening, late March. The sun is starting to slowly melt down into the mountains behind the reservoir. I'm driving home from school in silence. My body and mind are drained from the long exhausting school day. I have no intention to make plans with friends; I need to decompress. As I come to a stop sign, I take my phone and put on my favorite song. I'm tapping my hand on the steering wheel to the beat and rhythm. I've played this song a million times, yet it never gets old. I know every lyric and beat by heart and suddenly I'm humming along to the words. A burst of happiness fills my bloodstream and gives me the adrenaline I so desperately needed. I enter a euphoric state. Not a single anxious thought can ruin this moment. How can such a simple song change the way I feel in a matter of five minutes and twenty six seconds? All vexatious thoughts that swarmed my mind simply evaporate away into thin air.

I wonder what the world would be like without music. Millions of artists wouldn't be who they are today. It would be a world without feeling. People wouldn't be able to escape their reality without it. I'm almost home and the song is halfway over. More thoughts cross my mind as to how this particular song brings me back to a certain time in my life. I've now time traveled to the day I got my license, and for the first time I drove just myself to the beach. It was the best day of my life. The most indescribable feeling of freedom a teenage girl could ever dream of. The windows were down, my music blasting to where the whole city could hear it. I felt the wind blowing through my hair as if it were taking away all the troubles in my life. I wish this moment would last forever.

I blink back to reality and realize I'm turning onto my street and there's forty five seconds left of the song. I don't want to go home. I want to listen to this song on repeat for the rest of my life and never come back from this euphoria. I'm hesitant to turn my car into the driveway because I'm relaxed but at the same time I'm anxious about losing that nostalgic feeling. I will never hear this song the same way. The outside lights turn on as I pull in. The worrisome thoughts slowly start to return. I'm no longer in the warm weather driving with the windows down and wind blowing through my hair. The song begins to fade as it gets closer to finishing. I turn off the car and walk inside knowing I will never feel this again.

Andalyn Bordoy '24

GHOST

Wait up just a minute,
Let the time run up, let the whisper of the past catch up,
Rest assured it wishes to join in the parade, rest assured it wishes not to be left behind

When the leaves fall, they do not want to be forgotten,
Wonder, how do they feel? To be used and disposed of when it is most convenient?
To be exchanged for what is new once they lose their usefulness?
Rest assured, they wish not to be left behind

When the wind blows the clouds, when their intricate
patterns are swept away without a thought,
They do not desire to know forgottenness,
They do not want to never be known again,
Rest assured, they do not desire to be left behind in the
marching band of time as it ambles on at a sprinting pace

When the deer with the broken leg is abandoned by his once kin,
He does not hope to die alone, he does not hope to be left
in the silent woods when he can no longer walk,
He does not aim to lay in wait for the mercy of death's warm hands,
Rest assured, he does not hope to not be remembered by a living soul

So, when you get a minute,
Wait up,
For it prays not to be the leaves, to not be the clouds nor the deer,
Wait up, so it may catch up in the wandering stream of time,
And wait up, so it will not decide that it may be better off unknown



Mama's Kitchen

So little was Mama's kitchen,
The cake was no perfection,
But everything was an expression,
Of genuine love and passion.
So tiny was the cooking space,
The time had no permanence,
But the words and stories,
Would last longer than the meals.
The food was plenty and of variety,
But the most important to me,
Were unconditional love and loyalty,
As well as honesty and integrity.
However I am capable,
I will stay grateful and humble.
I still remember that table,
And the laughter deep down in my soul.

Simon Dong '27





Gus Aspillaga '25

Loving dogs

Loving dogs
Is the easiest job.
Always high, rarely low.

NOTHING
Could ever take the love you have for a dog away.
From accidents in the house
To endless early morning wake up calls
You still love your fur bestfriend.

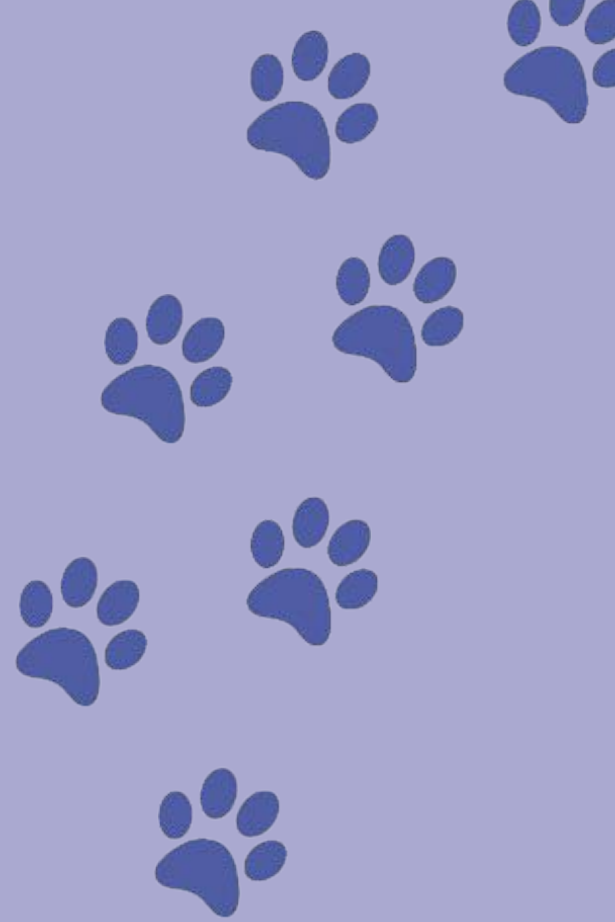
You raise them.
They raise you.
You grow old,
They grow older.
7x faster.

It's difficult to see age in something you love so much,
But as a reminder,
Don't take a single moment for granted,
For one day they will only be a memory.

From a playful pup,
To a dog who completed their job,
A job well done, fulfilling many years of memories and happiness.
But, there will never be enough years with them,
As their time earthside only lasts a short while.

The day their job has become complete
Becomes the day
Loving dogs
Is the hardest job.

Grace Littman '25





Missing Puzzle Piece

In a world of people all around, I often feel like I'm out of bounds. I don't quite fit in with the crowd, sometimes I wonder if I'm lost, not found. I'm like a puzzle piece that doesn't match, in a world where others seem to catch. I'm different, unique, not the same, and sometimes, it can feel like a bit of a game.

I don't always blend in, you see, but that's okay, it's just me. In this world where I stand apart, I find my own way, I find my own heart.

Being different can be tough at times, but it's also where I find my rhymes. I see the world from a different view, a rainbow of colors, not just a few. So, even though I may not quite fit, I'll embrace my uniqueness, bit by bit.

In this world where I don't always blend, I'll be myself, and that's how I'll transcend. In life's big tapestry, I'm a special thread, creating stories, adventures ahead. Though I may not fit in like the rest, I'll shine my own light, be my very best.

Lil Havard '27

slow and steady wins the race

Endless roads weave through neighborhoods,
forests, and memories,
Where lush trees and the lumber-rich biome surround you on this never ending journey.
Cars speed by as you slowly enjoy this beautiful scenery,
Just because they're ahead doesn't mean they're living life to the fullest.
With each mile, you see more of the extraordinary planet,
Taking in every ounce of color,
More memories are to be created on these beautiful roads.

Jackson Beil '26





liam lu '26

Icarus

Beaches
Peaches
Breaches the sun.
You fly too high,
Your wax wings run. (Oh, Icarus).
Ignoring the warnings
Your father foretold,
Your falling now
Down
Down
Down
You plummet to the depths
Of the ocean blue,
Icarus,
I
Am
Just
Like
You.

Toni Erian '25

The Scale of Osiris

Sometimes I wonder...
How will Osiris weigh
My heart?
Will mine be too heavy
For the scale to weigh?
Will it make the feather
Fray?
Or maybe the scale
Will balance.
My heart as light
As the feather.
My soul withering into
Paradise.
Osiris, I hope that
You are nice.

Toni Erian '25



Through Time

From 1700 to 2024

From towns to tall skyscrapers

From farms to extraordinarily loud construction sites

From green trees to delicious food trucks

From horses running to cars roaring by

From people to people

Hugh F '28





Just Like How the Sunlight Sits

The fading sunlight sits best between the tree's leaves,
Just like how you sit best in my heart, a hole carved out
just for you.

The leaves sit best rippling on the water's surface, cuddled
by its cold embrace,
Just like how I lay best in your arms,
Because no matter how cold you and I might become,
my home will always be intertwined in you.

The moss sits best on the chilled rock's surface,
It is just like how my heart rests best with yours,
As if I can only breathe when it is you, and I feel as if I'm
running a marathon without your shadow by my side.

The switchgrass sits best on the soft soil, always finding a
way back to one another,
Just like if you threw me 6 feet under, I would still find you,
For my love lives best when accompanying you.

If the dust dances best between the morning rays,
Then I am sure that my soul sings loudest when I am with
you, Your beautiful light shedding onto my form.

And when the diamond sits best on the golden ring,
It is just like how I am best when held by your golden hands,
Shining brightest when embraced by none other than you,
and only you.

Lynx Herbig '26



Making Sense of Life

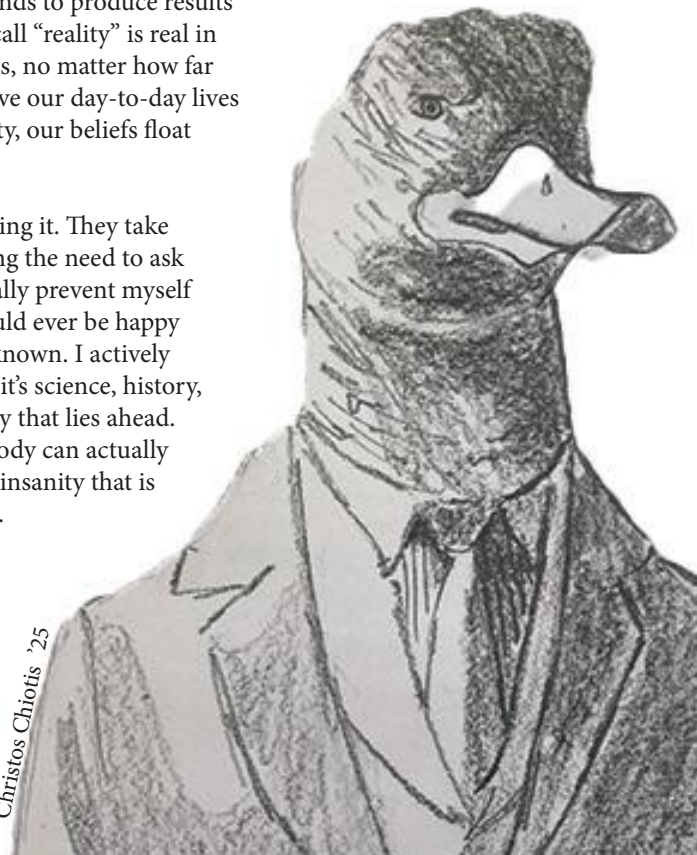
Most things don't make sense. Actually, no. Nothing makes sense. If you consider any of the "facts" of our universe for more than a moment or two, you'll realize how nonsensical all of it is. Here's one such fact: what goes up must come down. Why is that? Because of gravity, someone will tell you. But why does gravity exist? Well, that same person will respond, gravity is actually the result of matter bending spacetime. But why does matter bend spacetime? Now that's a difficult question. The person that you ask might take a while to ponder as they search their brain for an answer, but I can almost assure you that an honest interlocutor will inevitably answer with, "I don't know."

Try this with any individual fact that you claim to have knowledge of, and there will always be a point where a "Why?" is met with an "I don't know." Even some of the most agreed-upon ideas, like the idea that the earth is round, will be met with this conundrum. Why do you believe that the earth is round? If it's because science points to that conclusion, why do you believe that science is a reliable path to truth? If it's because science tends to produce results that are consistent with reality, how do you even know that what you call "reality" is real in the first place? "I don't know" lies at the end of every one of these paths, no matter how far you have to travel to reach it. And this is what is so unsatisfying. We live our day-to-day lives as though we are justified in claiming absolute knowledge, but in reality, our beliefs float upon a vast ocean of uncertainty.

Most people deal with this epistemological nightmare by simply avoiding it. They take the facts that life has handed them, and they sail on without ever feeling the need to ask questions. But that's not good enough for me. While I could theoretically prevent myself from giving in to all of the inquiries that I have, I don't think that I could ever be happy doing so. Instead, I have chosen to swim freely in the ocean of the unknown. I actively search for parts of the universe that I have yet to learn about, whether it's science, history, or musical theater, and I excitedly dive into the pool of unpredictability that lies ahead. Perhaps it is true that nothing makes sense. Perhaps it is true that nobody can actually "know" anything. But why should that matter? Let's embrace the pure insanity that is the universe, and let's try our best to have a good time while we're at it.

Anselm Juan '25

Christos Chiotis '25





A Letter from a Hopeless Romantic: I Adore You

You have been my favorite experience. From the moment I got to know you,
you entranced my heart and captured my full attention.

When I first truly met you, I was struck with such limerence that I became addicted to you. My need for you grows stronger every day and I never want it to go away. Ever since the day I fell in love with you, my life felt like an aubade. You touched my soul and filled my heart, my dear. Our love will be aeonian. I wish to wake up to you daily and watch the sun's rays rest beautifully on your skin as you sleep soundly. My wish is to keep you safe in my arms.

Your smile is ethereal, and your gaze is soft as cotton. You make me yearn
for your touch and pray for your admiration. You give it to me willingly,
yet I question if I deserve something as beautiful as you.

We have come such a long way, not only as friends but as lovers. I've stayed with you through
good and bad. But now, because of you, I wish to continue this life and its challenges
if it means being with you.

Falling in love with you felt like a dagger into my heart at first because I couldn't have you right
away. You weren't mine to claim, and yet you claimed my heart right away, didn't you?

I don't expect this to come out as if I am Romeo and you are my Juliet,
but I hope it comes out as if I am yours and you are mine.

I adore you.

KARA SCIACCA '24



Alison Hu '27

To be Childish

Together let's be juvenile once again,
Let's forget the wonder of the world, forget the gentle sway
of the leaves and the way the butterfly floats,
Let us relinquish what we know, forget that all that is
foreign does not seek our harm, our downfalls,

Let us return to when we cowered away from the dark, much preferring
to chase it away than learn it,
Forget what it is like to hope to understand,
Forget to go as far as to question why we would prefer to destroy
rather than to understand,
I'm sure it'd be easier to neglect the question, blessed with
ignorance as we might say,

May we remember how to make the world only black and whites,
Become colorblind to the grays that lie before us,
And let's lay them bare and accuse them of our sin, decide they
are all worth punishing for the comfort of our ignorance

Allow us to mint a newborn reality,
A place where our beliefs may be a precious rose, held
sacred above all,
And let us compliment the slick blood dripping down its thorns,
Remind ourselves that the letting of their livelihood was righteous
for our shining rose,
For who are they to uproot what is so central to us?

And together let's be juvenile once more,
Where we may forget that there may be good in the other of the world,
Where we neglect to wonder if we may be wrong,
And remind one another of the truth that we are so sure is absolute.

Lynx Herbig '26

SHADOW

Haunted by a ghost
Yet there's no one around
It's lurking and watching
But not making a sound

I can't figure out who it is
But I can feel the sorrow
If only the ghost knew
Happiness isn't something that you borrow

The forest goes silent
As the birds stop singing
Yet the quiet all around
Makes my ears start ringing

It's not a constant ring
But like a sentence or phrase
Almost like a call to me
Begging for its praise

As it gets closer
It walks a lot lighter
Letting me know
It feels a lot brighter

The joy inside
Is making it brave
But my happiness
Is still what it craves

It reaches for me
Quiet and steady
For it will always know
When the time is ready

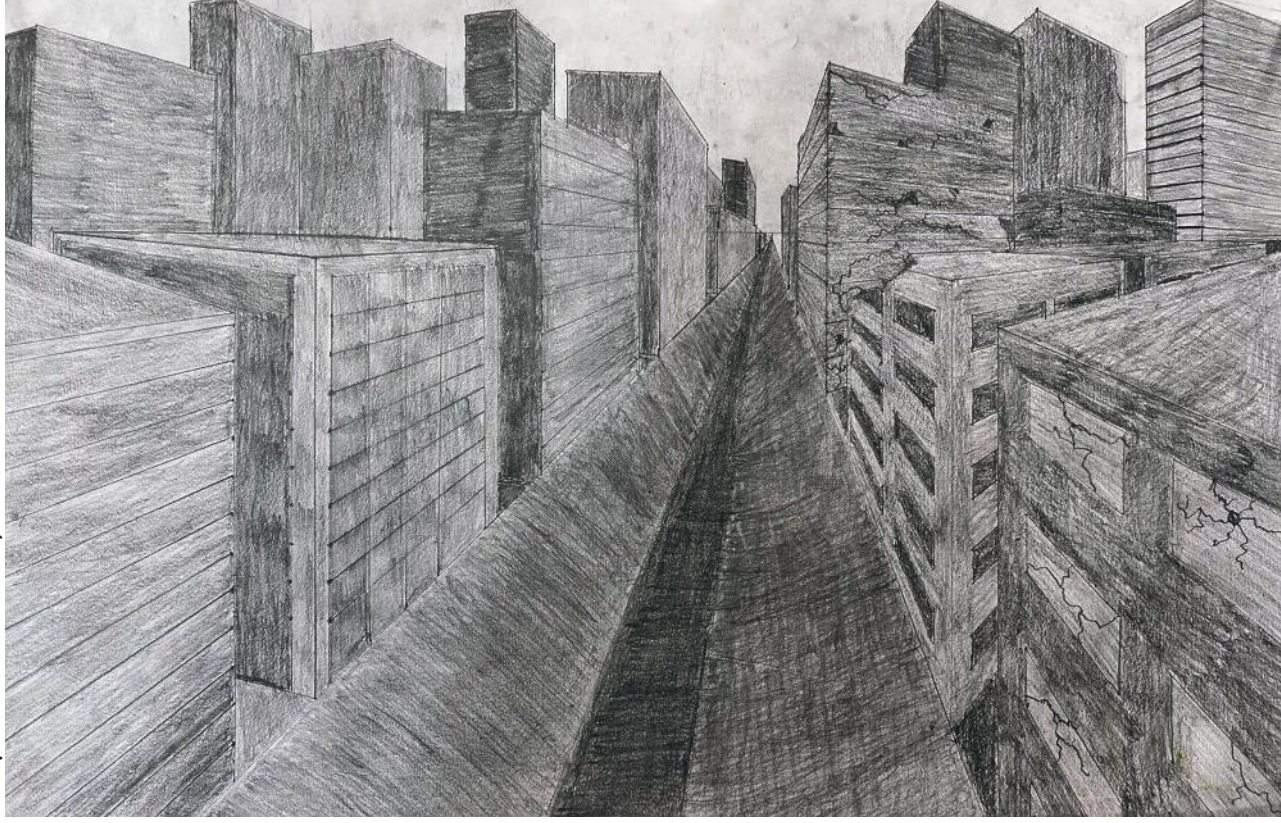
As we're face to face
I can start to see
That the ghost that's haunting
Is just a shadow of me

Austin Kriegel '26





Riley Andrea-Neuhuijs '24



A Mile of Time

A mile of distance filled up with time.
Now filled in with everyday lives.
The journey starts here while another one ends.
The burial ground filled with ancestors and friends.

In the ground 20,000 lie,
all of their souls brought up to the sky.
490 taken from their rest;
stories discovered to be shared with all.
Trinity is next standing proud and tall.

The once humble chapel now grand and bright,
fills up the skyline in everyone's sight.
Doors carved with tales are left open wide,
Inviting those who don't want to hide.

Down by the harbor where Castle Clinton lies,
you can see Lady Liberty freeing her ties.
Patriots once looked across the bay,
while British fleets headed their way.

Now back at home warm and tired,
We can sit back truly inspired.
Isabel's life was full of history
and now for us it won't be a mystery.

Natalie M '28

I'm not special

I'm not special.
It happens to girls all the time.
I'm not special.
I hate him with everything I have.
Something was stolen from me, something I can never get back.
I'm not special.
Nobody will ever believe me.
I'm not special.
I live with this constant fear that it will happen again,
that I will let it happen, and be powerless to stop it.
I'm always on high alert.
There is a part of me that belongs to him.
I hate that part of me, I hate him so much.
I'm not special.
I relive it over and over again.
A constant reminder of what happened.
I'm not special.
Now I lock my door every night.
My routine: lock, unlock, lock again, and pull.
As a little girl, I never had that fear of monsters in my closet.
Because to me, the scariest monster in the dark was him.
I'm not special.
He got away with it.
They always do.
Nothing ever happens to them.
I'm not special.
My body is a crime scene.
I'm not special.
This happens too much.

Anonymous



Ella Moskowitz '26



Novel Life, New Luck

An August sunrise brought me,
To a place of so much beauty,
Wooster School in Danbury.
The mountains glow like a picture,
My life begins as an adventure.
The first month came with difficulty,
And I blended into this community,
With diversity and equality.
I'm striving for a bright future,
With colorful memories to treasure.
I'm from an ancient country,
Valuing dignity and harmony,
Which contribute to my identity.
As an enthusiastic lover of nature,
I'm expecting our planet better.

Simon Dong '27



Excerpt from “Race My Mind”

The sun dipped low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the high school track. The stadium filled with cheers and applause as the crowd witnessed Lily Miller, a sprinter known for her exceptional speed, take her mark for the final race of her very impressive Junior season. The anticipation was noticeable; a combination of excitement and nostalgia filled the air. As the starting gun cracked through the quiet hum of the audience, Lily exploded off the blocks, her lean frame slicing through the air. The pounding of her spikes echoed in her ears as the wind whipped past her face. Lily’s focus was unyielding; her eyes focused on the finish line, the mix of countless hours of training and loads of dedication. With each stride, Lily widened the gap between herself and the other runners. Her legs moved with effortless grace, a result of the years spent perfecting her technique. The cheers from the crowd became a distant hum as she approached the final stretch, her heart pounding in sync with her rapid footsteps. Crossing the finish line, Lily threw her arms up in triumph, a radiant smile crossing her face. The cheers from the crowd erupted like a cheering volcano, acknowledging not just her victory but the spirit she brought to the track.

After the race, a sharply dressed man approached Lily. He extended a hand, adorned with an expensive watch, and introduced himself as Mr. Thornton, a representative from St. Crestwood High School, an elite private school renowned for its academic and athletic programs. “Lily, that was an incredible performance,” Mr. Thornton commended, a genuine admiration showing in his eyes. “I couldn’t help but notice your exceptional talent out there. St. Crestwood is always on the lookout for individuals who embody excellence, both on and off the track.” Caught slightly off guard by the unexpected attention, Lily nodded, a mixture of pride and curiosity playing on her features. Mr. Thornton continued, outlining the prestigious opportunities St. Crestwood could offer her: state-of-the-art training facilities, renowned coaches, and a scholarship that would alleviate any financial burden. As the conversation unfolded, Lily’s mind raced with possibilities. St. Crestwood represented not just a school but a gateway to a future beyond her wildest dreams. The prospect of joining their ranks was both exhilarating and daunting. She couldn’t help but wonder if this encounter marked not just the catalyst for her high school track career but the beginning of a new chapter that held the promise of even greater victories.

ALBERT AND EMIL

Chapter 1: The Snow Storm

7:02 AM

"I will find you." Albert squeaked.
However, Emil heard the snowstorm outside and shrieked.
All the animals, rosy-cheeked,
hid from the storm that violently streaked
across the forest, uprooting sprouts.
The storm made its way to the mice's house.
"Brace yourself, our house will hold," Albert yelled.
But the storm's sheer power was unparalleled.
Before the poor mice knew, they were expelled
the unbearable weight of the wind threw the felled mice.
They landed on opposite sides of a river that was covered in ice.
"My son!" Albert yelled, attempting to speak over
the roaring storm.
Albert knew there was no way to traverse the river's form.
"Let's meet at Mrs. Gobble's Dorm!"
A brilliant plan that may be,
but how long can they stay outside without the warm?
Just as Albert began to walk, a tree nearby fell across.
Emil crawled to the other side, clinging to the frozen moss.
Emil tried to yell to his dad "I am here," but he was
already long gone.
Emil knew he needed to catch up, and so he continued on.

Chapter 2: The Varmint's Trap

7:44 AM

Albert soon was overpowered by the cold.
He looked around for a bit, and there behold
a tree stump covered in mold.
Albert approached the door and pulled.
The door swung open. Albert rushed in.
He was instantly hit by the smell of gin.
Albert wanted to find his kin,
but the quiet of the house dragged him in.
"Who's there?" A booming voice made the house shake.
Albert jumped, "What are you? A cat, a dog, a snake?"
He was so tired and could barely stay awake,
not to mention his throat, oh how it ached.
The creature entered the light, revealing a red and spikey nose.
Sharp yellow claws wrapped around its fingers and toes.
Its back was bent, a bump lay on top. Albert froze.
"Help me, will you?" It had a loud voice,
as opposed to the house's quiet and comforting feel.
"Don't worry you can stay, I won't make you my meal."
It said, "I just need help unclogging my chimney.
Let's make a deal."
"All you have to do is crawl up my chimney and
push out the snow."
Is this real? Albert thought.
The chimney is narrow, what if I get caught?
How much snow is in there? A lot?
It's right over the fireplace;
if the creature sets it ablaze, it would be burning hot!
Albert believed the creature was planning to roast him in a big pot.
So he rushed out of the house covered in tears and snot.
You see he was rather paranoid for an adult,
but he believed if he didn't run, it would all be for naught.

Chapter 3: The Mole's Dilemma

7:59 AM

Emil was soon overpowered by the cold.
He looked around for a bit, and there - behold!
A tree stump covered in mold.
Emil approached the door and pulled.
The door swung open. Emil rushed in.
He was instantly hit by the smell of a musty old bin.
Emil wanted to search for his kin,
but the house's colors dragged him in.
"Who's there?" a raspy voice rang out in fear.
Emil jumped, "It's just me. It's all-clear."
Emil attempted to peer,
and see whose voice sounded so dreary.
To Emil's surprise a mole appeared,
revealing a pink and pointy nose.
Dusty nails laid on his tiny fingers and toes.
He had a bad back, Emil saw through the baggy clothes.
"Help me, will you?" The mole squealed.
Emil could see his back was in pain, it needed to heal.
"Don't worry you can stay; I won't make you my meal,"
"I just need help unclogging my chimney. Let's make a deal!"
"All you have to do is crawl up my chimney and push out the snow."
Emil didn't notice the fire pit below.
"Of course I will help you!" His excitement showed.
Emil crawled up the chimney, not taking it slow.
He pushed out the snow, letting in a cool breeze
before crawling back down, getting ashes on his knees.
"There you go I've fixed your chimney, and did it with ease," Emil said.
"Finally I can light a fire to keep me warm," The mole wheezed.
"As a part of our deal you can stay, have some cheese."
Emil thought about the offer before turning it down.
After all he made a promise to his father, he couldn't stick around.
Before leaving, the mole gave him a warm blanket, a dull brown.
"Sorry it's the only spare thing I have," the mole frowned.
But Emil wasn't picky and went on his way.
He needed to find his father before he became the storm's prey.

Vega Farro '25



Felicity Gorman '24

stray cat

I'm a stray cat wandering the streets,
Looking for a place to call home.
I don't stay in one place for long
Once I get cozy.
They say "scram," "get out of here."
I leave, obeying their wishes.
It hurts each time.
I'm getting used to moving
from place to place.
I go wandering the streets once again.

Oh stray. Oh stray.
Stray wandering the streets.
Looking for a place to call home.
People kick you out, and lock the door.
You just want a home.
Oh stray. Oh stray.

I'm a stray cat, wandering the streets.
Looking for a place to call home.
People don't want me hanging around.
They say "scatter," "leave and
never come back."
I do as they say.
I am getting used to moving
from place to place.
I go wandering the streets once again.

Oh stray. Oh stray.
Stray wandering the streets.
Looking for a place to call home.
People do not want a dirty stray.
You want to find a place
that you can stay.
Oh stray. Oh stray.

I'm a stray cat, wandering the streets.
Looking for a place to call home.
I go to a corner, in an alley.
Then someone comes along.
They say "get out of here,"
"this isn't your home."
I go, leave the corner in the alley behind.
I really do not think
I will ever find a home.
I go wandering in the streets once again.

Oh stray. Oh stray.
Stray wandering the streets.
Looking for a place to call home.
People hurt you, you hurt them.
They just need to realize that you're
scared and alone.
You do not give up, you keep trying.
Knowing that one day,
you will find a home.
Oh stray. Oh stray.



Bill Xue '26

SCHOOL'S OVER

School's over which means that I can finally head home
Back to New York I go, the home I miss the most
Finally letting go of the feeling of being alone

In distant lands, I find myself apart,
Yearning for the warmth of a deep hug
The streets I walked, and the friends I once knew
The sense of belonging that created you

But fear not, your home is never gone
The essence will hold on tight and forever stay along
A feeling of love will surround you keeping you at your toes
Even when you feel down and no one knows

Hold onto all the memories and keep them with you
As time may pass by,
Love from a true home shall never die

Malaiya Prosper '25



Allison Hu '27

WHO IS GOD

Who is god
Is god you and I
An idea
A concept
A beginning and end
Is god a reason
A reason to justify our lives
A reason to wake up in the morning

Why we're here today
Or an explanation
For the sensations
That can't be defined
Does god give us the confidence
To win the fight for life
The confidence to curb
the fear of our own morality

Is god nothing yet everything
An antithesis to itself
Is it physical or metaphysical
Something that defies all odds
Is god real
Fake
All of the above
Or none at all

Dillon Haims '25

Footsteps to Freedom

An ordinary girl,
no. A slave, taken
from her home.

Her footsteps
showed the path,
on which she was
foraging, alone.

The scarce city,
on the brink of revolution,
now filled with noise,
and lots of commotion.

First, the burial ground,
long forgotten under
Manhattan,
buried with it the history,
of a 250 year old mystery.

Slaves, working tirelessly
until their bodies broke.
Leaving them crushed,
by pounds of dirt and grief,
their lives far too rushed.

Unfortunately this was a
long sung sound,
not quite gone,
as it sunk into the ground.

Then the sacred church,
that came and went.
Once, twice,
again and again.



Simon Dong '27

A great fire,
it all went black.
A heavy white snow,
the roof collapsed.

Now the spectacle,
that makes people
stop and stare.
Some are even
buried there.

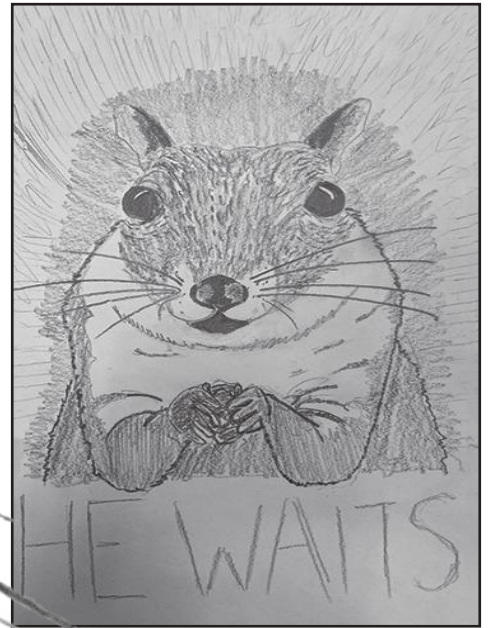
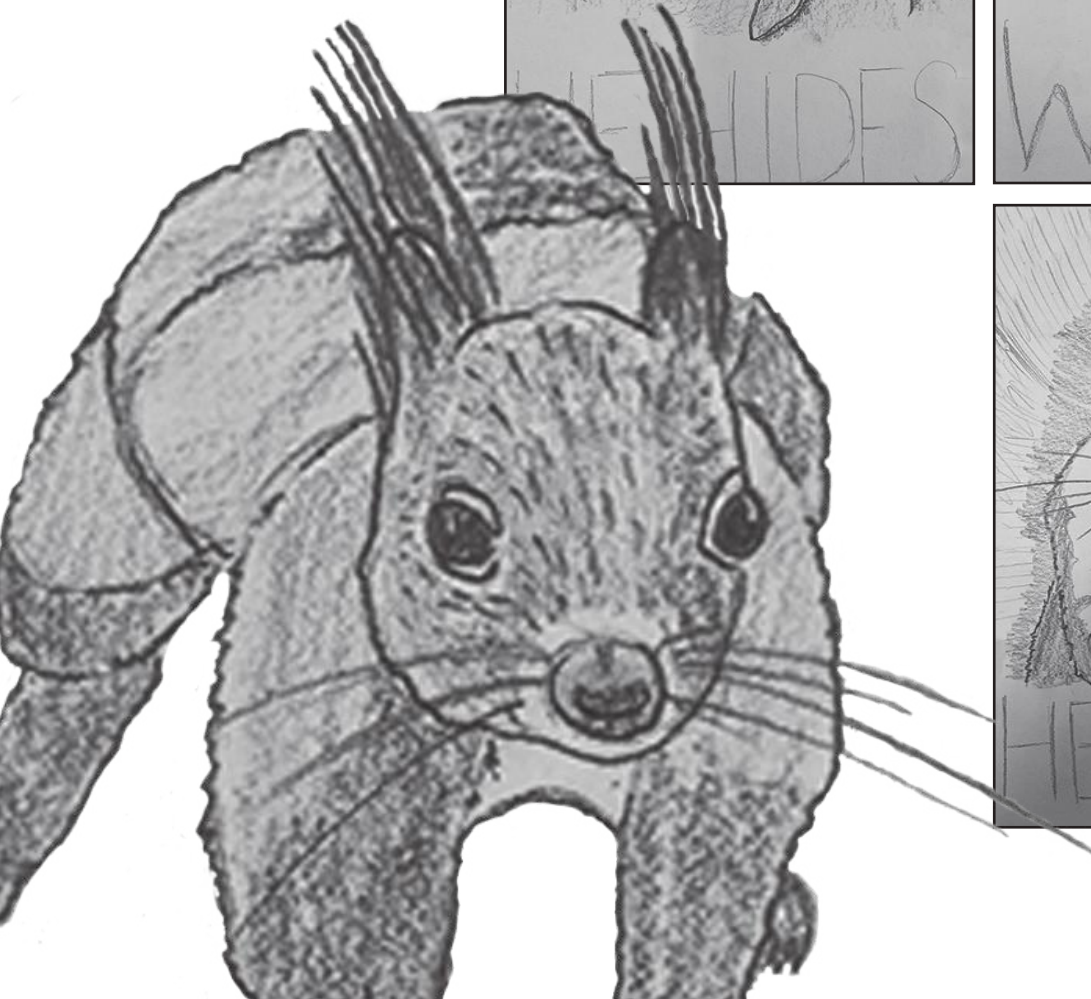
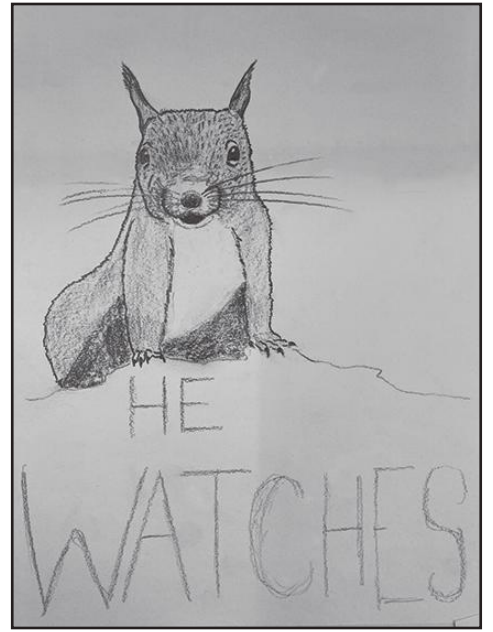
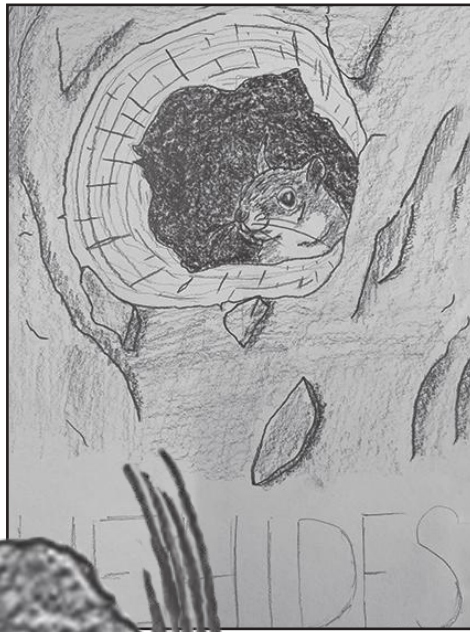
Next the green,
and city hall.
Long ago,
the greatest
sight of all.

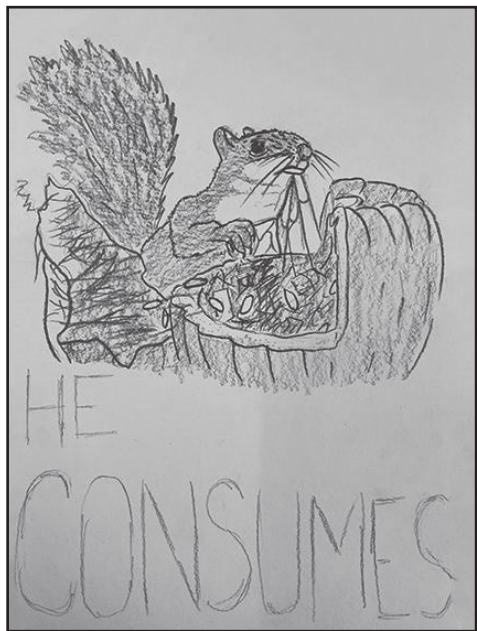
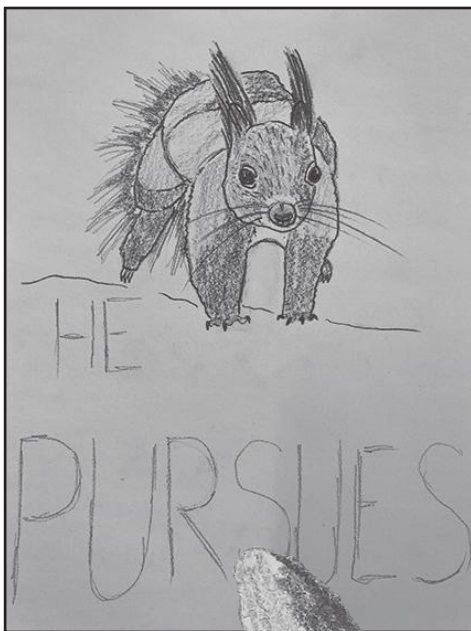
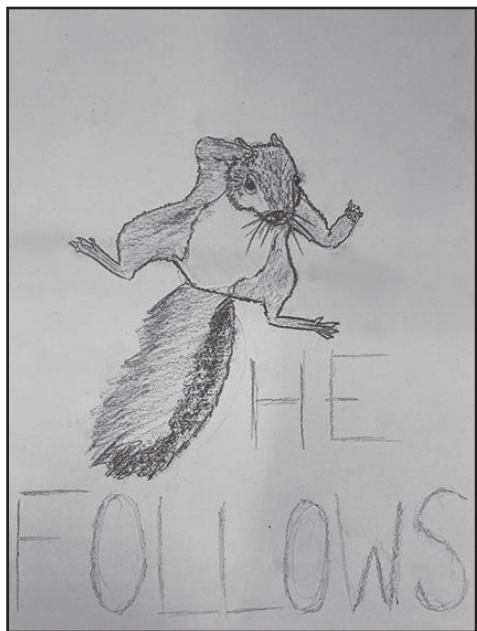
King George
upon his horse,
crumbling down,
without a speck
of remorse.

In its place,
a wall was
constructed.
One of freedom,
in which a union
was conducted.

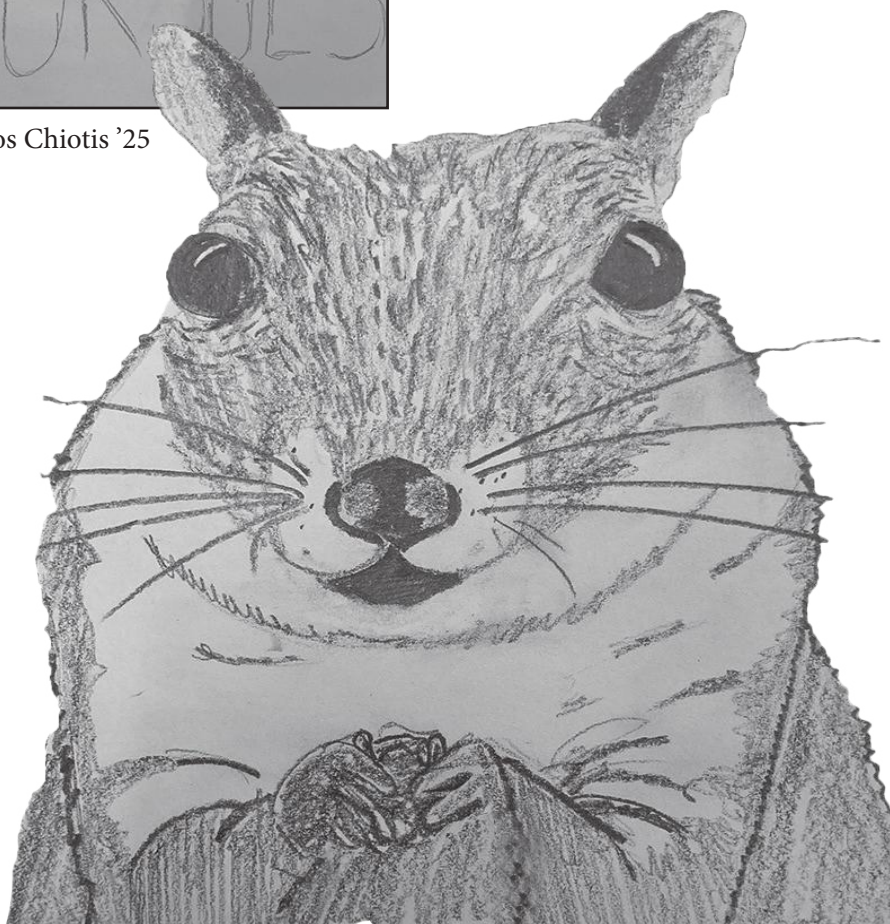
Finally, the waterfront,
looking across the
surface, you can see,
the towering statue,
made of hope and liberty.

Ivy Masotta '28





Christos Chiotis '25





SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW

Inspired by Clint Smith's

"Something you Should Know"

Something you should know
Is that I don't think I am supposed to be here,
Existing as something human.
I am much too docile and frightened,
Like a baby deer.
I am much too quiet and meek,
Like a field mouse.
There are days where I feel as
though I might not be visible at all,
Like a ghost, or an atom.
My parents seem to think I
could be as significant as the big bang,
Though I assume I am only
a particle. I hope one day this
feeling will pass, and I will realize
that it doesn't have to be like this.
It's okay to make noise, it's okay
to do things without caution.
It's okay to be seen.
But for now, I will live vicariously
through deer in headlights.
Through mice that blend in
with wheat and straw.
With ants as tiny as specks of dust;
as a minuscule creature.
I am not supposed to be here.

Kayla Falconer '25





Do you see me?

I see you, scar, looking at me,
piercing through my hair.

Do you see me, peeking at you?

Sometimes I touch you, wondering
if the bumps are whispers of that day,
of that scalpel piercing my skin.

Do you see me, glaring at you?

Sometimes I wonder if the stitches
were my mom's healing kisses,
then warm hopes of a mother's prayer.

I see you, scar, a constant reminder
of a journey that has just begun
but feels ancient.

Do you see me, staring at you?

I see you, scar, my scar, my unwritten story.

Will you ever go away?

I know the answer: no.

You're always there when I look in the mirror.

Do you see me, scar, admiring you?

Josh T '31

Recess

A wonderful time of day has arrived
Bunch of friends run to the play-set
Circles of people plan their games
Double taggers, am I right?
Endless fun awaits
Fun is here and it never ends
Go, go, go we are here to play!
Harmony of friends run around
It's a fun day but it gets worst
Just like an ad in a movie
Keeping us excited for tomorrow, but the bell rings
Lingering steps we take
Must get back to school work, no more play!
"Noooo", we all say!
Oh but it's so much fun
Please a few more minutes is all we want
Quiet down and get in line
Rush inside, go, go, go!
Silently we go
Together we frown
Upstairs we go, go, go
Vexed by the short recess time
Work we must, do, do, do
XO XO playtime

Josh T '31



Ella Moskowitz '26

Girls Who Love Running

They are always pushing, pushing to be the very best they can be. They are always fighting, fighting for a spot. Girls who love running are careful, careful when they run alone, they know danger, they know risk.

Still, they have no limitations, they break through society's mold.

They run, legs moving like steel, feeling the world, seeing the world, seeing nature, feeling its beauty. It's as if time slows all around them, but they're still running, pushing, kicking. Girls that love running live on adrenaline, craving that high, that burn.

Each breath they take is a breath of freshness and purpose as they take in their world, lungs filling with the outside air.

In the final stretch of a race, these girls fight through the burn and give everything they have, everything they have left to each and every race. They have no limits.

Girls who love running know struggle, people notice them, but sometimes they notice too much. For these girls, running is their life, even when they're not running they are thinking about the next race, the next time. They don't have time to look back, they just keep moving forward, as if they will never stop, never be slowed. They have goals. And they have dreams. Running makes these girls happy, makes their soul happy. It gives them purpose. When they are in the final stretch of a race, instead of slowing down, they speed up, they fly. As they finish, it's as if their whole being is fulfilled, as if they've had the best meal, their bellies full, hearts happy, their spirits full and fulfilled.

Anonymous





About The Editors

Ja'Miyah Claxton '25

I wish just once for a dream that is not forgotten. I'd love to feel the fear of a nightmare and the bliss of a dream. I beg to be able to close my eyes and create a new reality. Every night I lay in bed hoping for a dream I can remember. Something more than a face that lingers. I want to wake up in a sweat after running from my fears. I dream of dreams and their fantasies. Why can't I remember my dreams? Will I ever remember a dream? Would I miss these dreamless nights?



Abbe Kanfer '25

As I stepped out onto the stage, the bright lights shining in my face, I was nervous. What if I forget? The music starts, and all of the moves come back to me. As I finished the performance, I got a round of applause. I don't understand why I get anxious. Come award time, I know I did my best. Will it be enough? I hope so. They announced my number for the highest score of the day in the solo category. I stood up and got my award. Smiling from ear to ear.



Elina Ye '26

The airport announces my flight information. My head is empty, but my eyes are moist. I need to say goodbye to my parents. I raise my hands forcing an unnatural smile. I can't cry in front of them. I can't let them worry. I reassure myself that it will be okay. I will adapt to the new environment, right? I feel that the future will be an unknown darkness. I am scared until my first friend says hi to me on the first day of high school. A ray of light shining on me in my dark future.



Grace Littman '25

I stood outside the French doors waiting for my grand entrance three years delayed, my body shaking and my head spinning. Thoughts rushed through my head. My song came on; my body felt like jelly. “Are you ready?” One of my escorts asked as if I had time to answer. “Make some noise for our birthday girl!” The muffled music became clear, the doors opened, all eyes on me. I entered my pink wonderland. I felt so much love as everyone circled around me. My family right there. My heart grew bigger. The dance floor became a mosh pit and the night became an everlasting memory.



Ella Moskowitz '26

5:30 am wake-up by my little brother. Tired eyes and flannel pajamas. Little hearts pounding as we tip-toe down the stairs. Our sparkling Christmas tree. Warmth and coziness as the snow falls gently outside. Boisterous laughter as my aunts tell stories in the kitchen. The smell of rich Italian spices and sauces. Even after everyone leaves, the lingering smell of my Grandma's heavy perfume filling the house. Laying on the couch, my body curled up next to my brother's, hearts full and happy. The fire curls and sways just like this repetitive dance of tradition and love.



Kayla Falconer '25

Amidst my stagnant, uninteresting front yard, there was something spectacular. My tree. I didn't know what type of tree it was, or if the berries were edible, or exactly how tall it was. For 11 years, that tree was part of me; its branches knew the grip of my hands, the imprint of my feet, the shrillness of my cries when I went too high. One January evening, my parents decided to move, and I realized I would never see my tree again. After that news, I found answers to all my questions. It was a Kousa Dogwood, the berries were edible, and my dad estimated that it was 16 feet tall. Goodbye tree; goodbye childhood.



About The Editors

Jack Weinberg '25

It was a Monday, but at least I woke up on time; the bus would leave at 7:00. I stubbed my toe on the bathroom door. No toothpaste, and all my clothes were dirty. I threw on random clothes from my little sister's closet. Embarrassing. I stumbled on a step and fell, and my dog attacked me as I lay helpless on the ground. Of course there was no food. Getting in my car, hungry and almost indecent, I drove to the bus stop. I sprinted, looking like a viral video, tripping over myself. I woke before I hit the floor. What a disastrous dream. I checked my phone. 7:15.



Felicity Gorman '24

I watch her slowly lose her memories. She grips my hand and sings her favorite song, the song that brings her back from panic. "You make me happy when skies are gray." She doesn't talk much, but she is still my favorite person to work with at the nursing home; it's her energy and attitude. She's the best listener. Even with a disease so draining she is able to find her happiness. How can I find mine?





Echo
Metamorphosis
2024



