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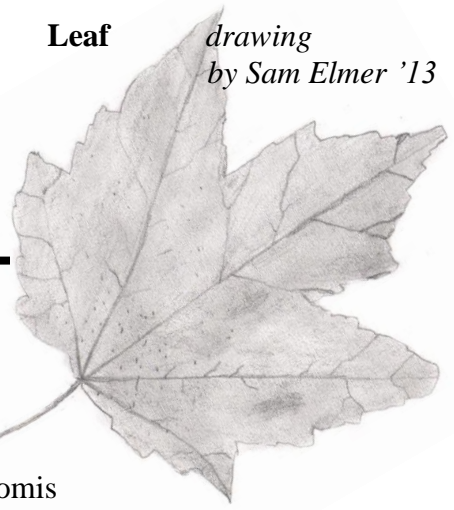
Christ School Journal of Writing and Art
2012-2013

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Leaf

drawing
by Sam Elmer '13

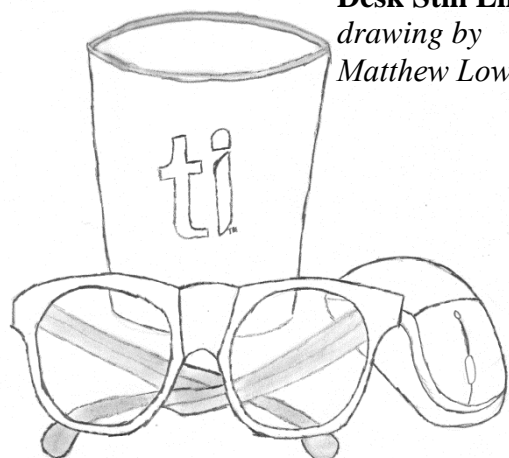


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Desk Still Life
drawing by
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Perennial Sunlight

A hero knows the time of his death;
he can find no way to breathe forever.
The hero wants a panacea; he tries to fight with death.
Yeah, right.
If death is precision, life is chaos.
How many paths have you crossed?

How long is the bridge?
How much blood have you spilled?
The bullet never knows his target;
its speed and beliefs trail far behind.
However,
descendants will point out your truth posthumously,
and as the wall of black night collapses,
perennial sunlight will clean the dirt out.



Bamboo

scratchboard drawing by Xavier Wang '13

Lessons From a Small Town Barber Shop

“How’s it going, son?” asks Mr. Clinton with a broad grin and booming voice. The door swings behind me and I am engulfed by the smell of after-shave and hair “tonic,” as the men like to call it. The gospel music playing in the background is overpowered by loud greetings and friendly chuckles followed by handshakes all around. Mr. Clinton is carefully shaving his customer with a straight razor when I enter. As I find my seat in a plush, antique chair, I take a moment to appreciate the warmth and familiarity of this place. Old-fashioned barbershops are hard to come by in this age of Great Clips, Sports Clips, and Supercuts. I am the youngest person in the room by at least thirty years. I’ve been coming here since I was five. These old men have watched me grow up. They heard me fantasize about playing football at seven years old, and listened intently as I described my experience in the State Championship game at seventeen years old. They cheered me on as I talked about a grueling tackle, and then interjected their own tales of heroism on the gridiron. Mr. Clinton was one of the first men I told about my acceptance into boarding school. This barbershop watched me transform from a boy into a young man.

Mr. Clinton has been a barber for forty-five years. He has always done it “his way.” He knows almost everyone in our small South Carolina town. Most men come as much for the experience and camaraderie as for the haircut itself. If you’re lucky, you can even witness Mr. Clinton playing the organ while one of his many talented customers sings. It is truly a special place.

Sitting in that same waiting chair, I have been transported to the Inchon Landing in Korea, the Clemson football team locker room, duck hunting in Arkansas, West Berlin during the Cold War, the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, and even a church pew just down the street. Listening carefully, it strikes me that embellishment may be a fine art as well as a respected rite of passage. I have heard stories of heartbreaks, success, and adventure. It was in that antique chair I discovered the value of hard work, and began applying it in the classroom and athletics. I have been given never-ending advice on girls, fishing, bosses, and parents. I have been warned of the dangers of alcoholism, and told of the pleasures of a happy family. Yet these are not even the most valuable lessons.

What I learned in Mr. Clinton’s barbershop is that great men are not always created in big boardrooms, powerful offices, or in the glaring eye of media and fame. Great men can be found anywhere, around every corner, in the least expected of places . . . say, for instance, a simple barbershop in a small Southern town where the gospel music is playing softly and there is always another story to be told.



Red and Blue

photograph by Conrad Ma '15



Dunes

photograph by Jack Fleming '15

Morgan MacDonald '17

The Curve

Looking around, he realized how beautiful a day it was, despite the overcast skies. Clouds are okay, he thought. They get rid of shadows. Glancing down, he watched his boots flatten the coarse grass as the shrubs brushed past his waders. The day was perfect to go to the stream – mid-April, warm with a slight breeze. As he walked he pulled out his old map, even though he had been to this creek many times with his father, grandfather, uncle and cousins. Arriving at the head of the well-beaten path towards the mill brought memories flooding back, memories of coming back with arms laden with fish as well as empty hands. He started on the half-mile trek to the stream.

Arriving at the stream, he immediately began piecing together his eight-foot bamboo fly rod. The thin rod was made for him by his father on his fourteenth birthday, and he had treasured it as a work of art ever since. He then began threading the thick, smooth fly line through the guides until it peeked through the top where he pulled it back down the fly rod with the greatest care. Digging through his vest, he pulled out a small spool of almost

invisible thread, which he then attached to the fly line, tying the complex knot with ease. He pulled about six feet of the leader from the spool, cut the end and placed the plastic spool back in his pouch. Now came the hard part, figuring out what fly to use. It was too early in the season to use a terrestrial, and decades of fishing this hole had taught him streamers don't bring in much. It was the perfect time to use a mayfly imitation, but what species was out today? Pulling off his vest, he began searching for a hatch chart, telling him which insects would be on the water today. But as he kept searching, he grew more and more frustrated. 'Darn!' he said, thinking out loud. 'Where did I leave the chart?' Realizing that he must have left the small paper at home, he decided that guessing was his only choice now. He pulled out his fly box and looked over the elaborate collections of fur and feathers. He finally decided on one that had been his family's got-to fly forever – the Adams. He carefully pulled the black-and-white-winged fly from the foam, and threaded the eye with the near-invisible line. Using his experienced hands to tie the intricate knot, he walked to the bank, ready for a relaxing afternoon on the stream. Letting go of the leader, he immediately pulled the rod back, snapping the line through the air. He then began to false cast, the process of whipping the line back and forth to gather momentum. After three or four false casts, he released the thick, smooth line through his fingers, sending it shooting through the guides down to the water's surface, letting it float down the calm stream.

* * *

The current of cold water swirling past its scales brought it back to the present. It turned and came up to the surface to look for a bite to eat. It hadn't eaten in a while and this showed in the slight dulling of its usually-magnificent pink and green sides. Looking up through its emotionless eyes, it saw a small disturbance on the water's surface. Rising to investigate further, it appeared to be a small insect struggling in the current. It paused, and immediately lunged for the mayfly with astonishing speed and precision.

* * *

Noting the boil on the surface with the tug on the line, he instinctively pulled back on the rod, effectively getting the hook stuck in the fish's lip. Pull up, reel down, pull up, reel down, time and time again, making sure not to put too much tension on the line. After several minutes of struggle, he reached back to grab the net and finally landed the fish.

This happened again and again until he was walking back home with six fish strung on his back. It had been a great day, despite the distant thunder and drizzle rolling in. He was glad his father had given him advice, but he was especially grateful for the one piece of advice from his grandfather: "The one thing that will always catch fish is the curve of the line. It's all in the curve."

The Anarchist

“According to General Jorge Rafael Videla, ‘*Un terrorista no es sólo alguien que las bombas, sino una persona cuyas ideas son contrarias a la occidental, la civilización Cristiana*’. A terrorist is not only someone who plants bombs but a person whose ideas are contrary to Western Christian civilization.” This message left *Senora*’s mouth and resonated throughout the seemingly lifeless, empty classroom where a thin layer of dust covered ten of the twenty desks. Patterns of light, created by the bright Argentine sun shining through the makeshift blinds covering the windows, stretched across the desks’ surfaces. Ironically, the same sun appeared on the flag that hung motionlessly in the corner of our light blue and white painted classroom. The same flag that once stood for peace, honesty, truth, and loyalty, now represented corruption and deceit under the rule of Perón and Videla.

I dated my paper March 13, 1976, and titled it “*El Anarquista*,” The Anarchist. Just thinking about the title gave me chills, but at the same time I felt empowered. In a time when any talk of revolution was hushed, and anyone with thoughts of challenging the coup was silenced, every touch of my pen to the paper was my own sign of rebellion. But who was I to defy the government? Contemplating the thought and twirling my pen between my fingers, I thought of what it means to be an anarchist. A true anarchist should be feared by his enemies and praised by his friends – someone people listen to – but also a simple stepping stone for everyone else’s success. During my deep contemplation I had wasted the remainder of my class period. My nine classmates and I were dismissed with a final message from *Sonora*: “*La literatura y la historia siempre satisfacer.*” Literature and history always meet.



Untitled

photograph and alteration by Dillon Weir '14

The usual afternoon rush of students returning home subsided as I stepped into the hot afternoon sun. I left the gated courtyard surrounding our school. My walk home was usually accompanied by the laughter of my peers as they shared the day's gossip, but today I walked alone in the shade of trees which arched over my path, as if to protect me from the surrounding chaos that consumed Buenos Aires. Each crack in the pavement provided an obstacle and every loose rock a makeshift soccer ball. The only thing distracting me was the noise of passing cars. Honking and screaming, the usual afternoon traffic kicked up dust from the unpaved streets into my eyes. This walk through the dusty afternoon in Buenos Aires provided time for thought – and time to draft my revolutionary essay in my head.

My thoughts were quickly interrupted when I heard a disturbingly familiar chant echoing through the streets. "*Que los tomaron vivos, queremos volver con vida!*" The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo paraded through the streets demanding, "You took them alive, we want them back alive!" They were grandmothers of the hundreds of children who had recently been 'disappeared' from our town, the same children who once filled the now empty seats in my classroom, where dust collected in their memory. When President Isabel Perón had appointed General Jorge Rafael Videla as commander in chief, everything went wrong. Anyone who was accused of conspiring against the government was 'disappeared' along with any record that they had ever existed. Nobody knew where they were sent, or if they were kept alive. But we did know that the government now had complete control of Argentina, and it was not to be opposed. This only encouraged my desire to get home and begin writing my paper.

The next morning I arrived at school, my finished essay in hand. I held it in my hand because I did not want it to leave my sight as it was very possible that a curious passerby could reach into my backpack and fish out my precious story. I wasn't about to risk losing the most life-changing document I'd ever written to a classmate with sticky fingers. I strode through the halls of my school, picking at the skin tag on the end of my thumb as my stomach turned in knots. My heart pounded and my palms sweat as if I was going to speak in front of a large crowd. I tried to distract myself on the way to class by staring at the pale green lockers, counting each number in my head: "207, 208, 209..." Each step closer to my classroom presented a new opportunity to second-guess myself, The Anarchist. I was by no standards an anarchist, but anyone with the courage to write an essay like mine deserved that title. With my new-found confidence, I opened the solid metal door to my classroom.

With great confidence I handed my paper to *Senora* and took a seat at my desk. I looked around my classroom. Eight students. For a second I doubted my counting abilities and did a recount: eight, one fewer student than we had in class yesterday. I figured he was running late, but as I checked the clock, it ticked past 8:01 and he was never late to class. I met the eyes of my other classmates. Nobody spoke but somehow we all understood what

had happened: our friend had been ‘disappeared’. Another student had vanished from *La Escuela de Peron*. Everyone in the room respected an informal moment of silence, and then class began.

On my way out of class, *Senora* returned my graded paper. She had written a personal message in the header: “*Un terrorista no es sólo alguien que las bombas...*” Perplexed, I left the classroom and walked down the very same hallway I had that morning. I tried to understand the message *Senora* had left me. “A terrorist is not only one who plants bombs...” It was the quote General Jorge Rafael Videla had used when addressing the issue of social reformers, anarchists like myself.

I walked the familiar beaten path over the seemingly earthquake-stricken concrete sidewalk, with the shade of the trees protecting my every stride. When I crested the hilltop I was a block from my house, and my school disappeared from view. Everything about my walk was exactly the same as yesterday, except for one thing: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo were nowhere to be found. They were the only group fearless enough to openly protest against Videla. This heightened my senses; I was alert and wide-eyed but most of all I was suspicious. I firmly held my essay while millions of possible scenarios flashed through my head. *Maybe the Mothers were protesting in another town? Maybe they had a late lunch break? Or perhaps they were ‘disappeared’?* With that thought, the hairs on my neck stood straight up as if to warn of danger to come. But I shook off my suspicion as I knew this would never happen since it would be too obvious if more than one hundred old ladies went missing. Right?

I opened the black metal gate that surrounded my small white home, making sure to close it behind me. That was when I noticed my mom’s car in the driveway with the door left open. Strange. With every step up the cobblestone path leading to the door, I took a breath. Palms sweating, heart pounding out of my chest, I thought, *You’re being ridiculous. Why would Videla come after you? You’re only a fifteen year old boy with an essay.* I grasped our shiny brass doorknob, running my fingers over it slowly, analyzing its texture as if it would be the last time I felt its cold, metal complexion. After a deep breath, I turned the doorknob and peered through the small crack in the door. A cool draft slipped through the narrow passageway, accompanied by darkness. Stepping into the house, closing the door behind me, my suspicion all but subsided. I called for my mom to ask why the lights would not turn on, but as soon as I did I took a blow to the head. Stumbling through the darkness and feeling around for a support, I slowly slipped out of consciousness.

When I awoke I was in a cold, dark cell, with a flickering ceiling light. There were no windows or doors, only a message scratched on the wall with chalk: “*Un terrorista no es sólo alguien que las bombas...*”

Drop
photograph
by Zach Pulsifer '17



Shep McCauley '13

Response to Tattooed Woman

Still he sits there all day long,
held in place by siren song.
But at last could it be
His long lost love Penelope?
He runs to meet his maiden fair
but his arms embrace the air –
she was but a trick of sleep.
The warrior sits and starts to weep.

Ease of Access

The morning of Saturday, October 26, 1929 was an unusual one for Charles. For one thing, he awoke at 6:17, irritated by a niggling sense of wrong-ness that he couldn't, for the life of him, pinpoint. He looked about the room anxiously before his eyes settled on the maple paneling of his cuckoo clock. That was what was wrong! The cuckoo had not made its usual 6:15 foray into the chilly air of his bedroom, but instead crouched resolutely in its wooden chamber. This happening, so different from the routine of the last twenty years, alerted him to the other reason this morning was extraordinary: this was the morning Charles had chosen to retire, to abandon his life of clock-making in Quarry, Pennsylvania for a more leisurely existence, one of thought, contemplation, and lethargic mornings drinking Earl Gray and reading the newspaper. Charles slowly rose from bed, his left leg a little unsteady. He got dressed and made himself breakfast, unsure if eating at 6:45 felt liberating or unbearably unfamiliar. By 7:30, he was feeling a bit better about the unstructured life remaining before him, but nevertheless he felt that he must do something to while away his hours. So, he ventured out into the garden and pulled hundreds of square feet of weeds that he had never had time to tend before. It was amazing to Charles how much he could do when he simply had the time. Stepping back from his labors, he checked his pocket watch: 11:22, a perfect time, it appeared to Charles, to walk to town and eat his sandwich on the steps of his shop. *Some habits die hard, I suppose, and I might as well pick up some gardening tools at the hardware store while I'm there.*

Sitting on the steps is quite an enjoyable practice, thought Charles, especially when one had no work to get back to. He would have to terminate his lease on the shop, he supposed, and might as well get rid of his clock-making supplies while he was at it. He had no idea who would want to buy clock paraphernalia in a small city in eastern Pennsylvania, but now was no time to think about that. Luckily, almost all of his clocks had been sold in preparation for his retirement, the money safely deposited in the bank.

Ruminating on these matters, Charles didn't see Jerry Faldwell, one of Quarry's three police officers, until he was only ten yards away.

"Mornin', Mr. Rutherford!" said Jerry.

"Oh please, Jerry, call me Charlie. We've known each other for three years, after all."

"Oh of course, Charlie, I'd forgotten. Well, Mr. Ruther...Charlie, have you heard about the bank?"

"Why no, what's the matter with it?"

"Well, there's been some problem with its foreign investments. Apparently they're losing a lot of money, and they can't grant any loans, or even hold onto people's savings accounts! I'm just telling you this to warn you that there might not be much business down here until the bonds pick back up."

Charles quickly thanked Jerry and sent him on his way, not wanting to show the young policeman the rising worry and apprehension in his eyes. Luckily, Charles wasn't the type to wear his heart on his sleeve, but inside, he was a trembling knot of nerves. *Where's my money? How will I retire? What will I do? I don't have any relatives I can ask for help, and who else could I talk to? Jerry? No, of course not.* Charles's thoughts churned that same way as he walked the short path to the Eighth Street Bank.

The bank was filled with people of every age and financial status, all wild-eyed and frantic. The four tellers were surrounded by people chattering and waving bank statements. Charles knew there was money in the vault; he had been in it barely a week ago, repairing the bank's precision clock system, and he had seen the heaps of bills, incongruous in a small town bank, which filled the safe. His mind was racing, thinking about those piles of bills. *How will I live if I can't get my savings? I can't work much longer, at my age.*

Measured as always, Charles took many minutes to reach his conclusion. There was only one way to get back his money. He sat down on a nearby bench and feigned sleep, his eyes mere slits but watching the lobby closely. Finally, his gaze found what it was looking for, the service door he had used during his last visit to repair the clock. He walked quickly to the door, opened it, and slipped in, unnoticed by the masses on the other end of the hall.

Inside, the service corridor was shadowy and filled with the hissing and clicking of machinery. Charles walked with a short, precise stride, moving smoothly to the end of the hall, where he entered a small room, its interior dominated by an enormous clock covered in levers and dials. Charles's fingers moved expertly, rearranging the mechanisms inside the tall wooden box. Charles was no experienced criminal, but his forty years of clock-making had not been spent entirely inside the law. In fact, if not for the shadier customers who sometimes visited his shop, looking for precision timepieces or machinery, he would not have been able to stay in business. Finished with the clock, Charles walked slowly back down the corridor to a maintenance ladder leading into the air duct system. He knew that the next ladder he would climb down was in the middle of a locked corridor, at the end of which was a door with the enormous bank vault beyond. The vault door was unlocked during bank hours, while the entrance to the vault hallway was locked. At this time, 1:45 on a Saturday, the vault would be unlocked, but at 2:00, it would lock automatically as the bank closed. Today, however, the vault would not lock, due to Charles's expertise. According to the bank's clocks, it was only 12:45, not close to closing time.

Charles crawled slowly through the air ducts until he saw the small hatch in the gray sheet metal that signaled the presence of a ladder below. He peered down into the bright hallway, vault door on one end, wooden door on the other, and – *Darn! A guard sitting in between!* Charles's heart thumped like the wings of a hummingbird, light and fast. He looked closer and realized that the guard was asleep, chin to chest, snoring softly. There seemed to be no way to get by the guard without waking him up. *Oh well, I guess there's only one thing for it.* Charles crept down the ladder, checking the guard after every rung. He landed lightly

in the corridor, barely ten feet from the sleeping man, who, according to his name tag, was Hector.

“Hector!” yelled Charles. “Wha-wha-what?”

“Abe sent me,” said Charles, remembering a teller who had once deposited a check for him. “He wants you in the lobby to get all those people out of there by closing time.”

“Oh, yes – Wait. Who are you?”

“Why I’m Jack, don’t you remember?”

“Sorry, Jack, I’m a little tired,” said Hector, already moving toward the exit and the lobby.

Once the guard had gone, Charles breathed a huge sigh of relief and rushed to the vault door, opening it with a soft whoosh. *Oh, my goodness!* In the vault were stacks of crisp bills reaching to the ceiling. *Why can no one get their money? There’s enough in here to stock Fort Knox.* Charles’s plan to steal only enough money to get back his savings immediately left his mind. *This bank isn’t having money troubles, they’re deceiving the people!* He thought back to last week, during his visit to check the clocks. Ironically, his parting comment to Lucius, the bank supervisor, had been, “I’ve been around this place so long, I could steal the lot if I had a mind to!” The pale-skinned, suit-clad man’s eyes had narrowed.

“You’re too weak and lame to make it past the lobby,” he sneered. “And besides, the game’s changed, old man! The days when you could rob a candy store are gone, let alone a bank.”

His mind made up, Charles took off his long tweed jacket and placed it on the marble floor of the vault. He spent the next three minutes and twelve seconds tipping piles of money into the jacket and tying the sleeves into a makeshift backpack which he slung over his shoulder. As he stepped out of the vault, Charles heard running footsteps and voices. Limping into action, he trotted to the ladder and clambered up it, leaving only an open safe in his wake. Charles knew that it wouldn’t be long before the guards figured out where he had gone, so he crawled quickly through the air vents, heedless of noise. He jumped into the first service hallway that he had entered and ran to a door labeled “FANS.” Inside, the building’s monumental air fan system rattled and hissed. Charles took hold of a door in the machine’s side and pulled, revealing a wheezing mass of air rushing into the duct system. With a quick movement, he flipped the jacket off of his shoulder and into the machine. Money flew everywhere.

When Charles stepped from the maintenance door, he found chaos. People jumped and ran every which way, trying to catch the whirlwinds of \$100 bills pouring from air vents all over the room. Charles noticed a familiar suited figure over by the tills – Lucius, the snide bank manager, trying in vain to stop his tellers from joining the madness. One man ran by Charles at full speed, fists full of bills, yelling, “Ten thousand dollars! It’s all mine!” A woman on the other side of the room beat a man over the head with her purse trying to dislodge money from his shirt pocket. It was a scene of glorious chaos. Through it all,

Charles walked, calm as a king. He strode across the lobby, ignoring the money and customers flying around him. He walked out the doors of the Eighth Street Bank and into the street, calling for a taxi with his right hand, while donning his hat with the other.

“Where to?” the driver asked.

“I believe I’m heading to Philadelphia,” Charles replied.

“Yessir. That’ll be four dollars and fifteen cents.”

Charles popped a peppermint into his mouth and waved a bill across the seat. “Here you go – and keep the change.”

“But sir, that’s one hund –”

“Yes, I know what it is. Keep the change.”



The Bruise of Time

oil painting by Vincent Li '13



Run

photograph by Jack Fleming '17

Michael Freeman '16

Dog Days

I blinked immediately because of the sudden light as I woke up this morning. I did so with the smell of a damp basement and the sound of an old heater running. I was met with the sound of the woman coming down stairs to let me get out of my cage. Everyone calls her 'Mom,' so that's what I call her. I ran up the stairs with great excitement to get my food for the morning. After finishing breakfast I walked around the yard, did my business, and ran back to the door to watch my family get up and eat breakfast. Sometimes they let me in to join them, but today I was ignored, left to sit and wait for them to let me inside after breakfast. After having a break from the cold, I went outside to watch my family leave, one of my least favorite parts of the day. They would be gone for a long time and I would be stuck outside. As I watched them leave I had my first thoughts about what I was going to do today, and that would be my adventure.

The past few days I have just sat around in the sun, slept, and waited for my family to come back home, but today would be different. I thought about leaving the yard, past the electric fence and off into the woods. That sounded like a good idea, so I decided to do it. First, I had to get past the electric fence. It outlined the yard I lived in – under the ground, invisible – and yet there was something dangerous about it. I could not place it so I started running toward it. I made it to where I knew the electric fence was and skidded to a stop. The danger felt much nearer and closer, almost menacing. I cautiously backed up and returned to the grassy area in the yard. I really wanted to leave, but the fence unnerved me. The temptation grew and grew, so I decided to run and hope nothing happened. I started towards the electric fence, got to it, and a shock raced through my neck and my body. I flew forward, unbalanced, but past the fence. I was clear. I was on the ground and only a bit dazed after my first step toward my adventure. I waited for a second to recover and then I was off. I started out into the woods, the smell of pine trees, squirrels, turkey, and deer overwhelming my senses.

As I wandered through the woods, I noticed many things. The woods were thin, but had a lot of shrubbery and small pines, with branches stretching many feet above my head. My senses were overwhelmed with all of the smells that came from the trees. Squirrels scampered out of my way everywhere, making me feel very powerful, like the king of these woods. As I walked a little farther, I ran across a fence. I had three choices. Turn back, follow the fence to the left, where there were more woods, or go right toward the houses. I really wanted to have an adventure so I did not want to turn back and the way right of the fence had more houses and I thought that way really would not be much of an adventure. So, I chose left. I strolled through the leaves and sticks that covered the ground, finding many scents. I did this until I came across one I had never recognized. It was nothing I had ever smelled before, and I had come across many animals. This one was kind of like a fox and maybe a little bit like another dog. As I thought this, I felt myself engulfed with a sense of danger. So I backed away, turned around, and then ran into something soft, black, and scary.

As I fell back, I caught a glimpse of two very large black figures, although one was a little smaller than the other. I was face to face with a grown bear, a ferocious predator that roams the forest near our neighborhood. It stood in front of me with its cub. I had not realized that they were there at all because I had never smelled one before, although I did see them run off once. Now that they had surprised me, they had the advantage, although my chances of winning a fight were not very good in the first place. They both probably outweighed me by 150 pounds. So, I did what any dog would do: I started barking while backing away slowly. At first, the barking startled them just a little, but as I increased my volume they backed away. This surprised me so I kept it up, following them, but not too closely. I trailed them until I could see them running off into the distance. After defeating the monstrous bears I felt on top of the world, like nothing could ever impede me on my first adventure into the woods.

As I walked farther into the woods I came across deer and turkeys, which, like the squirrels, ran from my path, enforcing my feeling of invincibility. I was hyped after not only surviving a bear attack, but scaring the beasts. After all of my adventures, the sun overhead was just at its peak and I was hungry. I set off to find some food for myself. I tasted the air for any smells of leftover food in the woods and thought I caught a whiff of hamburger in the distance. So, I followed the scent, which led me to a dead deer, rotten and rancid. That was not something I wanted to eat, so I stumbled toward a clump of ferns, and collapsed to take a nap. It was a perfect day, and I was very content about what I had done today, so I slept easily.

By the time I woke up, the sun had moved down so I knew I probably only had three or four hours left of daylight and I was ravenous. I set off once more. I walked for a little while, and then came across a peculiar smell, a very sweet smell, like it could almost be food. I followed it for a very short distance and it led me to an interesting looking thing hanging from a tree. It was yellow, had some type of liquid oozing out of it, and there were tiny little buzzing things flying around it. It looked pretty appetizing, so I walked under it and caught a drop of the liquid. It tasted amazing, so I got up on my hind legs and tried to get some more. I got a little more, but not nearly enough to satisfy my hunger. So I jumped up and hit it, trying to knock it down so I could get more of this sensational liquid that oozed out of this round yellow thing. As I did this, I felt a sharp pain on my paw, then many more all over my body, and before I knew it, all of the tiny things were stinging me everywhere. As my gaze shifted from the thing on the tree to the tiny things, I saw the yellow and black on their abdomens and a stinger with a wicked tip on it. I started to run away from these tiny things, as the stings began to burn. Dodging, sprinting, and crashing through the woods, I ran blindly, narrowly missing trees. As the tiny things followed, I smelled for water. I could sense it close by and to the left, where the trees thinned. As I turned sharply I seemed to lose the tiny things, but the stings still burned very badly. I saw the water and raced towards it, disregarding everything. I jumped in and felt the best feeling of my life, relief from the pain.

I stayed in the water a little bit longer, easing the pains for the trip back to my house as the sun sank lower and lower. I walked slowly with the pain of the stings lingering, which made it hard to walk. I ambled back the way I had come, past the dead deer, and back to the place where I had defeated the bears. All the way through the woods, squirrels and deer ran away from me. That got me wondering: How does something small like the stinging bugs make such a big impact, when something like a bear, deer, or turkey is so easily brushed aside? As I came near my house, I heard my family calling me. So I ran towards them, limping slightly, still hungry. Never again would I go outside my electric fence.



Breaking Away

photograph by Zach Pulsifer '17

Liam McCann '16

Light

Shafts of brilliant sunlight lit the forest floor. Leaves rustled in the cool breeze. Shadows sank deep into the forest as the morning dawned. A young boy emerged from the shadows of a small, woodland village. He carried his canteen, fresh with the cold spring water. He followed the dark and dusty path out of the village and into the tunnel of tree limbs that enclosed his path. His feet kicked up dirt as they thudded against the ground. He moved with a quickness that showed his purpose. He, a traveler, had come far and had much left to go: this trail, his way, and this forest, his home.

The trees numbered this place like the stars number the sky. The path, he followed alone. He carried a canteen and his bow, all he needed to survive. Survival had become a way of life. He had to kill to eat; he had to kill to live; he had to kill to escape. With a garrison of trained militants on his trail, and the death of his family on his heart, he kept on his way.

The night crept in, and darkness invaded the forest. The only light came from a small, crackling fire. A morsel of food sizzled in the flame as the boy watched eagerly. This fire meant safety from the beasts of the woods, but it also spelled danger. The light of the flame gave evidence to his position, so he dared not sleep. He had lain down to rest his weary legs and started to drift off when he heard it. It started a mere whisper in the dark, then a rustle of the leaves, and then it was upon him. It stood just outside the light, a shadow. It moved with a silence only death can bring. The boy felt his heart leap in his chest. His palms started to sweat. He rose. He knew this feeling well; he had experienced the crawl of death, and the odor of its oppression, for it had taken not only the lives of those he loved, but also the life he claimed. It had taken his life in the cruelest of ways. Death had stripped him of his purpose and robbed him of his ideals. He was dead, yet alive. The shadow remained still, not advancing, not moving, not breathing. The young boy, seeming to shrink in terror, backed away slowly. The shadow did not move, but simply stood outside the golden halo of light. *Shadows are only possible due to the light*, he thought. He inhaled the frosty night air deeply.

The cries of the birds in the trees, the rustle of the leaves, the trickle of a nearby stream, and the warmth of the morning light woke the boy from his slumber. He could not remember sleeping; he only saw a figure as it loomed in the dark. He felt his palms start to sweat, and told himself, *Only light can cause shadows*. He stood, filled his canteen, picked up his belongs, and started off, jogging down the lonesome trail. His mind wandered as he ran. He thought back to his life. He thought back to a time before he was wanted for murder, before he had learned the horrors of this world. He thought of his parents, his mother's face, and then his father's. He felt warm tears welling up in his eyes. He had fought his whole life to forget. He tried to fight off the sadness and terror that came when he thought of the world he lived in. Slamming his feet against the ground with every step, anger surged through his body. He thought of his old country. He thought of the corruption. He knew he could never return.

The trail wove like a ribbon through the ever-darkening forest. The boy continued to run. He had seen the torches of his pursuers. He could hear voices so he increased his pace. The sun continued its slow descent past the horizon. Gathering breath became difficult. He had to stop; he had run all day. He ventured off into the forest, away from the trail. He knew the risk. He could not lose the trail. As he walked, he stumbled. He felt the hard ground collide with his face. He felt his vision blur and tasted blood. He felt like yelling but knew that would only bring more pain. The sun sank and darkness fell. He reached for his cold canteen to soothe his bloodied cheek. The cool water shot relief across his face. His vision cleared and he boy realized what he had tripped on: a headstone. He felt cold tears as he

realized his position. The headstone belonged to his parents, the people he was accused of murdering. He had buried them in what seemed like another life. He lay on the ground, silent tears streaming down his face. The voices got louder as sobs broke through his lips. He felt hands tearing at his arms. He struggled. He felt a sharp pain and his arms went limp. As his eyelids fell, he saw a shadow outside of the torchlight. He thought, *Lacking light, everyone will suffer*. Pain subsided. All went dark.



Lichen

photograph by Zach Pulsifer '17

Trevor Thornton, faculty

One Day of Presents

Mrs. Williams sets the birthday girl at the head of the table
under the black Jesus.

Santa Claus comes in to hand out party favors.

Some boys and girls laugh and point,
and I want to tug his beard.

She runs to her room without blowing out the candles,
and I think it must be hard,
having a birthday so close to Christmas.



Giraffe

*pencil drawing by
Sam Grabenstein '15*



Branch

photograph by Blaise Dunsmith '13

Fabrice Dallies '16

The Guardian

One dark and stormy night, a boyfriend and girlfriend named John and Lisa were driving back from a movie theater. It poured down rain while lightning flashed brightly every twenty seconds. The couple was having a nice, easy conversation even though there was a huge storm just outside the doors of their car.

On their way back, they passed an old house with a cemetery in the front with a giant, arched gate entrance. At the entrance was a large Grim Reaper-like statue. They looked towards the house and quickly looked back at the road for the statue they saw that was guarding the gate did not suit them very well. They drove another mile or two before a bolt of lightning struck a tree in front of them causing it to fall onto the road. John had little time to react and he swerved into the ditch. After about five seconds, John asked Lisa if she was okay.

“I think so,” she said. “My head hurts really badly though.”

She started rubbing her head where she was hurting. John looked at the spot and saw that she was bleeding badly. He needed to find help quickly before she lost consciousness. John got out of the car to check the damage. The car, badly damaged, had lost a wheel and the entire right side of the front was wrecked. He got back in the car and told Lisa that he had to go to the house they had passed a couple miles back to get help. Lisa said it was a bad idea and that they should call an ambulance and wait in the car. Lisa tried to waste as much time as possible because she knew that the only way to get to the house was to go through the cemetery. John insisted on going back to get help. There was nothing Lisa could do to change his mind. John left and locked the doors to make sure nothing would happen to Lisa.

As soon as he left, Lisa started to worry. Even though she had hit her head and couldn't think very straight, she kept thinking about where she had seen that house before. A vague memory suddenly came to her mind about something she read in the newspaper. It was about a boy who, one day, had decided to walk up to the house. He went in but never came out. He was missing for three days until the police found some freshly dug dirt in the cemetery. They dug the dirt up and found the boy's body. His throat had been slit. Lisa tried very hard to get the story out of her head. She looked at the clock in the car and saw that it was 9:47. John had left only five minutes before but it felt like forever to Lisa.

Lisa turned on the radio and kept the volume low. She finally calmed herself down enough to get her mind off of her boyfriend. She began to get tired and slowly started to doze off. She did not want to fall asleep but her fatigue took over her body. She closed her eyes and fell asleep to the sound of soft music coming from the radio.

Lisa woke after a long nap and looked at the clock. 10:23. The pain in her head was still present and she began to worry about John again. She waited another ten minutes to see if her boyfriend would return. Almost an hour had passed since John left and he still had not returned. Lisa could not take it anymore and went out into the storm and ran toward the house to find John.

After about ten minutes of wobbly running through the rain, she finally reached the gates of the cemetery. She was panting heavily, her body hunched over and her hands on her knees. After catching her breath, Lisa looked up at the entrance of the cemetery. Something did not look right to her. She started to look around for the thing that did not look right and finally found it. The Grim Reaper-like statue was missing. At that moment, a surge of fear shot throughout her body. She immediately looked down and tried to get the image of the missing statue out of her head. Then she noticed a pool of blood a few feet in front of her. She slowly looked up at the arch of the entrance and saw a body hanging from its peak. A flash of lightning lit the sky and Lisa let out a giant scream of terror. Her boyfriend was hanging on the archway, dripping blood from his slit neck, just like the little boy who had been dug up. Lisa was scared out of her mind and turned to run but a tall, dark figure stopped her. The figure wore a hood that hid its face and held a tall, sharp scythe in its right hand. Lisa let out another scream of terror and then all went silent.

Donna Kinney, faculty

Cobwebs

Seven years I have treaded this trail.
Other than some erosion from rain wash-out
The trail is the same,
My heart anticipates each abrupt rise, each root-strewn patch,
The sun-parched pasture, where even in March I find warmth.
But something's unwelcoming this fall;
My bold sprint is met with tiny tendrils of invisible resistance,
A tickle, a sting, an insult to my bare, sweating skin.
As if to get my attention,
Nature reminds me
My work's not done.

Tree Pot
ceramic by
Cole Curtis '14





String Theory

photograph by Zach Pulsifer '17

A Third Hand

Nervously adjusting the knobs on my wobbly bench, I glanced up at my reflection in the fallboard of a nine-foot Steinway. Behind me sat a column of strangers routinely twisting pegs and plucking strings, awaiting their first rehearsal with the soloist. As I positioned my hands to strike the opening chords to Schumann's Piano Concerto, I reassured myself that my polished fruit was ready for display. As the maestro raised his arms and the cacophony of tuning waned to silence, the maestro and I locked eyes. He snapped his baton.

As our ensemble delved into the score, I became increasingly puzzled by the nature of our musical interplay. The orchestra did not conform to my interpretation as devotedly as I had imagined. Instead, each orchestral soloist offered a distinct musical perspective, independent from mine. The clarinetist, for example, shaped her melodic phrases in a way that exposed a sublime countermelody in my accompaniment that I had failed to recognize. As the rehearsal progressed, the deficiencies in my own conception became more evident. I began to draw exquisite features from each player's interpretation to refine my own voice. I left the rehearsal having transformed my rendition of the piece. Two evenings later, we delivered a performance the maestro declared "stupendous." Not until the summer following the concert did I begin to allow this constructive engagement to inform my approach to future musical endeavors.

Two months later, I attended a six-week music festival with a fresh perspective. I had always taken pride in my self-reliance as a musician, discounting chamber music and only interacting with fellow musicians in the fierce environment of solo competitions. That summer, however, I sought an escape from my solitary practice. I craved a venue in which I could exchange ideas with other musicians as I had done with the orchestra; therefore, I established a peer critique forum in which fellow pianists and I could constructively analyze our playing. We used each other's comments to continually improve between lessons. These new insights helped me refine my consistency of tempo, of which I had not been cognizant.

This openness toward learning from peers translated beyond my own playing. Upon returning home for the school year, I began to look outside my own familiar sphere of classical music to expand my music outreach organization. Having initially recruited only classical musicians like me for the group, I began welcoming jazz saxophonists, beat boxers, and pop pianists, performers whose talents could augment what I had built. The addition of these talents, different from mine, ultimately furthered my mission of persuading underprivileged children to learn an instrument.

I have discovered that, to maximize my influence as a musician and leader, I must surround myself with various individuals from whom to draw ideas and talents. My skill set is far from comprehensive. My two hands will carry me only so far; I will always need a third hand—that of those around me.

Blood and Lace

I fired a single shot through the dark. Across the long room, a short, pained cry and a muffled thud sounded. With my hand shaking, I tucked Robert's six-gun back into my coat and turned back to the small safe.

There had been at least three thousand dollars in this safe, and it broke with a few smashes with a simple mallet. It was such a shame how easy it was not to do honest work anymore. Robinson's Pawn was the only place this side of Maxwell Street that had kept open after the crash. The only reason they could do business was because of all the people around who were so eager to sell their old lives, not to mention all the thieves willing to sell their stuff cheap. Everyone was moving, trying to find somewhere that wasn't as hopeless. Maybe, someday, someone would find it.

When I had finished shoving the contents of the safe into my knapsack, I stood up to go. My knees ached in the cold. Even in this warehouse, I could see my breath. I shuffled over to the front window. On the floor lay a woman. She had a pretty young face, but a scream like a banshee. Too bad it had taken lead to shut her up. She was wearing a plain blue dress with lace on the cuffs and collar. Blood was trickling from the base of her neck, staining the collar and sleeve. She lay awkwardly, as though she had just crumpled, looking sad, worn, and broken. I tore my eyes away and glanced out the window.

Outside, James was staring at me from the car, its sleek black paint gleaming in the soft moonlight. As I looked, he motioned for me to hurry up and come out. I stepped out the door, then turned and ran. James honked and tried to turn the car around. Before he could get it pointed toward me, I ducked into an alley and headed east.

Little Anna would be home now, waiting for me or maybe fallen asleep. I was her only family since our mother died of tuberculosis. She depended on me, but I'd been away a lot, trying to make a name for myself in the gang. Tonight that could change. This was enough money to keep us fed for a while, until maybe I could find a real job. We'd move south, I'd find work with Roosevelt's Tree Army. Things could be good.

I headed down South Street and slowed to a jog. Robert wouldn't be happy when he found out I was trying to steal from his gang. James was probably on his way over now. I had to get home before they got any nasty ideas. It was another four blocks to home, then I'd just grab a cab to Chicago Union Station and be gone.

I got into the apartment just as the clock struck one. Anna was lying on the floor, curled up, her dirty blond hair tousled over her face. I was reluctant to wake her, but we had to get going. As gently as I could, I picked her up and slung her over my shoulder. I grabbed a bag and stuffed it with clothes and a few other things, before dashing out the door. I glanced around for a taxi, but there were none in sight. Not surprising, given the hour and the

street. I started heading west, but I hardly got a block before I heard the last thing I wanted to hear.

“Hey, Murphy!”

It was Robert.

“James told me about your caper! What did you think you were gonna do, disappear?”

I stood silent.

“Just gimme the money and nobody will get hurt.”

I knew better. I had been witness to enough of these situations to know Robert wouldn’t let me off without a “lesson.” He wasn’t about to let every neighborhood thug think they could get away with stealing from him without a scratch.

I did the only thing I knew how to do: I turned and ran. I made it through an alley back out to Harris Street and ran left. If I remembered correctly, there was a hidden alley somewhere along the street. A few seconds later Robert turned the corner with a gun out. I ducked behind a building as a shot rang out. I heard Robert loose a shout as I found the back door and slipped through.

The building was pitch-dark inside, so I stumbled into a side room and unburdened my shoulders. Anna gave a small whimper as I set her down. I felt along the wall and found a switch, which I flipped. A bulb on the ceiling popped and flickered on. I turned back around, and my stomach dropped.

Anna lay still on the floor. Her abdomen was slick with crimson blood. A stray bullet had found its mark. I couldn’t breathe. I fell to my knees and kneeled over her, helpless. Even as I watched, her eyes closed and her breath became ragged and faint. There was nothing I could do. I had failed, I was hopeless like so many others.

Blood crept along Anna’s dress, staining the graceful white lace embroidering stitched on by mother. In the garish orange light, the Anna who had once been a lively child looked utterly broken. I was not the only one who lost a sister that night.

No tears came, just a chuckle. The irony of it dazed me. So much for everything. I stood, killed the lights, and shuffled back out and into the street.



Untitled

ink drawing by Will Cole '14

The Apple

When you ate the apple,
Was it bitter? Was it sweet?
Did you know what you were doing
When you ate your little treat?

Did you feel inside your heart,
As you approached the core,
That you were making way
For famine, plague, and war?

Was the apple worth it?
Was the flavor that divine?
Did you feel any great regret
For committing our first crime?

Was it sweet as sugar?
Or bitter as a lime?
Did your conscience tell you
That you had crossed a line?

Do you still regret it
Or are you really sure
That the apple was truly worth it
And you'd gladly eat some more.



Courtyard

oil painting by Vincent Li '13

Rocket Man

As my father and I pulled up to the blue decrepit walls that housed the eclectic art studio, I began to wonder if this really was a beacon of learning and intellect. The inside of the studio was filled with a strong aroma of incense which could be compared only to the smell of the most delirious Bob Dylan fan's home. I passed the peculiar ceramic faces on the walls, along with the occasional Picasso knock off, as I made my way to the back of the high-ceilinged studio/art gallery to meet my new math tutor, Vance. This gray haired, 1960's flower child who never graduated to the 80's punk rock stage had a head of hair reaching the middle of his back that would make Robert Plant jealous.

With a wary smile, I reluctantly set down my Holt math book and my assignment for him to look over. With his glasses sliding halfway down his nose, he began to babble on about how much he despises math books. As the days meandered by, we became good friends. We often discussed things such as politics and the economy. Vance's political and economic views were far from the stereotypical "peace and love" of the late 60's persona. He did not like Obama, but disliked McCain and every other 2008 Republican candidate equally as much. When asked who he did like, Vance often responded that he liked Ronald Reagan...and only Ronald Reagan. Vance's favorite topic of choice, however, was Harley Davidson motorcycles and stories from his younger years when he cruised cross country on long road trips. I often wondered about him, this-ultra-conservative, Harley Davidson-riding hippie. There couldn't possibly be anything else to add to his stereotype-bending lifestyle. I was wrong.

During one session of tutoring, we got off the topic of pre-algebra as we often did, and I had a sudden urge to ask Vance why he had chosen to move from Los Angeles to a very small rural North Carolina town where cattle, not pop culture, was king. He digested my question, and then started out by saying, "Well, once I left NASA ..." I was astonished. Vance had once again thrown a curve ball which struck me out. As our conversation progressed, he began to connect the dots of my curiosity. Vance had been an engineer for the Apollo projects. His job was to construct the air systems for all Apollo spacecraft, and according to him, many of the calculations for the crafts were completed in the "pre calculator era." Now my ultra-conservative, Harley Davidson-riding math tutor suddenly became a NASA engineer. I officially decided that he fit no stereotype known to man.

Vance taught me many things over the course of that school year, including how to mold ceramics and which presidential candidate would surely enslave capitalistic America only to create a second Iron Curtain. However, the most lasting, as well as appreciated, lesson Vance taught me is that in life, people are not always who they seem and judgments are often dead wrong. Knowing Vance, I discovered that if you give someone the time of day, you may just find a NASA engineer standing right under your nose.



Excitement

scratchboard drawing by Evan Barnette '13



On and On It Goes

photograph by Zach Pulsifer '17

John Freeman '16

Lost at Sea

Booooooooooom! Cole woke up, thunder booming and waves thrashing against the side of the boat. Rushing over to his dad's bed, Cole screamed over the storm, "Dad, Dad! It's storming outside and the boat is swaying back and forth violently. We better go clear the deck and make sure none of our fishing stuff has gotten thrown off the boat!" Cole, a very curious and alert kid, sensed when things were going bad or good, so he demonstrated just the right personality and qualities for a fishing trip.

"Calm down. Calm down. It's not even morning. What's all the fuss?"

"There's an enormous storm outside! We need to go check if our stuff is still on the deck!"

“Where did this storm come from? We need to hurry. Let’s go!” Cole’s dad said.

Running and slipping, Cole and his dad looked frantically for all of their fishing gear but all they found was one fishing pole that had been thrown across the deck to the bow. They had left their stuff out on the deck under the covered part the night before but all of it, except one fishing pole, had flown into the ocean. While Cole and his dad were still searching, the storm continued with the wind howling, the waves crashing into the boat, the sky lighting up with lightning, and the thunder shaking the boat. “Dad, we need to get back inside. It’s no use, only one fishing pole is left,” Cole pointed out.

“Alright, we’ll keep looking later,” his dad replied. After they got back inside, Cole’s dad realized they needed to check to see if they were still going in the right direction. Reaching the helm in a rush he realized the storm was pushing them northeast when they need to be going southeast towards Nassau. With the storm pushing them north, they were getting closer and closer to the Bermuda Triangle. Having no idea how far they had been pushed to the north, Cole’s dad got out his map and looked to see their coordinates. They were twenty miles from the Island of Bermuda. Having no experience with boating trips, he decided to turn the boat back towards the southeast. Although Cole’s dad didn’t know it, going back into the waves and wind was very dangerous because the boat could easily flip if it didn’t have enough power to make it up a wave.

Three months before this boating and fishing trip, Cole and his family had moved from Boston, Massachusetts, all the way to Key West, Florida. Cole and his dad planned this trip to Nassau, Bahamas, from Key West one month after they arrived in Florida. Cole loved to fish and this was his dream to go on fishing and boating trip.

Crashing and spitting, the waves hurled themselves at the bow of the boat. Cole, going out onto the deck to see how the storm was, could barely see anything with all the water plummeting down on the boat. He then hurried back inside and to get some rest until morning. However, neither Cole nor his dad slept with the noise of the storm right outside their room. About an hour later, Cole and his dad heard a gigantic thud that stopped the boat instantly and hurled both of them out of their beds. Cole and his dad, bruised and tired, got up to see what had stopped the boat. As soon as Cole got to the stern, he said, “Dad, we’ve hit a bunch of rocks.” By this time, the storm had calmed down and Cole and his dad only heard a slight rumble of thunder off in the distance.

“Why are there a bunch of rocks in the middle of the ocean!?” Cole’s dad said madly.

Cole replied, “Well if we’ve hit a bunch of rocks, then maybe we’re close to land.”

“Yeah, I sure hope so,” Cole’s dad replied. Cole’s dad could feel the boat leaning forward into the water and realized the boat was sinking. Thinking out loud he said, “Hey do you feel the boat sinking Cole?”

“Yeah, maybe a little,” Cole said.

“I think the rocks made a crack in the boat. Hurry we need to get the emergency raft before the boat sinks!” Cole’s dad yelled. “You go get the emergency kit and all the food you can carry!”

“Okay. I’ll meet you at the stern of the boat,” Cole said in a panicky voice. Going down to the kitchen to get the food and fishing pole, Cole noticed the boat was sinking rapidly. Cole said to himself, “Those rocks must have made a huge crack in the boat. I better hurry.” Slipping and sliding, Cole slammed his head hard into the stair railing going down the stairs to the kitchen. Then everything went black.

Up on the deck, Cole’s dad rushed to get the emergency raft and life jackets when he realized they would need a compass to find their way to land. Running to the stairs to go up to the helm, he stopped dead in his tracks seeing his son lying on the stairs with blood rolling gently out of a cut above his eye. Hands shaking and lips trembling, Cole’s dad rushed over. “Are you alright?” he asked. Cole’s dad, no doctor, got very light-headed and worried when injuries occurred. Cole silence made his dad even more concerned, but he soon realized his son had been knocked out. Trying to forget about his fears of injuries, Cole’s dad acted fast because the boat was sinking rapidly. Cole’s dad sprinted to get some food, the emergency kit, and then his son. Taking the supplies and his son up to the deck, he grabbed the raft and got both of them safely off the boat onto the raft. Soon, however, he realized that he had forgotten the compass. Deciding it would not be worth it to risk going back onto the boat and leaving his son on the raft unconscious, they floated away without it.

Head itching and skin burning, Cole woke up worried and not aware of where he was. Cole remembered nothing and was perplexed why he and his dad were on a raft in the middle of the ocean.

“Dad, Why are we in on a raft in the middle of the ocean and why are there stitches above my eye?”

“Oh, no. You’ve forgotten everything about our fishing trip after you fell,” Cole’s dad said.

“Our fishing trip? And when did I fall?” Cole responded.

Cole’s dad went through the whole story, though his dad still didn’t know how Cole had fallen. After Cole rested for a day, he got back to his normal self, fishing and having fun on the water. Cole caught fish after fish although they stayed stranded in the middle of the ocean with hardly any food. Even though the circumstances continued to be bad, Cole, lively and exuberant, kept his dad’s hopes up.

Cole and his dad didn’t know it, but they were drifting towards Grand Bahamas Island. For three days, Cole and his dad, barely surviving, lived off the food from the boat. On the fourth day, Cole woke up and saw land in the distance. Cole, an energetic boy, woke his dad and started paddling frantically towards the land to get him and his dad to safety. Not a single person appeared to be on the beach as they came to shore. Exploring the island after getting ashore, Cole and his dad noticed commerce and people everywhere.

Cole’s dad said, “For sure there’s an airport here where we can fly back home.”

“There probably is, we just need to find it,” Cole added.

After three hours of looking, they finally asked a stranger and he told them the airport was fifteen minutes walking distance. Getting to the airport wasn’t a problem, but when they got there Cole’s dad found out he didn’t have any money with him and he was furious. He realized he had left his wallet in the boat next to his bed. Cole ended up convincing a generous family to give them some quarters, enabling his dad to call home and get the credit card number to pay for two plane tickets. After the phone call and lots of explaining, the flight home went smoothly, unlike the rest of the trip. Cole and his dad got home a week earlier than they had planned because of the boat wreck. In the end, Cole and his dad enjoyed the trip, even though they experienced quite an adventure.



Surf

photograph by Gilbert Browne '15



Stonework

photograph by Gilbert Browne '15

Broken

Broken up
Broken down
Broken in
Broken out

Broke with rage
Or just flat broke
A broken promise
Or a broken home

But the angels up above will sing *Amen*
And the sisters in the choir will sing *Amen*

A broken soul
Or a broken heart
A broken dream
Or a broken thought

Broken spirit left all alone
A broken wing
Or a broken bone

But the angels up above will sing *Amen*
And the brothers in the choir will sing *Amen*

Amen

Among the broken, a hope will rise
And in the dark, a light will shine
Will give us a love that will never die
And there is nothing left to say but
Amen



Distance

photograph by Jack Fleming '15

The Dream

It was the bottom of the eighth inning when the bullpen phone rang. The manager wanted Derek to start warming up. Feelings of nervous excitement rushed through Derek's body. He was about to make his Major League debut, and be one of the youngest to do so at the age of only 19. Derek never went to college because the Los Angeles Dodgers had drafted him out of his hometown high school in southern California as a left-handed closing pitcher. As his high school pitching coach put it, he had Randy Johnson's speed and the curveball of Sandy Koufax. Ever since he was a young boy, Derek had wanted to play Major League baseball and his dream was finally coming true. Strike three! The inning was over and the phone rang again – it was time.

Excited beyond imagination, Derek sprinted to the mound. The manager handed him the ball. "Do your best, son, and have some fun." The Dodgers led the Giants 5-0. Batter up! He set the first batter down on three straight fastballs. Good start to your career, he thought to himself, although he managed to contain his excitement. The next batter put up a bit of a fight, but after five pitches, Derek got him to ground out to the shortstop. Everyone was on their feet now. He had the batter down 0-2 when he threw a curveball and caught him looking. When he released the curveball, he did feel a slight pop in his elbow, but he perceived it as nothing. His team congratulated him on making his Major League debut, and he returned to the clubhouse to change and go home to his apartment.

Derek arrived at the ballpark the following afternoon for another game against the Giants that night. As he went out to do some long tossing, he found pain flying throughout his elbow after only a couple of throws, so he went to the trainer who pushed around on his elbow for a few minutes. When he was done, the trainer told Derek he had torn a ligament and he would have to get Tommy John Surgery. Shocked, Derek just sat there thinking about a year-long recovery, not listening to the trainer. Derek walked out of the clubhouse and returned to his apartment, not knowing what to do. A week later, he had surgery and then returned to his parent's house in southern California.

Derek stepped out on the field for the first time that spring. The smell of fresh cut grass was in the air. In just a few minutes, Derek's team would show up for practice. It had been six months since his surgery and he knew he still had another six months to go before his arm would be fully healed. Derek was the new head coach at his old high school and his team was one of the worst in the state. He stood there for a few minutes wondering how his team could turn it around and at least have a winning season; he couldn't think of solutions to help his team get better. Eventually his team arrived and he asked each player what position

he played. He had one pitcher, two outfielders, one third baseman, one first baseman, eight middle infielders and no catcher. This was going to be an interesting season.

Derek had them warm up, and after a few minutes he realized the pitcher was the only player who actually looked like he wanted to be there. The rest were there because their parents had made them play or they just wanted to hang out with friends. The first practice was as terrible as he had expected. The pitcher asked Derek to stay after practice and work with him on his mechanics. After they were done and the pitcher left, he thought how much he enjoyed teaching other pitchers. All the way back to his parents' house, he thought about becoming a pitching coach instead of a head coach, and then he made up his mind.

The next day, Derek talked to the athletic director of the school and resigned from his head coaching position. Derek had decided that he wanted to give private pitching lessons to kids in California. He put up a few posters around town, and before long he had a number of people call to ask about lessons. Derek gave his private lessons at the field just up the road from his parents' house. One day, Derek got a call from a kid in the middle of his senior year who wanted help with his mechanics. After just a few minutes of working the kid, Derek realized the kid had a lot of talent – maybe even enough to get drafted out of high school. At the end of the lesson, Derek talked to him about his potential. He told the kid that if he worked hard enough and had a good season he had a good chance of getting drafted.

Throughout pre-season, Derek had many private lessons with kids. He loved what he was doing, but he was still looking forward to resigning with the Dodgers and playing in the Bigs again. A week before pitchers and catchers reported for spring training, there was still no call. Finally, the phone rang. It was the Dodgers, but their call was not about him; they were considering the kid he'd been working with. They were thinking about signing him right out of high school and wanted his opinion on the kid. Derek gave his honest opinion, saying he was a good kid and he believed that the kid could play in the Majors. The Dodgers thanked him and hung up. The next day Derek got a phone call from the kid, he said that the Dodgers had just contacted him and they said that they had decided that they were going to draft him. Derek congratulated him and the kid thanked him for working with him, and Derek hung up the phone. Derek was happy for the kid but he couldn't believe they didn't want him back.

Derek continued his private lessons, and helped the kid prepare for the Big Leagues. The season ended, and the offseason rolled around. Suddenly, it was draft day and Derek attended it with the kid. As promised, the Dodgers took the kid in the first round. Derek was thrilled that he had helped get a kid to Majors, but he wished he was getting drafted and signing that contract, too. Derek returned home that night wondering what he was going to do with his life. He couldn't give private lessons his entire life because he was barely making enough to survive. As spring training neared, Derek noticed that the Dodgers had not resigned their pitching coach, and he began to wonder who they were trying to bring in.

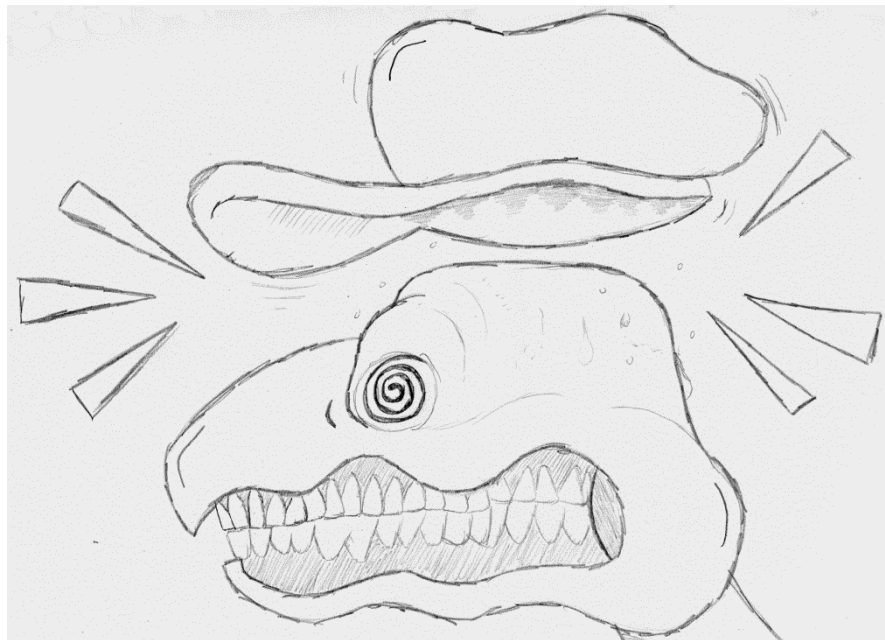
The phone rang. Once again it was the Dodgers but this time it was for him. They offered him a job as the team's pitching coach. Derek thanked them and asked why they

wanted him because he had no experience at all. They said they thought it was incredible how much the kid had changed from the end of his high school season to the beginning of Spring Training. When asked how the kid had improved so much, the kid explained that he had worked with Derek all summer and winter. With those kinds of changes in just a few months, they told Derek that he had the potential to be a great pitching coach. Of course Derek accepted and raced to his room to pack his bags.

On his way to Spring Training, Derek realized that his dream was not to play baseball but to be a part of the game in any way that he could. Derek also enjoyed teaching people about the game as much as he did playing. He could not have been happier with his new role in the organization. Derek did end up breaking a record, the record for being the youngest pitching coach in Major League Baseball history at the age of 21. Derek was proud of his new job, and went on to be a pitching coach for the Dodgers until he was 72 years old. Derek and the kid became one of the greatest duos in all of baseball, and the combination was even more intriguing because they were both practically the same age. Eventually the kid retired at the age of 41, and was inducted into the Hall of Fame the next year as one of the hardest throwing left-handers in the history of baseball. Although Derek was not the one being inducted into the Hall of Fame, he realized that he loved his job and he would trade nothing in the world for it.

Cap

*pencil drawing by
Sam Grabenstein '15*



The World in My Eye

“That is Ursa Major.”

“Look, Orion.”

Dark as it was, my friends and I were sitting on the ground trying to identify all the constellations we knew as we headed to the first base camp of Mount Qomolangma. I looked out at the night sky of slate-blue clouds and glittering stars. In the distance the first dim rays appeared, and, before long, the day broke, sun shining brilliantly on the distant ice peaks. We drove on along the rocky road that curved wildly around the mountains.

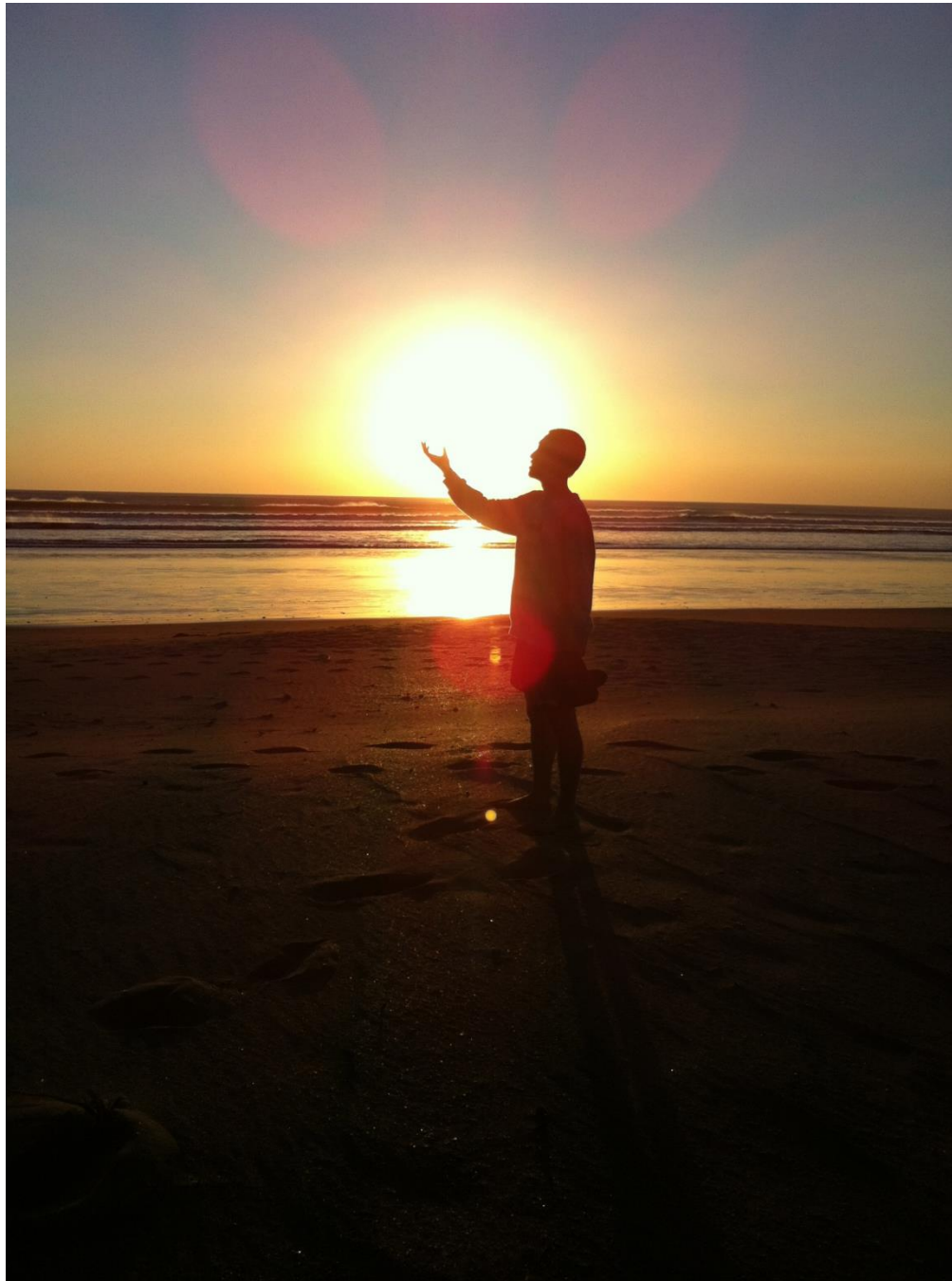
At the altitude of six thousand meters or so, we stopped at a mountain pass to take a short break. I took out my Taoism book and in the warm sunlight of Tibet I continued to read. The Way. Nature. Right and Wrong. The Governing. The Desire and Void. It was unexpectedly easy to be absorbed in the ancient language because everything around me -- the bushes, grass, and valleys in the distance -- was all in such an undisturbed state, as if it had always been this way since centuries ago. This quietness provided me with time for introspection and meditation, which an industrialized hometown can hardly do. Six hours later when we finally got to our first stop, the Tibetan sun was shining passionately, melted snow water flowing right beside us, clear as children's eyes, chilly as the winter breeze.

We had to climb over a small hill no higher than twenty meters, but what seemed to be a simple task was now particularly uneasy to tackle; at an altitude of 5,210 meters, we already had trouble breathing the thin air. Eventually stepping on the platform, I saw the world unfolded in front of me. There was no Noah's Ark, which was to my disappointment, but I saw Taoist Nature here, pure and glad. Heading up, iridescent sutra streamers, the link between the gods and people, were dancing in the wind. I couldn't help but gasp at the sanctity.

My friends reminded me that we had officially come to the border of our country, yet there were no signs of a boundary. There were also supposed to be no signs of human activity in such primitive nature. I recalled the beautiful starry sky we had seen that night at the small town of Dingri, where electricity was definitely absent, thus allowing us to witness the uncontaminated night sky. I recalled all the stunning scenery that came into my eyes during the journey, and suddenly wondered if all the so-called “developments” were really worth the cost, and how we must find a balance between industrialization and conservation. Lao Tzu taught that all the conceptions of good and bad come from comparison. Before that day I tended to see things the way I wanted them to be, and I forgot the way they really are. Now I know that all my previous judgments had been unfair about the place since nothing should be defined from a predetermined perspective. Having the preconception that urbanization means a better life, that urbanization would help the people in an underdeveloped region lead better

lives, I had forgotten to consider whether people, as well as nature, are happy with these “developments.”

The question that hit me will always remind me to explore unconventional perspectives. My whole life, it seemed, had been lived with all the perceptions and judgments injected by the authorities, textbooks and the elderly. But when I stood in a new position and looked at the question from a fresh angle, I found new answers. Nothing is eternal, but the starry nights and the shining peaks on the road will stay with me forever.



Rising Sun

photo by Conrad Ma '15

The Memory

The frigid air of an early late December morning burned the already chapped cheeks of the hunter. Few days till the season's end, the determined eyes of the man were set on a trophy buck. With the morning wind whispering, the sun creeping over the treeline, filling the sky with a pink glow, "Almost seven o' clock," the hunter said to himself. Finally, maybe one hundred and fifty yards away, the hunter saw a buck standing as still as a statue. The buck's tail was flipping, as if a spring were under it. A veteran hunter would know this was a sign that the deer was suspicious. Hands sweating and shaking, the hunter almost dropped his gun. This was a big buck. The hunter was almost as nervous as he had been at his first kill. The suspenseful scene was shattered when the buck made a move. Creeping and tip-toeing, the buck made the decision to go out into the field to the food plot – right where the hunter wanted him. Using his scope, the man counted ten, maybe even twelve points from this distance. It was the first chance he received all season to make a trophy out of a buck. He easily placed the scope just above the buck's shoulder, right where the heart would be. This was where his dad always taught him to keep the crosshairs; he could hear his booming voice now.

He watched the deer stomp into the snow as it breathed heavily, letting out small clouds of what looked like smoke. This was one of many moments that the man enjoyed about hunting, just watching this huge buck carefully make its way into the field to feed, taking each step with caution, always smelling the wind to make sure all was safe. It was a moment many hunters dream of getting. But just being able to watch wasn't the only thing that kept the man from taking the buck so quickly. Days like this reminded him of when he was just a boy and his dad had first taught him the ways of the hunt. It was this exact deer stand where the man had killed his first buck. He remembered it like it was just a day ago...

"Is it loaded?" the dad sternly asked his son.

"No, sir," the boy replied. After rechecking the chamber, they proceeded to the deer stand. The boy looked through the rifle over his shoulder and began his climb up the ladder to get settled in the stand. His dad gave him a look of approval along with a "Good luck!" The stand was closed in on all sides with windows on each wall.

As the boy got settled, the sun began to rise. "About 6:30," he mumbled to himself. He waited. And waited. And waited. The sky soon filled with early morning light. Twigs cracking, leaves rustling, he snapped out of his daze. He thought it was just a squirrel but the sound continued. It got louder and more violent. He knew this was no squirrel. He looked around but it was hard to tell where the sound was coming from. As soon as the sound stopped, however, the boy spotted the fat head of a buck poking out of the trees. It was taking extreme caution with every step toward the corn spread in the middle of the field.

Hands sweating, heart pounding, he became more nervous than ever before.

Adrenaline rushed through his veins. His legs wouldn't quit shaking. He took deep breaths, trying to remember how to breathe. He pulled it together and pushed a 3-round magazine into the rifle, pulled the bolt back and chambered one round. Before the boy could take his gun off safety, however, the buck headed out. Nothing about this field appealed to the buck.

The boy was going to have to work for this one. Picking up speed with every step, the deer was just shy of a near sprint. It would be a tough shot, but not impossible, and he was determined to take this opportunity nature had given him. He was confident in the work he had put into becoming a good shot. The boy remembered what his dad mumbled to him every time he made him practice his shot. "Aim small, miss small." He could hear his dad's voice now. Nature had presented an opportunity to make the boy a man, but nature wasn't just going to give it away, for this shot was only getting tougher with every second the boy didn't pull the trigger. Putting the crosshairs on the buck, he followed it. "Aim small, miss small," he repeated over and over.

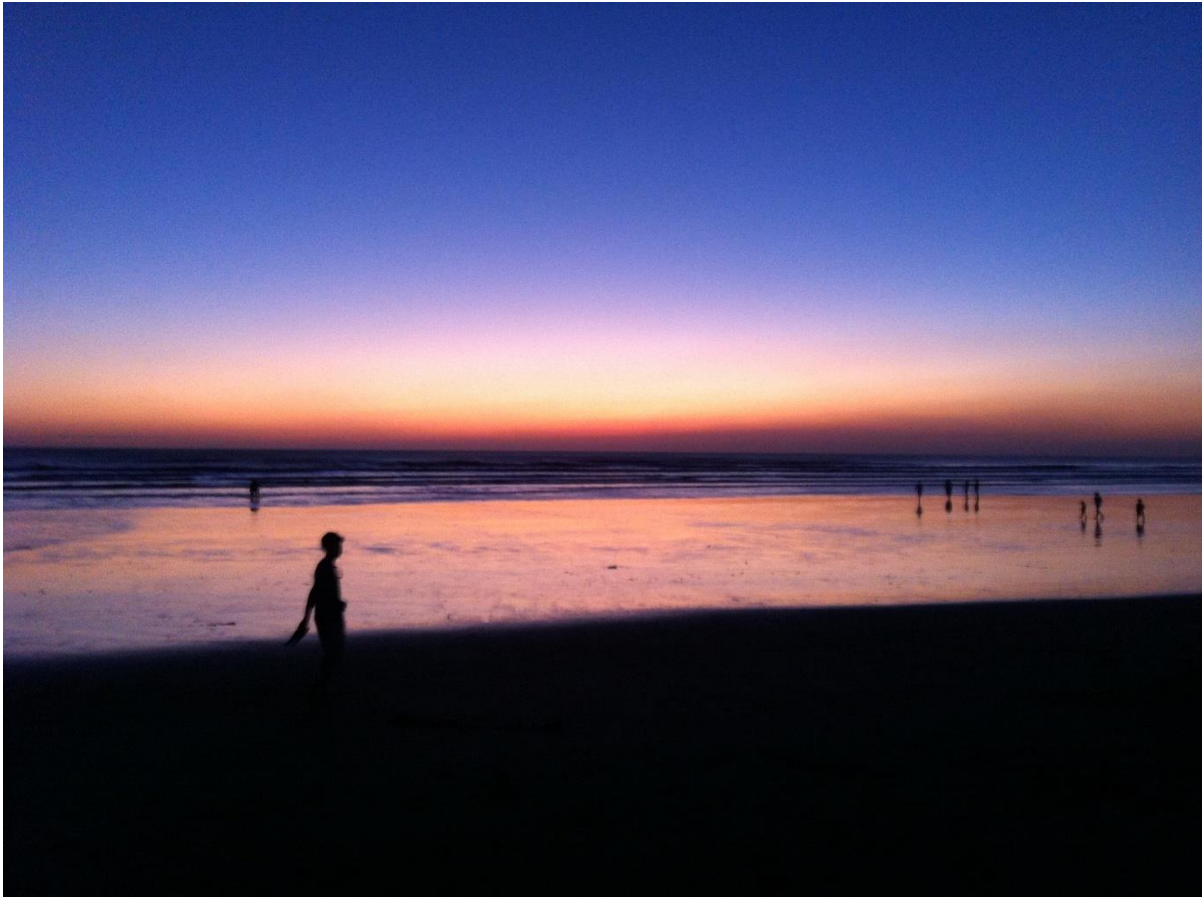
Soon enough the boy had a good half-inch lead in front of the buck's heart, right where he had always been taught to shoot. He eased his right index finger onto the trigger, and applied just the slightest but perfect amount of pressure.

The man quickly snapped out of his daze. He jumped and he wondered how long he had been daydreaming. Clearly not long because the buck was still grazing in the field. He placed the crosshairs on the 12 pointer. "Aim small, miss small" he whispered. Taking a final deep breath, he gently pulled the trigger.



Meeting Place

photo by Zach Pulsifer '17

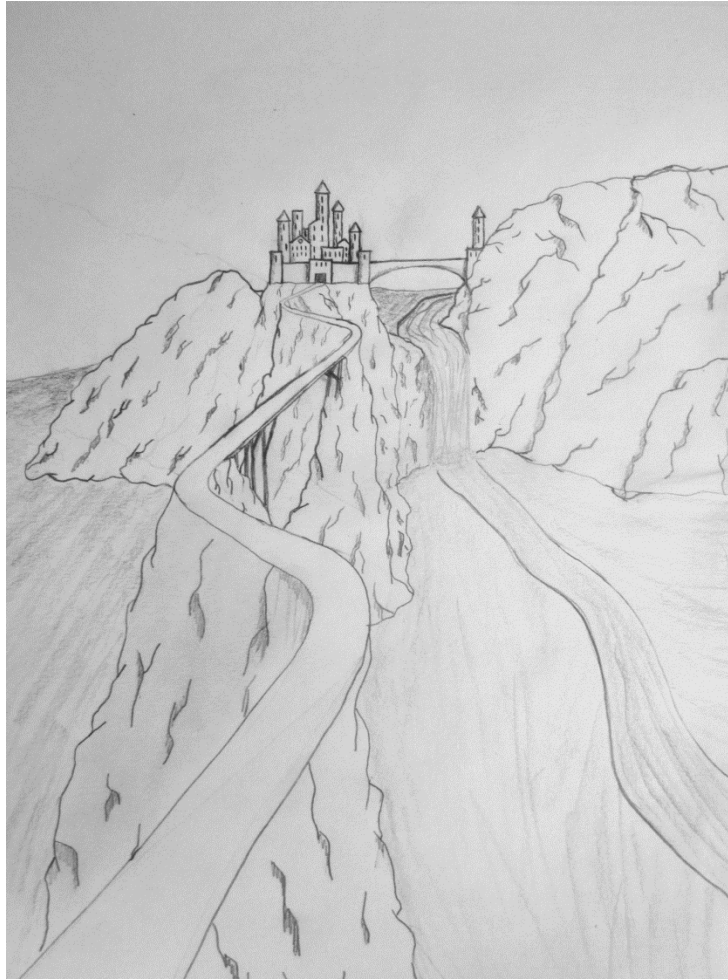


Purple Beach

photo by Conrad Ma '15

Fortress

*pencil drawing by
Nick England '13*



Turner Strayhorn '13

Snow Globe

CLUNK! My precious snow globe fell to the floor. Please don't break! Whew, thank goodness! It rolled under my bed. I knelt and reached until I felt its smooth, glassy shape. I pulled it from its dark retreat and looked into it. There lay a perfect replica of a small portion of one of the sections of the Great Wall of China. It had been carved by a direct descendant of the emperor, the Chinese snow globe salesman told me. Made from the bones of the fallen Mongolians who had laid siege to that very wall, painted with inks that had fallen in a meteor shower from outer space. It was a beauty. I felt the inscription on the bottom of the globe: Made in China. I gave it a shake and flurries waved up and around ("Made from real pieces of pearls," the same salesman had whispered to me). Idiot! He sold it to me for just five dollars!

Take Off

As the Christ School mini-bus pulls into the Snowshoe parking lot, trailer in tow, I can already see myself flying down the single-track, getting big air off of the tabletops and pulling huge G's on berms. I am the first to get off of the bus and run around to the back of the trailer. My good buddy Alex isn't far behind me, and we both lower the trailer gate to the pavement. People start getting in line to get their bikes, and Alex and I are ready to hand them out.

After everyone has his bike, Alex, the rest of the guys, and I start putting body armor on. I am always careful when it comes to biking, so I put my full back and chest protector on first. Next I clip on my neck brace, which keeps my head from moving too far back or forward. Shin and wrist guards are next, then my helmet and goggles. I bought some new Oakley goggles before we left, and I am really excited to use them.

"Is anyone else as pumped as I am?" I exclaim. I get some "Heck, yeah's" and some "Woooo's" in response, but Alex just can't control his excitement, and runs over to chest bump me. "Dude," he says. "Let's get our lift tickets and go!"

As we walk up the concrete-block steps, I am relieved we pre-ordered our tickets, as I see the massive line unfolding in front of me. Our group walks past everyone in line, heading straight for the ticket counter. "Are you guys the 'Christ School' group?" "That's us!" I reply enthusiastically, ready to get this show on the road; or on the trail, rather.

I reach up to the guy in the ticket office and grab the tickets for the group. As I hand them out I look around Snowshoe Village. I can remember some of the restaurants and bars from last time, but I see some new buildings under construction at the far end of the main street.

Everyone has his tickets, bikes, gear, and helmets, so I figure it's about time to make our first run. We make quick work of the small climb leading up to the trailhead. I look to the left and see my all-time favorite trail, Pro-DH, which consists mostly of jumps and small technical sections. I want to ride it as my first run so I call Alex over, and the rest of the group splits off to take a slightly easier way down.

I start off pedaling fast, wanting as much speed as I can get for the first jump of the trail which is also the biggest. As I approach the jump, I feel the nervous anticipation that everyone gets on their first run of the day. I make sure my feet are in the right positions on the pedals. I check my brakes, slowing down a miniscule amount before take-off.

Immediately, I know I've hit the jump too fast. Everything is happening in slow motion. I feel myself pitching forward and realize that I won't be able to land this one. I ditch my bike in mid-air, throwing it to the right, off the trail. I remember something my teacher told me about landing a jump without a bike. "Land with your feet sliding down, to absorb

the impact. Then your hip, then your shoulder.” I try the process as best I can, flailing around in mid-jump, desperately trying to get my legs and feet pointed in the right direction.

As I inch closer to the ground, I realize I can’t get my feet around fast enough. My hip slams into the dirt landing ramp, with my head pointed downhill. My arm is next, and I scream as my entire lower left arm, radius and ulna, shatters on contact with the ground. My shoulder is next, and I can almost hear muscle and ligaments tearing. My collarbone fractures and penetrates through my skin, narrowly missing my neck. The worst is yet to come. My head smacks the ground last, jarring my brain and delivering a severe concussion. I am instantly knocked unconscious, my body unable to handle the intense pain.

I wake up four days later in a white room with people in teal hospital scrubs all around me. The doctors tell me that after I blacked out, I was airlifted off of the mountain. I slipped into a coma on the helicopter ride in. I had been in stable condition the whole time, but had still given my friends and family a pretty big scare. My lower left arm was severely fractured. My rotator cuff had been separated from my shoulder in two places, and had completely torn. I would need intensive surgery on that, along with 860 stitches to repair the damage my collarbone did. The doc tells me that I’m lucky my collarbone didn’t tear more than it did; a few inches to the right and my carotid artery would have been severed.

After eleven months of recovery and eight months of physical therapy, I am back at Snowshoe, standing at the start of the trail that almost killed me.



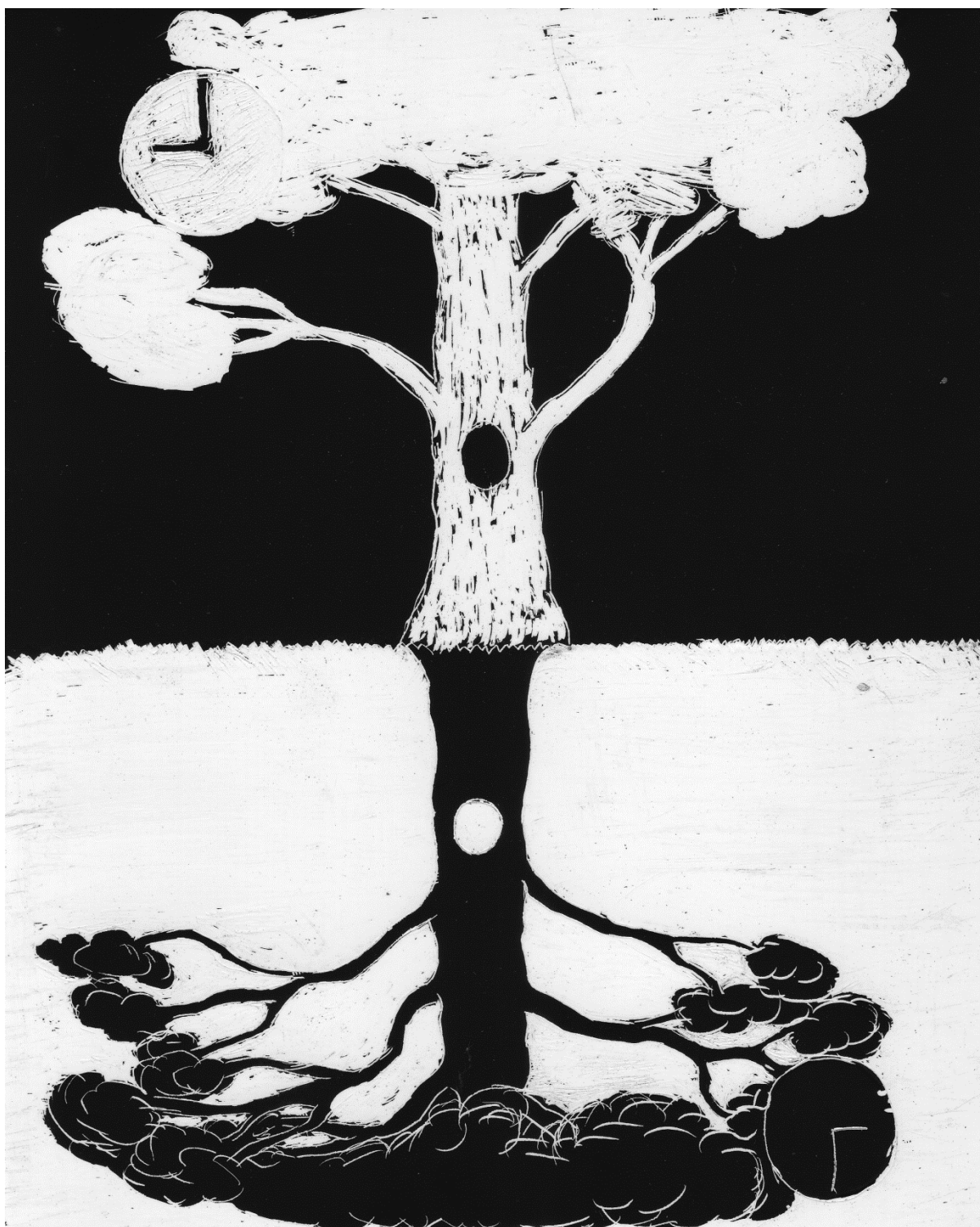
Plane

pencil drawing by Karl Yuan '16

Tree

Written for a friend who did not believe in himself

This hollow tree is broken.
His branches are dry and stiff,
the howling winds and bitter cold have broken his will to continue his life. All of his
once green and bright leaves now lie dead on the ground,
lifeless and sad.
The happy birds fly past him, chirping sweet songs of love and life,
while he is stuck in the ground, unable to move or change, lifeless.
He wants to fly and be free,
be happy,
be like the birds with color and joy.
He can't move out from the dirt, he is stuck with no hope.
He feels useless, not giving anything to the earth.
No fruits to give out, no animal's nest in him.
He feels useless.
He gives up and falls.
On his way to the ground, he hits another tree, a living tree with apples and leaves.
He chops that tree's branches off, makes the tree's leaves fall.
He scrapes the bark off other trees, and strips them of their resources.
He kills them as others have killed him.
When he falls, he brings everyone with them, making him feel like everyone else.
He still feels useless.
But once he has fallen on the ground, he is made into logs used to heat a family's home.
He is made into an old man's walking cane.
Although he is not the best tree,
he is far from useless.



Tree

scratchboard drawing by Luke Pearce '14

The Unthinkable

A special boy lived in a small town in Texas. He loved the game of basketball like no other but he could never play on his high school team due to his slight mental disability. Since freshmen year, the boy had served as the team's manager and had been attending the basketball games as young boy. He never missed any games and had a positive attitude even if his team lost. He refilled water bottles, cleaned jerseys, and did anything else the team needed him to do. He was part of the team even though he never played. Every player respected and loved him like a part of their family.

The boy only had one dream: to play in a game. He didn't care how long he played or if he scored, all he wanted to do was play.

It was the boy's senior year and the last game of the season. The boy was in for a big surprise. The coach has decided to let him dress for a game so he could play. The coach was even prepared to lose just so the boy could play. The boy had no idea about this at all. When the team told him, he didn't know what to say. Happy as a kid on Christmas day, the boy's eyes watered up.

Twenty minutes until tipoff, the team sat in the locker room ready to go. This time though, they had an extra player. Dressed in a uniform, the boy stood in the middle of the team. The coach gave the pregame speech and let the boy break them down and lead them from the locker room. Stepping out of the locker room, mouth gaping, the boy stared at all of the fans who had come to cheer him on. There were fans everywhere, overflowing from the stands and standing anywhere there was space. They all had signs with his picture and name. As soon as the crowd saw the boy, they roared like thunder, cheering. Dumbstruck, the boy just stood and stared at the whole crowd cheering. It was the best moment of his life.

With the boy starting on the bench, the game began. It was a close game the entire time, back and forth with no one team holding the lead for long. Finally, in the third quarter, the boy's team started to pull away. At the end of the third quarter the score read 54 to 43. That was when the chanting began. The whole crowd started to chant the boy's name. The coach made his decision and put in the boy. Excited, the crowd roared in approval.

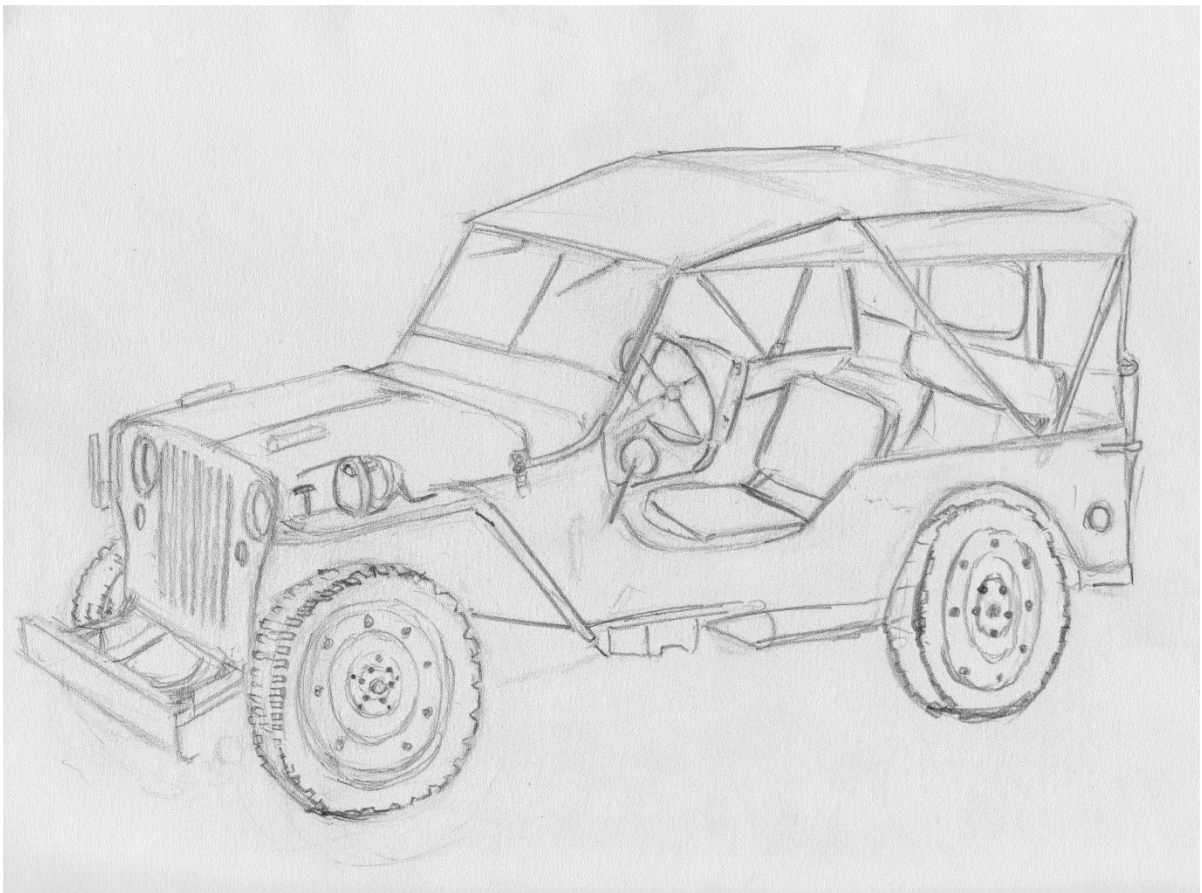
The fourth quarter began and the boys' team had the ball. They inbounded it and told the kid to go stand by the other team's basket no matter if they were on defense or offense. As hard as the team tried to get him to score, the boy couldn't seem to put the ball in the hoop. When they were coming down on a fast break and passed it to him, he either missed the shot or couldn't catch the ball. Each time the kid looked like he was going to score, the crowd got excited, but when he missed or dropped the ball the crowd lost hope as the game started to come to a close.

There were seven seconds left in the fourth quarter and his team was up by sixteen. As the game was coming to an end, it appeared as if the boy wasn't going to be able to score.

His team assured him that he would, but he knew that he wouldn't have time. The boy was standing under the other team's basket and referee blew his whistle for the other team to inbound the ball. Though he was happy that he got to play, the boy still wished he could have scored.

That was when the unthinkable happened. The player on the other team who was inbounding the ball, called the boy's name and passed him the ball right under the hoop. Shocked, the boy didn't know what to do for a second. With the clock counting down, everyone yelled at him to shoot. Snapping back to reality, the boy shot the ball. Time seemed to slow down for those seconds. The ball hit the backboard, rolled around the rim, and dropped in.

The whole crowd and both teams went insane. The gym shook as if an earthquake was happening at that moment. The roar of the crowd was deafening. Then, like a huge wave, they all rushed toward him. They picked him up, put him on their shoulders, and cheered. The boy, once a manager, was now was the star of the game and a hero in that small, Texas town.



Jeep

pencil drawing by Shawn Yang '15



Secret Call

pencil drawing by Camrin Opp '14

Turner Strayhorn '13

The Revolution Will Not be Televised

Sammy sat in his tenth story apartment, eyes fixed on his television. “Breaking News,” it read. The lights were off, but a warm glow flickered on the ceiling. He was focused on the news reporter who was standing in a street. Sammy recognized that street. Behind him there was a mass of people, mostly students but young children and adults as well. The excess of background noise suppressed the reporter’s voice. Sammy thought he heard screaming. He reached for the remote and held down the plus on the volume button.

His phone had been vibrating all night. Friends of his, from work mostly, asking if he would join them. The Revolution, they called it. He couldn't answer. Rather, he couldn't decide. Sammy watched on the television as a bottle flew through the air and smashed next to the reporter. "Shit!" Sammy heard him exclaim. *The news station won't be happy about that*, Sammy thought.

His phone vibrated again, his friends. *Why do they want me down there so badly?* Sammy considered getting out a notepad, listing the pros and cons of going. *No, that's idiotic.* He shifted his focus back toward the television, its light bright on the ceiling, blending with the warm glow coming from his window. *Not blending*, he thought. *Fighting.* His phone vibrated again.

He stood up. He couldn't sit. Pacing back and forth, he searched his mind, trying to find a reason to remain in his apartment, his bird's nest. *I guess I always talked of this day with my friends. Hell, I even believed I wanted it. Our people, standing up for themselves. I have to make a decision.* A car alarm shrieked and the reporter tried to speak over it. *I can't think with all this noise.* He grabbed the remote and hit mute but the noise continued, and other alarms began to join in. *Are they in my head?* The warm glow danced across his ceiling, growing ever brighter. The blue, cold light from the television was outmatched.

He looked out the window. These streets had never been so crowded. He saw SWAT vehicles and policemen, riot shields in hand, trying to stifle the crowd. And the fire, reflecting off of what glass had not been shattered, lit the street. *You can't quell "The Revolution,"* he joked. *I sound like my friends.* For a moment, Sammy truly wished he held that same level of passion and fury towards their government. He wanted to be out there, just as angry as them, swinging a baseball bat, calling for their self-proclaimed leader's head. He couldn't.

His phone vibrated. "Are you coming?!" *No.* He sat down on his favorite spot on the couch. His butt fit perfectly into the cushion, a groove that could only be formed from hours of sitting. He turned the volume back on. The reporter was holding a phone to his ear. After a moment he set it down. "It looks like the Chancellor is refusing to step down from office," the man said. "He is currently hiding in an unknown location. Military officials have"

The power went out and the TV went black.

Sammy sat on his couch for several minutes, watching the glow from the fires down below dance on his ceiling.

His phone vibrated.



Clouds

photograph by Gilbert Browne '15

That's Something

"You look like something Taco set her teeth to," Carla May said from her recliner by the fish tank. "There's muck in your hair – and what's wrong with that shirt?"

Smitty used one hand to shield his cheek, the other to tug the edge of his jean jacket over the bloom of blood. The slice by his hip was still oozing but he wasn't about to lift his shirt and feed Carla May's appetite for drama. He knew about the twigs and burdocks in his hair but his hands were shaking so bad they'd do nothing to work them free. Lucky for him, his aunt couldn't see much in the low light from the 60" screen above Taco's empty crate.

"Chemistry accident," he said, and watched without surprise as Carla May's attention scurried from the story he might tell to a drug commercial on the TV. Tan couples, silver-haired and swaddled in clothes so white they glowed, sacheted along palm-studded beaches and soaked in jacuzzis. "The best," a silky voice purred, "is yet to come." Comfortable in the rut her wide bottom had claimed years ago, Carla May couldn't help but smile and expel a languid sigh. Yes, for Carla May the best was always on its way.

"Where's Taco?" Smitty asked.

Carla May didn't rush to respond. She pulled a peanut from the plastic cup wedged in her chair's cup holder and rolled it expertly between thumb and forefinger. With a dainty flick, the nuts tipped onto her tongue and disappeared. There was a ping as the shell hit the rim of the mixing bowl by her feet and settled on the worn carpet. Fortified, Carla May shifted to the left and answered Smitty's question. Taco, the stray Dachshund Smitty had rescued from a puddle behind the Dollar Tree, was asleep in the slim gap between Carla May's generous thigh and the chair's armrest.

The last time Smitty's older brother Zebulon walked out of the Warren Pen, he had high-tailed it for their trailer and was jacked in an hour. He took a bat to everything in sight, including the plastic light fixture in the hall, the latch on the bathroom door and the mirror above the sink. His hand? He broke that, too, somewhere along the way. Smitty had been sorry about his clock radio and the pee-wee soccer trophy he'd won the year before their mother stumbled on Jesus and followed him far from her two mewling sons, but he'd been quick to shake the hurt of those losses. No point in getting attached when life was one robbery after another. Leaning over the basin with cool water breaking over his quaking hands, he felt a moment of gratitude that there was no mirror above him to frame his defeat. He wedged his dirty shirt under the door to keep it closed and cranked the hot water.

Without a fan, the room quickly clotted with steam. The moisture and heat softened the swollen knot below his eye and dissolved the scab that was trying to stitch the six inch cut at his waist. Washed clean, the knife wound didn't look so bad.

"I never went down," he said to the grid of pink mold that mottled the shower's tiles. "That's something."



Walker

photograph by Conrad Ma '15

Kiffen Loomis '16

Apart But Always Close

The other orphans ran and played about in the courtyard of the monastery. Most of the boys threw a red, felt-covered ball from one to another. Fibers fell from the ball each time it rolled out of a boy's hand and created faint red lines across the yard. The ball crested at a height above the decrepit Spanish brick wall surrounding the yard, but it never seemed to surpass the barrier. The girls gossiped about the latest news in the orphanage while sitting in the farthest corner. The other children sat alone along the perimeter, looking down into their laps. Broken concrete strips grew out from the rubble at the base of the wall and ran across the yard diagonally against the sparse grass that grew in the opposite direction to form a checkerboard pattern. Weeds emerged from the cracks in the concrete to nearly overtake the grass. A fountain of Mother Mary stood in the middle of the yard. Her ears had broken off, and the youngest boys had marked over her waved dress with crayons. Amy and I sat under the fountain and stared up at her hands in hope that a single bead of water might fall from one of her fingers. Mother Holmes, the matron nun of the orphanage, told me that the fountain water had dried up far before I arrived at the orphanage, but I never lost hope. This is how I approached my life in the orphanage: I never gave up.

Amy and I had known each other for about five years. She arrived at the orphanage when I was five and she seven. It took a while for her to open up to me, as was the case for many of the orphans. We all made the best of our situations. Abandonment and denial filled Amy's upbringing, so she constantly doubted the motives of those who loved her. Just before she arrived at the orphanage, her dad left her in a park, never to return. When asked why he was walking away from his child, he responded, "I have never spoken to her a day in my life, and besides, what is she worth to anyone?"

Amy turned and locked eyes with me. A thick part of her bangs hung over her face and almost covered her dark brown eyes. We stared into each other's eyes for a few more moments, and then she broke away and started rummaging through her pocket. She pulled out a small pair of scissors and cut two locks from her bangs.

I was taken aback. "What are you doing, Amy?" I asked.

"Sean, you are a part of me. You are my first thought in the morning when I wake up. Every time I see you, I get the same anxious feeling I had when I first spoke with you. I could never bear losing you from my life. So, I know how we can always be together," Amy said. As she held out the bangs in her hand, she proposed, "You will take one lock and I will take the other. If we carry it with us each day, we will be together for the rest of our lives. The hair will remind us that we are never truly apart, but rather, we are on different sides of one path."

I took the bangs and carefully clenched them in my hand. "I love you, Amy. You are my --"

GONG-GONG-GONG!!! Mother Holmes rang the church bell, which echoed throughout the monastery each day to signify that it was time for supper. The movement in the courtyard stopped for just a moment, and then we all ran toward the meal hall.

The scuffed, oak table stretched across the narrow dining hall. A solid oak door barely remained fastened at the end of the hall. The stucco walls had so many sloppily repaired holes that they appeared to be made of spackle. Along the table, the other kids sat according to their cliques. The boys who prided themselves on their confidence, but were actually the most insecure, sat on the far end of the table; the gossiping girls sat in the middle; the painfully shy and independent children sat on the end nearest to Amy and me. The orphans' high voices echoed throughout the hall, producing an almost unbearable noise. Some stood and moved and laughed and played, which, for only an instant, made them appear to be normal.

With a large crash and thud, the oak door at the end of the hall opened and smacked the wall with such force that white spackle fell in sheets. Father Eli emerged from behind the door with a middle-aged man and woman next to him. He shouted, "Amy Winsmorth, are you here?"

Amy's eyes widened, as she slid her right hand into mine. We both bent our heads down and closed our eyes in fear of what was to come. All of us had seen this before and knew what was happening: Amy was being taken up for adoption.

Father Eli shouted again in a much sterner voice, "Amy Winsmorth, are you here?"

She still refused to answer. Mother Holmes made eye contact with the priest and pointed at Amy.

Eyes still closed, I heard a steady, thud-like noise, which became deeper and louder by the second. Eventually the noise felt as though it were on top of us. The noise stopped for a few moments, until Amy began to scream.

"Patel!!! Don't let go!" she pled as Father Eli's two rough hands pulled her from me. She continued to scream and kick for her freedom as she fought the hands. Every mouth in the hall fell silent. I tried to anchor her down, but my strength was not great enough. The priest's hands overwhelmed me in power, and finally, I lost her, out of my grasp and touch.

I rose and began to run after her, but Mother Holmes restrained me. I watched as the priest carried away my beloved. Her screams reverberated until they were capped by the thud of the oak door closing.

I stared up at the stained ceiling of the boys' hall through the entirety of that night. I was unable to clear my mind of our separation. I felt polarizing guilt. Could I have held her tighter to me and not let her go? Did I give up during the struggle? Should I have fought Mother Holmes's restraint and run after her? These questions penetrated my thoughts. I was broken before I met Amy. She glued me back together, and I became shattered again.

My perpetuating guilt battled inside me long into the next days. I sat silently below the Mother Mary fountain all of the following day. No longer did I wish for a drop of water to fall from her finger, as my tears fulfilled my longing. My life was no longer worth living without Amy. When we were together, our conversations never ran dry, and our interest in one another was everlasting. She made my life livable. The fissures within me, which had begun to heal when I was with Amy, opened and splintered into my soul.

Over sixty years passed after the day that Father Eli ripped Amy away from me. I remained incomplete, still filled with the same shattering feeling of the first night. I thought of her every day. My mind would often coax me into seeing her in my most emotionally trying moments, which urged me to question the value of my life without her.

As I sat reading one day in Zoe Za's Coffee Shop, my mind began to drift back to our life together. I remembered her smooth voice, which I had taken for granted. My mind dove deeper into these thoughts. I began to stare into my coffee mug and watch the vapor rise from the steaming brew, blocking out my surroundings. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the tail of a lock of brown hair peeking out of a book beside me. I refocused my sight and looked over to see that the book was entitled, *Apart But Always Close*. My mind raced, as this prompted me to delve into the devastation of our separation even further. At first, I denied the inclination to think of Amy, but then I thought back to the lock of hair that Amy had given me so long ago. I reached into my pocket, where, for the past sixty-seven years, I had kept the lock of hair. I pulled out the lock, now brittle, but still retaining its color, and placed it next to the bit sticking out of the book. It matched.

I fearfully turned to my right to see an old, gray-haired woman, who locked her widened eyes with mine. Her eyes brought me back to the days in the monastery when Amy and I would gaze into each other's eyes. They filled me with the same sense of warmth and nostalgia and, simultaneously, the craters in my heart refilled. I knew that I had been reunited with my beloved. Our everlasting love for each other, which was never lost through the years apart, led us back together to live the rest of our lives as one.



Church

oil painting by Vincent Li '13

The Killer

William had been chased for a long time. From the time he started fleeing until right now, it has been six months. He lived in fear those six months. He could not sleep at night and always had nightmares that he would be caught or killed. At three o'clock one morning, he roused from sleep feeling like there was a cold steel tube on his throat.

"William." It was the voice of a man, but William could not see anything because of the dark. "Turn on the lamp." William tried to sit up, but he still could not get rid of the steel tube on his neck. The light flickered on; the light of the lamp was too bright for him. He blinked his eyes and his sight became clear. A well-dressed man stood next to his bed and the dark muzzle of a gun pointed at his head.

"It is over," William said sadly. "Everything is over, and no one will know that I died in this place. This is where my mom died. My dad was killed a long time ago, and when my mom got cancer, she spent the rest of her life in this small port city."

"You chose a nice place to die," the killer responded without any emotion. "It's been a really long chase. Mr. Totti has hired me for more than six months, and it is the hardest chase I have ever had. America, Japan, North Korea, China, Vietnam, Indonesia – I finally got you right here in Australia." William sat on the bed, his face pale, looking at the killer hopelessly. "I am one of the best killers in the world," the man continued. "Mr. Totti paid me a lot of money. He must hate you so much."

William smiled. "That is funny. Mr. Totti does not need to be afraid about anything. I just grew tired of those underground businesses. I will not tell anyone about it."

"Even though you are telling the truth, I still have to kill you. That is my mission," the killer said impassively.

Trembling and sweating, William knew he was going to die. Suddenly he yelled out, "I have a lot of money, I can give you anything if you want." He was almost crying, "I will give you anything if you want. Please let me go, please!"

"I cannot," the killer answered. "I am professional, I have to finish my mission. If I do not, it is not good for my reputation and my future."

"All right then." William calmed down and realized he had no chance of escape from death this time. "Can you do me a favor?" William asked calmly.

"Yes," the killer answered.

"There is an envelope in the first drawer of the desk with a piece of paper in it." William pointed at the desk on the other side of the room. "After you kill me, I hope you can read it and hand it to Mr. Totti. Will you do that?"

"Yes, I will," the killer answered. Then he fired the gun without any hesitation. A bloody hole appeared between William's eyebrows. His eyes were still open, but vacant. His head slanted to one side and blood dripped from his forehead to the pillow.

The killer pulled out his camera and took some pictures of William's face and the whole room. Before he left, he remembered the last words William had said to him. He found the envelope in the drawer. He opened it, read the letter, put it back into the envelope, looked again at William's corpse, and walked out of the room.

"Did you really kill him?" Mr. Totti, the leader of the black-hand party asked when the killer met him.



Angry

pencil drawing by Vincent Li '13

"That was a really long chase wasn't it? I can finally relax a little bit. Show me the photos."

The killer handed the photos to Mr. Totti, who smiled and nodded his head in satisfaction. "I have already put money in your bank account. Good job."

"William wanted me to give this to you." The killer took the envelope out of his pocket and handed it to Mr. Totti.

"What does he want? Does he still have something to show me after he's dead?" Mr. Totti laughed as he read.

Totti, I knew you would send a killer to murder me, but if you are reading this letter, it means the killer who shot me has already received my two-hundred thousand dollar check and his next mission is to kill you.

Mr. Totti looked up. The gun fired and Mr. Totti died clutching the letter from William.

Persevering

There is no panacea for hopelessness.

But, there is a place over here,

closing your eyes,

angels show you

what is in a particle of a blossom,

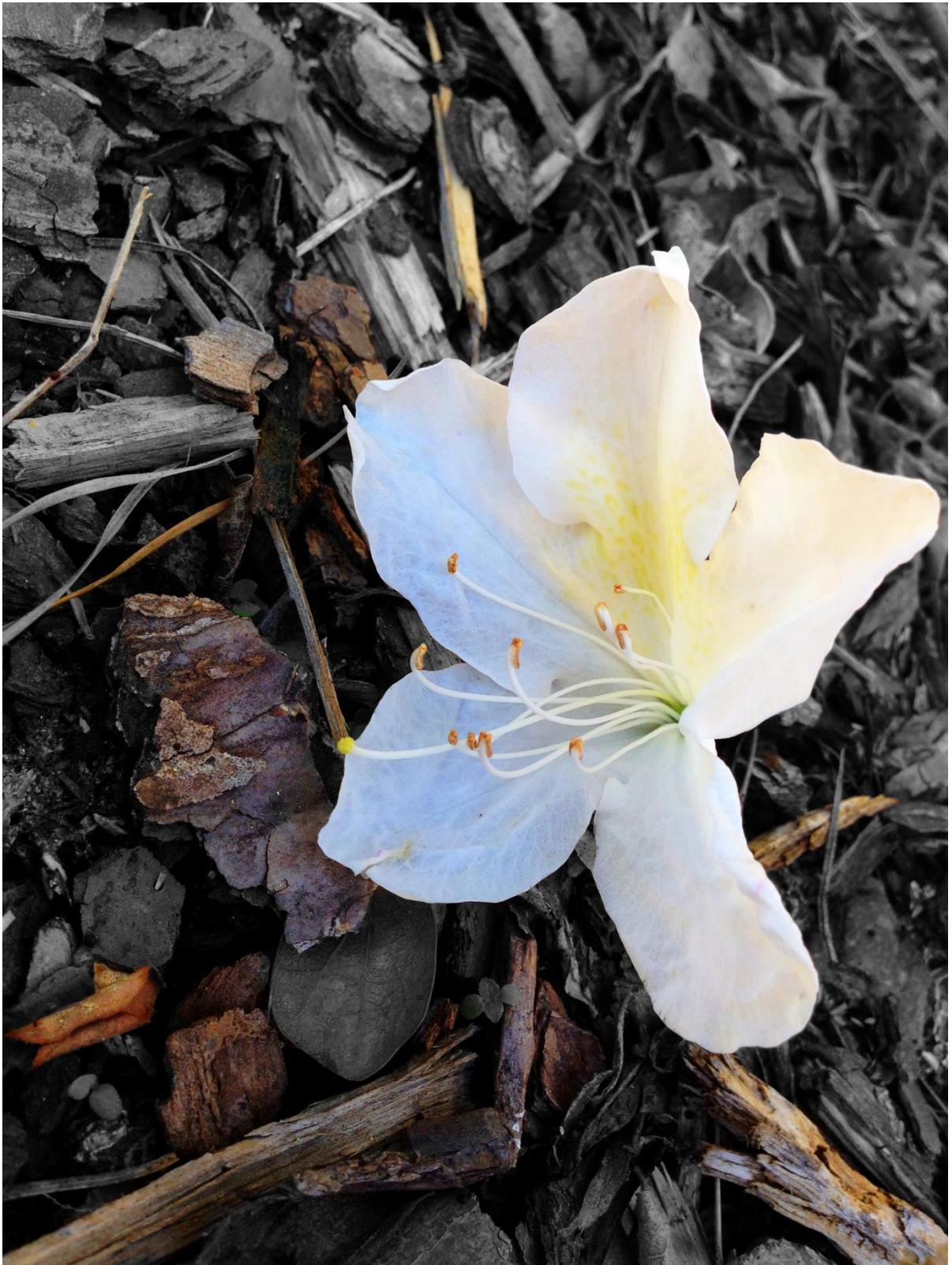
of flowers full-blown among thorns.

Tears germinate

those persevering blooms

and step by step

the bloom's aroma is fully exhausted.



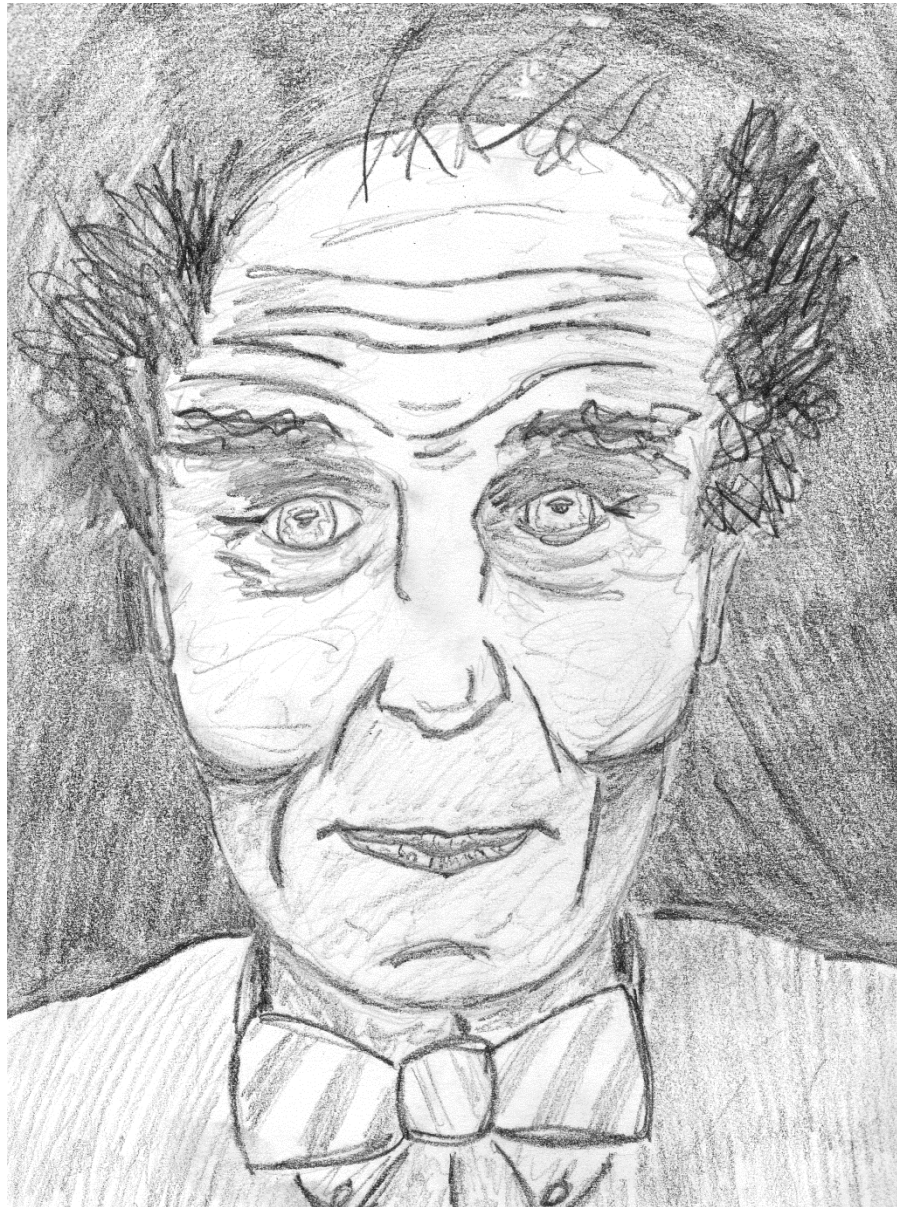
Spreading Light

photograph by Conner Allison '15

A Modest Proposal for a Perfect Government

The largest problem that faces the United States today is that two equally divided parties disagree on the government's role in national and global society. When a single party is in power, the government can pass legislation quickly and then make more significant changes to solve problems. Since it is fairly uncommon for a single party to maintain complete control, I can see only one solution which can solve this matter completely for the present and future of this country. If I were to be put into absolute power for life, then the country would be completely united. I, as the sole dictator, could pass legislation efficiently, making the country more productive and without disunity.

In the current system of the United States Government, legislation is very difficult to pass due to the fact that so many people have to agree on it. As dictator, I would only have to debate the topic in my head, and I would not have to worry about what others thought about it because it would be illegal for them to speak out against me. President Harry S. Truman, whom I will fondly call one of the less-successful of my predecessors once



Creepy

pencil drawing by Evan Barnett '13

said, “When you have an efficient government, you have a dictatorship.” With this ideology, the government could make improvements that would correspond with everyone’s opinion, because everyone would be forced to agree with me. According to the website *henrykeenanisthebest.com*, polls show citizens who approve of my ideas have increased by over six hundred million percent over the last year from zero. Therefore, if I were the supreme dictator, I would pass far more legislation which would not always necessarily be good, but that would be better than nothing at all.

After passing (through my head) all of the laws and projects, the country would immediately be forced to do as I say even if they do not want to. Richard Branson describes my feelings towards this controlled lifestyle, “I believe in benevolent dictatorship provided I am the dictator.” Therefore I would not care what the people thought of my orders, so long as they carried them out in an enthusiastic manner. Mel Gibson summed it up well when he said, “If you stand on a soapbox and trade rhetoric with a dictator you never win.” If anyone were to engage in a debate against me and win, I could accuse, try and sentence to death my opponent in a matter of seconds, which is far less expensive and time consuming than a traditional court. As a result of this constant fear, people would not focus on contradicting me, but rather they would concentrate on the task at hand.

Today, the country is divided between two political parties that have very different philosophies on the role of government. It is very difficult to get anything done as a result of this and the process can often be very messy. As Otto von Bismarck once said, “Laws are like sausages, it is better not to see them being made.” As dictator, I could relieve the country of this messy and corrupt process, and keep the messy burden in my own mind so that others would not have to worry about it. Right now, the country is looking for a strong leader, similar to Germany during the early 1930s. I, like Adolf Hitler, would turn my nation into a global empire; however, I would not persecute millions of potential contributors. I would be the great leader to fill the void in our country’s leadership, and would be the most popular leader, not only in our nation’s history, but in world history because the people by law would have to love me.

Dictators have had their names engraved in history since the days of Julius Caesar. Dictators are always remembered, even if they were horrible leaders, and I intend to be remembered, even if I would be a tyrannical leader. As dictator, I would also become the ultimate celebrity, in a country where celebrities are most celebrated. Some historians say that Winston Churchill was a great leader who failed miserably as a dictator. He won the Second World War and was promptly voted out of office; whereas had he been a good dictator, he would have made himself Prime Minister for life. The reason Churchill failed as a dictator was that he was stupid enough to believe in democracy. “It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government,” he once wrote, “except all the others that have been tried.” Churchill’s problem was that he was right. My final policy as dictator would be to return democracy to the United States. This return of democracy would also help realize my ultimate goal, which is to ensure that no man is ever as great as I will have been.

Mary Dillon, faculty

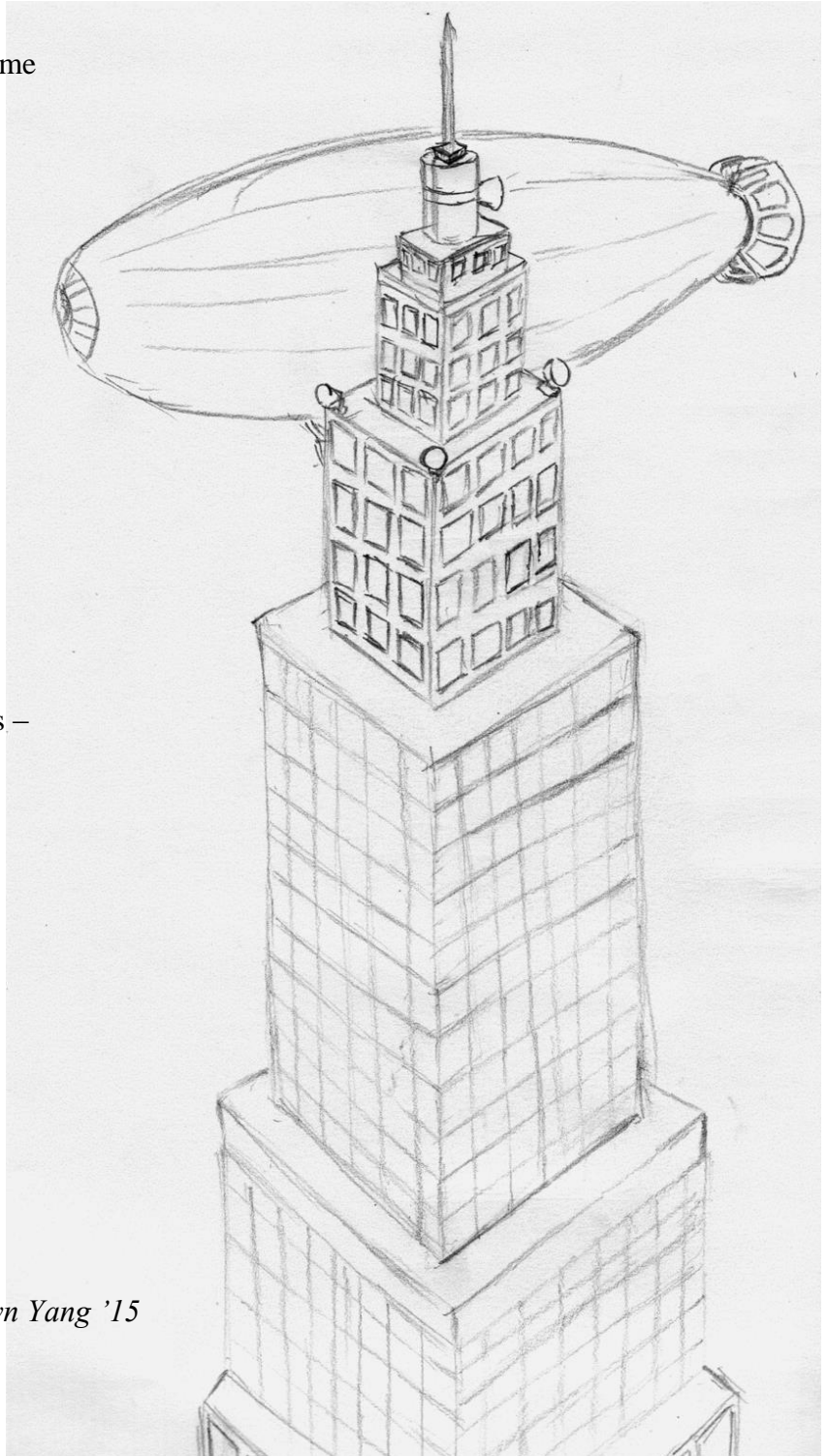
Traveling

When I realize that I – the me
I face as I brush
my teeth every morning –
will never be finished,
captured behind a glossy
surface like a photograph,
or smeared in oil and
hung in a gilt frame
on a museum wall
or be done with a “ding”
like a meatloaf,
never quite reach
an internal temperature
of 165 degrees
wearing a ruby crisp crust
and companioned by
pillows of mashed potatoes –

I sigh with relief.

Dirigible

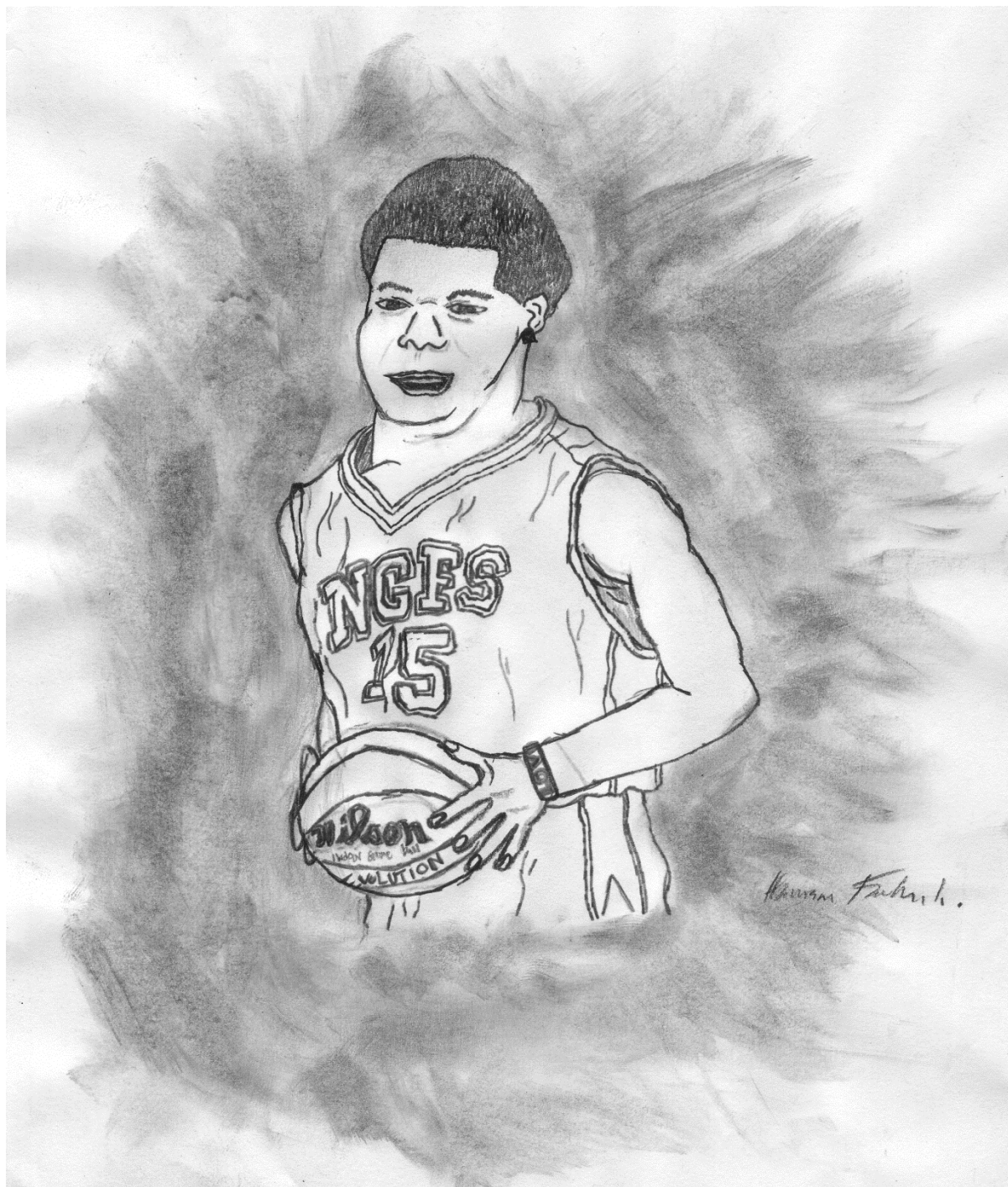
pencil drawing by Shawn Yang '15





Peace

photograph by Conrad Ma '15



Josh

pencil drawing by Harrison Froelich '16

Legacy

*An excerpt from Jake's Senior Speech, delivered on March 1st,
days after the death of Josh Level, Friend and Greenie*

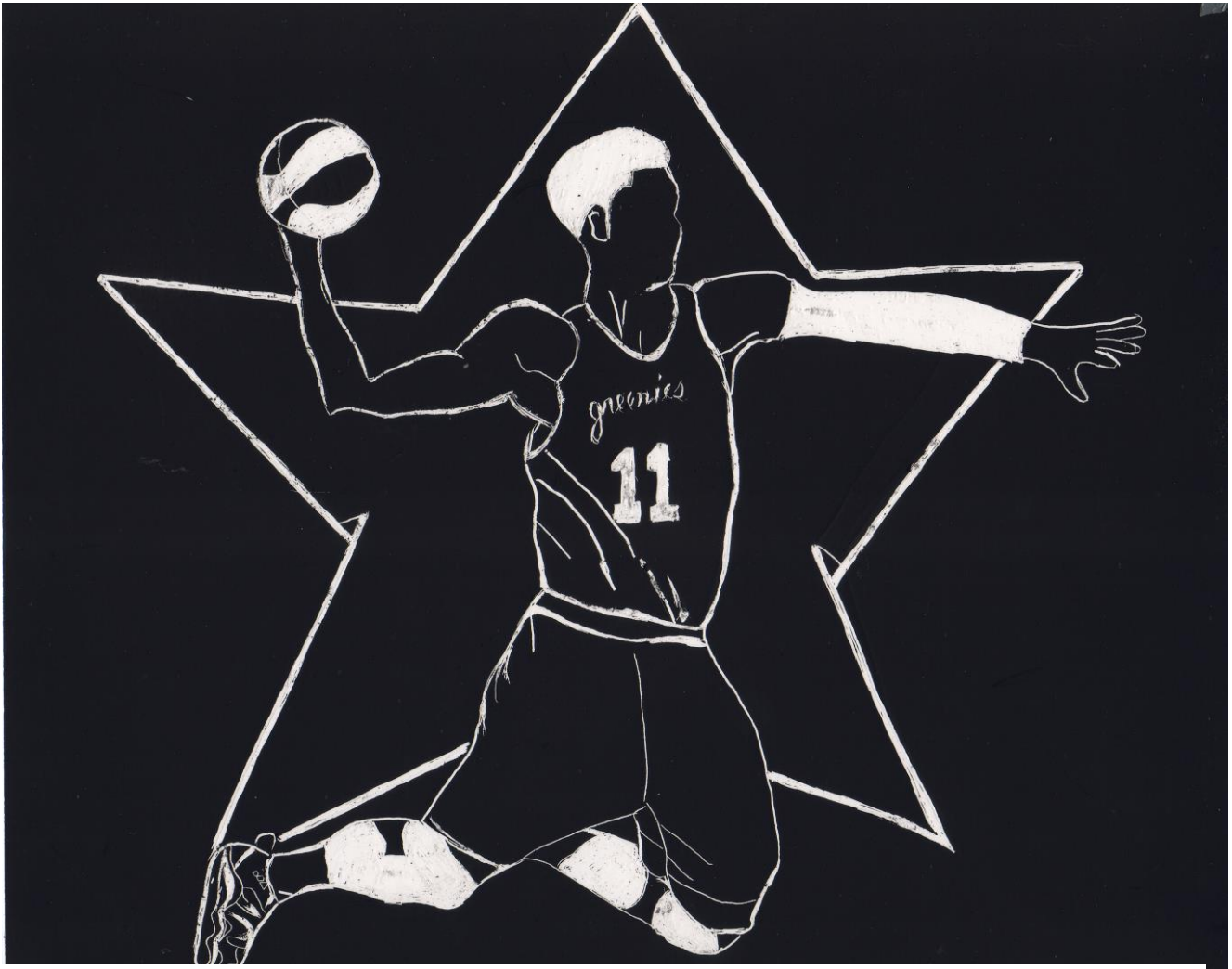
... We lost a brother last week. Some knew him better than others and some did not know him at all, but at a point in his life he was a Greenie and because of that he will always be remembered as part of this community. Last Thursday in chapel we all came together to celebrate and remember the life of Josh Level. Many students and teachers had things to say about what Josh left us with, memories of him playing the game he loved, and of his compassion and positive attitude.

What is truly remarkable about this entire week is that it showed the true colors of brotherhood. We, as a community, came together to support one another in a time of trial and to look back upon the legacy that Josh left us. This legacy is something that will always be remembered.

Legacy is what we all leave behind; it is what people who knew us will always remember. Our legacy is where our souls go when we are gone, it is the people and the places that we touched, the memories that we created. It is the changes that we made in the world. It is fueled by passion and selflessness, for it is the mark we leave behind for future generations to remember and benefit from.

Anyone could talk about the legacy left behind by the likes of George Washington, Thomas Edison, or Michael Jordan, but what is important to remember is that the magnitude of what you do is not what defines your legacy. All of these men had significant impacts on those around them and on the future, just like we all have the opportunity to do. Your legacy is not judged by how much money you make or how many history books you will be put in; it is judged by those you touch and those you change. It is what you do for others and what you put your soul into.

No one expected the events of last week – no one expected that we would never see Josh again – but we are changed and we all carry Josh's legacy. We all look at life a little differently now, thinking about the short time we really have. That is why I challenge you all to think about what your legacy will be. Who have you touched and changed, and where will your soul rest once your time is up? I encourage all of you to live with passion and selflessness for the remainder of this year, your time at Christ School, and, most importantly, your entire life. Thank you and God bless.



Jumping Star

scratchboard drawing by Josh Level

