

The Agathist

Issue 13

Fall 2023



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FALL 2023

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Advisor's Note

MR. DICKSON

The view outside of my classroom window has been dynamic this year, to put it mildly. In August, there was dirt. Now, there's a discernable structure, a soon-to-be performing arts center. As I'm typing this (in late November) you can make out where things will be—the stage, the audience, the orchestra pit. It started off looking bare, then chaotic, but now it's starting to take shape. It's beginning to make sense.

I've gotten a lot of use out of it as a metaphor for the creative process. No author or artist sits down and just bangs out a finished piece. Sure, sometimes we get lucky, but for the most part, creating a painting or a poem is a tough, not-always-fun endeavor. Creating isn't always easy, but the creations are always worth the effort.

Looking through this edition of *The Agathist*, you can see the effort in how these words and pictures are constructed. The cool thing is that we can marvel at what's behind the walls, so to speak, and look at the technique, the structure, the intricacies of building. Or, we can look at the completed building or poem or picture and admire the completed product. Isn't art wonderful?

Also, I'd like to welcome some of our Super Mavs to the magazine! For those not in the know, the Super Mavs are students in our self-contained special education classroom. They're bright spots in the building and in our hearts, and they're sharing some of their warmth with their artwork. Thanks to Ms. Brooks and Ms. Creel for doing the footwork on this!

Keep building, and enjoy this semester's *Agathist*

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Birth and Death

MARY CRAWFORD CANARD, 12TH GRADE

Elijah was an Android. The first of his kind. And in appearance it showed. Elijah was not a comely looking object. The Android seemed cooked with falling wires and teetering legs, and his arms gave down as if being pulled by some invisible force. His given face was more robotic than human, a plastered smile that streaked from one side of his face to the other terrifyingly. His eyes were dark brown ovals that neither blinked nor fastened from their gleeful emotion. Tufts of artificial black hair sat on his head like a mop. Indeed, he was strikingly flawed in appearance. But he was special. He did something no other invention of his day did.

"He can talk, you know, like people do, to one another. I know he might not look it, but he's actually quite lifelike."

"Oh?" Said Gregor. "It can?"

Gregor Harriet was mayor of Edeny, and if being expensive and mayor wasn't quite enough for him, Gregor sat square in the middle of the city, in a tower that was grander than gold itself. The Harriet tower was large and shaped like a sequoia tree, with a great burdening bank of balconies and situated flats at the greater top. It was to which the Harriet family lived.

Thus started Elijah's life as the objective fixation of the Harriet family, more so Gregor than anyone else. The Harriet family consisted of Gregor Harriet and his wife, Adine. There was the eldest child, daughter Ruth who was impeccably inclined and succeeded her trade by tenfold. The second child was their one and only son, Thatcher, who was still quite young and pursued nothing less than his own ventures. And finally, there was the youngest, their little girl Lisa. Lisa was innocent and of only the purest intention. She was adored by all her hand maids, and all the servants and workers employed by her family.

Elijah didn't know the name of his creator. Even his face seemed a blur. There wasn't much of remembering anything. He found it hard between the wires and fastenings, almost like a fog that wouldn't go away, to catalog anything and store it away for later memory. It felt wrong to give an Android life and not give it the ability to remember any of it. Elijah's first day at Harriet Tower was less than enjoyable. Elijah didn't know much, but sometimes he would place his hands on his face where

he saw humans had ears and feel none. All he could feel were wires, stringing out of his ears like infectious parasites.

It scared him to be so different, though he knew he was, very much, from everyone else.

Adine had not taken fondly with the android. Upon seeing Elijah for the first time, she shrank down in terror and pointed a disgusted finger at him.

"Dear Lord, Gregor. It's.... well, it's hideous! I don't expect you to tell me that this is the foundational project that you've spent so much on."

Gregor Harriet was not delighted in hearing this and grabbed his wife Adine harshly by the sleeve of her dress.

"You listen to me, woman. Elijah might just be a prototype, but it's damn near achieving greatness. Look at it! It's no further away from being just like us than the grass is to dirt! And I'll be the one to show it off to the world!"

Gregor Harriet was a fraudulent man. In everything he did, he lied, and in everything he touched, he was gluttonous. There seemed not enough terrain for him to squander nor enough money to earn or take.

He was a rich man, but he was not a kind man, nor was he a loved man. Not by many, not by most, not even by some. Nor did it bother him. Even his wife, poor Adine, found that she liked him very little. The Harriet children had been, since their birth, left to kindle rosy fires with other people who seemed giving in human emotion unlike their father and their mother. Though less than perfect, the Harriet's were more than fortunate.

Adine shriveled further, scared more by her husband than the mechanical man he had brought home. She straightened her dress sleeve and pursed her lips tightly.

"If it is to stay, then it is not allowed in the back of the house. It's.....eerie."

Gregor agreed to this.

Elijah stayed in the front of the residence. Elijah felt that there was not much he was required to do. Gregor had insisted he stay put in the living room, but then why did everyone else leave? He did not see them staying put. And when he looked down from the tower's great windows, he could see the people like them, all walking and not staying put. Elijah raised his arm to touch the glass, hoping that it would shatter, but his arm was compacted together toddler-like, and it slowly began to bend

backwards on him. Coming from the sockets of his elbow, loose wires pooled out like vicious snakes and further attacked his arm until he was grasping at the damaged sockets with his other arm.

When his arm steadied once again, he looked back down to see if any of the people were struggling to pull back broken arms like he was.

They were not.

Two weeks had gone by. By then, The Harriet's had assimilated him into the background of their world. He was nothing more than something behind a display case. Elijah found this frightening because no one looked at him anymore. Not with marvel, not with fear. Except for little Lisa. She was smaller than he was, by a lot. Elijah saw that she was the smallest human in the house.

"E-li-jjah? El-jah. El-jah?" She repeated. She could not pronounce his name. But she did try.

Lisa could not be near him when Adine was in the house. Every time she walked into the living room and found Lisa cradling his arms or reaching on her toes to touch his synthetic hair, she would screech and whisk her away brutally.

"You stay away from that thing, Lisa Gene! Haven't I told you?" This would bring poor Lisa into hysterics, and she would kick and cry until Adine had had enough, whacked her good on the bottom, and sent her off to bed.

None of the Harriet's were as kind as Lisa. Adine despised him. The larger girl, Ruth, paid him no attention, which was much better than the one boy Thatcher's, which was usually filled with hateful quips and insults about his appearance.

"Father idolizes you, but you're so wretched. Look at this thing." The one boy would kick his metallic shins, so much so until they were dented in. "As if you're even real." He'd then pull his synthetic hair, but this was not enough, so he would rear a powerful fist and sock him square in the android jaw. It wouldgg sent Elijah's head swiveling around like a top, stopping sideways on his neck. And Thatcher would laugh and laugh, until he had had enough laughing, and then he would leave.

There was a moment in the fourth week, when Elijah was staring out the window, as he did so many times before, because there was not much else for an android to do, and he thought. Now Elijah

had 'thought' so many times before, but when looking down and seeing everything before him, like an open door, like an open window, a clink in his brain sputtered, as if telling, as if showing him something more. And when the lights from the town below flashed greatly upon his eyes, so did the light in his mind, and suddenly Elijah could see.

Elijah looked down at his arms and then at his feet. And for the first time in four weeks, he moved. His legs clanked heavily, unused to the movement, like a toddler learning how to walk. But with each step, he felt a greater purpose. He tried to move silently, for he didn't know what



Gregor would do if he caught him moving, or heavens if Adine caught him. But he felt that, as important as Gregor Harriet had made his arrival seem, that he was destined for something bigger. Elijah picked up his arms, glued to his sides but now rising, to feel his face. In dismay, he realized he could not feel a thing. He tried to move his fake fingers around, to catch features of his face that were unknown to him, but the image alluded him. Not until he stepped into a path of light, reaching a mirror, that he looked finally at his reflection, horrified.

He saw now how different he was from humans. Each fragment of himself was utterly twisted, mangled, feasted upon like crows. His face was unrecognizable from the faces he had encountered in the Harriet resi-

Slime Creatures from Outer Space!

AVA FULGHAM, 10TH GRADE, DIGITAL ARTWORK

dence. Fake. Everything about Elijah was fake. It was then that Elijah felt a crawling pang deep in his robotic body, unplaceable, but enough to send one last thought into his brain. In positioning himself once again by the window, Elijah realized there was nothing anybody could do to make him human.

The next day was Elijah's unveiling to the open world. National leaders and famous celebrities had been invited into Gregor Harriet's home, in order to see the first ever android. Everyone came in droves. They oohed and ahhed and some goggled. Others, while sipping elegantly on glasses of fine wine, would take secret snide looks at him and whisper, "Ugly looking, isn't it? I was expecting something a bit more life-like."

Elijah could see how everyone walked, unaffected by aching arms and heavy legs. Lisa jumped about playfully, knocking over guests, and absolute behind her was an angry Adine. Ruth and Thatcher's faces were now, so much more lifelike, as now he saw the wide gap between him and them.

Between an android and the Harriet's.

Gregor walked to the front of the room and clinked his wine glass. The assembly turned towards him.

"I thank you for joining me in celebrating the beginning of what is now the future of our world. I have found great joy in having a front row seat experience of the inventions of tomorrow. One such being our very own Elijah, and though it might not look like much, I assure you it is something extraordinary."

Elijah watched outside the window again, at the people walking by. And for once, he ignored Gregor Harriet's words and recalled his time in the Harriet residence. Were people all like the Harriet's? He couldn't imagine an entire populace with such fangs, and so brutal to one another, as secretly plotting harmful wicked things. And Elijah was sure that there were some notions of humanity that he would not come to know nor understand. But in looking down again, so suddenly, an urge came upon him once again, and he sought to enjoy the greatest of human experiences.

"—and lastly, its greatest and if I might add, most interesting function is its ability to communicate. Astounding to find that we now have the mind to create other beings that can talk back. Elijah."

The entire assembly turned back to look at him, human eyes fix-

ated in a blur on his face. His lifeless face.

"Say something pleasing for our guests today."

As Elijah looked through the window, he spoke, for the first time. "What humanity am I looking for? Yours or mine?"

Elijah plunged through the glass, suddenly, ferociously, and plummeted down Harriet Tower.

All the guests ran to the window. Screams erupted from the tower, but none were as loud as the metallic slap of Elijah's body on the pavement below.

When Gregor and the rest of the Harriet family had gotten down to the streets, to look upon the splattered parts and broken joints, they found a smile on the dead android's face.



Beaming Heart

MINA ALDRIDGE, SUPER MAV, COLORED PENCIL

Dozen Watermelon

MARY CRAWFORD CANARD, 12TH GRADE

Mississippi hot
grits painfully like an open wound
scabbing cracked earth
like beating tendrils
sweating aches crushing the mass
too hot to be anywhere outside
says those who can,
that is,
stay inside, closed doors, cool wind
but not the man with the dozen watermelon
taking up space in a dirty gray truck
sitting top heavy on the side of the road
with only a tiny umbrella
and his dozen watermelon
and it's painful to see
in sweltering heat,
the many cars trickling down, never stopping
passing this tired man
eager in the morning, weary in the evening
probably rubbing damp towels
against his soaking neck
and waiting with open eyes, like the sky
watching hopefully for a car,
in this troubled heat
to stop,
Lord, may they stop
and buy one of this tired man's
dozen watermelon



Swiss Alps

GRACE GARDNER, 11TH GRADE, PHOTOGRAPHY

Driving Down a Lonely Dirt Road at 09:57 pm

KY ARMITAGE, 11TH GRADE

my headlights show nothing but dirt and trees. the only signs i see are yellow speed limits and "deer xing". i don't drive fast. just thirty-five. the windows are rolled down, and i feel the cool night air blowing through my hair. i don't turn the radio on, i just enjoy the music of rocks getting thrown behind me. street lights placed every hundred feet bask my car in a golden strobe. the clock on my dash says 9:57, but i see no other cars on this dirt road. the cracks in my windshield fragment my vision, spiderwebbing the glass in a beautiful pixelated fracture. the clock on my dashboard changes to 9:58, and raindrops begin to dance on my car. the droplets blur my vision and sting my face as they fly through my open window, hiding the tears i never realized were staining my cheeks.



Love is Abstract

JAMES MARTIN, SUPER MAV, OIL PASTEL



The Beauty of Cars

EVAN HUANG, 11TH GRADE, PHOTOGRAPHY

Misty Winds: October

ELLA GRACE KENNEDY, 11TH GRADE

It's been a long day. I go down to the shore to think.

I wonder about the free fish swimming with all their life. I wonder about the schedule of the seagulls. Do they wake up in the morning and think "What is in store for today?", or do they never truly fall asleep. Is their brain ever turned off? Are they always on autopilot? Sometimes I wish I was a free fish or a stern seagull. Life gets to be too much. I get so overwhelmed; I don't know how to think. So, I let myself go.

I go down to the shore to think.

I count the seashells, picking out the "prettiest" ones. The shells with no cracks or chips. Sometimes I feel like shell. I find life sanding through the grains of people, picking out the perfect ones. The people with no cracks or chips. That's not me. I get so tired of trying to hide my cracks. I have too many to count. Feeling like all my cracks are being poked and prodded; dissected and analyzed by the "perfects" around me get to be too much. I get so overwhelmed; I don't know how to think. So, I let myself go.

I go down to the shore to think.

I look at the waves. I find myself lost in them. My mind goes blank, as I think about what life is like when I'm not around. Do they think of me? Do they miss me? Do they wonder what I'm doing, like I wonder what they're doing? I plan put a whole day for them. First, they get up and they text me "good morning." They eat breakfast with their mom, like they do every day. Are they thinking about me while eating their cream cheese-covered bagel, like I think about them while eating my syrup-covered waffles? I wonder about that for hours. My mind runs away to be with them. Sometimes I get so tired of thinking of them it becomes too much. I tiptoe my way into the lukewarm waters, and float, letting the soft October breeze take me away. Losing myself in the pulse of the Ocean,

I finally let go.

Limit of Time

ABIGAIL JONES, 9TH GRADE

Passage of Time is often forgotten, Taken
for granted each and every day.
Beauty slowly fading, its seeds rotten,
The countdown comes as a shadow at play.

Stars will burn out and implode into dust.
Earth will cease its turn, its life, and its burn.
Hills will fall flat, and the last chains will rust.
Infinity, no more. Nothing to yearn.

I miss you, oh Time, for I have none left.
No years to spend, not an hour to spare,
But I cannot come back from this great theft.
Time that I wasted. My burden to bear.

I will live my last life with joy and peace,
Till you take me away, my heart then cease.



The Sun Shines Brightly

CHRISTINA KIMBLE, SUPER MAV, COLORED PENCIL

Stupid Things

JAMESON KNIGHTON, 11TH GRADE

*I want to do the stupid things
I want to take the dumb selfies.
Make the plans to watch dumb movies under one blanket
Tell the dumb stories about our entire day
I want to make the dumb TikTok's
Send the dumb "you're probably asleep" texts
Remember, isn't love blind
Not blind in the way where we make dumb decisions
Blind where it's us versus the world
We see no one but each other*

*I don't want to be obsessed
No not that
I want to be thought of.
Little things go a long way*

*Not to say I'm not thought of
These are just words of encouragement
Don't hold back
Invite me to everything. Ask for a ride
Little moments with you go by so quick
Yet they last forever
These things seem stupid
but
I want to do the stupid things*



Dare to be Stupid

AVA FULGHAM, 10TH GRADE, DIGITAL ARTWORK



Soda Can City

ASH LOFTIN, 12TH GRADE, OIL PAINT

Glass Love

AYANNA JONES, 12TH GRADE

Holding on is like gripping broken glass,
The harder I grasp, the more I bleed
The tighter I grip, the more you shatter
The longer I decide to cling on, the more permanent this damage is
to us both.

But how do I let go? Tell me? How?
When this fragile object kept me sane.
The only reason I bare another day.
Kept my foot on the ground and my head in the clouds all the time.

As delicate as it is, I clutch on for dear life.
Scared to see somebody else enjoy what's
rightfully mine
Not realizing that these wounds are deeper than
my needs for you and these scars will remain till
my last days

I should've let go.
Before my hands were bruised, battered, and
bloody.
Irreversible damage to say the least. You are forever broken, and
though I am not...
this moment will stain my heart like red wine on white carpet.

How Dare You

ARIEL MORRIS, 10TH GRADE

In the myriad of questions I have for you in
The time we haven't spoken, I only have one I need answered.

How dare you?

How dare you take over my body and make a fool out of me.
Take me bit by bit. To turn my blood into sugary sap for you to pour in
your coffee and sip out of. To be this nicotine to my mind. Filling up my
lungs with black smoke that only you could
make beautiful.

How dare you, bring green to nature as well as the green in the poison
ivy that I've unknowingly sat in and infect the rest of my body to make
me scratch and itch. Look ugly and pale in comparison. To have me
clean out my throne room, dust my crown, tell the guards to put down
their weapons. Open all the gates to welcome a jade like you into my
humble home.

How dare you, inflict so much pain time and time again, and yet still
have me handing you
the ammunition to do that once more. To be this thing clouding up my
thoughts.
to make me smile in my somber moments. To have your soft scents of
jasmine stuck in bits of my clothes like it was sewn into it the moment I
bought it. To make me envy you in everything that you are when some-
how, you're no more human.

How dare you, to have more than a friend but less than mine, to make
my other friends seem like lone stars in comparison to your golden sun.
To make me think I was asking too much for you to have thought of
me the same. To not have smiled and played coy as if my days weren't
depending on your every move.

In the myriad of questions I have for you in the time we haven't spoken,
I only have one I need answered.
How dare you?



The Crucible

ALLYSON BROWN, 11TH GRADE, DIGITAL ART

Aphrodite in Pieces

GRACE GARDNER, 11TH GRADE

We are always told that the body is a temple. Striking silver spires that touch the heavens, large golden altars left for the weary to worship at, yet these are just sights to stare at. They say that temples are holy yet mine is full of holes.

We are always told that beauty is in the eye of the beholder,

until the body doesn't align with the beholder's idea of beauty. How jeans are supposed to look on a woman. What shape is acceptable to the prying eyes of the people.

How can my body be a temple when beauty is the idea of others? If I am supposed to covet and protect it because it is the only body I get, within an epidemic of chronic judgement.

Tear-stained clothes from what was shed when my new jeans wouldn't fit. The red marks from grabbing where I wish my stomach ended. It's a never-ending cycle.

Rinse repeat,
rinse repeat.



Poppy Power

COHEN SMITH, SUPER MAV, ACRYLIC

Jigsaw

MARY CRAWFORD CANARD, 12TH GRADE

I am unequivocally aware that I am not compatible with anyone
I have sat rather harsh nights looking at myself-
Inside-

To hopefully, perhaps, find what does not work with other people
That I cannot seem to find a like of mine

I am alike a puzzle piece

But the one that someone has lost,

And tossed asunder, underneath your chair, eaten by your dog

Perhaps I didn't even match my own little puzzle

And other puzzles have come across, but I have no fit with them

And I'll sit sullenly, quietly, down underneath this chair

While everyone finds everyone

To your pie, you've found your slice

And to your jewel, each lonely facet

To you all, you've found every missing piece, and you will never have
to wonder

If there's ever a half of someone, if ever a half alike mine

That you, that I, will ever, and I can never, fill

Oct. 18
2023



Self Portrait

AVA FULGHAM, 10TH GRADE, DIGITAL ART

A Seemingly Simple Cycle

LAUREN DANIELS, 11TH GRADE

The alarm goes off with a buzz.
She gets up, throws on some makeup and a pair of sweats.
Her brother hops in the car as she grabs her lunch and the energy drink she so desperately needs.
She drops off her brother and heads to school.
She goes to the gym when the day is done and heads home.
At home she does her endless stack of useless homework and goes to bed.

The next morning the alarm goes off with a buzz.
And then the next.
And the next.
And the next.
She does all of this with a smile that could mostly pass as genuine.
An attitude that seems so cheerful.

Nobody would know what goes on behind the curtains.
No one could tell what happens behind those closed doors.

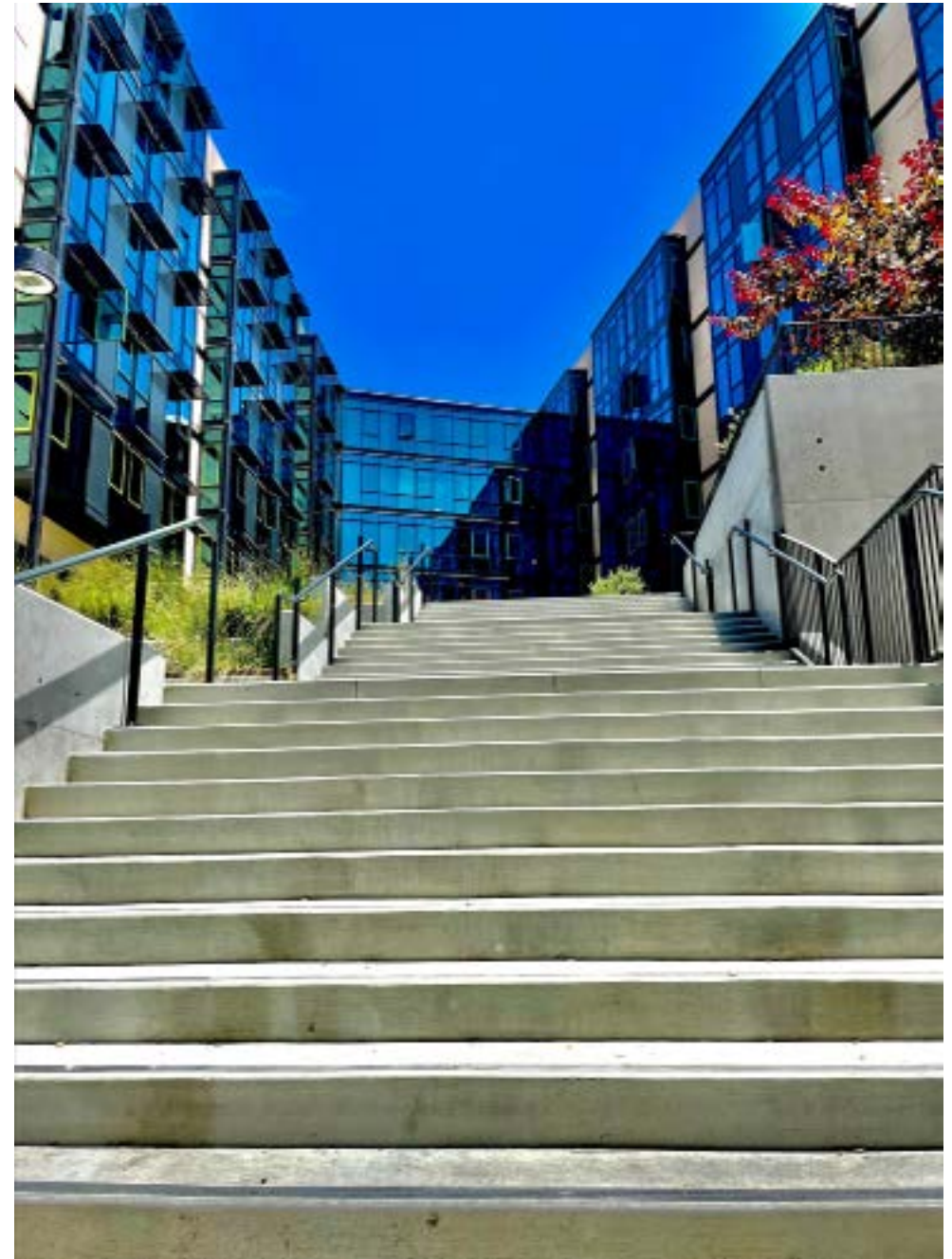
They don't realize that her house no longer feels like a home.
But she keeps on smiling.
They can't see the sadness she stuffs away.
But she seems so happy.
Many are clueless to the pain and the loss she's experienced,
Because she refuses to show it.
She feels like no one truly likes her.
But she keeps on going on,
and on,
and on.

Who knew that this seemingly simple cycle could cause her so much stress,
So much hurt, so much desperation for something new.
She just needs someone to listen.
Someone who won't shame her for her feelings or emotions.
Someone who won't call her self-centered the second she mentions something about herself.
If only she just had a break
maybe everything would be okay.

Confinement

TALIA BAKER, 11TH GRADE

The drive back to her hometown was long, but she couldn't feel it. The only thoughts that cluttered her mind were about how her family has changed. Would her mom stop criticizing her weight? Would her dad ever be home for more than a few minutes? Would her big sister stop acting as a guilty bystander when she was treated as the black sheep? Would her little brother ever stop making excuses for their mom? She knew the answer to these questions was a glaring no, yet her hope for change knew no bounds. She pleaded with the universe to allow her peace. Even moving across the country couldn't bring her this gift. The only thing helping to prepare her was the length of the drive. The wheels switched between smooth and rough for the entirety of the ride, much like her life. The sky was decreasing in light with every passing second. The windows were blurring with blinding fog. She almost worried about losing her sight while driving, but would that be the worst thing? The thick cloud of fog overtook the vehicle. It brought a certain complete isolation that she had been familiar with throughout her whole life. It was the closest thing to peace that she would ever have. The darkness was her only friend. Her mom, Nadia, would tell her to hurry and suck in her stomach before the fog left and people could see. Her dad, Sean, would have abandoned the trip before the fog ever hit. Her sister, Jane, would stare out of the window while she was being trashed. Her brother, Lucas, would reassure their mother that she's always right. And she, herself, would stay still; stomach sucked him, heart empty, and a lump in the throat. Imagining the alternate reality with her family in the car did nothing good for her mind. It was still far gone and had been for years. It's easier to rest when you pretend your trauma doesn't exist. Cold hands laid on the steering wheel while the fog around her began to dissipate. The phenomenon snapped her back to the unfortunate reality that was her life. She didn't want the darkness to go. She didn't want to be forced to relive everything she had to run away from. Her hometown was never a home to her. No one knew her. No one understood her. The only thing somewhat adjacent to a loved one was the dark. She halted, turned around, and went towards the fog. Why should she have to let go of the only one that knows her name?



Stairway to the Future

JORDAN PITCHFORD, 9TH GRADE, PHOTOGRAPHY

If I am an ocean

MARY CRAWFORD CANARD, 12TH GRADE

I am swimming in a sea of my own envy
It is the greenest water you've ever seen
And the tides are irrevocable,
That they're changing is impossible to explain
And you watch the waves,
Belly open,
Dip around in their own awkwardness
Trying to meet shore, but all they can ever seem to do is crash
And my waters will recede, back into themselves
Like a turtle into its shell
And when the night falls, I will watch as all you happy folk be happy
together
While my waves fall unburdened
Onto empty docks
Onto lonely beaches
Onto seashells and lost treasures from things I have never and know I
will never know
And my poor sea, this great ocean, will gape with the thousand scapes
of something that it washes up on
But never can seem to touch



Venus at Sea

ASH LOFTIN, 12TH GRADE, MIXED MEDIA

She was an artist

CEAMBER JEFFERSON, 12TH GRADE

She liked to draw lines,
And see what they would become.
Picking up her tool of choice,
She began to get to work.
Feeling the depth of her work on her canvas,
Made her feel euphoric.
Yet no one ever saw her artwork but herself,
She was an artist.
Seeing what she could make out of what she had left,
The red paint mixed with the white.
That was her favorite part.
Drawing made her really feel something,
A feeling she couldn't get anywhere else.
It was a different type of art,
And a different type of enjoyment.
Artwork only she could see,
She was an artist.

Staying in Circles

SHELBY HOLT, 11TH GRADE

Circling.
Around. Around.
Circling.
In pain.
Keep going.
Around, again. Again.
Wounds blistering.
It can't get me.
Cutting corners.
Hiding in the walls.
It's always here.
Going in circles.
Wounds now bleeding.
Have to get away.
Going faster.
Never stopping.
I can't.
Debate.
I have to.
Debate.
The torture.
Debate.
The pain.
Debate.
But the comfort.

Purge

LEO TINGLE, 10TH GRADE

Such cold gnawing at my flesh,
That void night sky ashamed of me,
For only it and I knew of it all,
Shivering in the bushes, isolated,
My brain blanker than the moon
I wretch up all that haunts me,
And when it's all over
My legs shake with the wind,
And my guilt carries me
All around the block of my home,
Just pleading with the universe
To let all those vulnerable moments
Stay with me and the night

Lady Bird

CEAMBER JEFFERSON, 12TH GRADE

You sat in the doctor's office with me,
Hearing the doctor explain to you that I need help.
Problems that you don't want to face.
It's not just me you messed up,
It's my brother and sister too.
I mean just look at them,
The outside is all nice and shiny,
But the inside is hollow and broken.
Wondering why we never visit anymore,
I can't imagine why.
Being around a negative person,
Your whole childhood is exhausting.
Needing an escape from it is what we sought,
Not having you around sadly feels nice.

Other Perspective

AUDREY DEAN, 12TH GRADE

You feel unseen.
But there's someone who sees you.
You feel unloved.
But there's someone who loves you.
Doubt, loneliness, and sorrow may fill your heart around,
Only making you wish for a better tomorrow.
But I see hope, joy, and company waiting to be found, not something
you have to only borrow.
I know that in our minds what's small can fill up much room.
It leaves us with only a foggy view.
However, this is here to reveal to you only what is true.
You can overcome the obstacles of your day.
You don't have to live by the overwhelming thoughts and what they
say.

Sincerely,
The Person from the Other Perspective

Please Stay

PERFORMED BY THE CHEVAL CHOIR



Click/ tap the speaker to hear our Cheval
choir perform "Please Stay"

Something You Should Know

(after Clint Smith)

ADDISON LINDLEY, 12TH GRADE

is that growing up, I was so excited to finally have a baby brother.
I already had a sister, but a brother was different.
I would be able to punch him, and he would punch me back.
Unlike my sister, he might would want to throw a softball with me in the
yard.

But one day, that blonde-haired blue-eyed baby brother of mine never
grew up.
He was very slow to talk,
And never learned to say complete sentences.
He became very aggressive,
and would throw punches that I could not do in return.
He was different.
Physically he is my 10-year-old miniature best friend.
But mentally, he has the mind of a 3-year-old.

The eyes of so many staring through our souls while in public
as my best friend gets over-stimulated and overly excited
about things such as a dump truck passing by.

But little do they know,
that little boy has a heart 10 times the size of theirs

Fall

ERIK HERRING, 12TH GRADE

It is now Autumn.
Leaves are drifting down, and down-
Caressed by the wind.



Rainbow Sunshine

CHRISTIAN MCDONALD, SUPER MAV, COLORED PENCIL



Beauty in Green

EVAN HUANG, 11TH GRADE, PHOTOGRAPHY

For Lily, What I'm Thankful For

GABBY CARAWAY, 12TH GRADE

when the orange cat
jumps up to join me on the mattress,
deciding he'll share his place of rest
with me for a while.

i can shed my tears when needed,
instead of tucking them in tight.
i seek the solace of someone i love
as we sit together on the floor and discuss.

the rush of reuniting with my bound,
people important to me.
a friend that distance tries to keep at bay
and fails.

i triumph after beating a difficult level
as my father cheered me on.
a feeling so unmistakable
as he realizes time has switched our roles.

a group sat at the kitchen table,
pushing off hilarious flirts.
i am humored by the imaginations
of the ever-engaged players.

i've evolved as a human.
i still live and breathe, but
i see so much more meaning within those,
and i seek quality in all pursuits.

i break into a sweat as i sprint,
returning back into the forest
to chase the familiar tracks embedded
into the dirt, cold beneath my bare feet.

and sometimes at night,
i look up to the starry sky
and yell "i love you,"
to let it know that someone does.



Red Fishy Poppy

KAESUN BROWN, SUPER MAV, ACRYLIC



Garfield

AVA FULGHAM, 10TH GRADE, DIGITAL ARTWORK

To Be Frank: a Response to Thomas Jefferson

TALIA BAKER, 11TH GRADE

A little historical context: In 1791, Benjamin Banneker--the son of former slaves, and a self-taught astronomer, writer, and general awesome dude--wrote [this letter](#) to Thomas Jefferson asking Jefferson to consider abolishing slavery in the newly-formed United States. Jefferson offered [this dismissive response](#) to Banneker. Talia's piece is responding to Jefferson's letter back to Banneker.

Sir,

I hold the utmost respect for your work in propelling the American Revolution. A great many of your actions are not wrong in being commended by most. However, I find your feigned desire, regarding the status of Black American citizens, to be shallow. There is an apparent neglect in your letter, sent to Mr. Banneker, of the truth that you yourself own slaves. In your own words, 'I can add with truth that no body wishes more ardently to see a good system commenced for raising the condition both of their body & mind to what it ought to be...' This is in contradiction of how you live daily. There is no way possible to call for the abolishment of a horrid system while perpetuating it willfully.

The black and white that some claim the world to be is inaccurate, but some things have little gray area. The institution of slavery must be one of them. Rather than morals, respect, and kindness taking place at the forefront, torment, pain, and harsh reality are found. You, as a white man are automatically powerful, but your title admittedly helps in excess. I find it extremely difficult to believe that you would allow that power to be revoked without a fight. You use the inferiority of black people to your advantage. Sally Hemings can attest to that. You used her as a 'maid,' and she birthed 4 of your (living) children. "Like her mother, Hemings would go on to bear at least six children to her master." The absence of certainty regarding exactly how many children you fathered doesn't absolve you of fault.

For every contradiction found circling around you, three more are prepared. Benjamin Banneker puts this into perspective by writing, "Sir, Suffer me to recall to your mind that time in which the Arms and tyranny of the British Crown were exerted with every powerful effort in

order to reduce you to a State of Servitude, look back I intreat you on the variety of dangers you were exposed, reflect on that time in which every human aid appeared unavailable, and in which even hope and fortitude wore the aspect of inability to the Conflict..." This small yet significant line expresses the solace you find in hypocrisy. I feel Mr. Banneker's plead for equality, while simultaneously feeling the thick air of insensitivity in your response to him.

I wish to see some attempt at reversal of your wrongdoings, for now and for the future.

Until then.

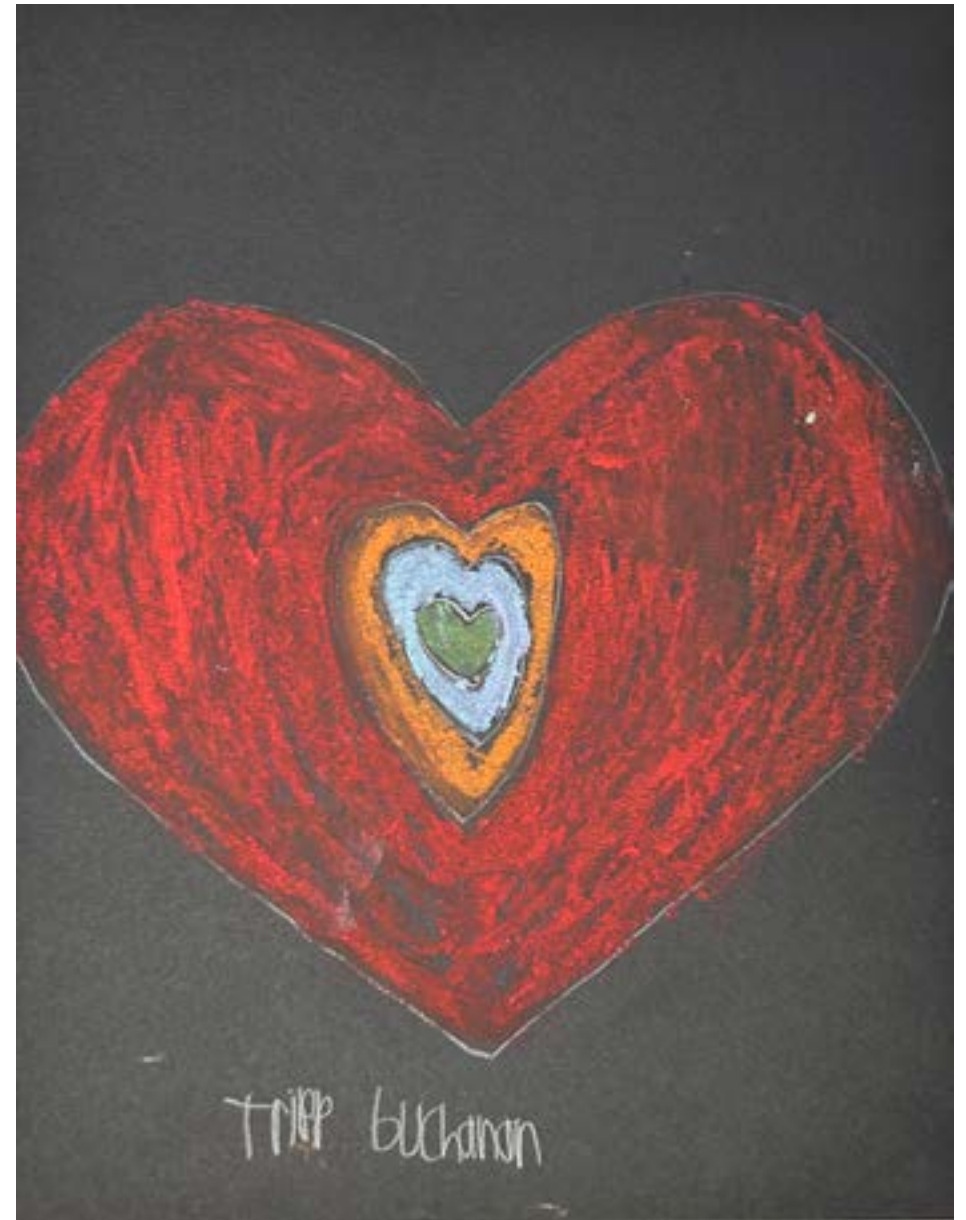


Roman Holiday

ASH LOFTIN, 12TH GRADE, ACRYLIC

Pretty Poppy

DYLAN WALKER, SUPER MAV, ACRYLIC



Big Ol' Heart of Mine

TRIPP BUCHANAN, SUPER MAV, OIL PASTEL