



ECHO CHAMBERS

DELAWARE COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE
2022

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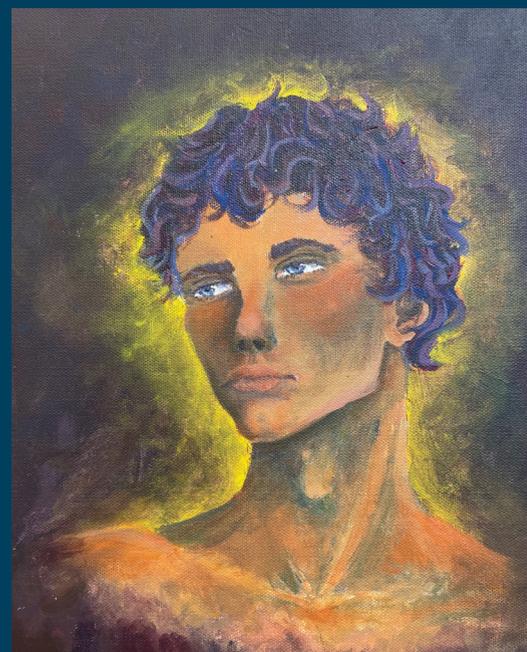
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風幼心搖樹云生性起坐
若明今日事昧却本來人

Julia Metzger, Colored Pencil



Julia Metzger, Colored Pencil

MEA AEVUM

Emerging from darkness into the light,
A shining soul whose wings spread free,
You grace the earth from sky to sea,
Beginning life with the most delight.

Your presence so short it will only ignite
A feeling of fear so fiery,
But when you choose to stay with me
I treasure you long into the dead of night.

You take until you can't anymore.
Because of you, small rains will fall
As slowly you close the heavy old door.

But as I walk to the endless shore
With you, I become forever enthralled;
You chain me not, but let me soar.

– Anna Schiller

VACATION BOUND

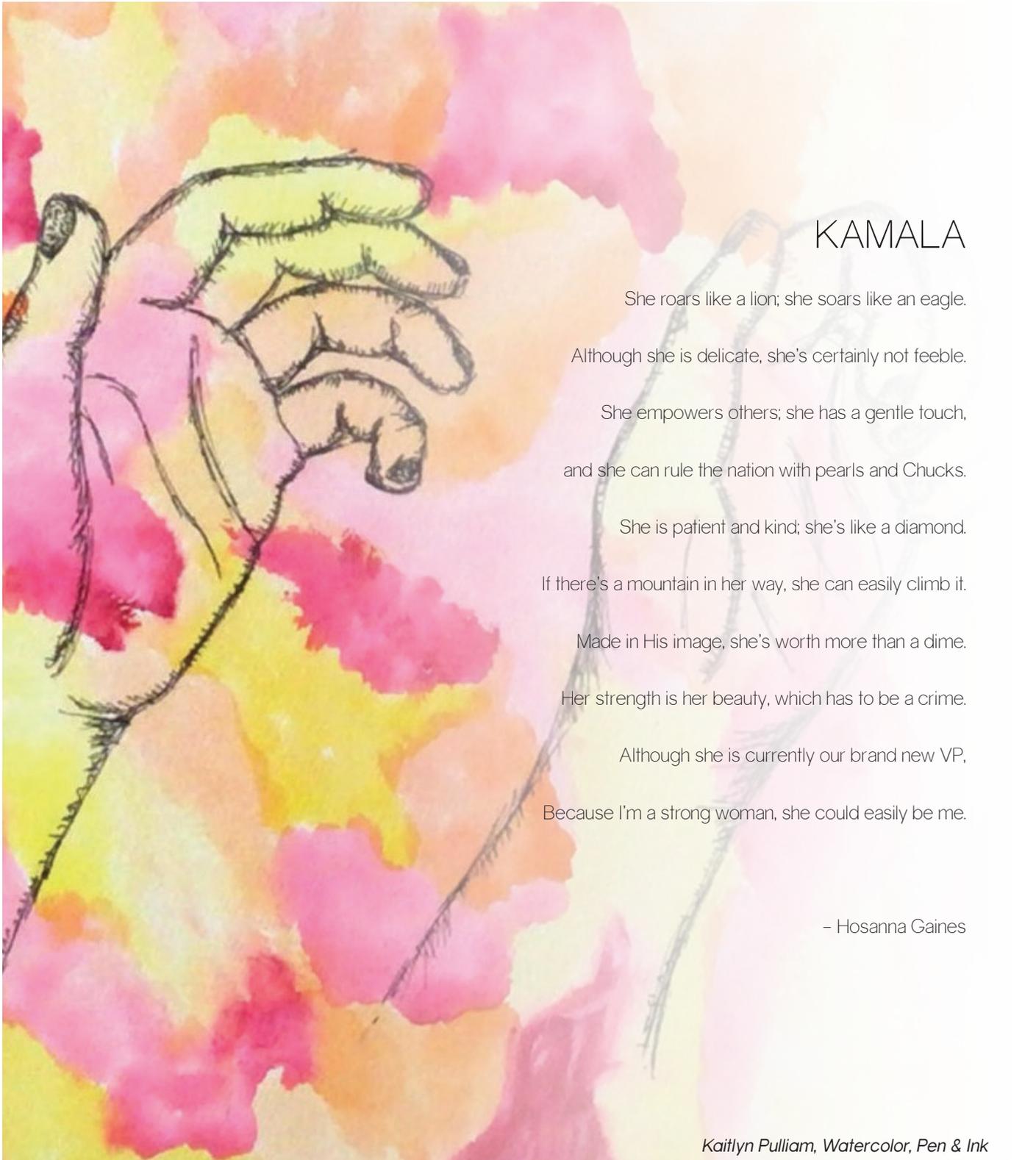
"Welcome aboard and buckle up tight!"
The flight attendant says with style.
I open my window and take in the sight
Of our luggage all in a pile.

The engine roars and causes a fright
To a child now screaming in the aisle;
Upward climbing through clouds so white
Makes this trip so worthwhile.

I watch the sunset transition to night,
Resting my eyes for awhile,
Dreaming of palm trees standing with height
Like skyscrapers in single file.

As I open my eyes to the morning sunlight,
Our descent is but another mile.
When our pilot announces we've completed our flight,
The thoughts of the beach make me smile.

– Emily Rossini



KAMALA

She roars like a lion; she soars like an eagle.

Although she is delicate, she's certainly not feeble.

She empowers others; she has a gentle touch,
and she can rule the nation with pearls and Chucks.

She is patient and kind; she's like a diamond.
If there's a mountain in her way, she can easily climb it.

Made in His image, she's worth more than a dime.
Her strength is her beauty, which has to be a crime.

Although she is currently our brand new VP,
Because I'm a strong woman, she could easily be me.

- Hosanna Gaines

Kaitlyn Pulliam, Watercolor, Pen & Ink

A TROUBADOUR'S TROUBLING TALE

"I'm here to tell a tale of old
But not like other stories told,
For in this story the honored white knight
Is as dark and as shadowy as the night!"

The troubadour inhales.

"A certain queen an injury must revise
With her daughter, who had been baptized—
A girl whom she had terribly hurt,
A royal, but alas, a forced convert.
Her mother shoved her under, fully immersed.

Not gasping for air, instead she cursed,

"A ruler so very well disguised
would at least look me in the eyes,
For as strong as your own nation stands,
They have a monster on their hands!"

The crowd leaned forward, every subject in the court hungry for more. The queen gave her husband a defeated glance, and he knew then that she was aware of her daughter's fate.

"So she locked her away,
Never again to see another day
Of her home, her love, her dear land
Unless she met her queen's demand—
All to await a miserable king.
All she must do is bear his ring.
So tell me, royals, peasants, friends!
Wouldn't you like to know how this ends?"

– Luke Bradley

SNOW

I went for a walk outside.

I ventured to the other side of my window,
To the blankness of the cold and open snow,
To the darkness of the dusk upon white.
I felt the sound of stars' whispers
Twirling about the sky
And circling inside my eyes.

I felt the cool and sharply biting gusts of
Air upon my face.
An icy awakening was forced into my lashes—
Was forced into my blue and cracking lips,
Was forced into my red and roughened cheeks,
Was breathed into my chest.

I wandered about and listened to
A silent and slanting outpour from
The depths above my head—

A sigh of breath from on high.

I felt the cold and saw a silenced field.
I was drenched by richly colored blood,
By salty and watery blood.
God's gums bled out and forcefully showered down.

Down upon my lashes.
Down upon my eyes.
Down upon my head.

Reaching for Heaven

My skin is worn as leather and my muscles are
Prone to ache. My
Bony hands are made of cords
That twist and knot
And break.

My eyes are concealed, glazed over,
Yet they vomit up
Rivulets of water.

I perspire under heavy rainfall,
And I sweat out
Disfigured tacks.

Mold and mushrooms grow
Into my lungs, become my breath. My
Twisting breaking bones
Are shrieking wildly in
Fear of death.

A stumbling, disjointed chaos
Of moldy bones and string,
My tangled, twisted body sings as it
Spirals downward steadily.

In desperate discomfort my eyes are
Upwards straining. My
Body wrestles amongst itself in a struggle to
Reach for Heaven.

— Maya Collins

DISPLAYING LOVE

As of 2021, there are approximately 171, 476 words in the English dictionary. Among those thousands of words there are three, often put together in a phrase, that have considerable meaning, but especially the one in the middle. It can conjure up other strong emotions that we often can't explain. It is a word I have been thinking a lot about recently. In today's society, I feel like we're often too quick to use this word. We throw it around without really thinking about what it means, or what we ourselves mean by it.

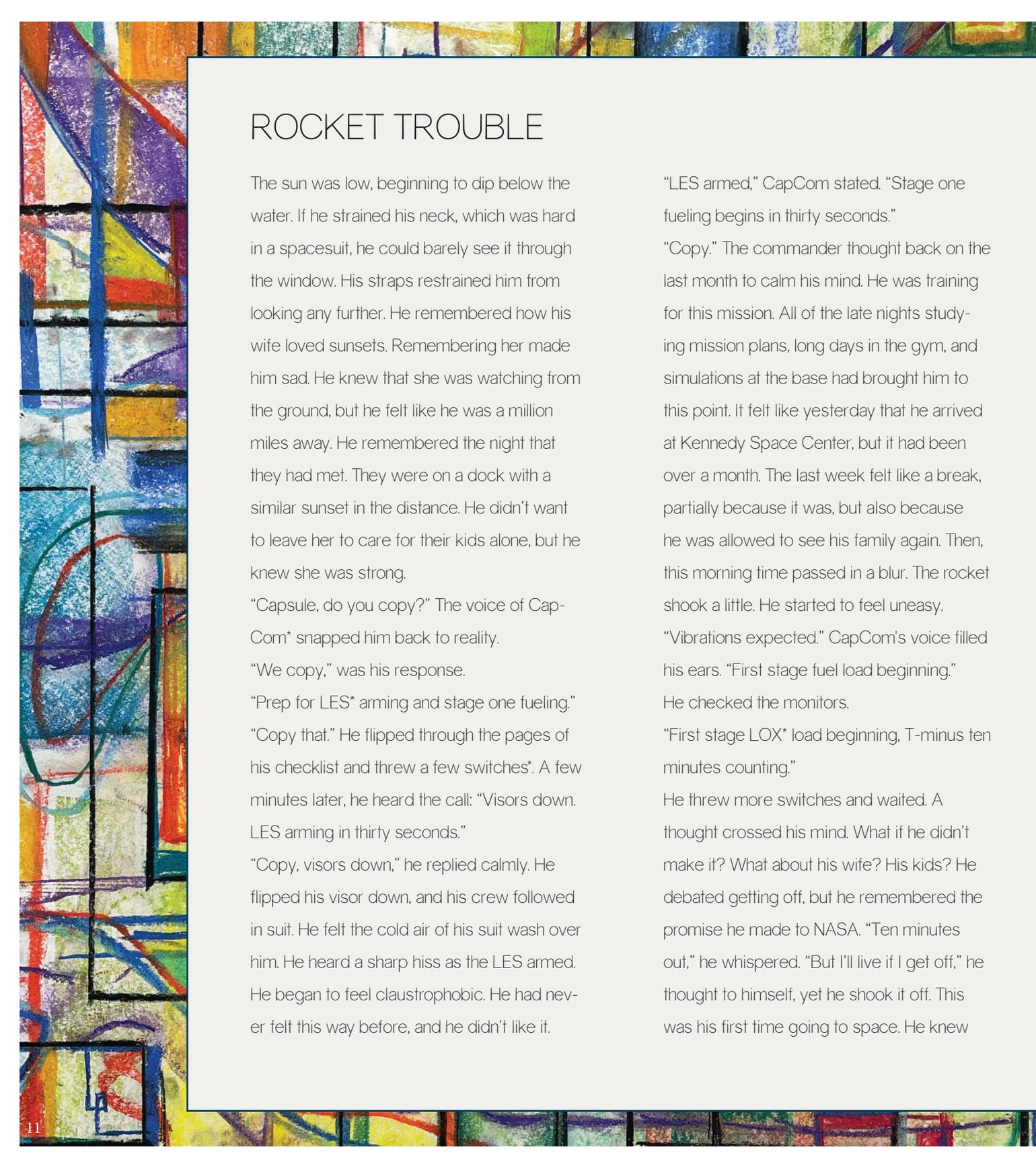
One definition I've heard of the word love, spoken wisely by Olaf the snowman in *Frozen*, is that "love is putting someone else's needs before yours." I think that's a great way to put it. If you truly love someone, you'd go to the end of the line for them. You'd be willing to do anything for them, even if it meant doing something you'd rather not do.

That is why, when I tell people I love them, I want them to know I mean it. I want them to truly know I care for them more deeply than they'll ever know. I want them to know that I'm willing to do anything for them—that I'll put aside my own desires and pleasures and make sure they're safe and okay. As much as I hate it, I know it can never truly take all their suffering and pain away. I can't always make them happy, but I can sit beside them. I can hold their hand. I can give them a shoulder to cry on. I can also laugh so hard with them that we cry tears of joy together. I can listen to them explain to me things they're passionate about and enjoy, even if they sound like they're speaking a whole other language.

If you really love someone, you'll figure out disagreements and come to a compromise. You're willing to hear their side of things. If you truly love someone and you have an argument, you can't just throw in the towel. That's not true love. If you really love them, you'll try to figure it out. No matter the distance or disagreement, if you're willing to put their needs before your own...that's love.

- Corinne Creeden





ROCKET TROUBLE

The sun was low, beginning to dip below the water. If he strained his neck, which was hard in a spacesuit, he could barely see it through the window. His straps restrained him from looking any further. He remembered how his wife loved sunsets. Remembering her made him sad. He knew that she was watching from the ground, but he felt like he was a million miles away. He remembered the night that they had met. They were on a dock with a similar sunset in the distance. He didn't want to leave her to care for their kids alone, but he knew she was strong.

"Capsule, do you copy?" The voice of CapCom* snapped him back to reality.

"We copy," was his response.

"Prep for LES* arming and stage one fueling."

"Copy that." He flipped through the pages of his checklist and threw a few switches*. A few minutes later, he heard the call: "Visors down. LES arming in thirty seconds."

"Copy, visors down," he replied calmly. He flipped his visor down, and his crew followed in suit. He felt the cold air of his suit wash over him. He heard a sharp hiss as the LES armed. He began to feel claustrophobic. He had never felt this way before, and he didn't like it.

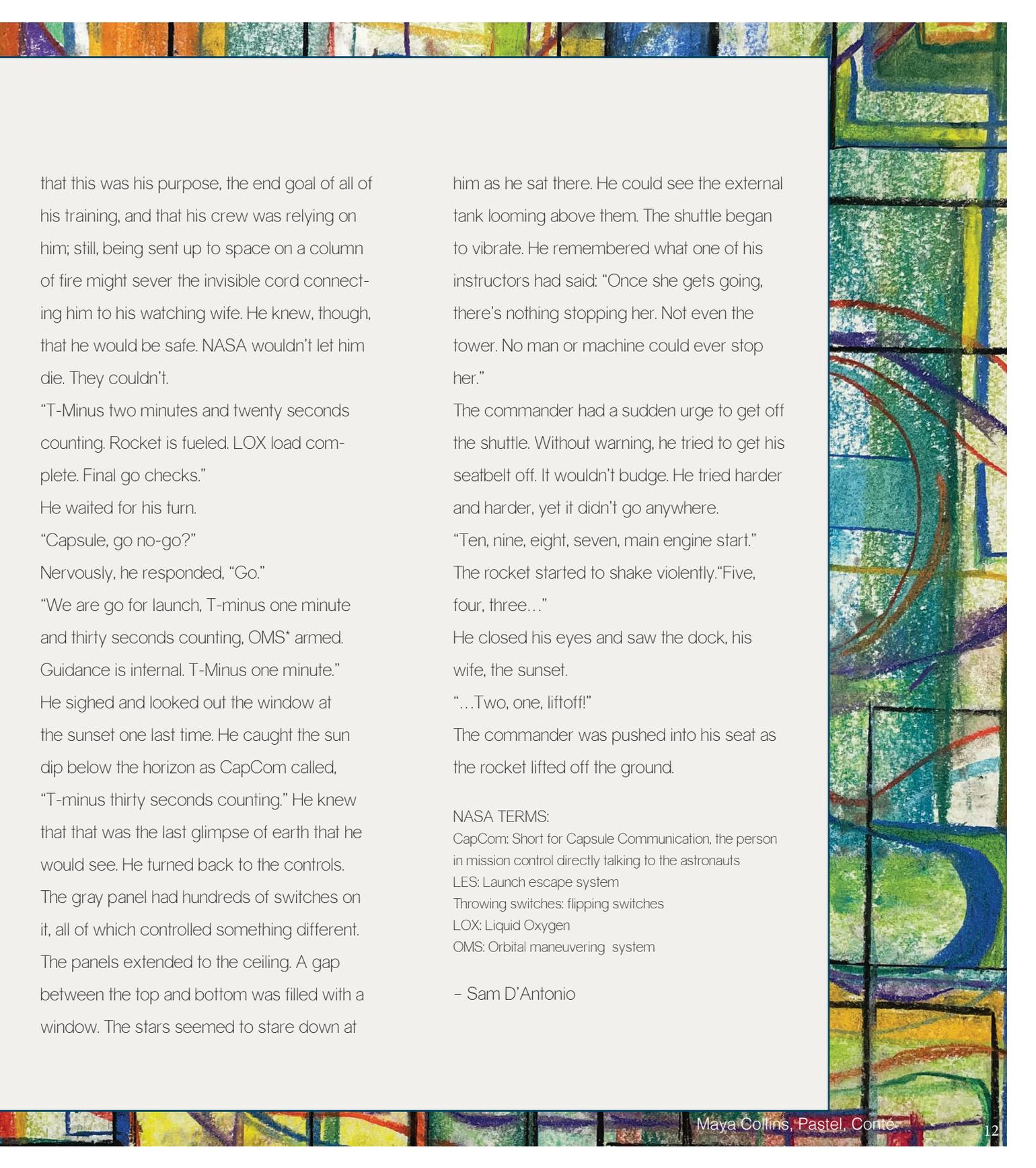
"LES armed," CapCom stated. "Stage one fueling begins in thirty seconds."

"Copy." The commander thought back on the last month to calm his mind. He was training for this mission. All of the late nights studying mission plans, long days in the gym, and simulations at the base had brought him to this point. It felt like yesterday that he arrived at Kennedy Space Center, but it had been over a month. The last week felt like a break, partially because it was, but also because he was allowed to see his family again. Then, this morning time passed in a blur. The rocket shook a little. He started to feel uneasy.

"Vibrations expected." CapCom's voice filled his ears. "First stage fuel load beginning." He checked the monitors.

"First stage LOX* load beginning, T-minus ten minutes counting."

He threw more switches and waited. A thought crossed his mind. What if he didn't make it? What about his wife? His kids? He debated getting off, but he remembered the promise he made to NASA. "Ten minutes out," he whispered. "But I'll live if I get off," he thought to himself, yet he shook it off. This was his first time going to space. He knew



that this was his purpose, the end goal of all of his training, and that his crew was relying on him; still, being sent up to space on a column of fire might sever the invisible cord connecting him to his watching wife. He knew, though, that he would be safe. NASA wouldn't let him die. They couldn't.

"T-Minus two minutes and twenty seconds counting. Rocket is fueled. LOX load complete. Final go checks."

He waited for his turn.

"Capsule, go no-go?"

Nervously, he responded, "Go."

"We are go for launch, T-minus one minute and thirty seconds counting, OMS* armed. Guidance is internal. T-Minus one minute."

He sighed and looked out the window at the sunset one last time. He caught the sun dip below the horizon as CapCom called,

"T-minus thirty seconds counting." He knew that that was the last glimpse of earth that he would see. He turned back to the controls.

The gray panel had hundreds of switches on it, all of which controlled something different.

The panels extended to the ceiling. A gap between the top and bottom was filled with a window. The stars seemed to stare down at

him as he sat there. He could see the external tank looming above them. The shuttle began to vibrate. He remembered what one of his instructors had said: "Once she gets going, there's nothing stopping her. Not even the tower. No man or machine could ever stop her."

The commander had a sudden urge to get off the shuttle. Without warning, he tried to get his seatbelt off. It wouldn't budge. He tried harder and harder, yet it didn't go anywhere.

"Ten, nine, eight, seven, main engine start."

The rocket started to shake violently. "Five, four, three..."

He closed his eyes and saw the dock, his wife, the sunset.

"...Two, one, liftoff!"

The commander was pushed into his seat as the rocket lifted off the ground.

NASA TERMS:

CapCom: Short for Capsule Communication, the person in mission control directly talking to the astronauts

LES: Launch escape system

Throwing switches: flipping switches

LOX: Liquid Oxygen

OMS: Orbital maneuvering system

- Sam D'Antonio

MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

From August 29th to September 2nd, as remnants of Hurricane Ida were moving up the East Coast, thirty-five tornadoes touched down. One of these tornadoes touched down in my town of Fort Washington, Pennsylvania on September 1st, 2021.

I had been having a problem with my AirPods for a couple months leading up to this day, and I found that the problem was common. Fortunately, Apple would replace any pair with the issue for free. I had been putting it off for a while, but I had finally made an appointment at a nearby Apple store at 5 p.m.

Up until then, my day had already been fairly eventful. It was my first day of senior year of high school—a little exciting, though not entirely in a good way. Adding to the excitement, I had a doctor's appointment that I had to leave for at 1:30 p.m., which I had mistakenly thought was

12:30 p.m. So, at 12:30, I pulled out of the school's parking lot, and while I almost immediately realized my error, I had made a stressful mistake while trying to park my car back at school. (I was in something of a hurry, as I didn't want to appear irresponsible to school administration by randomly signing out in the middle of the day.) Due to such a hurry, I managed to bump into a poorly parked white Kia sedan while pulling into another parking spot. My sense of urgency was immediately replaced with a sense of dread as I made an embarrassed phone call to my dad, who instructed me to leave a note with his phone number on the windshield. With a bit of a cloud over my head, I signed back in and continued about the school day until it was actually time to leave. Afterwards, I took my freshly injured vehicle out of its spot and headed on over to my pediatrician's

office, where my dad and I met. I then went in for my appointment and stayed an extra twenty minutes longer than necessary while my dad employed his seemingly limitless power to turn any conversation college related.

From there, I went about the five-minute drive home and waited for 4:35 p.m. to head off to the mall where my Apple store was. My mom had seen that the forecast indicated some heavy rain and high winds during the time that I would be out, but nothing seemed significant enough that I wouldn't be able to handle it. I initiated my heroic trek to the mall, and after conquering some left hand turns, arrived a little after 5:00 p.m.

At the store, I took a seat at one of the overwhelmingly creative plain

wooden tables, arranged in their comforting and warm symmetrical grid that seemed to point to the dull, sanitized, soulless life of the 21st century man. After fifteen to twenty minutes of waiting, I managed to catch an employee's attention and start my appointment. He took my damaged AirPods to the back of the store for the apparently long and arduous task of conducting a sound test. Forty minutes later, he gave me back the case with a new pair of AirPods.

In the meantime, every iPhone in the store found it necessary to alert its surroundings of the tornado that was making its way around our geographical surroundings. In addition to these, my parents also called me for a grand total of three times and warned me not to leave the building yet, which in my great impotency, I agreed to.

By this time, my mother had dutifully

notified me that the roads were safe to travel while my father instructed me to pick up a Husqvarna chainsaw from Lowe's, along with some gas cans. From the local mall to the local Lowe's, the journey was unexciting enough—very wet and cloudy, with a constant and heavy rain beating down into whatever surface it found appropriate.

Big puddles gathering on the sides of the road added a mild treachery to the trip, but nothing was unexpected. I maintained my speed at about five miles under the speed limit until I felt a phantom pressure from the automobiles on my tail to match the limit instead.

I arrived at the desired hardware store, got out of my car, and scurried my way inside in an attempt to dodge the bullets of rain. I found the chainsaw that my dad was asking for, picked up the biggest gas can in the immediate area, and sent a

picture to my dad to ask if it was what he wanted,

I waited a few minutes, and checked out. Then, my dad responded to tell me to get another gas can, so I re-entered and purchased an identical can and M&M's. I headed back home, taking small detours until I ended up in a residential neighborhood.

From here, it should've been a four-minute drive. Unfortunately, at least one-hundred cars must've been in that area as every road seemed to have a downed tree. It felt like a giant rat maze, with everyone scampering around looking for the path amidst all the dead ends, with every path obstructed by wooden obelisks bound for the wood chipper. After navigating the labyrinth of dead ends and flashing high beams, I came out the other side to an area of greater familiarity but of ultimately lesser passability.

MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (continued)

My parents had been routinely calling to make sure that I had survived the stationary trees and wet rain from the inside of my car to make sure that I knew that I should try to drive toward my house when possible. Upon making it out of the maze, I received another call on the phone and released an aggressive sigh, followed by my pressing of the green "accept" button. After telling my parents that I was now two-hundred yards further in the direction I told them that I was already going, my father gave me advice to take Virginia Drive, the road "that the Wawa was on." Looking at my map, I spied our most iconic and most visited Wawa, and saw its resident road to be named "North Bethlehem Pike". I tried searching the name

on Google Maps, but the cell service wasn't about to let that happen. After looking around the roads I might find myself going down, I concluded that my father needed to work on his clarity and continued trying the closest roads.

A similar story to the last, but this time with flashing police lights and backups on the most desirable routes. A line of cars was waiting for a stop light that was twisted and mangled, lying in the street, with a van from the electric company standing by, ready to loiter at any moment. Awkward three-point turns were made to try yet another path in the opposite direction. An hour had already passed at this point, but my resolve stood firm. I made my way down every street

that could yield some progress. When that was unsuccessful, I came across a flooded section of road. Doubts started to pop up. Is it really proper to put a car through this? Is that going to damage it? Will I even get home this way? But I fought back. "In my seventeen years of living on this earth, not once do I remember hearing about water damage to a car. I'm in an SUV, I'm higher up than the average sedan. Japanese cars are supposed to be reliable anyways." Accordingly, I pushed on. I forded the extemporaneous rapids—and on the other side, finding even greater water, something more akin to a lake, with cars stranded in the middle and first responders guiding people away—I decided not to push my luck.

I made my way back across the flooded road, tried down another floodfest, and was met with some guy in a van screaming at me as loud as he could not do what I was doing. As he seemed to know something, I didn't, opting to take his advice. At this point I was stuck. My parents had kept their calls persistent, and multiple times my mom laid out the idea that I may need to leave the car and set out on foot. With my vehicular plight foiled, plan B went into effect. I knew what the future held for me was uncertain, but it certainly wasn't permanent. In the worst case, all I may have had to do would be to sleep in my car for the night. The prospect wasn't fun, but it had an air of adventure. The scenario appealed to my sense of masculinity. I suddenly became a hardened adventurer, traversing the perilous and paved wilderness, chasing an uncertain end, braving the cold winds and rains that

tormented and tormented my corporeal form. But as much as it attacked my physical being, my spiritual resolve was unaffected.

By this time, night had fallen. I exited my car and checked for an umbrella. One was found, but amidst the rain and an overexcited opening, the canopy of the umbrella inverted, leaving a convenient bowl in which the rain could gather. The canopy was then somehow removed from its skeleton, leaving on-the-spot repair difficult. Equipped with shorts, my phone, flip flops, and a hoodie, I made my way to the same roads I had tried before, but this time I made a smaller profile. As the rain remained as heavy as ever, I walked towards the same ends that I had gotten to last time. Some progress was made, but the tiny flashlight on my phone only went so far. After an hour of walking around the area, the water had completely soaked

through my clothes. My glasses had become so covered in water that I was seeing better with them off than on. Encumbered by the heavy rain, the night time, and the insufficient light from my phone, I decided to head back to where I started. Calls to my parents were more varied during this period. At some point she had recommended that if need be, I could show up on somebody's door to ask for help. Half an hour after that call, my mom said she would head out to come find me. Five minutes after that, she met a single tree in the road and gave up. Later, there were discussions of my dad going out and finding me. When I had gotten back towards where I started, still a street away from my car, I had gotten cold enough that my mom's earlier proposition of out-of-season trick or treating became very appealing.

MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (continued)

Desperate for a break, I went and rang the doorbell on a nearby house. After a second, a small lady of retirement age with a British accent answered the door. I hastily described my predicament, as well as a good mixture of personal information, in an attempt to ease her potential anxieties about a tall male stranger who had showed up at her door at night in the middle of a frightening storm. We then made small talk for a minute as I shed onto her doormat some of the water that the storm from the Gulf of Mexico saw fit to bestow upon me.

After the minute passed, her husband revealed himself, walking out of the bathroom door that was behind his wife. I repeated my story to him, and he decided that he would give it his best shot to drive me back home. They had been living in their current house for over thirty years, so the man's knowledge of the surrounding area was more than likely to be triumphant over mine—a boy who had been living in the area for under two years and had been driving for half of one.

I still wasn't entirely confident that he would manage to get anywhere I hadn't, but it felt rude to turn down his offer, and I would

rather be inside a truck with a roof and heat than walk in my flip flops in the rain. I got inside his F-150, and his experience in the mile surrounding us displayed itself. While no real progress was made simply due to the state of everything, he quickly navigated to streets that I hadn't gotten to in my hour or so of driving in less than twenty minutes. While I sat in his passenger seat, my dad had been making his way over to me. After the kindly man had exhausted most of his options, he mentioned something about my dad, which reminded me to call him about what was going on. I did so and explained my new situation to him. When asked about where I was, I struggled mightily to describe my location. The man stuck his hand out for my phone, so I told my dad that he was about to speak with the stranger and handed the phone over.

The man then told me dad with extreme efficiency the location and description of his house and that we would be there. The man then drove us back to his house while we waited a surprisingly short amount of time for my dad to show up.

They had an introductory exchange, and we were then supplied with some bottled water, a few snacks, and some ziploc bags to keep things dry. Dad and I then went off to retrieve the car to drive it towards the closest point we could to our house. Upon ignition, evidence that cars do indeed get damaged by water made itself quite apparent. The dashboard got into the Christmas spirit as lights popped up all over it. A warning about something to do with electronic breaks came up. A certain guilt crept up on me but retreated when I remembered the situation I was in. The car still drove itself to the first downed tree just fine. We got out, retrieved the gas cans and chainsaw, and began our new trek on foot.

My dad was notably better equipped than I was, with a flashlight, a raincoat and rain boots. With this assistance, we made our way past the assortment of downed trees, dodging branches and downed wires that were certainly not live; however, if they were live, that would certainly

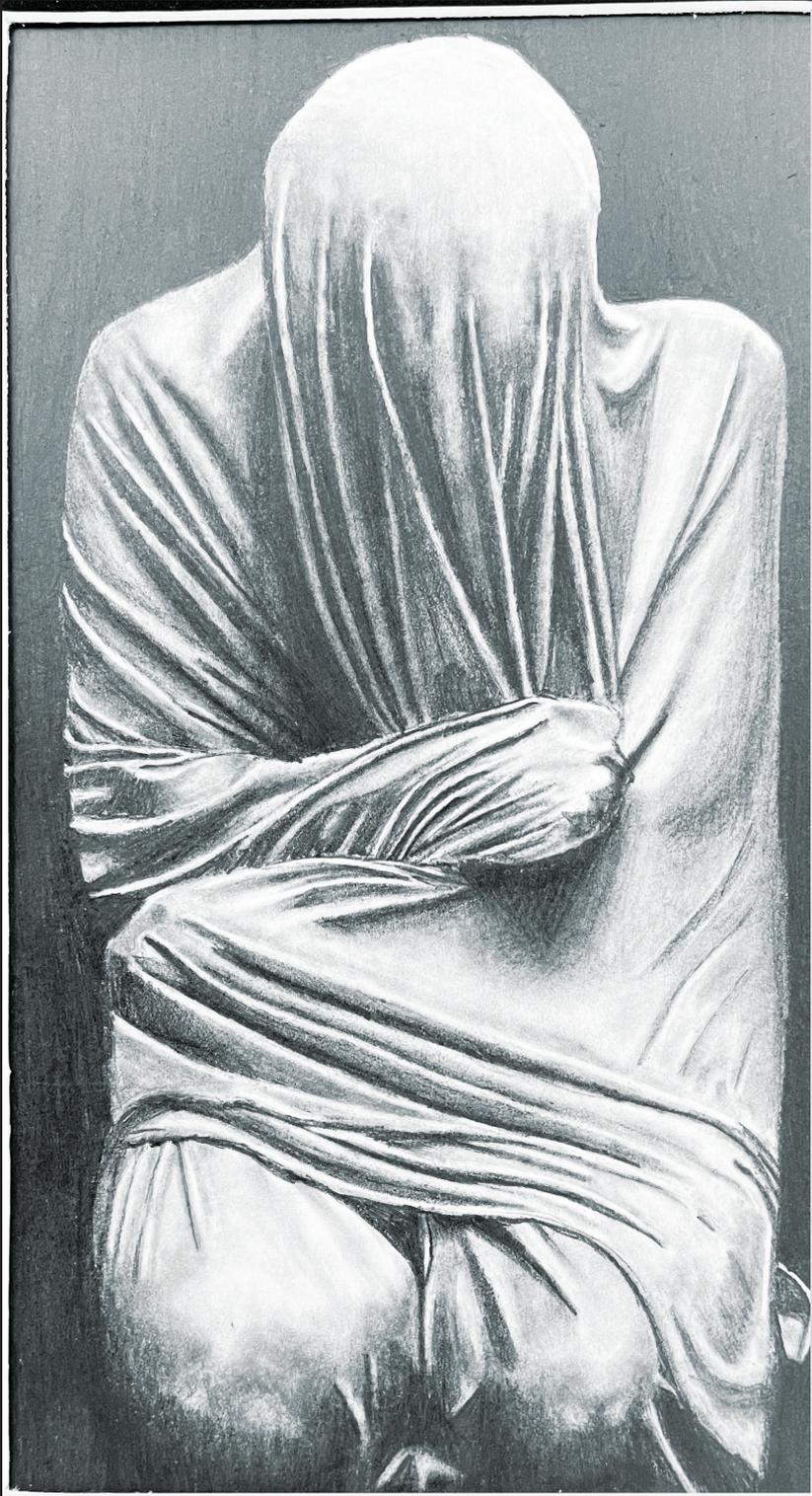
be a fright, so we avoided them fanatically. Things got hairier from there: more trees and wires down, muddy lawns, whatnot, until we got onto the street two roads adjacent to our home. The walk here was a fairly straight shot, with the road wide enough that trees couldn't possibly block the whole way. Here, we met another person walking through the aftermath of the storm, with whom we had a brief chat before we went our separate ways.

At this point, we made it into the neighborhood I actually lived in. Its trees were a selling point, with a beautiful canopy of tall trees distinguishing itself from surrounding neighborhoods. However, this ended up working against us. A downed tree here was every thirty yards. We had to duck and evade the militia of trees and telephone wires while we made it through the even darker landscape.

Finally, we made it. My own home was in sight. We went around the tree leading up to the house, then ducked

the tree in our driveway to go around the tree that landed on our porch and blocked the front door. We made it to the back door with a celebratory shout, and my mom breathed the heaviest sigh of relief I've ever heard. The first order of business, after giving my dog a few head scratches, was to head to my bathroom upstairs and remove my soaked clothes. I re-emerged as a new man with a towel around my waist. I grabbed the first clothes I could find in my closet, put them on, and went downstairs. My mom had made me a grilled cheese sandwich. As hungry as I was, I was still more tired, so I ate it at a much slower pace than average. After some belly rubs for the dog, and apple juice and a grilled cheese for me, I headed upstairs and went off to bed. The hours-long adventure had finally ended.

– Liam Bell

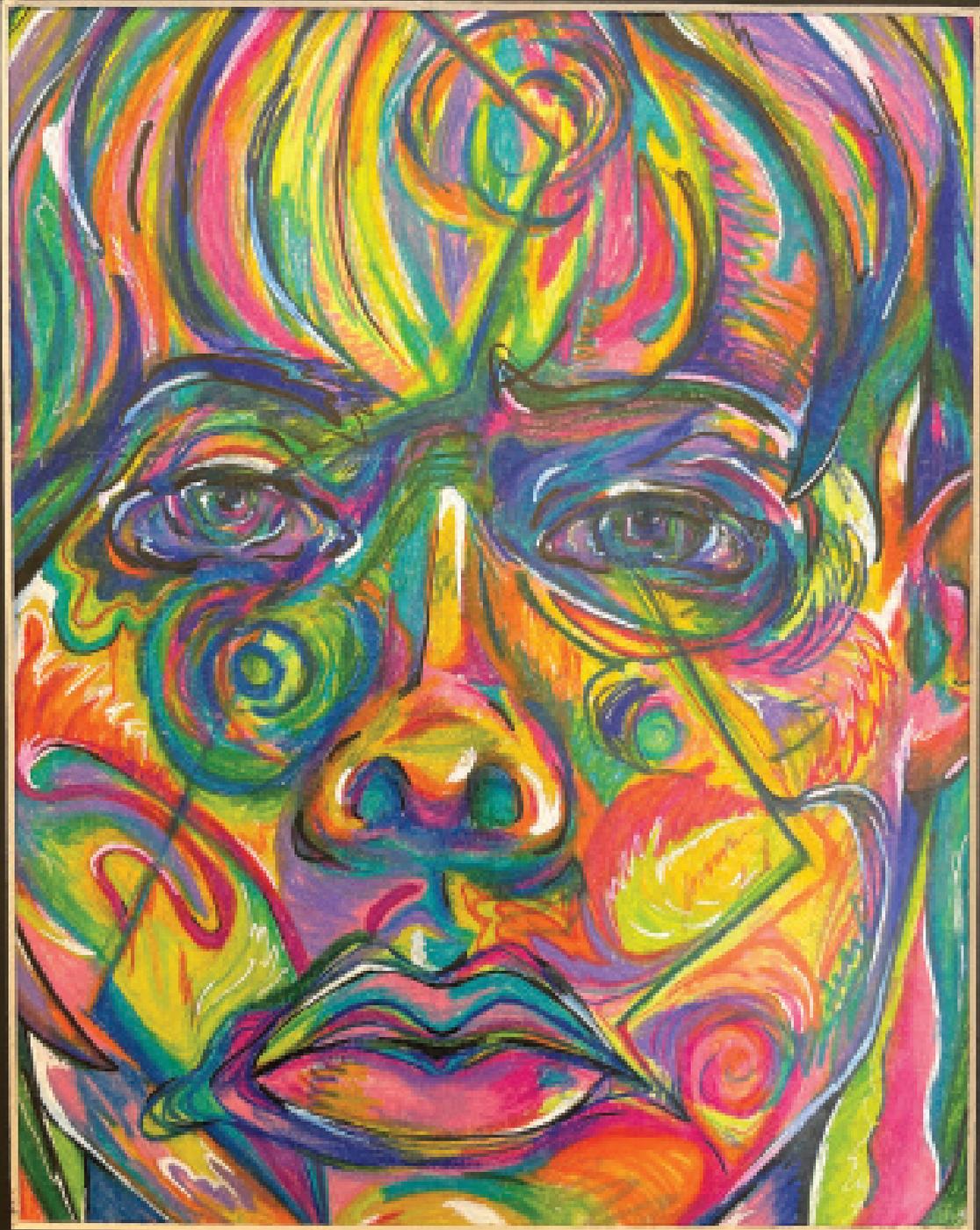


EMPTINESS

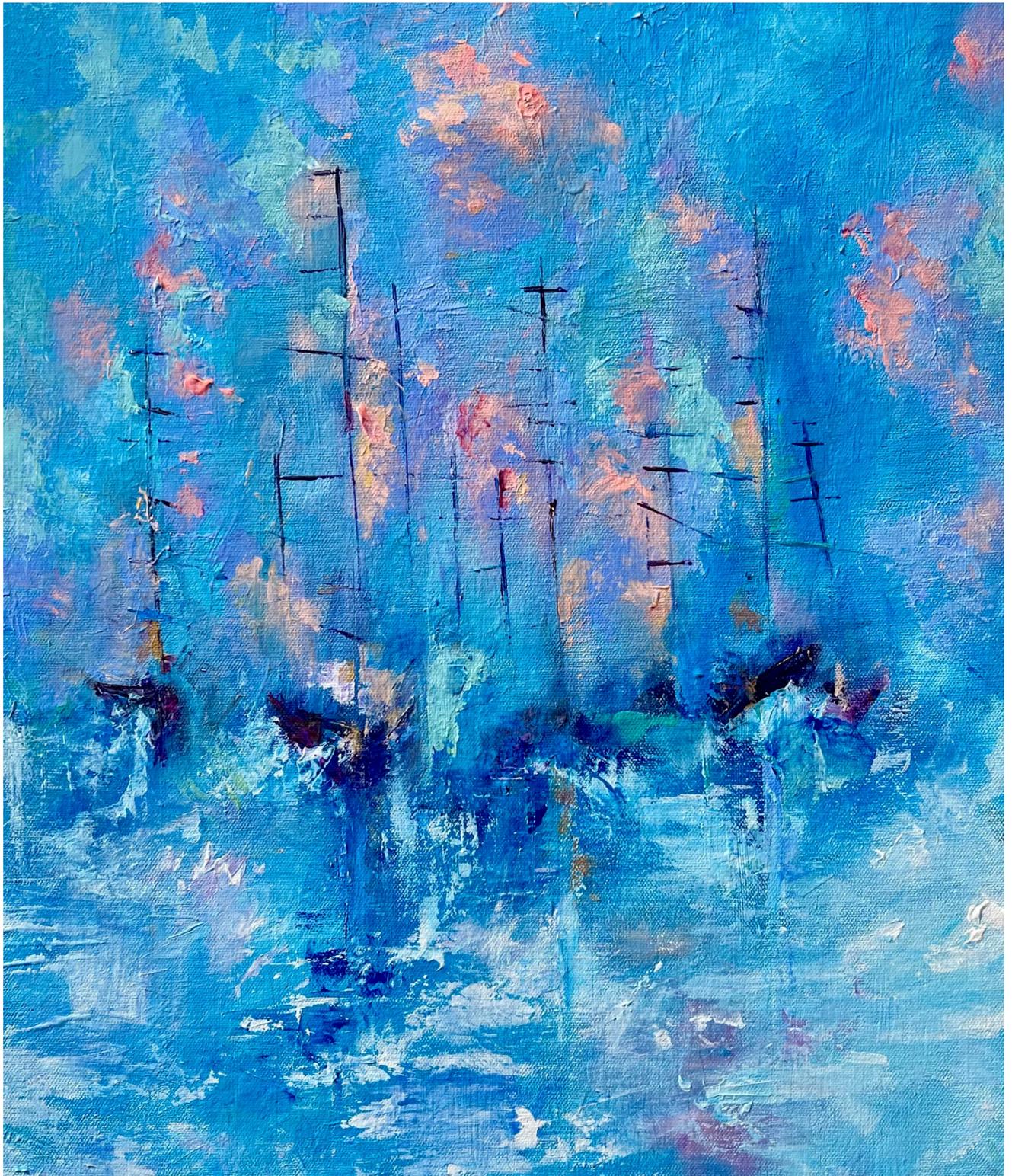
It's as though there were no thought
That one could e're remember:
The one and only spot
In her heart that held an ember.
The eager desire to quell
The thirst that lingers on—
Her mind now under a spell
That her heart could never con.
She sought to hold a feeling
Once again in her heart,
But nothing could break the sealing
That had encompassed the whole part.
It seemed her love could ne'er return
All due to one who on her had turned.

— Cherith Garner

Hailey Wichard, Graphite



Maya Collins, Colored Pencil & Ink



Charlotte Clark, Oil on Canvas



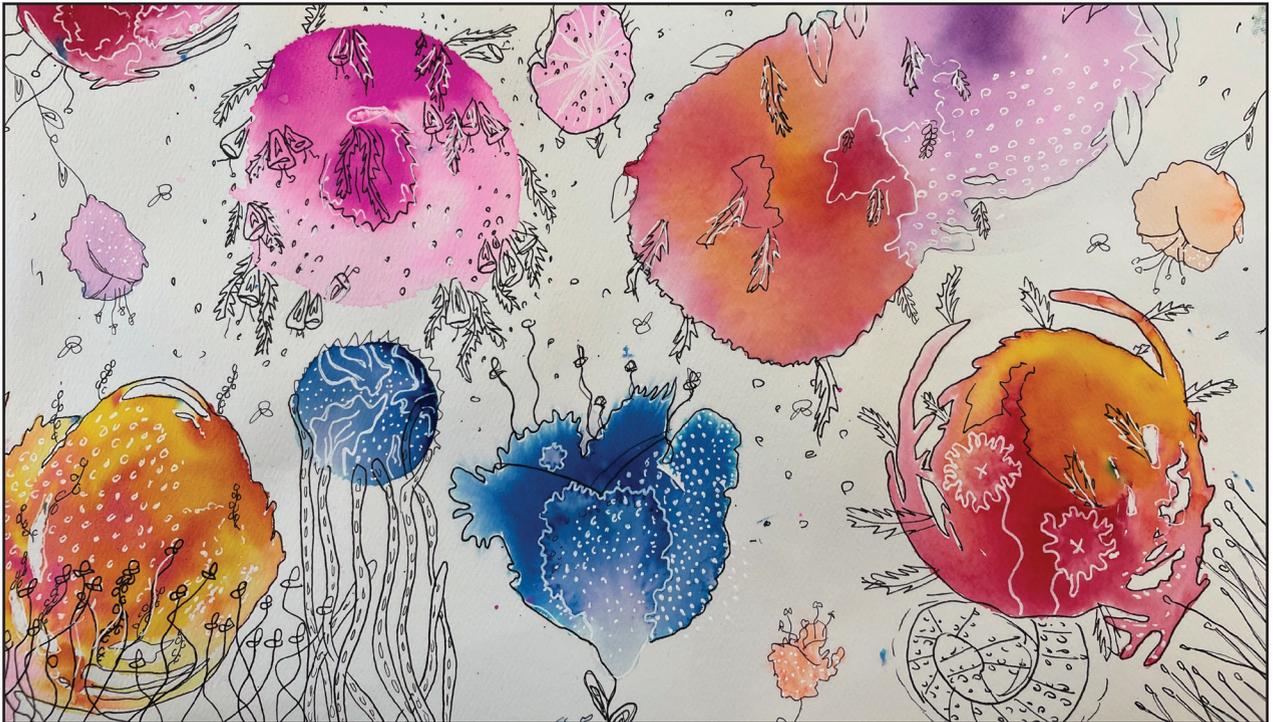
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Doris Hou
12.06.2001

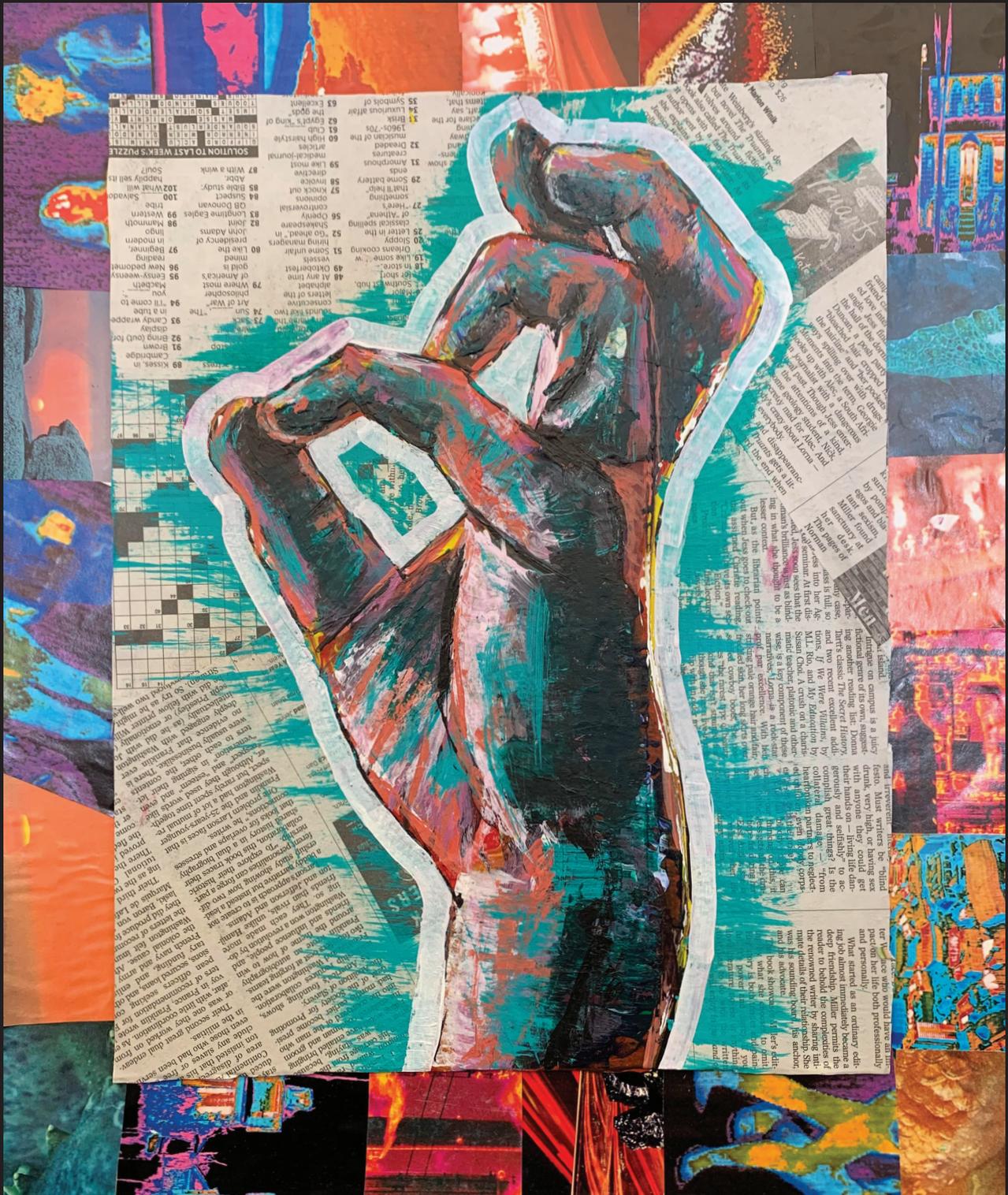
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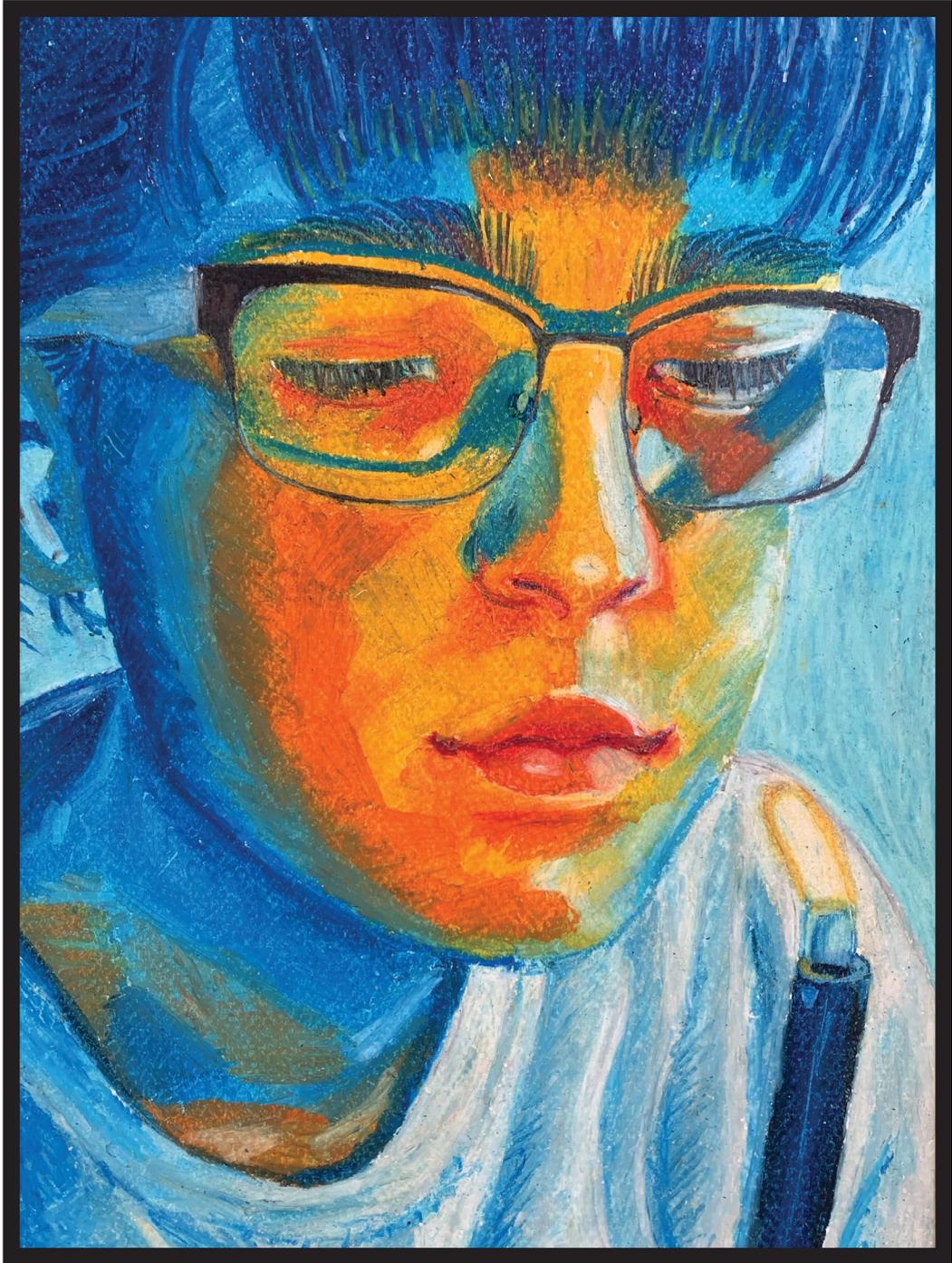
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Elise Bushra, Chalk Pastel





FOG

In the dark night sky,

The fog begins to take form;

Stars twinkle, twinkle through heavy mist.

Shapes, form, twist, turn, in, out, left, right.

What do you miss most? I see it.

The fog reveals it, a manifestation of your thoughts.

Oh, how sad you seem...they are so far.

The impossibility of the future,

Oh, how you yearn for it; the fog perceives it

Shapes, form, twist, turn, in out, left, right,

You are selfish? No.....

The fog surrounds you...where are the stars?

Live in the now, live in the now, live in the now, live in the now.

Catch up, stay focused, work harder, go faster, slow down, focus.....

The fog begins to dissipate,

the stars twinkle brightly.

I'm right here.

I'm here.

Here.

- Hailey Wichard



Doris Hou, Ceramics



Sarah Mento, Ceramics



Evezi Omuyeh, Sculpture



Doris Hou, Ceramics

THE CLIMB

Staring up at the mountain,

I see my fate;

So sure I can make it,

Yet I still hesitate.

Uncertainty eats at me.

Doubt calls my name,

Yet hope beckons me forward

Towards the goal that I aim.

Who am I to be there,

Where none have prevailed,

Where so many have tried,

And so many have failed?

Starting my climb,

I have one final thought:

I will make it up

For all who have fought

I hear a voice

Coming from the trees:

"Turn back, no further,"

And much more they tease.

Yet, I refuse to listen.

I won't let them win.

I continue on,

Though I'm troubled within.

I hear a voice in the wind—

A faint, low murmur:

"You can make it."

It pushes me further.

After some time passing,

I'm nearly at the top,

Yet the view I see

Makes me stop

The skies light up;

The clouds cheer me on,

And suddenly

My turmoil is gone

Warmth fills my soul

As I run to the peak,

And a voice loud and clear

Begins to speak:

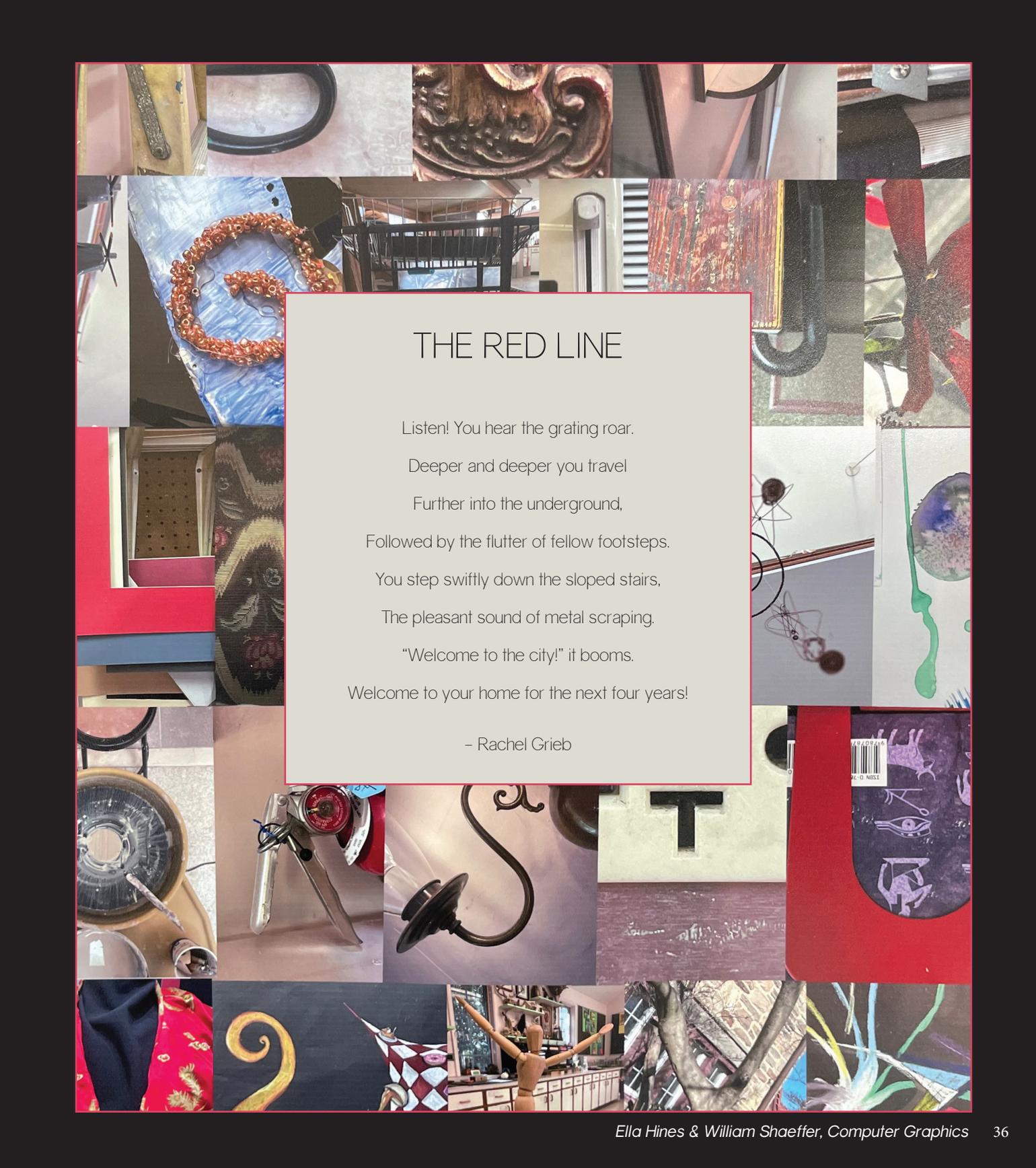
"You have proven yourself

Zealous and fervent.

Well done," It said,"

"Good and faithful servant."

– Idara Umoh



THE RED LINE

Listen! You hear the grating roar.
Deeper and deeper you travel
Further into the underground,
Followed by the flutter of fellow footsteps.
You step swiftly down the sloped stairs,
The pleasant sound of metal scraping.
“Welcome to the city!” it booms.
Welcome to your home for the next four years!

– Rachel Grieb



Lincoln Palmer, Graphite

FLEETING MEMORIES

Mosquitos jeer and foamy waves mock—
deliberately chased but rarely caught.

A haunting silhouette, a futile knock—

As you flee, a war is fought.

As captured prey, your story unravels
of bare humanity, exposed unbelief.

As emotion submits, your thought travels

On paths adorned with flowers or coated in grief.

But petals line grief, the sadness controlled.

Beautiful distortions: your cracks painted in gold.

— Eowyn Oh



Hana Yaguchi, Oil on Canvas

sweet dreams

i know a place you may go
if you're feeling sad or upset.
you flatten your sheets and
slide down your feet
so nothing can be a threat.
you close your eyes and
create new lies to fill
your dreamy head...
in this corner here,
you escape all fear.
in this place you call
your bed.

– Kate Myers



DELAWARE COUNTY
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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