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Letter from the Editors

As the floral scents of spring fade away and transition to the sunny days of summer, another amazing year at The Lit comes to an end. With that, The Lit is proud to present its Spring Issue. Students have worked hard throughout the year while dedicating time to laughter and fun. Thursday meetings at the Lit have been a great time to relax and enjoy the simple pleasures of drawing a blind portrait, writing a poem with friends, and designing posters for decoration. Along with regular meetings, The Lit brings bursts of energy - a mix-up of vibe. Students have consistently filled us with awe, and are a testament to the creativity that inhabits Choate's campus.

This year has been exciting for The Lit. Although our veteran seniors walk their last steps on campus, we are sure they will continue to explore their passions and do special things. Meanwhile, The Lit will continue to sprinkle its spirit around Choate's campus. We have cherished the quality time spent with members, and find joy in sharing the amazing submissions with all students. We would like to thank all contributors who have submitted their visuals or writing - this year would not have been the same without you. Like a grand finale, The Lit's Spring Issue marks the end of a school year filled with a variety of pitches, melodies, and moods. We are confident, however, that this final issue leaves yet another memorable year on a high note.

Finally, we would like to thank the incredible people who have made everything possible at The Lit. Thank you to our advisor, Dr. Siperstein, for his guidance and commitment. Additionally, we are grateful for Ms. Nolan and Ms. Thomas at the Copy Center, who have helped us tremendously. Lastly, we would like to express our gratitude to all students, members, and subscribers who have helped The Lit deliver year after year. Please enjoy the Spring Issue.



LOULOU POLITI '25

Cultural Remnants

The remnants
of a culture that only remains vibrant
on a far away continent,

the dynamic
created by the pressure
of seemingly unlimited opportunity,

the realization
that trials are trivial
when marked by a generational divergence—

attending prestigious,
elitist private high school,
the mere concept of which
remaining entirely elusive to my parents
and nonexistent to theirs.

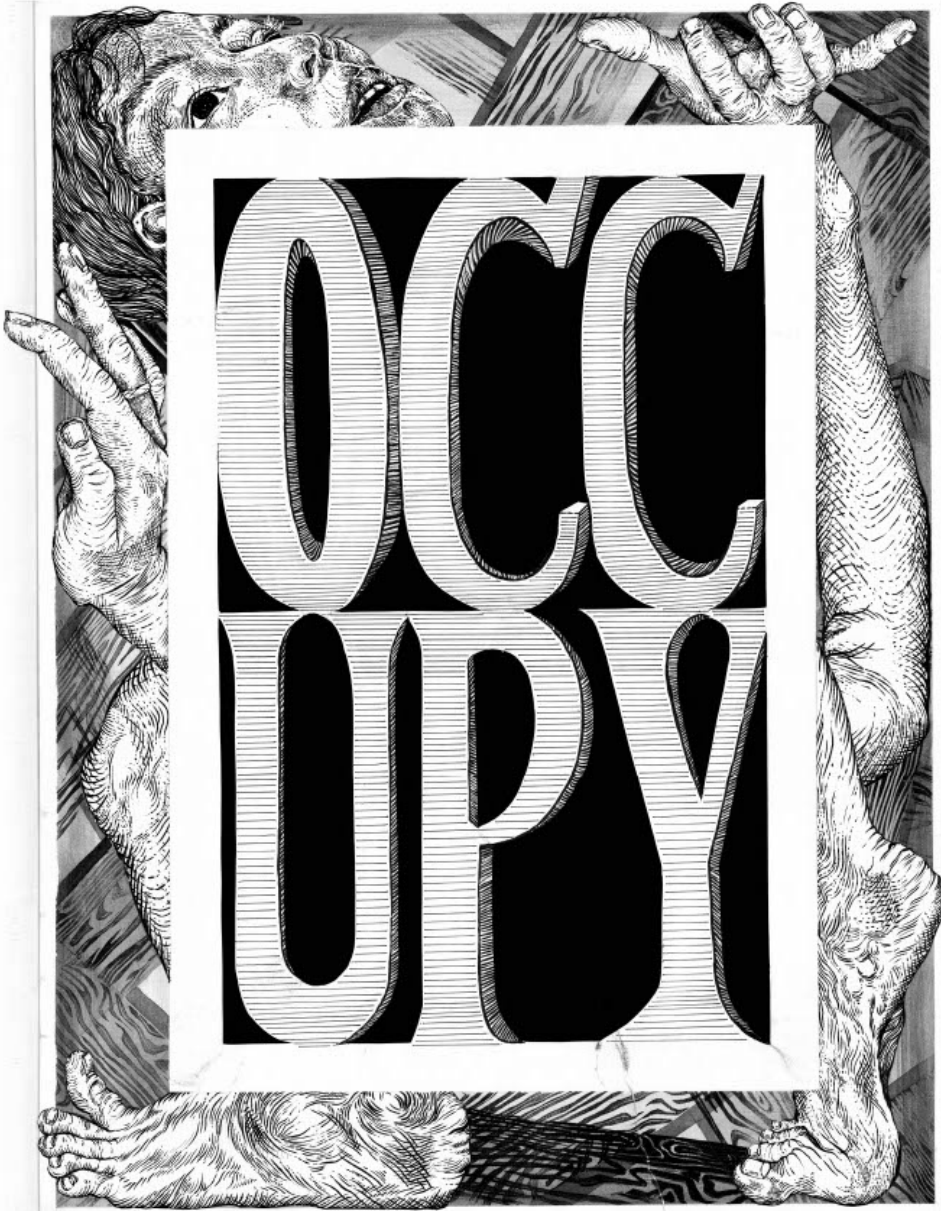
The aspiration to improve my family's situation
by learning and accomplishing
every dream they've ever conceived for me
and without a worry line ever marring
their tired faces
contradicting
the desire to comprehend my culture
and the life my own family led for so long.

My grandparents obsessively watch the news:
local news, American national news, Portuguese news, Telemudo,
anything to connect themselves to the world.

They often encourage me to entertain that need
for connection and education with them,
so much so that my grandfather emails me
Diario de Coimbra,
the esteemed daily publication
from the city where my mother was born.



JOHN JANNOTTA '25



KATHERINE CHONG '25



LOULOU POLITI '25



The Frontman is an Ancient Deity

It was around 1 am, and I had managed to escape a party I was dragged to. The night was odd, everything seemed hazy. So I looked for things to do, and found a ticket booth in the corner of my eye.

“What’s cheap and happening now?”

The man stared at me and grabbed a handful of damp red tickets.

“A band called ‘Dionysus Ivy’ down there.” He pointed to a decrepit building.

He seemed unconvinced of their entertainment value, but I took a ticket and paid him. There was the faint sound of Queen coming from inside. When I entered, there weren’t many open seats, so I wandered to the back.

With my decent view of the stage, I noticed the glint of sunglasses on a tall, stalky figure. There were scattered drum crashes and guitar strums coming from behind him, but with a wave of his hand, they were miraculously tuned. It was dark enough that the only other thing I could really make out on the man was his striking red hair. But when I say red, in no way do I mean “ginger.” It was red. Long, wavy, and blood red. When the lights came on, I noticed he was wearing stilettos and a black suit.

It was an odd sight, but before I knew it, he had started. He played a few tunes that fit his overall vibes- Pearl Jam, some more Queen, and a few others. All of the band members seemed almost enamored with the man- unable to look away, yet still playing perfectly. They were for hire; all of the advertisements for the band had different members. Yet there they were: almost mesmerized.

It seemed like every detail about the man was contradictory or strange. One moment, his voice was raspy, and the other, angelic. At points, he seemed almost drunk, but was completely sober the next second. When he sang, a low, breathy hiss radiated from his microphone, never quite audible, but in every crack in the rhythm, noticeable. It wafted through the crowd and coaxed the crowd’s lungs to breathe with the melody. Every time he spoke it seemed to rattle the ground, even without the microphone. It was a random Saturday night, in a random venue that I had not bought a ticket for more than 10 minutes beforehand, and it was the best concert I had ever been to. When he stopped playing, he made a peace sign and said “Y’all made Dionysus proud tonight!” and slinked off stage.

When I got home, I did some research. The guy did not exist. I looked up “Dionysus Ivy Band” and all I got were conspiracy theories. All of the credited band members spoke nothing of

the experience, and eerily enough- I went back to the same ticket booth I had gone to before, and the man had no recollection of a band called “Dionysus Ivy.”

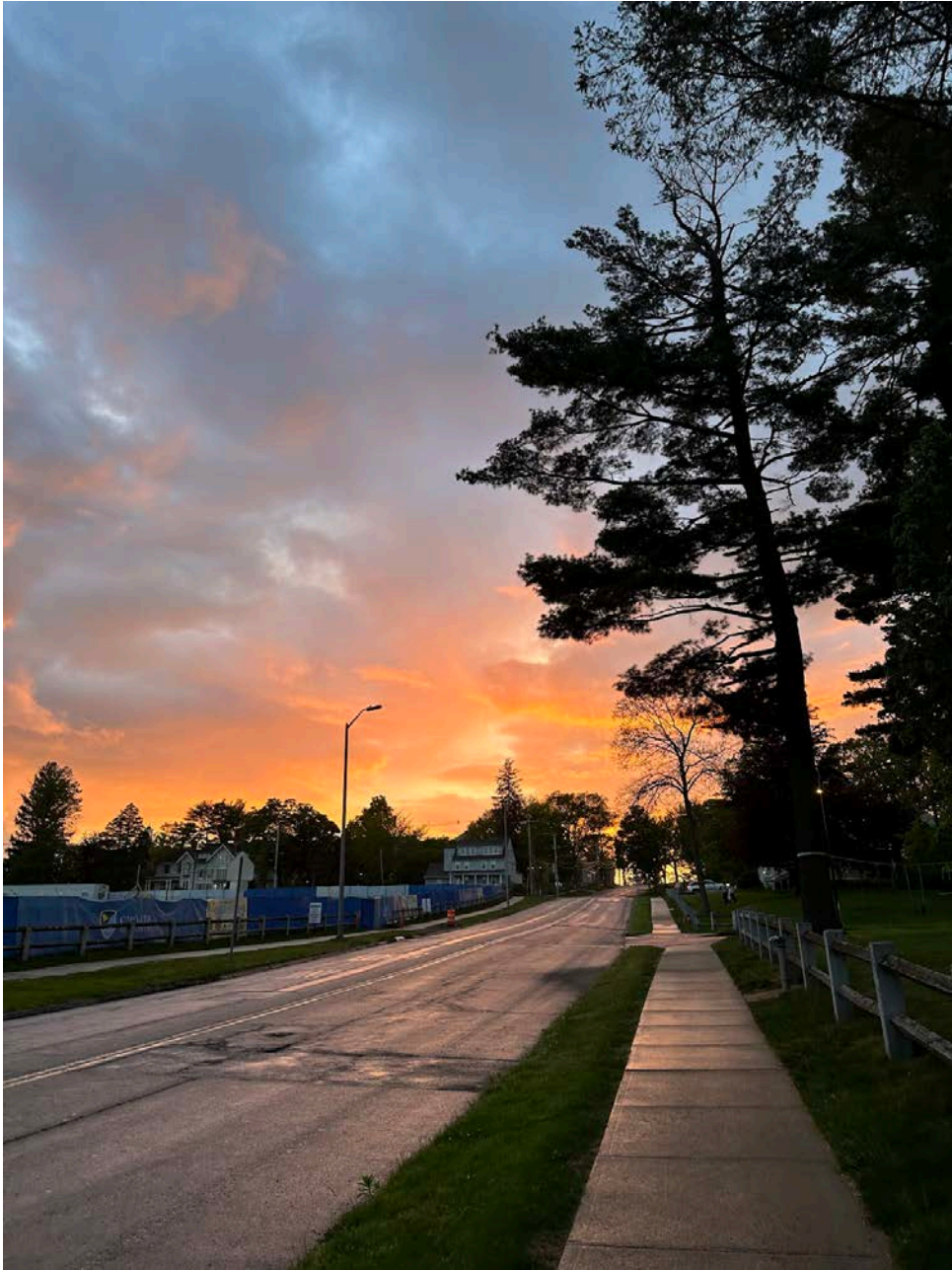
But what I did find was that the Greek god of Music and Wine was said to have striking red hair. And his name was Dionysus.



LILA GIZZIE '25

Posie

Slowly and quiet it lies below trees
While everybody knows of it nobody sees
Many shapes it shows on each deep floor
Forever cease to exist when the sun is no more
It creeps out of every hole during birth of night
When moonlight and darkness stand in epic fight
When stars are the only light you see
Just know, it has devoured you and me
Surrenderous it spreads weight upon your soul
Until you abandon your path, your light and goal
In times like these we need our dearest friend
Who reminds us that shadow and night will someday end

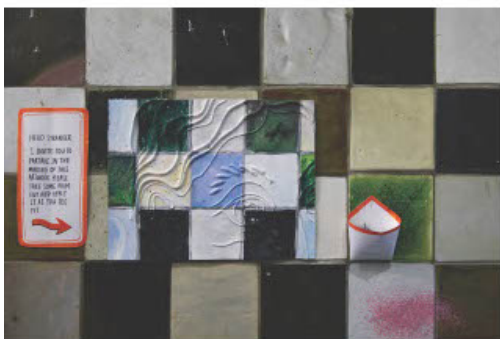




George III, 75 Waterman St, Providence, RI 02912



Sachem Canonchet, 94 Geroge St, Providence, RI 02906



Helen Metcalf, 30 Waterman St, Providence, RI 02912



VICTORIA TANG '27

Santa Cruz Moos

let us graze on greener pastures
race against the stooping sun
dewy fields licking our flanks no longer
spit chewed cud at vacillation

let us jump those barbed wire fences
scuffed hooves dislodging packed soil
our unfettered pace brazenly freeing
calves fitted with horse blinders

let us be spring's looming super bloom
embrace the breeze's sobering sway
trample neat arrays and buck and drop
drooping poppies finally flattened



LOULOU POLITI '25

Onwards, Until?

Life can be pictured as a road, a straight road that stretches on infinitely.

On this road, some move faster, some travel more comfortably, and some go backwards and lose their way. Some are confined to stillness, voluntarily or involuntarily.

Some are given a horse, others are not given shoes. Some are able to use their wit and skill to obtain a horse, or perhaps an automobile.

The only universal law is that no one knows where the road is going.

Since it is impossible to know where the road leads, then we must know why we travel. We must know the reason why we continue.

It is equally important to understand that the road is long. If we fail to realize this, then we might lose our way, becoming stuck on one thing or another, and confining ourselves to stillness.

Finally, progress, real forward progress, is key. Without meaningful progress? The road might become a circle, and completing the journey will leave you right back where you started.



PANTONE
654 #
Cobalt



PANTONE
668 #
Covore



PANTONE
1977 #
Tidepool

Izzy Cook '27



For now, the plant seemed to persist. It seemed to understand that I depended on its survival more than it depended on mine. What had started as a small anomaly now threatened the integrity of the station, and Venus command no longer cared whether or not I returned to The Garden alive.

“It’s up to us to get out of here little buddy,” I watered it with water from the windtrap catch tube, loosening the tap which it had miraculously grown around. I stood up as the water pooled around my feet and moved over to my “Command Station,” which was a laptop, seated on a short desk with a triangular shape, and full metal sheets instead of legs, that formed a little cave or crevasse that was just big enough for me to curl up into a ball under. The Desk was bolted to the floor and the corner faced the wall of the plant. The computer was plugged into a server that the plant had again seemingly sensed my desire for and grew to accept it. A number of red and yellow flashing symbols that would have made me panic two weeks ago now make me sigh with annoyance and a desire for caffeinated atmosphere. There was a very drowsy feeling hanging in the air created by this plant.

I know that I called it “little buddy,” but you have to understand that the room I called my home for a number of weeks was this plant and its planter. What started as a transplant from the oxygen garden grew to encompass almost the entire bridge and kitchenette, enveloping it in folds and vines, constantly releasing oxygen into the air, and filtering out whatever deadly spores were on the outside that came from the upper atmosphere of Venus, where the station is hovering. That is of course, what I had come up with, that there were killer mushrooms out there. I still don’t know exactly what it was that killed everyone else and caused the station to go on lockdown, but I was pretty sure it was some sort of fungal bioweapon.

My plan was, to get a sample of the air outside, figure out a bunch of things about it, and then broadcast it to Venus command so that they would have no choice but to come get me because of what I know about a dangerous alien entity. That of course started with getting outside, something that I needed an ATESE to do. ATESE stands for All Terrain and Environment Survival Exoskeleton, and they happened to be located on the other side of the plant wall keeping me alive. And, I was very tired.

So my plan became, to convince my “little buddy” to move towards the ATESEs and then open up to let me and an environment sample tube out into the greater chambers. My secret hope was that I could extract the death fungus from some of the air outside, and have a sweet sweet caffeinated breath or two, without the risk of inhaling toxic spores.

“Hey little buddy,” I place my hand on the wall, it feels fuzzy, “I need to get a sample of the air outside, to run some tests on it. I need to get to the ATESE’s, can you grow over there and open it up for me?”

It didn’t seem to have a reaction to that, but neither did it the last time I asked it to grow towards the refrigerator, or the server, and both of those worked. So I had high hopes that my plan was set in motion. Now I just sat on the roots near the side I wanted to open for me, and waited patiently.

I must have taken a nap, because the plant spoke to me and told me that everything was going to be ok, and that we were going to get out of here. All I had to do was sit tight and wait.

Eventually the roots in front of me parted, and the way was clear to a black panel on the wall labeled “Emergency ATESEs.” I go over to the panel and pick out an orange pod about the diameter of my palm. It looked fully operational, so I walked into the most oxygenated part of the room and clapped it to my chest. I felt the air ripple around me, condense slightly, as a blue film spread across my vision.

The plant didn’t like that, it groaned and began to shrink. The root walls began to slither and draw inwards.

“Woah buddy, it’s ok, we’re cool.”

According to the plant, it was not ok and we were not cool. The rumbling continued and a pink sediment floated through the air. A heads up display in the ATESE isolated the molecule and identified it as chloroform.

A number of pores in the wall began glistening with a strange, oily liquid. That would probably be the digestive fluid. So, that’s bad.

Thankfully, the ATESE protected me from the chloroform in the air, and the walls have not completely shrunk around the kitchenette. I ran, a sudden burst of adrenaline seeming to slow the walls closing in on me. The shifting, constricting ground beneath my feet actually pushed me faster towards my destination, like a horizontal escalator in a spaceport. I reach to grab a knife, but something out of the corner of my eye moves, a small door wedge is constricted, and as it passes through the wall, a small gap appears, and some sickly orange substance is released into the air amidst the pink chloroform fog. Spores.

I needed a hollow wedge big enough to make a hole I could fit through, and then I had to hope that the digestive fluid didn’t dissolve my ATESE, and leave me for the death shrooms. Where would I find a wedge-like shape? The desk that I spent an abnormal amount of time explaining the orientation and details of at the beginning of this story? Bingo! I sprinted back over to the computer, and just before the shifting vines had swallowed it whole, I dived underneath the desk, hugging my knees to my chest and screaming. The vines snapped shut with enough force to crush my skull, but I could still see the light from inside of its flytrap.

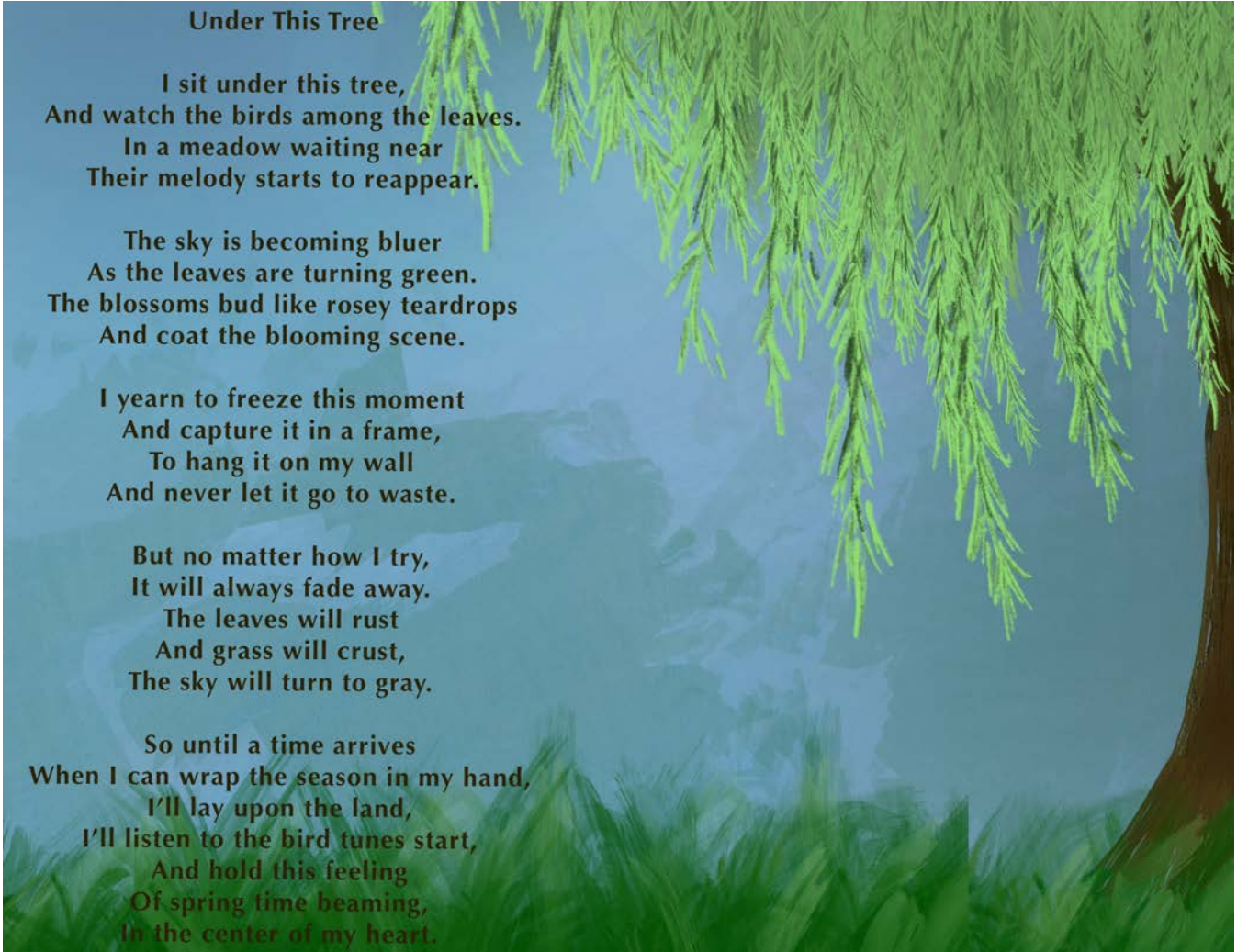
In under ten seconds the last vines, thick and armored, came crashing together in front of me to reveal the outside. Hot, atmospheric air signaled that the hull had been breached. The plant that just tried to eat me was one of 20 makeshift pods, the exact number of crew for a crumpled and destroyed station, overgrown with carnivorous fauna. I had escaped my Venus Flytrap: Now to help the others, and get home.



LOULOU POLITI '25



YOYO ZHANG '24



Under This Tree

I sit under this tree,
And watch the birds among the leaves.
In a meadow waiting near
Their melody starts to reappear.

The sky is becoming bluer
As the leaves are turning green.
The blossoms bud like rosey teardrops
And coat the blooming scene.

I yearn to freeze this moment
And capture it in a frame,
To hang it on my wall
And never let it go to waste.

But no matter how I try,
It will always fade away.
The leaves will rust
And grass will crust,
The sky will turn to gray.

So until a time arrives
When I can wrap the season in my hand,
I'll lay upon the land,
I'll listen to the bird tunes start,
And hold this feeling
Of spring time beaming,
In the center of my heart.



LILA GIZZIE '25

Thunder and Lightning

Rain roars and pounds on the window panes.

I roll over from my waxy crayon masterpiece and stare at the dark walls—
the world seems to stop.

Chills run down my spine as I close my eyes and imagine... all the horrors that could happen

Light cracks through the windows blinding my vision and panic overwhelms my body,
like the thought of being on a plane or spiders crawling up my back.

Adrenaline propels my stubby legs onto the floor and I sprint to find my sister,
only to find her calmly typing away at her homework.

I dive under the covers searching for warmth. “How are you just sitting there? IT IS THUNDERING!”

She looks over, responding with a soft chuckle. “The rain can’t do anything to us, we are inside. Why
don’t you just sit down and do something else.”

Her words go through one ear and come out the other. My tears trickle onto the soft blanket and I slowly
shut my eyes, hoping. Comfort surrounds me, and the thunder stops.



PANTONE
8889 #
Orchid Bouquet



PANTONE
1739 #
Baby Whale



PANTONE
810 #
Rosewater

IZZY COOK '27



Why Golf?

There are many different motives for doing the things we love. Maybe because we are good at it, and it makes others envious. Maybe because it makes us feel better about ourselves. Maybe because it's a good thing for the soul and the body.

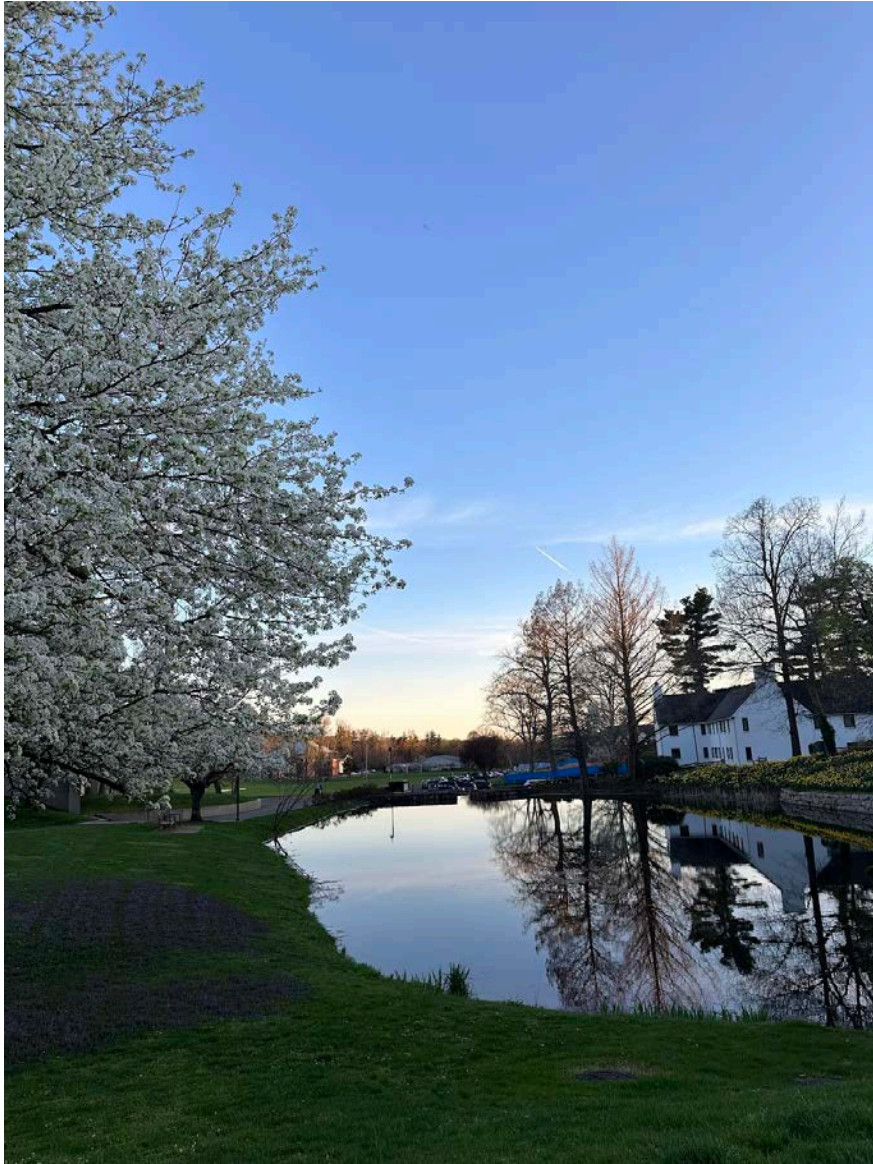
So then why is golf so popular? Most suck at golf, and it embarrasses us. Because many suck at golf, and see holes in their bank accounts and hours spent on the course, it rarely makes them feel good about themselves. It is often good exercise and stress relief, but there are better ways to improve yourself, no?

Obviously this is not true for everyone. If you are good at it, then it sparks all the motivation for doing it over and over again.

The reason then, that I love golf, and why many do, is that we see glimpses of being good, glimpses of greatness. Absolutely puring an 8 within a few feet gets me going like nothing else.

We think that if we try hard enough, then we can be good, because we've seen it in ourselves. Because what's the difference between me and Phil Mickelson?

This spark, this vision, is why golf. Among other reasons, of course.



YOYO ZHANG '24

Untitled

You have to understand that people like convenience. That is why over the years, vacuums, washing machines, and cars have been invented for people to get things done in easier, more efficient ways. In every way, convenience is good. Therefore, the more convenient a product, the better it is.

And who wouldn't want the best, most convenient pair of scissors in the world?

Here at Scissor Corp, we are dedicated to creating the best scissors possible, fashioned from the highest quality substances known to man. That's right, these brand-new scissors are not stainless steel or titanium. Each pair has a unique set of blades, forged out of a super-durable material called "plastic." They're so well designed that a single snip of these blades has the ability to rip through the space and time continuum and travel through time! (Only one in a million Scissor Corp scissors have this ability. Don't sue.)

Not only that, but our scissors are manufactured with such precision that they are able to cut paper (up to) a whole millisecond faster than traditional scissors! This is such an incredible time saver and has so many versatile applications in the real world. Yes, Scissor Corp scissors are truly the pinnacle of human ingenuity.

Also, the safety features of these scissors are unmatched. How many hundreds of times have you seen someone cut themselves with scissors and suffer a near-fatal injury? This is sadly a big problem in society today. But do not fear, as our scissors have been designed with this very scenario in mind. Scissor Corp scissor blades will break very easily, which makes them ineffective at actually cutting anything. This is a unique safety feature that will doubtlessly save thousands of lives in the future. And the cherry on top is the affordability of these scissors. Why, the first of six down payments will only cost you an arm and your left kidney! How's that for convenient?



KATHERINE CHONG '25



Bird's Eye View

The rock below is fading,
The grass growing in size.
The water cuts through
The ground in grooves,
As I start to rise.

I feel a frosty breeze,
I see the blue horizon.
The trees are sprouting from the dirt
Like fuzzy dandelions.

The ground is now
A mash hues,
From earthy browns
To crystal blues.

Around me is the vibrant sky,
It surrounds me as I
Begin to fly.

Wrapped in the rainbow,
Trapped in a balloon,
I surf in the cloudscapes,
And sail to the moon.



Izzy Cook '27



Why I don't mess with gum

Gum, as in chewing gum, is admittedly very flavorful and delicious. It can be practical, should you have bad breath, yet also refreshing and distracting.

So why don't I mess with gum?

First of all, most gum leaves my mouth feeling dirty, like I just drank three sprites, went to bed without brushing my teeth, and then woke up.

Gum is also addictive. It's addictive in the sense that it is something to do, something to chew on. Once you spit it out, what is there to do? Put in another slice, I guess.

Finally, I sound like a cow when I chew gum, and I look like a fool when I move my mouth around. It also makes my teeth and jaw sore, for no good reason.

These are the reasons why I don't mess with gum, but everyone else seems to love it. Have I ever told anyone that I don't mess with gum? Have I ever told anyone that I think they should stop? Have I ever told anyone that they sound like a cow when they chew gum, and look like a fool with their mouth moving around?

No.

I don't mess with gum, but that doesn't mean anyone else shouldn't mess with it either.



YOYO ZHANG '24



KATHERINE CHONG '25



LOULOU POLITI '24



A Mother's Song

My mother's voice was like the roaring streets of Pakistan; like the intense honking of motorbikes slanted in a haphazard zigzag, like the screeching Urdu at our family's get-togethers. Yet, the way she sang my name was like the pillow I would lay on at night when she told me magical stories of The Shoemaker and His Wife. She would gently tap on the bed frame "Cut, cut, cut. Stitch, stitch, stitch. Tuk, tuk, tuk." Forming the sounds of shoes. Chuckling in response, I would take my tiny fist and knock too. Her lullaby of sounds lulled me to sleep.

The harmony of clinking metal on the sizzling stove engulfs the gloomy kitchen, as rain pitters against the window panes. My mom carefully slices each vegetable, and throws them into the biryani pot, stirring a symphony of flavor and love. I wonder how she finds the time to create a masterpiece of flavors just to feed her family's growling stomach. Her flavors transformed the thundering noises of the outside world into a beautiful arrangement of spices. The flashes of light and crashes of thunder washed away— just my mom and me.

I recall her song of tears— one I have only heard twice. But there were probably many more. My three sisters and I would embrace her like a cocoon hoping to protect her wings, but instead we weighed her down even more. Sometimes I forget that she once had dreams like me— maybe to be a singer, or to explore the world, relax by the beach. Yet she continues to sing that same song for us. That same lullaby. But we all know how songs become old after being stuck in your head for so long.

My mother had a mother too— one I have only seen shuffling slowly around the house, face carved with wrinkles of memories. I recall the endless nights my grandmother spent in the hospital, my mother shadowing her at all times. The way she recited her Urdu words were like a ballad of birds on a crisp spring morning. She was the one who never shed a tear, so my mom shed tears of worry for her, like my tears of gratitude towards my mom.

Sometimes I lay on that same pillow my mother would rest next to me on, wondering how I can give her the same amount of love and nurture she gave me. Maybe she lays down on the same pillow thinking the same about her mother. But I know deep down that nothing I can do can compete with the hours she spent riling together four chaotic children every school morning, and making sure our curious minds don't go to waste.

Her album of songs is like a collection of memories. Maybe I can sing a song for her now like she has done all these years, like her mother did for her. Like a mother's song for her daughter.

Patrons

Young Kim
Maya Moorthy
Olga Robertson
Cecilia Wolfson

Benefactors

JR Ahn
Doungjai Gam Bepko
Dana Brown
Theodore and Sara Kim
Alyssa Montler
Patricia and Berry Stone

An aerial photograph of a city at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with the sun low on the horizon. The city below is mostly in shadow, with some lights visible in the distance. The foreground shows a dense urban area with many buildings and streets.

Literati

Gigi Chen '24

Reagan Colton '24

Konstantin Paschos '25

John Jannotta '25

Katherine Chong '25

Mikayla DaSilva '24

Lila Gizzie '25

Friday Acuña '26

Jacob Fedorowicz '24

Isabelle Jiao '26

Victoria DeVito '27

Victoria Tang '27

Drew Wolfson '27

Cora Slowe '26

Faculty Adviser

Stephen Siperstein

Masthead

Cassatt Boatwright '24

Portia Chung '24

John Markley '25

Justin Lee '25

Rafia Pasha '26

Izzy Cook '27

Jamie Lee '27

Editor's Pick

Mikayla DaSilva '24

Yoyo Zhang '24

John Jannotta '25

Loulou Politi '25

Victoria DeVito '27

Literati

Yoyo Zhang '24

Will Garcia '27

Michael Quintero '27

Sunny Vo '24

Honmi Oshe '26

Josh Pan '27

Elizabeth Burgstahler '26

Gisele Yeung '27

Jason Chang '26

Chiamaka Eke '26

Edward Jeong '27

Graham Edwards '25

Jason Schmidt '27

Ananya Ravipati '26