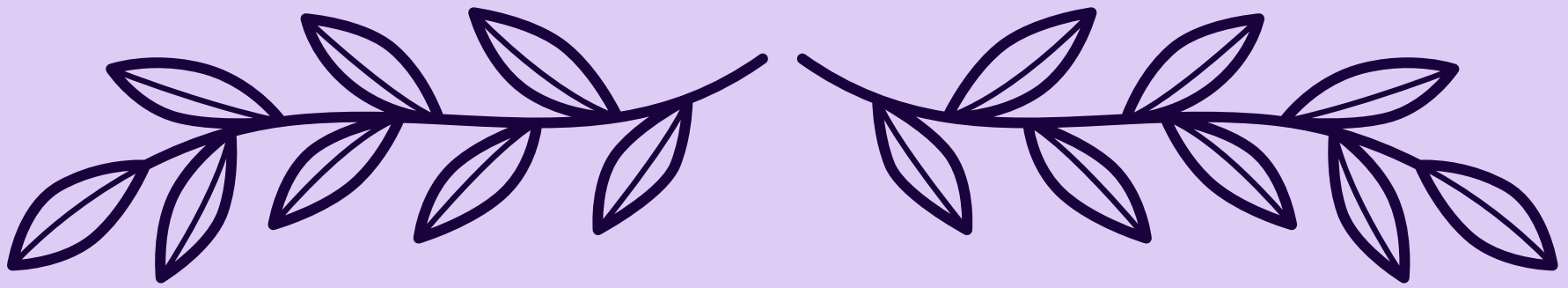




LITERARY

MAGAZINE

ISSUE ONE

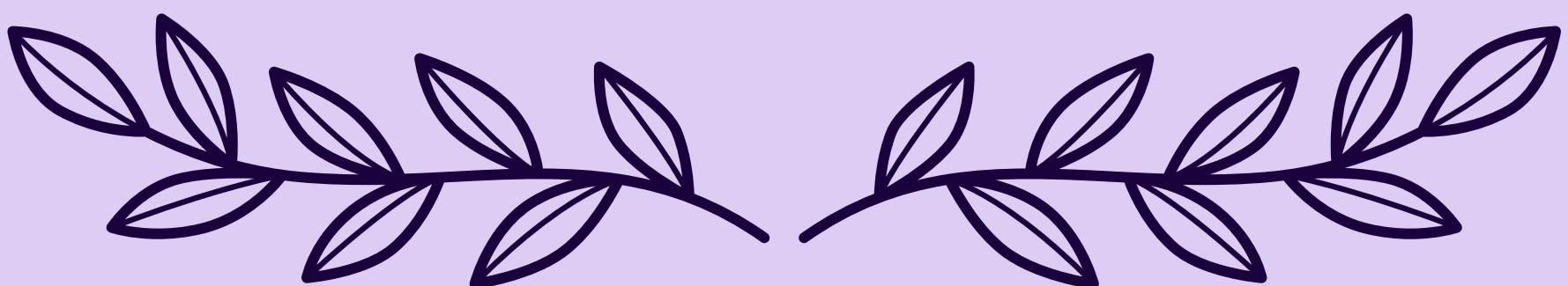


Welcome to the Rider Eye Literary Magazine!

We're a creative writing club that meets in A209 every other week. Part of what the Rider Eye does is compile the best work done by our members every few months and create an issue as a way to share it- just like what you're seeing now.

If you want to share your work, please come and join us! We are always accepting new members.

Please enjoy Issue 1 of the Rider Eye Literary Magazine.



Meet the Officers!

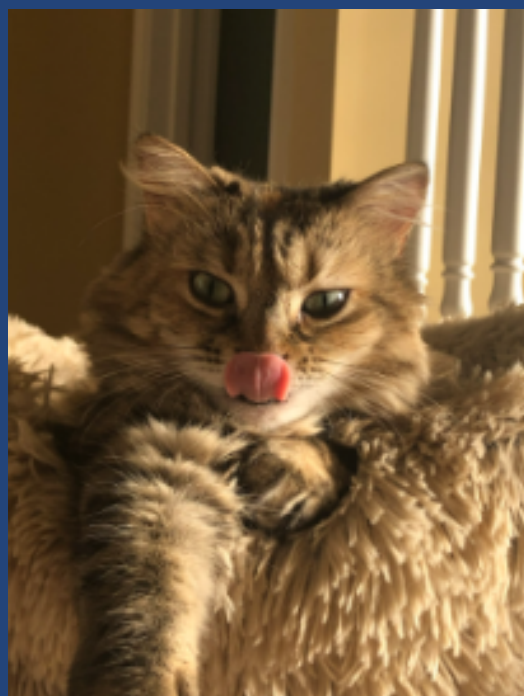
Editor in Chief- Moon Peppard

Moon (they/them) is a junior at CRHS, and this is their third year in the Rider Eye. They love theater, music, long walks, and their cats, Rachel and Ziggy. Moon prefers to write fiction, specifically dystopian and fantasy. Moon enjoys lending books to their friends (even if they never get them back) and wants to go to college for technical theater when they get older. Their favorite font is Assistant.



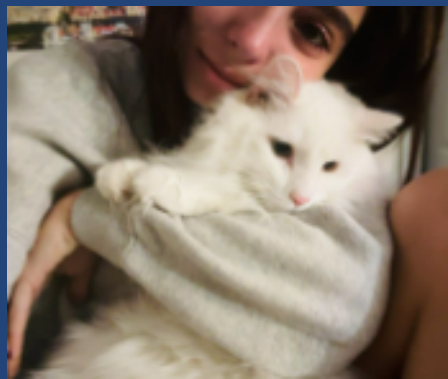
Managing Editor – Francis “Arlise” Burke

Francis (they/them) is a junior at CRHS, and it is also their third year in the Rider Eye. This is their first year as an officer. They enjoy reading books about dragons, wearing fun clothes, and learning new languages. Upon graduation they will either continue studying foreign languages or buy a van, go off grid, adopt a cat, and traverse the world. When it comes to writing, poetry is their jam. Their favorite font is Times New Roman.



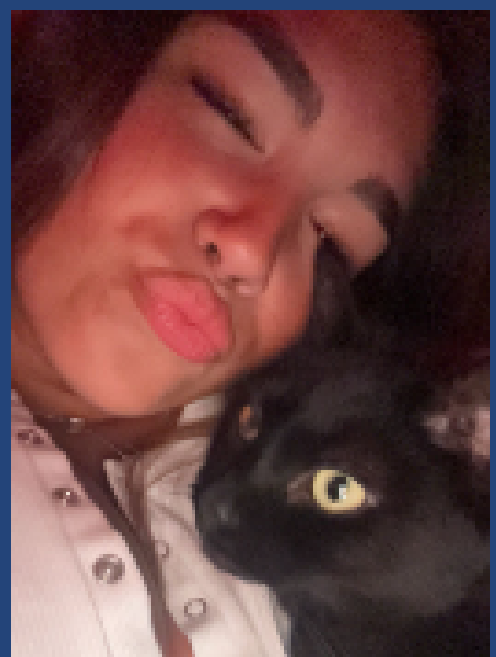
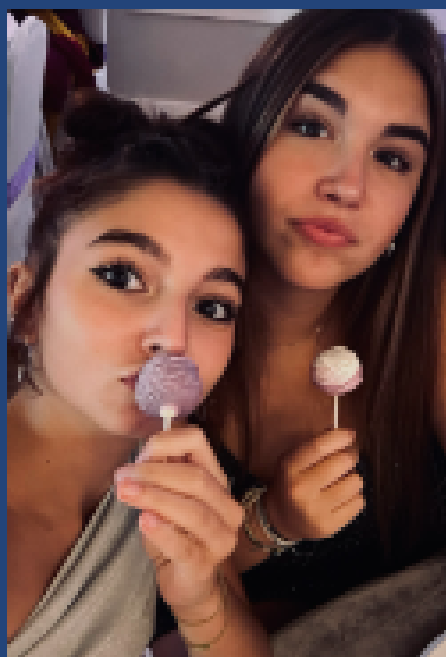
Design Editor - Madison Butler

Madison (she/her) is also a junior at CRHS. It is her second year in Rider Eye and her first year on the officer team. Her hobbies include writing poetry, photography, sketching, listening to music, and spending time with friends and family. She also loves cats, especially kittens. Once graduated, she plans on attending college, hopefully in Florida, majoring in Education. Her favorite shape is a star and she has a slightly unhealthy obsession with Billie Eilish. Her preferred font is Alegreya.



Assistant Design Editor - Kylie Smith

Kylie is a Junior in high school, at CRHS. This is her second year in Rider Eye. Her friend Madison introduced her to the club in her Sophomore year of HS, and she really enjoys it. Kylie loves art and listening to music, she likes almost all genres of music as well! She doesn't know exactly what she is going to do for college, but she really wants to travel. Kylie has three dogs, and one small, black cat named Raven! She likes circles, and really likes green. She likes traveling and sightseeing a lot. Her favorite places she has been to are Texas and Tennessee! Her favorite font is Playfair Display!



“I Love You.”

“I love you”

What a laconic thing to say

**How could these three simple words define the entirety of my existence
How could only these words even begin to illustrate the concept of what I
feel for you**

**I can't seem to wrap my head around the fact that by confessing this
simplicity I am confessing that not only do I live for you but I need you to
live**

You are the air I breath and simultaneously the poison I breath out

You are the warmth of the sun after a long harsh winter

You are every color and hue imaginable in a world of black and white

**You are the soul origin for this concurrent feeling of fear and joy
intertwined**

For upon losing you is losing myself

**And yet I am supposed to tell you all of this through these effortless words,
bursting at the seams**

Now that just feels a bit preposterous.

Madison Butler

Blue.

I like the color blue.

Like the ocean. But not the deep ocean.

**More like just past the shore line. Where the waves are crashing and
there is every shade imaginable of it surrounding me. With little hints
of the sand lifting from the bottom.**

**Or maybe blue like the sky. When the sun is high above me. When I'm
looking to the distance just past the tree line and into the horizon.**

**When I can't tell if I'm looking at clouds or the edge of the earth.
Or better yet like your eyes. Which seem to capture everything all at
once in various shades combined.**

That's the kind of blue I like most.

The kind I only see when I look at you.

The kind I only see when I look into you.

That split second, when I get to see a glimpse of your soul.

That is my favorite.

Madison Butler

Searching;

**I want to seep into the Earth;
Become the dirt and the trees and the dust in the air
Because the Earth would be me and I would be Her
Naked in the eyes of the Mother I lie
I would be all and all would be Mine.**

**And then, She might;
Grant me my self, my love, my poetry
Allow me to know Her just as She knows me
Banish this grief sewn into the stuff of my chest
And give my tried heart its long-sought redress.**

**And then, I would be;
Everything but myself, yet never so pure.**

Arlise Burke

**To my dad,
Who tried his best
To do me well under his circumstance
To be our mother, to be our father
To fight his battle for me and my brother.**

**To my dad,
Who loves hazelnut in his coffee
And his dog, his guitar, octopi and talking
To that scent of coffee that wafts from his mug
The one that I made him, in third grade, with love
The nutty smell we say should be a candle
That finds me lost in my memories at random
Today, I find myself reaching for a cup
To fill with coffee and nostalgic hazelnut.**

Arlise Burke



**And just for a second,
It was as if our DNA had merged and I had
stolen a part of you.
Everyday when I walk, eat, drink, breathe,
I carry a part of your jokes with me.
Even now, when we're so physically apart,
I still have a part of you that reflects in my
personality.
Even now, I still recite the lingo you used to tell
me,
but instead, I direct them to someone else.
Even now, when we aren't friends anymore,
I still carry you along with me.**

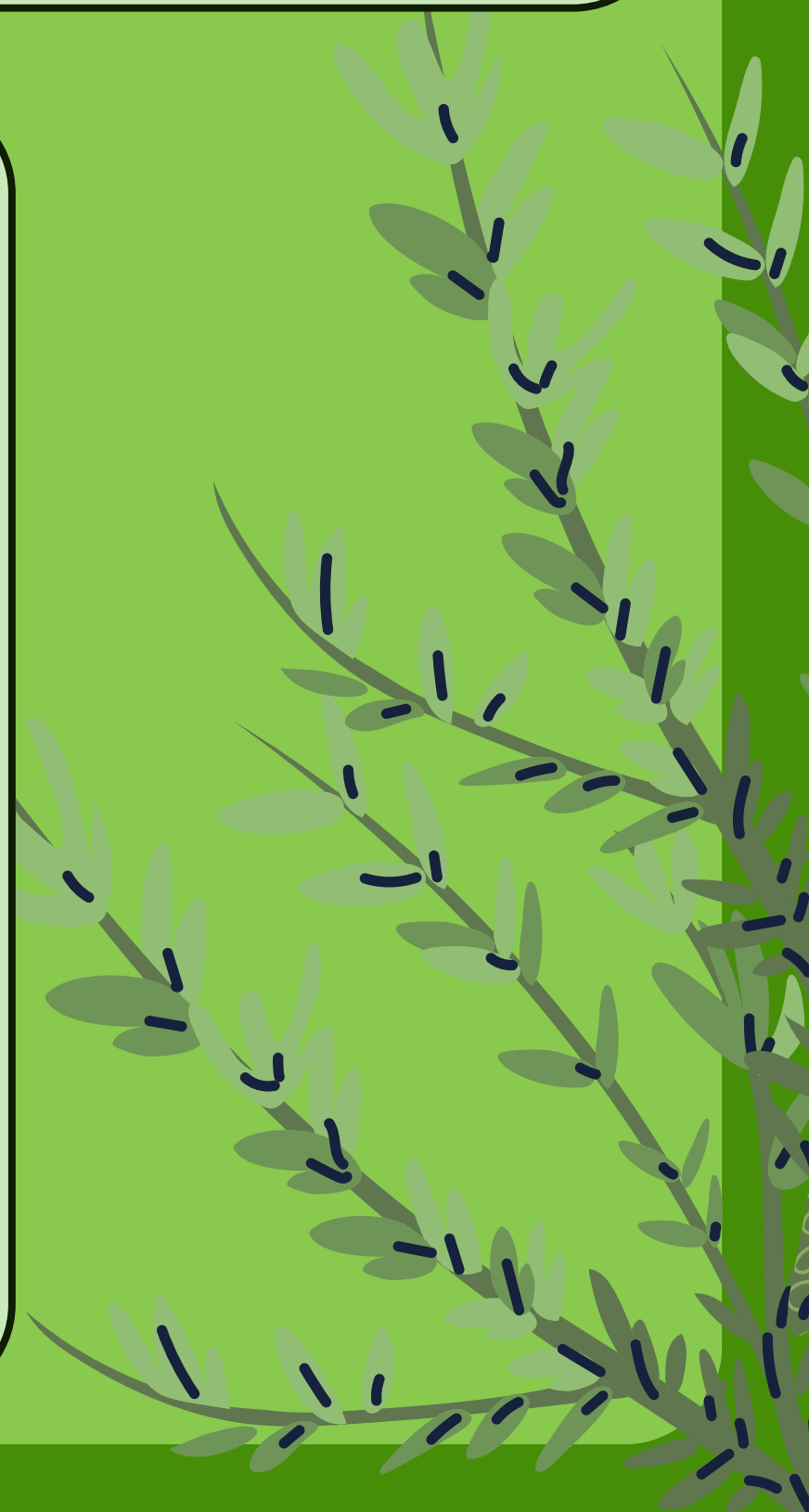
**Nisha H.
November 11th, 2024**



A poem by Stephano

**October 22, 2024
"A pleading soul"**

**When I pray in this Sacred place
I receive a contented feeling within my heart.
I beseech my god to let him know
that I want a changed heart.
Something known
to vanquish within my devious heart.
And now my heart grows
like vegetation within those hearts.**



My Fear of the Dark

By Arlise Burke

To be outside at night is nice. To be inside at night is torture. I enjoy the light of the evening because of the peace, but I dread the night because of the silence – the sun goes down, the streetlights turn on, and the day is gone.

It is better, at night, when you are with other people; when the moonlight bathes you all, highlighting your laughter and your smiles, rather than acting as a spotlight and exposing the empty space beside you when you are alone. Right now the space around me has never been so stale, so void of life. The moonlight never so piercing; accusing. As if it's saying, you could do better. I am reluctant to turn my light on and shower my room in its unnatural glow. That would be admitting that the day is over, and I can't do that, not when there is so much I didn't do.

I'm sure I could do more with my life. I'm sure that the pages upon pages of books I read do not compare to the pages upon pages that could be written about me if I simply tried more, used my gift of breath for something more than nothing. But I am tired. I cannot keep up with this endless dance, the constant spinning of the gears in my head, the drifting of my eyes as it reaches for something to enjoy, something to be happy about, the mechanic sound of my steps as I walk and walk and walk down a road, the end of which I might never see, the straining of my ears to hear something worth listening to, the arms extending for person after person and coming back empty and cold. Everything would be simpler without the distinction of punctuation and the convolutedness of poetry and the anger of forgetting. The run-on sentences, the fragments, the red underline under so many of the words I type that I cannot seem to fix.

These are the thoughts that come with the dark. My light, still off. Shadows creeping into my room and whispers into my heart.

My inspiration is always short-lived. Anyone can write, but few can write for a long time and still hold onto meaning. My motivation is ever fleeting. Like a setting sun. Work piles up and my shoulders sag and my chest is heavy. My mind turns to fog and the days to a blurry overwhelm, people are reduced to words and memories are left right where they started. I can write, but I can only write the way I think: short bursts of feeling that quickly slip into nothing. Uncertainty and tiredness. Commas, periods, semicolons; they all start looking the same, and are slotted away along with the rest of my writing in some obscure corner of my notes. I am struggling to write in this dying light. But it feels more than I can bear to let go, to face something new, to allow things to change. I will try, and try, and try to hold on to the sun's last rays, deny the moon her existence. To cling on to the life I've always known.

I know, inside myself, that change is not the devil I think it is. Yes, the light may pierce my eyes, and blind me temporarily with her suddenness, but after my eyes adjust, I will see that everything is okay; all of the beauty in my life will be highlighted by my lamp's yellow light.

I find my faith in the moon's reflection of the sun's light. I finally get up and turn on my light.



THE FOOL

Arlise Burke

The day he met Rowan, he hadn't known his life would change as it did. Looking back at the stumbling, all-too-good fool that fell into his life, he should have known; someone like that doesn't just come and go. They stay, burrow far into your heart, and wrap themselves with your attention like a blanket. They seep into your soul and put a chokehold on your life. You don't see it coming, they don't see it coming, it's just instinct. It's just life.

The fool that wandered their way into his heart had first wandered into his school, confused and cold, in the dead of winter. Missoula, Montana didn't have particularly biting winters, unlike the rest of the state, but a bad snowstorm had wiggled its way into their streets and between their small shops. It was below freezing and snow was pressing down on them. School was canceled, people stayed home, and businesses were, in fact, not booming. Miles lived at and attended the University of Montana. He was sitting in the library, studying (staring at a blank piece of paper and drinking his cup of hot cocoa), when the doors suddenly swung open and someone stumbled through. A rush of cold air hit him in the face. The doors shut with a slam, bringing back the warm silence of the library, along with an awkward figure wrapped in layers of coats waddling through the entrance.

"... Hellooooo?" The stranger called. Miles was the only one in the library, so he guessed it was his responsibility to respond. Alas, woe and despair, his hot cocoa would have to wait.

"Hello," he said, standing up and walking over to the entrance, "are you lost?"

"Um, yes." Their voice echoed through the room.

"Hm. How lost?"

"Like, on a scale of one to ten? A solid 6." Miles quirked an eyebrow at them.

"I mean, I live here.. I just don't know how to get home. Started wandering and got lost." They started peeling off layers of fabric, continuing: "I'm going to stay here for a bit, then hope to goodness that my phone still works and use it to get home. Who are you?"

"I'm Miles."

"I'm Rowan."

Rowan finished taking off their layers and sat down. They looked around, nodding.

"Nice library."

"Yeah, it is. It's probably my favorite part of the campus."

They nodded, then stopped mid-nod.

"Wait, what? Campus?!" They put their hands on their forehead, panic stricken, and looked around again.

"Yes... you didn't know that? How did you even get here? This is in, like, the heart of campus. Of the University of Montana."

They let out a breath. "I dunno, man. I just walked. A lot."

"Right.. I take it you aren't from around here?"





THE FOOL

Arlise Burke

“No, I just recently moved here to get away from my parents. I’m enrolled in college - online - trying for my art history degree.”

“Cool. Want some hot chocolate?”

“Yes, please.”

Miles turned around and went over to the small kitchen area in the library. He put some milk on the stove, grabbed a cup, set it down, and waited for the milk to heat. He took this chance to look at Rowan a little more closely. They were also in college, so they couldn’t be much older than him - they didn’t look it, either. Maybe an inch or two shorter than him. Black, shoulder-length butterfly locs that were completely tangled, given the hat that they’d been wearing. He self-consciously reached up to his head and fluffed up his own black hair. They had black eyes and brown skin, and now that he could see their outfit he could guess what kind of person they were: crystals lining their wrists and neck, those dangly earrings that in no way seemed comfortable, but looked really cool, and an outfit - honestly, just imagine the queerest outfit possible and you wouldn’t be far off. They had impressive, stretching eyeliner wings surrounding their glued-on lashes. He (in his personal opinion) was pretty cool, too. Right now he was wearing a sweater vest over a turtleneck and was really rocking the dark academia vibe - the fact that he was brooding in a library during a major snowstorm also

certainly helped. He enjoyed trying all sorts of aesthetics and switched every day. It was a talent. He had on a couple of different necklaces and bracelets, with a single stud in one ear. Mild, brown eyeshadow was brushed on his tawny skin, paired with a small eyeliner wing. He liked makeup. He liked the way he was able to change the very shape of his face with it, how much of an art form it was. Honestly, if he’d been able to choose a different major—

“Um... Miles, right?” Rowan waved a hand near his face, cutting off his train of thought. “I think the milk is done.”

Miles turned towards the milk and it, in fact, was done. It was so done that it was about to boil straight out of the pot. He rushed over to turn the stove off.

“Aw, shucks! I’m so sorry about that.”

Rowan laughed. “It’s no problem.” And then, a moment later, “Did you just say ‘aw, shucks’?”

He felt his face heat up in embarrassment and scratched the back of his neck. “Oh, yeah. I guess I did.” He let out an awkward chuckle, “I get it from my dad.”


“Nice. Do I still get my hot chocolate?”

“Oh! Of course, let me get that for you.”

He prepared the hot chocolate in the way he always did, with three marshmallows on top. He was proud of his hot chocolate recipe. It was delicious, quick, and easy.

“Mmmm, this is so good. Where did you learn to make hot chocolate like this?”

“All the credit goes to the ‘poor college kid desperately looking for ways to satisfy his sweet tooth’ aesthetic. Honest to God, lifesaver.”



THE FOOL

Arlise Burke

Rowan laughed, and then they sat in silence for a bit.

Miles had lived in Missoula for a good portion of his life: he and his family had moved here when he was 14, looking for a place to escape the problems of big city life. They found comfort and welcome in the landscaping, the trees left and right, the graciously large sidewalks, and the lack of heavy traffic. Its beauty in the autumn and cold bareness in the winter, the green summers and pink springs. His family had eventually left (save for his sister and her husband), but he stayed. Maybe he'd leave one day, but that day was not today. He was in college for his Bachelor's degree in physics and was set to earn it in the summer of the following year. He was 21 and already enjoyed his life. It was a little lonely sometimes, but he always had a good friend or two around the corner. It was nice.

He did often find himself wishing he had someone to share it all with, though. It didn't even have to be a romance - a roommate, a best friend, anything. (Although, if some conveniently gorgeous person would like to walk right into his life, he would not complain.)

"So.. What do you do for fun around here?" Rowan asked, half done with their hot chocolate.

"Not much," he chuckled, "but there are a few cool joints here and there. I've lived here a couple years, so I know the best ones."

"Sweet." They pulled out their phone and tapped a couple of times. Then, they handed their phone to him: it showed the "add new contact" screen. "I don't have any friends here yet. Care to be my first?"

Miles looked down at the phone in surprise. He smiled.

"Of course."

He jotted his number and name down, snapped a selfie for the profile, and handed the phone back. Rowan looked down at their phone and cursed.

"I have to go now, my cat will tear up the whole apartment if I don't feed her soon!"

"Oh, well then go! Here, I'll help you gather your things." Miles started picking up various items of theirs and setting them on the table.

"Thank you, thank you." They shoved on their winter gear, put their phone in their pocket, and started walking towards the library doors. "It was nice meeting you, Miles, I'll be sure to text you."

Miles smiled and waved.



There's a fire in my brain, and I'm
burning up, oh my, oh my...

Sometimes, it feels like the world is on
fire.

I mean, the world sort of is. Global
warming and all.

But a different kind of fire. A fire not
everyone can see.

A fire that burns bright, too bright, too
white, so bright that it's blinding.

A fire that isn't orange, it's white.

Almost blue. Like the hottest stars.

Unfathomably, scorchingly, vaporize-
your-bones-in-milliseconds hot.

A fire that churns out thick smoke that
clogs my lungs and makes them feel
empty at the same time. Smoke that
burns my eyes and nose and gets stuck
in my hair. A smoke that carries cinders
and ashes and dust that stains my
clothes.

It doesn't behave like normal fire, either.
It spreads so quickly that I look away for
a second, and suddenly it's bearing
down on me. The cinders stay alive in
places where I was sure I'd stomped
them out. It can catch on almost
anything and has been burning for years
and years and years.

But the strangest thing about this fire is
that it doesn't sound like normal fire. It
doesn't crackle or pop or whoosh
quietly. It doesn't mumble like normal
fires do when you poke at the logs. It
doesn't hiss when you try to put it out.

The fire screams.

A long, bellowing, sustained scream,
angry and vengeful and threatening
violence.

And I didn't always hear it.



Keep running for the sink, but the well is
dry, oh my, oh my...

It's strange to think of my life before I
heard it. I was so sure that everything
was fine. That the world was a peaceful
place, that there was no imminent
danger around me.

But I see it now. I see the fire, I hear the
screaming, I smell the smoke, and I feel it
burning.

It's terrible to live in. It's terrible to look
around, to see my school, my house, my
neighborhood, the whole country, the
whole world on fire. It feels so wrong. It's
terrifying.

But most people don't even see it.

The adults I know, peers, people I
consider friends, they all look at me like
I'm crazy when I tell them the world is on
fire.

They tell me:

"Oh, it can't be that bad,"

Or

"I'm worried about the economy! A fire
is the least of my worries,"

Or

"Well, I don't see any fire, so I'll be fine."

And as the words leave their mouths,
they seem to catch,

Cinders igniting on their clothes,

Hair billowing into flame,

The white-hot tongues slowly

consuming them,

Until they're on fire too.

Every word I say is kindling, but the
smoke clears when you're around...

So I stop talking, because I don't want to
add to the screaming, nevermind even
being heard over it. I stop looking up,
because the fire is blinding. I plug my
nose and ears to keep the smoke and the
screaming out, to save my sanity, to
guard my soul.

And when I do that, I don't quite see the
fire. It seems to disappear- I don't quite
smell the thick smoke, or hear the
deafening screaming. But I can still feel
it burning, I can feel the sizzling of the
embers on my skin. It almost feels like
it's worse.

And I can almost,
Almost,
Go about my life as normal.
Because it's fine.

The world is not on fire.
There is no imminent danger.
But then I see other people, people like
me, people who see the fire too, and are
deafened by the screaming and starved
for clean air,

And I can't tell them they're crazy.
"The world is on fire, and I'm terrified,"
"I know," I reply. "I am too."
And both of our eyes, that are usually
dark with fear and despair, light up with
some strange recognition.

"I'm so glad you see it too," I say.
"I'm glad I'm not alone."



Won't you stay with me, my darling,
when my walls start burning down,
down, down...

Something I've realized is that most
people don't know that they're on fire.
Or some do, but have just learned to live
with it.

But people can't thrive when they're
literally on fire, when their world is
burning down around them. If they
ignore it, they think it might go away,
but fire spreads the more you leave it be.
Living while you're on fire isn't living at
all.

So sure, the world is definitely on fire.
But I have friends with fire
extinguishers, and water hoses, and fire
blankets, and buckets of sand. And even
if my friends and I can't put the fire out
tomorrow, or next week, or in six
months, or in four years, or in ten years,
all the time and energy we put into
putting the fire out helps.
Every second, every inch. All of it counts.

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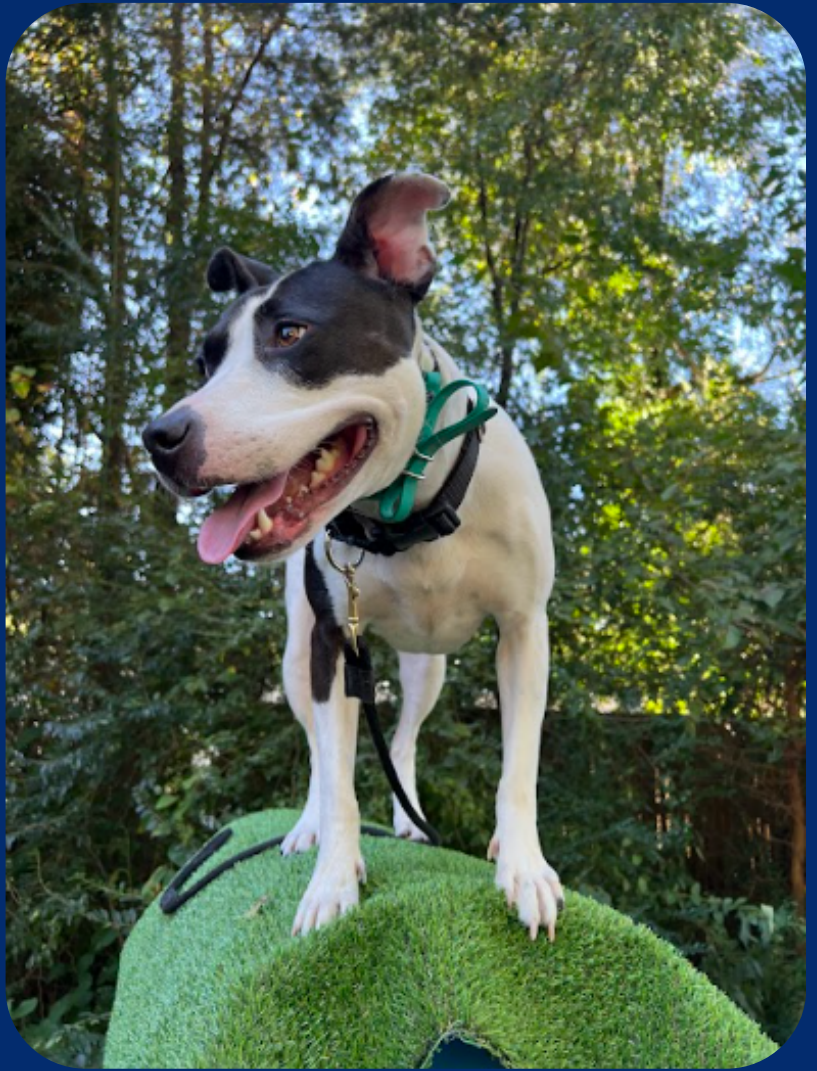
Moon Peppard
Song Lyrics: Curses - The Crane Wives



PHOTOGRAPHY

SOPHIA SHAH & MADI BUTLER







Go Volunteer!

By Arlise Burke

Volunteering is a vital part of our community: taking action to help others without reward is the backbone of our world. Whether it be taking care of those who can't take care of themselves, cleaning up the environment, fundraising, advocacy, or anything else that serves others, volunteering is something that everyone should partake in. We have many community service opportunities here at Caesar Rodney High School, and a variety of clubs that strive to provide such opportunities.

At the moment, we at CRHS have several collection drives going on that you can easily donate to. Beginning this December, Silent Helpers will have a sock drive: bring in new, clean socks to donate to Code Purple, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping those in need – especially those suffering from homelessness, addiction, and abuse. Check the announcements and posters around the school for more information on where to drop your socks off. Also, the Arabic/KBG club still has the blanket drive going on. Donate new, clean blankets and drop them off in one of the designated classrooms. But these drives are not the limit of your ability to donate: all around Delaware there are donation spots, whether that be through a secondhand store like Goodwill or a nonprofit organization like the Food Bank of Delaware.

The high school also has a plethora of clubs dedicated to many different community needs. We have a chapter of UNICEF, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, through which fundraising and awareness campaigns take place. Funds gathered through the club are donated to UNICEF, whose mission is to “advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential”. Check the hallways for posters with information on upcoming meetings and events! Caesar Rodney also has the KBG Club – Kick Butts Generation. This club is dedicated to reducing the use of drugs in the school and minimizing the effects of tobacco on our community. It is combined with the Arabic club and has meetings on Fridays in Mr. G's room. Silent Helpers is a volunteer club here at CR that aims to serve without reimbursement; we do food and sock drives, fundraising, and other kinds of volunteer activities, like caroling at Westminster Village. Show up to meetings in Mr. Hartman's room on Mondays! Although not explicitly a volunteer organization, the National Honor Society does its part in the school, with all of its members having a certain required amount of volunteer hours per semester, and Student Council is a student-run organization committed to helping the students of CRHS with meetings every Monday. Other clubs include the Jobs for Delaware Graduates, Earth Club, and your very own Rider Eye.

School-based clubs are not the only way you can give back to our community. Here are some organizations that are always looking for hands to help them:

- **Habitat for Humanity**
- **The SPCA**
- **Meals on Wheels**
- **The Food Bank of Delaware**
- **Senior Centers**
- **American Red Cross**

This is not an exhaustive list. You can visit the Volunteer Delaware website to find specific volunteer opportunities locally!

I implore you to volunteer not just to gather necessary hours for your honor societies, but also for the good of the community. Make connections, help others, and have fun!

Dear Reader,

Thank you for making it all the way to the end of Issue 1! While you're still here, I'd like to take a quick moment to recognize the people who made this issue possible.

Thank you to Dr. Hutch, our advisor, who makes the Rider Eye possible in the first place due to her unending support for her students. You and so many teachers go vastly under-appreciated for all the work you put in after hours, and you deserve so much more credit than you get for everything you do for the Rider Eye.

Thank you to Francis, my managing editor who runs meetings when I have to arrive late and also keeps me sane. I'm grateful for your support and contributions to our club despite your various other commitments.

Thank you to our designers, Madi and Kylie, who are a vital part of publication.

Thank you to our new members for being the largest group of new writers the Rider Eye has had. I'm grateful for your talent and commitment to the Rider Eye, and look forward to working with all of you for the next two years.

And finally, thank you to everyone who contributed photos, poems, short stories, and more to this issue. None of this would have been possible without you.

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While this is my third year in the Rider Eye, it is my first year in an officer position, and my major goal for this year is to bring quality content to readers like you. I believe that this club is an opportunity to form a varied and creative community of writers, poets, and artists at CRHS, and I want our issues to reflect and showcase the talents of all of our members.

Please keep an eye out for our next issue, which is scheduled to release during February. I cannot wait to show you what our members can do.

**Sincerely,
Moon Peppard
Editor In Chief**