

MOORINGS

JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY AND ARTS JOURNAL



SPRING 2021 | VOLUME 5

From the Editors

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the Fifth Volume of *Moorings*, the Jesuit High School Literary & Arts Journal. This publication strives to highlight the creativity of our student artists and writers by sharing their works with the Jesuit community.

This year's Spring Edition features works of Prose, Photography, Poetry, Art, and Video. We curated this edition toward the goal of creating pieces that represent the hope of recovery amidst the COVID pandemic. We hear nature's music through "A Hidden Rhythm." We find new resonance in "Alone." We admire the cadence that "Ode to a Waterfall's Concerto" invites us to hear.

Moorings owes its existence to the support of many teachers, students, and faculty members. As the editors, we extend our sincerest thanks to our faculty advisor, Mr. Loverich, for his dedication, support, and generosity throughout these trying times. We would also like to thank Mr. O'Connor for helping connect us with faculty members to spread the word on *Moorings*.

We understand the difficulties of acclimating to a new school environment and being distanced from one's friends. We hear the anguish and pain many have felt through this past year. We would like you to sit down for a moment, peek through the journal, and contemplate on the art your brothers have created. Through it all, we've remained together, and we've remained hopeful.

Alfred Yu '21, *Editor-in-Chief*

The Editors

Santiago Chang '21

Peter Wisner '21

Robi Castaneda '22

Sean Nam '22

Sean Paredes '22

Christian Sigua '22

Connor Stout '22

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Cover Art: *Reaching For a Free America*
by William Alejandro '24



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No. 305—Ode to a Waterfall's Concerto

BY NICHOLAS KASTEN '22

To strike one's heart true,
to cascade into the depths,
to reach for what's lost.

As passion wilts and sunshine rusts,
as cordiality nears wistful whistles,
as sparkles shimmer across a falling fall,
the Moment still remains -
A monolith boulder to be weathered, carved.
Its body is the canvas,
for falling falls fell greater stone than these.

From the aged goliaths to the tiniest of shrubs, the Forest is filled with pillars of green. The Sun is there, too. His rays are but trifles to the intricate canopy-tarp that lay over-head. The youths stare longingly at their enormous kin, who had kept watch over the Forest for eons longer than those sojourning at their feet. Those wanderers move from pillar to pillar, as noticed by many of the guardians. Their presence is often that of curiosity and awe at the guardians' figures. The guardians, upon further inspection, loom over the humans' frail and uneven bodies.

The trees pride themselves with their own longevity, and the humans with theirs. There is a difference between the two folk of the Forest, however: trees are sedentary, humans are searchers. The former are still, they stand with no struggle. No fight, no strife, no suffering. Their very presence is their content, or so it seems to the many peripatetic humans who pass by. Why should they get to be trees?

Diminishing claims seize breaths.
Ash gathers there
for myriad meetings of kin and kindle.

The core of man aches and swells,
soothed and cajoled,
answering its summons to belief,
denying its fate in truth.
To spill from the overflowing vessel,
to run amuck with blinding emotion,
to lose one's way with Surrender.

We walked with caution as the trail began to narrow. The precipitous left-hand cliff and rugged, tortuous path gave some of us intrepidity, while others hugged the right-hand bank for safety. I pushed forward, continuing a swift pace despite the danger. I spotted a small oasis among the pine-needle littered ground after a quick turn. A genuine waterfall—in July at that! As I approached, however, I noticed something peculiar. The waterfall was much smaller and closer than it appeared, though the brush around it made it appear distant and impressive. Once the rest caught up, we crossed the fall’s stream.

The opposing bank provided an enrapturing view. The fall fell into a small pool before entering its stream. Under it the endless flow of water continued past me towards the dell below, providing refreshment for the many plants at its edges. Trees were scattered throughout the area. The tallest were unsociable, maintaining distance from their gargantuan brothers. Their grandeur in collective solitude appealed to me, captivating my mind with ideas beyond imagination. *Only in the Forest*, I thought, as I focused once more on the trail ahead of me. A strange magnetism to the trees kept me there longer; a sense of understanding, a sense of security, a sense unique to the grove rose around me. *Only in the Forest*.

Verdant mounds
Embellish free will.
Assumptions claim beauty;
May waters bubble,
May ferns grow.



Tahoe Views

BY ELIAS GUZMAN '21
Pastel

A Hidden Rhythm

BY ROBI CASTENADA '22

A quiet breeze stirs the trees, leading them to sway like a maid with flaxen hair. I feel that same breeze come to me, kissing my face gently as a mother would to her child. The geese fly overhead, flapping their wings, pushing and pulling them, propelling themselves forward. This isn't the last mile of their journey, but one of a thousand miles, leading one to ask whether they might fly over a town similar to mine, with a young boy such as myself looking up towards the sky with the same trivial thoughts surging through his mind.

My feet crunch and stir against the gravel at a steady beat. A bird sings its sweet song before sweeping down for its morning meal. I take a deep breath of the fresh morning air, taking in the beauty, taking in the energy, savoring it like I would a succulent orange. My lungs enlarge with the air and breathe it out once more, providing carbon dioxide for plants as they provide oxygen for us. The nexus between all living things on this planet is obvious. Yet despite all this life blossoming before me, death takes center stage.

In a world of facades, life is worshipped like it is the only thing that exists, and we fail to see the reality of death. A reality that is unmasked like an ugly truth hidden under a happy face. That cool breeze that kissed my face is the same breeze that fluttered the veil of a distant widow at her husband's casket. Death follows those same geese that fly to the south in the hopes that they might escape the prospect of an icy death. Death follows the unfortunate worm that faces the fate of being shredded by the beaks of young birds. Death follows the energy of my

In a world full of facades, life is worshipped like it is the only thing that exists, and we fail to see the reality of death.

We all have a role to play, the only question is... what's yours?

gravel-crunching feet which crush a poor ant. It seems there are two sides to every object and action, two forces that act in an equal and opposite reaction. Life and death are like yin and yang; two seemingly opposite forces that work together in harmony. Life produces death. Death produces life.

The universe itself is a strange thing, and with a deeper look, it becomes stranger so. The relationship between life and death pushes and swells like the waves of the sea, and comes in and out like the air in our lungs. The constant push and pull is the rhythm of our world—a never-ending cycle that has continued for millions of years. This rhythm, as it happens, is the order hidden within this universe of chaos. All it takes for one to feel it is to stop, listen, and wait. And after all that, one might finally be able to take comfort in the certainty of this never-ending rhythm. When one beat stops, another continues elsewhere. When a man breathes his last, a child breathes her first. And perhaps, at the end of human civilization, a single cell on a distant planet begins to multiply, beginning the age of a new life.

The greatest mystery of death is that no mind on this earth has been able to solve it. Not even the great philosophers, scientists, and theologians. A theory may arise every now and again, but with what proof? After 200,000 years of solving, pioneering, and innovating, have we no evidence to hold credence? What lies beyond death? I can ask myself a similar question for life. Why are we here? What is our purpose? As I echo the words uttered by different tongues and different cultures, I offer my best guess. Perhaps we are called to continue the rhythm of our universe, to choose a role in the vast scheme of things. I could become the next MLK or the next Gandhi, or I could just as well become the next Stalin or Hitler.

The choice to take life or to give it is purely up to us, and it is governed by the role we choose. But the unequivocal truth of the matter is that we are all part of the same cycle, the constant push and pull. We are but pawns playing our part in the living, and breathing circle of our universe. We all have a role to play, the only question is...what's yours?



Fall Hydrangeas

BY JOHN PAUL LEATHERBY '22
Pastel

Faith, Hope, and Love

BY JAKE SWANSON '23

2020 did take many victims,
from sickness, to unemployment, and prejudices alike,
the year is a monster.

Personally, no casualty was more dear
than the three women I befriended from Mass.

Hope was the first.
she still lays moaning and dying,
fading from our hearts.
She left when the virus postponed then cancelled,
and the children's life purpose,
were deemed non essential.

Her sister's attack was more sudden.
Bloody and foul,
For it's perfectly legal
to walk through the mall or arcade,
but enter a Church! Are you crazy?
"Stay home or be guilty of murder," they scream.
with hands as red as
Faith's mangled face.

The last is Love,
the greatest St. Paul did say.
But division, hatred, unrest
they spread as fast as the illness.
The Golden Rule lost its shine,
leaving way for only the yellow stain of jaundice.

Their deaths do not have to be eternal,
as this is not a note of pessimism
Just pointing out,
that Faith, Hope, and Love, oh my sweet God.
They're dying.

Diamante

BY DYLAN TSOI '23

Honesty
genuine, truthful
revealing, relieving, trusting
openness, morality, sin, deceit
concealing, lying, fooling
bogus, deceptive
Duplicity



All Hooves No Breaks

A FILM BY HORSEMASK PRODUCTIONS:
DREW MCDONALD '22, SEAN NAM '22,
ROBI CASTANEDA '22, JACK RANGEL '22,
LIAM AVENELL '22

Winner

- Senior Group Documentary Award
- Access Sacramento Documentary Award
- Sacramento History Award
- Sacramento Historical Society Award
- Sacramento Pioneer History Award

2021 Sacramento History Day Competition

A Creature and Its Strife

BY PATRICK BRANNAN '23

A
big decaying creature with bad teeth.
A
boy he meets and strangles 'til he's dead.
A
lady with hair that sits like a wreath.
A
picture as in river would be lead.

The
lady wakes, indictments waiting there.
Indictments
of a young boy's airless death.
On
false charges she will be hung with care
And
with a tug she shall breathe her last breath.

Remorseful
but content it creeps to sad
And
lonely quarters in the darkened trees.
Its
vengeance has begun with one small lad
But
is the cause enough to kill by squeeze.

A
vengeful life creates more pain than gain.
Any
attempt to make it right is vain.

Winter Moon
BY SEAN NAM '22
Pastel



Frankenstein and Jekyll

BY ALLEN TOVMASYAN '23

Shall I compare thee to a friend I knew?
Entranced by speaking potions just like him
His name was Jekyll, ambitious like you
Conducting an experiment so grim.

He left swiftly like a mix of a whisk
And once locked himself up in his chamber.
From the drink he drank, Hyde rose with much brisk.
Only to become the evil neighbor.

O silly Frankenstein cannot you see?
The similarity of the creature,
the walking hate that Jekyll not foresee?
Your ambition will not be your preacher.

Your likeness is undeniable,
As fate may lie the same as poor Jekyll.



Love, the Textbook Definition

BY SEBASTIAN PENA '23

A bright red feeling stuck
In your heart waiting to be
Let out and released no
Matter the cost

A feeling like a summer night,
warm and welcoming,
A force that no one can try
To understand

It grabs hold of you like a
Rabid animal, holding no
Sense of reason, only
That you know that you
Can do nothing against it.

Do what you can to prevent it from
Hurting you, and you will
Be disappointed many times,
But remember that after the storm,
There will be a rainbow.



Untitled

BY KENNY CASTRO '23
Photography

Alone

BY DYLAN TSOI '23

My eyes opened to still and candle light,
Alone, I felt, within the vast, dim room.
It seemed as if you were nowhere in sight,
So I ran off into the dark and gloom.

Alone, I felt, among eerie silence,
With just the moon lighting along my way.
Without your help, advice, support, guidance,
Survived, I did, while you cast me away.

Adam, like me, was made and put alone,
But pain, I felt, while he had love and care.
My soul damaged, and heart turned into stone,
Because my treatment had been so unfair.

Therefore I will forever live in strife,
With you who turned my consciousness to life.

A Ray of Hope

BY MICHAEL GRANRUD '23

The lonely man sat still contemplating,
A small teardrop dampened his t-shirt,
Silence was loud but not aggravating,
The darkness grabbed him but it did not hurt.

Then a soft ray of light peaked through his blinds,
The illumination pulled him in close,
The first sight of the vivacious pines
And the near river filled with lively boats

Made the man want to look at even more.
The sun setting over the horizon smiled,
And the tiny birds would wave as they soar,
All these new feelings made him feel restyled.

Just by opening up his own two eyes,
He was able to escape from his cries.



Ibex

BY JAMES IRWIN '23
Oil on canvas

Electricity

BY JACOB PARULAN '23

It stuns.
It strikes. It sets things ablaze.
It shocks. It zaps. It brings life to
static bodies. Electricity, it struck on that tree in front of Victor
and sparked his inspiration. Electricity, it served as a life force for the wretch and
gave fuel to an onslaught
of destruction.
Electricity,
it marked the
birth of two
monsters,
not just
one.

Untitled

BY JONATHAN HALEN '23

Where am I? Not the flesh and bone that wrap around me, not the conscious inside the brain in my skull, but the spirit that dwells elsewhere despite that conscious. Where am I? Am I in bed back home, ignorant of the world occurring beyond my closed door, happy but unknowing? Where am I? Am I walking down Main Street USA in Disneyland, forgetting the outside world and becoming enveloped in the childish excitement of nostalgia that flows through my ears and nose? Where am I? Am I staying with my best friend, who means the world to me, more than anyone else? Am I spending day after day relaxing with him and his family, who are like parents to me? Where am I? Who am I? These questions flow, circulating my head, water spiraling down the drain. Where am I right now?

Victor and Nature

BY JAKE SWANSON '23

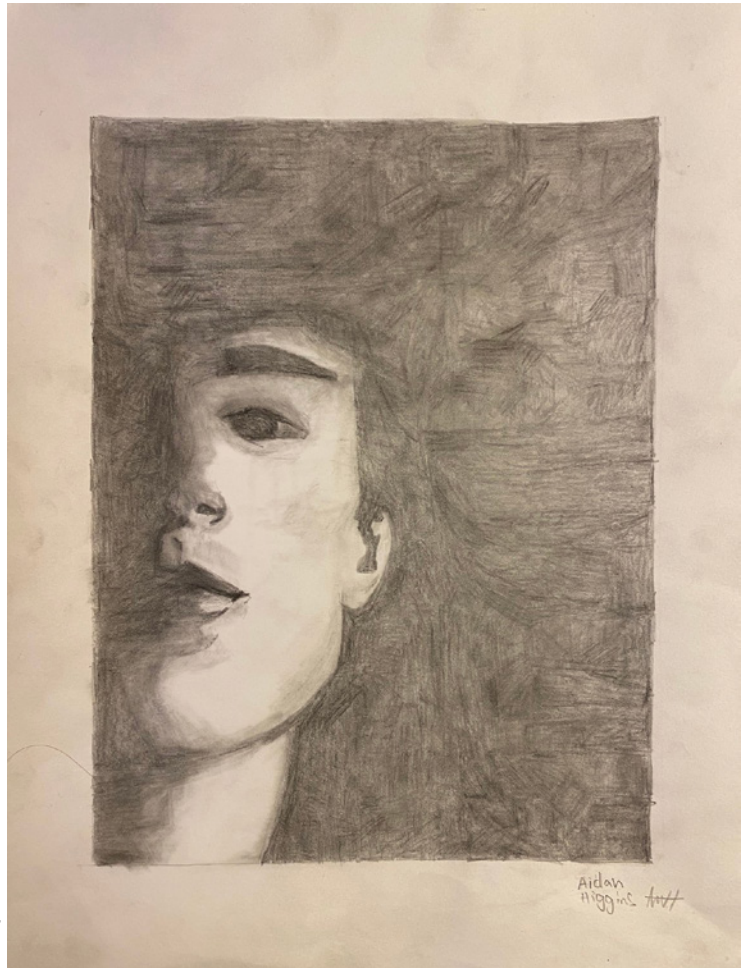
Their link remains consistent for all time.
His fate, by nature, was written on stars.
Their encounters cause charity or crime
With results permanent like some old scar.

His most formative moments, they take shape
Because of influence beyond control.
She creates the future he can't escape.
It's nature's power that will take a toll.

It was nature that threw mighty lightning
Down so intensely on that weary tree.
Nature gives orders; she's like queens and kings,
Appointed galvanist, Frankenstein, V.

Her final judgement set him on his path,
Not of good and love, but malice and wrath.

Socially Distant
BY AIDAN HIGGINS '22
Graphite



October 2027: Restless Soul

BY JULIAN STASSI '23

He reached the top of the hill and his dull, faded yellow eyes searched the desolate landscape for what he knew would ease his soul. He wandered on, the coarse martian sand passing through his brittle toes and the sun beating down upon him. His ribs jutted from his abdomen as if they would burst through his frail skin at any moment. It had been many years since his people and planet had been decimated by the rocketmen, and only a year since Earth had been engulfed in flames like a wildfire. He had not seen anyone or anything since then. His soul—restless.

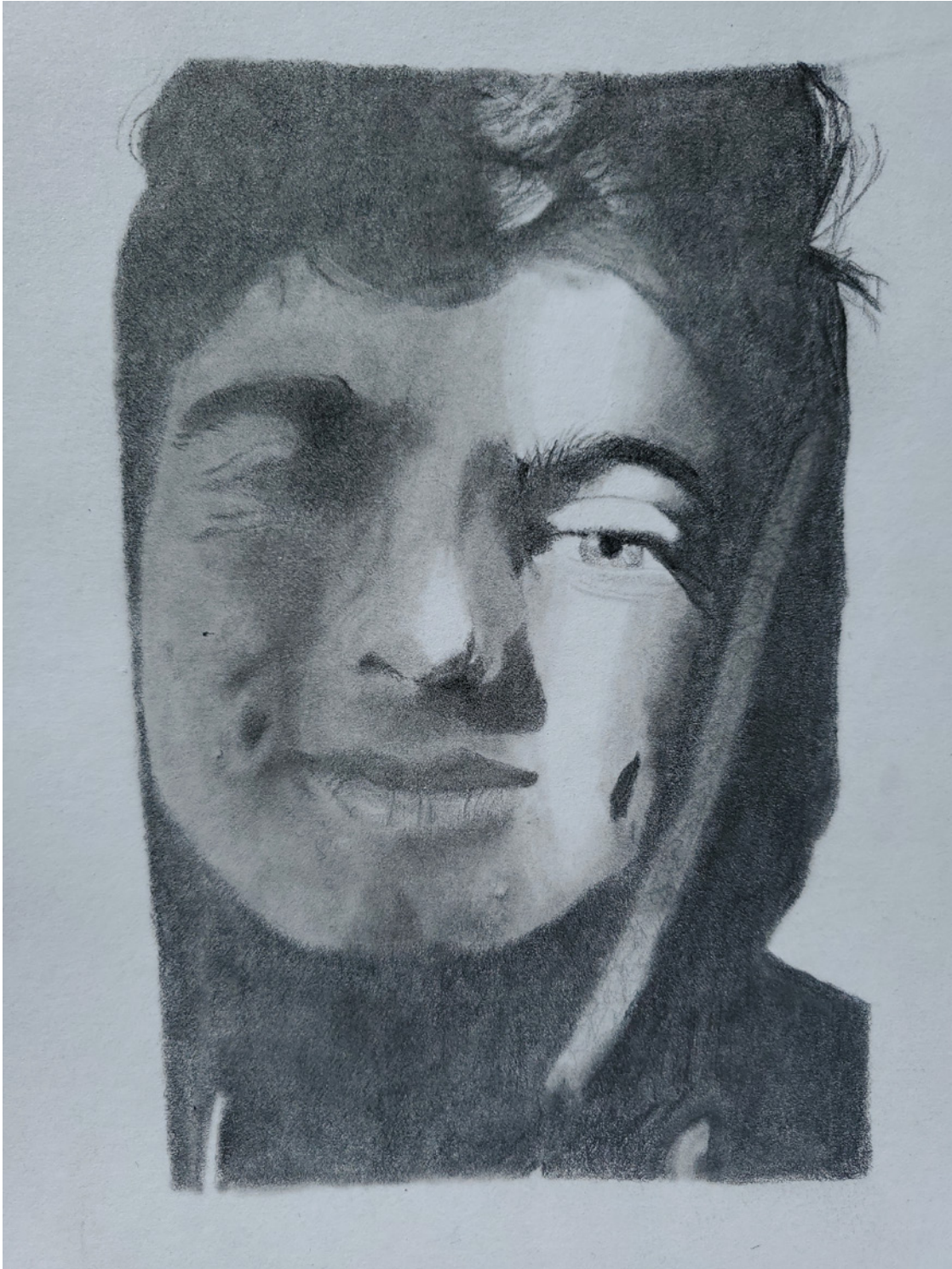
As darkness approached, he became increasingly exhausted from his quest. He laid down, taking shelter behind a large boulder, shielding him from the oppressive cold. He closed his eyes even though he knew sleep would not bring him true rest. As he drifted off, a bright reflection shone through his wrinkled eyelids. He crawled to the nearby glimmer of light and saw a bright white object, protruding from sand. He began to dig and uncovered a hand. An arm. Then a broken rib cage. A skull. A human, lying just beneath the sand, tattered clothing loosely entwined around his body, a single bullet lodged between a rib and his spine.

That night he dreamt of his family, wife, children, hometown, and his joyful life that once was. He woke up the next morning not to the call of a flame bird, but to an empty planet moaning from years of destruction. He continued this endless voyage, searching for his home and family, searching for peace. His soul—restless.

The sun sank below the desert horizon as he came into the town, his old home. The once lively community was eerily quiet as it became engulfed in darkness. He walked through the central plaza, wandering through his now strange and unfamiliar home. He approached his house, and the great bell tower suddenly rang in an odd off pitch tone that seemed to echo and reverberate throughout the entire town. As he entered his crumbling home, a shadow darted across the room.

“Hello?” he weakly managed to utter. Fear and anxiety built up in him until he soon realized the shadow was his own. He struggled to hold back the tears as he walked through the rooms where he had raised his family and made so many memories. No longer could he endure the pain and he left his house and headed for the graveyard.

There in the middle was a rocket, crushing the tombstones and disrupting the sanctity of the place where everyone he had ever loved and cared for was buried. Overwhelmed with grief he crumbled, his knees slamming down onto the red sand, and wept uncontrollably as his emotions flowed out of him and his tears stained the sand. Slowly, he laid down between the graves of his wife and children. He closed his eyes, as brilliant as the sun, for the last time. There he laid, the last of his kind, on the cold martian sand, his dark lips curved upward on his face.



Light Shining Through

BY JUSTIN HOLBROOK '21

Graphite



Sunset Mountains

BY SEAN NAM '22

Pastel

Sloth

BY CHARLES SANDERS '23

the sloth
 spends so much time
 looking away from his barren empty
 branch
 instead he gazes longingly at his neighbors who munch
 quietly away on their Lush, Green, Forests. now the sloth tries to take
 another's leaves. stretching and straining, turning and twisting, quite desperately
 to be part of that niche that
 the
 sloth
 loses
 his
 grip,
 and
 falls
 to
 the
 ground
 with his head turned to the sky

and
 sees
 the green leaves
 on his branch

Nightmares on Atypical Days

BY ALFRED YU '21

First Published in Polyphony Lit, Volume 16, Winter Issue

On Fathers

I walked in and found that the chocolate fudge birthday cake Mom got me for my thirteenth had been eaten, its box traced with brown. Shadows for what should have been. Father walked in, corpulence drooping over his grease-stained jeans as he smiled at me with fudge lined teeth. “Happy Birthday Son.” And for my fourteenth, I walked in and found the same. Father, teeth and hands tainted with all the hues of gluttony. “Happy Birthday Son.” And for my fifteenth, I walked home and Father pinned me to the ground, craning open his mouth to allow a slush of freshly digested vomit chocolate to crawl out and splash onto my face. He walked away, laughing, the sound of my grief encapsulated into his crackling cacophony. “Happy Birthday Son.” And it was for my sixteenth now that I walk in, hands uncovering the smell of fresh cake, tinged with my own ineradicable memories. I look at the sixteen yellow red blue candles and blow out the scintillas of flame they hold. The smoke undulates in the air before drifting away. Father giggles, and I turn around to see him lying on the couch. His mouth lengthens as a brown worm-like creature wiggles out, directs one end towards me, and opens its mouth to smile, revealing sharp serrated teeth with flesh stuck between their gaps.

“Happy Birthday Son.”

On Doctors

The sunlight seeps through the window, shafts extending their fingers to barely reach the molden blue blanket I'm covered in. Near me, the TV is still playing. This liquid I'm injected with hurts—it mixes with my blood no better than oil does with water. The doctor walks in, his face sullen. His eyes crescendo from dull grey to a vivacious black. Outside, the birds chirp their own little melodies, minors ascending and descending, descending with an unforgiving thump. I ask the doctor if I will be fine. He opens his mouth to grin, displaying his neat array of bleach white teeth. His eyes seem to laugh with him. I wish the curtains would open. Through the window sliver I see the birds, systematically littering upon the streets and hospital building. The ochre of the sky has faded to the color of vomit. Earthquake weather. “Of course,” the doctor finally responds, in the baritone tenor bass voices at once. The harmony was too perfect. He reaches down, grasps the scalpel, slits his right eye, and draws the blade down to his chin.

On Death

I heard that when Laura disappeared, it was from the inside out. That Laura had exhaled her heart, which came out of her mouth as naturally as smoke from a cigarette, rising up as if tethered to an invisible balloon. I heard that when David disappeared, it was very much the same, that he too had his heart escape his body. That his hazel eyes had evaporated like water into a line of smoke, until his entire body was faint. I heard that for Lucy-Ann it was worse, that her arms had atrophied into thin sticks, texture like jerky, before she disappeared. I heard that for Vincent, his body deflated into the ground, a human colored husk. And I fear for me it has begun too. My veins have transformed from blue to red as they break through my skin, heads pointed upward, already trying to escape.



Splash

BY LUCAS PENA '24
Photography



Nature's Teeth BY JACK CROTHER '21 Photography