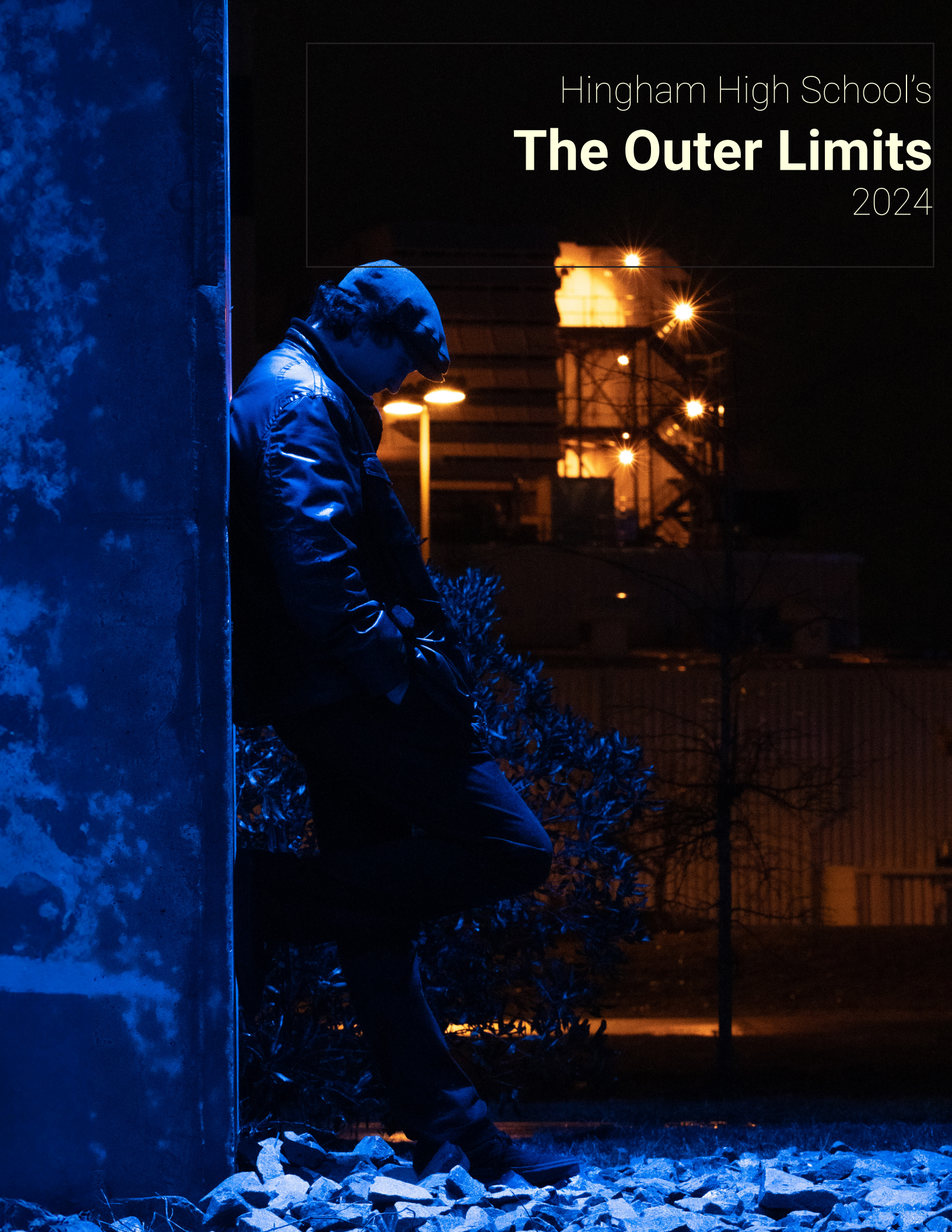


Hingham High School's  
**The Outer Limits**

2024





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The Mary Lee  
By Sam Ackerman  
Grade 11

She was absolutely hauling  
through the morning zone.  
She cruised right past the racing cones.  
With the water swish swashing  
off the side of her gunwalls,  
The Mary Lee was always  
caught fresh washing.  
Her overpowered 4 stroke  
roared like a lion,  
Yet at idle revs,  
she purred like a kitten.  
Her throttle was maxed out-  
The transom had given out.  
Her turning radius was tighter  
than the rusted-out hinges upon her bow.  
With the help of some Bar Keepers Friend as a  
fighter, such rust was unknown  
until now.

Bucky claims that she has seen  
her last days,  
“There’s watta in the gas tank!  
Time for a canoe.”  
Now Bucky clearly didn’t realize  
this was not news.  
Though rotted and waterlogged  
all the way to her core,  
Your knees were always spared  
thanks to her soft squishy floor.  
Although she went down more times  
than I can remember,  
She was still seen around town  
as an aquatic defender.  
The Mary Lee of Mattapoisett,  
how she came through for every function.  
She could buzz out to can cove,  
Our own established junction.

Hingham Harbor  
By Mia Sharkansky  
Grade 12



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## In Defense of Spring

By Liam Connolly

Grade 11

Summer is so close-  
A season adored by most,  
But I will miss spring.  
Now don't get up in arms,  
I know summer has its charms-  
From cool nights  
And windy days for flying kites-  
The sound of summer can ring,  
But everything is new in Spring.  
It is the first time in months  
that I can hear birds tweet,  
And there are so many new sights  
for my eyes to meet.  
I can feel the ground  
warming under my feet  
As snow clears to reveal peat.  
Spring makes me look  
forward to tomorrow,  
As I toss away that winter sorrow.  
In simple terms I will repeat,  
Spring is a season that can't be beat.

## To The Autumn Skeptics

By Katie Whitlock

Grade 10

The salty, smooth, summer air leaves.  
The fiery colors grow and overtake the trees.  
Crunchy leaves fill the sidewalk,  
While swirling like ballerinas high aloft.  
A cinnamon smell fills the air,  
with pleasure and no despair,  
And the grinning great oaks will soon be bare.  
Many people view fall as depressing and cool-  
Kids are downhearted as they start school,  
But the autumn awe will always take over  
When dads make piles with a leaf blower.  
Everyone always takes fall for granted,  
But enjoy the beautiful season before it fades  
And winter will take over with freezing days.  
Ranges of orange, red, green, and yellow!  
The fall experience will forever stay mellow.  
But sadly it will all come to an end  
As winter approaches and all nature is dead,  
The sound of buzzing bees  
and birds chirping will disappear,  
But the memories will last a lifetime,  
And the autumn awe will soon reappear.

Solo

By Eric Lu

Grade 12





Windup Toy  
By Chloe Stolzman  
Grade 9

## The Bird and The Man

By Adrianna Ryan

Grade 11

One step, a chirp, two steps.  
Although the bird must not fret,  
There is an element  
in the way of achieving  
what is meant.  
To jump, to fly, to live.  
To fail, to fall,  
to do anything but thrive.  
What if the bird fails?  
What if it cannot?  
Ignored are these thoughts,  
when a bird takes flight.  
As with all its might,  
fear is suppressed,  
and freedom is sensed.  
One step, a cry, two steps.  
Although I must not fret  
there is an element  
in the way of what is meant.  
To be alive, to go for it,  
to be who I want to be.  
To fail, to feel shame,  
to continue being  
what people think of me.  
What if I fail? What if I'm hated?  
Unlike the bird I cannot ignore  
these weighted thoughts.  
Thank you for that message, nature,  
For it has been a pleasure  
understanding what fear does to one,  
and how to push it out  
as a bird has once done.  
With this strength,  
greatness and freedom  
is at an achievable length.  
So take it after the birds,  
who may not have words,  
but know how to prevent fear  
and take flight.

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## Nature's Eternal Dance

By Aliza Zadi

Grade 11

In nature's dance, the seasons sway and twirl,  
A ballet of change in the air is a graceful whirl.  
From spring warm bloom to winter icy chills,  
Each season has its faint whisper.  
In summer's warmth, passions rise and soar,  
Like waves upon the beach shore.  
A tapestry of gold and crimson,  
In its embrace, I learned to let go.  
Blows in the autumn that we know.  
Winters frost bites, winds howl.  
Yet, in its cold silence,  
we find solace: our souls develop,  
For in the quietness, a new beginning awaits.  
A chance to dream beyond the snowflakes.  
Let us heed the inaudible whispers of change,  
Embrace the new and let go of the old.  
Like the seasons, we too age,  
In nature's eternal dance,  
we have to go down a new road.

## Storm's a Brewin'

By Tommy Parker

Grade 11



## The Bird Who Carries Dreams

By Liam Jordan

Grade 9

For if dreams die-  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.  
Hold onto dreams  
They are like gas to a car-  
A necessity to life.  
Dreams are the glaring sun.  
It seems like they never go away,  
But to some they fade  
in the howling wind  
Through troubling tough times.  
The elderly dream of the  
Glistening  
Tumbling  
Rumbling  
Bright new breathtaking car  
Seemed to be put to halt.  
Life is fueled by those  
new and ancient dreams  
That have flown away  
With the shimmering red bird  
that can fly.  
For if dreams die-  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.



## That Kitchen Light

By Aradhana Sood  
Grade 12

It has witnessed the salty tears  
that stream down my face at midnight,  
Listening to music and wishing my hand  
could get a break from the writing.  
It has witnessed the tired eye rubs  
at one in the morning,  
And me, staring mindlessly at the white light  
emitted from my bright computer.  
It's witnessed the goodnight hugs,  
when everyone but me goes to bed.  
I just sit there, their nocturnal daughter.  
It's witnessed the silent sobs of questioning,  
The meaning of life, the purpose of love,  
the reason behind it all.  
It has witnessed the cheesy smiles  
at late night "sleep well" texts,  
knowing I won't be sleeping anytime soon.  
It has noticed the determination,  
The clicking and clacking of keys moving  
Faster than my brain is able to function.  
It has watched slips and falls  
In the living room, the giggling, the whines.  
It has seen every worksheet,  
Every project, every assignment,  
Watching the counter get scratched up  
By pencils and sharpies.  
It has witnessed every  
"why aren't you asleep yet's"  
and "go to bed!s",  
It has discovered passions for art,  
For writing, passions for color coding  
And annotating things that  
Don't need to be annotated.  
I've sat here in the dark for hours  
Of days of weeks,  
And through those late nights,  
The kitchen light has been  
My only companion.

Emotions  
By Aradhana Sood  
Grade 12





### The Bird Upon a Branch

By Caroline Shelsy

Grade 11

In the midst of Mother Nature's beauty,  
 creatures possess the most desirable gifts.  
 Climbing up towering green figures  
 without pause, endless adventures await  
 for the ones who once saw how the world  
 looks from above and it's every flaw.  
 The vast valleys and homes, full of  
 warmth, fill every crease,  
 yet covered by the deceased.  
 Upon a branch sits a cluster of feathers,  
 watching and protecting her young,  
 who have just been exposed to the  
 wonders of the world and embraced by  
 their mother's warming touch.  
 As days pass,  
 their eyes slowly start to open.  
 As weeks pass, their feathers  
 start to sprout.  
 As months pass,  
 the time has come to try something out.  
 Upon a branch now sit  
 several clusters of feathers,  
 debating whether to fly or fall.

### Artwork-Forest Glow

By Kate Crespi

Grade 10

It is a risky decision to make,  
 yet mother's encouragement  
 erases any mistakes.  
 One by one they disappear from sight,  
 to travel to bigger places  
 and brand-new heights.  
 Onto live better and brighter lives  
 go the once-frightened young  
 that are now soaring above  
 blankets of green,  
 experiencing what could  
 never have been seen  
 if they all remained upon the branch.  
 All but one are off and gone.  
 This bird remains on the branch  
 until dawn.  
 Mother's support is there no more,  
 so it decides to sit there for much too long.  
 As days pass, its eyes slowly start to close.  
 As weeks pass, its feathers start to sag.  
 As months pass,  
 the time has come to say goodbye,  
 All because it never tried.

Poor Dove  
By Sophia Scott  
Grade 9

I do not know where you lie now,  
I buried you in the soil, in the ground.  
Though I hope your soul transcends,  
This minuscule pen,  
That is our world.  
Perhaps you're in heaven  
Or been enlightened.  
Perhaps this was only one of many lives,  
And now your soul survives,  
In another body.  
Or maybe you are simply no more,  
Life and death, settling an age-old score.  
But for me,  
My Dove,  
I see you in the flowers,  
I see you in the rain,  
I see you in the earth,  
I see you as pain.  
I see you as joy,  
I see you as light,  
I see you as day,  
I see you as night.  
I see you in the shadows,

What Comes Next?  
By Mia Nagle  
Grade 12

I see you in the snow,  
I see you in the darkness,  
Yet I watch you glow.  
I see you as the pansy growing from the sidewalk,  
I see you as the flower sprouting from its stalk.  
I see you as the fly being swatted from the wall,  
I see you as a wolf singing your nighttime call.  
I see you drifting,  
Drifting from the sky,  
Landing on my nose,  
As a butterfly.  
I see you reaping,  
Stealing innocent lives,  
Keeping life in balance,  
The dreaded compromise:  
For one to live,  
They must die.  
For one to live,  
They must comply.  
I know not where you are.  
I know nothing of life.  
I know not what lies beyond,  
But I hope it's paradise.



Introspection  
By Franchesca Almonte  
Grade 9



When I Come Home  
By Veronica Webb  
Grade 9

I return from a long and grueling day.  
I bitterly brew, lost in my dismay.  
In piercing cold, a patient dog awaits.  
He quickly makes his way toward the gate.  
To me he leaps and bounds with all his might.  
While his tail wags and shakes, I hold him tight,  
Soft velvet on his back is his black fur,  
And soon my gloomy day becomes a blur.  
As I peer into his content dark eyes,  
And with his warm embrace my spirits rise,  
His wet nose nudges me and his ears flap.  
I feel at home as he sits in my lap.  
This long last moment as sweet as honey  
Because I share it with my dog, Sonny.

Jamaica  
By Kimora-Simone Smith  
Grade 11

It's the natural essence of the island-  
Something I understand,  
Jamaica, land we love.  
Jamaica, the country with beautiful skies above-  
It's where my culture lies  
And where my heart resides.  
I couldn't imagine a more perfect place.  
The sun smiles at me  
And leaves me with a crisp glow.  
It's a blessing that Jamaica never snows.  
I am from Jamaica,  
Where out of many  
We are one.



Family Secrets  
By Kate Crespi  
Grade 10

My Love  
By Kylie McAloon  
Grade 9

The sport to me represents family,  
the love I have is why I am so glad.  
To tell the truth, it is perfect and lovely,  
my love forever fails to make me sad.  
To me the game is a brutal battle,  
we take the chances when we fight through all.  
The foul line is the only place we rattle,  
we take a chance, we hit the deck and brawl.  
No matter what, the coach's word is last.  
Nothing at all compares to the great game,  
if listening, you're told to just run fast.  
Some people only play in hope of fame.  
Ending is the treason of my season,  
we cry and sigh for an important reason.



The Dreaded Game  
By Eileen Lowther  
Grade 9

I slowly put my laces on, I'll fail.  
The murmuring confuses me, I plea.  
No competitors were found all year.  
I know no one can assure we will win.  
I stay off the court hoping I won't play.  
My rival shakes my hand and holds her laugh.  
My hand is weak and wobbly, I have a fit.  
I'm ready for the jump, I want to bail.  
Yet I can feel a burning hope in me,  
She suddenly looks weak and shaky, I fear.  
I need to let the competition get in.  
Confused looks strike me, maybe I am astray.  
We will secure a win, on my behalf.  
All my opponent needs to do is quit.

A Boy to Man  
By Cole Mancini  
Grade 9

In a small wooden cottage  
housed Shaw Boyd.  
Lived in Nova Scotia Canada,  
and was born in 1901.  
Wood scorches on the fire  
like magma in a volcano.  
Harvesting his crops every day.  
Watching his animals live forever  
as he is picking up his hay.  
Hoing his corn once a week,  
And then planting them once again.  
Steering his dingy left and right,  
And reeling in fish until night.  
Luring lousy lobsters into his cage.  
Shaw doesn't stop cranking his rod  
Until he has let out all his rage.

Before  
By Lane Collins  
Grade 10

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## Sudden Change

By Alea Shurbaji

Grade 12

Knotted blanket, why were you created?  
Knotted blanket, why were you hated?  
Knotted blanket, why were you loved?  
Folded away and always shoved  
In the cabinet, away from the world,  
What made my blanket take such a twirl?  
From the center of attention in quarantine  
To the dusty old quilt that smells of tangerines,  
Such change in such little time,  
What made my blanket see the end of its time?  
My blanket never did anything wrong,  
It just did not belong  
In a world as crazy as ours-  
To survive it would need superpowers.



## Once a Little Boy

By Michael Blanchard

Grade 9

On a farm in Knouckbul, Ireland,  
A boy was born in 1911.  
He was a cute, little lamb.  
They planned on naming him  
Jeremiah Joseph Tarrant.  
He felt as cold as the North Pole,  
As he had just been born with no blanket.  
When he was nearing his nineteenth birthday,  
He decided he would move to New Jersey.  
He wanted to work as an insurer  
for a Prudential company.  
He had an Irish brogue,  
but he was still very assisting.  
If people had any problem,  
he would be insuring them with help,  
As long as he kept attracting  
people to the company,  
He would keep his job forever.  
He had kids who had grandkids.  
He continued singing to them,  
And he was very amusing to them.  
He never stopped supporting.  
They also loved when he would  
start dancing with them.  
He finally died in 1990  
still adoring the  
great people in his life.

## Old School

By David Bennion

Grade 11



Enemies  
By Veronica Webb  
Grade 9

Mother, Father,  
O, break my heart!  
You give high fortune,  
And prodigious birth,  
To a child  
Whom you hate.  
You have only caused me sorrow.  
This torture in dismal hell.  
Shut me nightly in a house,  
You have made a vile prison.  
You never shall be satisfied,  
You never shall bring true honor  
Upon so soft a subject as myself!  
Your will cannot turn a sinner to a saint  
Past hope, past cure, past help!  
I will confess to you that  
Thou art my loathed enemy,  
Thou need'st to be gone.  
Let me be satisfied  
On this night.  
Your cold blood will run.  
You shall die  
By my hands.

Artwork  
By Peyton Burke  
Grade 9

Inception  
By Franchesca Almonte  
Grade 9



## A White Lily Lost

By Ella Cignetti

Grade 10

A distant time existed where impossible  
 became a word lacking of meaning:  
 A forgotten survivor on a distant shore,  
 A boulder lifted by a persistent hope in the  
 world, a boulder on our shoulders  
 that only augmented in alignment with time.  
 A period where we surveyed  
 modest pools in backyards,  
 Believing they, shrouded in dim light  
 from the sinking sun,  
 Were surreptitious mermaid coves t  
 ucked into glowing caverns,  
 Patiently waiting for the revelation  
 of their insurmountable treasures.  
 A time when truth and reality  
 were only concealed concepts,  
 A time lived in the present,  
 never, never in the peskily persistent past,  
 Where worries and wisdom  
 were shadowed by wonder,  
 When we naively assumed parents  
 restricted our freedom,  
 Meanwhile our minds obeyed no limit,

never conformed to pressure.  
 We were leaves fluttering  
 in a promising autumn breeze,  
 Not anticipating to plunge into the dark  
 and damp Earth with a sudden gust.  
 A time when we breathed freely,  
 When society and stress failed  
 to pollute our air,  
 Now prominent in every atom  
 of oxygen inhaled.  
 When the snow danced  
 peacefully above our noses,  
 Refraining from cascading  
 down on us when least expected.  
 When rivers ran leisurely,  
 straight into the ocean without deterrence;  
 While now, dark tumultuous waters  
 twist through unfamiliar groupings of brush,  
 Devoid of a destination.  
 The bubbly laughter t  
 hat used to ring out repeatedly;  
 Swiftly, a shadowed valley  
 with a white lily stationed in solitude.

This is the End

By Nick Seibel

Grade 12





## Sprouting Flowers

By Kate Walsh

Grade 11

Springtime is when seeds are planted  
and flowers arise,  
The coldness and darkness  
of the winter finally dies.  
Delicate petals and pollen begin to appear  
And there is a new positivity  
surrounding the atmosphere.  
Bright colors and images of green fill the grass.  
Blossoming trees and new wild life, alas.  
The sun smiles down on the world  
And the wind slowly stops its whirl.  
Sprouting flowers are a sign of new prosperity,  
Take the change and modify your identity!  
Though, this doesn't have to be taken literally.  
This poem has only one message for thee;  
Leave those negative thoughts  
and feelings in the past,  
And learn to use new opportunities  
and have a blast.  
Because brilliant flowers are as beautiful as love  
Or even picture perfect like a dove.  
Oh, a sprouting flower in spring,  
Truly is the most amazing thing.



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## To Be That Bee

By Alea Shurbaji

Grade 12

Chained to the desk in my class  
with nothing to read,  
All that I fill my eyes with  
is the nature-filled window beside me.  
Outside I peer and spot  
a yellow and black bee.  
Oh great heavens,  
The animal that opposes me.  
My heart yearns for the creature I see.  
Not because I love it, But  
Because I want it to be me.  
Chained to my desk with nowhere to go,  
Nothing to do,  
And nobody to love.  
But the bee,  
The bee that I see,  
That bee lives the opposite life of me.  
I envy that bee.  
It is everything I want to be.  
Traveling here there and everywhere,  
But not me.  
I am stuck at my desk,  
glued to the chair  
I sit in with prowess.  
Oh what I would give  
to be that bee,  
While the others look at me  
when I'm free.  
They would then hope to be me.  
Look at it flying everywhere,  
But I'm stuck here in my chair.  
All I hope for is the life of the bee  
To become the life of me.

## Nature's Grand Design

By Chloe Stolzman

Grade 9



One Second  
By Nick Seibel  
Grade 12

Senior Skip Day  
By Jack Salem  
Grade 12

My favorite day,  
Boundless possibilities-  
Glorious skip day!



Winter Nights  
By Mia Sharkansky  
Grade 12

Night bleeds into day,  
Darkness claims the  
winter sky,  
Short days linger cold.

Grayscale  
By Sylvia Chen  
Grade 11

Eight Past  
By Tommy Parker  
Grade 11

My shadow  
walked  
a little too far  
from me  
just now in the  
unlit hallway,  
in the mirror  
in my periphery,  
that I pretend not  
to look at.  
Just a few  
steps back,  
trailing behind as  
if the thought  
of me  
couldn't catch up to  
where I was;  
evidence left  
at the scene.  
It's 12:08. I am  
the only witness.

## The Mountain Burns

By Alexander Dinardi  
Grade 11

The mountain snores its slumber deep and vast,  
Beneath a violent tremor stirs,  
Unknown to man, the fiery chambers confide.  
They fight amongst themselves on whether to rise.

Then, with a roar that splits the crimson sky,  
Their decision has been made.  
Red rivers now flow where placid meadows lay.  
Where mere whispers turn to thunderous decrees.  
Destruction's hand rewrites the new land,  
Declaring itself as the anointed king.

For within the chaos, nature's dance unfolds,  
And at last, a new meadow is formed,  
Lush with lilacs, it screams,  
Just for the cycle to go again.

## Steamboat Springs

By Ned Coyne  
Grade 12



## The Short Lived Golden Wonder

By Julia Scipione  
Grade 11

The frozen ground thaws,  
Winter withdraws,  
A shoot of green emerges,  
As the birds sing their verses.  
Colorful petals unfold,  
Their beauty is equal to gold.  
Elegance and grace,  
Waiting to be erased.  
Wilted and lopsided,  
A muted brown,  
Shriveling up and falling to the ground.  
After months of waiting,  
The first signs of Spring are gone.  
Once a vibrant yellow tulip,  
Now brought to a crisp,  
A ghost of the past,  
A reminder, that all good things don't last.  
Yet the bulb remains covered,  
Buried under the hot summer,  
Sleeping through the autumn breeze,  
And hibernating beneath the winter freeze.  
The tulip will bloom again,  
But only then,  
A short two weeks,  
Will we find the beauty that we seek?

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## The Lone Oak

By Derek Dong

Grade 11

One Oak sapling of hundreds  
arises in the heart of the forest,  
Against the odds, it searches for the light,  
Through the darkness of the foliage,  
It stretched its limbs, seeking space.  
Its roots dig deep into the ground,  
And there, it is met with hundreds of other roots.  
So, the sapling digs deeper into the darkness,  
Until there are no more neighbors,  
And finally, its base is established.  
Its older counterparts tower over it,  
Not willing to part, nor share the vital light,  
Yet still the sapling wills itself upwards,  
Bending and twisting toward salvation.  
Triumphantly, the Oak breaks through,  
As the vibrant light of victory shines on it leaves.  
And now starts a journey anew.

## Tree Speak

By Cat Alexander

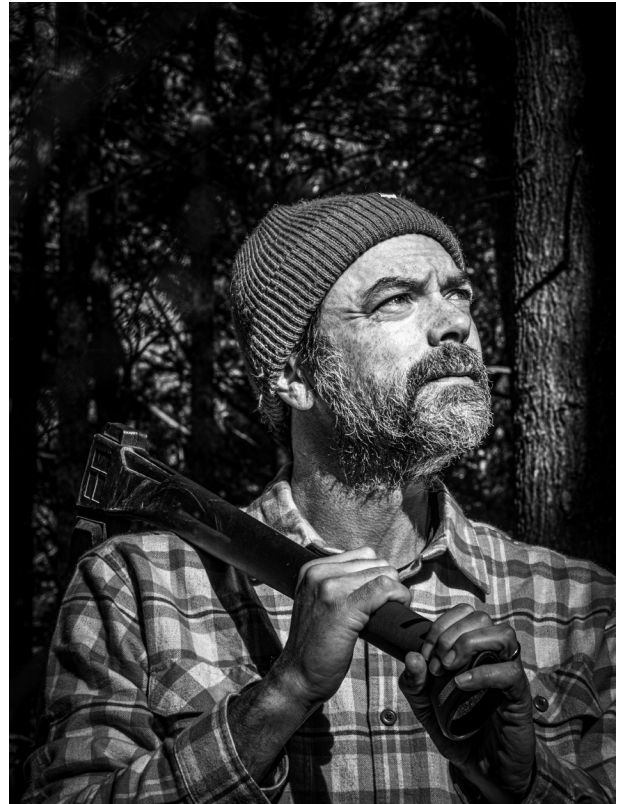
Grade 12



## Woodsman

By Max Papaleoni

Grade 12



## The Eternal Tree

By Taylor Delaney

Grade 11

The eternal tree-so still and free,  
Green as emeralds, yet brown as mud.  
All the possibilities, just waiting to bud,  
Every tree the same  
Yet all different and not tame,  
Yet each with its own mystery  
Living life throughout history.  
As the tree grows denser  
The roots get tenser,  
Getting older day by day.  
It grows more without decay.  
Time has passed and death is near,  
The seeds grow and reappear.  
What once was old is now new-  
The eternal tree, seedlings glistening  
in the morning dew.

## Thirteen Ways of Looking at A Dollar

By Annika Larsen

Grade 11

I

Amongst the dirty city streets,  
Twirling in the wind  
Laid a crinkled One Dollar Bill.

II

It didn't have much value,  
Like many individuals feel  
But represented so much.

III

The dollar rested against the dirty city ground,  
But whirled every time a breeze blew.

IV

As the days grew darker, the dollar rested.  
As the children tried to grab, to support their  
families in need the dollar rested.

V

I wish to see the war end and the money grow,  
But I wish the children did not have to know.  
The struggles of money,  
But dollar being so low but so high.

VI

Rain poured onto the town  
With booming sounds.  
The dollar flew in the guzzling rain.  
The poor war-stricken families  
Cried in the rain.

VII

The people of Germany,  
Do you dream of better times?  
Is the dollar not important?  
Does it not show  
the struggling times  
Of our country?

VIII

I have seen the war trenches  
And the starving children

But I know

The dollar plays a role

In everything I know.

IX

As the dollar rolled away in the rain,  
It showed the fear of the war.

X

Seeing the banks empty  
And the dollar wisping away  
The city cries out softly.

XI

The Dollar flew to The United States  
Whistling in the winds.

Captured by a young boy  
Bringing a frown to his smile.

XII

The United States is booming-  
The Dollar must be working.

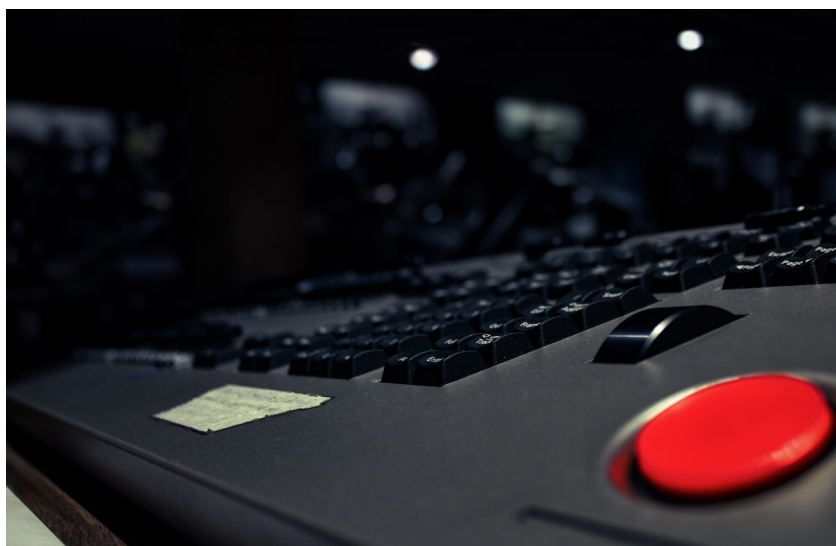
XIII

The dollar had been caught,  
It rested in his piggy bank.

While in Germany

The people cried for the dollar.

The Button  
By Henry Walker  
Grade 12



## Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Television

By Beatrix Boer

Grade 12

I

Lights turned on but the television is dull-  
An empty screen in the day.

II

An enchanted child sits excitedly on the couch,  
Imagining all the possibilities  
Disney shows them on the TV.

III

Christmas lights reflect off the TV screen-  
Turned off in the back of the room-  
Displaying gathered loved ones  
Sipping eggnog next to a bright flame.

IV

An imitation of silence fills the movie theater  
As strangers sit together  
Slurping on sour lemonade,  
Miles from their TVs at home  
Incomparable to the screen in front of them.

V

Past a small house, a single shadow walks a dog  
And glances at a TV through the window  
As it is surrounded by a full family.

VI

In the next room my brother and his friends  
Form a bubble around the living room TV  
As they connect over videogames.

VII

At the stroke of midnight,  
a teenager looks up in a glassy daze  
From their blinding phone screen  
Which replaced the downstairs TV  
And falls unconscious on their bed.

VIII

In a tiny crowded dorm room,  
A college student slurps down ramen noodles,  
Completing homework with a crackling TV-  
Like white noise in the background.

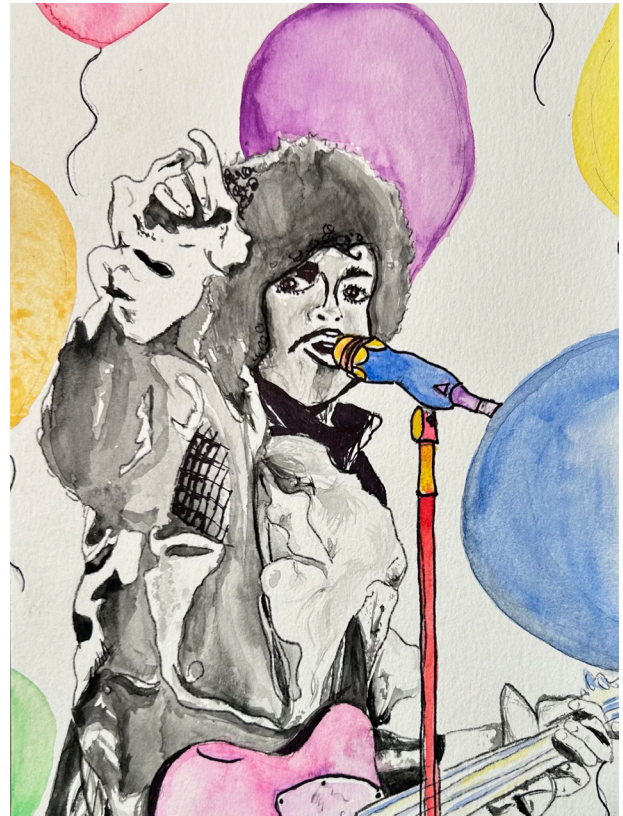
IX

Blistering hot under the presence of night,  
A couple sits in the dirty trunk of a car,  
Fingers covered in buttery residue  
As they crane their necks

Prince

By Grace Moore

Grade 9



toward the movie out in front,  
Leaving behind a TV at home  
for a new aesthetic.

X

A quick walk through the department store  
Displays dozens of TVs moving  
In synchronized time,  
Captivating the wide-eyed baby  
Stuck in a stroller.

XI

Alone, a single girl sits hearing a number,  
Prefer shaken, not stirred,  
Through a plastic sheet mounted on the wall.

XII

On an outdated TV,  
A mandated video for class is displayed  
To a group of lifeless students.

XIII

Lights turned out but the television is bright-  
An always-present glow  
In the darkness of night.

## Love Is Not A Race

By Alea Shurbaji  
Grade 12

That simple dimple on your face  
compels me to pick up the pace,  
But this should not be a race.  
I need to get ready for the big embrace.  
I watch you grow near and then  
in my heart you become more dear,  
But only if I could slow time.  
I could relish within the space  
where you are mine.  
If I figured out how to harness time  
To delay this big embrace,  
Although it seems like a crime  
And we will no longer interlace  
at this fast pace,  
It will prolong the place  
that took us so long to create.  
The big embrace is indeed t  
he prize at the end of the race,  
But once we reach the end  
that took years to create,  
There will be a change to said race.  
The race is no longer  
after the big embrace.  
Instead it will be replaced.  
Replaced by what,  
we do not know.  
The only thing in our future  
is the thing we chase  
Which seems to be:  
The big embrace.

## An Eternal Change

By Declan Kelley  
Grade 11

Amidst the cold and shivering nights  
that I endure,  
I hope to see the sun once more,  
As I wake each morning,  
I begin to mourn,  
For my hopes life shortens  
with each passing day,  
I feel stuck in a cycle of dismay,  
With no real end in sight,  
However, things began to change  
as the weeks went by  
I no longer felt as if I wanted to sigh.  
For the sun was now out  
Peaking through the clouds without a doubt.  
a beacon of hope, hope  
That displayed I would no longer have to cope.  
With the gloom of winter



Perspective  
By Kaitlin Dessy  
Grade 12

## Fight for Freedom

By Annie Sargent  
Grade 9

Time moving through the space of years too far away to touch. Time moving on each rotation around a fiery glowing sphere. Time moving in every tilt, turn, and twirl. Time ticking second by second, day by day, year by year, life by life. That is until we reached the date of May 25th, in the year 1787, at which our story begins. Such a date was upon an ornate calendar marked by extremely messy penmanship that smudged across the page hanging on a wall of a lavish study. The owner of such penmanship evidently did not appear to have the time to let the ink dry before writing the next line. The sun hitting the calendar sparkled as though it were a warm sapphire dancing across the walls and floor. The rest of the room remained in the dark, but rather in a comforting way as plush sofas and leather-bound books filled the sides of the room.

The sun glinted off the glittering window and landed upon a circle of extraordinary faces. One face was middle-aged, with long white hair tied by a satin ribbon, a man of importance and popularity. Another, slightly weathered, yet kindhearted, with lightening grey hair and

sharp blue eyes. In the corner, one man, sitting upon a plush red chair, had similar blue eyes, but a younger face than the others and chestnut hair. The last man in the room appeared to be an aging and pale man who required reading glasses and styled his purely stark white hair around the bottom of his head.

One of the more senior of the described was the notable James Madison. Madison leaned back into his comfortable leather chair with a groan, “Now, George, your head, though filled with fanciful dreams, deludes your capabilities. We must begin with some basic principles.”

“Principles are what made up our last indenture, the Articles of Confederation, Madison,” George responded his gaze trailing the glass of whiskey in James’ hand.

“That may be so, sir. Yet I... I place my trust in nothing less than fundamentals,” James continued while rearranging papers placed on the wooden desk.

“Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That is settled, Madison. And so is our basic system of government formed by the tremendously balanced executive, judicial, and legislative branches,” Washington recapitulated.

Puppeteering  
By Aradhana Sood  
Grade 12



Fight for Freedom *continues*



*Fight for Freedom continued*

“And George, do not forget the importance of our concept of Congress,” James Wilson added complacently, clearly pleased he could participate in such an exchange.

“Of course, Congress. Though I am still displeased about the name. Congress, why not Progress Wilson? It is as if you men believe nothing will be completed in the Senate or House of Representatives during their annual meetings,” Washington questioned.

“I said nothing of the sort, George, and I believe our system to be the most efficient on the planet. I just hope that we can follow Hamilton and begin to divide into two parties to differentiate our beliefs,” Wilson replied while evasively glancing over to where a blue-eyed young man sat, his eyes slowly rising to meet the others.

“You know where I stand. Two supportive parties to contrast each other and allow for politicians to prosper would be ideal. A place where people could compel one another with their ideas in a respective and understanding way,” the blue-eyed man, Hamilton, urged.

“I just cannot fully patronize your ideas,” Washington cautioned scrunching his already creased forehead skeptically.

“Talk less, smile more,” Hamilton appeased, as he closed the door to the study, the wind rippling gently around his coat in his wake.

“Gentleman, this country was founded to escape the politics that restricted us in England. I can only pray that this institution will not follow the path of power which can only lead to self-destruction. We must collaborate and discover a solution. This constitution is our only hope or else we shall be divested of our utmost concern... freedom,” Washington rebutted as he sighed and followed Hamilton’s path out the door. Little did he know what the country’s future would hold.

Y2K

By Dillon Turner

Grade 10



Checks  
By Michael Blackwood  
Grade 9

*My baseball cap, car keys, and my first baby tooth.* Since moving into the apartment complex which I currently reside in, I've grown paranoid that I'm not alone. No crap I'm not alone, I'm not the sole proprietor of the complex. But, I don't have roommates, nor family, a girlfriend, not even a pet to share the space with, and yet...

My bathroom is small and windowless, almost like a closet with just enough room to miraculously fit a shower and toilet, with a small sink practically hovering over the front of the seat. The door, old and in need of repair, is just a smidgeon too big for its frame, requiring a po-



Locked Memorial  
By Gus Doggett  
Grade 9

lice-grade enforcer to budge open, or a shoulder charge with comparable force. If anyone or anything was in there with me, I'd hear it, see it, even feel it enter. And yet, though my apartment lacks air conditioning, and my showers border upon scalding heat, I never fail to experience an uncharacteristically chilling, ominous breath down my neck, evoking a sense of pins and needles. I've told the landlord, my parents, my coworkers, anyone who might listen, but am met with looks of mock skepticism and sympathy, thinking overtime and paranoia has gotten to me.

*My baseball cap, car keys, and my first baby tooth.* Each night, I attempt to silence my racing thoughts with the assurance that the possessions upon my dresser are left undisturbed. The cap, from my university days, the last place I've lived in where I felt solace. The car

keys, I don't need to explain why I don't want to lose these. And my first baby tooth, a good luck charm from my youth, back when I caught a pop fly with my face. Each night I check, and each night they are there.

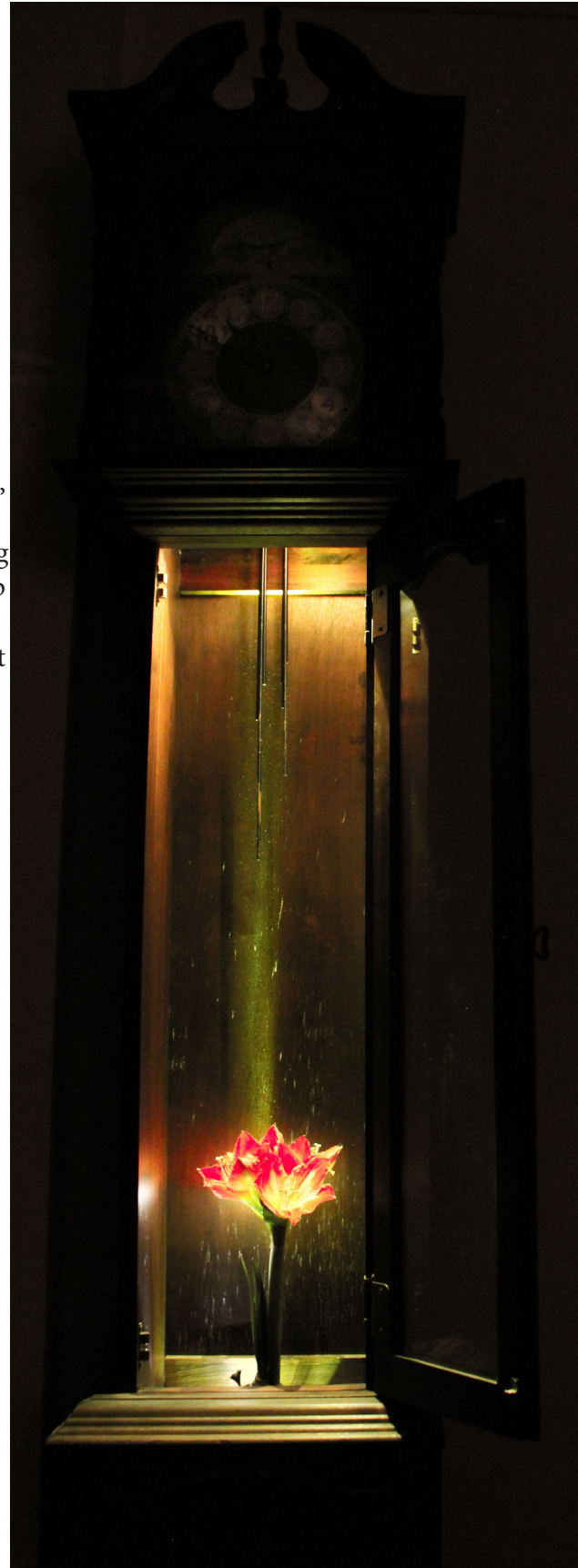
After hours of semi-lucid dreams, I awake to a cold sweat. Disturbed, and unable to return to rest, I make my way to the kitchen to fetch a glass of water. Being as old of a complex as it is, my path is marked by incessant creaking. However, upon refreshing myself, my nerves continue to rise. Despite my resting position, the creaks continue. Not the long, drawn out kind, caused by the cold shrinking and warm expansion of wood. No, these must be footsteps. Panicked, I arm myself with half of a pineapple, brought home from the office's "tropical" party. As I creep toward the source of the sounds, the hallway outside of my room, my breathing becomes erratic. My primed arm, shaky. My legs, heavy. My will, rapidly diminishing.

Checks *continues*

### Checks *continued*

Mustering courage, I burst into the door with a loud clatter, surely awakening my neighbors. The door is nearly thrown from its hinges. The impact sent shudders through the room, knocking books from the shelf and shirts from their hangers. Thrashing the pineapple about aimlessly, the wall is splattered by the crushed fruit. After several moments of panic, I settled myself. Though the lights are still off, my eyes have adjusted to the darkness by now, and I can see clearly that I am alone. To flip the switch would be to blind myself. As the adrenaline falls, so too do I, thoroughly exhausted from the ordeal. After cleaning the mess I had made, sorting fallen garments and novels and resolving to mop the chunks of obliterated fruit in the morning, I returned to my room. Having some comfort that what was in the house was nothing more than a figment of my imagination, I nearly forgot to check the possessions on my dresser.

*My baseball cap, car keys, and two baby teeth.*



When the Clock Strikes

By Tommy Parker

Grade 11

Nordland  
By Parker Bradl  
Grade 11

The burning heap of wreckage soared into the mountains, leaving a streak of piercing white light behind the sparking propellers like a fresh scar on the night sky. With a screech that sent flocks of vultures in all directions, the cockpit tumbled over treetops into the unyielding rock face, kicking up a cloud of sparkling glass dust that engulfed the lungs of the wheezing soldiers as they stumbled out of the remains of what had once been a helicopter. Peter immediately turned to see two shadows pull themselves out from under the hot metal skeleton to emerge from the smoke. The moonlight revealed two young men with dazed faces and torn uniforms looking at Peter with wide eyes, as if to say “What now?”

Despite the fire, Peter could still see the symbol painted below the cockpit window. The heroic image of an armored Viking holding a hammer and standing atop the charred bodies of the various barbarous peoples of the East, West, and South, against a bright red backdrop evoked the loud percussion and grand orchestral sounds from the endless slew of military parades that had punctuated Peter’s life from a mere infantry cadet to a gunnery captain aboard one of the best helicopters protecting the Eastern border of Nordland. Now, the military Peter had fanatically dedicated his entire existence to was using all of its resources to hunt him, and the other survivors of his squad, for attempting to cross over the Ural Mountains into Siberia, the Land of the Barbarians. Peter’s entire vision of life, as a glorious march to the battlefield where he would vanquish the enemies of the Nordic junta, was shattered with one word, found in the oldest corners of the Academy library, on the grainy, worn pages of a textbook from a bygone era, written in ink from a pen that had surely been destroyed along with its author. That word, which united the three men in a common goal of establishing a free society, drove them to fly through the rough skies above the Ural Mountains, dodging anti-aircraft missiles fired from the Nordic base at Moscow to reach Siberia, the dangerous Land of the Barbarians, and the only place they could be free. The word that had toppled the most authoritarian regimes of ages past: *Democracy*, would lead them to their salvation.

Sprinting up the snow blanketed mountain side, the three traitors of Nordland didn’t exchange a single word. Every twig and dry root that pierced the freshly fallen snow threatened to dig its skeletal fingers into the ankles of the runaways, and drag them into the frozen earth to be utterly obliterated by the bullets that strafed the horizon, and steadily increased in volume as the helicopters grew ever closer. With a horrific roar an entire segment of the



Astronaut  
By Ben Cavallo-Smith  
Grade 11

*Nordland continues*

## Nordland *continued*

mountain was blown apart, sending the slowest of the three into the depths of the valley below along with an avalanche of dust and stones from the rocky shelf. His scream reverberated off of the nearby mountains back into the ears of the remaining two men, sending them to the ground with their hands on their temples, as the next missile barely missed them, soaring over the top of the hill into the distant tundra.

After a moment of catching his breath, Peter stood up and motioned for his squadmate to follow him. However, the other man on the ground didn't move. With one glance at the man's shattered ankle, Peter knew he was on his own. Peter locked eyes with his wounded comrade one last time before beginning his descent down the mountain, to proceed into Siberia on his own.

The stars twinkled as swaths of luminous purple and green flowed through the night sky, interspersed with the helicopters less than a mile away. Peter had stopped in his tracks. A village, on the edge of a frozen lake, illuminated by firelight that showed through the falling snow, could provide him shelter for the night, and protect him from the Nordland patrols long enough to emerge free. He heard a crack in the ice and pivoted to see a man covered in furs walk across the lake's surface. Through the sheets of snow that fell between them, the man reached out a hand. Once his face came into focus, Peter could make out a welcoming smile under a thick frozen beard. A warmth seemed to flush across his whole body as his heart soared with the hope that he could be saved, until he focused on the more intricate details of the man's face.

His almond shaped eyes, his roundish nose, and red cheeks, which would have evoked feelings of safety and kinship in the average human being, instead represented the horrifying characteristics of the barbarian's face, found in countless posters throughout Nordland, exaggerated to horrific proportions to appear uglier than the skulls of their Nordic victims, which struck Peter with an intense fear that rattled every bone in his body from his teeth to his spine, and filled him with enough adrenaline to run a marathon.

"NO!" He screamed.



Artwork

By Christiano Iannacone

Grade 12

Nordland *continues*

*Nordland continued*

He could not be a barbarian. Even though he could logically invalidate his deep prejudicial hatred of the man, Peter's emotions ran far deeper. They controlled all of his body as he ran towards the helicopters, continuing to move towards his enemies, even as volley after volley of bullets tore apart every fiber of his body. Even as the shrapnel blinded him, and the blood from his scorched organs billowed up his throat, and launched him into convulsions as he choked to death on his own bodily fluids, Peter still lurched forward, drawn to the party as a bug is drawn mindlessly to a fire, where it always dies. *Democracy* was forever lost from his mind now as his skull shattered on the ground, pounded into dust as the gunners laughed from above.

The traitor was dead. How, or why he defected was of no concern to the men who gazed upon his charred ashes, but simply the invigorating ecstasy of taking the life of another was enough to sustain the soldiers of Nordland until their next mission. Only by killing another did they live; In the absence of killing, they died. This was the way of Nordland. As the northern breeze swept across the mountains, the last remnants of the night were erased, lost in a cloud of blinding snow, behind which laid a dream that could never be.

Lock and Key  
By Cat Alexander  
Grade 12





