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MOORINGS

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FROM THE EDITORS

A sunset is a beautiful marker of the end of a day. We often find ourselves admiring the hues of pink and orange, wishing the golden rays wouldn't fall behind the horizon so quickly. But sunsets remind us of the inevitability of change in our lives—the sun will rise and fall as life moves up and down. Change, though bittersweet, makes way for new beauty, for the sky sparkles after sunset and awakens with renewed life at dawn.

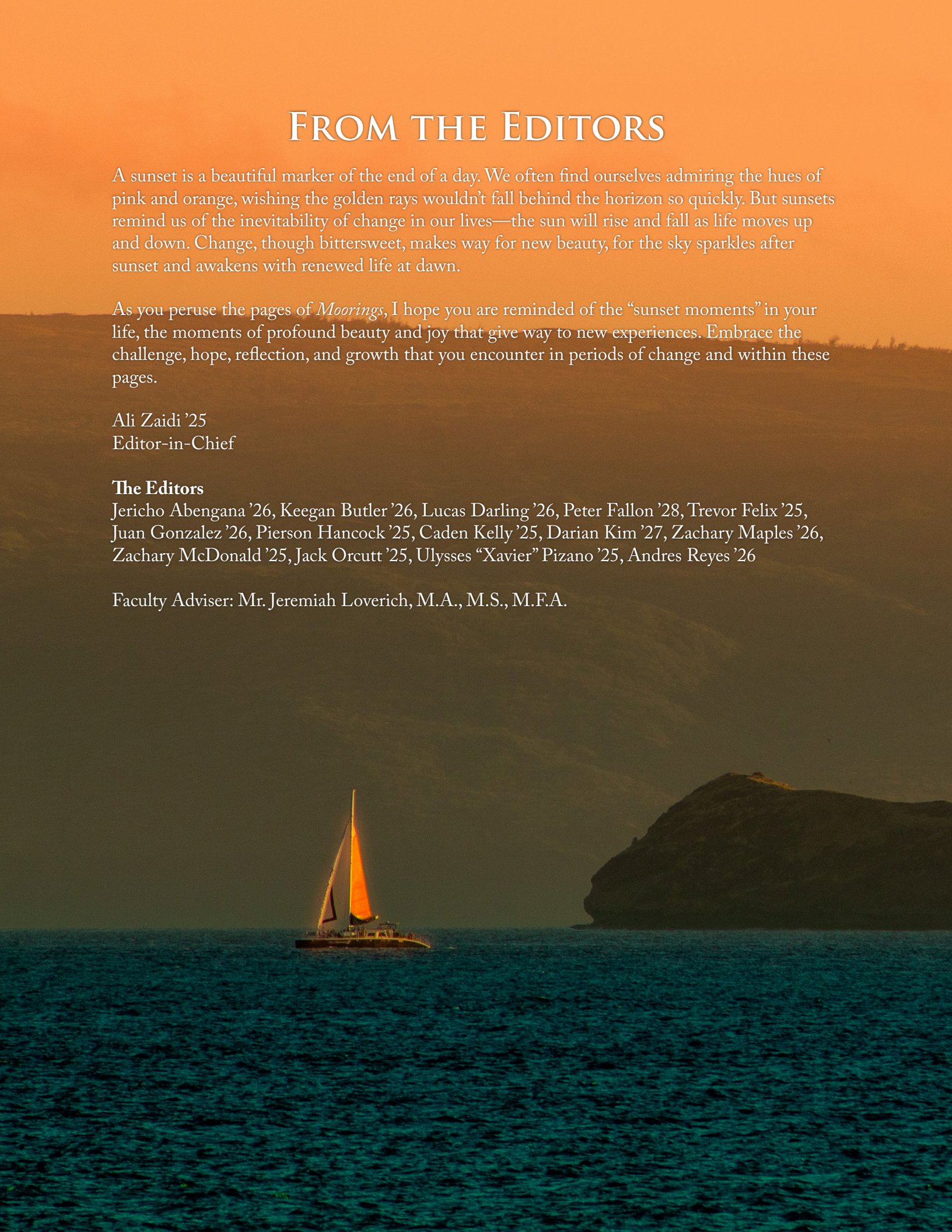
As you peruse the pages of *Moorings*, I hope you are reminded of the “sunset moments” in your life, the moments of profound beauty and joy that give way to new experiences. Embrace the challenge, hope, reflection, and growth that you encounter in periods of change and within these pages.

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August 2009: A Canticle for Hathaway

BY DREW EANDI '27

My family is dead.

I am a hoary primate struggling across these vast, desiccated plains, the sinuous hide of a rotting giant. Each languid footfall stirs up a diaspora of red mist, a swirling vortex hasty to revoke any claim my tracks would impose upon the land. The zephyrs softly caress ancient canyons, tumbling out of their funnels to tear through those staid, dilapidated human settlements; like anthills on a graveyard. For Spender's sake, I remember the ingress. They flocked to this barren tomb, the sickly pink sky reflected in a profusion of tin cans raining down upon the poor crimson behemoth. He was right—they did not understand the sacredness of the ruins.

Mars is quiet. The silence gently presses down on the tumultuous dunes, like a heavy comforter; it only serves to amplify my ragged somnolence. I used to find solace in that silence—Spender made me believe it held the wisdom of a thousand vanished voices. Now, it is a

reminder of what I have become. Pallid, a ghost, bound to this desolate land by my own stubborn convictions.

Anger flashes red in my mind, but it quickly subsides. What good is fury when there is no one to hear it? And yet, I am not alone. The voices come at night. At first, they seem yet another casuistry of my phantasmagoria—brought on by a desperate imbibement of initial water supplies. At first... at first, I think it might be them. But the language is alien, a subtle cacophony of patois to dash my hopes.

They begin softly, like the rustling of leaves in a faraway forest. Though the words are foreign, I understand their sorrow. Maudlin, I would have called it in my brash, inventive youth, yet the magnitude is that of my own. I feel two wasps have snuck behind my hollow eyes, to jab and burn my tear ducts in reprisal for their failure to produce moisture.



They mourn what has been lost with my coming. I mourn with them.

That cruel, effulgent orb mounts back into the empyrean once more, and I continue wandering through this broken world's ruins. The voices abate, yet remain at the edge of my awareness, an ever-evasive, amorphous whisper to fill the void. They call me to them, charting a tortuous path through ashen temples filled with cracked marble, ruptured as though by divine vindication. Yet the heavens are silent to my pleas—its elusive daemons grow more insistent, more accusing, as coarse as the grains assaulting my side, as visceral and demanding as the vacuous hunger that hammers my stomach in tempo with my stride.

Days pass; I now face the detritus of a Martian vault, led by this taunting gale of devils. They ebb with my guilt, then, roaring, crash back upon the shore; the extant spray of aspersions flickers through my consciousness. Dank murals inside betoken a once flourishing culture, and my

feeble eyes rest on a jagged frieze of a mother and her children. Their onyx pupils burrow into my soul, silica tears seeping out of the wrought granite.

“Show me,” I plead, my voice breaking. “Tell me what to do!”

“The voices fall away, but the quiet that follows is not one of peace; it is thick, suffocating, pressing in from all sides.”

The ululation spills forth from my throat, raw with longing. The very air pricks my gums, hailing a fusillade of vitreous shards to ravage my pharynx. Throbbing, my palate seizes an abutting nerve, stiffly coiling its neck muscle to incite a dusty thudding up my left eye. My tempestuous choir surges, taunting the futility of my actions, the impossibility of salvation, roiling chrome clouds billowing about every shattered fragment of hope wrested from my speech.

Then—silence. The voices fall away, but the quiet that follows is not one of peace; it is thick, suffocating, pressing in from all sides. I stand rigid, breath cloistered down into my lungs, and the world grows frozen in the viscous stillness. My heart gorges up into my throat.



Could they hear it? The thought claws at my mind, digging into the nascent cracks. *Could they hear me?*

And the silence is not an absence; it is an attention, as if something—someone—has taken notice, has stopped to listen, to watch. The air is too still, too heavy with expectation. Unseen, ineffable eyes send icy sweat to slither through the stiffened hairs of my back.

Though I seal my vision to spurn the sensation, the distant whispers resurge, louder, closer, almost within me. These are not some voices in the air, some external presence to blight this vitiated rock.

The voices are mine.

They have always been mine.

My heart's ventricles hammer an estranged beat, quickening their concord to a thunderous roar as if to escape my chest. A pillar rises to meet my stupored

collapse, yet the frigid stone offers no comfort, no respite from the truth unfurled within my mind.

The strange argot, the sorrow, the accusations—they are my own thoughts, contorted and magnified by the silence of this dead world, a reflection of the remorse that gnaws at my soul. Taken notice of my madness, it has noticed me in turn. My knees accost the grimy floor, trembling; I open and close my mouth, yet no sound emerges. What have I been praying to all this time?

That turpid silence nestles around my neck, constricting with burgeoning solitude, stifling, all-consuming. The ventricular drumbeat swells, drowning out all else until it too yields, leaving only the vast, empty quiet. And in it, I can hear the voices, still whispering, still there, always there. Because they are me.

I am them.

***“My heart’s ventricles hammer
an estranged beat, quickening
their concord to a thunderous
roar as if to escape my chest.”***



Palms at Sunset

BY TEDDY RIOS '26



A Forgotten Memory

BY DARIAN KIM '27

The world lay soft in shadows, stroked with dusk,
As pink and orange hues brushed clouds to blush.
The quiet hum of cars, the crickets' tune,
Wrapped evening's veil in whispers smooth as silk.
As he walked the sidewalks worn and known,
His sneakers scuffed, his cap a careless crown,
A stick in hand, he drew in drifting sand,
Tracing with aimless lines the day's descent.

He turned a corner, stopped, his small heart stilled—
A playground, hushed, stood silent, steeped in dusk.
The swings, once soaring high on summer's sighs,
Now swayed with sad, slow secrets in the breeze.
The sandbox, ruled by weeds, lay cold and still,
Its castles crumbled back to sand.
A rusty slide, forlorn, stood lost in time,
While colors faded like forgotten smiles.

And on a bench beside the empty scene,
A grandma sat, her eyes adrift in dreams
Her gaze was fixed upon the swings' slow arc,
As if to summon spirits of the past—
The shadows of her youth and children's songs,
Still swinging somewhere softly in her heart.

Old Reliable

BY BRANDON CURRY '25

Thine Fragile Horizon

BY LUKE SETTLER '27

Mine azure eyes surveyeth thine torrid landscape,
Behind which, a melancholic requiem deftly synchronizes.
Thine noxious and acrid gusts of hostility,
Burneth mine baleful lungs.

Where had our impassivity gotten us?
Our infallible nation, layeth in tempest ruins.
Thy innocuous assumptions piloted our unforeseen demise,
Yet by what avenue could hath thou walked to obviate it?

Beneath all, layeth mine monotone fluctuation of emotions.
Mine tortuous expressions, betrayeth mine own stolid persona.
Despite mine perspicuous countenance of disposition,
I leaveth here with an assailable tenacity.

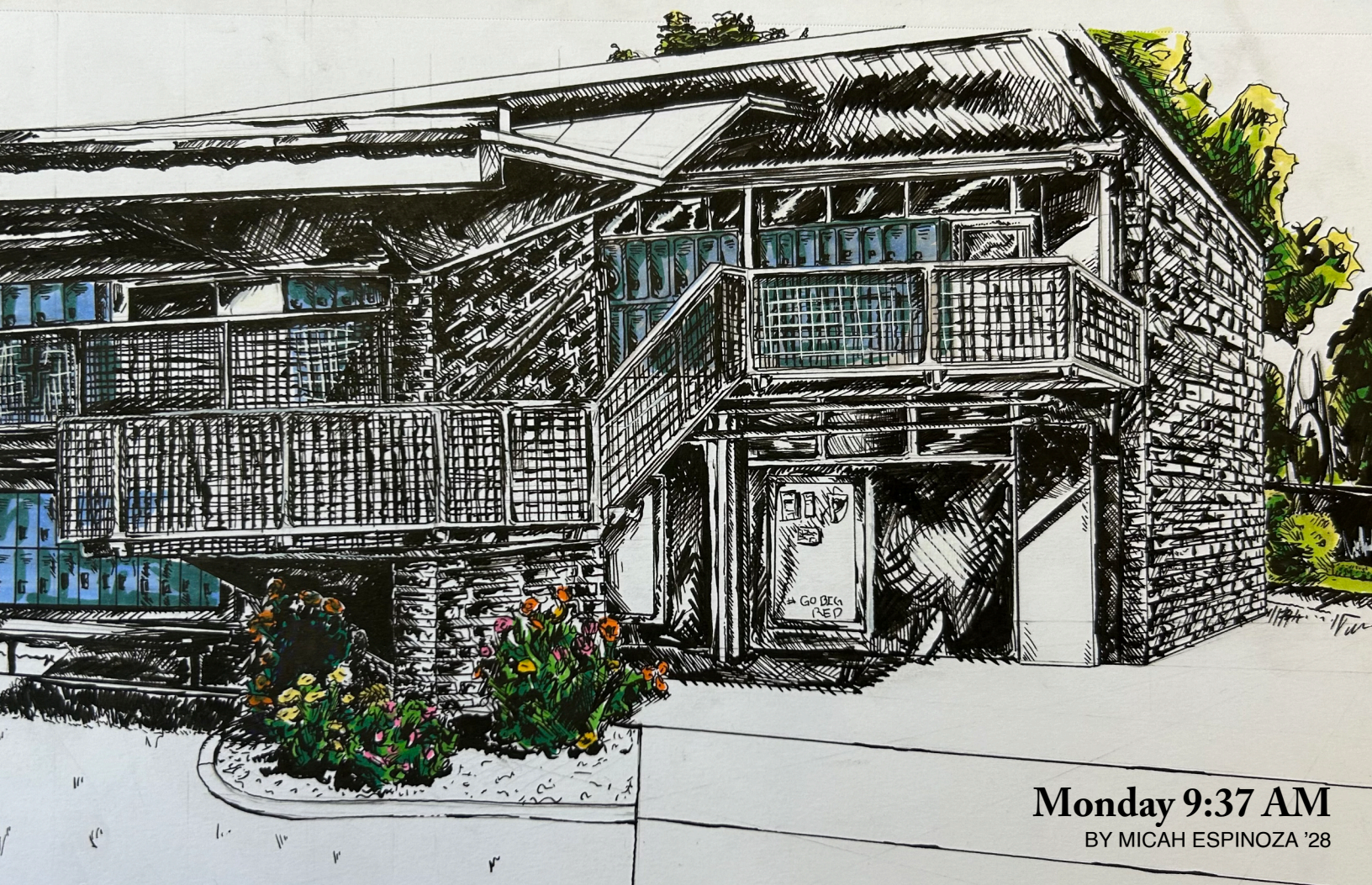


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Big Boy Out West

BY MICHAEL MAHNKE '27



Monday 9:37 AM
BY MICAH ESPINOZA '28



A New City
BY ANTHONY DOAN '26

Mortuary

BY CIARAN STOUT '27

When remembering Officer Silas Gray, many would picture him as someone helping them with their paperwork or paying for their lunch, and it was that personality that made people question why he would choose to work on death row. He could often be seen in his quarters, reading some book on psychology or writing inmates' traits in his pristine blue notebook. He almost never interacted with the prisoners physically until their time came, only spending his time looking at them through a camera before then. Everyone would always wonder why he observed them so meticulously but desperately tried to stay away from them at the same time. Gray's only job here was to talk to the convicts shortly before their execution. He deeply enjoyed this purpose, and no one could understand why. Why would such a cordial young man find so much enjoyment in talking with these people?

On a certain day that no one remembers anymore, the time had come for a specific criminal. It was Gray's policy to enter the room having no prior knowledge of what these criminals did. The room managed to remain at a temperature that would give people shivers but maintained an aura of warmth nonetheless. The only furniture adorning the scene was a table separating two regular chairs. It was a peaceful area, with the one light on the ceiling gently delivering its order to the two men facing one another now.

"Good morning. How are you feeling today?" Officer Gray asked in a blank tone.

The inmate scoffed and turned his head in opposition. His crossed arms acted as two thin stretches of rope binding his soul together.

"You can choose to sit here in silence until your time comes, I don't mind, but this is your last chance to talk to someone in your entire life. I imagine you don't want to waste it."

The convict glanced at the officer. After a few minutes of silence, he gave up.

"Fine. You win."

Their faces confronted each other, and Gray fully saw the

criminal. The hair on his chin that unsophisticated people would call a beard was out of control, short in some parts, longer in others. It stained his rigid face with disorder. His wrists that were underneath his clothes were scarred and had seen heavy damage. The orange jumpsuit he was wearing was in surprisingly superb condition, despite the numerous years of use.

"Why don't you start with how you're feeling right now?"

The inmate scoffed. His voice was harsh, like fingernails scraping against stone, but had an air of refinement hiding inside it.

"What's the point of this? Why are you trying to figure me out? Are you trying to take pity on this one poor soul in its final moments, or use my actions and traits for your research?"

"What's there to say? My story's just the same as anyone else's in this place. I considered myself a hero, and I think I still do. It's hard to tell anymore."

"I am only here as someone to listen to you."

"And you just happen to be writing down everything I say

and do? Do you think I'm blind?"

"Everything I write is purely for my own interests, I can assure you. If you would prefer my notebook not be here, then I will remove it."

"Thank you. Believe it or not, I would not not like to be the subject of government scrutiny." Silas set his notebook on the far side of the table, out of reach of both of them.

"Now, is there anything you would like to talk about? Perhaps you would like to regale me with your tragedy of such extreme woe?" Silas asked.

"What's there to say? My story's just the same as anyone else's in this place. I considered myself a hero, and I think I still do. It's hard to tell anymore. Now I'm being put down, and I don't think I've done anything wrong."

Silas leaned forward, engaging more with this person, as if silently interrogating him.

"Tell me *officer*, is this world truly equal?"

"If you're trying to make excuses then—"



"I would say that nothing on this earth will ever be equal. But I also think that it must maintain a guise of equality in order to prevent complete anarchy and destruction. Don't you agree?"

Silas paused before responding, contemplating his counter.

"I just want to know; why do we fail so miserably?"

"I have given justice to the wretches of this world, the ones that others have chosen to ignore," the man spoke, his voice growing colder and more intense as he straightened in his chair. "Do people like you even have the comprehensive ability to know what it means to be someone like me? Someone that was never perfect, never respected? I doubt you could ever understand it. You think of yourselves as omniscient, perfect beings, when you know nothing. You think you can do what's right, when you can't. You think you help and save lives, when you don't. My life has been a tapestry of blunders and shattered souls, yet I take pride in my work."

"And of course, you decided if these people were worth

killing or sparing based on your own mindset and ideals?"

"Is that so wrong?" The man responded quickly, detracting from the effect of the rhetorical question.

Silas was slightly taken aback by this response, and so found himself being drawn towards the man's eyes, which had been fixed on him for a short while. Inside these eyes was a glimpse of what seemed to be a younger face, not guilty, but not innocent either. Silas saw no end of horrors in those eyes, and something there interested him. He slowly leaned back, regaining his composure.

"Why are you proud of it?" Silas asked. The man scoffed at the question.

"I think that's pretty obvious. They deserved it. They were aware of the path they had tread, and I merely collected the debts they owed. I ended countless lives, but I promise you none of them were human."

"And what gave you the right to do that? You based your actions on your own beliefs." Silas's voice started shaking slightly, before returning to a comforting tone.



In The Morning

BY COLE ARNOLD '25

"I couldn't let them hurt so many innocent families and people."

"What about their families? You hurt them."

"They understood the judgment that I passed."

Silas felt himself engaging more in this conversation than any others before it. He didn't quite know why. So many others had told him their tales before, and he never spared a second thought. He became aware of a strange doubt in his own words he had thought out so meticulously. He started stammering in his speech; no words could leave his mouth. The buzzer indicating that the time was up sounded, and both men remained unfazed by it.

"Who are you?" Silas asked desperately, not wanting to lose the opportunity.

He told him his name, before the guard walked in and took him away. He smiled at Silas as he was dragged out.

Silas Gray, the police officer, considered the man's view. He sat silently for a short amount of time as he pondered. The man's words hung in the air throughout the room; Silas shook from the freezing cold of the lifeless area in which he sat. He could feel these icy pangs of regret stabbing him as he sat upon his plastic chair. The light flickered above him like a dying firefly, trying to survive, but to no avail. He could feel the walls closing in and suppressing his being from every side. He looked in shame towards the notebook he set aside, feeling so distant.

"I'm sorry," he said to the empty area around him.

Late that night, in his slumber, Gray's mind wandered out of his reach. He was walking along a dilapidated stone bridge as he scribbled down his wandering thoughts. As he observed the area around him, he realized he was in a world he no longer knew. Just out of sight, he saw a sign indicating where he was, before his gaze was directed towards a faceless being in front of him. They stopped and faced each other, and the flowing waves under Gray's feet were engulfed in dark flames. A smile crept across what would have been the figure's face as it melted into the sidewalk crack, and Gray pondered what this was before he realized he had thrown his notes into the fire, and entered battle with the being in Hell.

Officer Gray's body was found two days after this event, just south of K-92 in the Missouri River.

Light from the Heavens

BY TEDDY RIOS '26



Fallen Brother

BY PABLO ROMO '27





To Seniors

BY LOGAN NGUYEN '25

For what do you work?
As children play
And the sun shines
You have yolked yourself.
Whipping your own back
Plowing barren fields.
And if it comes to nothing
What will you do?

Fighting On

BY GEORGE TZITZIKAS '25

Running out of Time

BY SAMUEL POWELL '27

Hickory dickory dock!
There's no more time on the clock!
He got up late
With no time on his plate
He has to finish his work on the spot!
His face was flushed
As he rushed and rushed
He glued things down
As he ran round and round.
His parents helped
They cut out the felt,
But he already knew
That time doesn't stop.
With little time left,
He screamed in treble clef,
And finished his project
With only 2 minutes left



On Your Mark

BY JACK ORCUTT '25



Take Care

BY MITCHELL SULLIVAN '25



Guide

BY LOGAN NGUYEN '25

Dogs know how to read the wind
With each fleeting waft they find
A memory of the earth
Is bestowed to those who smell

Man is now illiterate
Nature is a foreign script
And when the earth tries to speak
He learns how to plug his nose

Why must man now sanitize
Every aspect of our lives
Chlorine sprays and concrete fills
Have stranded man in the world

The smell of damp clouds means rain
Can you smell the scent of change?
If your nose is turned away
In indignation of it all

I heard that there is a path
To regain our long lost strength
Let olfaction lead the soul
Listen to the earth once more



Terra Nova

BY JUSTIN PAREDES '25

Below The Sea, Above The Stars

BY CADEN KELLY '25

Life rushes past, each moment dissolving like salt in a torrent. There's an ache in me, a quiet tremor beneath the surface, as days pile up and topple like some intricate house of cards, a little too delicate to bear the weight of my hesitation. Everything around me feels unstoppable—a blur of headlights and faded faces that slip away before I can memorize them, like trying to catch raindrops only to find the wet trails vanishing into the earth. The world is restless, moving too fast for me to keep up.

I'm walking beneath the pale glow of streetlights, each one a fleeting flare against the dark. They pass over me in steady intervals, casting brief, golden halos before fading into shadows, like memories slipping away before I can hold on. I try to soak up their light, the warmth of each glow brushing against my skin, but they're gone as quickly as they appear, leaving only traces of themselves, small ghosts hovering at the edge of my mind. I run towards these lights, but I can't keep pace, as they flash by too fast for me to truly see.

I reach out, wishing I could slow down, capture just one, let it last. But time keeps tugging at me, pulling me forward, as more streetlights flicker past. Each light slips into the dark, and the farther I walk, the dimmer they grow in my memory. And just like the days and the faces and the dreams I thought I'd hold forever, they vanish, leaving me to chase after their fading glow.

As the rain falls like shattered shards of glass from the sky, I bleed like watercolors and drunken pastels down the causeway, a blur swept forward into the night. I know I'll keep moving, always reaching for the next light, the next day, even as they blur into each other, lost in the rush. I'm caught further in the water, a mess of reds and purples mixing into the calm, blue. I am color slipping away, a soft stain carried off into the rush of time, each drop a shade of what I thought I could become.

Overhead, the clouds gather like waves, a sky as heavy and deep as the sea. Beneath it, I feel adrift, as though I am lost in an ocean without edges, with stars like fragments of sunken constellations reflecting through a surface I'll never reach. Days float past just out of reach, fading as quickly as I catch a glimpse of them. I feel like I'm walking on the seabed, watching the sky ripple far above, slipping away like water through my fingers.

And for a moment there is peace. A whisper in the air—a promise of something new, something that should feel like a beginning, but instead feels like the end. *This is gonna be the best day*, I tell myself, trying to breathe life into the words. A celebration of an ending, of all the moments slipping from my grasp, of all the colors I am, vanishing into the void.



Beach Bird

BY DRAKE STAUFFER '27



The Storm

BURGMULLER ETUDE OP.109 NO.13

BY JONAH LANDRY '28



Lonely Blues

BY TYLER REYNOLDS '27



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