



TORRENT

Literati 2020

Volume 31

Our Lady of Lourdes Academy

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When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what the storm is all about.

- Haruki Murakami

Dear Reader.

We have all experienced the thrilling danger of a storm coming to pass; the exhilarating flashes of lightning, the booming shrieks of thunder, the deafening rhythm of raindrops. What many of us fail to notice, however, is the way the sky drains itself of color and the small glimmers of light who manage to peek through the surface mourn its losses.

We forget to appreciate the euphoria of sun showers and the way that, once the storm has cleared its path, there is a delicate sensitivity to beauty which had once been forgotten amidst the chaotic storm.

The way we experience emotion and channel it into art is much like the process of a storm forming, releasing, and dissipating. In the cumulus stage, clouds begin to form and fill with moisture until they become too heavy and allow rainwater to slip away, slowly but surely. Similar to this, our emotions fester and build up until they cannot help but spill over and come to life in a passionate eruption of creativity. Sometimes, we may not even notice that they are there until the raindrops dew our skin and we are deafened by the booming of thunder in our hearts.

In the mature stage, the storm

is at its peak and finally makes landfall; it ensures that everyone and everything are affected by its existence. This mirrors the way we channel this passion, creativity, and mania into a piece of art which we want to be seen and felt by others. We want the beauty of our pieces to trickle down like rainwater, and their messages to be heard like echoing thunder.

Eventually, once we have let the last droplet of emotion fall, the storm clears and the horizons show signs of relenting. The dissipating stage of a storm is when, one by one, the clouds clear and the earth returns to normal. This is when, having released what once burdened us, we find closure and peace in the possibility of a new beginning.

As artists, we learn to channel this emotion and use it to fuel the pieces we bring to life; creativity is a storm, an accumulation of emotion and experience thrust into words on a paper or brush strokes on a canvas. In the pages of this book, you will discover a thunderstorm brought to life.

The following divisions categorize student work by subject matter and work process, evoking the respective qualities in each stage of cumulus, mature, and dissipating.

Table of Contents

Cumulus

- 4 **Storm** Isabella Lista, Class of 2021
- 8 **Releasing Frustration** Erica Hengartner, Class of 2021
- 9 **Thought #817** Arianna Grillo, Class of 2021
- 10 **Letter to my Daughter** Sophia Pargas, Class of 2020
- 11 **Familial Roots** Nicole Corrales, Class of 2020
- 12 **Apollo** Olivia Brouwer, Class of 2022
- 13 **Aqcuainted with the Day** Alex del Canal, Class of 2020
- 14 **What is Wrong With Me?** Bianca Estevez, Class of 2022
- 15 **Piercing Judgements** Veronica Vilato, Class of 2021
- 16 **Silent Desparation** Isabella Alamo, Class of 2021
- 17 **The First Rainy Day in Quarantine** Vanessa Arguello, Class of 2020
- 18 **The Power of Perserverance** Samantha Damas, Class of 2020
- 19 **Facets** Juliette Borges, Class of 2020
- 20 **An Artist Cries** Carolina de la Vega, Class of 2022
- 21 **Frailty and Faults of Facial Features** Veronica Vilato, Class of 2021
- 22 **Butterflies, Beanies, Boys?** Olivia Brouwer, Class of 2022
- 23 **Is This It?** Carolina de la Vega, Class of 2022
- 24 **Insert Your Title Here** Erica Hengartner, Class of 2021
- 25 **Shattered** Daniella Zumpano, Class of 2020
- 26 **View from the Other Side** Isabella Jimenez, Class of 2021
- 27 **Patria** Nicole Torres, Class of 2020

Storm

Isabella Lista, Class of 2021

Mature

- 30 **Victim Impact Statement** Carolina Rodriguez, Class of 2021
31 **Alone** Natalie Cerra, Class of 2020
32 **Partition** Sofia Valderrama, Class of 2021
33 **Water** Andrea Lopez, Class of 2020
34 **My Leap of Faith** Vivian Quevedo, Class of 2021
35 **Electric Waters** Stephania Lopez, Class of 2022
36 **Grasping Death** Gabriella Sanchez, Class of 2020
37 **12 Seconds** Amanda Rodriguez, Class of 2023
38 **Pretty Little Thing** Elise Frias, Class of 2021
39 **Exume** Isabella Solorzano, Class of 2020
40 **Look Within** Isabella Alamo, Class of 2021
41 **Anxiety** Alexy Monsalve, Class of 2020
42 **The Expedition** Emily Salado, Class of 2020
43 **Chinami** Isabelle Solorzano, Class of 2020
44 **Unapologetically Myself** Lena Kaskavalciyan, Class of 2020
45 **Lo Que Siento** Emilie Gonzalez, Class of 2022
46 **Caught My Eye** Gabriella Perez, Class of 2020
47 **I Think I'm In Love With You** Mia Aviles, Class of 2022
48--9 **Innter Turmoil** Daniella Zumpano, Class of 2020

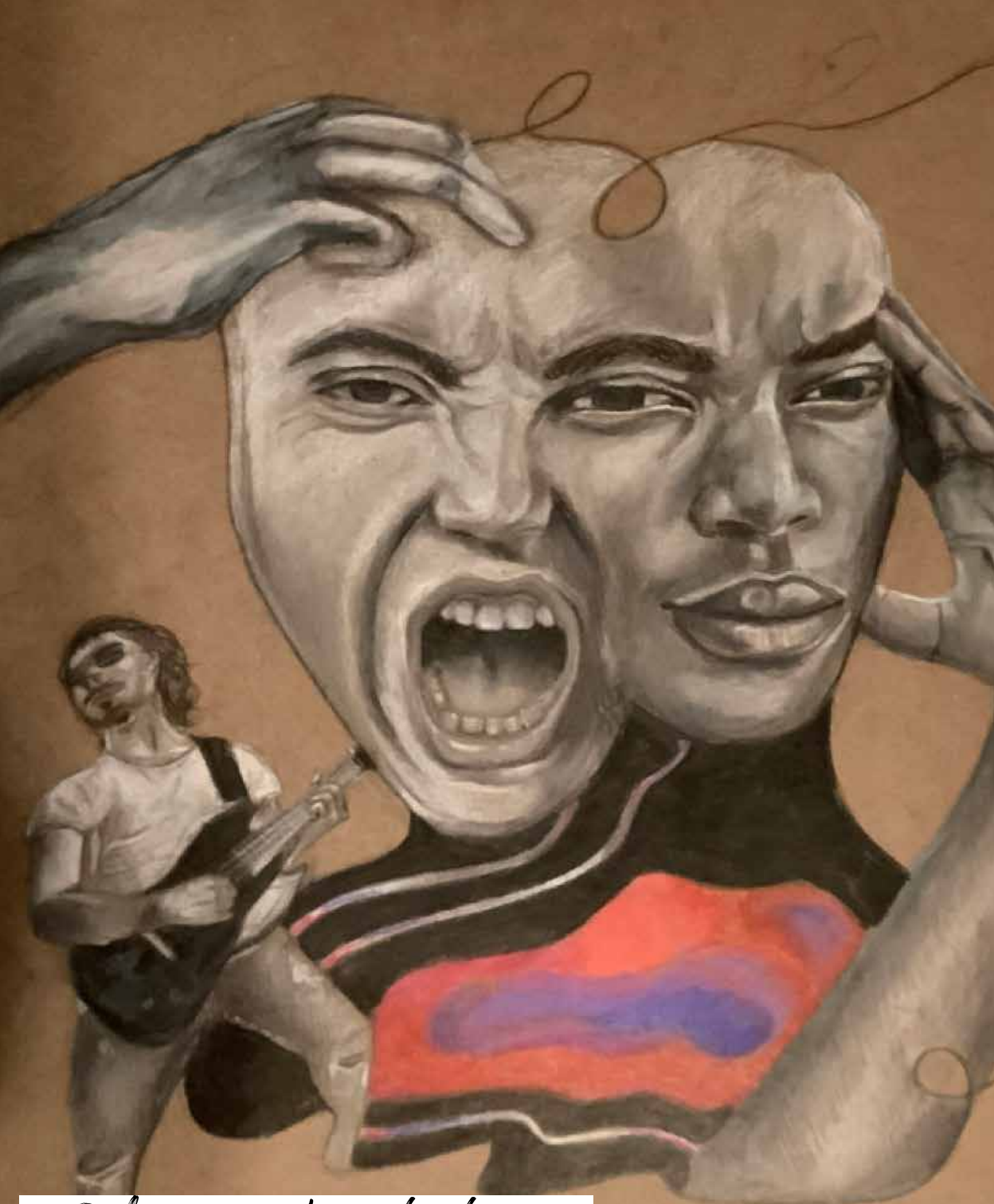
Dissipating

- 52 **Starry Eyed** Carolina Lizama, Class of 2021
53 **Star Stricken Wrists** Alexandra Gonzalez, Class of 2021
54 **Photographs** Sofia Valderrama, Class of 2021
55 **Glimmering** Mariana Puga, Class of 2022
56 **Shattered Reflection** Sophia Guimaraes, Class of 2020
57 **Embrace the Human in You** Gabriella Chachin, Class of 2022
58 **Home** Cecilia Cardenas, Class of 2021
59 **The Mountain in Mindo** Carina Pavon, Class of 2020
60 **Eye to Eye** Nicole Corrales, Class of 2020
61 **Precious Hearts** Valentina Castro, Class of 2021
62 **The Great Race** Alexa Lopez, Class of 2020
63 **Path Less Travelled** Vanessa Sanchez, Class of 2020
64 **Lingering** Carolina Lizama, Class of 2020
65 **Still Burns** Ariana Nunez, Class of 2021
66 **Love Everyone Deeply** Gabriela Spizale, Class of 2020
67 **Touch of Heaven** Carolina Lizama, Class of 2021
68 **The White Light** Julianna Rose, Class of 2020
69 **Silver Lining** Andrea Lopez, Class of 2020

Cumulus:

1. *the stage in which the clouds form and condense as they are filled with moisture; the storm begins to develop*

2. *a buildup of emotion; abstract, premature, ominous*



Releasing Frustration

Erica Hengartner, Class of 2021

Thought #817

*Arianna Grillo
Class of 2021*

How do I say something that can't be put into words
What can I say without sounding absurd
I am caught in between the fork in the road
I feel a smile and I feel a frown
I feel full and I feel empty
I'm not quite up but I'm not quite down
So I just won't say anything as you might think I am insane
You won't understand
I just can't explain

A Letter To My Daughter

Sophia Pargas
Class of 2020

To My Story,

Just a few short weeks ago, my psychology teacher challenged us to choose one lyric which describes our character entirely, a daunting task which I decided I would approach with the utmost of care and delicacy. After much consideration and what seemed like millions of songs later, I stumbled upon a lyric which whispered much more than just a catchy tune into the tattered ear buds which adorned my head.

In just an instant, this one lyric became not just an answer to a homework assignment, but my own personal mantra: "And when my time is up, have I done enough? Will they tell my story?" I hope that as you read this letter, you will know it was written by a mother who dedicated her life to making sure she created not just a life worth living, but a story worth telling.

Growing up, my parents have instilled in me a passion for life which I believe I have learned not by their words, but by their actions. They have taught me to be vulnerable in times of heartache, outspoken in times of injustice, and relentless in times of importance. My biggest hope for myself is that I can find a way to instill in you the same. I hope that the same fire which burns my soul and warms my heart fills you to your capacity.

As I write this letter to you, I am filled with hope. I am filled with passion, and vulnerability, and emotion, and determination to create a life which I will one day be proud to pass onto you. Right now, everything is bright. I have found my own passions and I live everyday in pursuit of them. You see, passion is not something which is pinned down and kept in a back

pocket of some old pair of blue jeans. Passion is an adventure: a will to run a little faster and speak a little louder and live a little better.

I hope you find passions which are unrelenting. I hope they become your reason to wake up every morning, and that they keep you up every night, and that they fill your dreams until you can make them a reality which you get to live every day. I hope that you find the thing which stirs in you an unwillingness to sit still, and that you never stop moving in the direction of where your passion lies.

By the time you will be reading this, I hope to be able to tell you stories of an extraordinary life lived to the fullest: I hope I have loved fearlessly, learned constantly, and challenged myself daily. As I sit here and write this now, a seventeen year old girl with big dreams and an extraordinary drive to achieve them, I hope I will never let the fiery glow of the passions which light up my life dwindle. Regardless of where I am or what I have achieved until the time that I am lucky enough to have had a daughter, I hope, more than anything, that you will be courageous enough to do the same.

You see, the measure of a great life is not how many people remember your name. It is not how many people shook your hand or how many bowed at your feet. The measure of a good life is what you've done to make it an even better one. Create something which will outlive you. Whatever I have done and wherever I have been, you are the story I hope people will remember of me one day. Be sure you make it one worth telling.

The Author.

Familial Roots

Nicole Corrales
Class of 2020



Cumulus | 11



Apollo

Olivia Brouwer, Class of 2022

Acquainted with the Day

Alexandra del Cañal
Class of 2020

I have been one acquainted with the day.
I have been blinded by the blazing sun.
I have longed to rest, to fade into gray
But still learned to outlast, outshine, outrun.

I have endured the endless desert chase
And dragged my feet over the burning sand.
I have scrambled, scurried in the rat race
In an attempt to find the promised land.

But the halcyon Darkness knows my name.
Her rumbling murmurs soothe my fevered mind
Her silken shadows surround my dull flame.
She beckons me forward. Gentle. Soft. Kind.

In some time I will follow her away.
I have been one acquainted with the day.

What Is Wrong With Me?

Bianca Estevez
Class of 2021

"STOP, it feels like needles," my four year old self shouted as my grandmother placed a blanket over me. My two bedroom Miami Beach apartment was filled with family members that I had never seen before trying to figure out what was wrong, and not even my grandmother who's "always right" could figure it out. It had been ten days after drinking the medicine serum sickness for the first time, after having an ear infection. The pain had gotten so unbearable that I was unable to sit on the toilet to go to the bathroom. My mom had to hold me over the sink as if I was a newborn child getting potty trained for the first time. Finally, my parents did what any parents would do for their four year old child and rushed me to Miami Children's Hospital.

After being at the hospital for two days they diagnosed me with a simple rash. I was given "odorless cream" that clogged my nostrils every time I had to apply it. After clogging my nostrils for three days the cream did nothing for the pain in my body. It had seemed as if they had misdiagnosed me with a rash. My mom with worry on her face decided to call my pediatrician to see if he had any other opinions. My pediatrician said to go back to the hospital and to not leave until the pain went away. This time the drive to the hospital was unforgettable. The thirty minute drive from Miami Beach to South Miami felt as if I was driving to the other side of the world. My body laid diagonally along the cold seats of my moms silver Toyota Sequoia. Finally, after the "thirty minute" drive we finally arrived to the hospital for the second time.

As my father carried me into the hospital with tears dripping down my face

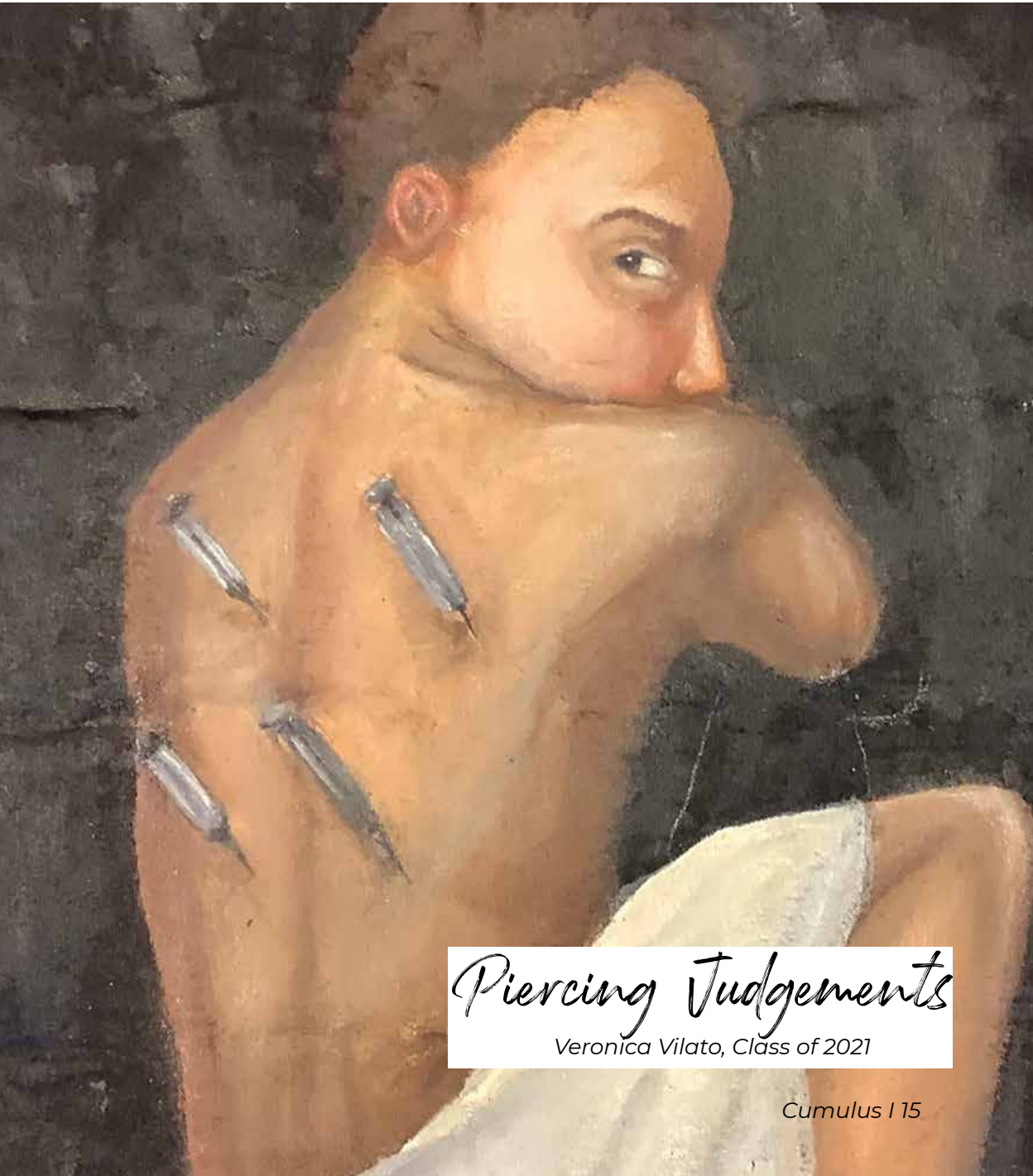
all I focused on was the fact that I had to get an IV again. As the IV pierced my skin my face turned pale as a ghost. After two days filled with running tests the doctors figured out that my body was reacting to a certain medication. The only issue with the diagnosis was that they knew that the reaction was not the medication itself but a medicine that was mixed in to create it. The constant smell of hand sanitizer from the million doctors that walked in haunted my nostrils just as much as the cream did.

The third day of being at the hospital was the worst of them all. I was given steroids for the first time and to top it all off it was my older brothers 7th birthday party. My parents had to continuously swap from the hospital to his party. In the two minute gap of no parents in my room it allowed me to let my held back tears flow. I would not allow myself to cry in front of my parents because I knew if they saw me like this they wouldn't appreciate my brothers birthday. When the party ended and the sun had set it was an internal relief but physically the pain had just begun.

An effect that helped narrow down the possibilities of what I had was the fact that my symptoms would only start when the sun went down. Also, I was not able to lift my dominant right hand. These symptoms helped conclude that I was having an allergic reaction to the medicine penicillin. It was so difficult for the doctors to diagnose me because the reaction to penicillin should go to the individuals throat not body. I was so fortunate because if the reaction would've gone to my throat the odds would've been against me. This whole process made not

only me but my family realize that if you feel something wrong don't stay quiet. Even if you feel embarrassed of what you feel, tell someone because you never know what will happen. My parents didn't give up on me because I knew something

was wrong and I spoke up for myself. No matter my size or age my parents trusted my gut feeling that something wasn't right. Speaking up for yourself when you know something's wrong can save your life.



Piercing Judgements

Veronica Vilato, Class of 2021



Silent Desperation

*Isabella Alamo
Class of 2021*

The First Rainy Day in Quarantine

Vanessa Arguello
Class of 2020

Let the silence beat its quiet drum as the rain batters your roof and dribbles down your window.

Let the empty sail of excitement rest in the absence of the winds of a sure future.

Let the chaos that seems to parade through our world today run through you like the droplets that trace down the panes of glass outside your home, quickly and in random directions.

Just remember this, the world has always been chaos and we have always lived through it.

Do not allow this shaking of normalcy to make you see our lives as just a byproduct of entropy.

The soft pitter-patter of tear drops from a grey sky, watch them and be calmed by them.

For there must be storms and black nights for sun kissed tree limbs and dew soaked grass blades to grow and become.

The Power of Perseverance

Samantha Damas
Class of 2020

“We can do anything we want to do if we stick to it long enough”
-Helen Keller.

I started my letter to you with this quote to show the importance of perseverance. To persevere is to persist in anything undertaken; maintain a purpose in spite of difficulty, obstacles, or discouragement; continue steadfastly.

This idea of perseverance has been a lesson my own mother has told me since I was young, so I will continue the legacy by giving you this advice.

Although it may be cliché to tell you hard work pays off, I am here to tell you that sometimes it does not but it is crucial to keep going.

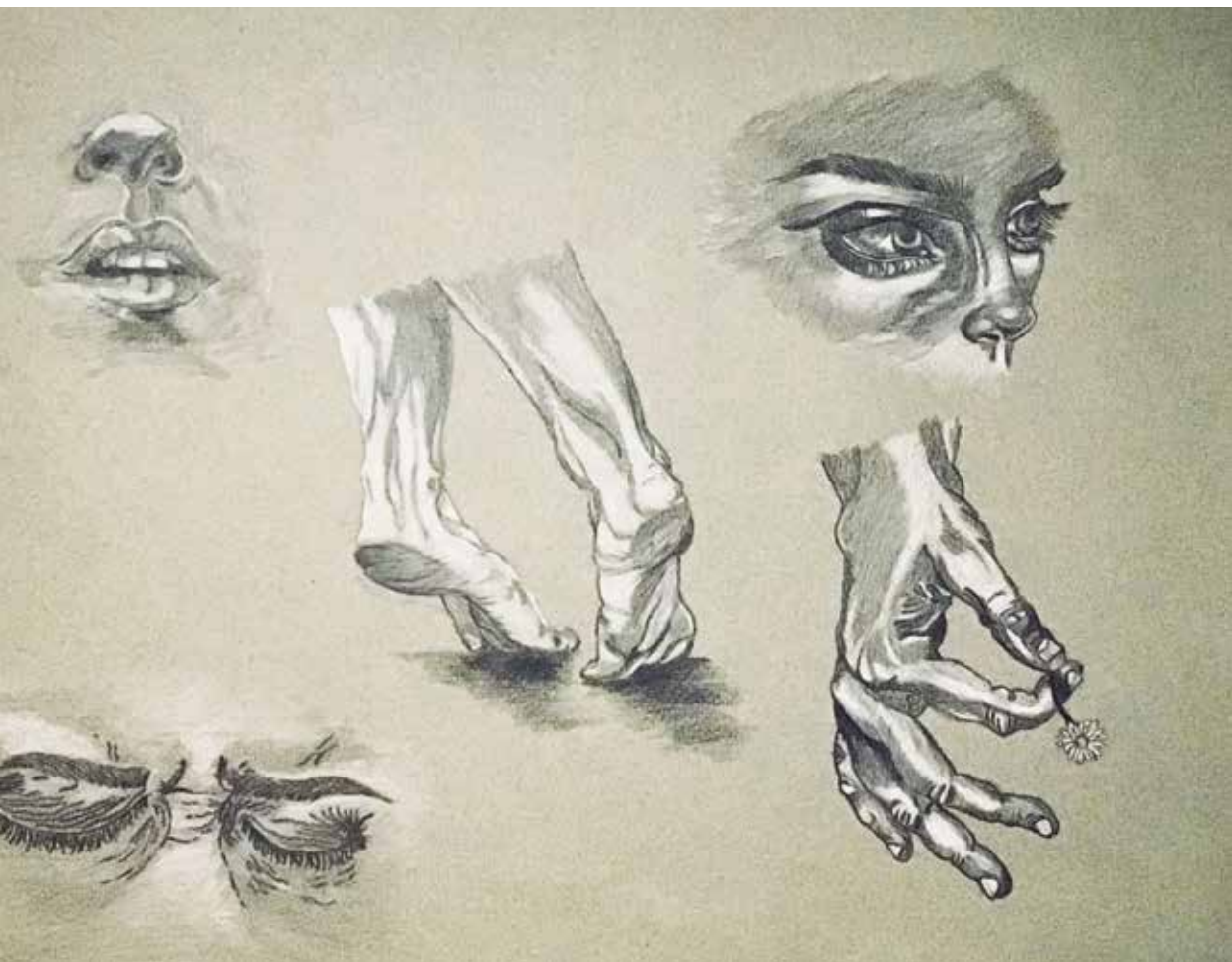
Unfortunately, there are moments in our life where we put in a great deal of effort and we are not rewarded with the outcome we want and deserve. In the face of this disappointment, it is important to stay humble and motivated to achieve that goal.

When I was in middle school, dancing 24 hours a week, I would practice almost every day to get this one move called a back leg grab to perfect my solo. Dance was my passion and was an escape from any stress I had in my life. Once I was dancing on stage, and it was time to do the

back leg grab I had been working on for months, I fell out of it. I was in shock and discouraged to continue the solo. I didn't receive the placement I wanted, which made me insecure and unmotivated.

My mom suddenly realized my sadness and told me to continue practicing to look like the famous dancer, Misty Copeland. I continued to practice the dance move with a pessimistic attitude like a child refusing to eat vegetables, but willing to do so to accomplish my goal. The next competition came around and I performed my solo again, hitting every move, including the back leg grab. I was elated and felt my love of dance speaking to me once again. I placed first and learned to persevere no matter what obstacle comes in my way.

One thing I would like you to take from this letter is how it takes perseverance to accomplish your dreams. Even when all else fails, I want you to get right back up and conquer what you deserve. I want you to realize that you will find your purpose in life. I want you to be happy and have dignity. First and foremost, I want you to persevere in everything you want to achieve, because in the end, it will be worth it.



Facets

Juliette Borges
Class of 2020

An Artist Cries

Carolina de la Vega
Class of 2022

Sparkling dresses and champagne
2020. Hear it roar.
Hopes and dreams pour out. The cup is empty.
It will crash. It is evil.
It crashed before.
Elegance. Expression. Emptiness.
Need it to fill our void.
An artist cries.
Tears are acrylic. Oil. Watercolor.
They are made beautiful.
They speak the truth.
They fill the void.
It cannot crash. It is pure.
Survives the fall.
Leads us home.
An artist cries. They cannot see it.
Imperfect in its eyes.
And still they crash.
Can't see their tears as water.



Frailty and Faults of Facial Features

Veronica Vilato, Class of 2021





Butterflies. Beanies. Boys?

Olivia Brouwer, Class of 2022



Is This It?

*Carolina de la Vega
Class of 2022*

Is all we have some high-heeled shoes?
And social cues that they abuse?
You read the news
You know the clues
They call us shrews
It's pink not blue
Is all we have the few?

And so we send a battle cry
Through tear-stained eyes and wonder why
The world it lies
Won't let us fly
Best laid plans do go awry
But let's just make an apple pie
Is justice finally nigh?

No, this is not the end
We will ascend and change the trend
Protect our friends
And make amends
Too much time we spend
Too much energy we expend
For it to not be around the bend
This is not it.

Insert Your Title Here

Erica Hengartner
Class of 2021

Can you imagine a world where everything is the same
Except one person who has a different name
Can you imagine this one person could make a different place
Could give the universe as we know it an entirely different face

I think that this world exists and another as well
Where instead of walking away from love, you fell
See I have a notion, an idea, a dream
That perhaps another universe exists through a screen

I think if I reach out far enough I can stick my hand right through
To a place where I am nearly me and where you are nearly you
But one choice, one decision, or one little word
Has changed the place we live in and multiplied it by a second, a third

I think there are infinite places; universes somewhat like own
Some far, far different, some almost like a clone
I think these places contain the choices we did or didn't make
Each time another one of us has a different path to take

I heard about the butterfly effect and I wonder if it only works on time
Or if Perhaps a flap of wings could create a universe parallel to mine
And I wonder, if in these endless possibilities there is one too
Where I am reading this same poem written by you



Shattered

Daniella Zumpano
Class of 2020

Cumulus | 25



View from the Other Side

Isabella Jimenez, Class of 2021



Patria

*Nicole Torres
Class of 2020*

Hearing the blare of car horns
And protests on the street
The place they're shouting for
Calls me, sounding sweet
And sounding too familiar
Though 300 miles away
Roots detached and ripped
Remaining memories of older days
I miss a sea breeze I've yet to inhale
And now-rusted homes I've never entered
I miss narrow streets unexplored
And the sound of trumpets unheard
Sans these circumstances of unrest,
I miss the person that maybe I could be
If we were all just farther south
But all we have are scorched family trees

Mature:

1. *the cumulus clouds become too heavy and raindrops are released; the storm makes landfall*

2. *a release of passion and creativity; prominent, inevitable, thunderous*

Victim Impact Statement

Carolina Rodriguez
Class of 2021

“Her facts don’t line up, she’s practically an alcoholic...”
Blame hurled towards the plaintiff table a hundred times.
In person and in writing,
inconsiderate, merciless, cruel.
Waiting to strike her in the chest.
A fatal blow.

“Do better! This is just what happens.”
The crime is vulnerability when assault is guaranteed.
Freshly launched criticism infecting the air.

Brandish these damaging catapults and never consider.
She’s told herself this before, a thousand times.
Those who repeat are infinitesimal.
A single wave to all the oceans.
She already knows.
She’s told herself this before, a million times.

The aid in justifying what she has already accepted is not deserved.
Who is innocent until proven guilty?
Victim or perpetrator?
Decide before casting your stones,
Inhabiting thrones of moral superiority.



Alone

Natalie Cerra, Class of 2020

Mature | 31



Partition

Sofia Valderrama, Class of 2021



Water

*Andrea Lopez
Class of 2020*

Let the waves lap along the shore
Let the waves hop-scotch one over another
Let the sea foam float idly, face-up and sun bathing
The water plays its happy little tune
The water plays its haunting little tune
The water is deep and secret storing
And I fear what lies underneath the waves

My Leap of Faith

Vivian Quevedo
Class of 2021

It had been ten days into my trip, and as each day passed the same terrorizing thought crossed my mind. I honestly did not know if I was going to leap off a six hundred foot steep waterfall, and let my little lonesome body swing. This swing is the gorge swing, located in Victoria Falls... the largest fall in the world.

The moment I arrived to Victoria Falls I had the opportunity to take in an amazing sight. The waterfall seemed as if it went on forever. I heard the river water trickle down rocks, then splash from hundreds of feet above. The closer I got to the edge, the more I felt a mist of fresh water hit my face. I also heard my mom screaming with worry, "Get away from the edge it's not safe!"

As my vacation group and I walked around the area, the thought of me doing the swing or not consumed me. The time came closer and closer to swing. My group had finished touring around the fall. Everyone was lined up behind the front desk getting ready to sign up for the gorge swing. A pile of papers was handed to each family. They consisted of payments, questions, and wavers galore. It was time to make a decision.

This was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Was I going to say yes? My mind was racing. I felt like I was taking an exam, I had to pick an answer, and time was running out. I then said three words that changed my life, "I'll do it." My parents were filling out the paperwork, while I had a mini panic attack. Once the paperwork and my panic attack were done, I was on my way to the launching pad.

I had a strenuous hike up a cliff to get there. Many rocks and ditches made

it difficult for me to climb to the top. I stumbled multiple times on my way up. Each time I staggered I wondered why I was going to do the gorge swing.

Then, I reached the top of the cliff. I was nervous. What did I get myself into? I was not going to do it alone. I decided to go tied to my friend. This still did not make the situation more comforting. We watched people jump, and swing one by one.

They swung so far that their bodies seemed like a speck swaying across the water fall. Luckily, the rope had not snapped for anybody, so no one fell. As each person jumped, each screamed louder than the person before. It was soon my turn. I hesitantly stepped into the harness. The worker tied my friend and me together as I stared at the bottom of the cliff in fear.

The drop seemed to be gargantuan. The drop was so steep, it was difficult to see the bottom of it. It was our turn to free fall for four hundred feet, then swing across the world's largest fall with two hundred feet under us. There was no way to prepare me for this. The kind worker made us feel as safe as possible, then said words that made me feel sick. "Ready? Three, two, one," I leapt.

My eyes were closed shut, and I grasped the rope with all I had. I felt as if my heart went up to my throat. At that moment, I realized if my eyes were closed and I was so tense, then what was the point of doing the gorge swing? I opened my eyes, and loosened my grip. I felt free.

The experience was literally eye opening. I was swinging and enjoying it. The wind rushed through my hair. The

view I was able to gaze upon was unreal. The rocks and water looked like they were a painting. The fall surrounded me, and I was in awe. During this moment I felt as if life was in slow motion.

Jumping was really worth it, and I would do it again in a heartbeat. A smile appeared on my face from ear to ear. I was ecstatic that I had done the gorge swing. I

was extremely hesitant before I leapt, but something in me made me do it.

Ultimately, I took pleasure in my experience. I can truly say the gorge swing was the most exciting and thrilling thing I have ever done. I learned not to let worries take over my life, and obstacles may not be as difficult to conquer as they seem. All I needed to leap was a little bit of faith.



Electric Waters

Stephania Lopez, Class of 2022

Mature | 35



Grasping Death

Gabriella Sanchez, Class of 2020

12 Seconds

Amanda Rodriguez
Class of 2023

It's so cold here. How was I supposed to know that when outside, at night, aluminum can get so cold. The aching in my limbs are relieved as a sense of numbness sweeps over me. This is not at all what I had imagined, crashing would feel like.

I guess, I was expecting more of a continuous piercing feeling, One that would travel throughout my body, through every limb and bone, touching every artery and vessel I had ever known.

Not one that would indulge me, surround me, drown me,

In an excruciating sense of pain to only be relieved after what seemed centuries, which I assume is now, paralysis.

Under this 2,871 pound metal demon, I am held captive, in a jail I implicitly chose. I am unable to scream out to, who I assume is the officer, that I am alive, or at least still is at this moment. Her radio, a victim, to what the officer is describing, of what seems an unfortunate accident on the I-95. It is dark where I am, yet

I see a red filter, over what I see, I guess the blood is finally beginning to trickle down. Iron overwhelms my mouth, however soothing me once I realize that I can still sense pain.

I'm beginning to hear portions of what the officer is saying, either she has a stutter or I'm starting to lose oxygen in the one place I thought I was thinking straight, sadly I don't think she has a stammer.

I'm spacing out, as I sense the blood to space in, I'm not thinking straight, how, did I get myself in this position?

I didn't even do anything, I only picked up my phone in two seconds, read through her caption in four, looked up in five, and crashed in, one.

All the warnings where there, from my childhood where they played those stupid, safety videos, to my teenage years, when they told me to never drive distracted. But, I wasn't even distracted for so long...

...and yet it only took 12 seconds.

Pretty Little Thing

Elise Frias
Class of 2021

Pretty Little Thing
Look, right in their places,
Those pretty doll faces,
In doll houses where they "should stay".
Fair marionettes many ages and races,
Unheard, their voices at bay.
Our powerful men,
Both now and then,
Never let them come out and play.
Their poor little wives, keep wasting their lives,
Not a thing they're allowed to say.
But dollies, be strong.
Break free, move along.
You've done nothing wrong,
Sing boldly your song.
Stronger as one,
Wear blazers, not blouses.
No more looking through windows,
Of little pink houses.
'Cause our time is now,
So you'll hear us sing:
May society beware,
The Pretty Little Thing.





Exume

Isabella Solorzano, Class of 2020



Look Within

Isabella Alamo, Class of 2021

Anxiety

Alexy Monsalve
Class of 2020

As she began to walk across the hall
She thought she heard a heinous creature crawl
Behind the door, the noises getting louder
The thoughts of a monster begin to cloud her

She reluctantly starts to turn the knob
The fear is building up and makes her sob
She cracks it open, revealing the dark
The anxiety has nearly stopped her heart

She pictures a horrifying outcome
As she comforts herself with a loud hum
She finds the courage to turn on the light
Her eyes remaining closed because of fright

With hesitation she decided so
To open up her eyes though it caused woe
Expecting the barbarian to roar
There was never a thing behind the door

The monster was an art work of her mind
It was of an imaginary kind
And though there was no actual monster near,
She couldn't help but have a sense of fear

The Expedition

*Emily Salado
Class of 2020*

The view from the BASE of a mountain. 18 years old. The young adult's expedition into the unknown. The elder's dismissal into the secure realm. The once innocent child trembles of uncertainty. Calmness. Winds. Lights. Darkness. Paths. Lost. Outside forces tearing down self-esteem instead of building up dreams. Retraction. Interaction. Satisfaction. The view from the PEAK of a mountain.





Chinami

Isabelle Solorzano, Class of 2020

Unapologetically Myself

Lena Kaskavalciyan
Class of 2020

Hypothetically speaking, how could a child fail kindergarten? This question riddled my parents' brains for one full year. Kindergarten is all about learning numbers and letters and learning to put sounds and words together; however not only words, but names. More specifically, my own last name. At a whopping 13 letters long, Kaskavalciyan was nothing more than a mountain my five-year-old self was not equipped to climb.

After moving to the very Hispanic, Miami, Florida, from my very Armenian and conservative upbringing in Long Beach, California, we traded dolma and manta for pastelitos and croquetas.

When we lived in California, I was constantly surrounded by Armenians, not realizing how small the Armenian population was in the world. In my Armenian school and community, I didn't really stand out; however, in Miami, I very quickly realized just how shocking my last name really was. Not just to my teachers who had to call my name off a roster, but to myself, as well. For years, I told people, "You can just call me Kay". Kay became the three-letter, one-syllable, alias, my sister and I claimed for ourselves, in an attempt to normalize our last name for the sake of others. Even though on the surface I wanted to "Miami-fy" my last name, I relished in fearlessly showing people the most honest version of myself - my loud, opinionated, and daring self.

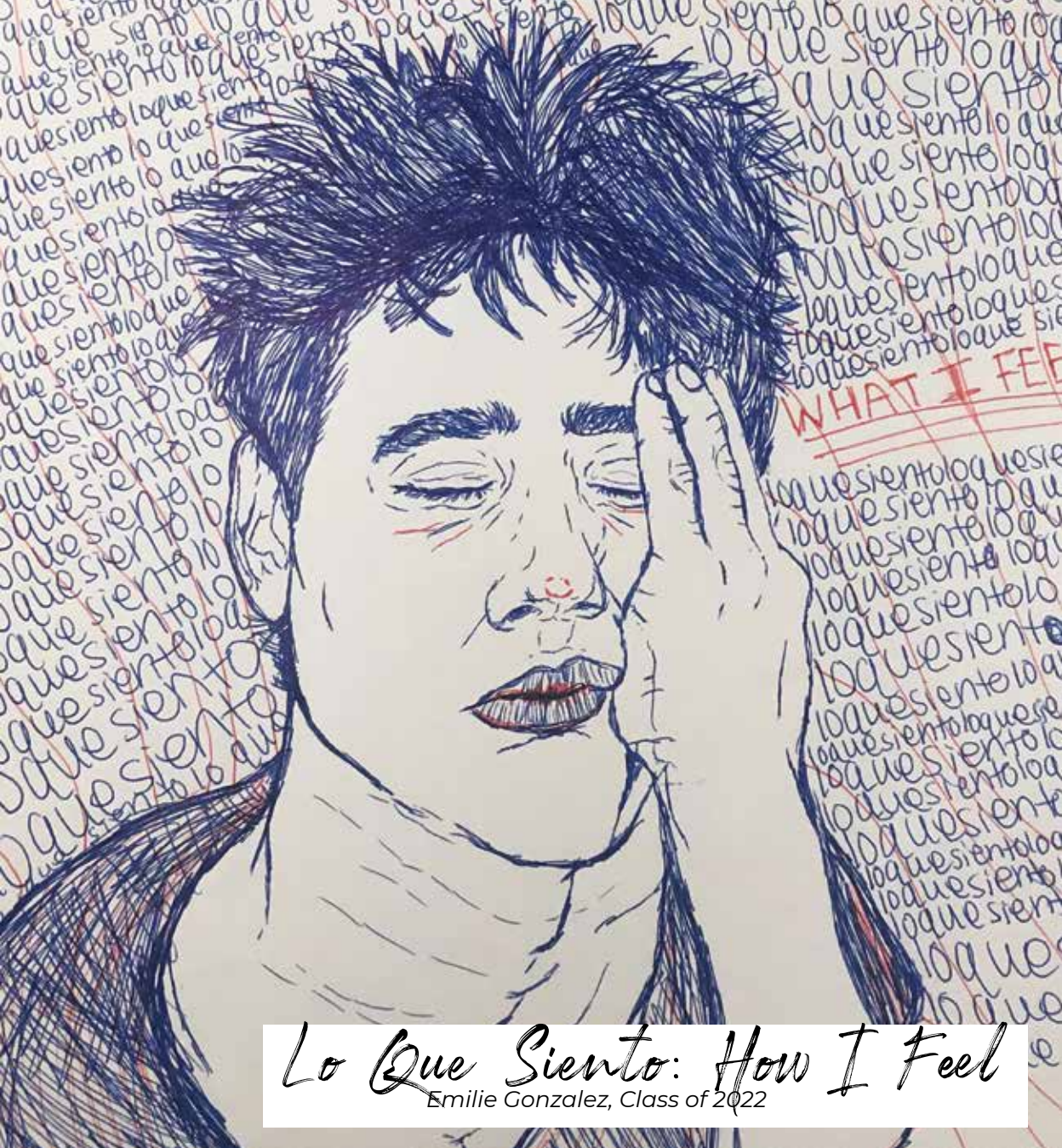
Coming to Miami with such an unusual last name, I got a lot of questions. Mainly, "Where is your last name from?" and "What's Armenia?" By 7 years old, I could easily fool a goalie, ride a bike, recite

my times tables up to 12, and give a detailed explanation of the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian Genocide obliterated land, history, and culture, which is the reason why the world doesn't know about us. In 1915, when the Ottoman Empire invaded Armenian villages, they had only one goal in mind: the extinction of all Armenians. They mercilessly killed 1.5 million Armenians and stole the majority of their land.

104 years later, Turkey still hasn't acknowledged the bloodshed, avoiding historical reparations. Now that I'm older and physically away from my Armenian community, it has become my responsibility to continue our traditions, to celebrate our shared identity.

In a world with 7.53 billion people, only 6 people are named Kaskavalciyan. Naming in general strangely preoccupied my childhood, but now I know, it is the greatest right we can all afford one another. Human rights are defined by the minimum standards necessary for people to live with dignity.

What better way to guarantee all global citizens are extended dignity than with the ability to name themselves and their experiences? Allowing all individuals the ability to be represented in an international conversation is the first step to an equal and just world. During my junior year Women's History class, I realized my need to spend my life fighting for the rights of every human being. As I sat in Room B206, on a cloudy afternoon I instantly decided that I will leave this world better off than I found it. For this reason, I want to dedicate my life to



Lo Que Siento: How I Feel
Emilie Gonzalez, Class of 2022

International Human Rights Law. I aspire for the name, Kaskavalciyan, to one day signify voice, strength, and perseverance for those who can't defend themselves, but until that day, it really just means cheese.

For now, I focus on differentiating

myself with my voice and my opinions. In a school of 800 girls who are characteristically known for looking the same, talking the same, dressing the same, and acting the same, my last name has instilled in me the confidence to always stay unapologetically myself.



Caught My Eye Gabriella Perez
Class of 2020



I Think I'm In Love With You

*Mia Aviles
Class of 2022*

In the quiet safety of my room, staring at my roof in the late hours of the night, I come to my senses only to realize: I think I love you.

In the thousands of thoughts of my buzzing mind as I go about my day, one soars above the rest, I think I love you.

In the things I see, I think of you. In the books I read, I think of you. Still, I try to press this burning realization back into my chest: I know I love you.

In the keyboard on the screen of my phone, I see the letters spelling those three words calling out to me. I. Love. You.

In my heart, I know I can't keep this to myself anymore and I have to tell you the truth, that I love you.

Before I have the time to get nervous, I spit it out, saying it once, fast, as it comes racing off my lips; and then repeating those words once more, only slower, thinking deeply about every word as they leave my lips once more: "I'm in love with you."

Turns out you loved me too.

Inner Turmoil





Daniella Zumpano, Class of 2020

Dissipating:

1. the storm is gone and all remnants of its presence begin to fade; the clouds dissipate and rain slows to a drizzle

2. a new beginning filled with closure; euphoric, airy, nostalgic



Starry Eyed

Carolina Lizama, Class of 2021

Star Stricken Wrists

Arianna Grillo
Class of 2021

My star-stricken wrist
Locked away in my subconscious
Yet, residing just under my skin
Embeds itself deeply into my rushing veins
And taints my denying heart with its truths
Bringing a halt to every thought in my head
And setting lose a new sensation that starts my atoms into a state of trembling.
The star and I gleam a guilty shade of blue.

I can still recall the angel's embrace...
The very breath that sent me into orbit
And awoke all my senses
Would be the same breath that damned me
Away from all the heavens and hells we could dream of
With my cheeks still flushed in color
And my throat still choked with words
And the star still pulsing its bittersweet blue
Hidden by my shame.

Yet, no matter the time that passed
Days, weeks, months, years
I still held that angel's soft hand with strange certainty
A clarity that seemed too true and too lovely to ever deny.
With my eyes fixed forever upon the angel
The morning star rose above us
And despite the disapproving voices from within and without
My wrist shone in a new light.

And perhaps it wasn't tainting
And instead teaching
For my heart, that night, had learned to accept
That my stardust had been arranged in such a way
That not even my star-stricken mind could begin to comprehend.
And, I realize now
As I failed to realize then
With my eyes so full of bittersweet tears
I had been gifted the most beautiful star in the night sky.

And when our atoms finally collapse
And we burst into clouds of spectacular nothing
We'll reflect the most brilliant blues of the universe

With our star-stricken wrists.

Photographs

Sofia Valderama
Class of 2021

Moments suspended in time
Safeguarded by the heart yet
Soon to be forgotten
Lost as life goes on
A flash of light
A portal to the past
A time you will never get back
Cherish what you can
Smile!



Glimmering

Mariana Puga
Class of 2022





Shattered Reflection

Sophia Guimaraes, Class of 2020

Embrace the Human in You

*Gabriella Chacin
Class of 2022*

I fell down...I got back up.
I got a bad grade...I studied harder.
I woke up late...I went to bed earlier.
I made a mistake...I learned and moved on.
I hurt someone...I apologized.
I didn't race the way I wanted...I trained harder.

I am not perfect.
You are not perfect.
Nobody is perfect.

We all make mistakes and we all mess up.
We all have our ups and we all have our downs.
We all have those days where we want to give up.
It's not about what you do wrong but about what step you take afterwards. What matters is what you do after the mistake has been made.
Forget about the past and look towards the future.

Home

*Cecilia Cardenas
Class of 2021*

Today I only remember the good things about you,
Mountains and rivers to name a few,

Majestic landscapes all around,
A whole paradise you have on your ground,

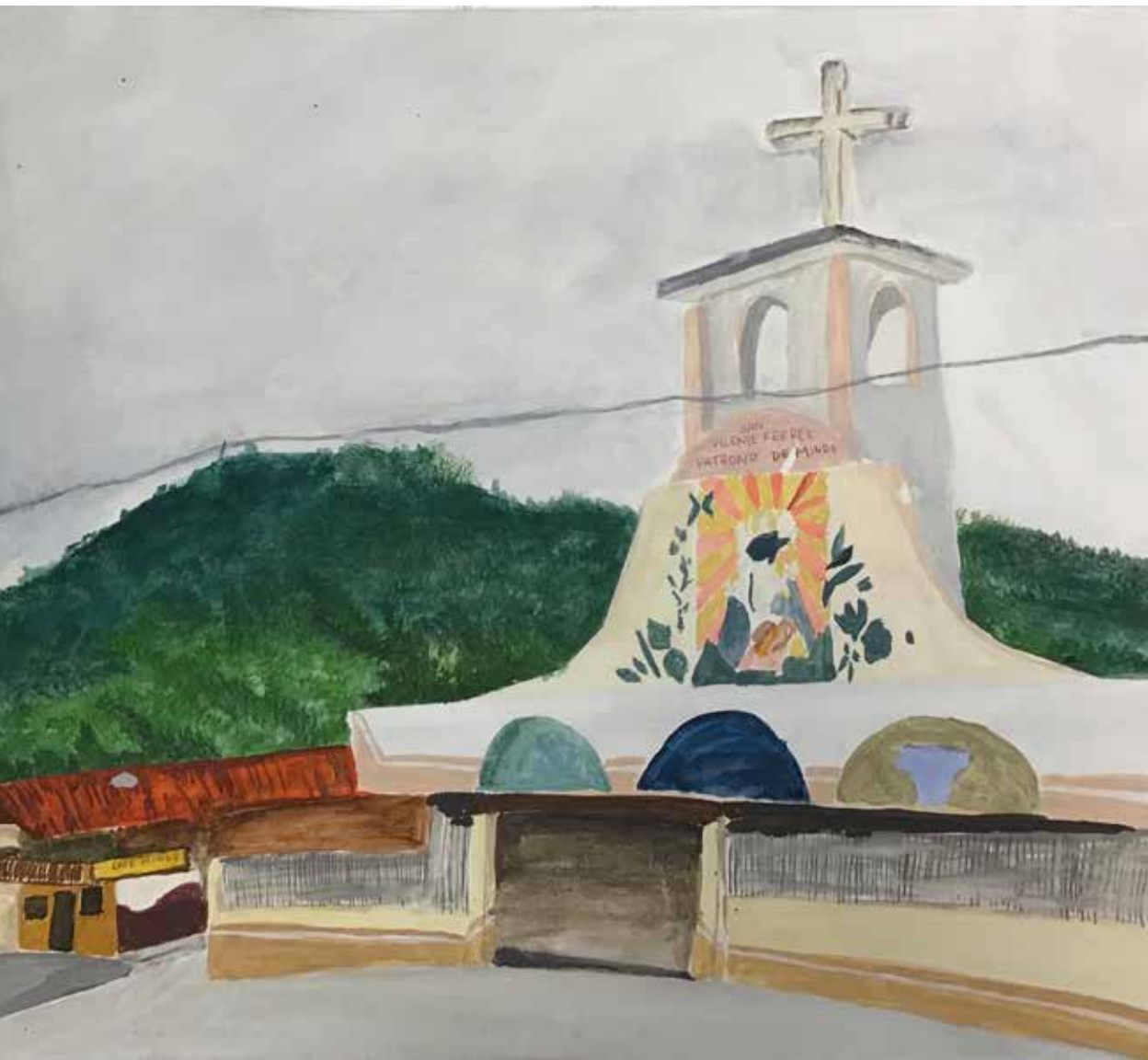
I ignore the atrocities that made me part,
And swear to always keep you in my heart.

Eternal gratitude and loyalty I promise thee
For I am today who you've made me.

As for better I've left you,
And for worse I've missed you,

Nostalgia fills my tone,
As I say goodbye to my home.





The Mountain in Mindo

Carina Pavon, Class of 2020

Precious Hearts

Valentina Castro
Class of 2021

Up and up and away we go
Flying through the adventure that is our life
Smiling through it all
Dancing around the halls
Of the school where we've spent years
Growing our precious hearts

Here, where we've spent years,
Growing our hearts
We've learned to splatter the world
With the paint that is our love
We've learned to project our voice
deep into the world
So everyone will know of our precious little hearts

Here, where we've spent years,
Growing our hearts
We've learned to spread our beautiful melodies of happiness
With the intention of making the world beautiful, too
We've learned to flourish in the knowledge we are given
And to pass it on forever and forever

Here, where we've spent years,
Growing our hearts
We have learned to fly through our lives as if it were one big ad-
venture
Savoring every moment
knowing that even though these moments will pass
We will always find our adventures
Deep inside our growing hearts



Eye to Eye

Nicole Corrales, Class of 2020

The Great Race

Alexa Lopez
Class of 2020

The gunshot blasts through 6 am alarm clocks.
Millions of people finally up and racing to their endless day of work.
Everyone seems as if they are struggling through each mile of their day.
Problems arise from not being able to pay the bills to who will pick the kids up from school.
Once they have completed every mile of their day they cross the finish line.
Until the next morning the gun shot flows through their 6 am alarms.
They complete the race again over and over.
It seems like some of us have not entered this Great Race.
They are the wanderers of the earth.
They explore Great Walls of foreign countries and give water to communities in need.
The wanderers find their Great Race at every new encounter.
Their life is meant to see the beauty of the world.
To touch the hearts of the ones they come across.
To feel the happiness that flows through early morning sunrises.
To hear the laughter of the ones closest to them.
Life is not meant to make the same race every day.
Live in your own race and wander the world you have.

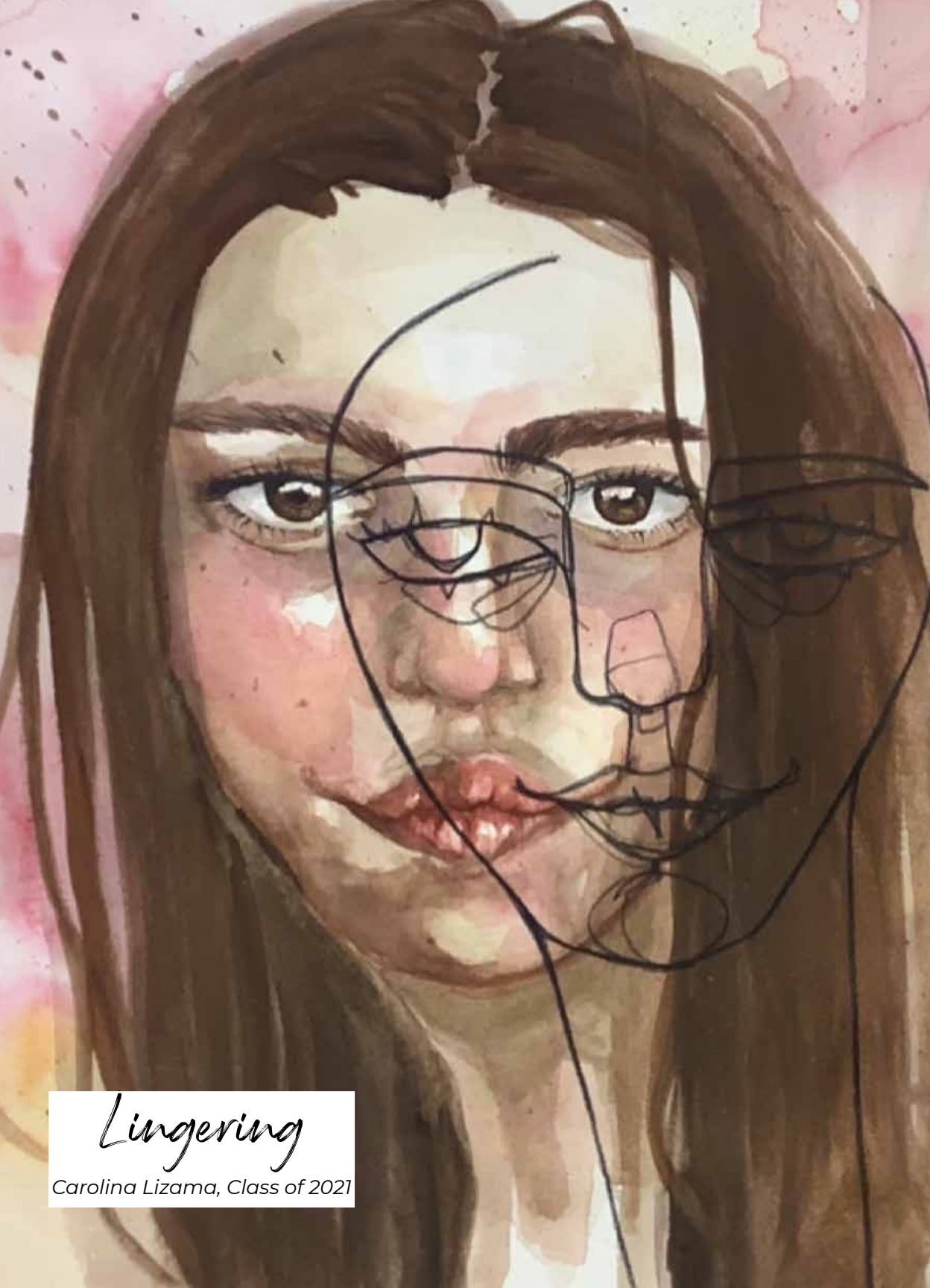




Path Less Traveled

*Vanessa Sanchez
Class of 2020*

Dissipating | 63



Lingering

Carolina Lizama, Class of 2021

Still Burns

Ariana Nunez
Class of 2021

You
Everything comes down to you
Every thought ,every word, every dream that lingers in my mind
You should know
That no matter where you go
I wouldn't rather be anywhere than by your side
Cause I fell, fell too hard In my feelings for you To fall into the dark
A fire still burns
Burns in my heart for you
And I won't let it die as long as you're in my mind
A fire will burn
A even when you don't love me
And I won't let it die even when we are apart, I won't be in the dark

Love Everyone Deeply

Gabriela Spizale
Class of 2020

We were 16 years old when he first told me he loved me. I had never heard the words "I love you," before in the manner that he meant it. I did not know whether to say it back, but I knew what I had felt was so strong that it had to be love. From that moment on, we loved each other deeply and immensely, for the next year and a half of our lives.

In a way, I knew it would one day come to an end as we were young and

immature, but that did not stop me from continuing to love. Eventually, the time came and both our hearts were broken because we knew that we had to go our separate ways.

The breakup was open heart surgery without the painkillers. We tried to stay friends, but it was too painful as we would constantly reminisce on what we once were. Precisely a year after the break up, I received a frantic phone call from my best



friend. In audible sobs she uttered the words, "He's gone. I am so sorry."

I did not think I could handle the pain of that day and flashbacks of our past continuously replayed through my mind. I had no idea what to say to his parents and brother, as they were still my second family. My world seemingly had ended in an instant. I had no control over what had happened and no understanding as to why.

A week later at his funeral, his father said the words, "He lived a long life to the fullest every single second and I know now that his mission was complete because all of you are here because he impacted you in some way, somehow. I ask each of you to hold onto that impact he had in your

lives and continue to live it in his honor."

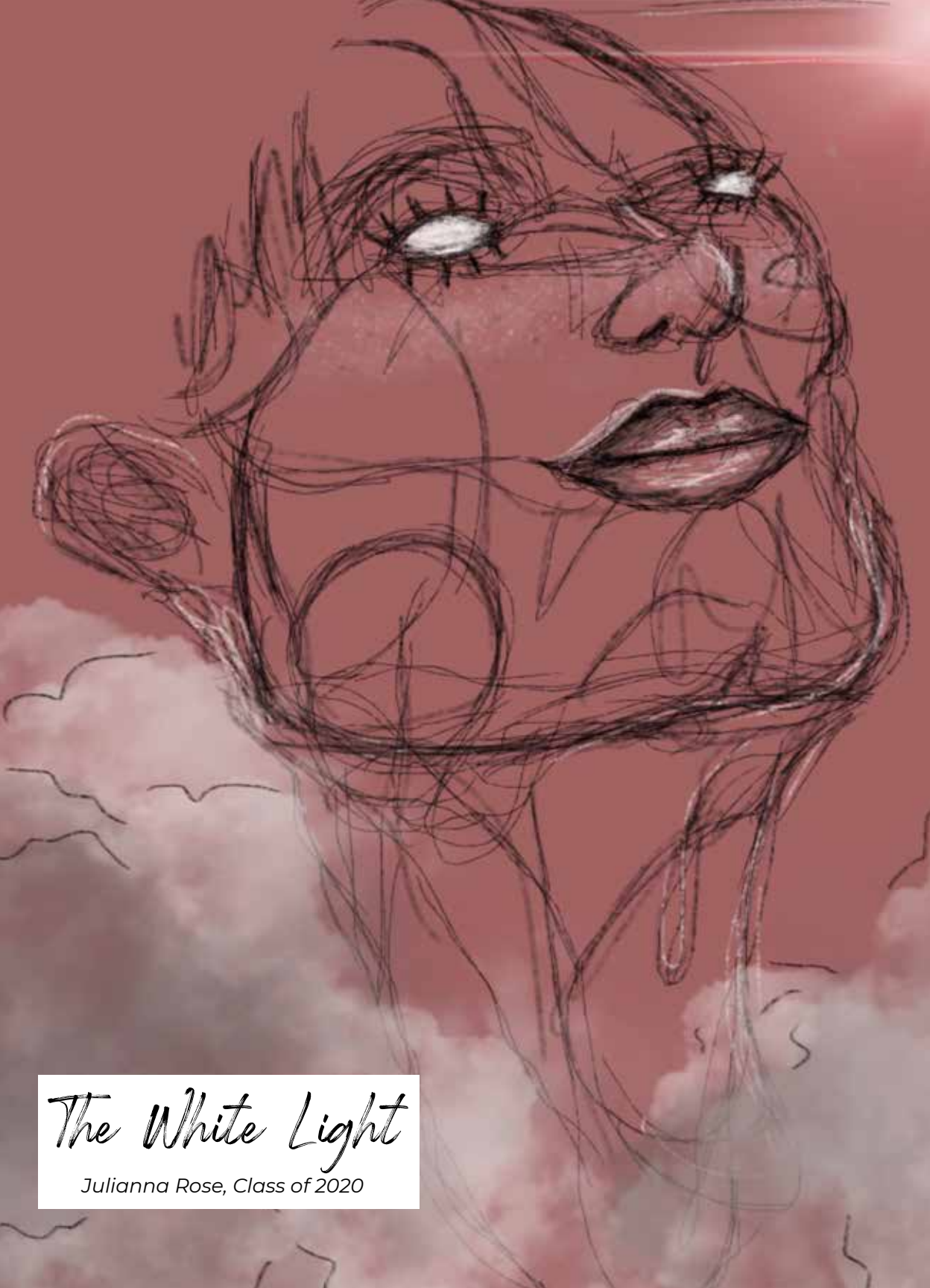
In that moment, I realized how he had taught me to love deeply. He loved everyone he met and spread that love unconditionally like a wildfire. I was blessed enough to meet him and learn this life-long lesson at such a young age. Everyone deserves to feel unrequited love and he always understood that.

We each have so much love to give and it does not take much to simply give it. He was kind and genuine and never had the intention of hurting a small fly on a wall. These characteristics left their tinct on me. They have shown me to love everyone as much as you can. To never be ashamed of showing that. There are no regrets in loving deeply.



Touch of Heaven

Carolina Lizama, Class of 2020



The White Light

Julianna Rose, Class of 2020

Silver Lining

Andrea Lopez
Class of 2020

One day
Clouds came, made rain
And grey wet fingers curled around tired old lungs
Ushered indoors
Doors ushered closed
Singing through keyholes praise of heroes unsung.

Will clouds veer? Will clouds clear?
Desperation soon outgrows the room it's kept in.
But draw your dusty blinds, open your tired eyes,
And see golden sunshine
Peeking out behind silver cloud lines.

Witness clear canals
Oxygen's sweet smell.
Quiet your heart, be still, be here, be well.

Colophon

TORRENT is the 31st volume of *Literati*. The name given to this volume is meant to encompass the metaphorical meaning of a storm: an outpour of emotion which translates into art. Just as creativity does, storms take time to build and grow before being released into one passionate flood of intensity. When they go, they leave in their wake a sensitivity to beauty and a feeling of euphoria and closure, just as occurs when we release our feelings into something bigger than ourselves. Storms cumulate and muster up emotion, passion, and creativity: all of which are channeled into the pieces which fill the pages of this book.

Advised by Mrs. Rebecca Q. Retana, the *Literati* staff sifted through various conceptual ideas until finally reaching TORRENT. The staff further developed the theme into a fluid combination of the verbal and the visual.

The magazine is broken into three sections denoted by the three stages of a storm: Cumulus, Mature, and Dissipating. Cumulus is symbolic of the gaseous or

beginning stages of a storm. The pieces in this section are more abstract, premature, or not fully developed; they build up to the release of emotions, but aren't quite there yet. Visually, the art in this divider is neutral and dark toned to mirror the grey skies which signal the beginning of a storm. The next is Mature, in which the writing is powerful and bold to reflect the prominent and unavoidable storm.

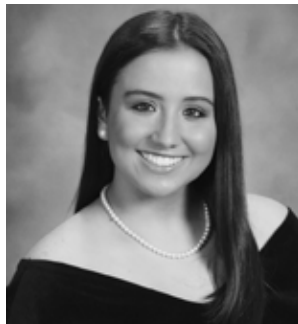
The art in this section is dark blue toned to reflect rain and build up to the introduction of color in our last divider: Dissipating. This section is filled with pieces of closure and new beginnings. Visually, they are airy, colorful and vibrant as a means of inciting the feeling of a storm finally washing away and unveiling beautiful, peaceful weather.

The staff collaborated to choose what would fill the pages of Torrent. Over 200 writing and art submissions were considered for publication before the staff ultimately narrowed down the pieces which would be included in the book. Fine Arts teacher Mrs. Cristina

Literati Staff



Editor-In-Chief
Sophia Pargas



Art Director
Victoria Milian

Adviser

Rebecca Q. Retana

Copy Editors

Catalina Caceres
Sofia Pereda

Zizold supplied the AP Studio Art class' portfolios and shared submissions. The English department also encouraged all classes to submit poems, narratives, and essays.

The magazine's 6.5" x 9" dimensions were chosen for the publication. The visual layout and design is credited to senior Victoria Milian through Adobe InDesign CC 2020 and Adobe Illustrator CC 2020. The editorial content was written and edited by senior Sophia Pargas to introduce readers to the intended perception of TORRENT.

The student work showcased is the main focus of the layout, to not be overpowered by the conceptual or visual design of the magazine.

The artwork and images bleed off the page. The body text font, Monsterrat at 12 pt, was chosen for its minimalist sans serif design and legibility. The title typeface is Rockness at pt. 45 and is intended to mirror the sporadic beauty of a storm of emotions. The by-line is Montserrat Italic at pt. 10 and was chosen to highlight the artist without overwhelming the visual layout.

The members of the staff extend their appreciation all of those who supported the *Literati* from invention to publication. The staff would like to thank the school administration for its support of this yearly publication.

The staff also extends its gratitude toward teachers in the Fine Arts department and English department who encouraged and inspired students to submit all types of creativity. A special thanks to Mr. Michael Herold at R & C Management, Inc. for aiding the staff in the printing of this magazine.

Literati is recognized by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association as a nationally-renowned literary magazine. The publication has received the Gold medalist award from the association in 2005-2019. The magazine was honored with a Silver Crown in 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2017; a Gold Crown—the highest award given to a publication—in 2005 and 2010, as well as the NSPA's All American Award in 2013. Most recently, the 2019 *Literati* was awarded an All-Florida designation from the FSPA.

Editorial Policy

As the official literary and art magazine of Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, Literati provides a means of showcasing the broad, creative scope of the student body. Works are mainly solicited through Art and English classes, but all students are invited to submit entries in March of each production year. To be eligible for publication, all submissions must be accompanied by a certificate of originality.

To maintain the high standard for which the magazine strives, submissions are carefully reviewed by Journalism II and III Honors students and advisers who choose only the most exemplary pieces to be included in the publication. The magazine production is part of the curriculum of Journalism II and III Honors and is completed during the second semester of each school year.

When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what the storm is all about.

- Haruki Murakami