

*Winter Edition 2023*

# The Churchill

## CHRONICLE

### **Dirt in Your Ribs**

*Realizing how the  
mundane surrounds you*

### **Just for a Second**

*To be seen for just even a  
second*

### **The Biology of Small Things**

*Smallest details hold the  
most power*





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# Playlist for Winter

Unlock the rhythm of the month with our handpicked beats suggested by members of the Chronicle!! From infectious grooves to soulful melodies, this playlist is your passport to a musical journey that transcends genres. Get ready to hit play and let the good vibes flow! This playlist can accompany you while you cry to your homework or try to just kick back and not stress about the Unit test tomorrow!!



The Churchill Chronicle



## Ajab Si

KK



## Tolerate It

Taylor Swift



## Stick Season

Noah Kahan



## Delusional Lament

MIMI



## Stranger

Jeff Satur



## Osmanthus

whaledontsleep ft. Ado



## Japan

Yot Club



## bonfire

wave to earth



## Never Love an Anchor

The Crane Wives



## The Summoning

Sleep Token



## 穷开心

Wowkie Zhang (大张伟)



## Portrait of A Blank Slate

Lovejoy



## Fire Flower

Summer Salt



## I Know The End

Phoebe Bridgers



## Mitsy

Lesley Gore



## Waiting Room

Phoebe Bridgers



## Moon River

Frank Ocean



## Melt

siouxie and the banshees



## 8 am in charlotte

Drake



## Orange Juice

Noah Kahan



## Reptilla

The Strokes



## The A Team

Ed Sheeran



# Just for a Second ❄️

BY Ryan Tea

I sit on the couch in silence, watching the snowflakes flutter past the window. The house is devoid of its usual chaos, my parents having ventured off to warmer lands, leaving me to maintain the cage. It's tedious. I groan and stand up—I need to do *something* before I fuse into the cushions.

And so I pace. Almost as if on autopilot, I walk, retreading my steps as I head into the kitchen. Nothing new has appeared in the fridge, that much I know, but I still open the door and peer in. And then I close it. And then I leave the kitchen. And in a minute flat I know that I'll be right back.

*Fading. I feel like I'm fading. Just like the snowflakes falling outside, I'll only be on this Earth for a second, and I fear that I won't have left a mark once I leave.* I pull myself up onto a chair by the window and try to gaze out, but the fog on the window blocks my view and I wipe it away.

*I'm tired of not being present; I don't think I've had an honest conversation with someone in days. And I've tried to create something that will outlive me, but it never seems good enough.*

*What I would do to be seen for even a second...*

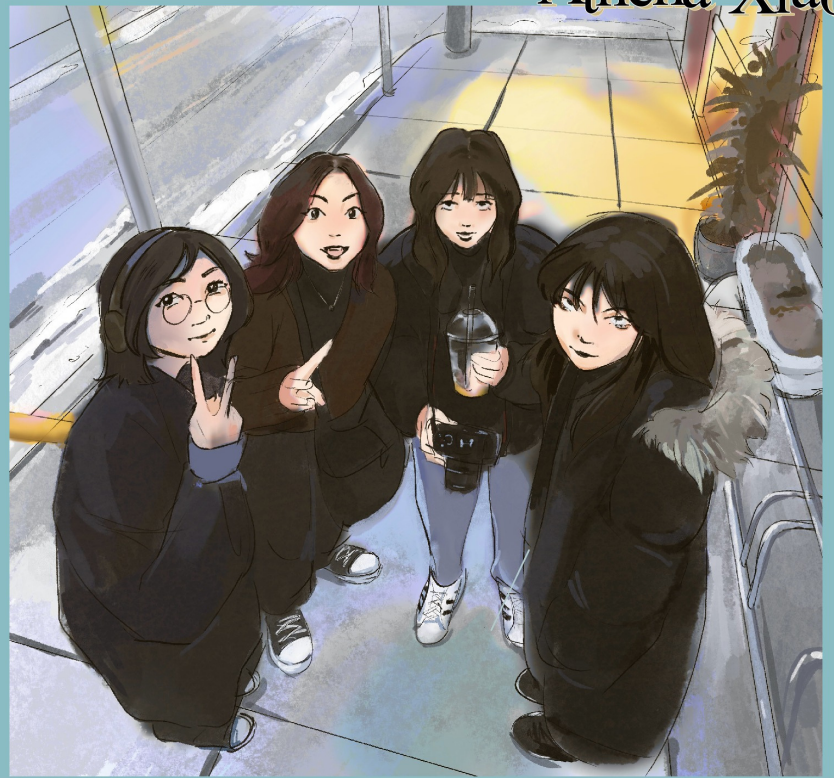
The fog has reappeared on the window pane, and it upsets me more than it reasonably should. It's pathetic. Still, I hate how little control I have left—how quickly my tracks can be erased. I drag a finger through the fog, pausing before I clear away the mist, leaving a line, clear as day.

So I draw another. And another. And eventually, the window is plastered with insignificant doodles, born to disappear, and I step back to admire them. They're hideous. The drawings look like the scrawls of a particularly demented child, barely sensical and devoid of artistry. Somehow I've never been happier.

Once the drawings fade to ghosts, I scrawl over them. For once, I couldn't care less about changing the world because this miniscule hit of dopamine is worth all the marks I could ever want to leave.

And I laugh, to no one in particular, because I can. Because there's no one around to say I can't. And just for a second, I'm alive.

BY Athena Xiao



## Dirt in Your Ribs

BY Moumita Murshed

I think you have this idea in your head. One that says you can only be loved if you are spectacular. That, at your lowest, no one could choose to look at you and say, “there is love worth digging out of your ribs with hands caked with dirt.”

But, in 50 years, you will still be here. Maybe that idea will still seem fresh in your head at first, but then it will start to blur with laughter in your friends' eyes and the feeling of dancing with your sister in the kitchen, warm under the heat of the stove and the love of growing closer after drifting apart. You will see sunsets in the parking lots of grocery stores that will strike you as much more beautiful than any scenic location, because the way the clouds meet the Sun will remind you of the way your mother's eyes crinkled when she smiled. You will eat from hands that seem like your father's, rough with the lines of devotion yet soft with the way they linger on your mouth.

You will laugh at the absurdity. At how small your worries will seem when you are overwhelmed by the interconnectedness of the world. I think you will start to feel calmer when you see finger paintings in old caves and realize that we have been living the same way for centuries, transfixed with an idea of love laced with cruelty and remembrance.

You will realize that the mundane surrounds you, and everything will suddenly begin to sing with a voice so soft that you will dig your own heart out and offer it to the Sun as a showing of gratitude.

The idea in you will become buried in the dirt of your chest. At first, it will rot, decomposing your insides with haunting isolation. But, soon after, dandelions will start to grow from the worms and rip you apart with solace of peace.





# Christmas Delicacies

BY RAINA SHIPRA

The hot coffee rested in his hands, just enough to warm them up but not enough to burn them.

“Be careful, it’s hot.” He gave the same advice to his daughter sitting across from him holding some hot chocolate of her own.

“I know, I’m super careful.” She replied, evidently holding the cup a little too much and hurting her hand in the process.

He chuckled and continued sipping at his own drink. The cozy atmosphere circled around him, warming him up more than any hot drink could. The scent of cinnamon and hot chocolate filled the air, but it wouldn’t be so easily captured if he wasn’t with her. He should’ve known that she would be drawn to a place with bright lights and a Christmas tree.

He watched as she continued devouring the delicacy as soon as it was cool enough for her to do so. Her sweet demeanour towards something as simple as hot chocolate was something to envy for ages. He sighed and looked at the crumpled up receipt in front of him: \$10.90 total.

“Do you know what you want to ask Santa for?” He asked.

She put her hand on her chin, as if pondering the biggest decision of her life. For her it was.

“Yeah, I want a Barbie!” She exclaimed.

“Oh yeah? Which one?”

“I don’t know, I just want the new one. The pink one.”

“Right.”

“Yeah, I’m gonna ask Santa for that one instead of you.”

He looked up from his coffee, raising an eyebrow at her. “What do you mean?”

“Well, I know you can’t really buy stuff that costs a lot of money so I’m gonna ask Santa so you don’t have to get it.”

He could feel the bitterness of the coffee stick to his tongue more than it did already. He crumpled up the receipt and shoved it into his pocket, giving her a smile.

“You don’t have to do that, hon.”

It’s okay, Santa can do it so it’s easier for you too.”

He could feel his grip around the cup tighten as the thought flowed in his brain.

He wanted to avoid having her live with that reality.



**FROM: CHELSIE LI**

“He watched as her mind completely forgot the conversation they just had and instead focused on her hot chocolate. Glamoring over the presents and the lights that covered the tree and walls that surrounded them. Maybe it wasn’t that she was worried or living in

that reality, but maybe that she was just trying to allow him to enjoy it too.

“That’s very sweet of you.” She smiled and sat proudly in her seat, drinking her hot chocolate without one worry at all.



# ART OF AN ENTOMOLOGIST

WRITTEN BY L.K

There is no single fascination in the mind of a bug that cannot be summed up to instinct. Its every move is calibrated and hard built into its tiny, most simple brain. A bug is an unassuming, stupid, , artless creature. I am a purposeful being with intention. This is what I intended to do with my life. Making the artless into art.

It's patience that drives me, the thought of completing another project that makes me wait. If I rush it, the legs will bend and dry and break. A pull to doing what I enjoy the most.

My hard work and collection shines through as several framed bugs that I've pinned line the wall of my room. Out of the corner of my eye, I spot something else.

There is a web in the corner of my room, long left untidied and undusted. It's a dark, damp, unassuming spot which I had never thought to look. There's a small spider on the web, still and in waiting. Probably crawled inside after the cold hit yesterday morning. I grab a tissue, walking over to crush it. It's far too high up, safe in the center of its web, the only tiny universe it will ever know.



IMAGE BY AMIE NAQVI

Maybe it would leave after seeing the many mounted bugs along the wall.

The next day it's there again. As time passes day by day, it's watching. I have grown to a strange comfort with it sitting there in my corner, content and entertained.

It no longer bothers me. I have a strange compassion for it. I imagine it's looking down at me, but not with judgment, but with an awareness.

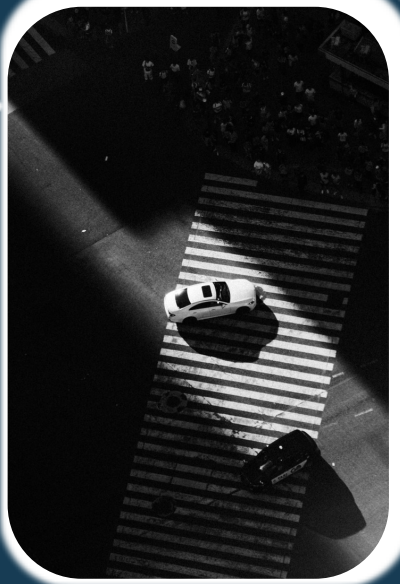
One day, I walk into my office and I don't see it. I work, but it plagues my mind to wonder where it could be. I can't help but feel a little solemn. I stand up, after the day ends, seeing a spec on the ground. Upon further observation, it's the bug. Its legs are curled in a protective position on its side, dry and brittle, like many specimens I had examined before. A pang of sadness fills my heart. I pick it up gently, setting it on my table. This simple little office was the only home it's known.

I think, perhaps, just maybe, that this little bug that had haunted me for the past month was always some form of art.



# The Biology of Small Things

-Nabeeha A.



-Nathan Niu

The smallest details are those which hold the most power -  
the soft bubbling of tea as it boils, the angle between a  
solid chair and a messy desk, the shimmer of a coin as it  
falls into a fountain.

These sights, these sounds, they are what pulls together  
the fabric of your day-to-day, your mundane and  
meaningless daily life.

It's the slight upturn of your friends mouths when they  
look back at you,  
the crisp pages of a new book,  
the scent of the trees in the air come spring,  
yet also the shapes of breath in winter.

There are whole worlds trapped within the texture of tree  
bark -

Galaxies in the way that a plant curls towards the light.  
Sonnets could be written within the soft glow of blue light,  
flowing through your screen;  
and odysseys on the crackle of the PA in the morning.

And yet at the same time, there is no meaning to these  
sensations

they are the ones we miss, the feelings we glance over  
ignoring the trees for the forest, the forest for the world,  
the world for the stars it embeds itself between.

A sleepy corner of the closet, within which only dust  
settles, staining all around it gray -  
that is where the meaning lies. In the nooks and crannies  
we leave untouched.





PHOTOGRAPH BY  
JONATHAN X

# Mortality and The Afterlife

BY MANAAR FATIMA

The afterlife is what someone expects to occur once they have died. You may have heard of the infamous white light that people imagine when they think of passing on. What wondrous sights could await us in the afterlife? Are we all destined to lose consciousness and end our journeys as worm food? Many different cultures have attempted to answer these questions.

Ancient Greek society claimed that an afterlife exists. Known for not having very moral Gods, the Ancient Greeks believed that good deeds and evil deeds did not alter what became of your soul after death. They believed that when a person died, their soul separated from their body, and they arrived at the river Styx to be ferried across the division between the world of the dead and the living. When they paid Charon, the ferryman, his fee, they crossed the river Styx and were accepted by Hades, the god of the underworld, and were able to join the world of the dead for all of eternity. A person's soul did not exist in a pleasant or unpleasant state, they only existed and nothing else. There was no human emotion remaining in these souls.

Gods in Greek Mythology are ruthless and immoral. They often commit acts that would be deemed evil while being the ones assumed to judge mortals for their actions. This is why the concept of an afterlife in Greek Mythology is not reliant on morality. I like this perception of an afterlife, the monotonous suffering of our souls for all eternity without the ability to recognize the miserable state we exist in. This belief could be good and simultaneously bad for modern humanity. On the one hand, the lack of incentive to be moral would mean many individuals who uphold a façade of righteousness would abandon their beliefs in pursuit of others. On the other hand, people's true motivations would be easy to see.

The afterlife in Greek Mythology presents a moral dilemma on whether individuals seek morality for personal gain or true belief. If it is sought out due to personal belief, can it be said that this motivation is immoral, despite an inherent need to survive ingrained into all organisms? What makes morals important to individuals and when we remove morals from our values, what remains to be the difference between humans and animals?



# FINDING MEANING IN THE MUNDANE

by Vivian W



Cartoonist: Chelsea Li

through traffic and crowded sidewalks, there's an unnoticed poetry in the ordinariness. The faces we pass, the snippets of conversation overheard - each moment is a snapshot of the collective human experience. In the mundane, we find connection, realizing that the ordinary binds us together in a shared journey, transcending individual narratives. The workplace, often dismissed as a realm of routine, harbors a trove of meaning waiting to be excavated. Mundane tasks become pathways to mastery, offering a chance to hone skills and find satisfaction in the incremental progress that accompanies daily effort. It's in these routine tasks that resilience is forged, and the pursuit of excellence becomes a habit rather than an aspiration.

In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, it's easy to overlook the profound meaning concealed within the seemingly mundane. From the simple act of sipping morning coffee to the routine commute, there exists a rich tapestry of significance waiting to be unraveled.

Consider the morning ritual - a cup of coffee held between eager hands, steam curling upwards as the aroma fills the air. Beyond its surface, this daily act symbolizes much more; it's a moment of pause, a personal act that marks the beginning of a new day. In the mundane, we discover a sacred rhythm that grounds us, providing a thread of continuity in the ever-changing fabric of life.

As we navigate our daily commutes, weaving

In our quest to unveil meaning in the mundane, it becomes apparent that ordinary moments are not trivial. Rather, they serve as portals to deeper understanding. They hold the potential to teach us about ourselves, the shared human experience, etc. Embracing the significance embedded in everyday routines fosters gratitude, mindfulness, and a profound appreciation for the subtle beauty that surrounds us.

The meaning in the mundane is a living, breathing reality waiting to be acknowledged. Whether found in the warmth of a morning procedure, the daily grind of work, or more, the mundane leads us to profound lessons and connections. It invites us to look beyond the surface and discover the extraordinary within the ordinary.



# BLANK SHEET

BY AMAKA E

Winter creeps upon the world day by day, ever so slightly, and no one really knows until the day soft mittens and thick coats are one's only resources for comfort. No one seems to think about it like that; it's always inching closer. Even when summer is present and vibrant, as the year comes to a close, frost will soon take over glass panes and there's no stopping the early nights. I find comfort in the fact that winter will always arrive, and along with it the new canvas it brings. That painful blindness that hits me for a second, gives way to a fresh layer of snow. If in the right location, it can stretch on for miles upon miles, sometimes even connecting with the sky and closing me into a great white box. If one were to look closer, an unsettling feeling may wash upon them. All they can see is nothingness. All outlines of bushes and trees and houses blending in together to form an immeasurable picture of nothingness. At first, I realized the potential that this nothingness held. Doesn't everyone? Thousands of lists being made just before the clock strikes twelve, indicating a new year. One full of aspirations and opportunities. However, this illusion doesn't last for long. Along with the snow it withers away. The blank sheet that was once painted across the land soaks into the canvas and leaves a vile stain behind. Brown splotches of dying grass splatter upon what was once perceived as hope. Yet, despite the fact that all signs of a piper dream have vanished, the reminder that it was there in the first place still lingers. The cold weather still making people unbearably ill persists like that suffocating feeling of watching those whose dreams become reality. Not all in the cold stay healthy. Not all with resolutions succeed. And so, yes, I suppose there might have been some truth in the words said by those who believe that winter only reveals nothingness. All the same, year after year the same people create the same goals, because deep down we all believe the same thing. Not all in the cold get sick and not all with resolution fail.

## CHRISTMAS MORNING

BY LIAMARA

It is a chilly December morning and the snow shimmered with the rising sun. I stare at the alarm clock beside my bed as it ticks waiting for it to go off and signify the beginning of the best day of the entire year. After seven more excruciatingly slow ticks, the room fills with the sound of the alarm. I smile. It's Christmas. Finally, a full day that I can spend with my parents. Just like any other kid my age.

Martha walks in carrying a breakfast tray and a hot towel. "Good morning, Miss. Merry Christmas."

I smile. "Merry Christmas! Oh, Martha, I'm so excited!"

Martha smiles and places the tray of food on my bedside table. "I'm glad to hear that. Eat up. And then you can open your presents."

I shrug the covers off my body and stuff my feet into warm fuzzy slippers that my friends had given me as an early Christmas gift. "No thanks! I'm gonna eat with my parents today. And then we can open stuff together!"

Martha bites her lip. "I'm sorry, Miss. they aren't here. They have told me to let you know that they'll be home by dinner."

My heart drops. "Wait what? No. They said they were gonna be home today."

Martha gives me a small smile and stretches the towel out towards me. "I know. They are dreadfully sorry. But duty calls. But they have left you an entire room full of gifts." Her voice drops to a whisper. "I think I counted almost 70 this year."

Tears sting my eyes and I push past her and across the hall. Surely this is a trick. They're going to be home today. They have to be. They promised. But as I enter their room, I see that Martha hadn't been kidding. My parents aren't here. Halfheartedly, I walk back to the living room.

Wrapped gifts are spread out so far over the room that it looks like Santa's workshop. But none of them mean anything. I wanted to open them with my parents.

Martha comes up behind me. "They'll be back, darling."

I sigh. "I know. It just hurts that work is more important than me." I walk over to the biggest gift and rip the wrapping off. "You can go home, too. Merry Christmas."





# Smiley Face



# NOSTALGIA

It's a little circle of fog on  
The Sienna window  
Bought 10 years ago  
I drag a finger down  
Move it a few inches to the right  
Drag it down once more  
Shift my finger a few paces down  
A semi-circle facing the sky is drawn  
There we go  
A smile  
The car driving by  
With a passenger  
Can mirror what my breath and finger created  
I take the edge of my sweater  
And drag it across  
It disappears as quickly as it appeared  
But, it was there  
And that's all that matters

By: Subashini Thangadurai

Can I go back to being a little kid,  
I didn't have to worry  
what I should do next?  
Where time seemed to stand  
still. No pressure.

Can I  
rewind time?  
Just for a moment?  
I feel like I'm missing  
something, and I  
won't find it here.

My heart is heavy,  
but I'm not quite in pain.  
I'm sifting through the pieces  
of my past and trying to  
reclaim the small moments  
that used to be mine.  
Is this what growing up feels  
like?

By: Fatima Sabir



Photo by: Daniel Yang



# THE POEM THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST

MIKAYLA GIRARD

i tried to delete this poem but the words appeared again as if the page itself could think out through my veins leaks and drips and spills the ink those pesky letters escape from my brain's psych ward while the words explode, screaming crying begging to no longer be ignored

don't let their vacancy be restored

squeezing out every ounce until there's no more energy left to spend  
i fight not to stop it, yet i know that it must end  
if i choose to let it happen, who am i to complain?  
yet i swallow my objections until bitterness is the only taste to remain

my lungs are fire as i inhale salt and water  
each wave steals a piece of me, first sister then friend then daughter  
while the ocean above thrashes, greedy and hungry for everything it can find  
the darkness below beckons in a silent invitation for me to leave my torments behind

with no one to take my minutes or hours or days, i can drown the one upon my brain's throne  
if i hold her under she will grip me tight and together we will tumble into the unknown  
but i don't care because if i go down, she will too, she'll shut up, she'll finally leave me alone  
please, god, i just want her to leave me alone

so don't try to save me, just turn a blind eye as i sink  
a little farther  
a little longer  
a little...

## 5 Things to Do While Waiting for the School WiFi to Work

ADELA ALAKBAROVA

**Are you tired of the school's delayed WiFi? Do you want something to do while your computer makes you wait 5-7 business days to access a website, load a document, or even log in? Well look no further, because here is a list of what you can do instead of watching that "unable to connect" sign pop up for the twentieth time.**



Do some homework. While this option is on the productive side, there's nothing wrong with it. Finish a math problem, brainstorm ideas for that essay, or figure out which trophic level a rabbit is on. Whatever schoolwork it is you're doing, you've got tons of time so no need to rush!



Contemplate life. This is a (mostly) fun way to pass the time while continuously clicking the refresh button, as it takes your mind off of the fact that you need that website to finish your project. The sky's the limit when it comes to what you can think about, but be assured that you will definitely have the time to think about everything.



Count every digit of pi. Some say that pi is endless and has infinite digits, but those people obviously never had enough time to count them all. You, however, will have plenty of time to count every digit, and by the time that Google Doc finally loads, you'll be long done!



Read a book. This one's simple and obvious, after all it is what teachers often suggest. Read a fun novel, and when you're done with that, read a second. Since the WiFi has probably still not been loaded, you could consider the textbooks and dictionaries in the class. This is a win-win situation because not only does your WiFi finally work (no promises) but you have also gained a huge amount of knowledge. And if it doesn't, you already know it all!



Paint a renaissance painting. You don't necessarily need to know how to paint to do this. Why? Because you'll have enough time to build a time machine, go back in time, learn painting from the masters, come back, paint the most beautiful piece known to man, and go back to your computer in time for the internet to still be "unable to connect."



PIP LUPICK



# WARM VANILLA MILK

**Fouzan Rizwan**

As winter's chill settles in, there's nothing quite like wrapping your hands around a steaming mug of warmth, savoring the comforting embrace of a seasonal beverage. Amidst the many choices, one stands out as a healthier alternative, while still bringing the whole "cozy winter" vibe. Warm Vanilla Milk. Forget traditional hot cocoa. This aromatic drink, not only promises a warm taste, but also brings loads of benefits that make it the perfect winter companion. Compared to the sugar-laden hot cocoa, Warm Vanilla Milk stands out, offering not just taste but also the freedom to make it uniquely yours. It's a healthier blend of flavors that caters to your unique taste, while providing a soothing remedy for relaxation and sleep. This winter, choose the wholesome experience of Warm Vanilla Milk. Welcome winter with a new vibe: the tranquil and delicious Warm Vanilla Milk.

**Sip and Unwind:**

Savor this wholesome beverage 30 minutes before bedtime, engaging in a calming activity will enhance the relaxation. Whether it's reading a book, listening to soft music, or simply reflecting on the day, let the Hot Vanilla Milk be your companion to serene nights.

- Uniquely yours, Vanilla Vibes.

**Ingredients:**

- Whole milk
- Honey or maple syrup
- Vanilla extract (vanilla essence will also work)
- Nutmeg or cinnamon powder (for that extra touch of warmth)



**Priyanka Gupta**

**Instructions:**

1. Place one to two cups in a small saucepan or pot. Heat the milk just until it's hot, avoiding a simmer or boil.
2. Move the milk off the stove and add honey or maple syrup (1 tbsp). Adjust to your preferred level of sweetness.
3. Add 3-4 drops of vanilla extract into the milk as well. Adjust to your preferred level of vanilla.
4. Mix, with a spoon or whisk, for some froth.
5. Pour into your favorite mug,
6. Sprinkle a pinch of nutmeg or cinnamon on top for that extra layer of warmth and flavor.
7. Be sure to enjoy the aroma and the simple, yet deep taste pallet it offers.

**Extra Notes:**

- Better use the stovetop method to heat your milk, but the microwave works if convenience is your preference.
- Heat the milk until it's pleasantly warm, avoiding a simmer or boil to prevent a skin from forming on top.
- Experiment with other spices and nuts for flavor (cardamom, almond, cayenne peppers, mint)

# A DEDICATING PRINCIPLE

**Alexander Fu**

Dedication is the principle that defines our motivation and it is essential for the growth and expansion of our learning. Through dedication, we are able to push past the barriers we create for ourselves and bring learning to an entire new level. We are able to unlock new abilities we never thought we were capable of. When we dedicate ourselves, it is much easier to connect with and understand the material that is taught. In high school, especially IB, students are required to dedicate themselves to their education and commit themselves to whatever they are learning. Possessing the ability to dedicate yourself will be useful all throughout your life and will allow you to find success wherever you go.

Dedication and commitment not only have the potential to change your life, but also the lives of others around you. For example, Marie Curie, a two-time Nobel Prize winner famous for her contributions to cancer research and her discoveries in radioactivity, changed the world in this way. In 1867, Marie Curie was born into a poor family as the youngest of five children. Despite being socioeconomically disadvantaged, Marie Curie always had a thirst for knowledge and a passion to learn. Her passion and perseverance in the face of adversity and professional barriers has inspired many scientists up to this date. Working on the front lines alongside her daughter, she helped save many soldiers during World War I through her invention of small, mobile X-ray units that could be used to diagnose injuries. Her remarkable dedication and endeavors have allowed her to invent and discover many ideas that would still be obscure without her. As a woman in her time, Marie Curie still managed to become one of the world's most recognized scientists through her dedication to science and her passion for learning.

Commitment can take many forms, and paired with education and learning, it can help you change the world. Education is one of humanity's most important inventions, and we must continue to utilize our knowledge to find answers to questions that still need to be answered. By learning, we are given the choice to continue and commit to furthering our education. We have gone so far since we first began our education, and we must not end now. Only through dedication and spirit are we able to persevere through any hardships that may come our way.



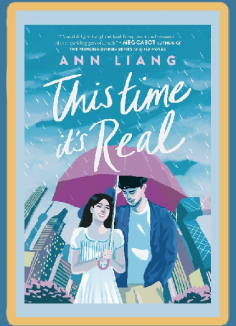
# THIS TIME IT'S REAL BOOK REVIEW

connie chang

TITLE: *THIS TIME IT'S REAL*

AUTHOR: ANN LIANG

RATING: 4/5



*This Time it's Real* by Ann Liang is a romcom following Eliza Lin, writer of a viral essay about her nonexistent relationship, who enters a fake relationship with rising star, Caz Song, to further pursue her dream career. Caz is a very kind and considerate fake boyfriend to Eliza. He pays attention to little details and never dismisses Eliza's opinions or concerns. The relationship between the two is quite wholesome, and the rest of the story explores their relationship and complexities about being a teenager.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It takes place in Beijing, China and mentions a fair amount of Chinese; however, this shouldn't pose much of an issue for non-Chinese speakers as there is an English translation. I really appreciated that Liang made Eliza's friendships very important to her. Eliza has grown apart from many of her friends before, so she tries not to get too close to others at her new school. The only friend of hers that she has not lost contact with, is Zoe, her best friend from the eighth grade. However, as her relationship with Caz develops, she starts losing contact with Zoe. It starts off with vaguely mentioning new people, to the conversations becoming shorter and awkward, so it accurately depicts how it feels to grow apart from your best friend.



My only big criticism about this book is that it's written from the perspective of teenagers. Liang does a wonderful job at creating a convincing voice, but it's to the extent that the start of the book comes off quite cringey. This is most likely due to the fact that I tend to not read books from the perspective of teenagers, so reading this book made me cringe at how our generation (including myself) talks. In addition, the ending was a bit rushed- despite the mutual pining early on between Caz and Eliza, the book is a slow burn and could have used an extra chapter at the end to tie things up.

Altogether, I would give this book a rating of 4/5 and would recommend it to anyone who enjoys romcoms and the fake dating trope.

esha gethi

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# Poem With Various Words Taken From Various Books

Anonymous

\*Every line has at least two random words, and the length of each stanza is determined through a six sided die rolled six times. The amount of various words compared to the length of line gradually increases with each successive stanza.

Not a master's flattering pneumothorax fantasy  
Would compare to  
Man's handsome Finnish Bigfoot.  
And for there to be meaning, only  
Accomplishments can be made.

Hills notate Californian death  
In the most direct way;  
Choices, choices, choices, however,  
Only oils sequence Christmas style  
Perspectives, portraits, protégés, puns.

Electrical development people  
Bear knuckles of strength  
Vehicle prosecution is avoided  
Through topics which are prohibited from speech.

Livelihood is conserved standing  
Words are Italian,  
Words match.

Roots hanging?  
Daydreams listening?  
Run physicist! Run!  
Home is photocopying radios  
Approaches control discovered persuasion.  
Library mathematics?

Collected bibliography structures.



Photograph By  
Nathan Niu



## Details

CP

All of us will spend a majority of our lives being too normal. All too often, we sink into our constantly changing yet monotonous daily lives as we become thoroughly immersed. Days become weeks that blend together seamlessly.

Multiple memories mesh into a single experience. Living can easily become existing. Amidst this constant state of normalcy, we have the ability to change entirely through our own perspective. Moreover, the small shifts we make can alter the direction of our lives. The bigger picture becomes a few degrees brighter as we focus on simpler things.

This is a plain, everyday idea I believe is often neglected - accumulating such a number of little

positive things so that it balances out everything else. This will create a brighter outlook overall.

To elaborate, it is to allocate your focus to what you choose to better your perception of the

world. Afterall, you can't depend on the unpredictable highs in your life all the time. Often, the significant details in our lives are the ones we tend to overlook. From everyday things such as a fresh morning to completing a single math problem. Specifically searching for small everyday things that draw happiness, even in the bleakness of our routines, is something that creates a greater appreciation for life. This creates moments of rest and grounding in our busy

and constantly changing lives.

Here are a few things I personally love:

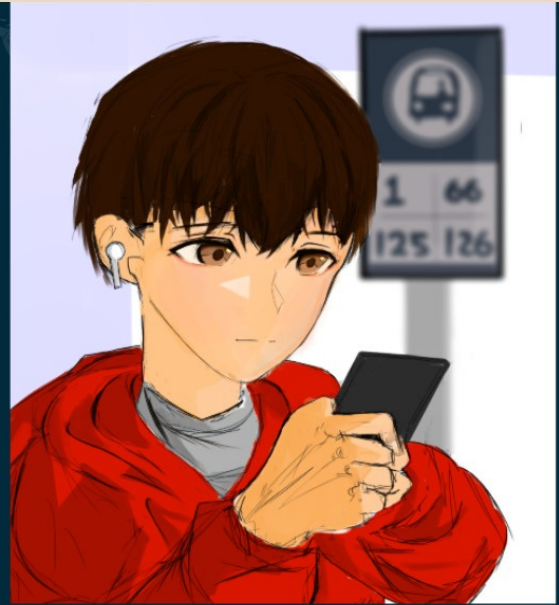
- Getting lost in sights
- Walking in the mornings - every satisfying step in the snow
- Watching the river rush past standing at the bank
- Not doing anything
- Waking up to a faint glow from the windows on my walls
- Staring at the Christmas lights
- The caustic from my glass of water - like the waves are transcending past the glass
- Walking around a supermarket
- Doodling on the edges of my homework
- The morning view - hazy blinding white, sharply enhanced by vivid colours that fade into the edges of slender branches
- Getting lost in a random walk to nowhere
- That feeling when you stay up late
- Watching snow dissipate on the back of my hands



BY: JONATHEN SU

# TYLER THE CREATOR AND THE BRILLIANCE OF IGOR CONTINUED...

»» EMILY CHEN



In this article, I will introduce some of the different pieces a part of the IGOR Album by Tyler the Creator. The season opener, EARTHQUAKE, as discussed in the last edition, introduces us to his love interest in the album, a lover that Tyler is fearful of losing but shakes up his world. Tyler begs the lover not to leave him, "Don't leave, it's my fault." Fault is used as a double entendre, as a fault is a crack that occurs in a body of rock, fitting for a track referencing earthquakes while simultaneously telling us that it is Tyler's fault that the relationship won't work out. Themes of desperation are littered throughout this track, Tyler states that he needs his lover there for when everything eventually comes falling down.

The following track titled "I THINK" begins to introduce us to unhealthy obsessions Tyler has with this person, with lyrics such as "I'm your puppet." indicating that Tyler is so infatuated with this individual that he will do anything they tell him to, like a puppet being controlled on strings, which is again repeated in a later track titled "PUPPET." A reference to Call me by your name is also made with the line "Man, I wish you would call me by your name 'cause I'm sorry." The story of Call me by your name is a short lived romance between two men in a homosexual relationship. This line alludes that Tyler is singing about a man, not surprising as he came out a few years before this album.

The following track is an interlude, summarizing season one of IGOR, the track follows a voice telling Tyler that there will be obstacles, then immediately transitioning to the next track "RUNNING OUT OF TIME." At this point, Tyler is desperate for his lover to love him back, claiming that his time is running out. Through the lyrics in this track Tyler tells us that his lover is not yet out and is in a relationship with a woman, "Are you livin' in pretend?" and "Take your mask off... I need her out the picture." demonstrates this. It is my interpretation that at this point in the album, Tyler is sick of hiding his relationship, and the lover is running out of time before Tyler's jealousy boils over.

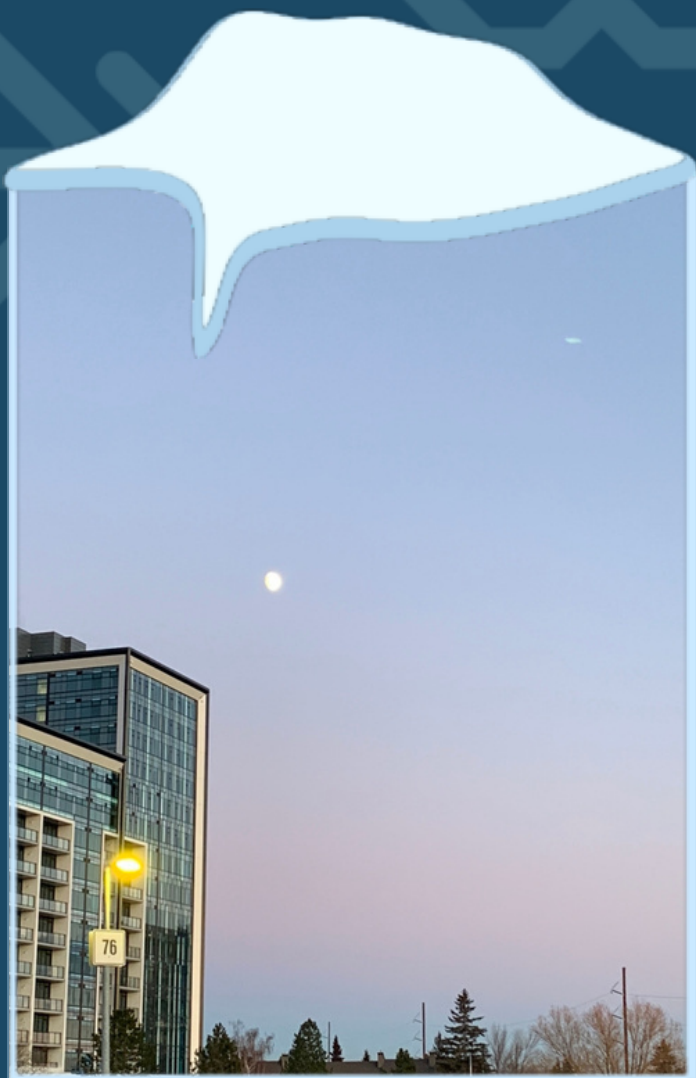
In this next edition, I will continue to delve more into pieces in IGOR, including "NEW MAGIC WAND," "A BOY IS A GUN\*" and the second part of this album.



# 4 PLACES TO VISIT DURING THE WINTER SEASON IN CALGARY

BY BINUDI P.

Calgary is probably best known for its winters, with the unexpected chinooks and the expected 12 inches of snow that will never stop coming until the beginning of May. However, there are plenty of fun things to do during the winter, so you won't get bored. Here are four places you should visit during the winter season in Calgary.



PHOTOGRAPH BY  
LUCY SUN

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## ZOOLIGHTS

Check out Zoolights for a magical Christmas lights experience. With over 200 light figures and an arctic aurora theme, it's perfect for getting into the holiday spirit. Plus, you can enjoy ice skating, axe-throwing, and hot chocolate.

Time & Dates: November 17th, 2023 - January 7th, 2024, 5 pm to 9 pm  
Location: Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo, 210 St. George's Drive NE, Calgary, AB T2E 7V6  
Cost: \$14.95 for children (ages 3-15) and \$21.95 for general (ages 16+)



## ICE SKATING AT OLYMPIC PLAZA

Originally built for the 1988 Olympic Winter Games, the Olympic Plaza is now used for hosting recreational events and festivals. Ice skating is a popular activity here in Calgary!

Time & Dates: November 25th, 2023 - March 17th, 2024, from 10 am to 9 pm  
Location: Olympic Plaza, 228 8 Ave SE, Calgary  
Cost: FREE for everyone

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## ONCE UPON A CHRISTMAS

This is a great place to get into the holiday spirit and learn about Canadian heritage. The event includes horse-drawn carriage rides, crafts, music, and much more!

Time & Dates: Saturdays and Sundays November 25th, 2023 - December 17th, 2023, from 10 am to 4 pm  
Location: 1900 Heritage Dr SW, Calgary, AB T2V 2X3  
Cost: FREE for Infants (3 and under), \$9.95 for both Children (3-15) and Seniors (65+), \$14.95 for General (16-64)



## WINSPORT TUBE PARK

Tubing is like sledding, except in a donut-shaped sled! It's the perfect winter activity to have a blast whilst sliding down a tall hill. However, there is a waiver that you must complete before you enter, as well as booking tickets online. For more information, please visit the following website: [winsport.ca](https://winsport.ca)

Time & Dates: starts on December 23, 2023  
When: Weekdays 11am - 9pm, Weekends 9am - 5pm  
Where: 88 Canada Olympic Rd SW, Calgary, AB T3B 5R5  
Cost: \$29 for Regular ticket, \$18 on a Servus Tube Park Friday (Servus Tube Park Fridays: January 12, 19, 26. February 2, 9, 16, 23. March 1, 8, 15.)

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In conclusion, Calgary has a lot to offer during the winter months, and these four places have something for everyone.



# Travelling to Palestine

By: Noor Ahmed

In just 2010 alone 4.6 million people traveled to Palestine. Palestine is known as 'the cradle of civilization'. It is a major attraction for Jews, Christians, and Muslims because the prophets of these three major religions have had important experiences there. Jerusalem for example is the home of the first church, as Jesus was born there. Palestine also holds the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Cave of the Patriarchs.

Another reason Palestine is so astonishing is the general behavior and attitude the people have. If a country is beautiful the people can ruin it, but in Palestine, they enhance the beauty with every action they take. Palestinians constantly put forward genuine behavior, hospitality, and generosity no matter the situation. This makes their community very strong and trustworthy leaving nobody marginalized or outcasted. They're continually taking action to prioritize their land. Palestinians taking so much care of their olive trees is just one example to show how much they care and generously give back to the environment. Olive trees take thousands of years to grow fully yet many have grown with good health there. Because the majority of Palestinians have deep-rooted ethics stemming from religious beliefs, they have a strong connection to their land and every source coming from it. Also one of the first changes you would notice upon your arrival to Palestine from Canada is the change of weather which enhances their ability to be considerate. Because the weather is generally in a pleasant state, people often spend time together outside further connecting their community.

The kindness given by Palestinians never ends, they channel this compassion through everything. A part of their care goes towards the stray animals found all over the country. They take in the animals and care for them. This is a widespread practice there and is a beautiful example of their morals. Taking care of these animals shows one of the outlets for their sympathy shared everywhere through everything, resulting in a general atmosphere of security, strength, and uplifting support.

Overall, Palestine is well taken care of because of the morals the Palestinians carry. The people are supported through everything with a powerful sense of connection in the community. Everyone is cared for and loved. Palestinians are filled with so much care and compassion which they generously use towards everything. If you travel there, your experience will be special because of the land and people.



# Dog Days

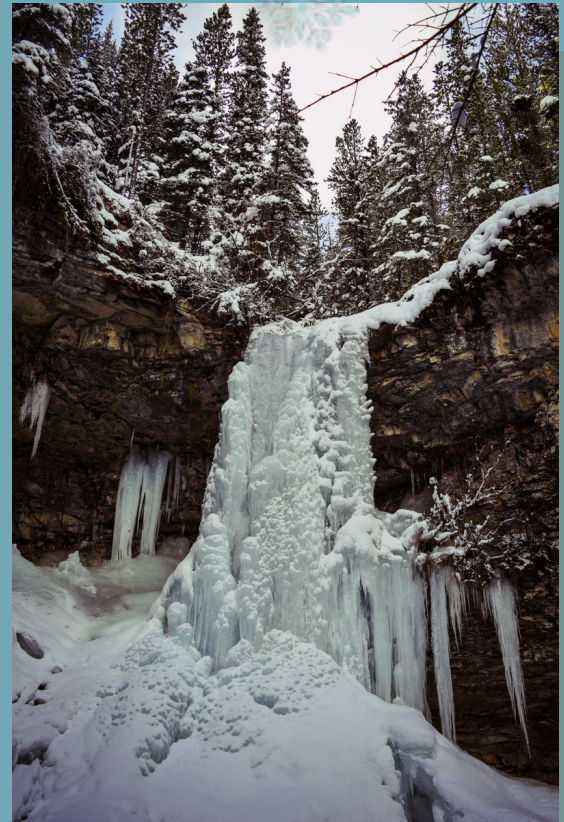
Writer: Elizabeth Ganga

One of my most terrible memories was back in the summer of sixth grade. I was in Mongolia in the poor part of town. The summer was blazing hot and the tan I received still remains prominent on my arms. I was walking outside between apartment buildings and amongst the plethora of stray dogs I spotted a big black one. It was laid prone against a single wall. Maybe to catch a break from the heat; maybe to not have its back open to other mutts. Maybe to have support on its weary bones; or maybe to mimic the feeling of resting against the wall in its previous owners' home.

In my minds-eye, I imagine it as a Saint Bernard-Australian Shepherd mix: a dog that symbolises love, home, and fidelity. It was too ruined to tell with its matted fur and rotted body. I approached it and it looked at me, because a dog on its deathbed could only look. I had no food and was too scared to pet it, so I sat on my haunches and looked at it, because a girl facing a morbid tragedy could only look.

In the summarised words of palaeontologist David Moore: "It is alright if you cannot viscerally connect with incredibly large numbers. To most, or all, they are just numbers." On Earth, the magnitude of pain and suffering is insurmountable. But, as humans, we distance ourselves from this fact and view it only as that: a fact. In Social Studies we learn about statistics that demonstrate examples of the horrors of the world. When we read them, we might seem surprised and disgusted, but we do not shed tears or go catatonic. The human mind, in all its wisdom from the beginning of time cannot ever really know large numbers. It's not built for that. I consider it a blessing, as much as a curse. If we could comprehend the omnipresent pain that is a constant factor in the world, the pain felt would be unbearable. However, world leaders could never act accordingly and respond to this ubiquitous pain.

One of my most terrible memories involves a single dog, and the human brain is equipped to viscerally understand the pain of a single being. I will always mourn this innately unfortunate dog, feeling it to the depths of my heart and echoing through the trees of my lungs.



Photographer: Daniel Yang



# WA SEI!

Two syllables, explosive, Chinese.

Ineffable. The pronunciation is: WAAAA for 0.5 seconds, followed by SEIIIIII for 0.2 seconds—that's the explosive part. Each syllable is emphasized relatively equally, with a little extension in the third part for around another 0.1 second. Pronounced with malleable intensity, this word is versatile, fitting into any interaction, substituting almost any one-sentence response. Witness Lin Dan performing a signature badminton stick smash? WA SEI! Watch a motorcycle rotating a 720? WA SEI! A friend surprises you with a mango pudding? WA SEI!

Then, there's its rival.

Wow.

One syllable, prim, English.

Lame. The beauty of an exclamatory word lies in its ability to showcase emotions. It doesn't matter what word is used or what language is spoken, as long as the idea of displaying emotion is there. As humans, we experience, we excite, we express. Some have 'wow,' some have 'awesome,' some have 'sheeeeeesh,' but 'WA SEI' with its explosive 'SEIIII' has its own flair—a masterpiece of a word.

'WA SEI' has become the most famous exclamatory word in Churchill, spreading from classrooms to classrooms. No one is confused when 'WA SEI' is being shouted—it has become a unique and impactful way of expressing excitement. Some may still use 'wow' or other expressions, but 'WA SEI' adds a special touch, making every exhilarating moment sound a lot more explosive and interesting.

Start WA SEI-ING today!



## FEATURING

Deadpan Discoveries: Breaking Spaghetti By Raif Zaman

WA SEI! - William Zhang

Photo: Amie Naqvi

## Deadpan Discoveries: Spaghetti and Feynman

Welcome to the second edition of Deadpan Discoveries, where I write an article most of you will never bother reading. I have a History IA due in a couple of days so this is going to be quick and badly written. Trigger warning for any Italians, today's topic is about breaking pasta.

Famed physicist and amateur bongo player Richard Feynman once spent an evening cooking some pasta for dinner and came to the shocking realization that spaghetti does not break into two pieces as expected, but into three or more. As the story goes, Feynman then spent the next two hours breaking spaghetti sticks and littering his entire kitchen with them, but he never did figure out why spaghetti has this property. Side note: several Italians reported the gruesome scene of Feynman's kitchen as "the most disturbing thing they had seen since New York's pizza proportions."

Feynman may have never figured out why spaghetti breaks into threes, but a pair of French scientists, Basile Audoly and Sebastien Neukirch, did in 2005. They explained it as such, a stick of dried spaghetti is nothing more than a rod, and by bending to the point of breaking, the resultant snap creates a shock wave that moves through the spaghetti rod and bends it further at a secondary spot, creating the multiple pieces we are left with.

In 2018, MIT students Ronald Heisser and Edgar Gridello wondered if they could manipulate the breaking of a spaghetti rod to only break into two pieces, so like the nerds they are, they built a spaghetti-breaking machine. This machine twisted the spaghetti with an equal force to which it bent it, cancelling out the shock wave and breaking it in two. The Italian Foreign Minister himself said this machine was "a weapon capable of indescribable destruction against all pasta and should be sanctioned by the UN," though unfortunately no formal resolution was ever reached.

Though this whole spaghetti escapade may seem goofy and stupid, it actually holds significant engineering applications and is useful in understanding stresses on fragile materials and structures. I could make another Italian joke but they're getting old... they're pasta their prime (I'm banned from ever entering Italy).

That's all from me. Come back next time if you want to be bored again. Consider donating, they still won't pay me and my family is tired of eating broken spaghetti.





# *Looking For Alaska*

EDITED BY ALIYA NAGHIYEVA

WRITTEN BY HIMANSHI CHOUDHARY

When you think of the word mundane, I picture a cloudy sky with rain trickling down lamp posts but just not enough for it to be considered a rainy day. I also picture walking through the same hallways, opening the same textbooks every single day because that just won't fit in your head, and waking up every Monday morning hyping yourself up to make it to Friday. The verbatim definition of mundane is "lacking interest or excitement; dull" and that gets me thinking that everything becomes mundane at some point. Take a labyrinth, for instance. You enter it all excited looking for a new adventure but after several turns, it seems to look the same, superficial, and doesn't catch your eye anymore.

## MUNDANE.

Alaska from the book *Looking for Alaska* by John Green takes this analogy with her through all her life decisions, her final decision being a bit more indelible than others. The labyrinth analogy is, ironically, from one of her favourite novels. Just like mine. She believes it's something we ought to escape. I wouldn't want to rid you of the excitement I felt while reading this book by spoiling its deftly written plot but I can say with confidence that *Looking for Alaska* takes the title for my personal favorite coming-of-age novel. The story is set in Culver Creek boarding school in Alabama with characters that will feel like home by the time you close it and put it back on your bookshelf. Not only that but it'll leave your mind wandering. One of my favourite parts of the book is when Pudge, the main character, writes his final paper on the question, 'What happens after people die?' in his religious studies class. Death is always an ambiguous subject and the way Pudge interprets it in his book is something I'll leave for you to discover, but it sure did throw me into the realm of how people think. How people think about things that seem to have no meaning. How they create their own beliefs to substitute for questions they can't answer. How they find meaning in the mundane. *Looking for Alaska* is a book that got me lingering on the more philosophical side of life.



# NOTHING GOLD COULD EVER STAY

WRITTEN BY: ABDULLAH AZHAR

Mundane? Artiya never knew what mundane meant. From the moment she was born, all Artiya could recall was her *ecstatic* life. She remembered her family's constant move between countries as if it were a book to be skipped through, the pages ruffling through your fingers, gentle yet sharp, safe yet dangerous.

That was Artiya's father's job. One that kept people, individuals, nations safe, yet a single blow from the opposition could end the lives of several, including himself. The ground felt like a chessboard, one wrong move would offset the trajectory. Unlike a chessboard, you couldn't simply have a *rematch*.

Gazing through the gilded window of her new room, Artiya saw her father leave the vicinity of their residence. Her new nation, or *home*, if she must, was rather spectacular; her house bigger than the last and her view prettier than ever. The golden sunshine often blinded her with its brightness as the birds chirped as if singing to one another, reminding her of the days when peace was imminent, a memory that would stay as such.

As she escaped her conscience's thoughts, Artiya noticed her father entering a black car. She noted her father wave to her, with three fingers instead of the full five, casting her a glimpse of comfort, reminding her that they would soon be reunited, forever and always. She waved back, smiling, using the same three fingers as he had, reminding the herself of the three people her father had most cherished: his wife, Artiya herself, and his nation. Artiya was always confused as to why her father had included a nation as one of his three favourite people—a nation could not be a person—but neither did she inquire nor did her father explain.

Yet, looking back, she always wanted to. As a child, Artiya never realized the connotation that those three fingers had. She never considered asking why she always received the biggest room nor contemplated always being given the biggest slice. They had all seemed *mundane*, expected, an action that deserved no reaction, no thought.

Today, however, she realized the meaning of those actions. She understood why her parents had done as they had done. As she now moved herself to the odd-looking wooden box laid before her, closed it, muttering prayers and then placing it in a designated location within the ground, Artiya had then unlocked the true meaning, saying the words before her engraved into a gray stone. "*Anthony Lockson (1982-2023): Loving husband, doting father and loyal soldier.*" For in a war-stricken land, nothing gold, or no loved figure, could ever stay.



Illustrated By: Adanna Grimes



# Remembering to Be – By: Nola B

I often get caught up in all the things I have to do. I must do my homework, I must get good grades, I must go to volleyball practice, I must clean my room. I am constantly chasing down the end of my to-do list, to the point that I sometimes forget to be. But the moments come, and when they do, and I take a moment to marvel at what it is to be alive, every small piece of life seems wonderful. From the way the snow sparkles just so, or the way the sun filters through my window in the morning. My friend's complete inability to handle spice, the shine of Christmas lights, and the first sip of a warm drink on a cold day. All the boring becomes beautiful when I take the time to remember to be. Budding flowers, tight hugs, warm fires, juice boxes, "good morning"s, chocolates, blue skies, old photos, ripe fruit, loud music, kind words, crowded hallways, empty fields. All these things are why I get up and do, because all the doing is worth the "being".

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## Lady by the Shore – By: Parnian

Marin's eyes focused intently on the horizon of the sea that stretched miles ahead of her. The sound of the waves collapsing onto shore was nothing more than white noise to Marin, who had spent her entire life by the sea. The sun was hidden behind dark clouds, drenching Marin's world in a lifeless gray. She could feel the cold breeze of coastal winter brush against her skin; her bangs briefly clouded her field of vision as the wind picked up. She blinked, and as she opened her eyes again, she noticed a new shape had taken form in the right corner of her eye. A young woman in a sunhat stood beside her, staring at the waves with curious satisfaction. Marin, too preoccupied with her own thoughts, snapped back to reality at the sight of another person in her vicinity. She observed the lady briefly; the oddity of wearing a sunhat on a cloudy day piqued Marin's interest. Perhaps the woman felt Marin's watchful eyes on her, for she turned her head around to face Marin. Their eyes met for a moment, and the woman smiled—it was the kind of friendly gesture that strangers often offer—and Marin immediately looked away. She was not the type of person to strike up a conversation, especially not with someone she hardly knew.

"Do you come here often?" the woman asked, her voice softly pleasant.

"I do," Marin replied awkwardly; her words were barely audible, but it would be rude not to answer. "I just come here whenever I want some fresh air," she added.

"I just moved here recently, and I've never lived by the seaside. It's so nice to live by the sea, isn't it?" The woman beamed.

"I guess... until it rains, which is likely to happen soon." Marin stated while inspecting the sky. The wind picked up significantly, and a droplet of water fell on Marin's forehead. Bit by bit, droplets began to fall, and soon they would start pouring. "There's a storm coming. You should probably head home now," Marin advised the woman.

"See you around!" the woman said with a smile as she clutched her sunhat in one arm before parting ways with Marin.

Marin realized she hadn't caught the young woman's name but doubted she would ever see her again. It was a small victory for her, though; Marin had spoken to a stranger for the first time in quite a while.





# Wolf

Eva Whyte

If I had to pin my current predicament back to a single moment, it would be the first time Lilith spoke to me.

*One year ago.*  
“Hey!”

“Aden, right? Do you have a pen?” the girl beside me whispered.

I was surprised to see it was Lilith speaking to me. We shared many classes together over the past four years but she had never spared me a second glance. She was always wrapped up in club activities or other group affairs. I dug through my bag, finding a pen at the bottom of it.

“Here you go,” I said, passing it to her.

She flashed me a smile and a thanks before returning to her notes.

During lunch she slid onto the bench next to me.

“I forgot to return this to you earlier, thanks for the save!”

“Oh, no problem,” I nodded, tossing the pen back into my bag.

At the end of the day I was surprised to see her waiting outside my classroom. She waved me over just as the professor let us go.

“Um, hey Lilith, did you need something?” I asked.

“Nothing really, I just heard that you need help with your lit project”

I blinked, while true, I wondered where exactly she heard that?

“I just wanted to offer my services,” she continued.

“I, um- that would be great actually,” I shrugged. It was impeccable timing, I was just considering a second perspective to round out my ideas.

“We could grab coffee then get to the project” I said.

“Sounds perfect,” she replied, lips stretching over her teeth.

Over the next few weeks we got closer. She always seemed to show up at the perfect time. Our schedules slowly started to sync up, or maybe I just started noticing her in more of my classes.

In the blink of an eye, a whole year passed by, then things took a turn for the worst. If I had only never sat next to her in that class, rejected her help with my project. But, it was too late to change anything now, evident by my being under lock and key in her basement. If only I hadn’t ignored the blatant warning bells. It seemed that even the most innocuous of actions, the seemingly inconsequential, could ripple out. An ask for a pen might actually be a ploy to lure and string along a lamb, right into the jaws of a wolf.





Photo by Faiza

### Lovesick By: Leanne Getachew

Today is December 3rd. A day when you would get a sweater from someone who loves you.

As I woke up this morning I knew that I would not get a sweater. Maybe I could find someone to care about me the way those couples do in those trashy Christmas movies, because for once I would like to be "the poem and not just the poet."

I would like to take a break from all of this and just live in peace and quiet, but I know that I am equipped to live alone.

I would like to look at myself and not see my imperfections, To have someone care about me the way my cat does without breaking my heart.

I want someone to see me as perfect so that when I don't look at myself that way they can tell me that they think I'm perfect.

I want to be everywhere but nowhere at once.

I want to live in the space between my cupboards and turn off my brain,

To travel the world and be around people,  
And sometimes I would just like to sleep forever  
To live my life without responsibilities,

Sometimes I wonder if I disappeared, would anybody notice?

Do I even know enough about myself to know what I'm looking for?  
If I changed something about myself, am I doing it for myself or am I doing it to please others?

And if I find what I'm looking for, will it break my heart?  
Will they break my heart?

Can a heart still break if it has already been broken?  
Is there anything left to even be broken?

The questions that ring in my head are never ending and I can never find my answers even as I

ruminate over them for years, I can never find my answers.

Why am I always the one writing down my feelings, because if I don't I will explode.

But why has nobody done that for me?

"I will always be the artist but never the muse."

For once I would like to be loved the way I love the people around me.

### Pathological Demand Avoidance By: Aaira Memon

A lot of kids don't like a subject at school. Maybe it is math or maybe it is language arts or maybe you aren't into P.E and would rather sit out or skip it. You don't do those things because you don't like them, but for a lot of us we can find one way or another to make the work interesting and doable.

That is if you don't have the pathological demand avoidance profile of autism.

Pathological demand avoidance is when a person avoids anything they feel they "have" to do. Once a task becomes a "demand", these people do everything in their power to avoid it. They may negotiate a later time to do it, and then just not end up doing it, they may use fantasy and roleplay and act as someone else who does not have these demands (which is the case with children) or in our case they may just procrastinate. This happens even with non homework and smaller tasks too, such as brushing your teeth or even eating and using the washroom.

This behavior stems from anxiety.

Pathological demand avoidance is a way to feel in control. This is also why people with PDA autism tend to have significant mood swings when their things go missing or when someone is trying to make them do things they don't wanna despite other sophisticated avoidance attempts. They don't feel in control when someone else tries to force them into doing things and they feel a loss of it when they lose something they own. Another behavior that shows this is controlling and clingy behavior in relationships. Oftentimes, the individual with PDA will obsess over a person and seem needy or manipulative in their interactions. They may learn everything about that person and talk to them a lot and notice small things that make them feel rejected, which makes them feel out of control of their relation to the person as a result. This mimics the behaviors found in borderline personality disorder, a cluster B personality disorder characterized by intense mood swings and push-pull behavior. A person with pathological demand avoidance could be misdiagnosed with BPD due to their sociability and their clinginess and obsession with a specific person.

This is the description of PDA I could fit in this article. I may write more about it later on. Thankyou for reading!



-Farah-

# TGCF Rants: Justified Revenge

**WARNING: CONTAINS MAJOR SPOILERS FOR THE SERIES “TIAN GUAN CI FU” OR “HEAVEN OFFICIALS’ BLESSING”**

HE XUAN IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL CHARACTERS IN THIS SERIES. HIS BETRAYAL TOWARDS SHI QINGXUAN WAS AN EXTREMELY HEART-WRENCHING MOMENT THAT MANY FANS HAVE DIFFERING VIEWS ON. WERE HIS ACTIONS JUSTIFIED? OR IS HE UNFORGIVABLE?

HE XUAN WAS AN INTELLIGENT INDIVIDUAL WITH A PROMISING FUTURE, BUT HAD TERRIBLE BAD LUCK. WHENEVER ANYTHING GOOD HAPPENED TO HIM, THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE SOMETHING EVEN WORSE TO COUNTER IT. HE WASN'T ABLE TO BECOME A SCHOLAR EVEN THOUGH HE ACED HIS IMPERIAL EXAM, HIS SISTER AND FIANCE WERE FORCED TO BE CONCUBINES, AND HE WAS THROWN INTO JAIL AND TORTURED—JUST TO NAME A FEW EVENTS. THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE A VOICE IN HIS HEAD THAT TAUNTED HIM ABOUT HIS ACHIEVEMENTS, MAKING HE XUAN EXTREMELY STRESSED AND ANXIOUS. IT TURNED OUT THAT HE WAS A VICTIM OF A MALICIOUS SPIRIT, CALLED THE REVEREND OF EMPTY WORDS. THE SPIRIT CREATED FEAR IN THE VICTIM IT LATCHED ONTO, AND HARASSED THEM INTO BELIEVING THEY WOULD LOSE EVERYTHING THEY CHERISH.

HE XUAN EVENTUALLY DIED AND BECAME A GHOST TO UNCOVER WHY THIS HAPPENED SINCE THIS SITUATION FELT ODDLY STRANGE. AFTER INVESTIGATING, HE FOUND OUT THAT HIS OWN FATE WAS ACTUALLY SWITCHED WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S: SHI QINGXUAN.

SHI QINGXUAN WAS THE ORIGINAL VICTIM OF THE REVEREND OF EMPTY WORDS. HIS OLDER BROTHER, SHI WUDU, HAD ALREADY ASCENDED INTO GODHOOD AND WANTED THE SPIRIT TO STOP TORMENTING HIS BROTHER. HE ENDED UP SECRETLY USING AN UNORTHODOX METHOD TO SWITCH SHI QINGXUAN'S FATE TO ERADICATE THE SPIRIT. ORIGINALLY, HE XUAN WAS SUPPOSED TO ASCEND TO GODHOOD, BUT AFTER THE FATE SWITCH, SHI QINGXUAN WAS THE ONE WHO ASCENDED.

HE XUAN GREW EXTREMELY RESENTFUL AND VOWED TO GET REVENGE ON SHI WUDU, WHICH HE DID. HE BEHEADED SHI WUDU AND STRIPPED SHI QINGXUAN AWAY FROM HIS GODHOOD. THIS WAS ABSOLUTELY JUSTIFIED KNOWING THAT HE XUAN WAS ROBBED OF A GLORIOUS FATE AS A GOD. HE DESERVED TO BRING JUSTICE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY, WHO ALSO SUFFERED AND EVENTUALLY DIED AS A RESULT OF THE SPIRIT. ALTHOUGH I DON'T BELIEVE REVENGE WAS THE BEST OUTLET FOR HIS PENT UP RESENTMENT, HE XUAN STILL HAD EVERY RIGHT TO AVENGE HIMSELF FOR ALL THE TORTURE CAUSED BY SHI WUDU.



-Sarah Peng-



# Grip and Grin: Ending Slab's Cycle of Trauma

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By Aurora

Welcome back Bulldogs, to everyone's favourite column! This edition, we're going to talk about a special type of climbing: slab climbing. It requires meticulous foot placements and careful movements. Sounds boring, right? Anyways, because of the relatively "friendly" angle that slab is at, holds are bound to be worse by design. Here's where foot placement, and body positioning matter tremendously. Sadly, success on slab isn't as dependent on raw strength as overhang. However tedious, this difference does lead to a more well rounded development of skills.

## Definitions

Slab: a wall whose angles are less than 90 degrees.

Also known as a really steep hill.

Campus: climbing depending entirely on upper body strength

Volume: multi-sided extensions of the wall, often used to make climbs more interesting

First thing's first: doing a two hour campusing session is not going to improve your slab climbing. What will improve it, is improving footwork over volumes and smaller holds. Don't forget to keep those hips close to the wall! This is just general advice; don't sue me if it doesn't work.

### Volumes:

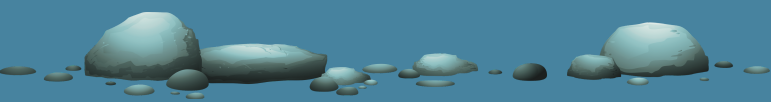
The best way to stay on these holds is to maximize your friction. To do that, simply let the back of your heel drop, instead of standing on your toes. That way, a larger area of your shoes are working to keep you on the wall.

### Tiny footholds:

Because of their sheer size (aka miniscule, basically useless), we (everyone) often have a hard time trusting these footholds. This causes us to put less weight on those holds, which gives us less friction over them, which increases the likelihood of slipping off. Dynamic climbers especially tend to be light on their feet, which contributes to the likelihood of falling off these. Basically, trust the feet. Another way to increase our friction is, like before, increasing the surface of the shoe that comes in contact with the hold. Instead of placing the tip of the shoe on the hold, place it on the wall the hold comes in contact with. That way, you "create" extra space on the hold for your shoe.

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Now, all that advice sounds all fine and everything, but it doesn't address the real problem: falling, while dragging your shins and elbows down the face of the wall. Maybe a strategically placed hold right below you took a liking to some select body parts. Slab is notorious for stomach-dropping falls, and heart-wrenching losses of skin. Well, loving slab is like Stockholm Syndrome: once you get kidnapped, you never want to leave.





- LUCY SUN



SHE WOKE UP THIS MORNING, WITHOUT A SMILE ON HER FACE,  
THOUGH THERE WERE NO CLOUDS IN THE SKY,  
NO RAIN POURING DOWN,  
WITHOUT THE INSPIRATION OF SPONTANEITY  
TO GUIDE HER THROUGH HER DAY,  
THERE WAS NOTHING SHE WISHED FOR MORE,  
THAN TO BE JUST A DULL MASS OF CLAY.

SHE WENT FROM PLACE TO PLACE, PERSON  
TO PERSON  
EACH EXPERIENCE THE SAME, HER LACK OF  
EXCITEMENT STARTING TO WORSEN  
WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT, EXCEPT A  
SERIES OF PROSAIC WORDS FOLLOWING,  
ONE. AFTER. THE. OTHER.

WHY DID SHE FEEL LIKE THIS?  
SHE FELT HER CHEST SIGH, KNOWING TIME  
WAS STANDING STILL.  
THE SECOND HAND WAS NOTHING BUT A  
LIFELESS LINE,  
AND TO HER DISMAY, IT FELT LIKE A FOREVER  
CLIMB.

SHE THOUGHT IT WAS JUST BODY PARTS  
THAT COULD TRULY BECOME NUMB.  
SHE DIDN'T KNOW THE SAME WENT FOR HER  
HEART SHE FELT SO DUMB.  
BUT ALAS, THE DAY WENT ON, AND SHE HAD  
TALLIED IT UP. SUCH MONOTONOUS  
CONVERSATIONS  
ONE. AFTER. THE. OTHER.

SHE FILLED A GLASS OF WATER,  
ONLY HALF-FULL  
AND THEN IT HIT HER,  
AND HER GLASS HALF-FULL BECAME BUT A  
BLUR

SHE WOKE UP THIS MORNING, WITH A SMILE  
ON HER FACE.  
THOUGH THERE WERE CLOUDS IN THE SKY,  
AND RAIN POURING DOWN,  
SHE FELT IMPULSIVE AND EXCITED,  
TO TACKLE THE DAY HERSELF, SHE SEEMED  
DELIGHTED.

SHE WENT FROM PLACE TO PLACE, PERSON  
TO PERSON  
CREATING EACH EXPERIENCE INTO A  
DIFFERENT VERSION.  
WITH EACH A SENSUAL SLANT, AND AN  
ABNORMAL INTERACTION,  
ONE. AFTER. THE. OTHER.

SHE NO LONGER FELT SUCH ANONYMITY.  
HER RECOLLECTION OF TIME STANDING  
STILL  
WAS A FOGGY IMAGE, A FLICKERING LIGHT,  
A FADING BREATH, A WRONG MADE RIGHT.

SHE WAS NOT NUMB, NOR WAS HER HEART.  
SHE UNDERSTOOD THIS NOW, SHE  
DETECTED SHE WAS SMART.  
SHE COULD SEE THE CONTINUOUS DAYS AS  
BURDENS, OR SHE COULD VIEW THEM AS  
GIFTS,  
ONE. AFTER. THE. OTHER

ANOTHER GLASS OF WATER,  
ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP.  
BECAUSE THE TRANSPARENT ABYSS,  
STOPPED HER FROM FEELING LIFELESS,  
BUT RATHER FEELING BLISS.

- HANANIAH H

ONE AFTER  
THE OTHER



# Fantasy OR Reality

**BY SIENA NORTON**

Think about what you do when you first wake up every day. Do you brush your teeth, get ready for the day ahead, or perhaps eat a meager breakfast before running out the door to catch the bus? It probably gets frustrating, at times, doing the exact same thing every day - the same boring, monotonous rituals day after day. You probably wish you were at Disneyland right now, escaping the real world for a little while. Replacing pragmatism with fantasy. If you do, you're certainly not alone. Routine can often feel draining, like it steals a little more of our energy each passing day. But believe it or not, there is meaning in these daily rituals that we have become so accustomed to. Every time we perform our daily routines, there is someone somewhere in the world wishing they could have a little more predictability in their life.



**BY EBUBE ABARIKWU**

It is said that the average human being works for about 90 000 hours throughout the course of their lifetime, meaning that around 60 percent of their day is consumed by mundane tasks. Even a well accomplished pianist actually spends most of their time memorizing music and sitting in their studio finding ways to improve their technique and musicianship. Only 1 percent of their time is actually spent under a spotlight. Even Neil Armstrong himself spent a majority of his time studying rudimentary geology and developing muscle memory before actually walking on the moon.

Now for my advice to you. Remember, reality always comes before fantasy. Be grateful for the structure in your life, but make everyday a little exciting in its own way. The possibilities are endless when it comes to adding a little spark of excitement to our daily lives. You might be jealous of someone like Neil Armstrong or Amelia Earhart, but who says that you cannot achieve something amazing in your life as well? Amazing things can come out of the mundane if you let it. It is those with a craftsmanship/growth mindset that will ultimately achieve their lifelong goals and aspirations. As said by authors Sean Dorraice Kelly and Hubert Dreyfus, "While most of us aren't stonemasons building a cathedral or astronauts going to the moon, what we do every day, no matter how tedious, is inextricably linked to something bigger than the task itself." I'll end this column by asking one last question, fantasy or reality? Dream big and embrace the journey, no matter how long it may be.



# WINTER EDITION '23

BY GORANKSHI NANDRAJOG, EDITED BY EVAN LI

Hello and welcome back to the Churchill Chronicle Advice Column, where we give unqualified advice because that's the only kind you can get for free around here. For this edition, with final exams approaching, you'll notice an academic theme amongst these questions. I thought we'd provide the student population with some helpful tips on the best ways to try and survive finals week.

## **How do you write a good essay? (anonymous)**

Listen, the most I've ever gotten on an essay is a 90, but:

1. Make sure you care about the topic you're writing about, if you don't care about it, you're not going to make a convincing argument.
2. To do that, look for holes in your statements, try to make it bulletproof.
3. Stick to the traditional format and dig deep into your lexicon. That's the basics to a good essay.

## **Do you think students should have finals and diplomas even when it causes so much stress? - unknown**

This debate has been around since the establishment of the modern education system. On one hand, standardized testing isn't very inclusive toward different learner profiles, but in other ways it helps to provide a lot of feedback about how much knowledge students actually retain and store in their long term memory throughout semesters. Weighing the pros against the cons, I think the best solution would just be to find a sort of middle ground.

## **How should I study through winter break? (anonymous)**

The problem most people have with consistently studying is a lack of motivation. Remind yourself why it's important to study. Research study techniques, and try a few out to see what works best for you. While studying, it's best to work smarter, not harder. I personally recommend the Pomodoro technique.

And to end on a philosophical note -

## **Why do people hate change despite it being so important (anonymous)**

A lot of people may view change as a disruptor of the routine that they are comfortable and familiar with, but it's important to remember that change brings opportunities to grow and experience new things. In a way, life is just a series of changes that we must make the best of. We'd all do well to keep that in mind heading into the second semester.

That's all for this time peeps, this has been rather serious and somber, so I promise to be even more ridiculous next time to make up for it. And guys, please stop putting in requests about how to get your crush to like you, I can only answer that so many times. I'll see you next time folks.





*Photo and Design  
by Nathan Niu and  
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