## CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Crossed Sabres 2017

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## **COLOPHON**

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## POLICY

Crossed Sabres encourages submissions from all LCHS students and staff. All works showcased in this magazine reflect the opinions of the individual and are not necessarily those of the staff, administration, or student body. Selections need to be appropriate for a high school student body and fall within the parameters of the Loudoun County School Board guidelines. All submissions are critiqued anonymously; are edited for spelling, grammar, and clarity; and are subject to approval by school administration.  $\Delta$ 

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

#### **CROSSING BOUNDARIES** leah bernstein and elyse kimball

We originally conceived our theme, crossing boundaries, to encourage student expression without the restrictions of a narrow theme. When we received works spanning the gamut of human emotions, it became clear that "crossing boundaries" would be about personal growth throughout high school.

The magazine begins from the point of view of a high school freshman and highlights the insights gained through senior year. It shows the overall crossing of the boundary from adolescence into young adulthood. The darker nature of the stories in the beginning transitions to more optimistic ones in the end, mirroring the way we grow through high school: the delta, the change. The final two pieces show that there are still unanswered questions, reminding us that we continue learning and maturing throughout life, not just in high school.

Paper cranes make an appearance several times throughout the magazine. In Japanese folklore, it is said that if you make a thousand paper cranes you will receive a wish, or even be granted eternal happiness. This visual motif reinforces our larger metaphor of working hard to achieve happiness in the end, which is evident through the progression of our magazine.

This magazine was made possible by our wonderful sponsor Mrs. Egger and our hardworking staff members, all of whom assisted tremendously with the production of this magazine.  $\Delta$ 



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### FRESHMAN

#### kylie dunne

New School, a small fish in a big pond, Feeling fear because I didn't know what's beyond. You could see the nerves in everyone's eyes, As the new chapter in our life arrives.

We were all tiny compared to the upperclassmen, They towered over us like a mouse to Big Ben. I felt small and powerless, Like high school was going to be one big mess.

Our first homecoming came around, I felt a subtle awkwardness in the background. Young freshman trying to fit the high school mold, Trying to rush growing up and become old.

I saw everyone try so hard to be someone they are not, I saw most of them change by a lot. Maybe this is how people find who they truly are, But I saw people stray pretty far.

I admit it I tried to fit in with the crowd, But I could tell I wasn't allowed. When I would be who I am, and feel free, People of high school didn't understand me. By the end of the year I felt I was on the outside, At least I could say that I tried. I wanted people to see someone that's real, Everyone wanted someone fake, it was surreal. I realized how much I had grown this year, Now I stood with no fear. Being myself wasn't enough, But I was going to be myself even when times were rough.

I knew I had to stick with what I felt was right, Hopefully that would keep my future at school bright.  $\Delta$ 



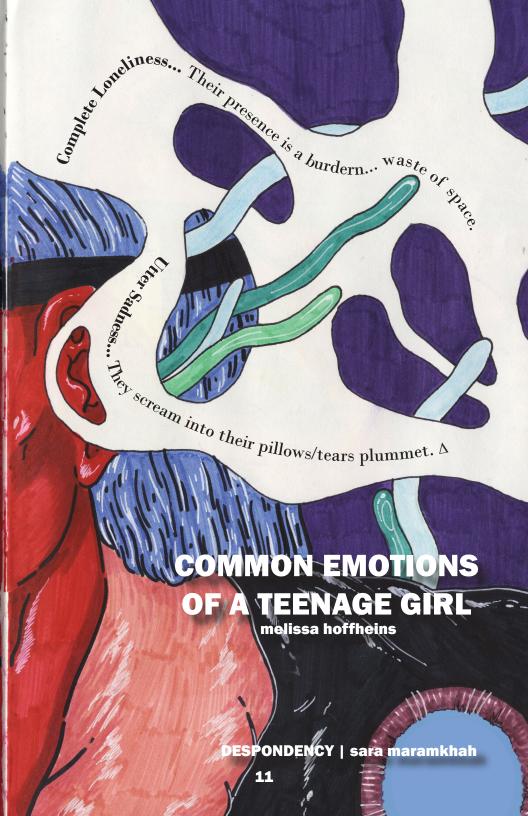
THERE CAN'T BE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER | sara maramkhah

## **WELCOME ME HOME**

#### arwen kaleshefski

I'm at recess. I think about going home And I start crying. Crying because she won't be there. To give me my snack with her warm smile. To ask me how my day has been. The school bully sees me and starts towards me, Like a lion honing in on his prey. "What's wrong, crybaby? Can't find your mommy?" That only makes me cry harder. "Just leave her alone." My friends shoo him off like a pesky insect, But they don't explain the crying. They know how I hate to see The hateful faces turn to pity, as they realize Mama won't be there to welcome me home.  $\Delta$ 





## THE TOP SHELF

haley hodge

How can she explain to you what she does not know? How can you ask her what she was trying to keep below Below the surface of her heart,

Below the surface of the very thing that's trying to tear her apart? She stitches up the hole, but it just keeps getting wider. She tries to suppress what's inside, but it crawls back like a spider. The heart is a curious thing that can't be understood. The heart holds feelings for things that she never could. That's why she keeps it locked for fear it might get loose And release the very thing she hides to avoid abuse. They say she is cold and calloused And all she holds for them is malice, So she stays inside herself And keeps her heart up on a shelf, The very top shelf so it can't be reached, In a locked box so it can't be breached; But he found the key And, climbing to the top, he set it free. He cleared off the dust and peered inside At the still heart that had been tossed aside. It was dark and dull from all the years it'd been hidden. Of all beats of life it had been ridden

He gazed at the girl below, then descended to the ground

And held out the heart without a sound.

She was tentative at first, not wanting it near;

The mere thought of all it beheld was her worst fear.

But as she took the heart in her trembling hands, the dull sheen had all but disappeared

And the colors again ran clear.

She took a deep breath and placed the heart back in her chest, and closing her eyes

She felt the warmth of a sunrise.

She spun around slowly, her arms stretched wide:

A smile lit up her face, for now she no longer had to hide.  $\Delta$ 





I try, I try, I try, But this pain won't subside.
I feel completely empty.
You have taken what's left of me.

The **cold cripples** my bones, For **you're making me** feel all alone. The **spring** has never felt so much **sorrow**, You have left me with a love **embargo**.

The tears roll off my cheeks, Hitting the crisp white pillow sheets. I know you're going to leave, But I don't want to believe.

Every night there is a **Storm** on my face, I now love the **salt taste**. Salt as **bitter** as your heart, But you will always be my **favorite** piece of **art**. I try, I try, I try, I try, Drowning in my nightly cries. I decide this is enough, I'm going to call your bluff.  $\Delta$ 



### FIRESTORM cheryl anne fries

We didn't know it would be our last sunset at the lake. We didn't know we'd huddled around the campfire for s'mores and ghost stories for the last time.

As we lay on the rocky sand, serenaded by the music of the Earth and gentle lapping of the lake, we didn't know it was the last time we'd see the stars. We didn't know it was the last time the moonlight would cast summer shadows across the grassy fields.

If we did, maybe we would have spent that last night trying to remember everything from the way the cicadas screamed in chorus to the way the sun rose above the hills in a burst of light like a prisoner tasting freedom. Maybe we would have tried to memorize the world around us instead of running around blind. I would have.

I would have spent the rest of my life memorizing the laughs of my parents and the look of unfettered joy in my dog's eyes as he dragged a branch twice his size from the lake. But you can't hide in memories; the Firestorm taught me that.

Its clouds of fire spread across the land, turning everything it touched to ash, leaving nothing but embers on stagnant winds. Our lake dried in the first onslaught of the Firestorm, leaving nothing but the scant supplies in our basement.

I was surrounded by cool concrete, barefoot and happy, my family playing in the lake, when I learned Death didn't come cloaked in black. Death came in a blinding flash of orange, as if Hell exploded from the flimsy blanket of soil upon which we walked. The explosion threw the world to its knees, demanding a final confession as Death swarmed, drenched in orange. Its scorching, ballooning clouds swept across the Earth.

Unprotected from the surge, people vanished where they knelt, people swept away by the copper flash, leaving nothing behind but their final footsteps in the scorched soil of a now dying Earth. The hot light burned brighter than the sun ever did, its flames singing a tale of hatred and annihilation. It set the sky ablaze and painted the land with crimson shadows dark as blood.

Gone now are the green hills and white roses framing the dead lakebed, cracked like a shattered mirror. Gone are the songs of birds and crickets, ashen wings and silenced songs leaving the frightful quiet for the song of orange death.

The once cool air burns my lungs as I breathe fire from the sky. My skin bubbles and vision swims, as if the decimated world I loved was lashing back at the lone survivor of the ones who did this to Her.

Because we did. We dropped it.

We dropped the Firestorm.

We always said the world would end, the aliens would invade, the sun would expand. Did we ever really think we would annihilate ourselves? How could we have believed we deserved the responsibility of holding the literal key to our own fate?

How could we not have seen the greatest danger? Ourselves.  $\Delta$ 



### TECHNOPHILE leah bernstein

Fingers, delicate and blithe, Smack haphazardly against glass, Despite the firm, directed stare That seems to come out of thin air.

Frequent distracting vibrations pull away A mind otherwise pure and content. Eyes project the light made by men Instead of meeting man made with eyes.

There's an attempt at chatter, like a morning alarm, Attempt after attempt after fruitless attempt, But such work is met with halfhearted care, Brushed off with the push of the snooze button.

I'm here. I took my time and energy to be here. But though I've put my phone aside to talk, You have not.  $\Delta$ 



### WORDS giana ferraiolo

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood..." "Once upon a time in a land far, far away..." "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..."

> A poem, a tale, a story too. Words flit through her head as she closes her eyes, Smiling at all of the adventures she'd been on.

But she'd **NEVEr** left her little **room**. A

### **FLASHES OF BRILLIANCE**

## NECROPOLIS

mary rossi One day up in Heaven, God woke up on the wrong side of the bed and decided, on a whim, that the planet Earth was ready for its first apocalypse. Δ

## KEY TO LIFE

What's the key to life when I'm trapped in these city lights? No privacy that's right; I'm pleading the ninth and you'll leave my rights... Δ MERRY-GO-ROUND giana ferriaolo NOISES, people talking in made up words Crowded, never alone. The whole world is with me Large, I'm an ant living in a place built by giants... Δ

# MOONLIGHT

My face was awash with the light of the moon... Those soft rays cradled me closer and the man of the moon smiled kindly down letting me know that my journey was over and there I rested... My face awash in moonlight. Δ

#### IN THE AIR | genevieve olsen

### QUEEN sarah van hook

July 6, 1553

The sun did not reflect against the wary stones of Greenwich Palace; cowering behind the clouds, it awaited the coming storm.

There were no birds humming; the summer wind had ceased dancing. The water in the lakes stood still. The flag had fallen against the pole, dead. Few lights flickered in Greenwich Palace as the Regency Council prepared to attend the sick King.

From inside the Palace, John Dudley, first Duke of Northumberland, scoffed as his servants buttoned him in the finest attire, his dark eyes wincing every time they pinched his skin too harshly.

The rather tense morning at Greenwich was pleasant for the Dudley family all across England. King Edward VI's illness had worsened throughout the early hours of the morning, and John Dudley could taste power. The King, in his miserable mind, had declared that his niece, Lady Jane Grey, shall succeed the throne after his inevitable passing, completely ignoring the position of his half-sisters – particularly that of Mary.

But the Catholic Princess had already claimed that she was the rightful heir to the throne, and genetically, she was; no one could dispute that. Mary had even begun assembling an army in Suffolk, whispering a declaration of war.

And much of the country was on her side.

Dudley had to hide his tremble of fear that ripped through his body – if Princess Mary would take the throne, he would be convicted of high treason; over the course of this dynasty, noblemen had learned not to dare cross the royal family – particularly the kin of the violent Henry VIII.

Dudley rubbed his fingers across his neck; he tried not to think about the sick, young King and the inexperienced and naïve heir to the throne.

Thomas Darcy peeked his head through the door. Dudley

waved his hand in dismissal at the many servants. "Leave us," he commanded, his voice leaking with vice.

The Duke of Northumberland was not particularly fond of Thomas Darcy, for he lacked ambition – his political position secured merely as the cousin of the late Jane Seymour. His usefulness was limited to his support of Lady Jane Grey.

"What do you want?" Dudley demanded.

The inferior man gulped, sweat trickling down his forehead. "I am the bearer of bad news, my lord," Darcy stuttered. Nerves crawled down his throat.

"Well get on with it!" Dudley bellowed, slipping on his elegant robes. He spun back around, ignoring Darcy's terrified stance.

Darcy shuddered. "I am afraid that I am the bearer of bad news," he repeated. Darcy fiddled with the sleeves of his extravagant robes. He opened his mouth to say something, but shut it again. "It seems, that perhaps, we are King-less."

Dudley seized his movements. His eyes evolved to a shade as dark as the thunderclouds rolling across the sky. "What do you mean?" The Duke snarled, flaring his canines.

"King Edward passed away in his sleep," he whispered, his voice wavering. "My condolences."

Dudley bounded past the man. He felt no grief, no empathy as servants sobbed, no sadness as the flag of Great Britain was lowered from the pole on top of Greenwich Palace.

He only felt a seductive lust of power, the whimsical thought of his niece's coronation poison in his head. He was going to be the uncle – one of the official and personal advisors to the first Queen of England – Dudley would have ultimate supremacy.

A smirk graced his devious lips, redness flushing in his cheeks.

The teenager was deathly pale, the deceased King's hands resting on either side of his body, his blonde hair colorless and his face thin. The physician's voice cracked. "Time of death, 7:38 a.m." The physician stood up from the bed and collected his



tools. Everyone sensed that death lingered in the room.

The physician placed his shaking hand on the Duke's shoulder, squeezing the bone gently. The expert in medicine ignored social protocols. "I am so sorry, milord," the physician said and left the room with the soul of the King.

The doors of the bedchamber bounded open, and dominant footsteps roared into the room. The Duke of Northumberland twirled around, his irises widening. Consternation swarmed in his gut.

William Paulet marched into the corridor, his ego barely fitting through the door. Being one the judges on the infamous Boleyn trial, the man claimed power like it was his own child. He was rumored to denounce his Protestant beliefs, converting back to Catholicism; he was rumored to be Princess Mary's right hand man –

Dudley cowered in horror.

Paulet cocked a brow, his handsome face contorting with arrogance. "Time of death?" he inquired.

Dudley couldn't respond, so the terrified Darcy did: "7:38, your grace."

A sneer tugged on the edge of Paulet's chapped lips as he circled the bed, his long finger tracing the wood of the bedframe.

"What are we going to do?" Darcy's voice trembled. His eyes bolted around the room but never reached the dead King. He took off his hideous hat, resting it against his chest, raising and falling rapidly with each outrageous breath.

Dudley lifted his head, not daring to glance at Paulet. "We must inform the heir to the throne – Lady Jane Grey – she will need to come to London immediately."

"No," Paulet interrupted, staring at Edward. The word rumbled throughout the room. Dudley's heart plummeted. "We must inform the rightful heir to the throne – the one whose throne is her birthright and the only legitimate child of King Henry VIII – the only one who'll restore God in the monarchy."

Paulet chortled as he thought of Princess Mary, who was currently assembling an army to seize her throne. He glanced up, and Dudley was afraid of the power sparking in his eyes.

"We must inform the Queen."  $\Delta$ 

### UNDER THE SUN gabrielle havens

So there is nothing new under the sun, And these words that I say are nothing new. So everything there is to do's been done, But we know words said twice are no less true.

If 'neath the sun, new things—they are no more, Then let our path be lit by way of stars. Let's run into night's always open door And live beneath the glowing light of Mars.

And there, at last, we'll build a city bright; In darkness we will craft our empire's wall, But this will only manufacture light Where all things new—like cities—surely fall.

So sad! But it's impossible to keep. We only find true darkness in our sleep.  $\triangle$ 

SINK | claudia jimenez

## **Blue Red Moon**

#### gabrielle havens

Once upon a blue red moon On a night in early June, The stars were out and shining bright. It almost seemed the perfect night. But then a man all dressed in red, Who wore a crown upon his head, He screamed and yelled for all to hear, "The end, the end, the end is near!!" The end, indeed, was near for him. His days were numbered. Time was thin, For in the shadows something lay, Anticipating future prey. Its claws were iron, tongue was flame, A creature known by many names, With wings that stretched across the sky Bellowing his mighty cry. Iron clashed and fire spread. The night fell silent, all lay dead. And now for every blue red moon, We all recall that night in June When stars were bright and men were brave, The creature sent them to their grave.  $\Delta$ 



#### ANGEL (edited) | anna fedderson

## I'M MERELY

#### gabrielle havens

I am a bird sitting up in a tree but my heart longs to fly on the shore of the sea. Yes it sure would be neat to feel sand on my feet, For a journey's my heart's greatest plea. I am a bird sitting up in a tree and I know I can fly, but I still don't feel free. If I jump I might fall and then that would be all. Yes, I'm merely a bird in a tree.

I am a sheep who is part of a flock, and we trust our defender's as strong as a rock. A sheep with no shepherd is lost to the leopard. But I'm no longer beasts' prey to stalk. I am a sheep who is part of a flock with a shepherd I often will walk with and talk. He has paid my full cost, so I'm no longer lost. Yes, I'm merely a sheep in a flock.

I am a path with some lefts and some rights, twisting along often feeling contrite. If I made a wrong turn I would just have to learn, That sometimes not all rights are right. I am a path with some lefts and some rights, I make my best choices with all of my might, But some turns I may make, lead some people astray. Yes, I'm merely a paths with some rights. I am a frown every once in a while; I tear myself down and critique my own style. 'Those hips are too wide and that face, you should hide,' Are just a few things for the pile. I am a smile every once in a while and see that I'm fine how I am and then I'll Actually see that I'm happy with me. Yes, I'm merely a frown and a smile.

I am a name that I have written down, that I've changed a few times for the sake of the sound. I still smell the same by a different name. Even though I'm no rose in ground. I am a name that I have written down. It's how people'd describe me, as not to confound. If we all were named Daisy, I think I'd go crazy. Yes, I'm merely a name written down.

I am a song that I sing in my soul, and whenever I sing it I feel in control. The song is of art and of love and of heart, And of silence and noise and of holes. I am a song that I sing in my soul. A plastic piano whose music I stole Is played by hands as I press my commands. Yes, I'm merely a song in my soul. Δ

### THE ROOM

#### giana ferraiolo

Born in nineteen hundred and five Or, rather, built, for it's only a room. But even a room can hold something special. Every room has a story to tell, And our has one more exciting than most, The Room of Our Story.

A room full of mirth and dance, Of food and of drink and of fun. A ballroom is what our protagonist was. Noise and music late into night. Ladies' heels stomping, heavy men twisting On the gleaming wood floor. Constant turn and motion, moving to and fro. But the room didn't mind. The Room of Dance.

The room was happy, content 'til the end of time. But Time had other ideas. War broke out, the whole world seeing red. The never ending sound of guns. The horrible screams of families breaking. All around, buildings tumbling down. Lady Luck smiled at our protagonist. Our room was safe, for now, at least. The Room of War.



DOOR | nicole kemon

The mirth of the ballroom existed no more. Ornate carpets torn up, the room was destroyed. Remade into a factory, on top at least. But below, a shelter, cold and cramped, To protect from the balls of chaos from the sky. The room was repurposed, helping people. Keeping them safe. Winning the war. The room was happy. The Room of Protection.

The room almost made it through, A month and a day til the end. But Fate was unsatisfied, things were too constant. The room was caught by falling doom, destruction. Destroyed. Metal frame melting, shingles dissolving in the heat. The Room of Rubble.

Many years gone by, the room left forgotten. Car horns rattling down new cobblestones, Laughter and chatter bleeding in from the street. Strange looks cast at the run down room. Year after year trickled past. Our friend was being repaired. Reborn as a place for children to come and play. The room was confused by all the buzz. It was used to the silence of the Forgotten, The quiet scuttle of tiny claws on dust. Tattered carpets torn up, Ash-riddled wallpaper replaced. New things the room had never seen. 'What are slinkies and hula hoops?' Little kids with their frivolous play and happy smiles. That's what the room loved most. The Room of Change.

But, of course, Time came back again As it always does when one is happy: And, again, for the second time The room saw the whole world ablaze. Shouting of men fighting. Screaming of people persecuted. Our room crying, stripped of its happy job. Instead of watching happy children at play, Sad families soon to be torn apart. Huddled in a corner, praying to God. Men with broken crosses on their sleeves. The Franks, whoever they may be. And now Time went slow. The Room of the Damned.

Pleased with its work before Fate paid a visit again. The fiery balls of doom and death Knocked down our friend once again. A place to store stuff never needed again. A storage locker. Boxes of files and documents. Bins of cards and names. Stacks of crisp, yellowing pictures. Long after the war ended, the room stayed filled. The useless knowledge contained in the room Crumbled away with the passage of time. The Room of the Decayed.

Years upon years, decade after decade. The room almost forgot itself When the door cracked open, blinding sunlight trickled in. All the dust in the world plus some trapped in the beam. Windows grey instead of clear. A maze of thing to be discovered. The wide eyes of a child looked around in awe. The Room of the Newly Discovered.

> Slowly the dust and webs fell away. Dusty, cracked light-bulbs replaced and turned on. Dirty floors swept, gleams of color appeared. Boxes opened, forts made. Books read, pictured and posters hung. Crumbled paper thrown out, old carpets brought in. The child made the room their own. Another life, a second home. The Room of the Reborn. Δ

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## WINTER GIRL

#### grace curtin

i'm too like the winter, i think i have a frozen spirit after you wronged me. like the snow, i am silent in my ways. do you know how you left me stuck in the ice? do you know how i screamed for you to LISTEN TO ME but my words were STRANGLED the world has never been kind to winter girls like me. wait for the BLIZZARD i will bring.  $\Delta$ 

CROOKED NATURE | sara maramkhah

### WE ALL LIKE OUR MARSHMALLOWS A LITTLE BURNT

#### leslie telleria

Some are more affected by the fire than others. Some enjoy a crisp, golden layer, Some fall to a pit charred and incinerated. Regardless, all fall to submission over the unforgiving flame.

They are all weak. With vulnerability, they are too easily engulfed, Losing all touch with what they once were: White, sweet.



Sad fate leaves them no choice. If not by fire, some are processed into gooey spread, Others melted in scorching chocolate, Once soft pillows of sweetness.

But soon they will all burn. Because it is what they are meant to do, Or at least, it is what they all will become pressured to do. And what's a good s'more without a melted marshmallow?

The flame will brutally take them all. It will cackle and pop, taking in its next victim, And it's normal Because we all like our marshmallows a little burnt.  $\Delta$ 



## JUST ME, MYSELF, AND I IN PARADISE

nicole kemon

UNTITLED | alyssa hughes

Time stayed still in this moment of paradise, as breathtaking beauty echoed in the sky.

Yellows,

Oranges,

And pinks,

lazily slept in the long clouds,

surrounding the blurry sun, sinking gradually into the waters. Upon the horizon, miniature sailboats the size of sparkling jewels, Bobbing up and down with their crisp white canvas sails drawn, Reminding me of childhood memories, of endless summers Spending hours staring out into the placid water.

On the warm sand of glimmering shine, I let my toes sink, burying into the soft grains. Hearing the sea breeze whisper in my ear its secrets of happiness.

The palm trees quietly *swished*, swaying side to side, as if gracefully dancing to the rhythm of the pulsing waves. The flocks of pearl white seagulls singing in their unique call, Soaring smoothly, cutting the burst of colors in the atmosphere.

Clear blue waves rolled slowly to the shore,

Coating the delicate shells upon the sand with a glossy coat of water, only to collapse and flow in a torpid retreat, back towards the sea. I watched the watercolor scenery,

a symbol of blissful peace and relaxing serenity.

I smiled to myself silently and sighed all the worries away And filled my lungs with salty air,



Е

With relief.

As time stayed still in this moment of paradise.  $\Delta$ 

### SESSION #102: FALL FOR ME IN 15 LINES r.j. sison

I'm sorry I scrutinized and underestimated your affection. I simply am in love with the way you think, I see your innate desire to enhance the world around you, But I think you also see through my arrogant demeanor, Nothing more than a failed concept, I suppose? A few questions, please ponder. Your relationship with family? Your most treasured memory? The last time you cried? My mother is my closest friend, and I'd always treasure my Memories with her. The passing of a great aunt was the last I cried. Something about you, the reader, has always mesmerized me The way your eyes glow while shifting from line to line. The inevitable ebb and flow of the tide in your head 🚄 And how I am bound to please you, the loving embrace of Fingers on paper... and thank you, I feel your Heart's secrets

indulging my words.  $\Delta$ 

## TESTS

#### cat williams

There are twelve months in a year, Seven days in a week, Thirty-five questions on the test, There's violence in the streets.

Seven times seven is forty-nine,

The mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell.

Tom Robinson was licked before he even began,

I can hear the pages turn, I can do the math by hand.

I can balance a chemical equation,

I can find all the metaphors in Robert Frost. I can't tell you why half the world's population is hungry, I can't tell you what to do when the benefits of fossil fuels don't outweigh the environmental cost.

TWO SIDES | cheryl anne fries

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### SENIOR kylee dunne

They say in high school you learn what you're going to be, But I really feel like I have learned about me, Who I am now is very different from how I began these 4 years, Now I feel so close to my peers. Freshman year I felt distant, But high school went by in an instant. Most of the 4 years we were all pretty lost, We knew finding ourselves wouldn't come without a cost. We will push ourselves 'til we can't anymore, We want to see how far we can soar. I really want to see us take the lead,





Watch us all after high school succeed.
I walk the halls one last time,
Thinking about how I'm on this uphill climb.
I wear my graduation cap and feel so strong,
Freshman year I had it so wrong.
I am glad I didn't fit in the mold,
Because I have never in my life felt so bold.
Nothing was holding me back,
As long as I stayed on the right track.
My whole life was ahead of me,
Now I could finally be free.
I didn't know what the future would hold,
But I was so excited to see it unfold. Δ

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