



SCAN

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The background of the page is a vibrant, artistic illustration. It features several large sunflowers with bright yellow centers and petals, set against a sky of soft, pastel colors including light blue, lavender, and pink. Scattered throughout the scene are small, golden-yellow stars and speckles, adding a whimsical, dreamlike quality. In the upper right and lower right corners, there are stylized, swirling cloud shapes in a light blue and yellow hue. The overall aesthetic is bright, cheerful, and creative.

Letter from the Editor

Although I wasn't raised religious, I can still recognize how faith and spirituality can play a serious role within daily life. It's the backbone of almost everything we do, like it or not, and I wanted to explore that concept in this issue of *SCAN*. How do our personal beliefs direct our choices, our answers, our life path? Can non-religious icons be worshiped as such? These pages explore a vast variety of faiths, from Judaism and Baptist Christianity, to the more obscure findings of American Football and Summer Camp. After all, religious or not, we all hold our own **Testament**.

— Eva Erhardt

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SCAN MAGAZINE
WINTER 2023



STAFF PAGE

Illustrated by **Cait Jayme**



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Shana Tova

A short story about Jewish new year, Rosh Hashanah

The two of them pulled into the driveway of a two-story house in a cookie cutter neighborhood. The leaves had just started to fall from the maple tree in the front yard, but not enough to hide the perfectly trimmed lawn underneath. Autumn in the crisp New Jersey suburbs was in full effect.

"Hopefully we'll be in and out," Eli said.
"Don't stress."

Mia swallowed the lump in her throat, following him up the stairs to the front door. She could hear the soft party chatter pouring out from behind it before he even rang the doorbell. A blonde woman answered it.
"Oh, look who's here!"

"Is that him?" someone yelled from the living room.

"Eli!" said another woman, appearing in the entryway. Wiping his Sperry's on the welcome mat first, he walked inside to greet her. The woman had orange hair that matched his, and as Mia looked closer inside, she noticed that most of the others did, too.

Written by **Stephanie Dejak**
Illustration by **Riley Sullivan**
Typography by **Fon Limsomwong**

"You must be Mia," the woman said with a smile. "I'm Iris, Eli's aunt."

"Nice to meet you," Mia said. "Your home is beautiful."

As they walked further into the house, Mia could see that the dinner preparation was in full swing. One woman with wrinkles and thin orange curls pulled a dish of sweet potato soufflé from the oven, fanning its steam away with her oven mitt. Another woman with the same wrinkles stuck a fork into a tender piece of brisket resting in a crock pot. A third with long auburn hair gave the large soup pot on the stove a stir, while two girls about Mia's age each sliced up an apple.

A wooden spoon clattered onto the counter. "Oh, hi sweetheart!" said the woman in charge of the soup, noticing Mia. "I'm Eli's mom. It's nice to meet you."

"Hi, Mrs. Altman. It's nice to meet you, too."
"Oh please, call me Anna."

Eli approached them with two glasses of cabernet, handing one to Mia.
"Cheers," she said, clinking their glasses and taking a sip.
"Cheers. Shana Tova," he said, taking a sip of his own. "Happy New Year."
"Shana Tova!" said one of the older women, now that the soufflé was safe and sound on the kitchen island.

"We should go say hi to everyone else," Eli said, after all the aunts had introduced themselves. He led her into the living room, where they found ten people squished together around a long card table.

"Is that my grandson?" an old man asked.
"Hi Zayde," Eli said, extending his hand. His grandfather didn't quite shake it, he just held it for a second as his own elderly hand trembled. "Mia, this is my grandfather Isaac, my dad, my brother Adam, Uncle Jake, Uncle Aaron, Auntie Josephine, Auntie Marissa, my cousin Rachel, and her husband Mason."

"Oh, hi everyone," she said. Anxious about attempting to remember everyone's name, she took a sip of wine.

"Everyone, this is my girlfriend, Mia."
Mia nearly choked, sending her into a coughing fit. His what? Eli nudged her. He should've at least warned her about the sudden drop of the G-word, the one he once swore he'd never say.

"Oh, and my other cousins are around here somewhere," Eli said. "You'll meet them later."
Mia let out a nervous laugh. "I almost can't keep up." One of the women at the table — Mia had forgotten her name already — laughed too. "It's a lot to take in."

"It's like 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding,'" Mia whispered into Eli's neck. "Your big fat what?" he whispered back. "Nothing. It's a movie. We'll watch it sometime." "Everyone," Bubbe said, emerging from the kitchen. "If we could all gather in the dining room, we'll get started. It's almost sunset."

On the dining room table was a white tablecloth, a silver tray with two matching candlesticks, two white candles, a box of matches, a covered basket of bread and a plate of apple slices with a small dish of honey. She understood why the card table was in the living room now — there's no way that a family this big could fit comfortably at the dining room table without being split.

"I want to begin by thanking you all for coming," Bubbe said. "I know it's rare nowadays that we're all together at the same time, and I feel very blessed to have my entire family here this Rosh Hashanah." She smiled. "I also want to thank Josephine for helping me prepare the traditional recipes that our mother taught us many, many years ago, and I'd like to thank my children for continuing to pass these recipes down to our grandchildren. I love you all very much."

“L’shana tova u’metukah,” the crowd murmured.

Bubbe struck a match, using it to light the two candles. Instead of blowing it out, she threw the lit match onto the silver tray, but the matchstick shriveled up too quickly to raise too much concern about the open flame. Bubbe’s hands made three circular motions around the candles before covering her eyes. Mia watched everyone else cover their eyes with their hands too, so she did the same. She listened as the crowd prayed:

“Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha’olam asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu l’hadlik ner shel shabbat kodesh.”

When she opened her eyes, Mia watched one of Eli’s uncles lift the breadbasket and uncover it. Before she could recover from the last prayer, the crowd began another one: “Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha’olam hamotzi lehem min ha’aretz.” He tore a piece of the bread, ate it and passed the basket around the dining room. By the time the basket made its way to Mia, both loaves had significant dents in them. She tore off a piece for herself anyway, handing the basket to Bubbe afterward. Then, Josephine picked up the apples and the honey, and the crowd said one more: “Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha’olam borei p’ri ha’eitz.”

“And here’s to a sweet new year,” Josephine said in English, dipping an apple slice into the honey and passing the plate to Mia. The apples were the tiniest bit brown after sitting out for a second too long, but as soon as the honey melted onto her tongue, Mia didn’t care.

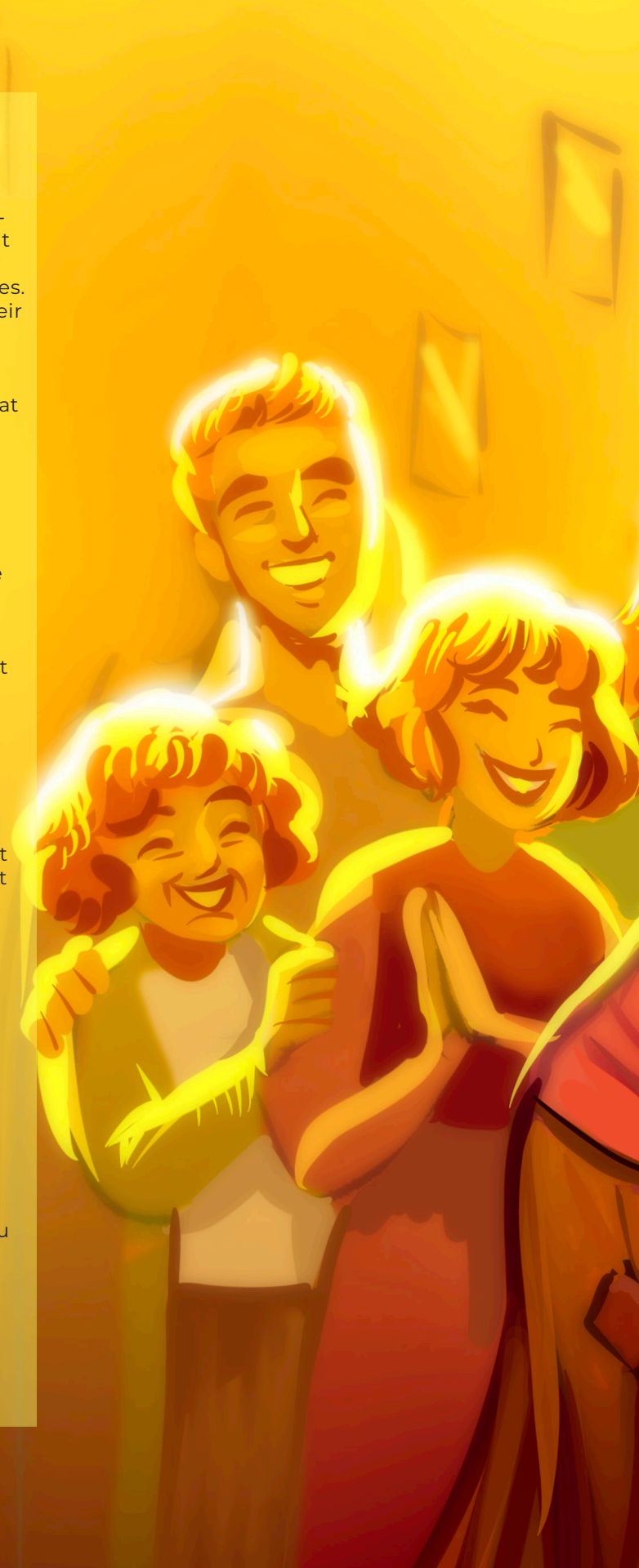
“Dinner is ready in the kitchen, so please help yourselves,” Bubbe said.

The kitchen island was covered with so many trays of food that Mia could hardly see its granite countertop anymore. She grabbed a porcelain plate and decided she would try a small spoonful of everything. When her plate was full, she found a seat at the table next to Eli and sat down in front of a steaming hot bowl of soup with a lump in the middle.

“I grabbed some for you,” cousin Rachel said. “Have you ever had matzo ball soup before?”

“No, I haven’t.” She didn’t know what matzo was, but it looked more like a lump than a ball. Regardless, she tore a piece of it off with her spoon, blowing on it before tasting it.

“What do you think?” Eli asked.



"Mmm. I love it," Mia said.
"It's perfect for this cooler weather."

"So, how did the two of you meet?" someone asked
from the other end of the table.

She tensed. This was the moment she'd been
dreading all evening. Before she could respond, Eli
cut in with his carefully crafted lie. "Picture this: it's a
brutal winter in lower Manhattan, as always, and I've



somehow made it through another very lonely Valentine's Day."

Mia smiled. That part of the story was true.

"And I'm walking around in the snow — way past freezing at this point — and I'm like, 'Why, God? Why can't I find a great woman?'"

She made more of an effort to hold her smile now, but it was hard. Seriously? Sure, Eli's Jewish, but Mia had never heard the guy talk about God, ever. He spent most of his Sunday mornings in her bed with a hangover, not at the synagogue.



“So, I walk past this little coffee shop called Café Belle, and I decide to go in and warm up with an americano. And then I see this beautiful girl typing away on her laptop, sipping a hot chocolate.”

This is ridiculous, Mia thought, still trying to hold her smile. Did he not know that she would’ve ordered an americano too? She wondered if they were actually friends with benefits, or if the benefits were the only thing keeping their arrangement afloat.

“I asked her if I could buy her a cannoli or something, and she said yes. We actually sat there and talked all night until they closed...”

“And the rest is history!” Mia chimed in, fearing that he’d dig himself into a much deeper hole if she didn’t. He could’ve just abstained from telling the truth — he didn’t have to go so far out of his way to lie to his entire family during a religious holiday. Maybe it was her Catholic guilt, but she refused to let the lie grow any worse.

“Aw,” Bubbe said from the other end of the table. “What a nice story to tell your kids someday.” Their kids? Oh, come on. He’d never even taken her on a date before — the closest they’d come to one since matching on Hinge seven months ago was splitting a carton of leftover lo mein on her fire escape one afternoon. Aside from that, it was just casual hookups and pillow talks in the dark.

“Mia, did you try the kugel yet?” Josephine asked. Mia was relieved to change the subject. “I’m sorry, the what?” “The pasta,” Anna said, pointing to her plate.

“That’s pasta?” Mia said in disbelief. “It’s so sweet — I thought I’d accidentally grabbed dessert a little early. It’s delicious.”

“My grandmother’s recipe,” said Josephine. “It has cinnamon in it. And it’s much better when it’s cold. I’ll send some home with you, if you’d like.”

Mia smiled. “I would love that.”

Later, with a tote bag full of leftovers, Mia and Eli waved goodbye to Rosh Hashanah and the Altman family. They’d bought the lie, but Mia’s head was spinning. Why couldn’t he put in the effort to make that story the tiniest bit true? As Eli put the tote bag in the backseat of his car, their eyes met. Deep down, she wondered if she’d be better off saying goodbye to him, too. ■



A Perfect Vegan

The Pursuit of an Ethical Lifestyle

I made the choice to be vegan when I was fourteen years old. It was after I watched a Humane Society International video for the first time, which depicted a cow being shocked with a stun gun before being slaughtered. I was mortified — I had never seen such suffering before. There were videos under that one, “Baby chicks ground up while they’re still alive,” “Pigs in factory farm bruised and beaten while awaiting slaughter,” “Baby seals beaten to death in front of parents for fur.” These videos were the most horrific things I had ever seen, yet they were addicting. I watched one after the other in awe of the appalling imagery. At fourteen, it was the first real opinion or stance I had made on anything, and I was hardcore.

As a new vegan, I made it a point to not associate with anything that was anti-animal-welfare. This, of course, meant not eating any animal products, not wearing animal products, and even not watching some movies that had animals in them. It bothered me that my friends weren’t vegan, and I would try every now and then to convince them.

Being vegan was good for me, and I immediately noticed an improvement in my skin. Since sixth or seventh grade, I had acne all over my face.



Written by **Chandler Groce**
Illustration by **Gina Stavrou**

I had been to the dermatologist, bought multiple expensive skin care sets, but my face remained the same until I gave up animal milk. At the time, there weren't a ton of vegan replacements available to me in grocery stores. A bag of chicken nuggets and a dairy-free bag of Mexican shredded cheese is what I remember. Because of this, I learned a lot of new ways to cook. You can do a lot with lentils, chickpeas, and tofu. I was also getting more into spirituality and meditation. I learned that you cannot meditate properly with dead beings inside of your body and spirit: the Buddhist belief. Buddhism taught me that all beings, without exception, deserve to be free from harm.

When I discovered The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, commonly known as PETA, I was thrilled. Their theatrical shows of anti-animal-suffering were exciting to watch, plus they were doing good for animal liberation in a legal setting. I followed everything PETA told me to do, and I loved it.

One article said not to even wear faux leather because it still endorsed the "look" of real leather. What if someone sees your cool faux leather jacket, wants one of their own, and buys a cow leather jacket instead? Of course! I had never thought of that.

As I progressed further into my veganism, I found that I began to have little conflicts with the statements I preached. My elderly, Appalachian roots, unemployed, Vietnam War veteran neighbor was certainly not one who would be interested in being vegan. Even if he was, could he afford it? Vegan store bought meats cost an average of \$5-\$11. Additionally, your local rural grocery stores and small town Walmart isn't interested in selling \$7 chicken nuggets that aren't even chicken.

I also began to consider others, especially those who aren't a cog in the Western factory-farm machine. My close friend has a family rich in Mexican culture so most of their traditional dishes involve meat and cheese, should they have to give those up?



Modern veganism for Americans seems to be catered towards the white, wealthy consumer. Of course, I had nothing to lose when the best things I was eating were Chick-fil-A sandwiches and slow-cooker pork chops. People with unique cultural dishes that are mainly meat-centered have a lot more to consider when wanting to be vegan or vegetarian.

After a while of using vegan leather, I began to question things. Vegan leather is of a lesser quality than cow leather and is often made of plastic. How can I preach sustainability and engage with a product that will contribute to climate change? I still try to buy mainly second-hand leather, however, to minimize my impact. In these scenarios and a few more, I think consumption of animal products is acceptable.

After all, isn't the main motive in being vegan the pursuit of an ethical lifestyle? To me, part of being vegan is being kind to all, including humans. It wouldn't be unethical for me to refuse to cook a non-vegan meal for my friends or boyfriend, but it does make them happy. Subtly introducing people to vegan alternatives and inviting groups to vegan restaurants allows people to be more open to the conversation of going meatless.

Head-on, aggressive measures to "convince" people at any cost usually does more harm than good. Although this is what convinced me, exposing people to brutal videos of the most intense suffering they will ever see is unethical in itself, especially with no age-limit on the videos. I do believe these videos can be beneficial as they have improved factory farm conditions for the animals and workers. At least now the animals can not suffer as much as they did before they die.



I still believe there is no ethical way of killing an animal, as there is no ethical or right way to kill a person. Even if animals are “raised right” on a caring and loving small farm, they are still put to death as a being who does not want to die. Mother cows are still torn from their babies to produce milk. I am just as pro-animal-liberation as I was when I began. However, I know this lifestyle isn’t for everyone. I know that some individuals need meat for their specific diet, or don’t have enough money or resources to be vegan.

I still entertain PETA’s emails, and sometimes, I agree with them. But, I know that I will never be the definition of “perfect.”

As I enter my sixth year of veganism, I think of the great things it’s done for me. I’ve been to vegan food festivals and restaurants I wouldn’t have been to otherwise. I’ve saved, mathematically, countless animals. I am making the world a better place. I love seeing the world around me become more vegan-friendly, and budget-vegan-friendly at that. And in the end, it’s been six years of improved health, stronger spirituality, better food and of course, improved morale. Here’s to many more years of the same thing.



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A Holy Trinity

Written by : **Jackson Williams**

The Binding of Isaac

I was raised in a stained-glass cage to hide,
but I learned to be complacent in pain.
Some things can't survive in eternal feign.
The witnesses won't allow me inside.

False prophets with real profits tell me
I'm hellbound while I'm tied to their table.
A lifetime of worship will enable
anything but a true identity.

Atrophied souls become advent spokesmen.
No audience with God, empty-handed.
Crucifixion is for bodies branded —
cut by policy and hateful amens.

I did their dance, but the knife still awaits.
Self-made sacrifices don't reach the gates.

Photography by **Hailee Williams**
Models: **Johnathan Cox and Ze Wang**
Shoot Styling by **Stella Temporal**
Spread by **Kallie Zinn**

Prometheus

For my Love, I let it all burn
Every monument will become a pyre
And I make the gods scared to turn

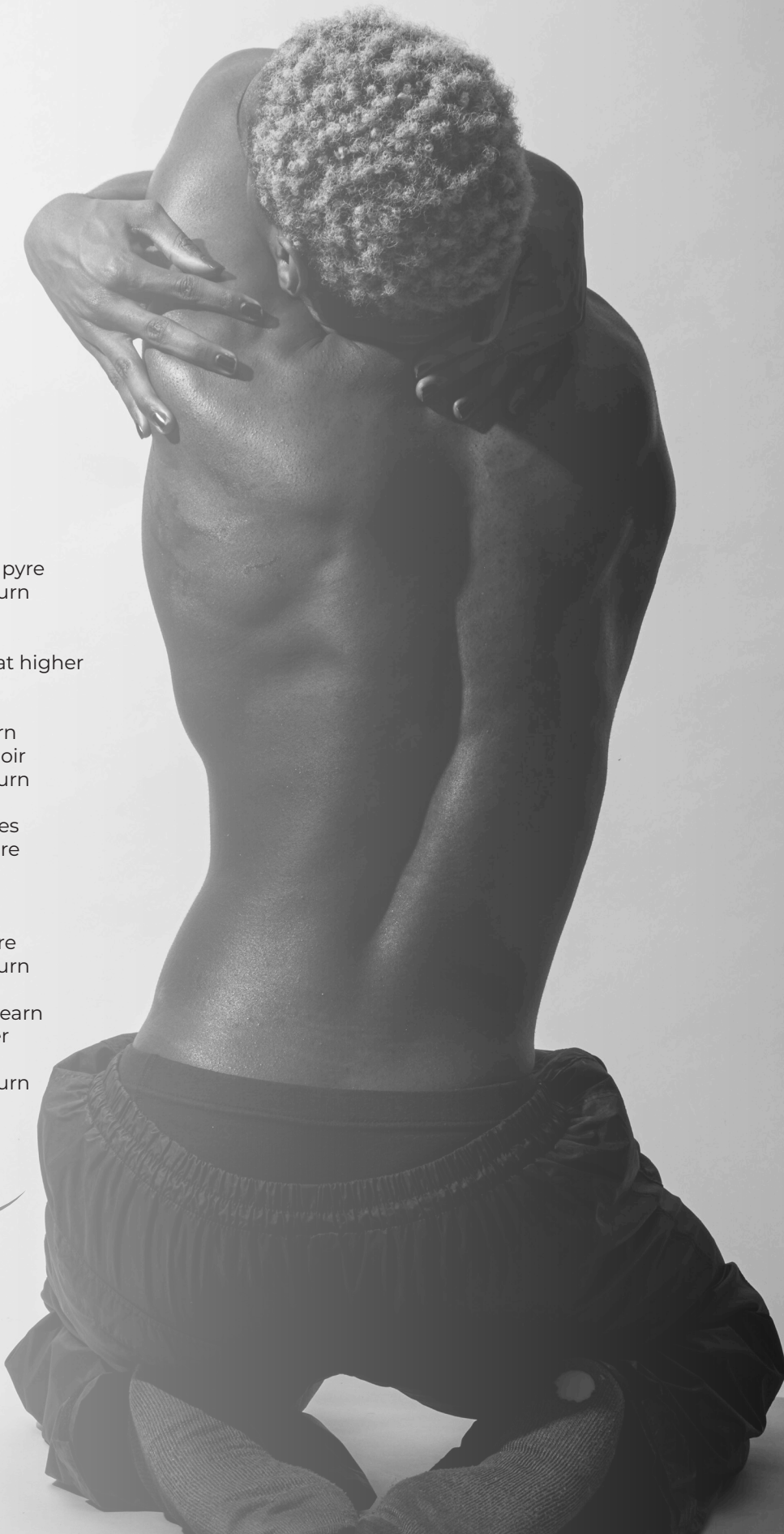
Pandora will raise my woes' urn
Watch as those ardent ashes float higher
For my Love, I let it all burn

They can sing counterfeit concern
I can't hear over my arsonists' choir
And I make the gods scared to turn

They want to feed me to the ernes
Heaven is the hope I want to retire
For my Love, I let it all burn

A lover's court never adjourns
The verdict is guilty; I stole the fire
And I make the gods scared to turn

There are lessons the world will learn
For Agapē, I'm the flame supplier
For my Love, I let it all burn
And I make the gods scared to turn



The Lovers

Cry dear, there's no bride in the room.
You don't ask, and I don't assume —
Mr. Imperfection's the groom.
There's only a son to stand.

Altar my heart, honey, you know
I'm here until we're an echo
halls of history will ignore, so
my salvation is unplanned.

October fifteenth is six years —
anniversary to dead fear.
Fly blind into a night unclear,
love is an open hand.

FROM THE SIDELINES

The sacred nature of American Football

The salvation begins in the middle of nowhere important, Florida, where the field is in the bad part of town, infested with ant hills and perpetual mud puddles no matter the season. There are no pews — no bleachers. The congregation has to bring their own, which is really just picnic blankets and foldable camp chairs arranged on the home field side. It's peace that surpasses all understanding to a religion that loves sports as much as their God.

The first service begins at eight on Saturday morning — the flag football team. The congregation is so good about bringing first-timers and spreading the faith in their community. Everyone is all dressed up in Mother Mary blue and halo gold.

The coaches are the elders — the most dedicated to the church. Staying all day, through every service. Providing wise counsel to young believers, helping them on their walk.

Stand up, greet the neighbors, and shake hands to introduce each other because this is where family is found.

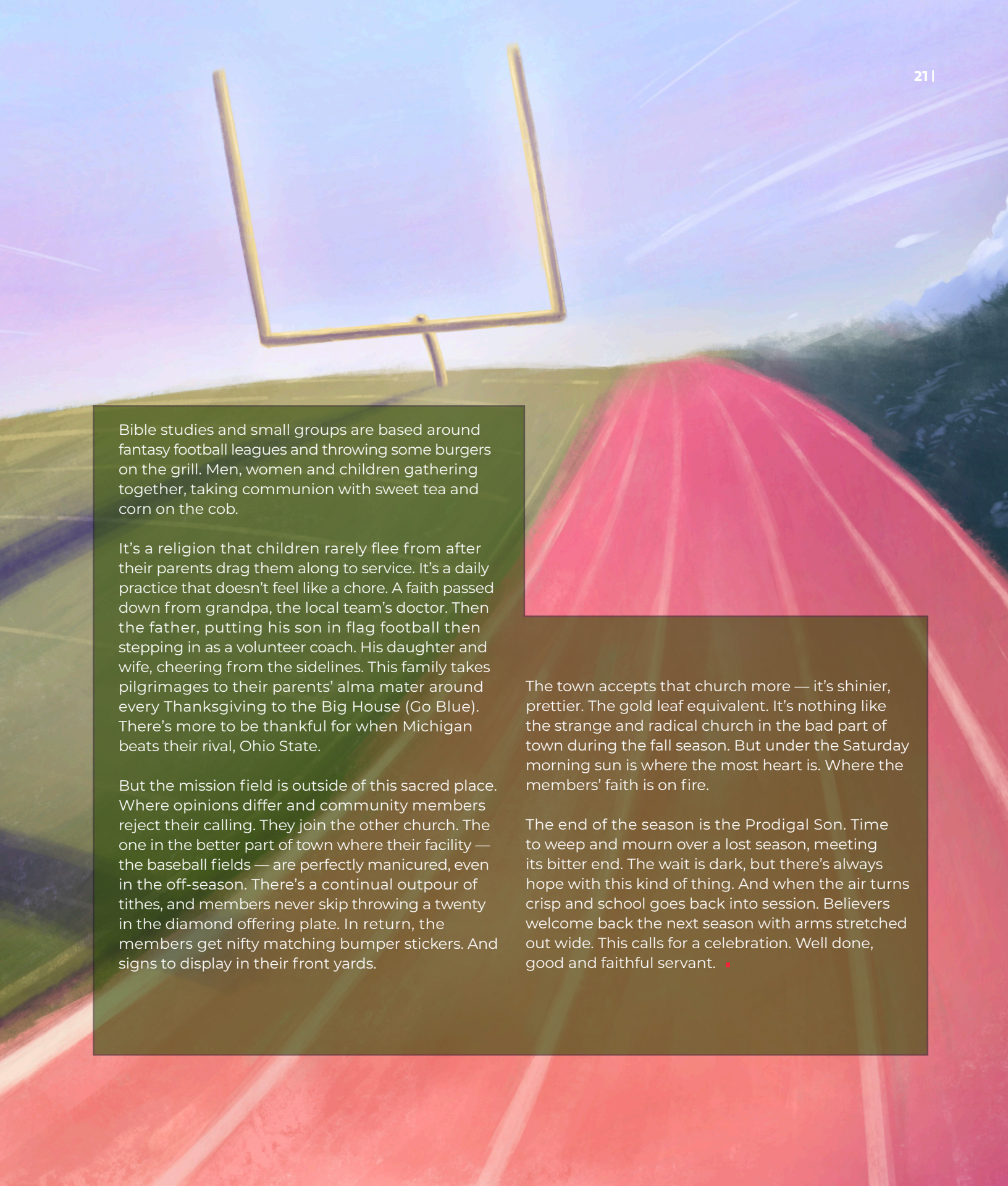
With like-minded people who might not look the same but everyone has the same heart, brought the same cowbells to ring and pom poms to wave at every first down. Everyone is welcome here, even the opposing team.

Each service tells a different story. One where David, the underdog team still growing into their shoulder pads, beat Goliath. Glimmers of the championship is the promised land, flowing with milk and honey.

These football games are attended more frequently than Sunday morning church in this town. It's the most vital way to get involved — to build community. Worship together to the home team chants and fight songs. Celebrate victory over sin when they get a touchdown or make a field goal. The cheerleaders are the angles, or perhaps the temptation. Spiritual warfare erupts when two teams go into overtime, leading to an eventual nail-biting conclusion. Hell is when they lose. Heaven is when they win.

But don't worry. It's not only on Saturdays. Where pastors ask for their congregation to take the sermons' lessons into the rest of their weeks, football fans do this best.

Written by **Victoria Radnothy**
Illustration by **Gab K De Jesus**



Bible studies and small groups are based around fantasy football leagues and throwing some burgers on the grill. Men, women and children gathering together, taking communion with sweet tea and corn on the cob.

It's a religion that children rarely flee from after their parents drag them along to service. It's a daily practice that doesn't feel like a chore. A faith passed down from grandpa, the local team's doctor. Then the father, putting his son in flag football then stepping in as a volunteer coach. His daughter and wife, cheering from the sidelines. This family takes pilgrimages to their parents' alma mater around every Thanksgiving to the Big House (Go Blue). There's more to be thankful for when Michigan beats their rival, Ohio State.

But the mission field is outside of this sacred place. Where opinions differ and community members reject their calling. They join the other church. The one in the better part of town where their facility — the baseball fields — are perfectly manicured, even in the off-season. There's a continual outpour of tithes, and members never skip throwing a twenty in the diamond offering plate. In return, the members get nifty matching bumper stickers. And signs to display in their front yards.

The town accepts that church more — it's shinier, prettier. The gold leaf equivalent. It's nothing like the strange and radical church in the bad part of town during the fall season. But under the Saturday morning sun is where the most heart is. Where the members' faith is on fire.

The end of the season is the Prodigal Son. Time to weep and mourn over a lost season, meeting its bitter end. The wait is dark, but there's always hope with this kind of thing. And when the air turns crisp and school goes back into session. Believers welcome back the next season with arms stretched out wide. This calls for a celebration. Well done, good and faithful servant. ■

Preacher's Daughter

Photos by Helen Kirbo
Interviews by Anthony Kosenkov
Model Ethel Cain

"Preachers Daughter" is a compiled photo series inspired by and depicting musician Ethel Cain. Photographer Helen Kirbo documented their time together as friends for the past several years, achieving her rise to fame, along with Kirbo's own religious experiences.





“

I can't ever remember a time where I felt strongly in my belief. But it was something I kind of played the part of, especially with my parents being religious and going to church on Sunday. As my life began to change around twelve or thirteen, I began to come into my own person. I stopped being religious which my parents did not understand or accept.

- Helen Kirbo





“

Her and I grew up close together, she lived in a town forty-five minutes south of my hometown. There was this bonding experience of similar experiences we had not only in the church, but growing up. It's the default exploration into the traumas of the church in the way that it can sometimes traumatize someone, especially young queer people.

- Kirbo on growing up with Ethel Cain.

JESUS CAMP

On falling in love with summer camp.

Jesus Camp spits itself out on a still, blue lake, settled among thick pine, and lazily floating boats. In the school year, it is cold and empty, grisled by North Georgia winter. But at the end of May, it thaws with the arrival of hundreds of school children, and accompanying counselors.

You are nine when your mother tells you you'll be going to camp. You are the personification of the city, understood only by the roaring skyline. Camp will be good.

A remersion into Appalachia, to the family you barely understand. Jesus is not a thought in your mind. The king does not exist to you. You think of canoes and crafts and caves.

The drop-off line is long, twisting down the dirt road, past the wooden totems. You have never seen girls so pretty, boys so handsome it seems movie-like. How could teeth be that white?



Written by **Eva Erhardt**
Illustration by **Jane Zyung**



The first day speeds by quickly. There is no time to consider homesickness, any want of TV. This little neighborhood is run by teenage America. Children follow children blindly. To you, they seem older, brighter, everything figured out. They talk of sororities, State schools. Go Dawgs! Someone tells you. You agree, even if you don't know what she's saying.

Everyone gathers in a concrete auditorium after dinner. The walls are plastered in paper signs, advertising the themes for each cabin. Nothing makes sense. Everything is hilarious. A gorgeous boy with gorgeous hair plays computerized music from a far-up booth. Everyone moves in unison, like water.

It is less like a trinkle, or a flow, but a rushing stream, picking up pebbles and rocks and city children.

When your analogue watch nears ten, things start to slow down with hopping music being replaced by a warm guitar. You know Jesus. You know God. Your grandmother brought you to mass once, and cartoons filled in the rest. But this is something else. You are a child, sitting on a damp concrete ledge, and the children of Jesus Camp are revealing the secrets of the world. The comradery radiates off of your new friends, and it feels like the closest thing to heaven you can imagine.



On different days, you visit deep gorges and make-believe tourist towns. A coke and candy bar is guaranteed every Wednesday. When you hear rumors of dating counselors, it sounds like the most romantic thing in the world. It is a dream. It is a need.

This continues on for years. A week turns into weeks and weeks grow into rolling summers. In dense wood and humid evenings, you understand what you are told. Listen. Way up in the mountain tops, touching the blue skies, this is God as you know it. At school, you feel alone, but here, friends come easy. Boys try to hold your hand. Independence is on your tongue and it rhymes with a hymn.

Early teenage years are cruel, and awkward, but at the finish line, you are promised two things: high school, and an introduction into the counselor program. You will not be a real counselor for many years, but it is a taste of what you've idolized. At the first wave of interviews, you are asked if you're a Christian. When you respond positively, it comes out metal, and hard. Your 'of course' is a step away from a choke.

You are Christian. You are. You like to sing songs about lions and oceans and sandy footprints. You feel his presence in the tanned lifeguards, sunning in front of you. You see him off of the zipping speed boats, the bikinis hanging outside of cabins. Down rivers, in buses, and off diving boards.

It's a feeling in your heart, a true love, bright excitement. You have a passion for your camp — your friends. This spark of independence is what God is to you. You have faith in the feeling you have.

Every morning, you fall in love all over again. The sun dances over the glass water, and you make a point to stare at it, getting lost in its soft ripples. Someone talks about the lord, about Him (capital H). It echoes off the waterfront. When prayer is said, you go through the motions instead focusing on the soft hand you're holding. When you let go, the boy next to you smiles.

He wears cut-off jeans and a tie-dye shirt. His toenails are gnarled in hippie sandals. A temporary tattoo peels off of his tight arm. You think about rubbing sunscreen into him, watching the tattoo pill off into small pieces. Beautiful boy. He is one of many, but in this light, he glows. You think of the prayer beads displayed in Chapel, rainbow and wooden, settled into plywood walls. With his soft sigh, you want to say your rosary to him. Shame doesn't occur to you.

Jesus camp exists in this tandem, moving between the hotness of adolescence and the heavy weight of His watch. Everyone exists in paradox, leading children in prayer at sundown, then running into warm adventure when the moon hangs high. It doesn't feel disgraceful or unholy. It is just the function we've been taught, and learned to love.

This is how you learn about love. You are the plain Christian girl, in the large Christian camp, but you are in the fast lane of experience. Passion is fleeting, and easily exchanged. Every day, you fall in love all over again. Not just with the thin, shining people you swim with, but also the linking feeling it brings you. When it's time to have devotions, you feel the tugging of the red string between your heart and his. You are seventeen, and dumb, but this is the closest thing you'll ever feel to heaven. Jesus camp. Mumble amen. ■



How to be a Hindu

Reflection on a Hindu childhood

One of my fondest memories growing up was how we celebrated Diwali. Even though some states in the US now have their public schools take the day off, this wasn't the case where I grew up in Guangzhou, Southern China. But that didn't stop my parents from taking my sisters and me out of school for one day every Fall just to celebrate the "Festival of Lights."

We'd start our day off in our dad's office. My sisters and I would be decked out in bright Churidars, and you'd hear our ensemble of bangles ring as we'd run between the cubicles. Our grandmother would be in a conference room setting up an altar for the Diwali prayers—a coconut, rice, and homemade sweets all placed in front of Hindu deities. She'd light the Diya she made, a wick sitting in a candle holder filled with ghee. After all the chanting and singing prayer songs, my mom would wave her hand over the warmth of the flame and caress mine and my sisters' heads as a way of giving us blessings.



Written by **Vrishti Salvani**
Illustration by **Korey Griggs**

There was something warm and cheerful about a room full of middle-aged Indian men yelling 'Happy Diwali' to everyone who attended the prayers.

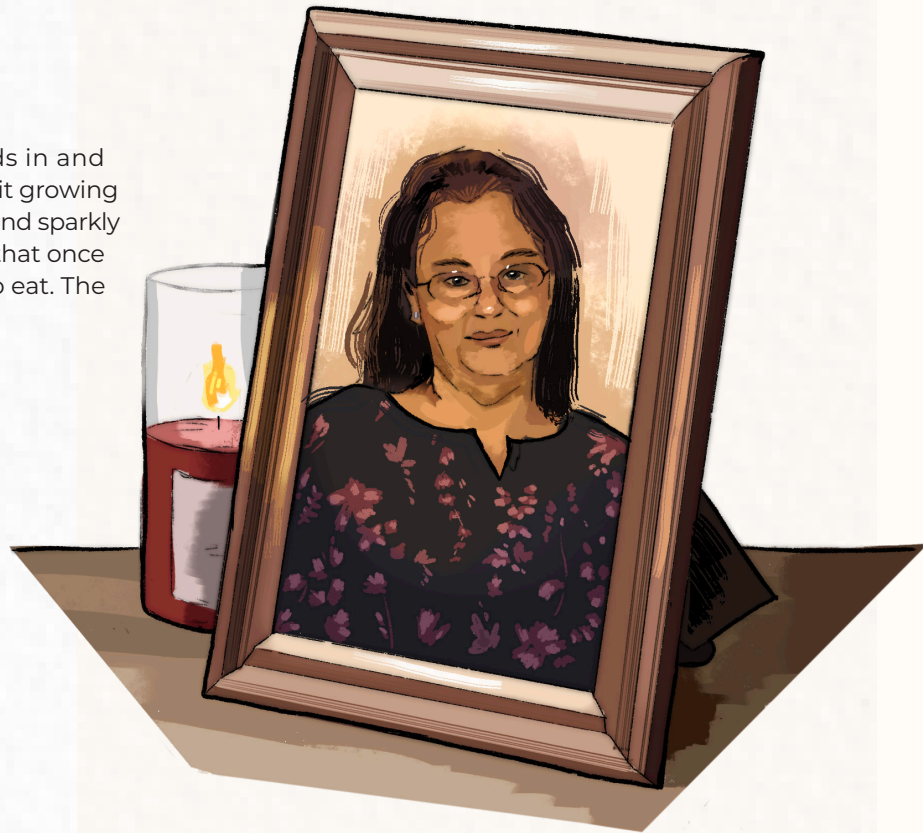
My family would eventually make our way into their office's dining room which would only fit about 10 people at a time. The catering team made sure to make dishes with seven vegetables, a Diwali tradition. We'd go home in the evening and eventually do the same prayer just between us as a family and end the night on the phone celebrating with some of our most distant relatives that we'd only talk to this time of the year.

I moved to Atlanta shortly after Diwali, back in 2020. Last year was my first year spending it away from most of my family.

My sisters
and I would
be decked
out in bright
Churidars

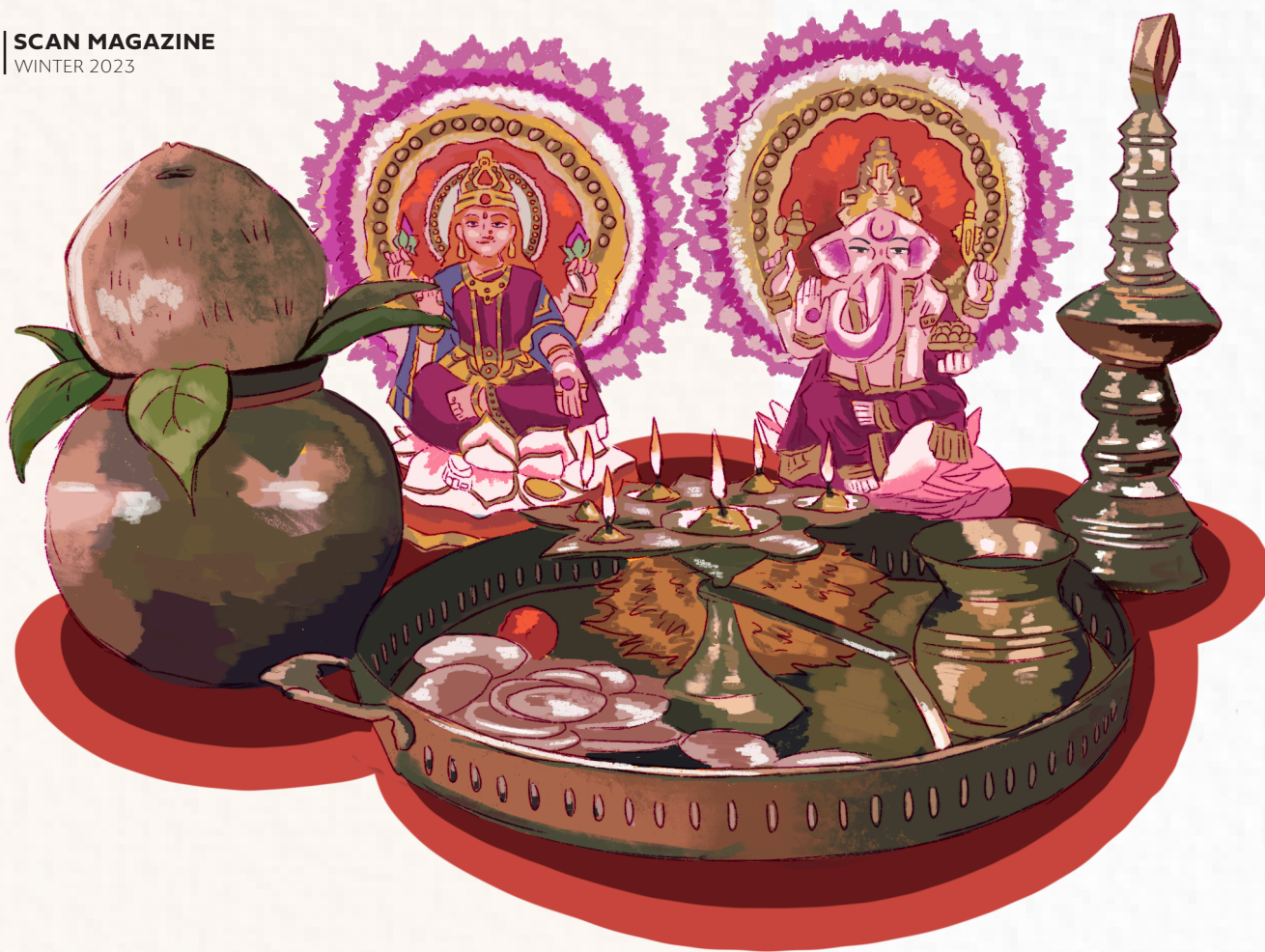
This year, I tried to bring some of my friends in and introduce them to the things I enjoyed about it growing up—lighting sparklers, dressing up in colorful and sparkly clothes, and making homemade Indian food that once again incorporated seven vegetables for us to eat. The one thing I have missed out on is the prayers.

Despite having been a part of all kinds of religious festivals for years, I never actively took part in prayer unless I was told to. My family has always been very religious. My grandmother was the matriarch figure of the community in our apartment complex, and she would host almost every religious gathering we had. She was the one who guided our family's faith until the day she passed and taught us every practice we've been following when it comes to Hinduism. When I was younger, I never questioned any of it.



She had a way of making the religion seem enlightening with how dedicated she was to it. Every morning and evening you'd find her in our little home mandir, or temple, that we made by opening a storage closet we weren't using for storage. She'd be in there praying to all her gods, taking good care of the space, and inviting all of us in to eat whatever offerings she brought to the gods that day. As a kid, I didn't question it. She seemed happy and content—something that following a religion is meant to make you feel. She'd tell us to do the same. Follow in her footsteps in every aspect from being vegetarians to making sure we washed our hair every Sunday. Again, because I was a kid, I never questioned why I was doing it.

My teenage years rolled around, and I started to take a step back from it all because I couldn't understand why I was doing what I was doing. I started to question things more, but because everything we did was so deeply rooted in tradition, there never seemed to be an understandable explanation for why we did it. I'd come home from soccer practice, ready to wash the sweat from my hair only to find out that I wasn't allowed to wash my hair on Thursdays. I asked my grandmother why and the best answer I would get is "because our religion tells us we shouldn't." She never grew up in a time or a place where she was allowed to question things, so she never really had answers for anything I brought up. The more I questioned and the fewer answers I got, the more I found myself stepping away from belief, but not from practice. I still found myself doing everything I'd done before, but it was only out of habit.



I became more aware of this after having moved here to the United States. Coming to the south where much of the culture is rooted in the Christian faith, I've seen people follow it with genuine understanding and a sense of belonging. I'd learned that a lot of Christianity was about a personal understanding between the people that followed it. It was however they interpreted the bible verses and how they built their own personal relationship with God. I tried to think about how I could apply this to my relationship with Hinduism.

My mom always told me that so much of it was rooted in the sciences without giving me a scientific explanation of how. Instead, I came up with these explanations so I could make sense of it for myself, and I could give myself some kind of guidance on how I live my life. So maybe I don't eat meat on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays because it's better for the planet and better for my health. Maybe I take the time to pray every Thursday evening because it'll be a moment of meditation and self-care that'll help me reset. But, because my way of understanding was so specific to how I think, and was altered to fit my mindset, I kept feeling like I was practicing Hinduism the wrong way. But if something is very personal, like religion, is there really a right or wrong way to follow it?

Faith is something that is inherently subjective. It's a very personal feeling that is meant to bring people peace.

It's meant to give you some kind of purpose that only you understand and something that probably won't be the same for two people. My connection to faith through Hinduism keeps changing. After being away from a strong Hindu community for so long, most of my connection seems to be purely out of nostalgia and wanting to reconnect with a big part of my past. I want to keep experiencing those warm moments, just like the one in my dad's office, where that faith brought people together.

At the same time, I'm stepping into a different phase of this faith—one where I'm bringing other people to see this side of me, and if I want them to understand why I'm doing it, I need to answer those questions for myself first. I need to give purpose to what I'm doing so it doesn't seem like I'm blindly following the orders that were given to me and I can try and be more intentional with faith. While I won't be able to set up that altar just like my grandmother did, I'll still be praying to the same gods when I celebrate. ■



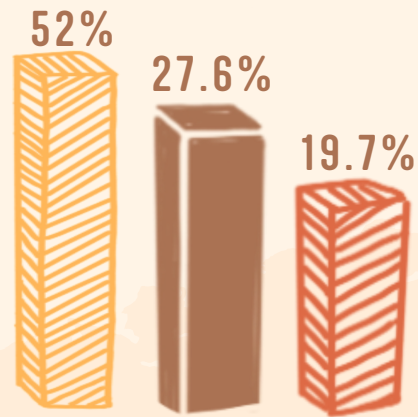
“She seemed happy and content—something that following a religion is meant to make you feel”

Spirituality Statistics: Religious makeup of SCAD

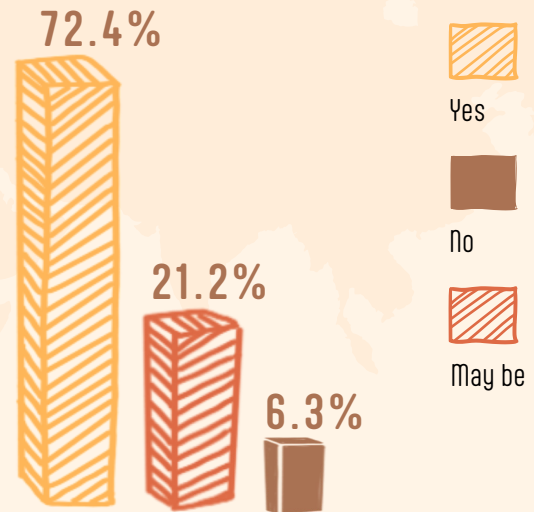
SCAD's commitment to diversity and inclusion has always been a top priority. This year editors from SCAN Magazine reached out to 130 SCAD students to generate an awareness of how diverse our student body is. With the theme of religion and beliefs, SCAD students share their stories and perspectives to engage with diversity and inclusion. This has enlightened us to really see the true beauty that SCAD has to offer.

Infographic by **Bhavyata Shah**

When asked if students identify as religious or spiritual:



When asked if being religious and spiritual are different:



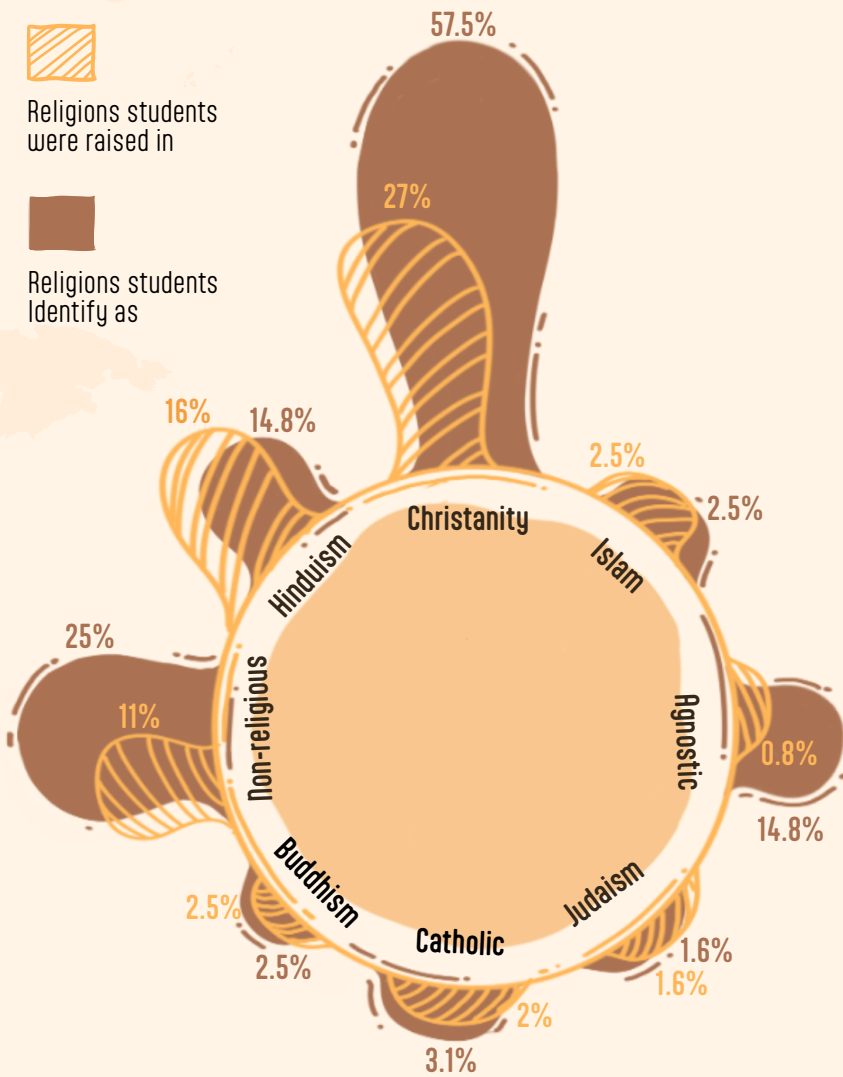
47.2%

Students said they believe in after life

39.4%

Students said they are not sure

Religions students were raised vs identify themselves as:



Other religions mentioned were Sikhism, Methodist, Baptist and Chinese Folk.

Religious holidays students enjoy are Christmas, Diwali (other Hindu holidays include Holi, Dusshera, Ganesh Chaturthi, Gudi Padwa), Thanksgiving, Halloween, Easter, Rosh Hashanah, Purim, Chinese New Year, Eid.



When asked if students attend religious service and how often:



Who can have the AMERICAN DREAM?

Dissecting the long-held idea expectation.

Long before I asked her to sit for an interview, I watched my girlfriend Gabi lose her belief in the American dream in real time. We grew up in the same suburb outside of Washington, DC, and I watched as we ended up taking the leap out of the safety of our small town and settling down in Atlanta. We didn't know we grew up in a bubble until we left it.

Our hometown was fairly homogeneous, the same polite white picket fences tucked into shady tree-lined neighborhoods on the banks of the Potomac. Everyone's parents were doctors, lawyers, or government-adjacent, and we all enjoyed the benefits of growing up in homes with a median household income of \$128,000. We attended Fairfax County Public Schools, a school district with an A-plus rating and a coinciding budget of \$3.4 billion for the 2022 school year. We were enrolled at a high school with a 99% graduation rate and where 82% of the student body participated in Advanced Placement classes. We were all expected to continue our education at a four-year college after matriculation. And how could we not, with our parents and peers making up the 31.8% of adults in Fairfax county with a postgraduate degree, compared to the national average of 12.8%?

For Gabi and I, this was all a given, we never knew life to be any other way. When we first learned of the American dream in elementary school, the idea that if a person works hard enough they can succeed beyond their wildest dreams, we believed it. Success was all around us, and we all made sure to put in the hard work so we could achieve even more than our parents had. We got private coaches so we could play varsity sports, we worked with SAT tutors to improve our scores, we hired private college advisors to help with the application process and get into a top university. We put in the work so that we could succeed, and lo and behold, we did. So when we learned about people around the country unable to pick themselves up out of poverty with the virtue of hard work, it didn't quite compute. We had bought into the idea that social mobility is achievable with a good attitude and a strong work

Written by **Annika Harley**
Illustration by **Evian Le**
Typography by **Fon Limsomwong**

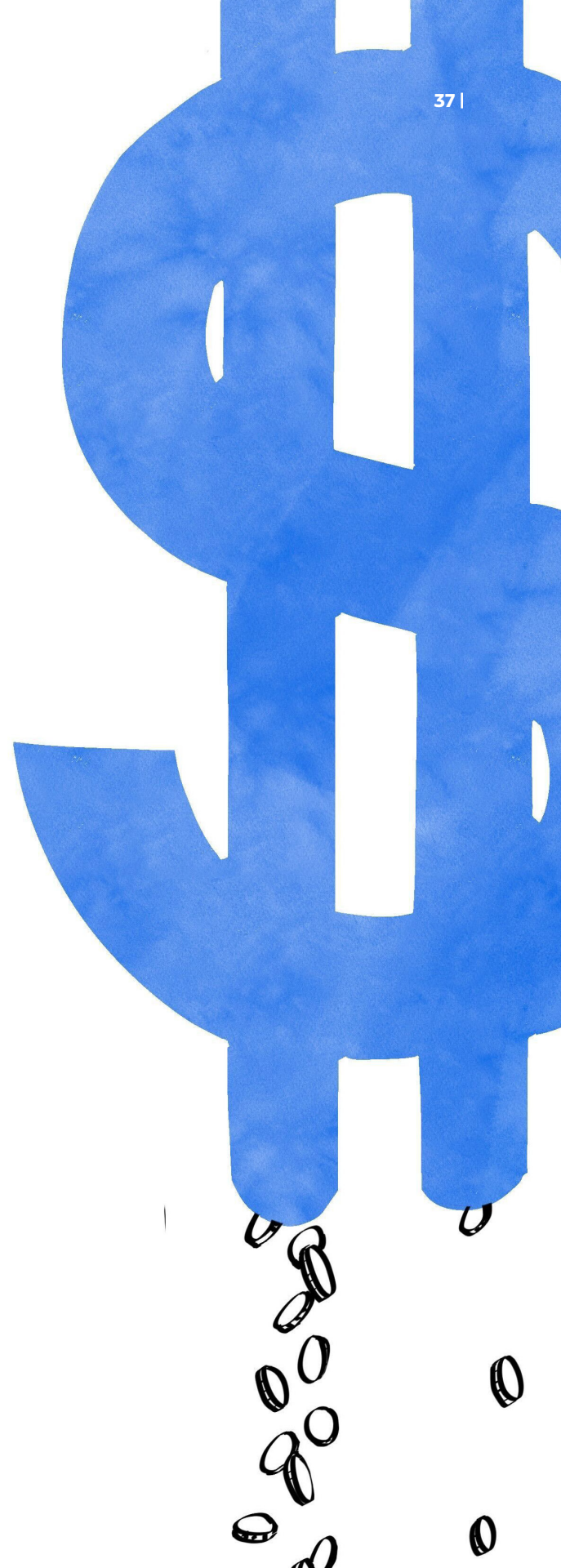
ethic. When we put in the effort, we got what we wanted. Why didn't that apply to everybody else?

It took volunteering at the local homeless shelter, Atlanta Mission, for both Gabi and me to see what life was like outside the sheltered campus and upbringing. The demographics at Atlanta Mission reflected those of the country at large, wherein "Among the nation's racial and ethnic groups, Black Americans have the highest rate of homelessness."

If you are a steadfast believer in the American dream, likely you buy into the idea that social mobility is available to those that just put in the effort. You might be inclined to think that the men and women I met at Atlanta Mission are just "lazy", and that they never worked hard enough to get the life they wanted. I only had to visit once to learn just how wrong that is. They didn't lose their housing because they were lazy. Almost every single one of the residents I talked to was working a back-breaking job, and often more than one, when they lost their housing. They lost it because their job didn't pay them enough to cover their rent, because they couldn't afford childcare and therefore couldn't work, or because their medical bills bankrupted them and sent them into the street.

The country is inundated with people like the residents at the shelter who never had opportunities to begin with, and I think a huge factor in their circumstances is the lack of access to basic education. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness found that "youth with less than a high school diploma or GED have a 346% higher risk of experiencing homelessness than youth with at least a high school degree." Homelessness is practically inevitable when education is unavailable.

It's gotten to the point that the American dream is drilled into children in public school to illustrate all the opportunities we can have if we work hard enough, however, we don't learn the fact that those opportunities may be limited to a choice few of the population. Gabi and I were lucky enough to be a part of the privileged few. To be fair, Gabi doesn't like the idea that everything was handed to us. She studied for 8 months for her SAT, took 12 AP classes, and graduated with a 4.9 GPA to get into Emory, a prestigious university with only a 13% acceptance rate. As a result, she'll likely graduate to a starting salary of \$60,919 a year at only 21 years old. That took hard work, hard work that she committed herself to since she was in seventh grade. But none of that would have been possible without the resources that are readily available for students like Gabi in places like Fairfax County. Families are capable of shelling out the big bucks for private tutors and private college admissions advisors alike. Resources are plentiful, and not just for those willing to pay a little extra. Publicly funded schools in the Fairfax public school system all have free tutoring provided by teachers and students alike during and after school hours.



Then why is a good education so hard to find in other cities? It took leaving Northern Virginia and some research for Gabi and me to figure out that not all school systems look like Fairfax. Gabi and I recently listened to an NPR feature story about the Normandy school district, a district so desperately underperforming that it lost accreditation by the state of Missouri from 2013-2017. In light of the fact that 28% of its students would be transferring to accredited schools, Normandy's 2013 budget was reduced to \$50 million, only a fraction of the \$2.4 billion 2013 Fairfax budget, for a student population that is 92.1% African American and 44% economically disadvantaged. Closer to home, Georgia's Clayton County schools, just south of Atlanta, lost accreditation in 2008, losing all of its public funding, and leaving a population that is 62.9% African American, 22.7% Hispanic/Latino to fend for themselves. Even after regaining accreditation in 2013, Clayton County Public Schools proposed budget for the 2023 school year is only \$945 million. All these numbers have me wondering; why are underfunded school systems primarily districts with large minority populations?

There's a handful of answers to these questions, all pointing in the same direction. A study by the

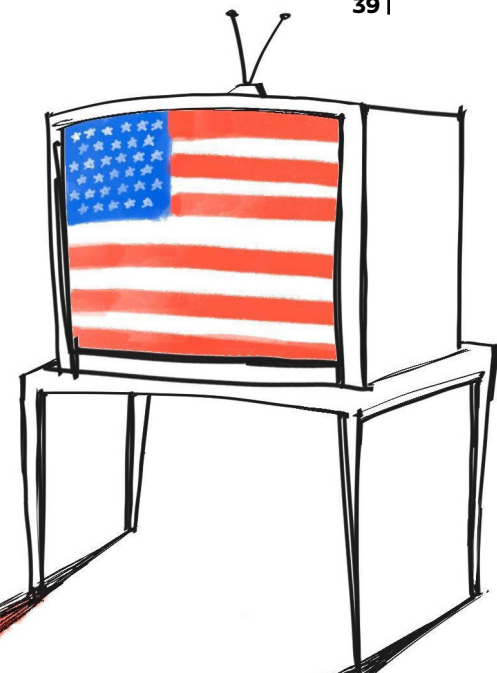
US Census Bureau found that school funding comes in three parts: 45% local money, 45% from the state, and 10% federal. Most of the local money provided is sourced from property taxes, which vary from district to district. In poorer neighborhoods, the state can foot the bill, but that aid doesn't even come close to matching the funding that high-income areas receive. Because residents of wealthy towns can also be hostile toward the construction of low-income housing in their neighborhoods, the gap between rich and poor districts becomes even more dramatic.

A report by Bellwether Education found that school districts with a distinct lack of affordable housing generate \$4,664 more in per-pupil funding compared to the average district. Thus, Fairfax County, a district with a median value housing unit price of \$576,700, gets \$3.4 billion in public school funding, while Clayton County Public Schools, a district with a median value housing unit price of \$122,100, gets only \$945 million. With state-sanctioned district boundaries heavily influenced by a history of racial segregation and redlining, the underfunded districts almost always end up being the



districts with a large minority population. Bellwether refers to the practice of state officials and realtors lumping all the affordable housing into one district as “educational gerrymandering.”

Again, I ask, for whom is the American dream achievable? Is it accessible to students in unaccredited school districts with four-day school weeks, defunct classrooms, uncertified teachers, and parent volunteers in place of professionals in the classroom? Or is it only available to those whose parents both have master’s degrees and bring in \$128,000 a year in annual income? Life beyond the homeless shelter can be unimaginable when a good education was never an option. When it comes to opportunity, it seems like many poor minorities never had a chance in the first place. ■



Student Showcase

Interviews by **Anthony Kosenkov**
Portraits by **Maria-Annelise Coello**



When did you start painting and why did this medium specifically interest you?

I began painting at a very young age, but I started officially studying drawing and painting classically around the age of 10. This educational background certainly was part of what drew me to the traditional mediums of charcoal, graphite, oil paint and now egg tempera. Beyond that, however, the ability to tap into such a deep and rich history of figurative art-making has been much of what enthralls me about the mediums of oil paint and charcoal specifically.



Joel Pasquarelli

B.F.A. Painting





Alina Skolarus

B.F.A. Painting

How did you discover your passion for painting?

Until recently, painting was always something I was good at but never really enjoyed. Throughout the past year though, I've learned that channeling my ideas and perfectionism into painting leaves room for an experimental attitude in other mediums. As I'm growing into my Jewish identity I want to create art that reflects my religion and community as well as take time to advocate against antisemitism in all its forms.

How would you say Jewish people are perceived and represented in today's world and how has this impacted you, both in your personal and professional life?

Antisemitism is rising at an alarming rate. The ADL found that Antisemitic incidents in the US reached an all time high in 2021 and it's gotten worse since that report was published. Now, I'm not exactly sure where this puts me, and I know many other Jewish Americans feel the same way. The truth is, Jewish people make up only 2.4 percent of the US population and 0.19 percent of the worldwide population. We can't fight antisemitism on our own so it comes down to who is willing to fight alongside us. We are living in uncertain times and I'm not sure what will come of it.



What do you hope to accomplish with your work? What does your work aim to say? What events or experiences in your life led you to spread this message?

Most of my work at this point in my life ends up as a thank you to Judaism and the Jewish community. It seems like too much of the exposure to Judaism that the average person has is some form of suffering, when our story is so much more. Part of what makes Jewish existence so beautiful is constant perseverance and the desire to turn suffering into strength. Judaism sees learning as a lifelong commitment, encourages diversity of thought and views our relationship with God as a partnership in creation. I've heard Rabbi's say that "the world is being created everyday" and it's our responsibility to approach each new day with empathy and passion to help others. I hope my work now and in the future captures some of the diversity, joy and strength of the Jewish people.



Yueying Liu

M.F.A. Illustration



How did you discover your love for art from various religions?

I always was interested in Buddhism because one of my relatives is Buddhist. I'm also interested in Christianity, and other religions. It's mystery for me, because I'm a non-believer, and I actually I don't believe anything. And with my graduate starting, I'd also like to explore some religious things because I think religion can make me calm down. It makes me think a lot about humanity and human relationships.



How do your paintings draw from and expand on techniques and themes found in Buddhist art?

I think the linework. The line is very important in Chinese painting, including Buddhist art. Chinese paintings really influenced me, so I really focus on the lines. Some Buddhist works are really flat. I think line is the biggest thing I learned from Buddhist art, and also the abstract quality.

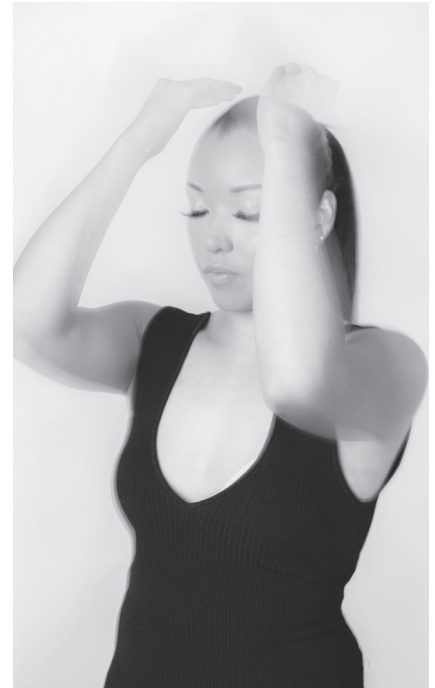
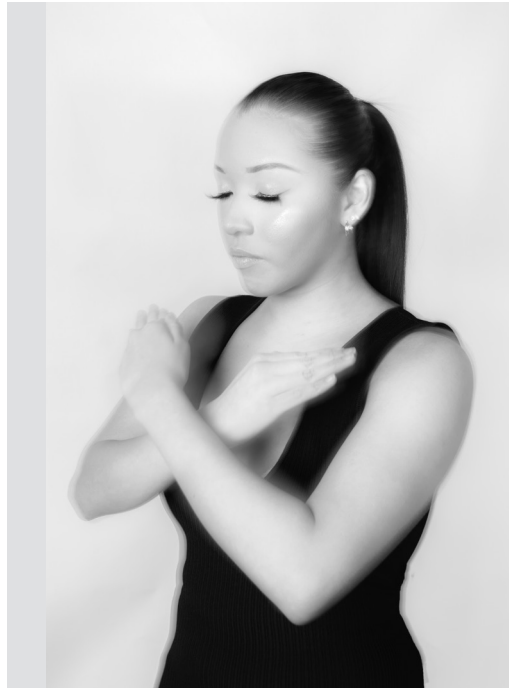
What do you hope your work accomplishes? What message do you want to send out to the world?

If you are talking about messages, it's about the human, the feminism, and the religion. The art I want to explore in my future – that's too much! Because each thing is in different fields – like I really like animation, like I want to try to combine the traditional and the digital in the future. The word "woman" is a really important word in my art. I want to talk about the no gender, the duality, more in my future.



Madelaina Polk

B.F.A. Photography

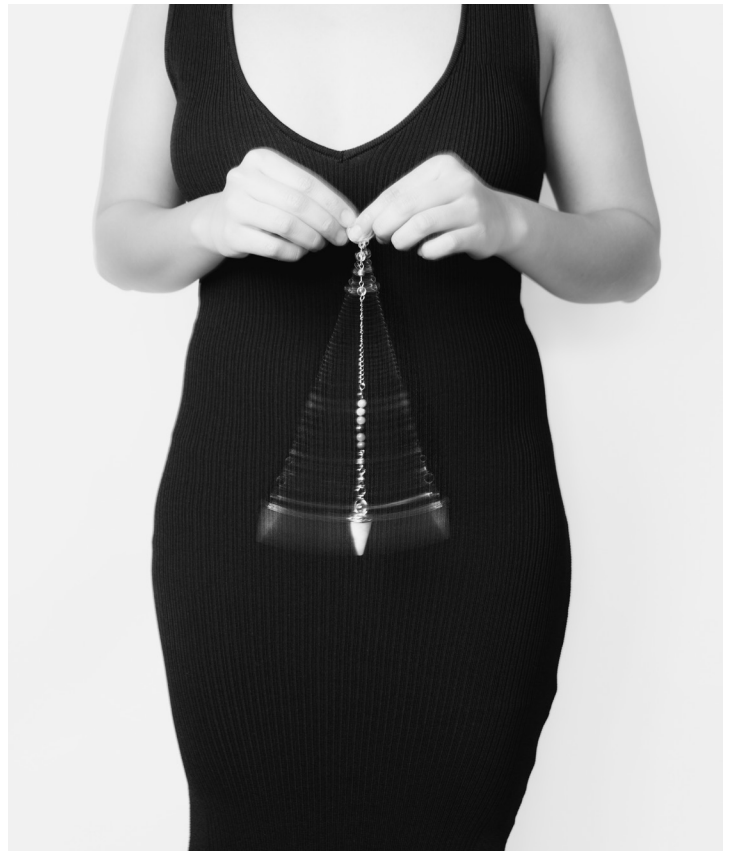


What inspired your series “SANA”?

I really wanted to do something that was inspired by the healing of reiki. My other works are completely different from this project. I do a lot of sports photography, which is completely different from fine art photography. With this project, I really just wanted to show people that there are other outlets to heal your body.

How did growing up with reiki influence your world view?

Trust is the biggest part, I think. Growing up around that I'd think “Do I trust it? Do I? Is this something that I want to continue with my own kids?” Stuff like that. After time and after seeing that it was working in my body and it was healing and allowing me to be the person I want to be, allowed me to, like, trust my mom and trust reiki. But I know that for some people they don't get it, they don't like it. They want to stick with the doctor, you know who tells them “Take this sort of medicine blah blah blah!” But most of the time we don't see them healing the thing that's really affecting them.



STRUGGLES AT SOUTH HIGH

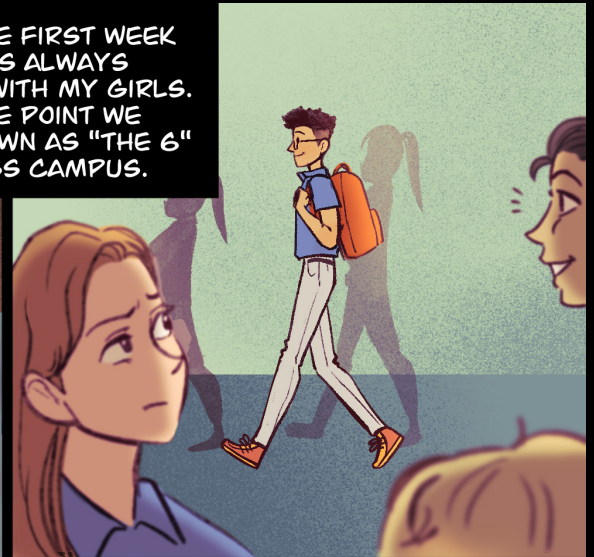
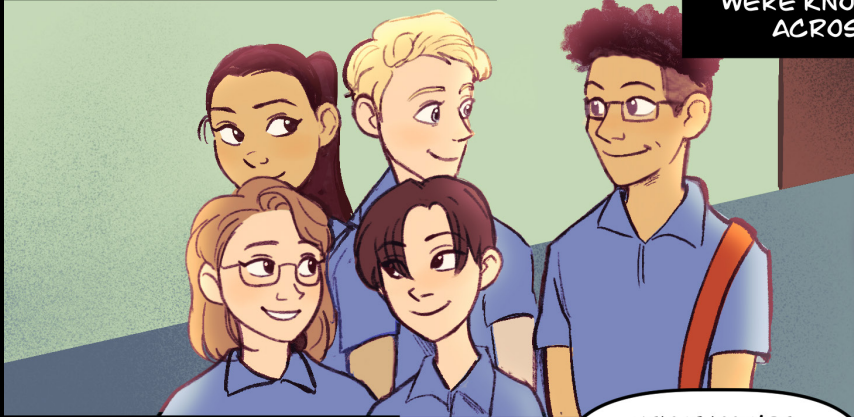
A comic about being kicked out of school for your identity

Written by DJ Shaw

Illustration by Mae Honark

IT'S HONESTLY SURREAL TO THINK BACK TO BEING GAY AT SOUTH HIGH.

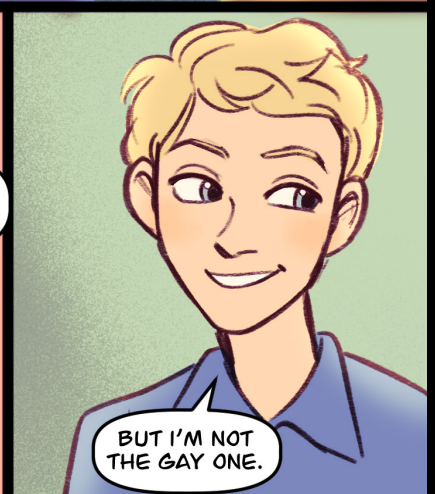
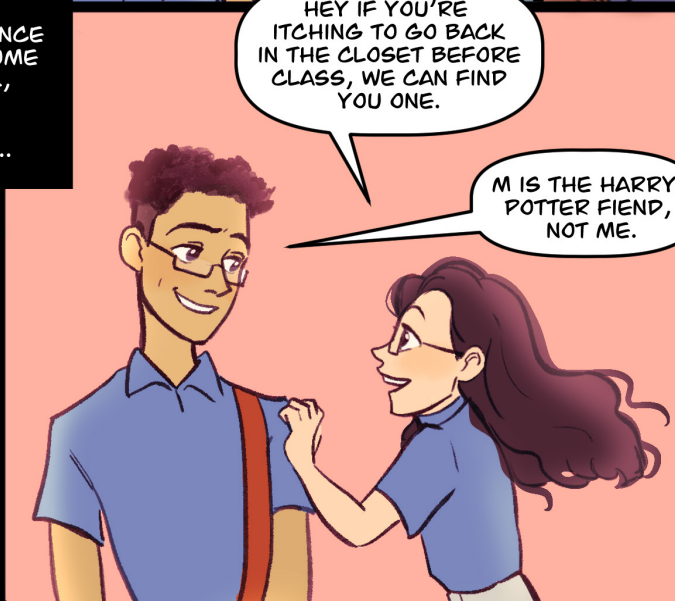
FROM THE FIRST WEEK I WAS ALWAYS SPOTTED WITH MY GIRLS. TO THE POINT WE WERE KNOWN AS "THE 6" ACROSS CAMPUS.



THE NAME WAS FITTING SINCE I'D KNOWN THEM, AND SOME OTHER KIDS AT SCHOOL, SINCE I WAS SIX. AND BY EXTENSION, THEY ALL KNEW I WAS...

HEY IF YOU'RE ITCHING TO GO BACK IN THE CLOSET BEFORE CLASS, WE CAN FIND YOU ONE.

M IS THE HARRY POTTER FIEND, NOT ME.

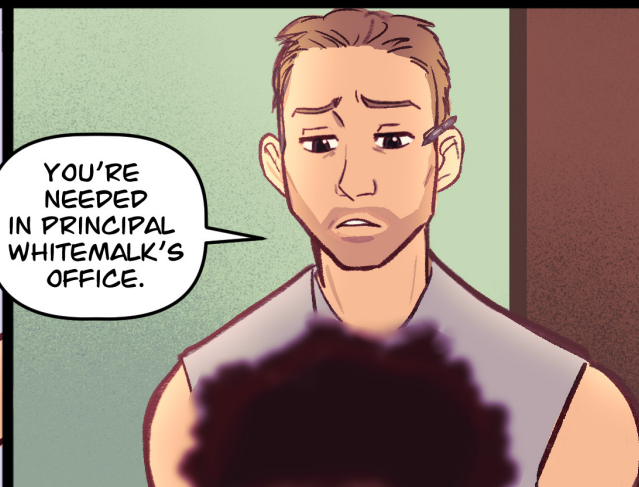


BUT I'M NOT THE GAY ONE.

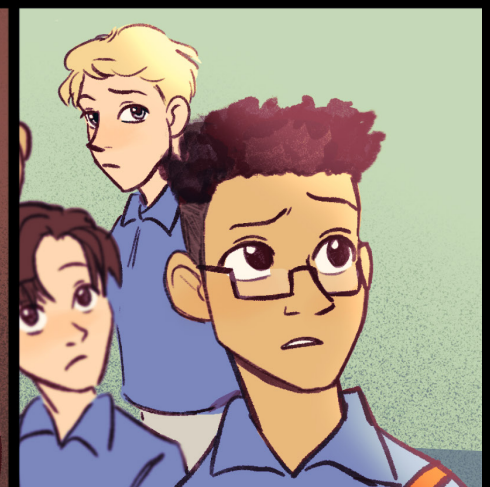
SHE WAS. AND WE ALL HAD KNOWN FOR YEARS.

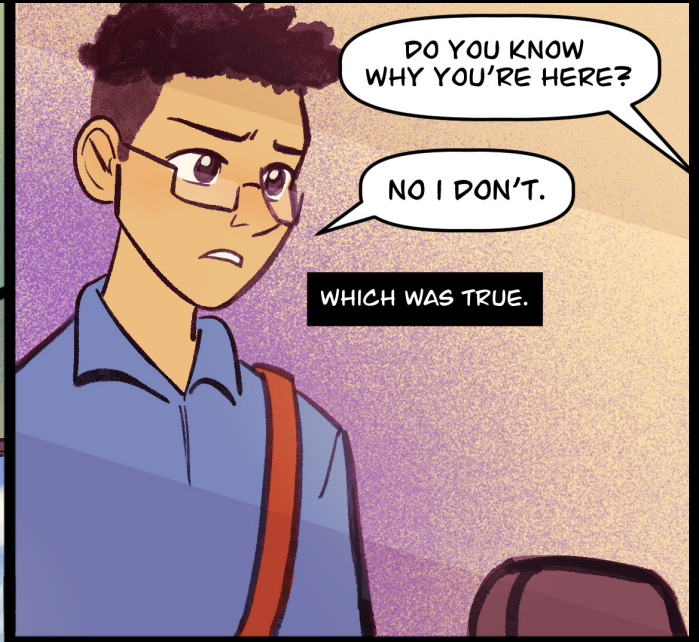


SHAW.



YOU'RE NEEDED IN PRINCIPAL WHITEMALK'S OFFICE.





DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE?

NO I DON'T.

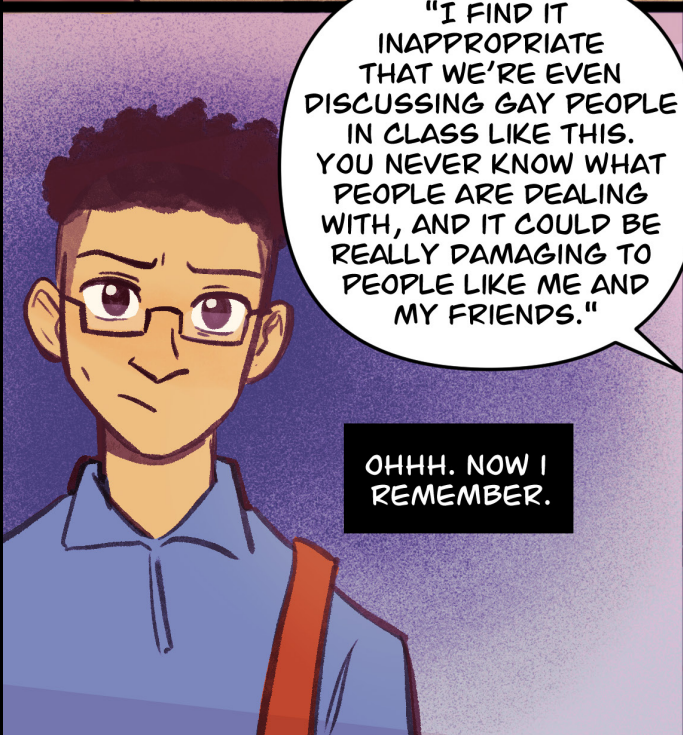
WHICH WAS TRUE.



DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU WROTE TO MR CELDER?

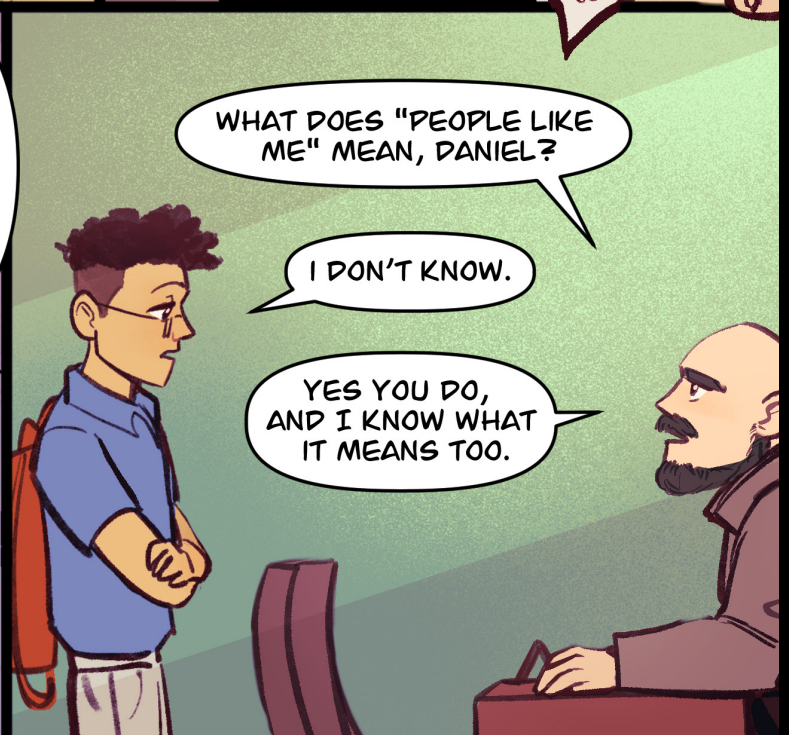
NO.

AGAIN, ALSO TRUE.



"I FIND IT INAPPROPRIATE THAT WE'RE EVEN DISCUSSING GAY PEOPLE IN CLASS LIKE THIS. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT PEOPLE ARE DEALING WITH, AND IT COULD BE REALLY DAMAGING TO PEOPLE LIKE ME AND MY FRIENDS."

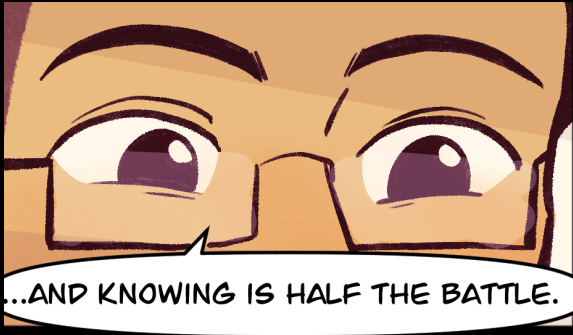
OH HH. NOW I REMEMBER.



WHAT DOES "PEOPLE LIKE ME" MEAN, DANIEL?

I DON'T KNOW.

YES YOU DO, AND I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TOO.



...AND KNOWING IS HALF THE BATTLE.



IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH SON, THERE ARE WAYS TO GET SUPPORT.



I THEN REALIZED THAT WHITEMALK- IN HIS WEIRD TWISTED WAY- WAS TRYING TO HELP ME. AGAIN, EVERYONE ALREADY KNEW.

AND PERHAPS IF I ADMITTED TO "STRUGGLING" THEN HE COULD CONVINCE THE SCHOOL HEAD'S TO GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE.



NO SIR, THERE'S NOTHING I'M STRUGGLING WITH.

ARE YOU SURE?

YEP... PRETTY SURE.

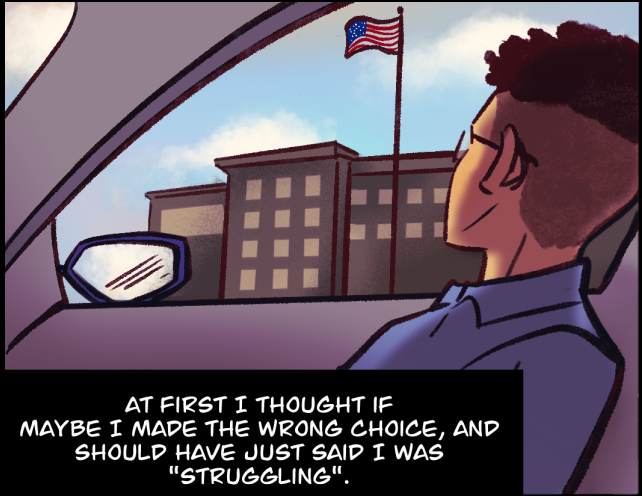
BEEN SURE, ACTUALLY.

OUTSIDE...



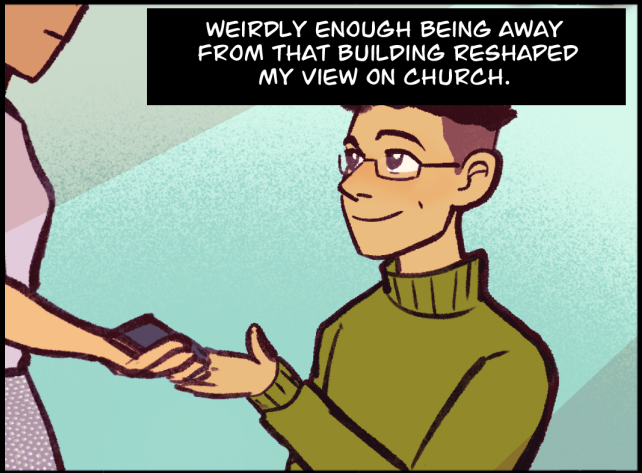
BUT SOMETHING ABOUT THAT WORD... "STRUGGLING". IF I AGREED TO IT, IT WOULD BE ADMITTING THAT WHO I'M ATTRACTED TO WAS SOMETHING TO STRUGGLE OVER.

AND LIVING WITH THAT... FELT WORSE THAN ANY OTHER PUNISHMENT THEY COULD GIVE ME.



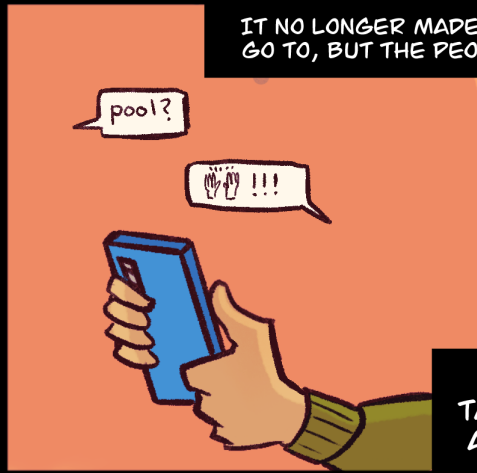
AT FIRST I THOUGHT IF MAYBE I MADE THE WRONG CHOICE, AND SHOULD HAVE JUST SAID I WAS "STRUGGLING".

I WAS DOING ONLINE SCHOOL, AND MY MOM HAD TAKEN MY PHONE.



WEIRDLY ENOUGH BEING AWAY FROM THAT BUILDING RESHAPED MY VIEW ON CHURCH.

IT NO LONGER MADE ME SEE IT AS A PLACE YOU GO TO, BUT THE PEOPLE YOU KEEP AROUND YOU.



AND THAT MADE ME TAKE BEING A CHRISTIAN A LOT MORE SERIOUSLY.

HAVING MY FRIENDS SAVED MY SELF-WORTH, AND SO NOW FOR ME, BEING A SYMBOL OF HIM MEANS BEING THAT TO EVERYONE I MEET.

GOD IS LOVE, AND SO WE CAN'T FEEL HIM BY OVERLY CRITICIZING AND DELEGATING THE RIGHT WAYS TO EXPERIENCE LIFE.

BUT BY LISTENING WHAT EVERYONE YOU COME ACROSS CAN SHARE WITH YOU TO STRENGTHEN YOUR OWN JOURNEY.

BECAUSE TRULY NONE OF US ARE STRUGGLING, WE'RE JUST EVOLVING.



ARTS CORNER

Divinity

Curated by Cait Jayme and Eva Erhardt



Abigail Bangura

B.F.A. Advertising and Branding

From the Bronx to Atlanta to California, music moves, speaks, and inspires all those that care to listen. Likewise, modern rap legends that break the mold like Lil Baby, A Boogie wit da Hoodie, Young Thug, and Travis Scott also have their song to sing. Within this tarot card set, each artist is categorized into the four traditional suits. In addition, each suit represents different natural elements as well as metals for further differentiation.



Yokiz Xi

B.F.A. Illustration

Everyone has talent inside of them, just as abundant as the universe and its stars. However, humans have the tendency to search for these stars as if they are hidden secrets to be found unaware that they themselves are created from the universe and these stars already exist inside of them. Our talents are not just an idea to explore and learn, but also are to be developed and molded for us as individuals. My choice of a dandelion is meant to symbolize the abundance of talents within us. These hidden talents are just seeds that fly with the hope to find the ground to land on so it can grow and bloom, just like the stars find their place in the universe to shine bright. The majority of the time, it's not your lack of ability but instead it's just that your talent hasn't yet found solid ground to grow and flourish.



Zoey Qu

B.F.A. Illustration

This piece is inspired by 16 personalities. By taking the test, people are divided into 16 different personality types. I chose ENFP as the theme for the illustration. People with ENFP personality are agile and expressive communicators. They are imaginative, have a strong artistic side, and prefer to be spontaneous and flexible rather than planned and organized. But at the same time, they might be sensitive, lack focus and follow through. I try to visualize these features and use visual elements to represent ENFP's characteristics. The representative flower of ENFP is the tulip, and the surrounding carousel and small animals represent the wild imagination of people with ENFP personality. And the misplaced digital clocks in the background suggest their inability to focus and thus cause procrastination. At the same time, I simplified the characters and formed a strong contrast with he/she through the rich background.



Zia Zhu

M.F.A. Illustration

There are many different forms of pop culture, like anime and TV series. The one chosen for this series is Astrology, specifically the Zodiac signs. The signs and their symbols have been used over and over as tools, but the stories and the origins almost seem obsolete. It is true that analyzing does not require knowing the story, but the mythology sure is beautiful and should not be forgotten. Because astrology is already a popular topic and everybody has a zodiac sign, the stories and their related illustrations can be liked and "owned" by everybody. Each illustration is presenting a scene of significance in the sign's story.



Van Long Nguyen
B.F.A. Illustration

Traditional art is fascinating, and I have been waiting for a chance to study or compose this rich, colorful genre of art. Thank the Youkai festival that brought me the brilliant idea to create a collection about the mysterious world. Introduce the 'Samurai', my first piece in collection finished using color pencil medium with size 9x12 in. A portrait depicting a samurai spirit wearing a human mask, he is wearing a typical, details samurai hat that is from a noble, royal family could only own. His expression is not so intense, he is quite calm but has a powerful feel. The imagery of samurai is based on Japanese history usually presents honor, Justice, Brave, and Loyalty, and I adore their characteristics and sharp skills. Additionally I chose the complementary colors blue-orange as the dominant scheme for the entire scene to achieve the most contrast and also added some support colors to give an overall dynamic throughout the composition. The "Samurai" is absolutely my favourite, colorful intro art in this collection; it goes together with my second, both of the illustrations present opposite interprets.



Li Yilin
M.F.A. Illustration

I have studied fine art and graphic design, and now my major is illustration. Illustration major is a new experience for me. It inspires me to immerse myself in a new way of creating. Typically, I use digital methods to paint my compositions to quickly express what I want to express. Currently, I am most interested in ghost culture in Asia. The unique and vivid images described in it are very attractive to me. In my paintings, I try to combine Asian characters and images with Western storylines, and I hope that each of my works has the dual power of Eastern and Western culture. I hope that what is expressed in the work can be both exciting and retrospective. In terms of color, I think rich colors are more attractive, and people can feel vitality and strength in colors. My passion for drawing gives me the freedom to experiment and create in any subject and direction.



About the cover artist

Avery Gray is a 24 year old queer, visual artist from Colorado who creates mixed media work that explores identity, pain, and hope for equality. She received her BFA in photography with a ceramic minor from Savannah College of Art and Design in 2020. She uses chaotic organization of the many layers of symbols and images to create complex metaphors that tell the poem or story she is reflecting on in each piece. By leaving a breadcrumb trail of nostalgic and noticeable images throughout all of her pieces she is able to connect with her audience while leaving space for their own selves and pasts to embody the works simultaneously.

About the cover

For this issue of SCAN, we aimed to represent a wide spectrum of belief systems ranging from traditional religion to firmly held convictions from a non-spiritual perspective. With this objective in mind, we reached out to SCAD graduate Avery Gray and asked her to create a collage to represent this idea. All assets in the piece are created from photographs and paintings completed by SCAD students.

The cover includes works from Amaiya Bloomfield, Jordan Brooks, Hsuan Chung, Disha Gupta, Shine Huang, Helen Kirbo, Sage Look, Caroline Perkins, Madelaina Polk, Jess Rhodes, Alina Skolarus, Xavier Thomas, and Laney Wardell.





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