



Loreto College Cavan's Creative Writing Society's Magazine

(1ST Edition: Winter 2022)

What Poetry Can Do

Poetry isn't for everyone. I get that
It certainly didn't used to be for me, either
Rhyming words to mean nothing or anything
Things I was too busy to understand
Words like "evermore" and "trepidation"
Poetry isn't for everyone, but look at you
You're still listening to this. You're over 10 seconds in –11
Look at you. I must have gotten you somewhere along the way
And this poem will end soon. I'll give you that hint
You won't have to stay here any longer
But listen to this. This is what poetry can do:
Imagine yourself at the end of the world: a cliff.
You step off, grinning, wide-eyed.
You've outsmarted the end of this poem
"How does it feel?" it asks
It asks how it feels to fly

By Arwa Abeer Memon, 5th Year

Messages

Maggie woke early one summer morning and was only thinking of the most amazing dream she had just had of her and her wonderful daughter Liv playing on the swings in their vast back yard. Their back yard is an endless number of alluring blossoms and vines. It had a lengthy, old stone, twisting isle with colours that were once beige, white and silver, now a flushed cream, patchy-white and grey. It is still just as beautiful and aesthetically pleasing as the wooden pergolas with a large crowd of roses, with colours of red, pink, yellow and white, all as vibrant as the suns glow. There was newborn ivy, dark green in colour, slowly creeping its way to the peak, in order to fully connect with the new blooming roses and buds on this brief summer morning, all dancing in the breeze.

The sky was a pale blue and clear of any clouds. That morning Maggie and Liv had watched the sun rise with a lovely view by the large pine hedges of colours green and lime. They were laying on the soft gras which was a beautiful mix of dark and light greens with sun-yellow tips. The grass was a canvas of daisies, dandelions, and many more gleaming wildflowers.

In the forever existent here and now, when the sun had risen above the horizon, the preeminent yard began to fill with all sorts of animals and critters. Maggie was picturing Liv, seated on a swing of pine wood with yellowing ropes, hanging down from the giant oak tree. The critters were now clearly visible amongst the many tees of oak and birch, with the bushes of holly and pine. There were hedgehogs who peaked out of the bushes, bees who hummed and buzzed along the garden to all different kinds of flowers and there were little

bunnies who were dancing with glee to the songbirds tune from high up in the trees. Every now and then Maggie would spot a fox and Liv would appear to show her mother how wonderfully fascinating and gorgeous they truly are. Every animal, noise and critter was there. Every single one but Liv.

This garden was truly home for Maggie just as it was and is home for Liv. Livs' father was always away and never got to see her grow up. He missed her first word, her first steps and he never got to experience her growing beauty, her love and adoration for animals and yet Liv still has lived a high spirited and joyful life.

Maggie observed as the swings rocked delicately back and forth in the now colder, late summer breeze. It would soon be autumn and Maggie was all over the place, but she always made time to take a look at those pine swings. She could almost catch a glimpse of her beautiful daughter with her silk-like, golden brown hair flowing down to her waist and her soft curls that ran from her scalp to the very ends of her hair. Her eyes are crystal blue and were always innocent and sparkling, her cheeks were as pink as bubblegum, her face was round and kind. Her ears were small with no lobes and just a single tiny, shimmering fox earring on each one. Her petite frame was already browning from the suns' rays and she was displaying a magenta dress with sea-blue orchids all decorated along the long flowing skirt that went down to her knees and a small green bow shining on the front with a matching one brushing back her hair. Her voice but a sweet chime among the peaceful air, barefoot on the grass, she had pink painted toenails and fingernails alike. This was Maggies favorite image of her daughter in her favorite dress.

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Maggie returned her gaze to the kitchen sink, shiny except for the ring of yellowing lime scale around the taps base. She paused for a second, taking it all in and then continued silently to the narrow hallway containing nothing but one picture. It was a picture of Liv on her first day of school just after she had turned four. You could see how excitingly nervous she was. She was so young, and she had not a worry in the world.

Maggie ran her fingers through her brown hair, knotted to the root with curls, her face was wrinkled beyond her years with worry, sorrow and loss of hope, her brown eyes glaring into the bedroom at her husband who had been hope for just a month now. He was slouched in their king-sized bed, his golden curls ruffled, his expression firm and business-like as always.

His thick eyebrows formed a V-shape in the middle of his forehead. He was reading the newspaper and slowly switched his attention to his wife, all the while he continued to flick the pages of the paper in his broad hands. He was slouched still when he looked at Maggie and he was immediately reminded of his daughter and glanced back at the paper. He shook his head, his crystal blue eyes reminding her of the only similarity Liv shared with her father.

Derek was back a month ago from another one of his business trips and is currently taking six months leave in order to support his wife. He had heard of the accident that had destroyed his daughters' life and he had heard of how his wife was falling apart and had come to show some love and more so to show respect to his family. He had also said it was good for his job and reputation, but Maggie really didn't have time to care. He had

announced his short term leave so as he could aid his wife through this undoubtedly difficult and painful time.

Ever since the accident one month ago, Maggie blamed herself. She would keep telling herself that the accident was all her fault, she would tell herself over and over until it stuck. Liv was such a precocious child, but Maggie knows and feels that she is still here, she will always be here.

Maggie took out her mobile phone. She wanted to call someone, anyone, but she knew she couldn't. She lives in a world of silence. She had endured a severe head injury in the accident, but silence was such a small price to pay for what she believes she's done.

Maggie is a prisoner of her own mind, subject to a world of silence and she has become a taciturn person. Would she ever hear again? If she did, does she deserve it? These are the questions Maggie was asking herself. The day of the accident her entire life had shattered before her very eyes and nothing seemed to matter anymore. She misses her daughter so very much and if only she hadn't allowed her to fall asleep it all may not have happened. She may have lived with the idea of Liv's death if Liv had been wearing her seatbelt, but she wasn't. If she had been, things may have been different.

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Her thoughts were interrupted as she could feel the small black flip-phone vibrating in her pocket. It was an unknown number, completely anonymous. Whoever it may be, Maggie was unable to answer it anyway so she declined the call and returned the phone to her pocket.

The phone had reminded Maggie of another memory. Maggie remembered that she had given Liv the phone only a week prior the accident. It had been her fourteenth birthday and it was a gift of love and responsibility, but also a gift for Maggie too. It was going to help comfort Maggie when Liv leaves the house. It was so Maggie always knew her daughter was just a phone call away. The phone was on Liv's person when the truck had struck the car. A peculiar thing is that no harm came of the phone. It was left completely unscathed.

Unfortunately, Liv was not quite so lucky. An oil spillage from the truck had caused the car to set alight. Liv had still been in the car at the time. Maggie had been pulled out by a firefighter and no one knew of the teenager, asleep in the back seat. Not one limb of Liv was found and if it wasn't for the leakage, Liv may have lived. Maggie had been left unconvinced.

Maggie tried to remember Liv playing on the swings but it was intruded by an unwanted memory. The memory of a horror, a memory of great sorrow.

"3, 2, 1. Hearts beating! Load her up! LETS GO!!!"

"Liv?" Maggie couldn't even hear herself speak. **"My daughter, please, where is she?"** Everything and everyone went silent. Maggie wasn't even sure how well it had come out.

Judging by the glimpse of expression she had managed to take it from their facial expressions, just before Maggie had passed out, she knew. Liv was gone. She just knew it.

All she had left of her was this little button flip-phone and not a thing else.

Maggie blinked. She was mortified. The sudden change of scene, the view of the real world, she was awoken from her terrifying trance by the vibrating in her pocket. It was that unknown number again and once again, with slight relief, she declined the call and made her way to the narrow, carpeted hallway, seizing her jumper from a hood by the door. She decided to go for a stroll to clear her busy mind of trauma. She had to attempt or at least try to clear her thoughts.

Still no word from her husband, Maggie reached for the handle of the door when the little phone vibrated in her pocket, but this time it was different. The vibration was short and sharp. Maggie's thoughts were cut off by a sudden wave of dizziness. The dizziness corrupted her mind, her person and sent her into the sitting room and living space. She planned on checking the message when she had sat comfortably into the large armchair with a thump and just as she was retrieving the mobile phone from her pocket a picture in an expensive golden frame with hundreds of tiny glass gems captured her attention. The picture in the frame's possession was a recent enough, newly placed photo, not even half a year old. It was a picture of Liv on her fourteenth birthday. 'She was so beautiful', Maggie muttered to herself, 'She is so beautiful'.

Her hair in a twisting French braid traveling down her right shoulder and brushing off her arm, her pink and white, horizontally striped dress was decorated with the heads of bright yellow roses, tiny, with green leaves. Liv's smile was as beautiful as a newborn fawn's first playful bleat. Her cheeks blushed pink and rosy, her eyes shimmering like diamonds, beautiful yet knowing. She was going to accomplish great things. She was a girl well above her time.

Maggie thought of the laughs they had and the love and affection the two shared for each other. Maggie thought of how Liv would have adored this new messaging feature of the mobile, black Nokia. The feature was only a month old. Liv was so intelligent and so good at school. She would have loved to figure out how it works. The joy Liv brought to Maggie's life and the love and affection they shared for each other was more valuable than gold.

Still feeling light-headed, Maggie returned her full attention to the real world, this cruel world. She was thinking of all the noises, good and bad. The noises she couldn't hear. All those sounds. The sweet chirrup of a newborn chick, the howl of the wind and the passing of the cars. She knew everybody would take those sounds for granted as she looked around the room, silence creeping up on her. She couldn't hear the clock ticking, only the silent movement of the hands. Most importantly, she couldn't hear Liv. She couldn't hear her daughter, even if she was still here. Maggie would never hear the chime of her beloved daughter again.

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Not realizing she had been sidetracked, enveloped in her own thoughts, and brought back the painful reality. She snatched the phone suddenly from her pouch like pocket in her coat and on the little screen there were three text messages, all of which were from the same unknown number as before. Maggie was confused, curious, careful, and wondering as she opened the messages.

Her chest had a piercing pain, and she was still very lightheaded and unsure if she would be able to read the messages without passing out. As she flipped the phone up, she read.

Mum... I understand how hard it must be for you, but please promise me you will not blame yourself for what has happened to me.

Maggie's heart was thumping in her chest. It felt as if it was being stabbed by blunt knives.

Her head was lighter than ever, she continued to read.

I was trapped in this phone the day they took you away after the accident, it is time that we be reunited. It is time you came to join me in the little phone.

Your daughter,

Liv x

There was a long pause. Maggie was frozen, unable to move even the smallest limb of her body. As she stood up, the knives had gone from her heart, and she felt a sweet nothing.

She couldn't even feel the beating of her heart. She collapsed to the floor, dropping the small black device from her hand as she went.

It all happened in the space of a second and now all was peaceful. Maggie rose delicately into the sky as all her worries washed away like a whale that had wound up on the shore. As she rose, she looked down at her body laying pale on the ground, wondering why it was there. Maggie didn't care, all of her pain had vanished like a needle in a haystack, ready,

Maggie looked up and rose quicker, into the sky and above the clouds.

Maggie was never heard of again and the phone was found on the floor beside her.

The phone still had no messages.

By Lucy Flynn, 2nd Year

The Mind of a Poet

I have words
thousands of them
tumbling around in my head
scratching the back of my throat
screaming to be said aloud
some shape together to form beautiful symphonies that disappear in seconds
Symphonies that I scramble to write down.
I have a yearning in my chest that won't go away
Can you feel it?
I yearn for my words to be heard
For my symphonies to be sung
Yet I'm shackled by my own reluctance
by my own fear
but one day
I'll share my mind with the world
and it will be glorious.

By Meadh Campbell, 6th Year.

Pity the Pirate

Dear Diary,

I'm bored.

As you could probably tell as I've decided to take up the tedious task of writing down my feelings! Because at this point I can't sink any lower for 112 hours I've been trapped in this cold damp cell with nothing but stone walls for company. How can someone as amazing as me get trapped in here you ask? Well it's a rather simple story that has completely destroyed my pride. You see I once had the perfect life, my own ship, people to boss around cities to rob and deceive whenever I wanted and a really cool hat... God I miss my hat. If you haven't figured it out yet I'm a pirate, why I'm explaining that to a piece of paper I do not know but whatever I guess. Anyway where was I?... oh yeah a pirate right first of all let's get this clear if you're thinking rotten Teeth and over the top moustaches firstly I'm a girl so who's sexist now second I've never had so much as a cavity and third I have amazing dress sense paired with a really stylish hat that was a deep black

glossy-

enough about the hat the point is I'm not a
stereotypical pirate

So there I was on my ship doing what captains do (which is basically nothing) and all of a sudden at least a dozen swords were pointed at my neck and I couldn't believe it, it was a bloody coup! Unbelievable I mean you threatened to behead a couple of people and suddenly you have and I quote " anger issues" sorry did I say threatened I meant attempted but anyway I'm a pirate what was I supposed to act like? Santa Clause.

But that's not what broke my pride this was, the leader of the coup was a man called... Glitter (internally dying inside) Now for the rest of my life I will be known not as the pirate who robbed four cities in a single night or stole five ships from the navy. I will be known as the pirate who got overthrown by an idiot named GLITTER! I Mean I would have been OK if it was by someone called Wave, Blake, Death-trap or even just Gary, and you won't believe it, it got worse he made me walk a plank like the moron he is! Could you be even more of a cliché (taking a few breathes to calm down)

So I swam in heavy leather that was very expensive or it would have been if I actually brought it. I wined up in this dump of a city where I was arrested for robbing a house, if only that was true you see I was so busy getting past the security controlling the owners dogs and breaking into the safe without tripping a single alarm that I was so happy like the dummy I am left without the money I was trying to steal so I went back only to run straight into the guards

Fast forward to being dragged in here which by the way is so dirty I'm pretty sure I'll never be fully clean again. I know I know what were you thinking how could I be so stupid? In my defence I didn't think I'd be caught and I was really drunk (which is not a pirate stereotype it's just normal alcoholism) don't judge! I needed to drown my sorrows somehow. It was fun at first yelling insults at the guards and listening to the person opposite my cell yell his story to anyone who would listen but then I ran out of insults (which the guards never replied to anyway) and how many times can you yell your innocence before you realise no one cares.

So I found a piece of paper and started writing and I started with "dear diary" for some reason like I said I'm bored. I'll probably come up with some clever escape later which will be the most exciting thing to happen in this city and probably talked about for years. (I really need a drink) Now reading back through this I realised what a waste of paper this is.

Forever sour,

Captain me.

By Angelina Farrelly, 5th Year

The Rolling Tide

I found it strange-
sitting on a cliff's edge in Rosslare
The inevitable tide rolling in slowly before my eyes.
everything so insignificant yet salient.
my mind weaved and wandered from gulls diving through the barrier between worlds for
their next meal-
to the wind, flowing through the fields of Hook.
still-
despite these dreams,
infinitely beautiful and pure,
one stubborn question persevered through it all
Am I as inevitable as the tide?
Or am I just another blade of grass
reliant on the wind-
for change.

By Meadh Campbell, 6th Year

It Is Impossible To Fold A Standard Size Piece Of Paper More Than Seven Times

It is impossible to fold a standard size piece of paper in half more than seven times
We tested this theory in fourth grade,
After coming back from recess
to find a small stash of white A4 printer paper on each of our desks
The teacher told us if we could fold the paper an eighth time she wouldn't assign
homework
The first four folds were easy
Though after the fifth our typical childlike confidence began to dwindle
As the material thickened and our young fingers struggled to manipulate it
Hands that hadn't existed a decade prior were frustrated
with their inability to conquer science,
Minutes of creasing and compressing resulted in angry sighs
and thirty-two clumps of wrinkled fist sized parchment,
Everytime we did not succeed, we would unfold our papers and we would try again.
This memory resurfaced yesterday
As I was sitting. On the far end of my mattress
with a pillow wedged between my arms and my chest.
I was feeling my body folding up, in half, then half, then half again
Until I was the smallest id ever been
Until I had been creased and compressed to my most stubborn and static self.

It was in this moment that

I remembered my emotions are only so large,
Like all of this, all that I am can fit inside the palm of a nine-year-old.
I remembered being here before, at the bottom of this cycle
The end of this exhale, the center of this seed inside this pit
I remember the overwhelming defeat I felt at my desk
Clutching the idea of an impossible expectation and wishing I could do more with it.
And I remembered restarting, reversing my process, walking back to Square one.
So far most of my adulthood has been this way.
I collapse after something dense and heavy and finally unravel, unfold, open up again
I spent my life recovering from these subtle implosions,
building back from condensed catastrophes in... three... two.... one.

By Arwa Abeer Memon, 5th Year

Memories Close To My Heart

I remember the time when you told me about the two pet magpies that you used to own and how you used to put a piece of tinfoil on your bike to persuade them to come to you. Another favorite story of yours and mine was when you would ride your horse Cait to the local shop in the village to buy some ice cream. The shopkeeper would leave a tub of ice cream out for the horse, so she would poke her head in through the shop window and eat from the tub. You would stand there watching the horse savoring the delicious ice cream while laughing because you found it so funny. I often think to myself how different my childhood was in comparison to yours. There was not a trace of technology back then and children would entertain themselves by going outside and making up games such as hide and seek, catch or by playing with their pet. Those were the 'good old days' where children would let their imagination run wild by building forts out of sheets, climbing hills and once at the top, they would shout, "I'm on top of the world!" before rolling back down the hill. It would be an endless day of fun and entertainment. I was really intrigued and fascinated by how different your life was when you were little and how you found ways to keep yourself entertained.

I enjoyed the days when I visited you down at the farm and our long walks through the fields. I remember eagerly putting on my green wellies and setting off down the field with you by my side and the dogs chasing one another. The grass blew from side to side with every gust of wind that came along. The rays of the sun shone on our faces, making us feel warm. I would race onwards towards the lake where we would collect stones of different shapes and sizes. We would skim them across the water to see whose stone would travel the furthest. The reflection of the blue sky and the trees surrounding the lake started to ripple away as the stone skimmed along the water. The color of the sky began to change as dark grey clouds crept in blocking the warm sun. Small drops of rain began to fall from the

sky and in no time at all we found ourselves running in the lashing rain towards the house for shelter. When we got inside, we were soaking wet from head to toe but we still laughed our heads off!

On one particular day, you became unwell, so much so that you had to come and stay with us. I really enjoyed the memories we shared when you came to stay with us. I can remember fondly when I would hide bars of chocolates or crisps in my bedroom locker, and we would open them up and have a little party when mom wasn't looking. Unfortunately, one day she caught us munching on the sweets and she was not very impressed.

You picked us up from school one day to my surprise. I hopped into the car along with my sister. As we drove off, I suddenly noticed something moving in the front seat of the car. My eyes widened and my mouth dropped when I saw the cutest puppy with big brown eyes and his tail wagging back and forth. When we arrived home, he jumped out of the car and began exploring his new surroundings, sniffing from one place to the next. When we got inside, we put our thinking caps on and paced back and forth, trying to think of a name. My sister finally thought of the perfect name. "We'll call him Lucky, since he is so Lucky to have been brought into our family". Lucky was such a bundle of joy and is still a very special member of our family. He was your little companion who would comfort you whenever you felt unwell. He was like a 'therapy dog', always there happily wagging his tail, which brought a smile on your face.

However, over the next few months, you began to become more unwell. The doctors tried everything they could to help you, but you were too weak at this point to try and fight the pain. You were put into a hospice and myself and my family spent all our time with you. You received all the love and support from us as you made your final journey from this world.

We even brought Lucky with us so that you could see each other one last time. He even jumped up on the bed, curled up beside you and glared at us almost as if he was saying, "I'm the king of the castle". When you soon passed away, I felt that a very important person who meant a lot to me in my life was gone. I wish that you were still alive. However, as I sat on my bed, staring at my surroundings, while grieving over the loss of you, I began to think back on all of the wonderful memories that I have of you and the stories you used to tell. I appreciate and cherish the moments I shared with you and know in my heart that you are in a better place now; a place where you can spread your wings, instead of suffering from that pain that your sickness caused you.

When I was younger, I recall butterflies swooping in and out of your house all the time. So whenever I spotted a butterfly flying past me, it was a symbol of your presence, checking on me and making sure that I am safe. I know that you will always be with me every step of the way and will always guide me through any challenges or obstacles that I may face in my life.

By Saoirse Lynch, 5th Year

Perplexity

disfigured souls gyrating
lifelessly with me,
gleaning hope
desiring to be

free from bewilderment
and heinous entity,
gliding graciously like a black swan
probing for its identity.

By Sophia Arnold, 5th Year

'Paper Towns' Book Review

'The way I figured it, everyone gets a miracle like I probably will never be struck by lightning, or win a Nobel prize, or become a dictator of a small town in the Pacific islands, or contract terminal ear cancer or spontaneously combust but if you consider all the unlikely things together at least one of them will probably happen to each of us'.

These are the first three lines of John Green's novel 'Paper Towns'. Quentin Jacobsen is our protagonist, he claims that his miracle is that he ended up living next to Margo Roth Spiegelman, 'The girl who loved mysteries so much that she became one'. Margo is one of the most popular people in the high school, and is known for deciding to suddenly leave town for a few days and coming back with unbelievable stories from her adventures to tell everyone. Quentin is part of a band with his friends and lives a relatively mundane life.

Margo used to be his childhood friend, however they grew apart. Quentin has had unrequited love for Margo for as long as he can remember.

Then one night Margo somersaults back into Quentin's life and enlists him as her getaway driver, they go around Florida completing the 11 things on her list, which involves pranking everyone that let her down, especially her unfaithful boyfriend. It isn't clear why Margo chose Quentin Jacobsen to be her partner in crime that night, but he hopes it will lead to

something more between them. The next day Margo doesn't show up to school, disappearing yet again. This time Quentin thinks that she has purposefully left behind clues about her whereabouts. Together, he and his friends go on a road trip to find her

I find that this book teaches the importance of getting to know people, our intentions with other people can shape us. This book is memorable and is filled with beautiful metaphors and plenty of funny moments.

Anonymous.

BLUE EYES

I have blue eyes
But they're not the kind of blue that people write poems about

They're dark, navy.
They look like the scary part at the bottom of the ocean
They look like black in most lights
There's no hint of yellow or green.

It's all the same
They don't look the kind of blue that blue eyes **should** do
And maybe that's just the jealousy talking
Maybe I'm just complaining and it's annoying because
If I had brown eyes or hazel eyes
I'd be complaining too.

But I don't care
That doesn't really matter in the end
Because we all want to be someone new.

We all want to be everything but what we are.

By Arwa Abeer Memon, 5th Year

Dirt

acres of land
flowing streams
running through mountains
disappearing through the trees
this place belonged to the gods
we are mere ants
destroying perfection
for the sake of the colony

By Meadh Campbell, 6th Year

Movie review of Greta Gerwig's 'Little Women'

The movie of the century.

Since the publication of Louisa May Alcott's timeless classic 'Little Women' in 1868. The big screens have seen no more than six film adaptations all starring Hollywood's biggest and brightest, giving their own portrayal of the March sisters and the troublesome Theodore Laurence names as big as Winona Ryder and Katharine Hepburn have taken on various characters. No adaptation has made a mark as fine as Greta Gerwig's 2019 adaptation bringing classic literature to life through colour, music, and exquisite casting. Domestic struggles of women have never seen such glamourization. Gerwig's genius manages to romanticize the reality and hardships of life for women in the 1800s. Greta includes and revives Alcott's memory throughout this film shooting the climax scene in Concord Massachusetts where Alcott grew up. This film is so superbly delivered Louisa May Alcott herself would pay to see it.

A hugely poignant role played in the success of this film is the casting. Cinema has never seen a more legendary cast Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Florence Pugh, Eliza Scanlen, Timothee Chalamet and to top it all off: Meryl Streep. We have seen Chalamet's and Ronan's work in their previous coming of age moving 'Ladybird' also directed by Gerwig. Putting that trio together is a recipe for success. All eyes were on Timothee and Saoirse to see their take on the dynamic relationship of Jo and Laurie and DaVinci couldn't have painted it better himself. Each scene between Jo and Laurie is delivered so divinely from Laurie's longing stares to Jo's obliviousness.

A quality I admire in this adaptation is the relationship shown between Jo and Amy [Florence Pugh]. This is a hugely salient part of the story that previous adaptations have overlooked focusing on the relationship between Jo and Laurie or Laurie and Amy. From the beginning of the film, we pick up that Amy and Jo's relationship goes that tiny bit deeper than that of the other sisters. There is an unspoken sense of competition and tension between the two.

In one scene, in particular, in the March house we see how they both gush and long for fame and to leave their mark through creativity one as an artist and one a writer whilst their other sisters are quite content with family life as it is. Amy and Jo's morals are very alike to much so that they clash, they are both driven women who will do anything for success and fail to see that in each other. Amy is jealous of her older sister's relationship with Laurie and constantly compares herself to Jo. This intricate and complicated relationship carries on between them into adulthood. Jo trying to fulfil her writing dream in New York still speaks of her sister Amy becoming an artist in Paris and how Amy has always had a talent to get out of the hard parts of life. Meanwhile in Paris Amy compares herself to Jo describing herself to have been second to Jo her whole life in everything.

One of the reasons why this literature is so timeless in film is the protagonist of Jo March. The blueprint for boldness and determination. Even as the second oldest sister she holds the superiority between them and is seen by all her sisters as being a leader. In her childhood Jo is seen as fearless, she doesn't doubt she will be a writer.

Interestingly in the future scenes Jo is the complete opposite she questions her once set in stone life purpose of writing, sadness eats at her as she stops writing declaring she doesn't have what it takes. Jo longs for childhood and the security of home she feels lonely in the world, she's not as brave without her sisters, she ruins herself every day for tarnishing her relationship with Laurie. She misses everything and her old self.

Another compelling technique used by Gerwig in this film is the time jumping setting her even further apart from previous adaptations. Her use of colours to justify each timeline is immensely precocious. In every scene set in the present there is a light tint of blue representing coldness and loss, dialogue in the present scenes is clear, direct and understandable. In contrast to the scenes set in childhood where there is an orange tint present representing warmth, joy or a sunset the beginning of a day. In scenes especially in the March house dialogue runs into each other the sisters talk over each other and laugh over words, music brings you from one scene to another in the past. Each past scene brings a sense of comfort where there is nearly always a bright candle or fire lit.

Costume design also plays a significant role in this movie, the radical dresses worn by each sister goes further than you may think at first look. Costume designer Jacqueline Durran.

The sisters Meg Beth and Amy are seen to swap pieces of clothing throughout their childhood. But not Jo who interestingly swaps outfits with Laurie they are seen wearing each other's jackets and vests in many scenes throughout the film. Designer Durran says 'it was a way of representing how close they were, and how much Jo wanted to be a boy'. Each sister was given a set colour for their costumes' shades varied throughout the film, but the base colour always remained Meg was green and lavender, Beth's was brown and pink, Amy's was light blue, and Jo's was red and indigo.

This movie should be on everyone's list. A heartbreakingly jolly tale of domestic struggles of women in the 1800s. Pressure turns to Greta Gerwig as fans await her next masterpiece. The question remains on everyone's minds 'How will she top that?'

By Keelin Burke, 6th Year

Little Blood Red Riding Hood

Once upon a time there was a young girl who lived in a village in the countryside. Her beloved grandmother had gifted her a little white riding hood which she was so fond of she wore it every day. It suited her so well it earned her the nickname: Little White Riding Hood.

One day, Father dyed her favourite cloak red. She wasn't angry though, red was a much nicer and more vivid colour than white. But Mother and Grandmother insisted she couldn't wear it and promised to make her a new hood. However, as much as she liked her old white riding hood she loved the red ten times as much. She wouldn't accept any other shades of red, only that specific tone she saw that day. And thus, Little White Riding Hood was no longer and Little Red Riding Hood was born.

Little Red loved her little village. But as much as she loved her home, she was also afraid. People said the woods on the outskirts of town were haunted by a wolf. It was born from the darkness and evil of the world, manifesting into the shadow of those with a fragile mind. It haunts them until they're driven into insanity, stretching the limits of human capacity. Lykos, they called him.

It hunted down its prey mercilessly, cornering them until there was no other choice but death. It will pounce the second you let your guard down, grasping onto your weaknesses with tendrils of corruption, invading into every sense you desperately try to protect—but ultimately, fail.

She was always warned about the wolf that resided in the Woods. Don't go through the Woods alone. That was the one rule that no matter what, you couldn't break.

One day, Mother suggested Little Red should visit Grandmother.

"I'm sure she is still struggling to cope with the fact that your father is gone," Mother says, "it would be good to visit her and keep her company every so often."

Father died when Little Red was younger. She has no memory of him except for the last time she ever saw him.

"I'm sorry sweetheart, but I can no longer fight it. Father is so, so tired. I can't do it anymore," he had said. "Don't be like me, Little Red. Don't give up."

She remembers blood, so much blood. It must have been the wolf who made him bleed.

"Are you sure, Mother? What if the wolf finds me?"

"Listen to yourself," Mother says, "if you are afraid now, in the safety of your own home, think about how your grandmother feels. She is all alone."

"Why can't you visit her with me, then?" Little Red asks.

Mother laughs, sharp and sour. "You want me to visit someone who thinks I'm the reason her son is dead?" There is agony in her voice.

When Father left, heartbreak arrived to replace him and accompany Mother wherever she went. Exactly like how Father once did.

They pack a basket full of Grandmother's favourite fruit and snacks before Mother sends her off.

"Whatever you do, do not go through the Woods, Little Red." Mother warns.

"Yes, Mother. I know that."

"I'm being serious. It took your father. Don't let it take you too."

And Little Red is off on her way. She walks along the stone path and her mind drifts. She can't wait to see Grandmother again. There are gusts of strong wind, but her red hood protects her from the cold.

As she journeys, she gets the feeling she is... being watched. It unsettles her deeply, and even more so when the feeling comes directly from the direction of where the Woods are situated. She walks faster.

She eventually comes across an axe being sharpened by the Woodcutter. The Woodcutter looks up and smiles at her, acknowledging her presence, and goes back to continuing the tedious task.

"Hello, Woodcutter."

"Hello, Miss. Are you alright? You look shaken."

"Yes, I'm fine. I just feel a little scared because I'm walking so close to the Woods." Little Red says.

"I would be too," the Woodcutter agrees, "May I ask why?"

"It is the only way I can get to Grandmother's house," Little Red replies, "Mother wants me to visit her because she hasn't been the same ever since Father was taken by the wolf."

"I see." Pity is not offered, instead a sense of understanding. "The loss of a loved one is difficult, especially one taken by it."

"I want to see Grandmother again, but I'm frightened of the wolf. What should I do, Woodcutter?"

"Don't worry, Miss. If you get into any trouble, I will come and help you."

Little Red smiles and bids farewell, tentatively continuing her trek. She soon arrives near Grandmother's cottage, her basket grasped safely in her hands.

A horrid, awful smell suddenly hits Little Red, and to her bewilderment, it is coming from straight from Grandmother's cottage. She is enveloped in a sense of foreboding, but she pushes through the churning in her stomach and clutches her little basket tighter.

Little Red knocks on the door thrice, like always, to alert Grandmother of who was at the door. Strange. Grandmother didn't call out to her like she usually does, and she can't hear any noise inside either. She knocks thrice again to be safe, and to her surprise, the rickety door creaks open.

She hesitantly enters, the cottage eerily quiet. And that foul stench has only gotten stronger. Fighting against panic, she makes her way towards Grandmother's bedroom, where that smell is coming from.

She pushes the bedroom door lightly. Scanning the room, her eyes land onto the motionless figure on the bed.

She has found the source of the smell.

Her heart drops.

"GRANDMOTHER—!" Little Red screams and oh, she is falling. She is falling onto her knees, legs too weak to support her small body.

No no no no, it can't be what she's thinking, it can't, it can't, it can't-

She scrambles against the oak floorboards, half-crawling, half-dragging herself towards Grandmother's bed. Grandmother is pale, so very pale. Her abdomen is swollen and her veins are discoloured and...

There was no denying it.

Little Red retches as acidity floods her mouth and overwhelms her senses. Thorns of despair slither around her and tie her down, imprisoning her in a cage of sorrow. She doesn't get up and she doesn't think she will be able to. This time, not even her hood can protect her.

Before the tears can even leave her eyes, she is made acutely aware of another presence in the room. Maybe someone did follow her when she was on her journey. But how can that be? She didn't hear anyone come through the door. Was she so caught up in her own grief she didn't notice...?

Little Red turns around.

There is no one there.

Maybe she is just being paranoid. She definitely isn't in the right state of mind at the moment.

She turns back to Grandmother and—

Lykos.

Her despair turns into fear.

It is the most terrifying thing she has ever seen.

Lykos stares at the petrified girl, soulless eyes burning into her core. Its fur coat looks like it was weaved from the souls of its damned victims and threads of darkness straight from Hell. It is tremendous and seems to be everywhere all at once and when she turns around to try and run and escape from this nightmare Lykos is there too, trapping her in the room with it and her dead grandmother.

Don't run. It whispers. Don't you want to see your grandmother again?

Little Red doesn't know what to do.

Don't you want to see your father again?

She is frozen from fear.

You can meet them again soon. It promises. I can help you.

"W-why would I ever trust you?" Little Red scoffs bitterly, voice quivering. "Who do you think I am?"

You do not have a choice.

Frighteningly, as it looms over her, it only seems to grow larger.

"You took Father and now you've taken Grandmother too. Haven't you taken enough from me? What else do you want?!"

You have nothing left.

"Shut up."

I only tell the truth.

"Shut up!"

Wouldn't it be easier to just end it all?

"SHUT UP—!"

'Don't be like me, Little Red. Don't give up.'

The window shatters as a newly-sharpened axe smashes through it. Hardly daring to breathe, a frail bud of hope blooms in Little Red's chest. Lykos, on the other hand, bares its teeth as it prowls towards the broken glass.

Who dares...

The Woodcutter swings wildly at the window with the axe again, jaw set with harsh determination.

"Little Red." Her name is said, strong. "I have come to help. Just like how I promised."

Help? Lykos laughs. The only thing that is doing is prolonging your suffering.

The Woodcutter's arm stretches through where the window once was.

"Little Red," Her name is said again. "Take my hand. Take it, and save yourself. Don't let it win. Don't let the darkness consume you."

By Hayley Lau, 5th Year

HOW TO SHAPE THE WORLD

You wish to be a bird and sing.
You wish to touch the sky.
But you think you can't fight
For you have no right
To tell them how to fly.

You stop because you don't know where the line draws.
What's the edge?
Your pencil quivers over it.
What you could've should've said.
And suddenly you feel so small.
It's just you against the clouds.

They're where the planes the people go and where
You're not allowed.

You wish to be a bird and sing.
You wish to touch the sky.
But you don't know how to shape the world.
So what love?
Neither do I.

By Arwa Abeer Memon, 5th Year

Run

run
for the moon has need to be chased
run
for the sun does not stop for no man
run
for your tyrant king hath taken over your land
run
for your freedom lies in your feet
run
for your sweet lover you left alone
run
for there is no kindness in time's cold heart

By Meadh Campbell, 6th Year