

A large, stylized silhouette of a tree or branch, rendered in a light blue-grey color, occupies the right side of the cover. It has a thick trunk and several spreading branches. The background is a solid blue-grey color. The text is in a blue serif font.

Pieces

2019

Winter Edition



Valerie Huynh, '22

Sabotage

I watch the boys setting up their instruments, getting ready for one last rehearsal before their performance tomorrow. The first ever “Battle of the Bands” at my school is less than 24 hours away and I will stop at *nothing* to win the grand prize.

My best friend Emily shifts beside me, uncomfortable.

“I *reeeeally* don’t think we should be doing this,” she tells me, a pleading tone in her voice telling me to stop now. I roll my eyes and stand up, frustrated with how innocent she can be sometimes. “Fine, then don’t help me,” I tell her gruffly. As the band is finishing up, I sneak back stage and wait until all the boys have left. Then, I stalk towards the instruments and pick up a drum stick. Inspecting it, I decide it’s perfect for what I want to do.

Although breaking instruments hurts me, seeing as I’m a musician, I need to do this for the grand prize: \$5,000. Holding the drum stick in my fist, I jab it into the drum as hard as I can. I open one eye and see that it has done nothing. *Frick...* I listen, hoping that nobody has heard the commotion. I don’t hear anything, so I go back to what I was doing. Stabbing the drum didn’t work, but I’m sure that taking out every single screw in the drum set will.

Twenty minutes later I’ve completely taken apart a drum set and I’ve taken out all the strings on Justin Blume’s guitar. That should be enough damage! Now to sabotage the rest of my opponents’ instruments.

When my band performs the next night, I must be glowing with pride. We’re doing so good! Just imagine what we’ll sound like when I’ve gotten my new guitar. I smirk at the furious bands at the bottom of the stage. Since none of the other bands had working instruments, only mine could play tonight, making my band the automatic winners. When we’re done performing, we’ll be presented with the prize money.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we would now like to present our winners with the prize money, courtesy of-”

“Stop!” someone shouts from the back of the stage. I turn, frustrated, to see none other than Justin Blume with the principal, my uncle. My heart rate picks up and I’m panicking. Ohhhh no. No, no, no. My uncle whispers something in the announcers ear and he looks shocked. Then, he turns back to the microphone. Justin turns to me with a smug look while my uncle looks furious.

“We’re sorry for the inconvenience, but there will be no winner tonight. The ‘Battle of the Bands’ will be postponed until a later date. Again, we’re sorry for the inconvenience.”

I’m shaking with fear and anger at Justin. But, before I can say anything, my uncle takes me roughly by the arm.

“Young lady, you are in some serious trouble!” he yells. I sink into a pit of terror and squeeze my eyes closed.

Anonymous

Autumn

Crunch, crunch
Go the leaves under my feet
As I step into the brisk autumn air
Reds and yellows and browns
Decorate the trees
And as beautiful as it is
I am saddened to think
That the leaves must die
In order to turn these hues
And that their deaths
Are seen as joyous

Thoughts of hot chocolate and pumpkin pie
Swell in my heart
But I cannot help but grieve summer
For all the joy it brought me
Days spent wasting away at the beach
And nights spent toasting marshmallows over the
fire
Were taken from me at a moment's notice
And the trees once covered in green
Now wilting away
Serve as a reminder
That all good things must die

But now perhaps
I can celebrate

A new beginning

Freedom

Up the trail I go. The car revs as it starts to
climb

I'm pushing hard to make it

The gas pedal is one with the floor

I push harder and stronger to get to the peak

One I do, I put the windows down, put it in neu-
tral, and let go.

The car begins descending down. It picks up
speed as it goes

I close my eyes and feel the wind, feel the freedom

I am flying

Then I open my eyes and see the wonder

Then I see the sign from god

McDonalds

On the side of an eighteen-wheeler

BOOM!



Disaster

**Disaster is forgetting your
Pieces shirt,
It's about the littlest things
Like getting a 60 on an import-
ant test
or accidentally chipping your
nail polish
Dropping your lucky notebook
A thunderstorm on your only
day off,
It's like ten thousand spoons
when all you need is a knife
It's like crying in uniform
It is the total destruction of
plans
Tripping on stage.**

THE GALLOWS

"Let them hang." Called the executioner, her gaze like burning coals,
"For their crimes. Let them hang for their sins. Let them hang for their mis-
demeanors. Let. Them. Hang."

The tolling of the church bell stopped. The crowd chanted the phrase
like a prayer, some practically singing it.

"Let them hang!" They cried, "Let them have their punishment for
these atrocities! Let them hang!"

The people swarmed the executioner's block, too happy for the dismal
scene before them. Ten people stood at the gallows, ten people were con-
demned to die. For their "crimes". There were five prisoners above the age
of twenty and five only. A child cried for her mother as the noose was tight-
ened around her neck. The crowd, the ever-swarming sea of grinning faces
and grabbing hands, relished her tears.

"They deserve it!" They cried, "They deserve what is to come!"

But they didn't. These people, "criminals" as they were called, had done
no wrong. They were being wrongly accused of witchery, when they had just
been doing their jobs. These medicine men and women were being prose-
cuted for saving lives, for practicing in healing, for doing good. But the sea
didn't care, because the sea is unfeeling. It will crash against the surf and
leave nothing behind. Such is the way of the gallows.

"Let them hang! Let them hang! Let them hang!" The final command
was forcibly shouted at the physicians as they cowered, but the sea kept
coming.

"Your pleas have been heard! And Justice shall serve!" The executioner
basked in the sea's chants, she reveled in its indifference for these innocents,
"Let them hang!"

The lever pulled, some choking gasps, the sea quieted. In total silence,
it absorbed the dying breath of these innocents, then gave the mighty roar
of a hungering beast never satisfied. The executioner smiled.

"Bring in the next wave!" The crowd cheered.

Thunderstorm

The crackle of thunder startles me awake
And I see the faint glow of lightning from my window
As I try to fall back asleep
There it goes again
BOOM!

The pouring of rain on my windowsill
Is loud enough to surround me
And make it so I can't escape

I toss and turn
But the storm rages on
And the thunder roars
BOOM! BOOM!
And the lightning pierces the sky
Illuminating my window
And so I stay awake

Then finally
The rain falls slower
And the roaring gets weaker
And the lightning gets dimmer
Until there is silence
And with silence comes peace
And I lay my head on the pillow
And close my eyes
Drifting to sleep
And dreaming of sunshine.

A G O N Y

The mood of the eve-
ning was set then ruined

As I noticed that every-
one was happy but me

I don't cry with so
many people around

Hiding my feelings within is painful

Secrets from those
that I love the most

Total, unending pain

It's something that

wees gotta go through

Thus, agony

Sweet, sweet agony

Pieces Staff



A HEINOUS WORLD

In a heinous world, a vicious riot is not surprising. It's a little surprising, though, when this riot is surrounding the only government. The people felt their leader was a tyrant, a dictator, and no matter what kind of world you're in, a riot will always break out.

The Leader confidently stode out to his balcony, safely three stories higher than the crowd. He laughed at their impudence and knew no harm would come to him that day. Still, a riot left unchecked will spread like a nasty disease. Better to snip it in the bud than deal with multiple at once.

He cleared his throat, raised his hand straight out, towards the crowd, and stood this way until they quieted. He smiled and called down to them. He told them their attempt at resistance was futile, he would never step down from office. He was here and here to stay!

Angry shouts drowned him out. The people were done with his unsympathetic laws, his compassionless claims that they were for the good of the country.

A woman shouted that lessening the rations helped the country none!

A man yelled that lowering the wages helped the country none!

A child screamed that the unchecked factory accidents, including the deaths of his parents, leaving him and his sister orphans, helped the country none!

The people were all screaming now, their frustrations and sufferings pouring out. The Leader was losing his patience. He spoke less calmly, eyes flashing dangerously as he called down to the people. He raised his outstretched hand above his head. The crowd grew louder, their cries no longer angry. They became indistinguishable screams, filled with nothing but terror.

The Leader swiped his hand back towards the crowd. The military followed his command. The shots rang out as the screams grew louder, people pushing over others, trying to escape. The Leader raised his hand again, then swiped from head to crowd, more shots fired. He smiled a cold, cruel smile. Once more, he raised his hand.

A lone shot sounded. Hand still raised, the Leader collapsed, his cold, cruel smile fixed on his cold, dead face. The rebel sniper nodded before turning tail and running, the military hot on his heels.

In a heinous world, a vicious riot will always break out and, no matter what kind of world you're in, it will always end in blood.

Chloe Pecheux, '21

More is More

i find it unwise to say that

less is more

when girls from seoul

can meet nigerian men

on the same college campus

when one can walk through

queens, new york

and be surrounded by

every tone of color

under the sun

when latinx and polynesians

can wave rainbow flags together

in the streets of west hollywood

when asians and indigenous peoples

from all across the country

can stargaze upon the same

tiny diamonds that chandelier us

when we can love and coexist,

when our differences can unite

why should less be more

when more can be more

ABYSSAL COLD

*The little people heard about me,
and ran to their little houses.*

*The young ones love me because I
take away their school days.*

*The older ones fear me because I
freeze their roads, and crash their
cars.*

*They all bundle up in their coats
and hats, and brace my howling
winds.*

*I am the snowstorm, and I'm just
passing through.*

Poem: Arrington Scott '21

Background: Valerie Huynh '22

Stalker

He won't stop talking
He won't stop knocking
He keeps on coming
Even though I said no

He follows me around
He chases me home
He's losing his mind
Because I said no

I can't do this anymore
I won't do this anymore
Losing my mind
I might say yes

Someone take him
away
Tell him to stop
Please
I beg

Running

She turned. She
ran.

Never stopping,
never stumbling,
Barely breathing,
only running.

She ran from the
man,
No, the monster
chasing after her.

He howled with de-
light as she ran faster,
He loved the chase.

Someone was cry-
ing. Was she crying?

Someone was
screaming. Was she
screaming?

She didn't know.
She continued to
run.

Inconspicuous Pain

Pain comes in different ways. There's the physical type, which tells us that something is wrong and that our body is hurt. Many people have said before that physical pain is something that you can handle.

But real pain isn't just a signal that your body does to tell you that something is wrong with you.

There's another form of pain. Emotional pain, that can only be seen if the bearer allows it.

You don't even have to be physically hurt to feel emotional pain, but you do have to be broken. Heartbreak works perfectly.

Some say that it's easy to get over emotional pain, that the bearer is strong and can handle it.

The bearer can be physically strong, but that's nothing to emotional pain, you have to be mentally strong to handle that kind of pain.

And even if they are strong mentally, even if they can handle the pain,

That doesn't mean they wanted any pain...

That doesn't mean they wanted their heart broken...

Christmas

Twinkling lights
And pretty sights
Are greeting me
This year

Lots of buying
Lots of vying
From old friends
Held dear

But don't let all
The smiling faces
Trick you into
Coming here

Christmas time
Is lots of fun
Unless you're filled
With fear



Winter Holiday

Glimmering, glowing lights
Families being brought to-
gether

Snow is piling up

Warm, cozy fire

Snowflakes swirling in the
night

Christmas sweaters, rein-
deer ears

Long, dark nights full of
sorrow

Poem: Pieces Staff

Image: Arrington Scott '21

Time

Time Ticks

my Heart Skips

The rush of air surges through my Lair from

My Lips

That was never sealed with thy kiss

Therefore the insanity that I feel within humanity is
not only a reconciliation for the sake of the constella-
tions

but a rehabilitation for the humanitarians

Why?

Because every second counts

1, 2, 3; The Clock Ticks

4, 5, 6; My Heart Skips

7, 8, 9; Time is Infinite

10, 11, 12; Life isn't Definite

Anonymous

Sick

I'm sick.

Not with the common cold, fever, or
flu

I'm sick because I'm thinking about
you.

The kind of sick that shoots you in the
heart

And makes you feel like you're falling
apart.

I'm over you, and that I know is true
And I'm aware that you already knew
But the feeling that I still miss the most
Is holding someone, anyone, up close
For it is not you that makes my heart
ache

It's the lonesome I feel when I awake

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