

THE GREEN LIGHT

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a first word from a new (but still sleep-deprived) editor *a foreword*

Yvonne Gao, Year 12

Dear reader,

Before I officially begin, as you may have already noticed, there have been a couple of changes as we bid a fond farewell to our Year 13s: Aisha, Nam, and Narmeen. We wish them all the best for the future and promise to continue their legacy as best as we can along the path that they have so painstakingly laid out. Although they may be moving onto bigger and better things (the bar for that is obviously very high), we'll miss them dearly and channel their memories into every following edition.

Now, onto the theme of this season's edition: Chaos.

Chaos is term that very accurately summarises the process of compiling this edition.

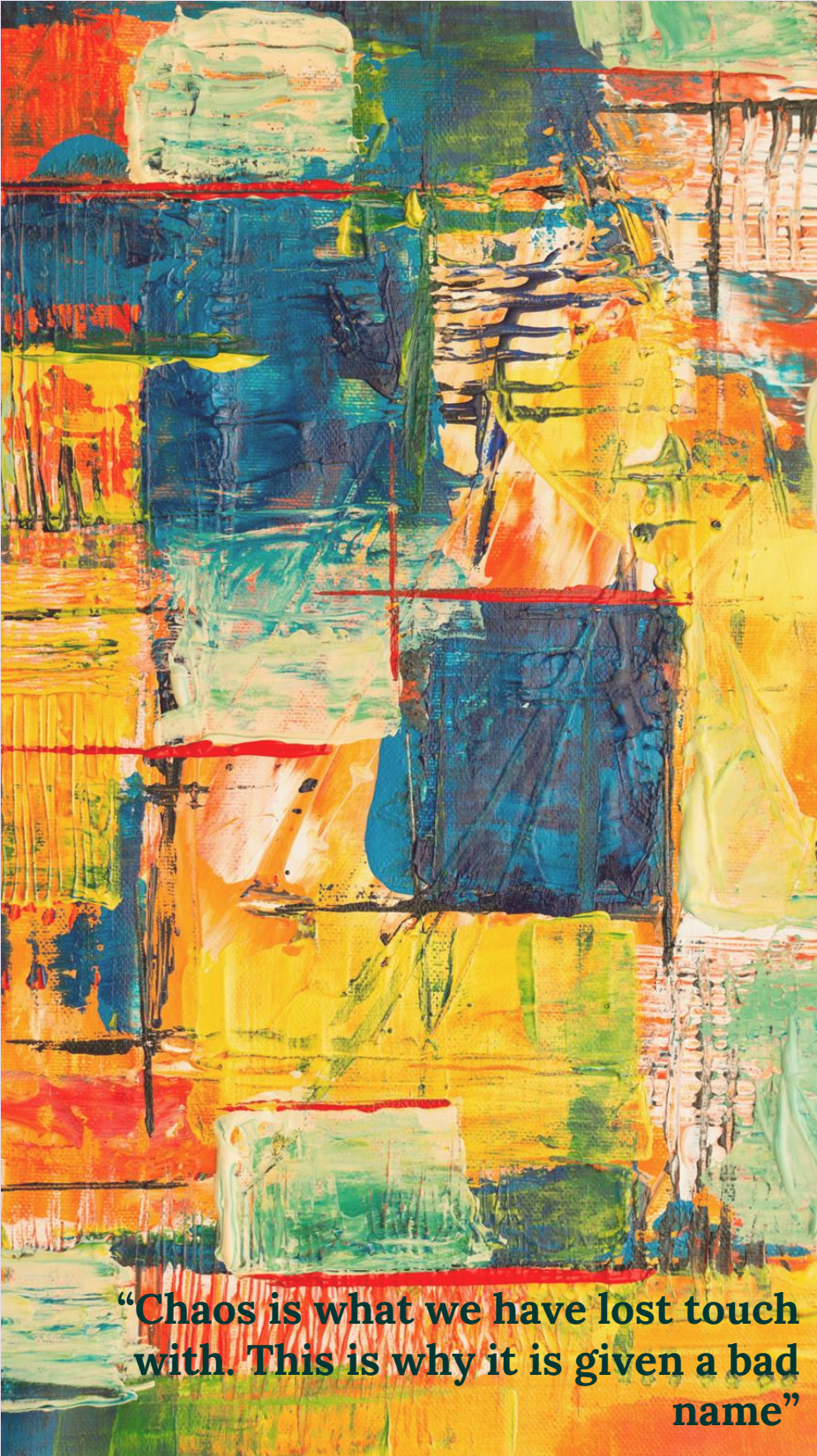
But it is also term that I'm sure most of you are familiar with. Whether it be the chaos of the summer exam season, the chaos of navigating school hallways, or even the chaos of trying to find your way through the never-ending change of your secondary school years, chaos is something that seems to constantly plague our lives.

So, as summer rolls around and the school year draws to a close to give way to a transitory limbo we call "the summer holidays", it seems fitting that we should explore chaos: both through the lens of reflection on a year gone by and of preparation for the trials ahead.

On that note, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to a brand-new edition of The Green Light! To all our old readers, welcome back again; and to all our new readers, we're glad to have you on board!

Lastly, a huge well done to our content creators and artists for this edition as well as all the thanks in the world to the rest of the editing team for working with me on editing, compiling, and co-ordinating art for everyone's fabulous work!

Enjoy!



“Chaos is what we have lost touch with. This is why it is given a bad name”

GLORIOUS CHAOS

a poem

Aleena Rana, Year 7

Deep down inside the core
Shadows lark with their dark magic
Faces hid away from a drop of light
And are lifeless as they look
But where they sleep
The shadows awake ready
For what to come.
They would twist blindly
And their power
Spread through like dust!
Tears would stream down cheeks
Oh! What glorious chaos!
Minds poisoned with worry
Everything that twinkled and flickered
Was gone with a click of a switch
Now the only thing left were
Dark whispers and memories.
And all things that were
Kept hidden, wear out.
Oh! What glorious chaos!
The fun never lasts.



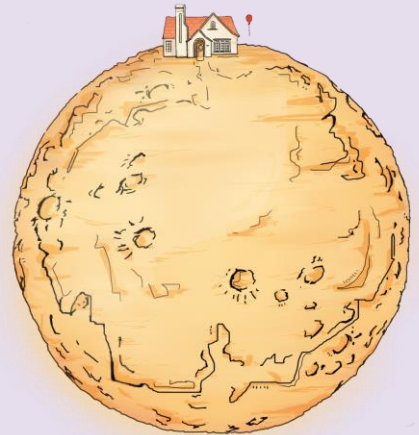
a poem

fingers lacing through my hair
i forget where i saw you last
pretty right glow worms pacing
through the darkness
yet no one thought to tell them
they hung from string all along

sea-foam floods up to the windowpane
insensibly i lose myself to the noise
the blue light smothers the floor
water pummels itself against the glass, and
i miss our old seafloor bonfires

i wonder what i got lost in the tide
and let the clams click-clack in my ears
the day i took myself out to sea
knelt weeping on the shore
the sand stuck in my throat because
i don't love the girl i wished that i could be

Evie Armstrong, Year 11



SWINGING INTO CHAOS WITH YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD SPIDERMAN

“Miles, being Spider-Man is a sacrifice.”

Rina Nasar, Year 10

It was the second of June, and I left the cinema genuinely beaming. Those five years of waiting for a sequel to *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* were totally worth it for the cinematic genius I had just watched; the animation, voice acting, storyline, and soundtrack were still not failing to impress. *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* is the epitome of beautiful chaos in a film, which is why I'm so excited to write all about it for this issue. Just as you thought the Spider-Man multiverse was as complicated as it could get in the first movie, the second completely pulls the rug out from under you, introducing many fresh faces and mind-boggling plot lines.

MINOR SPOILERS AHEAD!

The movie first gets into some action with our beloved main character and Spider-Man himself, Miles Morales. We watch as he reunites with Gwen Stacy, AKA Ghost-Spider, after months of being apart since the last movie took place. They lovingly catch up and you can tell the same spark is still there with how they easily swing back into their old conversations (pun intended!). Yet, when Gwen suddenly disappears, Miles feels he has no choice but to follow her. From here, he discovers her ability to travel through the multiverse with the click of a button and, before he can fully process the situation, Miles enters the multiverse right behind Gwen, mind whirling with bewilderment.

As seen in the first movie, we know that there are hundreds and thousands of universes, each with their own Spider-Person. It was in that movie that we were introduced to the fan favourite six: Miles Morales, Gwen Stacy, Peter B. Parker, Peni Parker, Peter Porker, and Peter Noir Parker. Even when I was watching *Into the Spider-Verse* back in 2018, I felt overwhelmed by the new characters I could obsess over. Little did I know the total chaos that would unfold when it came to alternate Spider-People in this new movie.

After introducing some fun characters like Pravit Prabhakar and Hobie Brown, we are then brought to an illustrious “Spider-Society” made up of thousands of Spider-People from almost every universe working together (even a universe where Spider-Man is a plush toy, seriously) with their headquarters on Earth-616, using the power of their multiverse travelling devices to stop crime and fix ‘anomalies’. An anomaly is a title given to villains who have somehow found themselves in the wrong universe due to glitches which, at the time of the movie, are becoming progressively more common.

MAJOR SPOILERS AHEAD!

Just as we begin to get comfortable, however, all hell breaks loose when we learn that Miles Morales himself, though not a villain, is an anomaly and was never intended to be Spider-Man to begin with. Realising this, he knows he needs to travel back to his universe (Earth-1610) to save those he loves most before his “canon events” roll into action. Here, we find that canon events in the Spider-Verse are events that must occur in every single Spider-Person's life. These include getting bit by a radioactive spider, losing a parental figure, and the death of a police captain a Spider-Person has a close relationship with.

Through the process of elimination, Miles realises that his next canon event will take place in two days. This being the death of a parent and, in turn, the death of a police captain as we see his father was promoted earlier in the movie.

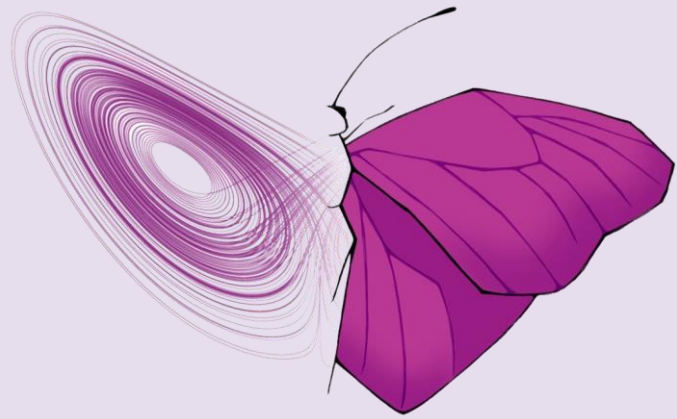
From there, Miles makes it his prime mission to save his family before it's too late, not caring that in doing so he would give up his chance at being Spider-Man, and possibly tear the entire multiverse down. In a powerful and chaotic chase scene, Morales flees hundreds of Spider-People begging him not to interfere with canon events and delivers one of the most

Since I was young, Spider-Man in general has been such a strong, inspiring interest of mine and if I could, I would go on for hours about it. I genuinely cannot wait to see what the talented folk behind these two Miles Morales films are spinning (pun intended!) for us next year.

But if you haven't watched this sequel yet, gear up and prepare to be swept away into a gorgeously animated, dimension-hopping extravaganza with *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*. The film promises to spin a web of excitement, laughter, and heart, reminding us that even in the face of chaos, the hero within us all can rise to the occasion. It's time to embrace the madness, swing into action, and remember: with great chaos comes great entertainment!

inspiring monologues I've ever heard. In the heat of it all, *he speaks* of how tired he is of everyone he knows telling him how to live his life and then goes on to vow to "do my own thing." After all this, he finally gets his one and only chance to travel back to his own universe - but is it really his? Without spoiling more than I already have, the plot continues to unfold and unravel with an insane twist before the movie ends with a jaw-dropping "TO BE CONTINUED..." *leaving us anticipating the release of part two in March 2024.*

SPOILERS FINISHED!



Meditate with Aurelius

How Marcus Aurelius' Meditations guides us through chaos

Nicole Jiao, Year 11

“Marcus Aurelius’ seminal reflections on virtue, emotion and living the best possible life have formed one of the benchmarks of Western philosophy. Never originally intended for publication, these aphorisms from the ancient world have guided millions in pursuit of a fulfilling and contented existence.”

- Synopsis from Waterstones

Arguably a piece of essential reading, the written thoughts of Marcus Aurelius can still offer us guidance almost two millennia onwards. Known as the last of the ‘Five Good Emperors of Rome’ whose reign marked the end of a rare period of internal tranquillity and good government, his Stoic¹ values formed the basis of his thoughts, in which he repeatedly stressed the importance of exercising self-control and fortifying the mind to overcome destructive emotions that arise from external chaos.

Admittedly, the chaos we face now is vastly different to that experienced by Aurelius; his position as possibly the most powerful person of his time was far from idyllic, and his reign was constantly threatened by neighbouring Germanic tribes and the emergence of the Antonine plague. However, his words are still applicable to the more modern chaos we face today: the infinite trove of opinions and information online; the all too familiar academic pressure; and the anxiety around maintaining a social presence.

One of the central messages of Meditations is the steady belief in the intangibility of events. Aurelius offers guidance with the quote, *“You have power over your mind - not outside events. Realise this, and you will find strength.”* He affirms that by denying external circumstances access to the mind, one can remain both emotionally and mentally untouchable in the face of chaos and unprecedented incidents.

Furthermore, the power of the mind is emphasised by his belief that *“The soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts.”*, a profound message that is reiterated throughout Meditations – despite the knowledge that we have no control over the actions taken against us, we do have complete autonomy in mitigating its impact by peeling away the biased judgements we layer upon them. Aurelius perhaps suggests that repeated allocation of the finite energy we have towards negative thoughts suffocate our perceptions in a haze of pessimism – ultimately, we will be responsible for the deterioration of our ‘souls’. However, if we choose to see hope even in situations that perhaps stray from the ideal, we can uplift our souls to radiate light rather than emanate darkness.

A further way of overcoming chaos is by frequently reminding ourselves of the transiency and ephemerality of life. He asks, *‘Why then this stress? Why not be content with an orderly passage through the brief span you have?’*, which poses an interesting question to the reader: although life is short and impermanent, why do so many choose to waste their existence worrying about things out of their reach, and remain consistently unsatisfied despite the privilege of being present here, alive, on Earth? Human life is compared to ‘mere smoke’: fleeting and easily extinguishable, only lingering momentarily. Aurelius urges the reader to take comfort in the knowledge that seemingly significant issues now have already been overcome by generations

before you. They were forgotten, or resolved, without the spiralling effects one might imagine, and in the overall span of time will likely have a miniscule impact. Given that life is brief and unpredictable, the idea that “*multitudes have never even heard your name; many will very soon forget it*” encourages living with authenticity and truthfulness to yourself— people come and go, but the only person who will stay by your side from birth till death is you, so why waste valuable time and energy hiding behind a mask, a persona?

For many, their fears and insecurity stem from worry of the judgements of those around them, but Marcus Aurelius encourages the dismissal of these with the advice to “*go to their souls, penetrate inside, and see what sort of person they are. You will see that there is no need to be racked with anxiety that they should hold any particular opinion about you.*” Humans are inherently flawed; to be perfect is impossible. Aurelius argues there is no need to worry about others’ criticisms and judgements, since they themselves will have faults just like everyone else. However, as humans evolved with the deep-rooted knowledge and social skills necessary to work together for survival, this would have included the inherent desire to ensure others thought positively of them, as exile from the group meant isolation and certain death. Although it is difficult to completely brush off all opinions regarding yourself, taking incremental steps in ignoring the opinions others hold about you can ultimately result in a much happier and more fulfilling life.



A final way in which Meditations can offer guidance within the surrounding chaos of the outside world is by rejecting the superficiality of fame and reputation. “*Some may praise you now but will quickly turn to blame, so reflect that memory nor fame, nor anything else at all, has any importance worth thinking of*” encapsulates his belief that intangible things such as popularity are fickle and worth little value, given their ability to shift dramatically and change without warning. To fixate obsessively over one’s social perception is futile – it is not only a waste of time but also a waste of effort to try and change your innate self to seem more appealing to others. Others’ opinions are short lived, and therefore it may be foolish to pursue them as if they were eternal and capable of causing lasting harm.

Marcus Aurelius’ words are valuable not only to gain a fascinating insight into the inner workings of one of Rome’s most successful emperors, but to also take his Stoic principles and ideas (which were a fundamental aspect of his beliefs) and apply them as an anchor to our own troubles in the frenzied chaos of relationships, social media, and academia. With more people turning to philosophy as a means to combat an increasingly interconnected society and quicker pace of life, Meditations invites us to take a step back and truly re-evaluate the aspects of our life that matter, and to live with complete authenticity.

THE CHAOS OF ANARCHY

a poem

Haya Al-Sharief, Year 9

Chaos lurks in the shadows,
Shattering in the daylight,
With inky black crows,
Plunging into the night,

Frenzies of fireworks,
Cloud the bleeding sky,
Wolves bearing silver smirks,
As the sun seems to cry,

Screams of terror,
Manic laughter,
Cries of horror,
Fear, an anchor,

Chaos is sharp pain,
That pours,
With acid hot rain,
And flaming floors,

Turmoil chasing,
at your every step,
Poisons lacing,
Ashes of a cobweb,

The roaring of never-ending flames,
The world set ablaze,

Chaos was blinding,
Was killing,

Chaos was anarchy.



Ruth Roy, Year 12

Peering through the keyhole, you catch
yourself having a love affair with the
earth. Vines tangled around your
corpse
you drink in the filth and bear its fruit.
With your brains smashed like church
wax against the ground and your
corpse
held together by cobwebs, the soil still
chooses to stay. Mother are you there?
Have you forgiven my being yet?
Drenched
from the neck down of the
setting sun, your scent tastes
of an unworldly revolution. You kiss
your god's rage like a fool in love
after eating the flowers he birthed.
Mother, how much more chaos
until I am able to forgive?

a poem

Eton mess recipe

Lovingly scrambled by Roxy Rezaee, Year 12

INGREDIENTS:

120g caster sugar
2 large egg whites
450ml double cream
1 tbsp icing sugar
500g strawberries

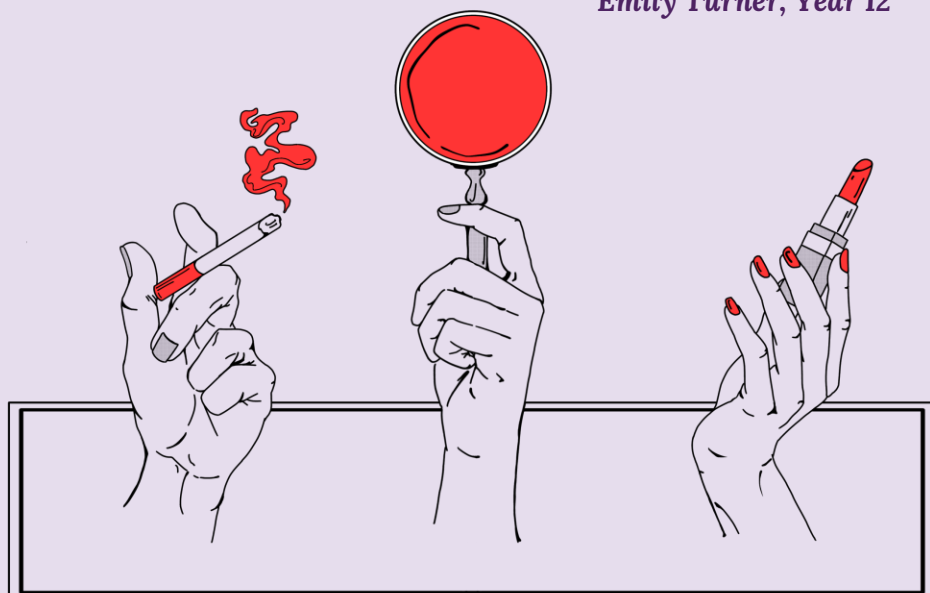
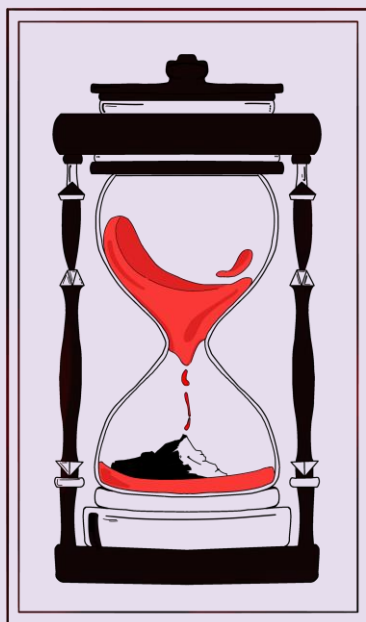
METHOD:

1. Spoon scoops of the mixture onto the baking paper
2. Whisk the egg whites in a clean bowl using an electric whisk until the egg whites form stiff peaks
3. Leave to cool
4. Pre-heat the oven to 120C/100C fan/gas 1 and line a tray with baking paper
5. Place the tray on the bottom shelf of the oven and leave for 1 – 1.25 hours (until the meringues are hard and easily peel off the baking paper)
6. Add the sugar in thirds, re-whisking the mixture to stiffen the peaks each time
7. Enjoy!
8. Blend 1/3 of the strawberries to make a sauce
9. Crush 3/4 of the meringues, add them to the chopped strawberries, and stir. Then add to the strawberry sauce
10. In a large bowl, whisk the cream with the sugar until it is firm in shape
11. Chop the rest of the strawberries into small cubes
12. Add scoops of the sauce, strawberries, crushed meringues, and cream to serving bowls and top off with the remaining meringues, sprinkling them on top
13. Lucky number 13 – unscramble all the steps !



HERE THERE *and* EVERYWHERE

Emily Turner, Year 12



In many ways, Richard McGuire's graphic novel 'Here' has been revolutionary for the genre. Told through a fixed viewpoint on the seemingly domestic setting of a single room, McGuire depicts everything that ever has and everything that ever will occur in this one space. First appearing in *Raw* magazine in 1989, the predecessor to this extended graphic novel was a short comic strip. Yet it immediately stood out as something pioneering – what made this inconspicuous black and white story, and thus the larger coloured graphic novel, so special was its movement away from the traditional form of comics. The panels are not ordered chronologically, rather McGuire subdivides each panel further to show differing moments in time within one location – a single box simultaneously portrays a conversation between elderly folk (2005), the phone ringing (2006), a game of charades (1964), and an apocalyptic flood (2111). Time is fragmented and parceled into neat boxes which paradoxically exist in isolation yet communicate with one another.

Many aspects of McGuire's novel seem to characterise the preoccupation concerning the oversaturation of our hypermodern world – indeed, the fragmentation and overlaying of many timelines seemingly creates a sense of chaos – leaving the reader dumbfounded, unable to discern one reality from another. I know, upon my first flick-through of this graphic novel, I was overwhelmed by the visual complexity and seeming randomness of each page; with so much occurring at once, it was difficult to find a meaning. However, when revisiting and deconstructing the novel, there was one aspect that did not fit with the apparent chaos of the narrative. This lay in the cyclical structure of the opening – a scene depicting a woman walking into the room asking herself “now why did I come in here again?” – and the final page showing the same woman; “...now I remember”. The comic relatability of this moment invites the reader to recognise their own relationship with time and space whilst reading the book. McGuire's meta-awareness makes the moment the reader consumes the

novel into part of the narrative itself; they too are a scene in the space which they occupy, a space that, like 'Here', has and will experience all of time.

What the reader is left with is a recognition of humanity's relationship with the natural place we inhabit.

This notion prevails throughout the novel as McGuire makes subtle nods at the reader to highlight our futile attempts to control nature; invariably, McGuire expresses the insignificance of these actions. Even the room – a construction of people – is ultimately rendered no match for the colossal power of the natural world.

A man chops down a tree in 1763; workers lay the foundations for a house in the distance the next year; 1871 depicts agricultural control; in 1907 the room is built, symbolically shutting off nature with the architectural uniformity of the corner of a room. Yet nature still manages to find a way to prevail. Despite our domestication of dogs, we are unable to control its natural instincts as, "everyday the mailman comes, the dog barks, the mailman goes away [...] it's a symbiotic relationship.". Once more nature persists as McGuire tracks the regrowth of a tree from 1564 to 1775; the house is no match for a great fire in 1783; and nature quite literally breaks back in as the rising ocean smashes through the window in 2111.

The barren desert in 300,000,000 BCE is the same ground that hosts a virtual tour in 2213. 'Here' is the only enduring presence in the novel – it waits with a melancholy strength in the background as chaos unfurls throughout time. And indeed 'Here' is in fact everywhere. Perhaps McGuire reminds the reader to enjoy the small mark that they make on the world in which we live.



Here, Richard McGuire, 2014

UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA

Yvonne Gao, Year 12

Utopia: derived from 'ou' and 'topos', the ancient Greek words for 'no' and 'place'

Dystopia: prefixes 'utopia' with 'dys-', indicating the negative of 'utopia'

'Utopia' was first coined as a term in Thomas More's 1551 book of the same name, playing on its similarity to the Greek 'eu-topos' - a good place. Since then, utopias in literature have served as the unattainable ideal of a perfect society, evoking the question of whether a perfect society is ever achievable while also exposing humanity's dreams and desires for one, nonetheless.

Perhaps reinforcing the impossibility of utopia is the rise of dystopia almost two centuries later. A supposed antithesis of utopia, dystopian literature has dominated the market since the turn of the 20th century, amid the political unrest in which each global power's campaign to achieve their own perceived utopia ultimately broke out into the two World Wars. As promises of a better world repeatedly collapsed into further chaos, the links between the drive for utopia and the resulting glimpses of dystopia prompted us to "confront the charge that the modern form of dystopianism inevitably emerged from utopianism"¹

UTOPIA

The idea of 'utopia' as a flawless idyll has remained consistent through literature since its (arguably) initial conception in 375 BCE in Plato's *Republic* and the later establishment of it as a recognised term in Thomas More's *Utopia*. Although the details of what this 'perfect society' consists of appear to be fluid and subjective throughout periods of literature, the purposes for which all of them were crafted converge in an escape from contemporary social, economic, or political problems. Plato, for example, sets out a society split into three social classes - the rulers, the guardians, and the producers - in which each group of individuals performs their own purpose and solely their own purpose in order to produce specialists in each profession and reduce the mistakes that lead to flaws in how humanity operates. The desire to optimise our societies and the way we experience life is demonstrated by this aspect of Plato's *Republic* as he proposes a solution to eradicate mistakes not only in the lower echelons of society but also in the governing of society that happens

in the higher class of the 'rulers'. Similarly, familiar strains of the political idyll we now associate with the concept of utopia arise in the expression of a desire to improve the fundamental structure of a societal system. Plato's division of society into specialisms was proposed not only with the aim of optimising the way humanity operates but also to create harmony through a system built on separate but co-dependent sectors or individuals.

It is this drive and desire for societal and political harmony that ultimately binds together utopias under our understanding of the word, and that is paralleled by later ideas of utopia in texts such as More's *Utopia* and Samuel Butler's 1872 novel, *Erewhon*. In both texts, there is a negation of any idea of commerce, possibly in an attempt to eradicate envy on a material level (Butler removes the purchasing power of money in *Erewhon* and More's *Utopia* sees the negation of any idea of private property).

Through the removal of this material envy, Butler and More, like Plato, also aim to create social harmony. The choice in these texts to eradicate the meaning of money or material property on the path to achieving utopia sheds light on each author's criticisms of their contemporary societies – namely the preoccupation with financial gain – and exemplifies how the use of utopia in literature not only demonstrates the ideals we search for in a perfect society but also exposes the flaws and criticisms we have of our current one. Perhaps the removal of commerce as both a connection and a polarising factor between people creates societies of materially separate individuals who share in a non-materialistic harmony and rely on one another to maintain that harmony. This mirrors the utopian ideal of separate but co-dependent individuals depicted in Plato's *Republic* and strengthens the idea that the desire for social harmony permeates utopian literature, as it is what our reality lacks.

Reinforcing the argument that utopian literature is not only a projection of our ideal desires but also a tool to criticise our current societies is the recognition that *Erewhon* and *Utopia* are both written with a satirical element. More's play on words to name his book 'no place' (ou-topia) rather than 'good place' (eu-topia) suggests an underlying cynicism that, despite his descriptions of a perfect society, it is also unattainable due to the stark contrast between the ideal and his own flawed society. Similarly, Butler's *Erewhon* was written with the purpose of satirising Victorian society (notably through the banning of machines in his utopia against the backdrop of a rapidly industrialising society) where the name 'Erewhon' is, in fact, an anagram of the word 'nowhere' – again exemplifying the distance between contemporary society and the ideal.

In addition, the employment of utopia in satire since the coining of the term perhaps ties it inherently to a level of

rather than one rooted in reality and possibility.

Regardless, the unattainability of utopia is not for humanity's lack of trying. Throughout the course of history there have been countless political ideals founded on the fantasy of an attainable utopia that have ultimately ended in chaos and failure as a result of trying to achieve the unachievable. Undoubtedly one of the most prominent examples of this failure is the attempts of the Nazi regime to establish their own twisted utopia of traditional 'Aryan' ideals that led to and ended in the horrors of the Second World War. Interestingly, it was in the aftermath of this international conflict and grotesque attempt at establishing a so-called utopia that dystopian literature from all areas of the globe were catapulted into popularity, and that texts we commonly associate with dystopia were written and published. Not only does this reinforce the idea that utopia is inherently unattainable, but it also evidences a suggestion that the attempt to create one is inevitably doomed to collapse into a dystopia.

DYSTOPIA

Dystopia is often used to describe an imagined society filled with oppression, chaos, and/or great suffering among its people, presenting us with an image of a society that is the furthest from perfect that it can be. However, while we commonly regard dystopia as the opposite of utopia, perhaps it is more truthful to acknowledge it as a parallel to or consequence of utopia.

In the progression of literature, the rise of dystopia followed utopia and is often characterised by the element of a failed 'perfect society', as demonstrated by some of the most famous dystopian texts we know of today such as Orwell's 1984, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* and, arguably most representatively, *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley.

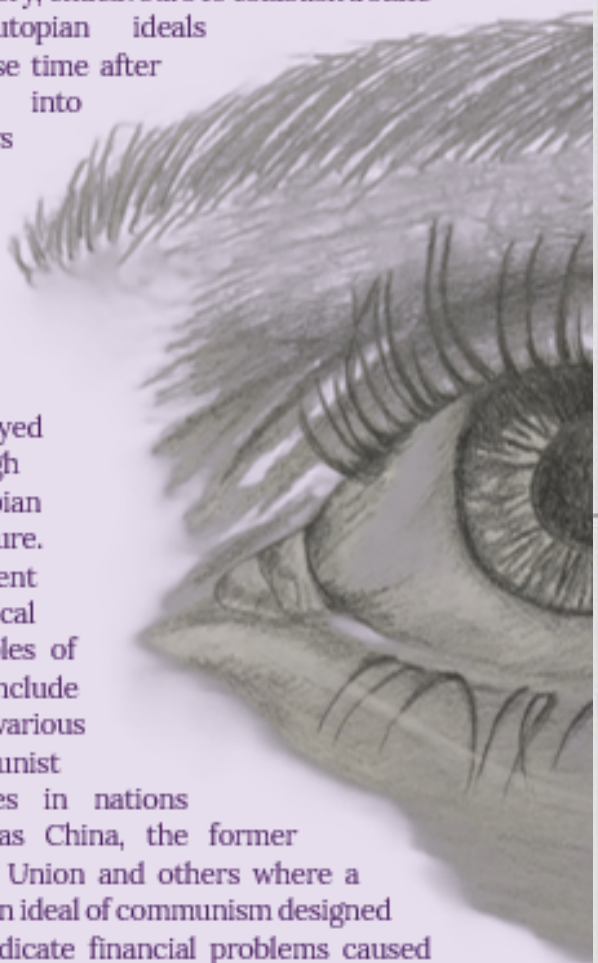
With consideration to a historical context of a world wrecked by the Nazi attempt to enforce their utopia through a totalitarian regime, it becomes apparent that the boom of dystopian literature came in response to the stark exposure of how dangerous the strive for utopia can be. A growing cynicism and scepticism towards grand promises of political ideals grew rapidly among the world's population, reflected by the popularity of dystopian literature and the similar themes of impenetrable control that span through it. In 1984, Orwell's creation of an all-seeing authority, 'Big Brother', is a representation of totalitarian regimes that exemplifies the deep-rooted ties of dystopia to the theme of control and to the suffering that comes from the intrusive levels of control that totalitarian regimes often exert.

However, while the nature of the society that 'Big Brother' presides over is indisputably recognised as and meant by Orwell to be a dystopia, it is arguable that Orwell aimed to demonstrate that a dystopian society was not synonymous with a society intended to cause suffering but instead a society that causes suffering in a failed attempt to optimise – or indeed a failed attempt in achieving utopia. This again poses the link that utopia is not the opposite of dystopia but is instead the origin of it, exemplified through the function of Orwell's 'Thought Police' to root out non-conformity and instead impose the ruling party's ideals by manipulating them into conformity. Orwell's choice to create a regime that attempts to control and brainwash people into **believing** in obedience to a certain doctrine suggests that perhaps dystopia was not the aim but instead that it is the consequence of

the strive for conformity to a certain group of individuals' 'utopia

The notion that dystopia originated from utopianism further reinforces the unattainability of utopia and sheds light on how dystopias emerge from inherently flawed attempts to achieve utopia. As proven by multiple occasions in history, endeavours to establish a state on utopian ideals collapse time after time into horrors that we see

portrayed through dystopian literature. Pertinent historical examples of this include the various communist regimes in nations such as China, the former Soviet Union and others where a utopian ideal of communism designed to eradicate financial problems caused by capitalism in society ultimately led to greater suffering than ever imagined. Perhaps one of the key issues that led to the downfall of these perceived utopian ideals was the necessity of control to enforce them. Even Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia* require a level of control to establish in reality, as they rely on



each co-dependent individual to uphold their role to maintain a utopian state. This perhaps therefore suggests that for someone to try and achieve a utopia it cannot be realistically possible to simultaneously have the complete conformity and complete freedom we would usually associate with utopia. It is this strong

theme of control running through both utopia and dystopia that

significantly blurs the lines and boundaries between these two concepts, increasingly so after the turn of the

20th century, and drives us to view these two concepts not as opposites but as two branches of the same tree.

UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA AS ONE

The blurred lines between utopia and dystopia are reflected in the ambiguity that often arises in categorising each of these genres. Huxley's *Brave New World*, for example, is widely recognised as a dystopian text but revolves around a system based heavily on a utopian state of bliss and harmony maintained by the drug soma which the citizens appear to voluntarily take to eliminate negative

emotions. While the society in *Brave New World* appears to exhibit the characteristic utopian traits of social harmony and a carefree population, a closer examination into the reliance of this society on 'soma' – a drug – begins to pick out the strings of control that permeate and bind both utopia and dystopia. 'Soma' provides the basis for Huxley's flawed utopian society by suppressing and altering feelings of pain, anger and sadness into a blissful trance in order to maintain harmony, tying the inherent framework of this utopian society to the idea of absolute control. A seemingly perfect society that relies on a drug to control and sustain its perfect façade picks apart the fabric of this utopia and exposes how the very mechanism that allows this 'utopia' to function is its most fundamental flaw. Here, not only does Huxley use the suppression of emotion to reinforce the unattainability of utopia and criticise attempts to achieve it, but he also links this drive and desire for utopia to the authoritarian control that dystopia builds its foundations on, demonstrating the blurred boundaries between utopia and dystopia and emphasising how the two are inextricably connected.

Therefore, as literature and society have progressed, mirroring the changes in each other along the way, two concepts that have always seemed to be the antitheses of each other inevitably blur and link together against the background of our chaotic world. Through blurred boundaries and interlocking themes, utopia and dystopia come together as part of the same machine to expose our desire for unattainable perfection and the chaos that flawed attempts often collapse into.



SUMMER 2023 PLAYLIST



Book Recommendations

A Room of One's Own

by Virginia Woolf

Written in the characteristic modernist style, Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* explores women's social inequalities through the form of an extended essay. Based on lectures and papers Woolf delivered and read at Cambridge University's two female colleges, the chaos of isolation and injustice that faces women in literature is brought to our attention in this noteworthy text.

Fahrenheit 451

by Ray Bradbury

Book-burning, censorship, and oppression all come together under Bradbury's memorable 20th century dystopia. A criticism of restriction of thought, Bradbury transports us into the chaos of a book about a society where all books are banned in a truly memorable manner.

The Book of Disquiet

By Fernando Pessoa

Fragments of thoughts and observations written over the course of Fernando Pessoa's life have been pieced together posthumously.

All the Bright Places

by Jennifer Niven

A heart-wrenching story of dealing with grief, guilt and trauma amidst the chaos of hectic teenage life, *All the Bright Places* takes us on the journey of two struggling teens as they battle to help themselves as well as each other through their darkest times.

Lord of the Flies

by William Golding

Chaos breaks out as a group of young boys are stranded on an island with no rules to restrict what they do... Golding takes us through the chaos of their journey as well as the wider picture of chaos in morality and how human nature chooses to govern itself given total freedom.

Slaughterhouse-Five

by Kurt Vonnegut

Chaotic in both its backdrop of war and its temporal shifts, Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* has been dubbed "one of the most enduring anti-war novels of all time" as it tracks the life of American veteran Billy through fragmented windows of time.

Fight Club

by Chuck Palahniuk

The first rule of *Fight Club* is: you do not talk about *Fight Club*...but I can type about it. Palahniuk's narrator introduces us to dynamic Tyler Durden who spins an organised yet hidden underworld of chaos into the lives of the web of people involved. As *Fight Club* grows, both the novel and the plot spiral into a tangle of simultaneously disorganised yet wholly calculated chaos.

Bunny

by Mona Awad

Nothing will prepare you for the chaos Awad hides behind the perfect façade of the Bunnies: a close-knit group of young women who seemingly discuss poetry over tea parties. A book that will completely grip you with a grotesque curiosity, *Bunny* will send your mind spinning down the rabbit hole...

Frankenstein

by Mary Shelley

Chaotic in both appearance and in nature, Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a book most have heard of in relation to horror and monsters. Now we invite you to view it through a different lens: one through the perspective of chaos in displacement and isolation as we begin to peel back the mystery and apprehension surrounding *Frankenstein's* monster to shed light on an alternative perspective.

MEET THE TEAM

YVONNE G (Y12)

Yvonne enjoys reading and listening to music. Currently studying English Lit, History, Chemistry, and German, Yvonne keeps herself sane by frequently bleaching her hair and eating minstrels.

EMILY T (Y12)

Emily is studying Biology, Chemistry and English Lit. She loves the arts: drama, plays, paintings, novels, poetry, films, architecture... to be honest, she likes a bit of everything.

ANUSHA P (Y12)

Anusha is in year 12. She has always loved reading novels for the escapism it offers and poetry for the themes that connect us.

ROXY R (Y12)

Our current arts co-ordinator, Roxy is currently studying Biology, Chemistry and Maths. Alongside playing the piano, art has always been one of her favourite hobbies.

RUTH R (Y12)

Ruth is a year 12 student who's finally published her poetry book (yay!!) If you couldn't tell already, she loves writing and reading poems and hopes to become a successful poet later in the future.

NELL W (Y12)

Nell is the TGL team's token STEM friend who's somehow infiltrated the inner circle to become our social media manager. Nell's favourite book is *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

EVIE A (Y11)

Evie is a resident J.B. Priestley hater and abhorrent poet.

NICOLE J (Y11)

Nicole is a big fan of feminist Greek mythology retellings, and her favourite books are the Poppy War trilogy by R.F.Kuang and *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. Alongside reading, she also loves crocheting, gardening and Horrible Histories songs.

RINA N (Y10)

When Rina isn't too busy being Spider-Man, you can find them enthusing about movies, headphones glued to their ears.

HAYA A-S (Y9)

Haya has always enjoyed reading and writing; since a young age she's always been a bookworm! She looks up to authors such as Oscar Wilde and John Green as her inspirations. Other interests of hers are politics and history.

ELLA W (Y8)

Ella enjoys art and design and wishes to study architecture, she admires the profession's skill. She also has a questionable love for fruit cups...

YUNAMI Y (Y8)

Yunami enjoys reading classical literature and detective fiction. Interests I include art, neuroscience, philosophy and writing stories mostly about people being very confused.

ALEENA R (Y7)

Aleena loves to write using her imagination because it makes her happy. That's what she did here!

In Memoriam...

NAM V (Y13)

to study English/ comparative literature

A co-founder and editor of the magazine you're reading, Nam took English Lit, Music and History. Their favourite pastimes seemed to include dozing off anywhere and everywhere.

AISHA Z (Y13)

to study PPE

Aisha was a co-founder and an editor of The Green Light and studied History, English Lit and Economics. In her spare time, she liked to read and sleep.

NARMEEN S (Y13)

to study philosophy

Narmeen was an editor for The Green Light and studied English Lit, History and RS. As well as her love for all things literature, she enjoyed things such as jewelry-making, crochet and mehndi design.

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Tobias

The Wellbeing Room

The Thought of Minstrels

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Application for GL Content Creators

Year 9 and above.

Send in an opinion piece to thegreenlight@aggs.bfet.uk

We are also looking for social media managers; if you're savvy with tech and good at being popular, email us for an application form.

Submissions to The Glass Cabinet

Year 7 – Year 13

To submit any type of creativity to The Glass Cabinet, keep an eye out for notices for any contests, or opportunities that will be running throughout the year.

For any queries, please don't hesitate to approach any of the Editors, our Arts Coordinator, or email us at thegreenlight@aggs.bfet.uk.



***(scan me!
I'll take you to our
digital magazine 😊)***

“you must have chaos
within you to give birth to
a dancing star”

