

Celestial

Cavin Xue '24

He didn't want it to end.

He passed the Chapel gleaming in the sunset, traveling a row of rain-kissed bricks. With every doventh step, a splash of muddy water erupted from beneath his shoe. The cool moisture mingled with his skin, and he felt the cotton of his newly-soaked sock conform to his foot. Somehow, he would miss the sensation—a reminder of drenched journeys across campus.

He traveled past winding paths pointing to a dormant screen that bore silent witness to his name. Along the faculty houses hosting advisory dinners and marshmallow roasts, windows glowed warmly, beckoning him to join.

He shared hallways with the gilded names and trophies of those before him. While passing piles of entangled backpacks and equipment, the triumphant tolls of Victory reverberated throughout every corner. He closed his eyes to picture the bell's surface, weathered by camaraderie and challenge. He savored the sound.

He passed a patio devoid of the sounds of New York, *les bruits de Paris*, or the roar of Fire and Ice. Past grassy fields, the sun painted the sky rose and coral—a canvas begging for capture. Clouds drifted lazily, bidding farewell as water droplets clung to the last rays of the sun.

His walk along College Street was long, as it always had been. The concrete, fissured and jagged, carved miniature terraces out of the earth. He watched tawny squirrels scamper in the shadows, unearthing time capsules of seasons past. At a crosswalk accompanied by muted melodies, the piercing headlights of an approaching car returned him to the bright lights of the stage.

Finally, he stopped. Resting his hand on the brick facade of the Loomis Observatory, he looked to the moon now visible in the twilight sky. The sun's eternal dance, like the cycle of a new school year, rose and fell. In the cosmos, celestial events were profoundly fleeting.

When the light dissipates, only that truth remains.

Lux et Veritas.