

## Through His Eyes

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*The following essay is based off a chalk image Daniel created. His work is located in the Student*

*Art section, page 59.*

Looking at this picture, you cannot help but to be drawn to the eyes in the image. They seem like windows into his soul, like a view that you have never seen before. You begin to imagine your closest friend. He is the kind of friend that will love you till death, walking with you through your trials and tribulations, guiding you on the correct path. He carries your burdens on his shoulders, falling with you as you fall under the tremendous weight.

He is mocked and ridiculed for your sake. He is stripped of his clothes, standing bare for all the world to see. He is spit upon and pushed around for taking up for you. He is beaten and ravaged in your stead. As he is flogged, pieces of skin are gouged from his flesh. He is redressed, and the blood begins to dry, matting his garments to his body. He is dragged, bloodied and broken, through the streets so you would not be. He falls with you as you fall, scraping his knees on the hard, cold stones of the path. You struggle together to find some footing on this ground where the dogs and wolves lie. An onlooker smashes a wreath of thorns onto his head. Another grabs a stick to finish the job, pressing down on the thorns so that they penetrate into his skull. Your friend looks at you with only his right eye as a thorn has impaled his left. He loves you no less.

He carries your burdens, with you at his side. Food is thrown at him instead of you. He falls again, exposing the bones of his knees, hands, and nose, which took the impact of the fall. Despite the beatings and mocking of onlookers, he rises once again to carry your burdens, blood spewing from his newly opened wounds. You look at his face, worn away from the path, covered in blood. He embraces your burdens with a smile as he thinks about your face. He walks on, choking on the blood he now vomits up from the beatings. You start to wonder if his unconditional love has blinded him to what is happening.

He stands, sweat mixing with the blood and dirt in his mouth, and throws your burdens to the ground. As he stands, waning in and out of consciousness like a candle flickering in the wind, a person from the crowd rushes out and stands within inches of his face. Silence engulfs the crowd. Then, this person grabs your friend's garments, and with a swift thrust that sounds like the tearing of a bed sheet, rips them from his body, reopening his healing wounds. The perpetrator proudly walks away with your friend's clothes in hand. Another onlooker rushes out towards your friend, and throws him atop your burdens. Then a terrified look of pain comes to your friend's wide, yellowed eyes as he is affixed to your burdens with nails being pounded through the flesh of his hands and feet.

Now, more blood spewing from his body, your burdens are hoisted up, towering in the sky for all to see. The onlookers gasp, as they look at what once resembled a man, now a bloody, broken, ravaged, torn mass of flesh and bones. They fall silent, ashamed of what they have done. All you can hear is the labored breathing of your friend who is now asphyxiating because of his lack of strength to pull himself up and take a breath. He loves you with no reserve.

As he hangs upon that cross of your burdens the only thing he can think about is you: your name, your face, every decision you have made, every decision you will make, your

insecurities, your journey, your friends, your family, everyone. He loves you till death. Because you do not know what he is thinking, you start crying out like the others around you, wondering when this madness is going to end. Then, out of anger, you scream out, “I thought that you loved me?”

As he hangs upon that bloodied cross, he manages to spit out the blood and sweat he has been choking on for hours. Then, as he looks to the heavens, with watery, love-sworn eyes, and breathes his last breath, he says, “I love you this much.” His arms stretched out, he dies.

As you take a step back from the picture, having just witnessed the most horrifying execution through his eyes, you ask yourself, “What kind of friend am I? Am I following in his footsteps, dying myself by sacrificing for the sake of a friend, or am I the one tearing him down, demoralizing him till there is nothing left but flesh and bones?” Then you realize that no matter what life you choose, he will love you no less.