

Entry #14

Dear Kaiser High,

Did you know that I used to be a huge bookworm? In middle school, I would always carry a mini library on my back with my nose in a book walking between classes. It got to the point where my teachers would have to warn me to put my book away before confiscating it, even in my English Literature class. Quite ironic, isn't it? My favorite book to read was not the huge novels that I would go great lengths to hide under my desk, but the Calvin and Hobbes comic collection that my Dad gifted me when I was seven. I love those books to death. I could get myself swept away in the many rascal antics of Calvin and his clever stuffed tiger Hobbes for hours. Their world was my peace and serenity where mine was falling apart. If I didn't want to hear my parents' cutting words thrown at each other through my thin wooden door, then I'd curl up in the corner of my bookshelf and pull one comic book after another until the surrounding pile resembled as much of a barrier as the words on the paper did.

I didn't realize reading was my coping mechanism for my broken family until I didn't need it anymore. I barely remember the times where I would have to be told to put my book down and practice. Now, all I have is vivid memories of being dragged off the shooting line to rest because it was too much fun to compete against my teammates. Weekends filled with trips to the library suddenly evolved into all-day wrestling tournaments filled with laughter. Where once years ago, I was ashamed of telling everyone I competed in Judo, now became one of my most defining features as the short Asian girl that could break you (a running joke between every one of my friends). Slowly 'The Team' morphed into 'My Team', which at last settled as 'My Family'. Kaiser High School is my family. It is the only place where I can be part of a family 24/7, for ten months out of the year. On bad days, I no longer needed to create my own safe space within Calvin and Hobbes, when I could reach out to my friends within my IBDP cohort. Within Kaiser, I've learned to recognize unconditional love from family for what it is, unconditional, without boundaries, and limitless.

Now, as a senior about to graduate in just 13 days, I'm writing to say 'Thank you.' Thank you for allowing me to grow to be the person I am proud to be. I might be closing this chapter of my life, but just like the adventures of Calvin and Hobbes, it's unforgettable.

Thank you for the memories.