



*Cedar
&
Sentinel*

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THIS YEAR WE HAVE THE HONOR OF TAKING CEDAR SENTINEL ONLINE. YOU CAN FIND OUR LATEST ISSUES ON THE KINGSWAY WEBSITE AND/OR INSTAGRAM. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT ANYTHING IN TERMS OF ARTICLES, SHORT STORIES, POEMS, PHOTOS, OR ARTWORK TO THE CEDAR SENTINEL, PLEASE SEND YOUR WORK TO CEDARSENTINEL@KINGSWAY.COLLEGE

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editor's message

Hello Kingsway,

Well, it's the end of March and spring is in the air! We are soon to begin a new month, and yes, we're half way through the second semester. I'm sure that most of you are feeling overwhelmed with the assignments and tests leading up to midterms, but keep your heads up- April break is just around the corner. This is the perfect time to reflect on the events of the past month, and in celebration of Women's History month we have chosen to highlight the contributions of Michaelle Jean, a woman of purpose. This issue also contains writing pieces and poetry by some young women of substance who will inspire you- yes, they're our seniors! As this school year draws to an end, remember this verse: "The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?" -- Psalm 27:1



ILIANA COLUMBIE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Best wishes and God bless,
Iliana



KYLE BACALSO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Hey Kingsway,

Despite all that has been happening this year, we've been able to pull through. This school year has been going by fast but hopefully this month's edition of our school newspaper can lift your spirits, as we have put together a nice helpful collection of articles. If you have any comments or suggestions on what you'd like to see next please feel free to contact us and send any pieces you'd like to feature in the paper. I'm looking forward to seeing all of your stories and different pieces of writing. Enjoy your reading!

God bless, Kyle Bacalso



words of wisdom

"If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write"

- Martin Luther

Michaëlle Jean

A Woman of Purpose

BY: NICOLE KUCHURIVSKI



I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul.” (Michaëlle Jean) On September 6th, 1957, a woman leader was born. Michaëlle Jean was born to Roger and Luce Jean, who lived in the capital Haiti, Port-au-Prince. When Michaëlle was only 8, Roger was abducted and tortured in person for nearly 2 years. Michaëlle’s father fled to Canada where Luce, Michaëlle, and the sister joined in. The family lived in a petite mining called Thetford Mines in Quebec. Roger and Luce’s marriage didn’t work out, so Michaëlle moved to Montreal. That is where the learning began for Michaëlle. Michaëlle Jean has paved a path for women’s rights in Canada through her work as a social activist, governor general, and proud Francophonie Canadian.

In the years 1982 to 1985, Michaëlle completed undergraduate studies at the University of Montreal, earning a degree in Spanish and Italian language and literature. During the

hard-working university studies, Michaëlle was also deeply involved with helping women and children who were the victims of domestic violence. This woman became a social activist for women and children at risk. From 1979 to 1987, Michaëlle dedicated time to work with Quebec shelters for women who had been physically abused and she helped create a network of emergency shelters where women could have a safe haven to go.

Over a decade, she worked towards the needs of thousands of women and children targeted by domestic abuse. That is how she contributed to the invention of a vast network of shelters, resources, and emergency services for women at risk. Michaëlle is a woman of integrity and compassion that has decided to take action on the issues that need a solution.

Advancing in career, Michaëlle became a popular commentator on a french-language network called Le Téléjournal.

Surprising deciding to host her own television interview show, she entitled it Michaëlle. Fortunately, the television show was well-liked and Michaëlle won multiple awards for outstanding work. Paul Martin, the Canadian Prime Minister was impressed with Michaëlle, therefore choosing her to be the 27th governor-general of Canada.

In August 2005, it was announced that Queen Elizabeth II approved the choice. Michaëlle became the first black person and the first Haitian immigrant to uphold this high-ranking position. This lady’s work as a governor-general has made an impact in Canada. Michaëlle has established a strong connection between the Francophone and Anglophone communities in Canada, as well as all the country’s cultural groups. After leaving the governor-general job, she was given the position, head of the International Organisation of La Francophonie. She was proudly the first woman and the first Canadian to uphold the position.

This job gave the ability to control the international body that oversees political action among nations that share French as a common language. Michaëlle wrote a book outlining her visions and commitments for being the Secretary-General of the International Organisation of La Francophonie. One of the topics was about the growth, prosperity and economic strategy for La Francophonie. Many people were inspired by a strong sense of innovation and loyalty that Michaëlle had. In the next two years, she was

replaced by Louise Mushikiwabo in late October 2018. Michaëlle has always been committed and determined to improve wherever she goes and works to make Canada an even better place. Throughout the life of Michaëlle Jean, Canada has been transformed into a better place because of the strong morals, high government positions, and proud Francophonie Canadian woman she is. Her childhood was a rough patch in her life, but that has made her into a stronger and powerful woman that she is today. Michaëlle continues

to advocate for stopping domestic violence and because of her fearless attitude, many things have been changed for the good. Since coming to Canada, Michaëlle is grateful for the education, opportunities, and events that have created a phenomenal and intelligent woman. “Canada offers us full-fledged citizenship: rights, freedoms, and responsibilities that we will uphold with gratitude, pride, and dignity.” (Michaëlle Jean)

“Empower Women and you will see a decrease in poverty, literacy, disease and violence.”

Time's Up

By: Rea De Guzman

It all began in a faraway place
In Oshawa, away from our homes and our space.
We were all brought together in a place we call Dorm
And for many of us, this wasn't the norm.
Friendships were formed, some as strong as a fleet.
And as long as we're willing, these friendships we'll
keep.

Class upon class, we helped each other pass
Looking back at it now, my how time has flown fast
At the start of grade nine, when classes weren't online
Everything was fine and dandy until corona came by
Geography, Math nine, oh what simpler time
It was all fun and games until time decided to fly
Mega marathon, Golden gnome, in grade ten we
owned the throne
Thanks to Mr. Kaytor and Mrs. Lisk, that win-win had
our minds blown

Even with step, we've leveled up
After our grade nine defeat, we never gave up
Low and behold when grade ten came along
We beat every grade, and we came back strong
With our small little parties in Buena Vista hall
Those were the days where we were young and small
From GoGuardian blocking us at the strict hour of ten
The clock then said boom! now we're in grade eleven
Biology and Chemistry leaving us scared
But English eleven that class hit hard
Before second semester could even roll in
Corona said "hey", and then broke in
Tours were canceled, leaving everyone dismayed
Everyone was sent home, to quarantine for a "decade"



Now that we're back, it's our senior year
It's almost time to go into our career
Mrs M. and Minnie, the two deans of our crew
Say "My how these '03 babies grew"
Now we can't forget Dean Browne and Dean John
Sadly they left the dorm but were never gone
From deep breakfast talks to obnoxious, loud dinners
The cafe was a place where we felt like big figures
Those random conversations about who knows what
And our small little rants that came from the gut
Those beats that we'd make, that got everyone on their
feet

And the good long laughs that had us falling out of our
seat, seat, seat.

Now, now, we're not done reminiscing
We still have some time, before we start missing
There still more to do, so please set the date
It's sad we couldn't do much but with some things, we
must wait.

Because of classes being on zoom
It feels like we're bonded and chained in a tomb
However, we must push through and through
And try to stop the feeling of being so blue
Thanks to these friendships made together in Dorm
That love we share, helped us cope in the midst of the
storm
When Senioritous hit us, we felt very down and de-
pressed

It even caused some of us an ache in the chest
We have little time left, but we'll make the best of it
I might miss Kingsway, even if it's just a bit.
I know it's sad to say, but we must accept our fate
We can't stop the inevitable, goodbye fellow classmates
We must also say thanks to the Father above
For getting us this far. It's something to be proud of
Time is of the essence. Our time is almost up
Four more months left, we must never give up.

Smell of Spring

by: ANONYMOUS

I LOVE THE TREES AND HOW THEY SWAY
THE WAY THE WIND PLAYS AROUND THE SHADE
I DON'T KNOW WHY, IT JUST FINDS A WAY

I LOVE THE FLOWERS AND HOW THEY BLOOM
THE WAY THOSE LITTLE BUDS CAN MAKE THE
SWEETEST OF PERFUME
I DON'T KNOW WHY, IT JUST FINDS A WAY

I LOVE THE BIRDS AND HOW THEY CHIRP
THE WAY THEY FLY MAKES ME PERKED
I DON'T KNOW WHY, IT JUST FINDS A WAY

I LOVE THE HEAPS OF SUNSHINE AND HOW IT SHINES
THE WAY THE LIGHT DANCES AND MAKES
ME MESMERIZED
I DON'T KNOW WHY, IT JUST FINDS A WAY

I LOVE WHEN SPRING HAS SPRUNG
IT MAKES ME FEEL AS IF WE HAVE WON

MARCH CONTEST

If you complete the puzzle below correctly, email a picture of your completed puzzle to cedar.sentinel@gmail.com, or send a picture to our instagram account [@cedarsentinel](https://www.instagram.com/cedarsentinel).
Have fun and good luck!

“

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fundraising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God bless



FAILURE TO ESCAPE

Keira Hodgins

The door was rickety and old, yet somewhere, hidden in the grooves, was a key to open the door. My friends and I frantically searched every nook and cranny of the dilapidated woods until we found the small, rusted key. Overjoyed with the first success of the night, we tried to fit the key into the door, only to realize that it was much too small for the keyhole in the door knob.

“Oh it doesn’t really fit into the door,” said the man from the front desk, “It’s just for show”. Well then what was the purpose of us looking for the key, could you have not just let us into the room? It was my sixteenth birthday and I had decided that my friends Mila, Lexi, Anne, Sarah, Jackie and I were going to do an escape room. Our goal was to break into the castle, steal King Lucius’s crown, and get out. Walking through that door felt like we had been transported to a plastic version of the middle ages; fake stone coated the walls while the floor was another kind of tile. As we entered the room our eyes were immediately drawn to the left where colourful flags were hanging from the ceiling. The single light in the room caused the suit of armour in the corner to glint as our shadows passed by. The back of the

small room was occupied by a raised platform that was barricaded by bars and what looked to be a drawbridge made out of plywood on the left side. The right side of the room housed what looked like a door but without a handle and a lamp attached to the wall above it. As we entered the room we immediately felt lost as we looked over everything in the room. We inspected the flags, the armour, even a hole in the wall but found nothing. After ten minutes of meticulous searching we heard a gasp.

“Look, I found something,” Mila exclaimed. We all flocked to her and stared at the small, wooden box in her hands. She had pulled it out of a panel in the wall beside the crank for the drawbridge. The box had a small keyhole in it so we set about looking for its missing counterpart. After another ten minutes of exploring we realised that we are terrible at escape rooms and that if we had any hope of retrieving the crown within the hour we needed help. Laura walked up to the bell above the door and gave it a ring, signaling that we wanted a hint. We were soon visited by a lady who told us to look inside the suit of armour. After we had practically disassembled the suit of armour we found a key that did not seem to fit into the

small hole of the box. We soon realised that it was for the lock that held the drawbridge crank in place. The silver handle was soon freed from its prison and I began to crank it. The plywood began lowering but the weight suddenly hit me like a brick and my hand slipped off the mechanism that was clearly a twenty first century design. The handle began to spin uncontrollably fast while the heavy drawbridge came crashing down, almost squashing Laura in the process. A loud BANG sounded through the room and she jumped out of the way, escaping by the skin of her teeth.

We all walked up the ramp into the area that bars had previously left unreachable. In the middle of the floor was an axe that was sticking up out of the ground, the plastic blade face up. There was a small cabinet with a lock and a golden horse head on top. There was a tiny window to the right but it appeared to be blocked by something on the other side. I approached the axe in the floor that was leaning slightly to the left and pushed it over to the right, suddenly a piece of wood opened on the outside of the small, barred enclosure. Inside was a small velvet pouch which held the key to the small cabinet. Sarah took the key and opened the cabinet to reveal

a magnetic pedestal. Jackie placed the horse head on the black plastic inside the cabinet and the lamp suddenly lit the room. We were bewildered and had no idea what to do next.

The success of the lamp was followed by five minutes of pondering before I leaned on a part of the wall and it started to move, the wood fell open as I pushed on it to reveal another room, about half the size of the last. There was a board of numbers to the right and a wooden pulpit to the left, above the worn pulpit was the little window from the other room but it had a cover on it. We eagerly entered the room and made a beeline for the pulpit. On it sat eight wooden pieces with black velvet on the back, they seemed to correspond with matching velvet spaces in the wood. After seven or eight minutes of swapping piece for piece we found a combination that made the lamps in the room light up. Unsure of what to do next, Mila climbed on the pulpit to get a closer look at the window which had been uncovered when the room was discovered. She noticed dots on the plexi glass but before we could figure out what they mean we heard a door open.

“Miss could you please not climb on the props,” the man from the front desk sighed as he watched her get down off the pulpit. He could clearly see that we were struggling so he smiled and offered us a clue. We were desperate by this point so we all nodded in agreement.

“Well you guys weren’t too far off,” he said, “I will just give you a push in the right direction”. As the word push left his mouth he slammed his body into the wall, with a loud BANG and several screams from us the wall opened and revealed yet another room. This one was more square in shape and had a dresser with costume jewelry and cups covering the entire top. There was an antique chair in the corner and it sat beside a rather un-sturdy looking table. To the left of the room was a large chest with a

keypad to keep its contents sealed. He chuckled at us as we recovered from our second scare of the night and fled into the room. We spent fifteen minutes or so combing over every detail on that dresser. The jewelry was cheap and appeared to be of no significance, the same with the chalices the fake valuables were scattered around. The dresser housed many puzzles, all of which we had no idea what to do with. Jackie found the first one, it resembled a complex tic tac toe board but consisted of dot instead of x’s and o’s. We each took a turn to fumble with it before we all became extremely exasperated and decided to call for a hint. Shortly after ringing the bell we were visited by our trusty man who sat at the front desk. Realising that we were never going to figure out this particular puzzle he took it and did it for us, all the while explaining how the dots correspond with the ones Mila had found on the small window before she was told to get off the pulpit.

“Well your time is up but we don’t have anyone else in here for a while so you guys can keep going if you want,” the man said, clearly pitying us and our inability to solve puzzles. Determination flooded our bodies and we agreed to spend more time in the room, everyone wanting to get their hands on that crown which we knew without a doubt must be made of plastic. However before the man even managed to leave the room we were stuck again, struggling to open the drawer the previous puzzle had pointed too. He opened the drawer for us, biting back a laugh as he left. Inside the thin drawer was a key, it must have been the tenth key we had found throughout the duration of the escapade. The key opened the giant lock on the large chest, I felt relief coursing through my veins as they key worked and opened the lid, Success, finally. I opened the heavy lid and was greeted by gleaming disappointment as I stared at yet another chest inside this one. The lock on

the smaller, blue chest had colours on it, my mind suddenly came full circle. The flags! I raced into the other room and stared at the flags and the colours on them. Eight of them hung from the ceiling, moving gently as I moved around them. I ran back to the third room and tried the colour combination, no success. I tried it backwards, but it didn’t work. We tried every possible combination of colours but nothing opened the lock.

We sat defeated looking at the lock in Sarah’s hands as the man came in through the door to tell us that time was up. Curiosity got the better of me and I asked him how to open it. “You just fill in the colours of the flags in the first room,” he said. “But I did that and it didn’t work,” I replied, feeling a little less stupid as the conversation went on. “Did you reset the lock after you tried it,” he looked at me questioningly. WHAT! I HAD TO RESET THE LOCK! I stared at the lock that was now in my hands and flipped it over to reveal a white paper taped to the back. On the paper were instructions on how to reset the lock so that they combination would work.

I felt like an idiot as I retried the first combination and it popped open. We opened the lid to reveal a dollar store crown situated in the middle of the box. Relief washed over me as I pulled it out and placed it on Lexi’s head. We had done it, we stole King Lucius’s crown. It may have taken a plethora of hints, an extra forty minutes and several scoldings by the staff but we had finally made it. As we exited the room and returned to my parents who were sitting on a couch laughing at us, I thought back to all the amazing memories I had made in the last hour and forty minutes. It reminded me of how much I love my friends and even if we are terrible at escape rooms, we could always have fun, as long as we are together.



DO GRADES MOTIVATE STUDENTS?

Grades have been seen to play a significant role in many students' lives. Historically, we've incentivized students to do well by rewarding them with grades, GPAs and class rankings. Grades are used to communicate a student's performance academically and progress throughout the school year. Traditionally, it is considered that grades have a significant motivational influence on students. However, in the last year, more and more researchers have denied the effectiveness of grades in motivating students to learn. They constitute the background of our current study.

This study analyzes the possible correlation between the grades students receive and their motivation to learn. Contrary to popular belief, today's grading system is seen to negatively affect students' motivation by affecting their mental health, defining a stu-

dents self-worth and success, and diminishing a student's interest in learning. Many educators, parents, and students focus on making sure their child maintain good scores throughout their studies. Many believe attaining high marks, is a "passport" to a high paying job and future success. This mentality causes many students to base their self-worth and success on their academic achievements. Jennifer Crocker, psychologist of the University of Michigan, found in her latest study that, "over 80% of college freshmen base their self-worth on academic competence" (Crocker 2).

This mindset creates a stressful environment for many students. When students use their grades as a barometer of their intelligence and self-worth it causes them to undermine themselves and their capability to make it far in life. In some cases, educators

have the tendency to label a student's success by their academic achievements, in the forms of grades. Peter Strawson, concluded that humans have the tendency to generate what he called "moral reactive attitudes" (Strawson 6). These are feelings of "offense and resentment" that well up in many individuals, in response to perceived slights.

This immediately causes some teachers to label a student by his/her grades without taking into account their other capabilities and accomplishments. Rudolf Dreikurs, a psychiatrist, mentions in his latest study that encouragement is the most "vital aspect of a child's development" (Dreikurs 3). Educators and counselors fail to realize this fact. Some teachers believe students with higher marks will go on to do greater things than those with lower grades. They then tend to give up on those struggling

and in need of guidance, lowering their self-esteem. This has become a major issue impacting a student motivation to thrive and learn. Many students believe success is determined by their ability to converge to the right answer. In the real world, success requires so much more. Success requires the ability to communicate complex ideas, pursue solutions and "explore possibilities beyond current knowledge" (Zoeckler 7). Grades focus on only a small portion of an individual's achievements and capabilities. Grades define students from only that small portion. Many students have strengths and weaknesses in different areas and until the educational grading system is modified to test all these areas, students will continue to undermine their self worth and success.

In today's society, many students focus their attention on their grades and academic achievements, diminishing their interest in learning. Students lose sight of the main purpose of school. Studies have shown that students put more emphasis on the "measurement of their performance" rather than learning (Holtgreive 2). Grades have become an external motivation for several students. Joseph Holtgreive recently stated in his latest writing, "too smart to fail", that when students focus on the measurement of their performance it reinforces a "fixed mindset" (Too smart to fail 72). Grades do serve an important purpose as to evaluate students' achievements; however, many students have become fixated on their grades and fail to understand the purpose of education. Students focus their energy and attention on grades, they lose sight of the lesson being taught. He says that if students were to "redirect their focus from the scoreboard, to the game of learning", they create a direct relationship between input

and outcome. This further implies that, the more effort students invest, the "greater opportunity to learn" (Holtgreive 8). Grades hold an important role but one must not be fixated on them. This external motivation imbues students with the wrong motives for study. They fail to grasp the material and seek further knowledge because they become fixated on their grades rather than the soul purpose of the lesson.

Grades were intentionally meant to motivate students; however, students in today's society are seen to suffer with mental and emotional health issues due to the stress of maintaining high marks. One of the reasons is due to the "fear of failure". Many students feel pressured to maintain high grades from their parents and educators. This pressure can lead to anxiety, depression, cheating and more. According to a study conducted in the University of Michigan, "80% of students base their success in life on their marks" (Sinclair 5). Students will push themselves to a point where they need to seek help. Parents have also been seen to put an emphasis on grades, causing their to be an overload of pressure on their child's back. The amount of pressure to do well and achieve high marks leads to "low self-esteem and other mental health issues" (Sinclair 6). A new study finds that when students experience an "academic setback" such as a bad grade, the amount of cortisol in their bodies spikes. This has caused many students to remain fixated on the setback and have difficulty moving forward. Researchers analyzed the stress level of students at two different highschools in central Texas. Students were to complete daily surveys asking about the stress they experienced, and daily saliva examples which were collected to measure their cortisol levels.

Their study found that "68 percent of students experienced a drop in their grades in the first semester" and reported that it was due to feeling stressed and anxious. Chronic stress can impair brain functioning and suppress their immune system, causing long-term damage. Students feeling stressed and anxious about their marks are not thinking about solutions for their own well-being. They will continue to push themselves over the limit leading to other mental health issues. Some students will turn to drugs and other medication to help them stay focused and awake, but as a result they are damaging their health and mind even more. Teachers should find ways to encourage students to adopt a growth mindset. They must teach students to not become fixated on their grades and understand that mistakes are normal. They need to learn how to overcome obstacles and take a moment to hear their bodies cry for help.

Grades are an important part in a student's life to help communicate a student's performance academically. However, in today's society grades have become an external motivation for several students. Grades have been seen to cause mental health issues, determine a student's success and self-worth and diminish their interest in learning. Students have become fixated on their academic marks, losing sight of the key purpose of education. The education system must find a way to test a child's capabilities in all areas. Every person is different and has different strengths and weaknesses. If the education system wants to produce well rounded students, they must learn how to motivate their students in other ways that reach each of their expertise.

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time

- Thomas A. Edison.

“TRAVEL OPENS YOUR HEART, BROADENS YOUR MIND AND FILLS YOUR LIFE WITH STORIES TO TELL



A DOUBLE BLESSING

Julie Rodrigues.

It was a cold, crisp winter morning; January 23, 2020, just a few days before Covid-19 was declared an outbreak. As I finished packing my suitcase, I quickly snuck a last-minute look at my English 11 notes for my final exam before the mission trip. About an hour later, as I wrote the final word for the essay on the English exam, I felt a skip in my heartbeat; I was burning with anticipation for the mission trip. I handed in my exam and whispered goodbye to my friends in that class who weren't going on the trip. I bolted up the stairs, eager to get my suitcase and sit on the bus with Reann. After we had both finished our exams, we went outside to start loading the bus with the others. The people in my class who also went on the trip were John, Marc, Rayna, and Carmina. Before the mission trip, none of us were that close or really talked to each other that much, other than Reann and I. To be completely honest, I never expected for us to all become so close over the next week, but it sure was an experience to remember.

Skipping ahead a couple of hours, we finally arrived at the Pearson International Airport in Toronto. A swell of emotions came over me all at once; fright, excitement, and anxiety. A familiar feeling mixed with joy. I have never been a fan of airports and airplanes, in fact, I most likely have aerophobia. As we neared the time to depart on the plane, I felt uneasy again. My stomach was churning with anticipation and dread all at the same time. Luckily, my dad also came on the trip with me and assured me that God would take care of us. About 5 hours later, we finally landed in San Salvador, El Salvador. Then we took one more plane to Tegucigalpa, Honduras. It was such a surreal experience; I felt as if I was in a different world. To think that just a couple of hours ago I was sitting in a classroom in Canada, and now stepping foot in a completely different country, was so astonishing. We quickly gathered all of our belongings and headed through airport se-

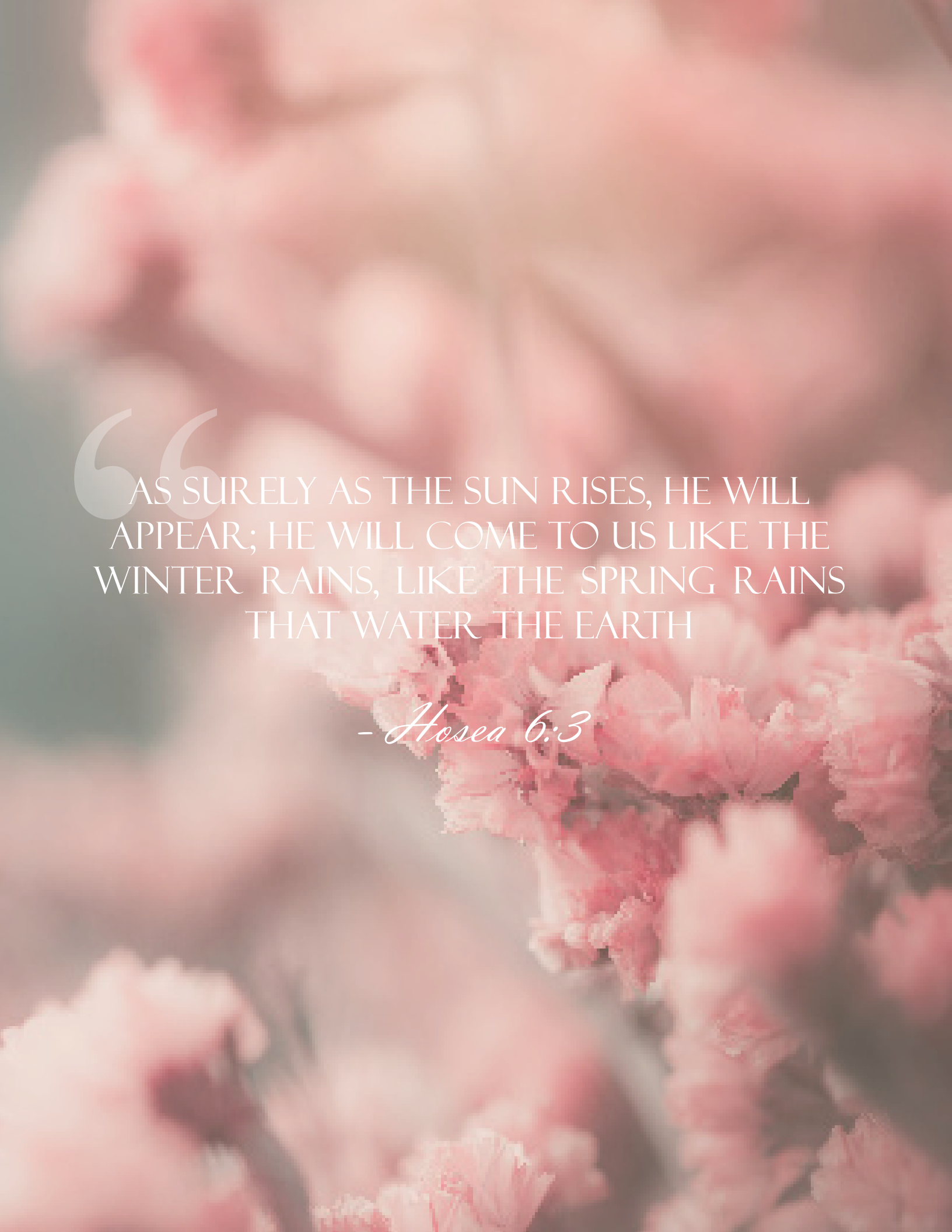
curity and out to Honduras's capital city of Tegucigalpa. It was dark when we arrived and everyone was tired, so the bright, busy city had not taken us aback yet.

In the morning after we had a restful night in a quaint little motel, we wandered outside to see the busy, mountainous city. It was an unforgettable sight, reminding me of Brazil, where I had been just a couple of weeks ago for Christmas break. Soon we had to pack up our bags and head to the vans that would take us to our next destination; Nacaome, Honduras. It was about a two-hour drive and by the time we arrived, we were famished. The hotel we stayed at was called The Royal Palace hotel and compared to the simple houses in the area, it was a palace. There was a beautiful pool surrounded by big trees and a suspended bridge hanging over top of it. It was so breathtaking. Luckily Reann and I were able to stay in the same room together, so we went up to unpack our bags and set up our room. The next day we began the first of many two-hour van rides to our work site. On the first trip to the worksite, we noticed that our van was getting really really hot. I don't remember how many long, hot van trips it took for us to realize this, but we finally figured out that John had accidentally switched the air-conditioner to the heater when we first came on to the van! We all laughed and still joke about it to this day.

Anyways, the mission for our trip would be building chicken coops for the families who lived there. The purpose of the chicken coops was to help the families keep their chickens safe so that they could sell eggs, and such to make money. We were separated into four groups to build the chicken coops. In total, the chicken coops took about three to four days to build. Luckily, after one of our long days of work, we had an escape to a little island called Amapala. The sun was almost starting to go down and we were astonished by the dark purple, bright pink, and fire red colours

that were displayed in the sky and reflected on the ocean. We arrived on the island by boat and spent a couple of hours taking pictures and looking around. I have so many memories with my friends from that day and I would do anything to go back. We had so much fun and laughed a lot together. The calming breeze with the electric sunset was a relaxing sight and a much-needed break from our work. I don't remember when this day happened during the trip, but one night Reann and I decided to invite Carmina, John, Rayna, and Marc up to our room to do face masks and talk about life. We all laughed as we helped Marc apply the mask and took videos and pictures of everything to savour the memories of the fun times. Towards the end of our trip, after we had finally completed all the chicken coops and set up the chicken feeders, we got to go on a trip around the city and take millions of pictures. As we neared the end of our tour around the crowded city, we saw a beautiful blazing orange sunset. Everyone was talking over one another and moving around in the van to get the best picture of the setting star. It was so much fun to see the beautiful places Honduras had to offer and be blessed with a beautiful sunset to reward our hard work.

Overall, it was such a blessing and an amazing experience to be able to help so many families by building them chicken coops to help them with their monetary needs. Each family we helped was always so kind and grateful for what we did, even lending a hand to help us work faster. I was blessed in double on this mission trip; with new friendships and a grateful heart. It was an experience that will forever be remembered.



“AS SURELY AS THE SUN RISES, HE WILL
APPEAR; HE WILL COME TO US LIKE THE
WINTER RAINS, LIKE THE SPRING RAINS
THAT WATER THE EARTH

- Hosea 6:3