

Artist's Statement - Our Story's Just Begin - Jaidyn Gaddis

For Our Story's Just Begun, I wanted the photograph to look like it had been traced with a green highlighter, like a student would use on an image they taped into a notebook. The photo is an original by Rudolph Bonilla, and then the centers of interest were cut out in Photoshop, then a second layer was created from the original photo and turned black and white. After that, the stroke was applied to the cut out image and the opacity was adjusted to make it look like a highlighter. Finally, the layers were merged together, and the other items were placed to create the final product. The entire process probably took about 30 minutes.



OUR STORY'S JUST BEGUN

"To anyone who's ever doodled in the margins instead of taking notes, this one's for you."

We started this school year the same way we start a brand new notebook: blank pages, high hopes, and pretending that we're going to stay organized for once.

But we did what we always do. We made a mess of it in the best way possible. We filled it with pen smudges, random scribbles, inside jokes, and memories that we'll carry with us through the long days.

But this year hasn't been like the rest. ACT prep was suddenly in every class (even the electives), advisory disappeared, the Beast Brew had a change of scenery, and we started to see our teachers doing bathroom duty. The Chieftain display under the stairs in front foyer changed to a bold "Welcome to Bellevue East" sign that definitely caught everyone off guard.

Through all of it, we kept writing our story. In Snack Shack lines and crowded passing periods. In the moments we wanted to last forever,

and the ones we kind of wished we could erase.

This book isn't perfect. It's got pages that feel too full and others that feel unfinished. Pages that are meaningful and a bit chaotic, just like us. Every word, picture, and page is a tiny moment from a year we're never going to get back, but also one we're lucky we got to live.

So flip the page. Remember the moments you forgot about. Smile at the memories. And know that even after 85 years of Bellevue East stories, our own is just as unique.

But the rest?

STILL UNWRITTEN.

Photo by Rudy Bonilla
Story by Jaidyn Gaddis

Opening

