Julia Pattison-Gordon
DC’13
Creative Writing

Growing Pains at the End of the World

My thesis, Growing Pains at the End of the World, is a collection of realistic and speculative fiction stories about young characters redefining how they relate to the world. Bonds that Break is set thirty years after diseases and a collapse of the collective unconscious brought about an apocalypse. Now the unconscious is repairing itself, resulting in special mental abilities for Lager, a conjoined twin who struggles with deep-seated fears of abandonment after his brother proposes surgical separation. In Never Land’s Captives, two boys starting puberty struggle with restrictive parents and teachers who seem to be trying to keep them from growing up. In Warrior II NASA announces that in seven years, aliens may arrive on Earth to kill humanity. The story follows Cam, a middle school student bullied by his older stepbrother, and Mr. Harrison, the new teacher, as they attempt to combat the chaos and panic unfolding around them. A fourth story, currently in progress, is Territory. This one focuses on a young woman confronted by an apartment that seems to erase any changes she makes to it. These stories follow themes of loneliness, individuality and community, masks, repression, mortality, external validation, impermanence, and the desire to deify.