BEST OF THE BETHS







Produced FOR students, BY students since 2019. Celebrating 6 years of history!

THE BEST OF SEPTEMBER 2025



BEST OF THE BETHS







THE BEST OF SEPTEMBER 2025



BEST OF THE BETHS







1) History & Evolution of 'Best of the Beths'

Written by: Faeq 10B | Page(s): 5-8

2.1) Tips for Year 7

Written by: Mohammad 8B, Daanish 8C and Siddharth 8H | Page(s): 9-12

2.2) Top Tips for Starting Beths Grammar

Written by: Nathan 10H | Page(s): 13

3) The All American Rejects - Move Along: Album Review

Written by: Hadi 11A | Page(s): 14-15

4) The Purpose of War

Written by: Samuel 11A | Page(s): 16

<u>5) Beijing 9.3 Military Parade</u>

Written by: Eden 12C1 | Page(s): 17-20

6) Paradise Lost: Love Regained

Written by: Ronnie 13H3 | Page(s): 21-22

7) The Sudden Events of Charlie Kirk

Written by: Ayotola 10H | Page(s): 23-24

8) Born With Teeth

Written by: Evie 13A2 | Page(s): 25

9) LSE Lecture on Trump Economics

Written by: Martin 13E1 | Page(s): 26-27

(continues on next page →)









BEST OF THE BETHS







Written by: Jago 11A | Page(s): 29

12) Shadow Slave: Book Review

Written by: Joshua T. 11A | Page(s): 30-31

13) Champions League Matchweek 1

Written by: Ehimen 10W | Page(s): 32-35

14) My Summer in Uganda

Written by: Joshua O. 10W | Page(s): 36

15) My Life Playing Cricket

Written by: Joshua B. 10E | Page(s): 37-38

16) The Fall of Icarus

Written by: Arjun 10B | Page(s): 39-40

17) An Interview with Mr Daniels... Burna Boy's Teacher?

Written by: Neel 11A | Page(s): 41-42

18) Boys Don't Cry: Book Review

Written by: Joseph 11A | Page(s): 43

19) The End of the World?

Written by: Todah 10B | Page(s): 44

20) The Fall of Manchester United

Written by: David 10H | Page(s): 45-47









EVOLUTION & HISTORY OF 'BEST OF THE BETHS'

FAEQ 10B [EDITOR]

Hello, readers! To those that had been reading **Best of the Beths** before, welcome back to the newsletter; if it's your first time, welcome to the newsletter that's been 'put together for students, by students' since 2019! Before we advance, I will quickly give you an introduction as to who I am - because why not? I am Faeq (pronounced: Fi-eek) of 10B (the editor of BOTB) and in the coming months, you may see my articles be based on two categories. I'll either write about certain events within school (such as House Football, though I'm not a football person) or motorsports - mainly focusing on NASCAR (though I am somewhat able to write about Formula 1 too, so don't worry)!

This time, however, my article focus is a bit different, and I'll explain why. This edition of the newsletter (as you're already aware) celebrates its 6th anniversary, and this is something that I actually wanted to happen. Now that it's been arranged, it's only reasonable for me to write about the history of the newsletter, and how it's evolved from the humble beginnings of 2019 up to the more modern format it uses now. Over 6 years, the newsletter has gone through 3 different eras (or 4, depending on how you see it), so let's break this down accordingly and take a trip through time!

*1) CONTEXT/HUMBLE BEGINNINGS [2017 to January 2020 Edition]

Every story starts somewhere, and this one starts sometime during 2017, when Miss Stevens (organiser of the newsletter and Year 10 HOY) was interviewed for a position as an English Teacher. She noted that (at the time) there wasn't a voice for the students of the school; while the Beths VIP was a weekly publication regarding the school's affairs, there wasn't much to do with students within it. This is something that she felt had to be rectified; with increasing confidence in her teaching and department, it eventually became her goal in 2019 to organise a student-written newsletter club.

At the start of the 2019/20 academic year, that's exactly what happened with the debut edition of the newsletter being published on September 30th. During this time, editions were made via Microsoft Publisher (which was clunky and not really student-friendly). While having to balance her teaching load at the same time, Miss Stevens found herself editing Word documents that were emailed to her monthly, making it quite time-consuming. Even so, there were various topics covered, including sports, technology, politics and teacher interviews! These early editions may also have been quite interactive, including quizzes and word-searches! But by early 2020, COVID-19 was looming large, and things came to a rather long halt...



This was the very-first page of BOTB, back when Microsoft Publisher was the main platform used to produce the editions. At this point, text tended to be arranged in columns, KS3 were a large part of the audience, and Miss Stevens (as mentioned) was the sole editor of the newsletter!

[*NOTE: You may have to zoom in to view further details within the image, but you can find the September 2019 edition on the 'Newsletters' section of the school website.]

(IMAGE CREDIT: Beths Grammar School Website)



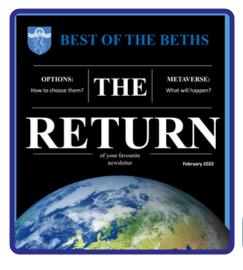
*2) POST-COVID [February 2022 Edition to October 2023 Edition]

As many of you may have experienced, the rise of the Coronavirus caused massive disruption across the UK (among many other countries), and this also steered the newsletter towards a 2-year hiatus. But as it returned and things were going back to a form of normality, Miss Stevens knew that something had to change. She enlisted her first student editor of the newsletter, Levi, who 'conquered' Microsoft Publisher and gave the newsletter a 'new lease of life' with the design. This era also saw the first special Sports Day editions (2022 and 2023) and some of the longest publications ever. Then, there was one student in particular that gave Miss Stevens feedback on the visual look of the newsletter, leading to a massive change...

The newsletter may have been knocked down for a couple years, but it's evident from this front cover of Edition #5 (February 2022) that it got back up far stronger! With a first student-editor came a massive upgrade in the design along with text no longer in columns and 'Notes of Thanks', to name a few things!

[*NOTE: You may have to zoom in to view further details within the image, but you can find the February 2022 edition on the 'Newsletters' section of the school website.]

(IMAGE CREDIT: Beths Grammar School Website)

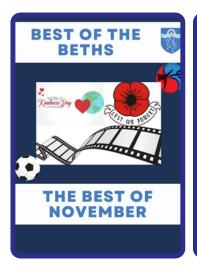




*3/3.1) CANVA, Pt1 [November 2023 Edition to March 2025 Edition]

From the October '23 to November '23 publications, the newsletter transitioned to a more student-friendly and educator-free platform called **Canva** (which is what we use now to produce these editions). Scholars that were a part of the team now had more creative flexibility with article production, being able to copy-paste images and add cliparts (to name a couple things). With articles also saving automatically, things were running far more smoothly as opposed to the Publisher days! Miss Stevens worked alongside Edwin (now 13C1, and her second editor) while initially creating a model of what the newsletter would look like; she eventually described the new design as 'the best it had ever been'!

That's three eras down, now for the finale...



November 2023's edition is where we saw quite a large shakeup with the design, which had undergone another major revamp! It's quite clear that from this point onwards, the newsletter was more vibrant and creative with many clip-arts being added, as well as consistent in its colour palette, sticking with shades of blue for the main presentation the entire time!

[*NOTE: You may have to zoom in to view further details within the image, but you can find the November 2023 edition on the 'Newsletters' section of the school website.]

(IMAGE CREDIT: Beths Grammar School Website)



*4/3.2) CANVA, Pt2 [April 2025 Edition to present]

From a personal perspective, this era of the newsletter is the one I'd know most about when comparing it to the three before (for somewhat obvious reasons). Regardless, here we are now, with the continuation of Canva but a slightly revamped design too. This era is one that may have been in the works from the March 2024 Edition, which is when I returned to the newsletter after appearing once in July 2023. From March '24 onwards, I appeared in every single edition and (despite simply being an article writer) eventually helped a bit in organising the team in the hope that things ran smoothly (i.e. getting article templates into the next edition's folder). Why is that significant, may you ask?

Well, Miss Stevens and Edwin (the second editor of the newsletter) noticed this and offered me the position of editor from the April 2025 publication onwards, as a result. I took that and became the **first-ever KS3 student** to edit the newsletter; in that capacity I've edited five editions (including this one), with marginal improvements and slight changes through time. Nowadays, the newsletter features an issue number once again (after 5 years), a more creative Contents page with clip-arts to fill the space, slightly more condensed font and now a new main font for the newsletter (Open Sans) from this edition onwards. This era has also seen the longest edition when it comes to a page-count (39 in July 2025); hopefully more success like this comes our way in the future!

Here's the front page of Edition #32 (April 2025), the edition that kickstarted the brand new era of Best of the Beths! Many parts of the prior Canva layout were retained, but we also have six-image collages at the front of each edition, more cliparts, the edition number (which has returned after 5 years) and far more - maybe more small additions are on the way!

[*NOTE: You may have to zoom in to view further details within the image, but you can find the April 2025 edition on the 'Newsletters' section of the school website.]

(IMAGE CREDIT: Beths Grammar School Website)









And that's the 6-year history of Best of the Beths in a nutshell! Thanks for taking time to not only read this article, but acknowledge where this newsletter came from as well! If there are any questions regarding the article, do feel free to contact either myself (@22B-Ojelade-Faeq on Microsoft Teams, Outlook or in-person) or Miss Stevens, who I shall also take a brief moment to credit for giving me key information for the first three segments of this newsletter, which I could relay onto this article!

In fact, we should **all** be thankful for Miss Stevens, who is the main reason why the newsletter even exists! She's put in a lot of effort from that day in 2017 when she was interviewed for a position as an English Teacher, and with her continued passion, ambition and dedication, this newsletter has undoubtedly grown massively (hopefully things stay that way too)! Best of the Beths isn't just any random newsletter; it is one that's been produced *by* students *for* students (and the rest of the community) to enjoy through a vast range of topics, so ensure you're reading it in the months to come as there could be something specific for *you*!

Anyways (and as stated), thanks for reading this one; watch out for my next piece, which could well be based on motorsports! For now though, enjoy the remainder of this edition, and I'll hopefully see you in the next one. That's all my content for now; until next time (from an article writer's perspective), goodbye! 👏



[*WRITER'S NOTE: This article was last updated on Friday, September 26th 2025. All facts and statistics within this article are as of that date, thought this may not be anything to worry about as it's a historical account of the newsletter. Hope you enjoyed it though; see you next time!]

TIPS FOR YEAR 7





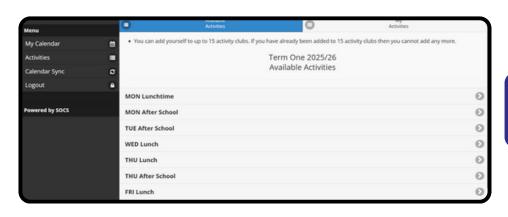
MOHAMMAD 8B | DAANISH 8C | SIDDHARTH 8H

*EDITOR'S NOTE: It's me, Faeq of 10B again - but only for a brief moment! As mentioned in my article, welcome Year 7s, to not only Beths Grammar School but also to the Best of the Beths newsletter! Hopefully, the new year has treated you well thus far, and hopefully you continue to read Best of the Beths in future months too! This academic year marks a very important point in your academic journeys as you have officially started life in secondary school! While you may have been given some tips already, I thought it would be nice to introduce BOTB to you all by getting Year 8 students (all of which have won an award) to give you some tips as you advance through the academic year. So without further ado, here's what they had to say!

Mohammad 8B

Hello everyone, and to the new Y7's and Y12's, welcome! To everyone else, welcome back! (yes, that's from Harry Potter). Today I am going to share with you some tips from my previous year at Beths that helped me succeed and excel, and I think they'll help you, too. So, without further ado, here's the first one.

1) Sign up for clubs: This is one of the most important tips, and it's one that's helped me a lot. At Beths, all the extra-curricular clubs are completely for free (except music lessons), so remember to take full advantage of that. Bottom line – if a club looks good, sign up for it. I personally guarantee that you'll enjoy it. Also, going to clubs helps you access a wide range of opportunities that you wouldn't have been able to access before. For example, I never would have become a Junior STEM ambassador if I hadn't gone to STEM club (which I absolutely recommend, along with debate club), even though I hesitated to sign up for it at the start of Y7. Lastly, if you don't know, signing up for clubs on SOCS is very easy! Just log in with your school email and click activities, then any date and press add.



The layout of SOCS.

- **2) Grind super-curriculums:** This tip is another very important one, as it's one way to get lots of commendations very fast. Every single subject has a super curriculum, so it's good to just ask your teachers at the end of each lesson. Also, while a few commendations here and there might not seem like a lot, it absolutely is when you add them up I got over 540 last year, just by doing this. Lastly, doing super-curriculums has a much more long-term impact as well, as it shows teachers that you're serious about your studies. One reason that I got the Outstanding Achievement in Y7 award was because I did a lot of super-curriculums, so you definitely should, too. Doing super-curriculum can also result in you getting Colours, so that's yet another reason.
- <u>3) Revise, Revise:</u> And finally, revise. Compared to the other two top tips I have given, this might not seem like much, but it absolutely is if you want to get good grades in your exams. By knowing when your tests are in advance (either ask your teachers or check on Satchel/Teams) and revising for them, you pretty much guarantee that you'll get a good grade. As of the time of writing (<u>16/9/25</u>) I had a Spanish test that I studied hard for, and I got full marks, and got awarded a ticket for food tasting (it's a Y8 thing). Bottom line revise for every test you have, especially if it's a termly test or an end of year one.

Thanks for reading and I hope to see you all again next edition!

Daanish 8C

The transition into Year 7 is an exciting milestone for any student. It's the first year of Secondary school, and the change from Primary can be both thrilling and a bit overwhelming for some. With new subjects, teachers, and classmates, it's easy to feel like there's a lot to take in all at once, but don't worry – with a few key tips like these, you can start the year off right and set up for success.

1. Staying Organised

One of the easiest ways to keep things under control is by staying organised. Secondary school means more subjects, more homework, and more things to remember. Here are some simple ways to stay on top of everything:

- (Actually) Use your planner: I've seen many people at school not write anything in their planners and they have had to do their homework on the day its due, using your planner will help remind you of any assignments so that you can be stress free and hand in tasks easily.
- Set Up a Study Routine: Set aside a specific time each day to do your homework or revise. A consistent routine will help you stay ahead and avoid last minute stress. An extra tip would be to pack your bag the night before so you are ready for the next day.

2. Don't Overload Yourself

It's easy to let FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) get ahead of you and make you want to join everything you see. Whether its clubs, extra activities or School Sports, it's really important to pace yourself. Here are a few ways to avoid overloading:

• Focus on What's Important: While it's great to be involved in school activities, make sure you're not wearing yourself out. Prioritise what matters most—like schoolwork,

sleep, and spending time with friends and family.

 Take Breaks: Don't forget to take time for yourself! Hang out with friends, play sports, or just relax, taking breaks will help you recharge and stay focused.

3. Take Advantage of the Resources available

Beths offers plenty of resources to help you succeed, and one of the best ways to make the most of them is just by asking!

• Ask for Help: If you're struggling with a topic or are unable to understand something, don't hesitate to stay back and ask your teacher for extra help. I know that they'll be

more than happy to explain things in a way that makes sense to you.

 Use the LRC (Learning Resource Centre for those who don't know) and Online Resources: The Beths LRC is a great way to catch up with homework or complete Super curriculum. As well as this, use online resources such as Kerboodle to get ahead with any topics you find interesting.

Remember, Secondary school is all about learning and growing, so take it one step at a time. I know you've got this! Thank you for reading this article and see you soon in the next one!

Siddharth 8H

Time management:

Lots of peoples(including myself) difficulties in school are with juggling homework and revision, so a main aspect of being a Beths scholar, in my opinion, is time management. You can gradually implement this in your own day-to-day life by investing some of your time into making revision timetables. organising your planner or even just having a look at your homework on Satchel One on a daily basis.

New opportunities:

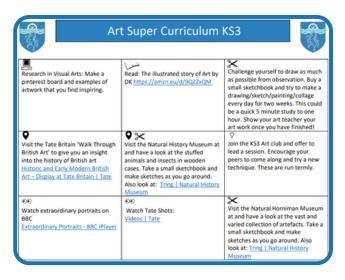
I probably will be repeating the words of your form tutors, but nonetheless go to as many clubs as you can. If you do this, you can look out and grab so many fresh opportunities, such as poster competitions premium to that club and commendations being handed out for good work. One more thing to look out for are badges; along with these opportunities being taken up are the badges being rewarded for things like special programs, signing up for ambassador roles, and the 3 you are asked to write a speech about in form time: Sports captain, Librarian and the School council representative.

Commendations:

You, as new year 7s at this school should spark strive to get as many commendations possible, as the whole idea of year group and house competitions were made to motivate scholars to get more commendations. Commendations are relatively easy to get, that is, if you have quality pieces of homework, reward worthy classwork, or even high test scores.

Supercurriculum:

There are many subjects in our curriculum, many of which have Supercurriculum tasks. If you go to the Beths Supercurriculum page (https://beths.bexley.sch.uk/curriculummaps/) and open one of the subjects, you will see a set of activities related to the subject, that can be rewarded with some commendations. In fact, one person in year 8 last year got a whopping 1,500 commendations from supercurriculum, so what's stopping you?



*EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for reading this combined article, Year 7! Hopefully (on top of the advice you're already been given), you can apply what these three award-winning Year 8 scholars have said towards your first year here at Beths while trying to make it as good a year as it possibly can be! With that, good luck for the rest of the academic year, and I hope you continue to read Best of the Beths in the upcoming months! Enjoy the rest of this one!

TOP TIPS FOR STARTING BETHS GRAMMAR



ITS A NEW YEAR! Meaning we will be seeing an array of new students, predominantly in years 7 and 12 starting Beths Grammar School for the first time. This can be exciting, being in a different environment around new faces however this can also be challenging for some to manoeuvre around a new system. So i will give you my 4 TOP TIPS for starting Beths Grammar School as a newcomer.

1 - SIGN UP FOR CLUBS

Getting yourself involved in the variety of clubs Beths offer is a great way to find new hobbies, meet new people and set goals for yourself. We offer many things such as Chess club, Basketball club and even Rubik's cube club so there is something for any student to engage with and enjoy

2 - USE YOUR PLANNER PROPERLY

At Beths the planner isn't just for homework, its for organising your whole year. Teachers will often ask you to write down homework due dates, test dates and reminders however you can add things such as a mood tracker, to do list and fixture dates. Students who use their planner well often feel less stressed and more prepared, especially when juggling homework with extracurricular activities.

3 - SAY YES TO NEW HOUSE EXPERIENCES

Beths has a strong House system, and it's a huge part of the school's identity. Every student is placed into a House when they join, and you'll take part in competitions throughout the year in areas such as sport, academics, creativity and charity. These are great for making new friends, earning commendations for your form and house and showing your skills and talents.

4 - MOST IMPORTANTLY BE YOU

Beths is such a diverse school with so many amazing people. There will always be a member of staff or a fellow pupil to support you. By being yourself you are adding to Beths Grammar's rich community of people who make the school stronger together.

THE ALL AMERICAN REJECTS

- MOVE ALONG

HADI 11A

Move Along (2005) is the 2nd studio album by the (obviously) American pop-punk band that you could likely tell the name of from either the title or the cover. On release, the album was quite popular, hitting 3x Platinum in the US and Gold in the UK. It also spawned numerous top 40 singles in both the US and UK. The album is widely influential in the pop-punk genre, marking a change from their emo-pop inspired debut. It features a wide range of instrumentation - from standard guitars and bass to banjos, electric sitars and the obscure theremin.



Track Listing

- 1. Dirty Little Secret
- 2. Stab My Back
- 3. Move Along
- 4. It Ends Tonight
- 5. Change Your Mind
- 6. Night Drive
- 7. 11:11 P.M.
- 8. Dance Inside
- 9. Top of the World
- 10. Straitjacket Feeling
- 11. I'm Waiting
- 12. Can't Take It
- 13. Night Drive (Acoustic)
- 14. Eyelash Wishes



My Review



- 1. **Dirty Little Secret 11/10** | Starting off with a bang!!! Here's a fun fact. This song is a pop-punk staple, holds an 8x Platinum certification worldwide and peaked at 18 on the UK Singles Chart.. Even my sister knows this one!
- 2. **Stab My Back 11/10** | An acoustic rock song. This demonstrates some of the album's unorthodox instrumentation, with usage of theremin (a contactless synth).
- 3. **Move Along 10/10** | A catchy, anthemic feel-good track. It peaked at 42 on the UK Singles Chart.
- 4. **It Ends Tonight 8/10** | More of the same, but they threw in a piano this time! It peaked at number 66 on the UK Singles Chart.
- 5. **Change Your Mind 7/10** | This sounds a bit like Weezer but if they were formed in the American South or something.
- 6. **Night Drive 10/10** | This track features more eclectic instruments, with the usage of a banjo, electric sitar, and talk box guitar effects. This is also the album's hardest rocker by far!
- 7.**11:11 P.M. 7/10** | I don't really know what to say, but this one felt especially American.
- 8. **Dance Inside 6/10** | The first written song on this album, but I do think that he wants to dance.
- 9. **Top of the World 10/10** | This track featured in the videogame Burnout Revenge and makes use of a classical (or Spanish) guitar. As for it's place on the album? Standout!!!
- 10. **Straitjacket Feeling 6/10** | The umpteenth ballad on this album. It's not too shabby, from a technical standpoint.
- 11. I'm Waiting 6/10 | Essentially the same as the prior track.
- 12. Can't Take It 11/10 | There was no need to have an entire orchestra, but they did and this song is genuinely great!
- 13. **Night Drive (Acoustic) 5/10** | I suppose it has it's moments, but I don't understand why this title received an acoustic version of all the songs on the album. The only good parts are the piano break in the bridge and the flourish at the end.
- 14. **Eyelash Wishes 7/10** | After 5 tracks of no pop-punk, we end with pop-punk. Fittingly poetic. Overall, the album features some great tracks, mixed in with American radio rock mediocrity.

Check out... Dirty Little Secret, Stab My Back, Move Along

I bestow upon thee...





THE PURPOSE OF WAR





SAMUEL 11A

War. War has made itself a defining part of human history; it has shaped our populations, our political systems, our borders, our cultures for thousands of years, and will continue to do so long into the future. It is one of the most enduring and troubling aspects of our civilisation; there is no doubt that the consequences of conflict are immense. However, it has also held the power to redefine the course of history. It is this power that makes it such a troubling feature of our species. One of the most predominant driving factors of warfare is the greed for power and territory. This greed runs in our blood; in fact, it could be argued that it was this greed which has shaped much of what we see and know today. History has shown many such examples.



For instance, the Roman Empire, one of the greatest in human history, through relentless rounds of battles built its immense power, wealth and global dominance, engraving its name forever in history books. Centuries later, towards the end of the last millennium, there was another example: Nazi Germany. Under Hitler's regime, the party devastated the livelihoods of millions across Europe, killing people with whom they disagreed, all under the justification of expansionism.

On the other hand, war is also fought for another significant purpose, the defence of a nation's sovereignty. Unlike wars fuelled solely by a leader's ambition, defensive wars are seen as a just war. So what is a just war? The dictionary definition is "warfare that is ethically justified and morally constrained, adhering to principles for initiating conflict and conducting warfare." In other words, fighting back with equal amounts of power, no less, no more. A clear example was Britain's retaliation against Germany during the Second World War; had the country not fought back, modern Britain and Europe would've been completely different.

When we look at the purpose of war, the answer may be indirect, blurry, but it always has a goal: power, ambition, territory, or defence. A war is never fought meaninglessly, yet its purposes are often deleted by the lives it sacrifices. History shows that war is a powerful device, a paradox that can devastate and liberate all in the same conflict.

BEIJING 9.3 MILITARY PARADE



EDEN 12C1



The event officially started at 9am with the flag raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square, followed by honour guards escorting the national flag. A military band and choir performed patriotic songs, creating an atmosphere of patriotism and nationalism that was felt throughout all of China, and in every Chinese persons heart. Chairman Xi Jinping then gave a speech, emphasizing China's unstoppable rise and commitment to peaceful development. He stated, "The Chinese nation is the great nation that is never intimidate by any bullies" and also declared China to be on the "right side of history" while highlighting the choice between "peace or war, dialogue or confrontation". He also honoured the sacrifices made by the Chinese army in World War 2 and positioned the country as a global leader. He then proceeded to greet the veterans who fought in the War of Resistance Aggression along with Kim and Putin.







At 9:30am Chairman Xi then proceeded to ride in an open top Hongqi limousine down Chang 'an Avenue and greeted the 12,000 or so troops that were there.



After the inspection of the troops the March Past began, where 12,000 soldiers from the numerous different groups including the naval, ground forces, rocket force and air forces marched Tiananmen Square in unison. This was then followed by the war flag squad, where numerous vehicles carrying flags drove down Chang'an Avenue. On each flag was an inscription of a famous person who died in the War of Resistance or a notable event that happened, each flag carrying its own story.





After the march past it was the military equipment display, where nuclear warheads, underwater guided missiles and unmanned fighter planes rolled through Chang'an Avenue, showing the advancements in Chinese weaponry. Robot wolves capable of carrying out reconnaissance missions as well as unmanned submarines, boats and planes which made their debut.









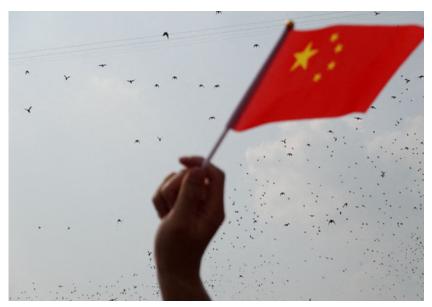
To end off the parade an aerial display was held, in which planes flew in a V shaped formation, leaving trails of coloured smoke. Helicopters also did a fly by in an "80" shape, as well as numerous fighter jets such as the J-20 "Mighty Dragon".





At the very end hundreds of thousands of people joined in with singing "An Ode to the Motherland".

Marking 80 years since the end of the War of Resistance, it was a bold declaration of strength, history and hope for the future. The parade honoured China's sacrifices while also sending a message to the whole world- China and the Chinese people will never again be bullied, oppressed or enslaved by anyone in the world again. With people like Putin and Kim by Xi Jinping's side, it sent another message: China is building alliances and staking its claim as a global superpower which I have no doubt it will succeed in doing.





PARADISE LOST: LOVE REGAINED +

RONNIE 13H3

Paradise Lost is an epic poem by John Milton (1608-1674) — an English poet and polemicist who served as a civil servant under the Commonwealth of England. Known for his shift from radicalism to conservatism, coinage of new words/neologisms in the English language, and for his unparalleled influence upon Romantic writers such as William Blake and William Wordsworth, Milton remains one of the most revered authors of all time. This, however, was something I remained sceptical of prior to my reading of Paradise Lost.

Two things were at play before I approached Milton. Primarily, I was in quite of a 'down' space in regards to literature; nothing from my recent reading had truly fascinated me, and as such I began to reconsider whether or not English was the right course for me to pursue at university. Simultaneously, I was more affirmed than ever in my belief that the writers we give unquestionable authority and merit to (see Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, or William Wordsworth) should be challenged rather than blindly respected — derived from my unpleasant reading and analysis of Wordsworth's 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality'.

Thus, when I began to read *Paradise Lost*, I was armed principally as a sceptic. The first few pages seemed to validate this stance. I was immediately met with dense, heavy, and initially indecipherable verse; I remember over half a page being given to the description of one action (Satan flying into the air and landing), and how deeply this irritated me (note that I was, and am, in the depths of personal statement construction, where conciseness and clarity was/is likely over-overemphasised). But I forced myself through it, and, as I progressed, a world unlike any other revealed itself to me.

My interests in theology, literature, and cosmology seemed to collide into one: *Paradise Lost* unravelled the origins of creation, the nature of the devil and God, the ethical impact of omnibenevolence, the tension between omnipotence and rebellion, and the overall idea of living in a contingent universe perfectly. The text's influencing and reconstruction of religion on these bases deeply intrigued me, and I too began to understand Milton's verse as necessary to the communication of these themes rather than an impairment to them. Indeed, after adapting to his syntax and terminology, both his diction and the epic's topics seemed to come to me naturally, uniting form and content in an inextricable and unforgettable manner. After starting Book II (the epic is split into 'books', each summarised with an 'Argument' that summarises the segment's events), I only read the poem aloud — there was something so primitive and necessary about expressing both Milton's form and contents sonically (as he did himself), and it completely enhanced the experience.

And so, when nearing the end of the epic, I realised three things. One: works such as these define the limits of humanity, and there is truly no other field akin to literature. That may run the risk of sounding overbearing or cliché, but it retains its truth. Two: John Milton deserves all the praise he has ever garnered. And three: this dethroned *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as my favourite literary work of all time. Paradise may have been lost for Adam and Eve, but the literary paradise of my own had been restored. Reading moved from a merely intellectual experience to something bodily and existential. I finally understood the passion with which some recall their favourite texts — a passion I had always felt excluded from, because, until this point, whilst I enjoyed literature, I could only ever approach it from a study-oriented and analytic mindset. I owe my freedom from such restraints to John Milton (and I now understand why Blake, Wordsworth, and Byron did, too).

So, conclusively, I would urge anybody reading this to give *Paradise Lost* a shot. Do not get me wrong: it is not exactly an 'easy' read. In fact, as evidenced by my initial reaction, it seems quite strenuous at first. But once you *click* with it — once again, as cliché as that sounds — you *click with it*. And from that point onwards, you will never be the same. My dramatic opinion, anyway.

Some of the standout features I picked up along the way include:

- 1. The humanisation, and particularly the feminisation, of 'Sin' (who births 'Death' in a very physically disturbing manner)
- 2. The almost chivalric and all-encompassing fight between the Son and Satan in Heaven on the third day
- 3. Milton's choice to have the Son create the world using the Father's essence, rather than the Father directly creating it himself
- 4. Satan's possession of a pre-existing serpent in the Garden of Eden (as opposed to his traditional 'manifestation' as a serpent himself)
- 5. Eve's proto-feminist defence against Adam for her transgression against God

With these in mind, alongside the various other moments of the epic that I shall never forget, I would give *Paradise Lost* an indisputable <u>5/5</u> (a rating I am sure Milton would have really cared about!). I therefore owe two thank you's: one for you, for reading this article, and one for Milton, for exposing me to a new kind of literary love that I doubt I would have encompassed elsewhere. It is paradise regained.



THE SUDDEN EVENTS OF CHARLIE KIRK



AYOTOLA 10H

Background

Charlie Kirk was an American right-wing political activist, sharing his beliefs on political topics that some may get triggered by, an entrepreneur, and media personality. He was born and raised in Arlington Heights, Chicago. He went to Harper College before dropping out after one semester to try and achieve his goal of political activism. Whilst working with TPUSA, (TURNING POINT USA), his rise started from the college



campus debates he had, sitting by a "prove me wrong" table, where people would debate on heated topics. He had influenced many young people under TPUSA and has helped people get into political conservatism. Turning Point had created allies, for example Donald Trump "including opposition to <u>abortion</u>, <u>gun control</u>, <u>DEI</u> programs, and <u>LGBT rights</u>. His more controversial views included his criticism of the <u>Civil Rights Act of 1964</u> and <u>Martin Luther King Jr.</u>, as well as his promotion of <u>COVID-19 misinformation</u>, <u>false claims of electoral fraud in 2020</u>, and the <u>Great Replacement conspiracy theory."-</u>

Wikipedia.

Assassination

On the 10th of September, Charlie Kirk was assassinated whilst speaking about a serious topic at a TPUSA event on the Utah Valley University Campus. Shortly after his death, the rise of international attention had hit, his death was the the most trending topic of Social media and his death had also lead to political violence. Trump announced that Kirk would "posthumously receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom." -+100,000 mourners, Trump, vice president JD Vance, and other cabinet members have confirmed that they will attend the memorial of Charlie Kirk on the 21st of September at State Farm Stadium near Phoenix, Arizona.





Tyler Robinson

The man accused of fatally shooting Charlie Kirk confessed to killing the right-wing activist in a message to his roommate, prosecutors have alleged, as they announced seven charges against him. Tyler Robinson has been charged with seven counts, including aggravated murder and firearm discharge, after the incident of Charlie Kirk's assassination at Utah Valley University. Prosecutors say the Robinson confessed in a hidden note that was left for his roommate to see, as well as a series of text messages, stating that he had "had enough of [Kirk's hatred]."

DNA matchings read that Robinson was found on the trigger of the suspected rifle, which his father recognised. Prosecutors also cited evidence of witness tampering, as Robinson allegedly urged his partner to delete messages and remain silent. Authorities say that the shooting occurred during a Q&A when Kirk was speaking about transgender-related violence, though they declined to confirm whether that was the motive. Prosecutors plan to seek death penalty, and Robinson, who has not yet entered a plea, remains in custody without bail.





Tyler Robinson

drop what you are doing, look under my keyboard.

The roommate looked under the keyboard and found a note that stated, "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it."

Roommate

What??????????? You're joking, right????

I am still ok my love, but am stuck in orem for a little while longer yet. Shouldn't be long until I can come home, but I gotta grab my rifle still. To be honest I had hoped to keep this secret till I died of old age. I am sorry to involve you.

you weren't the one who did it right????

I am, I'm sorry

I thought they caught the person?

no, they grabbed some crazy old dude, then

BORN WITH TEETH





EVIE 12A2

On the 20th of September, I had the opportunity to watch 'Born With Teeth" which is the Wyndham's theatre's latest show. This London West End play by Liz Duffy Adams imagines a relationship between Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Directed by Daniel Evans and starring Ncuti Gatwa as Marlowe and Edward Bluemel as Shakespeare, the play explores what life was like for these daring writers of Elizabethan England through the lens of both Adams and Evans. The play is based on the theory that Marlowe and Shakespeare collaborated on the Henry VI plays and it imagines their encounters in the dangerous world of spies, suspicion and conspiracy. It also explores the relationship between these two literary icons and imagines an ambitious and complex rivalry between the two.

While the play may not be historically accurate, it is definitely entertaining. Bluemel and Gatwa both deliver great performances and transport you to Elizabethan London. With a runtime of 90 minutes, the play was a whirlwind of excitement which made it feel as though it were over in the blink of an eye. In my opinion the play is propelled by the playful banter and witty dialogue between the two characters. Gatwa in particular had brilliant comedic timing. Despite the setting being rife with spies operating in both royal and counter-espionage networks to counter threats to the crown, Marlowe and Shakespeare seem to live in their own bubble of creativity and imagination. While they do mention the outside threats and life outside of their collaboration, the clever set design isolates them away from all the business of London and brings the audience's attention to to the writers' complex relationship and its intensity.

While I loved the play for its clever wit, outstanding performances and brilliant dialogue, I did find it hard to follow as I was not fully familiarised with the actual relationship between Shakespeare and Marlowe. However after the play I did some research on the actual history and discovered the Marlovian Theory that the play is based on. The theory suggests that Marlowe faked his own death in a supposed 1593 tavern brawl to escape political persecution for atheism and heresy. After this, Marlowe continued writing for several years, with his work published under the name William Shakespeare, who was possibly an actor rather than the true author. Perhaps, knowing the Marlovian Theory ahead of watching the play would have enhanced my enjoyment. Nevertheless, this play was definitely entertaining and worth a watch.



LSE LECTURE ON TRUMP ECONOMICS



MARTIN 13E1

In July 2025, I attended a lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). This lecture, led by former economist and Financial Times Author Phillip Coggan, detailed 'The Economic Consequences of Mr. Trump' as set out in his book of the same name. It was a hugely insightful talk that opened my eyes to the economic reality of the modern world. In this article, I will provide context for the topic of the lecture, summarise the lecture itself, and conclude with my own thoughts.

To understand Trump's economic position, we must go back to his campaign and the early days of his presidency. Trump campaigned on a program of regaining economic sovereignty. This included protectionist tariffs (taxes on imports) on US imports from other countries, as well as a push to strengthen the American manufacturing industry. These campaign points manifested themselves almost immediately. In April 2025, Trump announced that a baseline of a 10% tariff would apply to all countries, meaning that imported products would see their price boosted by 10% minimum. On top of this, he claimed the 'worst offenders' would face higher rates, justified by previously 'unfair' trade policies. This idea was fully implemented in August, when higher tariff rates were introduced for a number of countries. This included 50% tariffs on Indian and Brazilian goods, 30% on South African goods, and 15% on Japanese and South Korean goods. Trump argued these moves would boost American manufacturing, but many were worried about the potential ramifications on the global economy.

The lecture saw Phillip Coggan focus on 3 main topics: the US trade deficit can't be repaired, tariffs won't bring manufacturing back, and the risks to global economic health. Firstly, Coggan argued that the US is not troubled by any trade deficit due to its ability to attract massive investment, since the US equity market makes up 70% of the global market and is therefore heavily attractive to investors. The US, therefore, finds itself unaffected by trade deficits. Secondly, he pointed out that tariffs wouldn't necessarily bring domestic manufacturing back. All products are a result of the global supply chain. US products such as the iPhone aren't made by a single manufacturer; Apple's phone is the result of 187 suppliers, with hundreds of thousands of people contributing to make it. Trade is inherently based on specialisation – not everyone can build every product – therefore it is in our interest to pay for the manufacturing of others rather than moving to domestic production. It simply isn't feasible for the US to isolate itself from global manufacturing in favour of domestic industry. Thirdly, Coggan asserted that there will be profound economic consequences on the global stage as a result of Trump's economic policies. Most of the burden of tariffs falls on domestic consumers and companies, who have to pay more for imported products.

Even worse, whilst the burden on lower-income citizens is increased, the new tax revenues generated via tariffs will be used to justify tax cuts for the wealthiest, hence increasing inequality in the US. Furthermore, Trump's wider economic policy leans heavily on government borrowing. The biggest borrower in the US is the government; it is expected to borrow around 5 trillion dollars in the next 5 years. This borrowing will lead to greater government debt; a problem already embedded in the US economy. A bigger deficit means an increase in interest rates, a subsequent increase in inflation, and a decrease in economic growth. Money will be redistributed from the poor to the richest, widening inequalities to unprecedented levels.

Overall, this lecture proved to be greatly beneficial to my understanding of the US political and economic situation in the modern day. Previously, I paid little attention to US affairs on a domestic level as I viewed them as unimportant. However, this lecture has shown me the policies imposed by Trump will greatly impact all of us, whether directly or indirectly. We can't allow this economic policy to become the standard; we stand to lose far more than we gain in these matters.









THE KITE RUNNER







The Kite Runner, a novel by Khaled Hosseini

I have thoroughly enjoyed this book, unlike ordinary books addressing the hardships of war and escaping it. The Kite Runner portrays the perspective of a child who grew up in Kabul, Afghanistan who had to escape with his father to America to escape the political turmoil and violence after Soviet invasions.

It is rather difficult to present such a harsh reality through a child's eyes but Khaled manages to also capture how many like "Hassan" are alienated and as a child "Amir" (the main character) is unable to do anything. He successfully shows how a child is limited in their body, and harsh conditions such as alienation and pain corrupt their childhood to memories of guilt and torture. It expresses how such problems are available and young ages, as these children learn such nasty habits from their parents.

I would also highlight how Khaled shows only the fortunate and rich like Amir escape from such war, whilst the poor like Hassan suffer until death. He shows how 2 half-brothers raised in the same house and by the same people are separated by class and race. Amir completely loses most of his cultural links which is illustrated by Farid's children. As a child in America would awe for something shiny like Amir's watch (which he gave presenting his true kindness) children who are victim of war only awed necessities like food. Despite Amir being a successful author and having a rich background he is unable to purchase such necessities at a time like this. This shows the loss of value of money in areas of conflict and how everything changes.

What I rather appreciated a lot was despite Amir being charged monopolised prices like 90 dollars for a hotel with no water, food or even a window, he understands this is a must to feed their children therefore paying the price. Khaled's plot twist of Hassan's death and his child being taken in exchange for money shows the extent Amir will go to repay his childhood sin. A true bond of friendship which ha turned into brotherhood is expressed from these 2 boys separated by conflict. This rather shows 3 themes, guilt betrayal and redemption all in that order. Khaled manages to illustrate the experiences of both those who fled and stayed from the conflict in Afghanistan, Amir's dad's struggle to fit in as he feels like he has lost his identity, Hassan's limitation to fight back which resulted to his death and Sohrab who was born into such a mess. **-Jenusan 11A**

AGNOSTICISM





JAGO 11A

Agnosticism. A belief system that has been studied for centuries by millions of minds across the globe. The dictionary definition describes it as being, "A philosophical view that neither believes nor disbelieves in the existence of a deity or deities." Even before this belief had a name, this definition has presented itself in many different ways to many different societies. And, throughout history, the most common interpretation of agnosticism, is that it simply represents indecisiveness. That to be agnostic is to admit a lack of knowledge and therefore be seen with a lack of will. That without belief you are ultimately weakening your will, and failing to be an individual. The purpose of this article is to shed light onto the values that are withheld in agnosticism, and how they can bring peace and unity between societies of all beliefs.

Agnosticism, truthfully, is acceptance. Its a belief system that can see reason behind all religions and beliefs, accepting that each one has their own set of values, their own traditions and their own deities. Each of these vital pieces to every religion is what makes each religion its own, and that in itself creates unities across families and wider communities. However, in turn, it can create separation between different societies. And there have been times where this separation has resulted in tragedy. It is then where the values within agnosticism can be utilised in order to reduce any tension amongst these societies, for agnosticism is, as previously said, the acceptance that each religion and each belief holds its own set of values, and these values are supported by reasoning, and most importantly, faith.

So naturally, through the mind of an agnostic, I do not have the intention to steer you away from your own beliefs, and instead I heavily encourage you to stick to them, and to praise them with your families and your communities. Faith is what drives you, faith is the human spirit that brings people together, and sets a structure to your life that follows a pure guidance, that cleanses you and improves you as an individual. Faith is shared amongst each and every religion and belief, including agnosticism.

Agnosticism does not deride faith, but recognises its immense value and the role it plays in every religion. Agnostics see the potential in a world where all people of all beliefs can live in a peaceful co-existence, where we can all recognise the reasoning behind other traditions, other deities, other manuscripts and other religions as whole. I do not ask you to be agnostic, but recognise the reasoning behind it as well, and ultimately respect and support communities that may have different beliefs to your own.



BOOK REVIEW: SHADOW SLAVE



JOSHUA T. 11A

Shadow Slave by Guiltythree is a dark, imaginative web novel that blends survival, mystery and psychological tension into a gripping story set in a world where even shadows can hold terrifying power. The book was originally released on January 13th 2022, at which point it quickly garnered attention due to the sophisticated way in which it was written. It was published as an online novel and is yet to release physical copies but is projected to release a graphic novel in its image. I as a reader didn't set out to read Shadow Slave but after reading the synopsis I began to become curious and decided to read a few chapters just to satiate the aforementioned curiosity. However, after just a few chapters I was completely



hooked. Not just by the plot but by the intricate way the writer 'weaved' vital information into seemingly unimportant events.

In my opinion the easiest way to describe the plot of Shadow Slave is simply to say: A slightly clever 16 year old goes to sleep to gain mystic powers after being infected with a disease that is nearly 100% fatal (or at least transformational). However, it is actually much more than that. It is the story of an protagonist that strays from the trope of the 'hero' and more towards 'mercenary'. It is the story of a young entrepreneur learning to do business correctly. But above all it is the story of a man - an 'outskirt rat' specifically - who by various coincidences, a little bit of skill and maybe a few backhanded plans rises to the top of the world.

And this 'man' that I talk about is a man of many names and characters but primarily he is named Sunless (or Sunny to friends). His story is set on an Earth far in the future when certain continents are inhabitable due to nuclear warfare, where an insidious curse has forced itself on civilisation in the form of a type of narcolepsy. The Nightmare Spell. The Nightmare Spell is the main power system of the novel although there are some subabilities unrelated to it. When someone contracts the disease they are forced to fall asleep, at this point the person is called a Dreamer, in their sleep they experience a nightmare in the form of a trial that determines the trajectory of the rest of their lives.

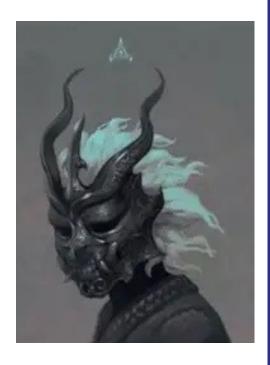
At the end of the trial each person is given an evaluation during which they will receive an Aspect and a Flaw (one of the main themes of the novel is the idea that no power, person or thing is perfect but everything below and above the heavens is imperfect). In this vein it continues - one must complete a trial to reach the next realm of power (from Dreamer to Awakened to Ascended to Transcendent to Sovereign to Sacred and finally Divine).

If I had to praise anything about the novel it would be the depth of the world itself and the way that everything that happens is connected to another event that may have already happened or will happen in the future. The lore the writer builds throughout the chapters is phenomenal with intricate descriptions of even the most minute or insignificant details becoming massive maybe even thousands of chapters forward. The vocabulary the writer uses is challenging at the beginning but as one starts to really get into the story it almost becomes second nature to investigate the new words and expand your own vocabulary.

Another thing that adds to the allure of the novel is the growth of the characters, especially how they adapt to the harsh reality of the Dream Realm. Excluding Sunny, even the side characters show a lot of growth. For example, Nephis (the female main character or deuteragonist) evolves from a seemingly perfect and distant leader into a more nuanced figure, revealing her vulnerabilities and the heavy burden of leadership. Or Cassie despite the blindness caused by her Flaw, grows in courage and wisdom, proving that strength comes in many forms beyond physical ability. Together, their growth is not sudden but forged through trials, betrayals, and shared struggle; making their development feel authentic and deeply tied to the novel's themes of survival and identity.

Some people might say that it is too long as it is currently sitting at 2609 chapters but I insist that you do not let the number of chapters scare you. It may seem like an unscalable mountain but it is doable to read and enjoy it with ease (and I can proudly say I have done so twice).

All in all I would like recommend the book to you who is reading this as it is an incredible read. If I had to give it a rating out of 10 I would honestly say without a 'shadow' of a doubt that it is a 10/10 book. However I would only recommend it to someone who doesn't expect a protagonist to be good all of the time as I can tell you for free that Sunny is not as morally upright as his name may suggest.



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE MATCHWEEK 1



EHIMEN 10W

UEFA Champions League Football is BACK! With a BANG! And it did NOT disappoint, with all 36 teams participating in their Game week 1 Fixtures, and luckily for you, I'm here to dissect all of the 18 fixtures that us as an audience, were a recipient of in the joyful, First Matchday of European Club Football's highest pedigree: the UEFA Champions League.

With Matchday 1, being the inaugural match, kickstarting a club's start to a competition and deciding which direction a club's momentum will go in. It makes this Matchday weigh so high in prominence and pressure, with every team no matter how big or small, no matter where they are located, or no matter how much their squad value costs, ANY team can beat ANY team, just ask Manchester United when Young Boys beat them 2-1 in the opening match week in the UEFA Champions league, this alone accentuates that there is no easy game and every team is HUNGRY for a good result, to set the standard of their success, rather than their failure and a win on the first matchday in UEFA's most prestigious competition would fill the void in hunger for many of the teams engaging in such a fierce competition as the UEFA Champions League.

Starting on Tuesday 16th September 2025; The first 2 Matches to be played were:

PSV Vs Union Saint – Gilloise And Arsenal Vs Athletic Bilbao,

Where the score was 1-3 and 2-0 respectively, showing how underdogs Union Saint – Gilloise, shocked the world in an unexpected win over PSV.

The Next 4 Games and the results are listed below:

Juventus Vs Dortmund 4-4, with an outstanding performance from Dusan Vlahovic, getting 2 goals and 1 assist in 31 minutes played, where Dortmund was 4-2 up in the 93rd minute, conceding late with goals from Dusan Vlahovic and Lloyd Kelly. My personal Game of the Week Pick!

Benfica Vs Qarabag FK 2-3, Another Shock win, with Qarabag scoring a late in the 86th minute.

Tottenham Vs Villareal 1-0, with Tottenham's goal being an Own Goal by Luiz Junior.

Real Madrid Vs Marseille 2-1, with 10 men Real Madrid being victorious through two goals from the Frenchman Kylian Mbappe from the spot, saving them after Dani Carvajal had gotten a red card after coming on for Trent Alexander – Arnold as a substitute in the first half.



<u>The Second Day commenced on Wednesday 17th September 2025 and the results</u> are down below:

Olympiacos Vs Pafos, 0-0 after Pafos had received a Red Card in the 25th Minute.

Slavia Praha Vs FK Bodø/Glimt, 2-2, Bodø/Glimt had scored a 90th minute equaliser to get their 1 point in the fixture.

Bayern Munich Vs Chelsea, 3-1, after a Kane double, and Trevoh Chalobah Own Goal, the result and performance was heavily flawed for Chelsea showing struggles. Media outlets started contemplating whether they can even last, let alone compete with top teams in the Champions League, after this shaky start.

PSG Vs Atalanta, 4-0, No Dembele, No Problem. Positive Result for the Parisians, especially keeping a clean sheet, in their first game In the Champions League without, for some, the best keeper in the world, Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Ajax Vs Inter, 0-2, with Marcus Thuram scoring a Brace.

Liverpool Vs Atletico Madrid, 3-2, many storylines in this one, including Alexander Isak making his debut in the Champions League for Liverpool after Liverpool had broken the British Transfer Record fee for him (£125 million). In the game now, with Liverpool going up 2-0, an old foe in Marcos Llorente, netted in two goals to make it 2-2, before Liverpool, (a.k.a Dark Arts FC, a.k.a Slot Time, Not Added Time FC), once again made it 3-2 through their captain Virgil Van Dijk in the 92nd minute. Scenes.



<u>The Final Day of Match Day 1 started on Thursday 18th September 2025 and the</u> results are below:

Copenhagen Vs Bayer Leverkusen 2-2, after Leverkusen sacked Dutch boss Ten Hag after 3 games.

Club Brugge Vs Monaco, 4-1, with Ansu Fati being the sole goal scorer for Monaco.

Eintracht Frankfurt Vs Galatasaray, 5-1, after Galatasaray defenders, in this game tended to score own goals for no apparent reason, with two of their defenders scoring own goals in this match.

Sporting Vs Kairat, 4-1, with Portuguese Young Star, Geovanny Quenda netting in this match, whom which he will be joining Chelsea in Summer 2026.

Man City Vs Napoli, 2-0. In Kevin De Bruyne's homecoming, which got cut short as Napoli went to 10 men, which KDB was the sacrifice to come off the pitch after only 25 minutes of play, allowing Man city to score 2 against an Italian Low Block led by Conte. Fun Fact: Haaland had netted his 50th Champions League Goal in this one, in only 49 games in the history of The Champions League, the quickest to ever do it. The Real question is though, Haaland or Mbappe?

Finally, the last match to cover was **Barcelona Vs Newcastle**, 2-1, where in Lamine Yamal's absence, Marcus Rashford stood on business, like a Boss, playing like his 22/23 self, full of confidence in this one, scoring 2 spectacular goals in Tyneside, with his second goal being My Goal of the Week! Lord Voldemort (a.k.a Nick Woltemade) was MIA in this one after a debut goal against Wolves and on the other side, Barcelona's midfield pairing of Pedri and De Jong, showed that night why they are so highly rated by pundits globally.



In conclusion, With drama, goals, and outstanding performances throughout Europe, Matchday 1 of the UEFA Champions League set the tone for another exciting campaign. While underdogs demonstrated they are prepared to compete on the biggest stage like Union Saint – Gilloise and Qarabag, most but not all established giants in



Europe achieved their goals of getting 3 points on the board. With every team having played a match, Home or Away, every point will now count as the journey progresses, and the stage is now ready for, even bigger conflicts down the road, like Barcelona Vs PSG in Matchday 2.

Above, is the final standings of The UEFA Champions League After Matchday 1:



MY SUMMER IN UGANDA



JOSHUA 0. 10W

This summer I spent a month in Uganda, and it was honestly one of the best experiences I've ever had. I got to explore so many different places, from the busy streets of Kampala to the peaceful hills of Ntungamo, and I also met loads of family along the way.

One of the highlights was celebrating my mum's birthday in Ntinda. We had a huge family party, and I met relatives I'd never seen before. I also got the chance to visit the Uganda National Mosque, where the view from the top was incredible because you could see the whole city.

There were plenty of fun trips too. At the zoo in Entebbe I saw a bald eagle by the lake, and afterwards we went to Victoria Mall for some food. In Ntungamo and Kabale the scenery was amazing, and I even went on a boat ride on Lake Victoria. Back in Kampala I went to Bellomania, which has skating, scooters and hoverboards, and later we ate at Café Javas, which quickly became one of my favourite spots.

Another really special moment was attending the Stanbic National Schools Championships. My aunty was part of the team running it, so I was lucky enough to join in. The energy, the food, and even spotting a Ugandan celebrity made it a day I'll never forget.

By the time I came back to the UK in early September, I had collected so many memories such as sunsets over Kampala, making new friends with my cousins, and all the adventures we had. Uganda gave me the best summer, and I'm already hoping I can go back next year.









MY LIFE PLAYING CRICKET



JOSHUA B. 10E

Love for cricket and Early beginnings

Throughout my life, like most people, I've played sports, but for me, the main sport has always been cricket. Some people play just for fun, while others take it very seriously. I'd say I'm somewhere in between. I love the competitiveness of sport, but I also think having fun and not getting annoyed at mistakes is the most important part. I was about as tall as a cricket bat when I picked one up. My dad played and watched cricket all the time, so I was surrounded by it - there was no way I wouldn't take it up. I loved playing in the garden, smashing the ball over the fence into the neighbor's house, and bowling as if I were playing for England. From then on, I never looked back. When I was six, I finally got my dad out for the first time - he never played easy against me! That moment was my first real taste of triumph. I played at cricket camps as a kid, and later joined Blackheath CC, where I racked up wickets, scored runs, and most importantly, made friends. Along the way, I managed two hat-tricks (getting three wickets in a row) and a few Player of the Season awards.



Kent Cricket and Setbacks

After years of hard work, I was selected for Kent Cricket in Year 7 following some intense trials. The winter training was tough and non-stop, but my friends and I persevered so we'd be ready for the summer.

I played a game for Kent, took a wicket, and felt on top of the world. That same summer, Blackheath won the league. But after that, I wasn't picked again for Kent and was released.

I was distraught and considered giving up. Instead, I stayed committed - captaining both my District and Blackheath. I trained hard through the winter, determined to prove Kent wrong. The following summer, I played strong cricket: my District team nearly made the final, and Blackheath came second in the league.

Into Regional and MCC Foundation

Last year was my best yet. I played for Regional (a level above District but below Kent), Blackheath U14, my school team, Blackheath Adults, and the MCC Foundation; a program set up for state-school players to get more opportunities, since 75% of England's team comes from private schools.

I started the summer with the MCC in a national tournament, taking two wickets in two games and helping us progress to the next rounds. For Blackheath Adults, I scored 71 and 74 near the start of the season.

But then disaster struck. While playing juniors, the ball was hit back at me, fracturing my thumb. I was out for six weeks, missing MCC and Regional games - including the MCC's eventual win that took them to a final at Lord's.





Back to Cricket and onto Lord's

On July 2, I returned to cricket, not fully healed and still a bit nervous, but determined. Through the rest of the summer I played three Regional games (and took three wickets), and helped my adult team win our league. And our U14 side came second again! Then came the main event: playing at Lord's, "the Wembley of cricket". I had been looking forward to it for weeks and barely slept the night before. On a cloudy morning, we arrived raring to go.

We batted first, scoring 189-6. As a bowler in this team, I was next in to bat but didn't get a chance. Then we fielded. They fell behind the required rate, and I was brought on to bowl. My nerves were electric as I marked my run-up and sent down my first delivery. In my third over, I took a wicket at Lord's. The rush of joy was indescribable. We went on to win the match and the National tournament. To top it off, I found out I'd been selected for Regional again for the coming year.

Reflection

This journey has had its highs and lows: thrilling hattricks, being dropped by Kent, broken bones, and moments of pure triumph. But cricket has taught me resilience, teamwork, and the importance of enjoying the game, no matter what. And as I look forward to the next season, I know this is only the beginning.



THE FALL OF ICARUS



ARJUN 10B



The Fall of Icarus

"Here's what they don't tell you, Icarus laughed as he fell." – Part of a poem by Fiona (@weareallboats)

This line reminds me to see the world as two-sided: the limits of human achievement set against the hidden talents sacrificed for safety. Why do we criticise Icarus for reaching too high, while Daedalus remained silent at his son's death?

As the story goes... Daedalus was a renowned sculptor of the classical world, his works rivalling the greatest minds and said to capture true beauty. Legend claims that if his sculptures were not tied down, they would walk or run away.

But Daedalus' greatest rival was his own nephew. His sister asked for her son to be educated under him, and so Daedalus taught him the arts and sciences. Soon, Pedrix became famous for his inventions, such as attaching a fish spine to a piece of metal to create a saw. Daedalus, consumed by envy, attempted to kill his nephew by throwing him off the Acropolis in Athens. Yet Athena, admiring Pedrix's ingenuity, transformed him into a bird, the Pendrix.

Following this, Daedalus was exiled by the Athenian council and fled to Crete, where he earned a place in King Minos's court as an inventor. Poseidon had given Minos a white bull to sacrifice, but the king kept it for himself and sacrificed another. In revenge, Poseidon, aided by Aphrodite, caused Minos's wife, Pasiphae, to lust for the bull. Pasiphaë asked Daedalus for help. He built a hollow wooden cow, covered in cowhide, so she could mate with the bull. The result was the Minotaur: a creature with the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull. Minos imprisoned the Minotaur in the Labyrinth, designed and built by Daedalus.

King Minos used the Labyrinth to terrorize the population, demanding seven young men and seven young women as yearly sacrifices.

According to legend, Theseus and Ariadne would eventually defeat the Minotaur with Daedalus' guidance. After Theseus and Ariadne eloped, Daedalus and his son Icarus were imprisoned in the very Labyrinth he had built. Minos controlled all land and sea routes, so escape seemed impossible. Daedalus crafted wings for himself and Icarus, made from bird feathers, thread, and beeswax.

Before their flight, Daedalus warned Icarus: fly too high and the sun's heat would melt the wax; fly too low and the sea foam would weigh down the feathers.

They passed Samos, Delos, and Lebynthos—but Icarus, in youthful recklessness, soared too close to the sun. The beeswax melted, his feathers fell away, and he flapped his bare arms until he plunged into the sea and drowned.

I believe Icarus laughed as he fell—from what his father tried to protect him against, he embraced. It is said that Athena asked Helios, the sun god, to punish Icarus for Daedalus' attempt on Perdix's life. Poor Icarus never knew his cousin or anything beyond the walls of Crete. Yet I like to imagine him laughing as he fell, finally glimpsing the vast world beyond.

Works Cited

Chaliakopoulos, Antonis. "The Myth of Daedalus and Icarus: Fly between the Extremes." The Collector, The Collector, 6 Sept. 2021, www.thecollector.com/daedalus-and-icarus/. Diodorus, Siculus. Bibliotheca Historica . 60BC. Lipsiae Teubner, 1985.

Original Text.

Ovid, et al. Metamorphoses. 8AD. Bloomington, Indiana, Usa, Indiana University Press, 2018.

Best verified recording after Siculus.



<u>The Lament of Icarus</u> <u>By Herbert James Draper</u>

MR DANIELS: BURNA BOY'S TEACHER?

NEEL 11A

I have had the incredible privilege of meeting Mr Daniels through his passionate and emotive chemistry lessons that he has taught me as my new chemistry teacher. It was this evident passion, that gave me the interest to interview him and find out more about himself and his teaching career.

Q: Welcome to Beths Grammar School. How are you finding it so far?

A: It's been a really positive experience. The environment is welcoming, the atmosphere is great, and the students are motivated.

Q: Why did you choose to join Beths?

A: Beths has a strong academic reputation. The students here are very committed and hungry for knowledge, which brings out the best in a teacher. That culture of achievement is what drew me here.

Q: What inspired your love for Chemistry, and what is your academic background?

A: My passion started in primary school—I was fascinated by electrons, chemical equations, and how substances transform. Industrial chemistry, in particular, captured my interest. I hold a Bachelor's in Pure Chemistry, a Master's in Industrial Chemistry, and a Postgraduate degree in Education. Many years ago, I also began a doctorate, which I hope to complete in the future.

Q: How long have you been teaching, and where have you taught?

A: I began teaching in 1992, so it's been over 30 years. I've taught in Nigeria, the US, Canada, and now the UK. In addition to teaching, I worked in Canada for Toyota in quality control, which connected my background in applied chemistry to industry.

Q: How does education in the UK compare to other countries?

A: Globalisation has made systems more similar, but the UK stands out for its discipline, parental involvement, and government investment in education. Schools here have excellent facilities, and the system constantly evolves to improve opportunities for all students.

Q: Have you taught any notable students during your career?

A: Many of my students have gone on to become professionals in medicine, engineering, and other fields. One particularly famous former student is the Nigerian artist Burna Boy. He attended Corona High School in Lagos, where I taught. Interestingly, his sister was in my science class, and Burna Boy himself was in the same year group. Even as a teenager, he showed incredible creativity and determination. While academics were not his strongest suit, his talent was evident, and the school and his parents supported him fully. It's been remarkable to watch his journey from those early school days to becoming an internationally acclaimed musician, and I still stay in touch with his family. It's inspiring to see a former student achieve such global success.

Overall, I really enjoyed interviewing Mr Daniels, as he gave me insightful, informative and remarkable information. I was definitely most surprised by the fact he has nearly 4 degrees and he was Burna Boy's old teacher!

BOOK REVIEW:BOYS LOON'T CRY



JOSEPH 11A

Imagine waiting to find out about your a-level results but instead find out you are a parent at seventeen? This is exactly what happens to Dante in the book called Boys don't cry by Malorie Blackman.

The story follows Dante who is awaiting his a-level results and has big dreams for a career in journalism, but instead his ex Melanie shows up at his door telling him he has a daughter called Emma. Dante then agrees to spend an hour or two with Emma whilst Melanie runs some errands. An hour goes by then two and Melanie does not return. Now seventeen-year-old Dante is a single father with no clue what to do and how to balance family, friends, and his future.

Malorie Blackman explores many themes throughout the novel such as teenage fatherhood, masculinity, gender roles, stereotypes, family dynamics, prejudice, racism, sexuality, secrecy, mental health, and the struggle to express emotions. The novel can clearly show the struggles of life and growing up whilst also showing how such struggles can be overcome with resilience and family. My favourite line from the book is "Boys don't cry but real men do." This line is so powerful for me as many males believe it is not manly to show how they really feel (in this context sadness) as they believe it makes them less of a man but this quote shows that, that belief is wrong that talking about the way you feel and expressing how and what you feel is what makes you a "real" man.

This is a realistic book filled with many twists and turns ups and downs and really causes the reader to think about what they are reading and connect with the story and the characters themselves. I strongly recommend this book as the novel highlights the challenges of growing up, making mistakes and finding the strength to overcome any adversities in your way. It also challenges stereotypes about what it is to be a man by showing that courage isn't about hiding your feelings but to ask for help when needed, face your fears and to care for those who matter most. The book leaves you as a reader with many messages and lessons that stay with you long after you have finished reading.



5/5

"A moving story that will stay with you forever."



THE END OF THE WORLD?



TODAH 10B

Imagine being told that the end of the world is arriving in 14 days. What would you do? Would you spend time with loved ones? Would you fulfil a makeshift bucket list? Well this daunting reality was brought to reality as Pastor Joshua Mhlakela had a dream about a rapture occurring on the 23rd of September.

What is the rapture? You may ask; the rapture is the Christian belief that the followers of Christ will be lifted up into clouds to meet him marking the start of the tribulation on Earth (the end of the world).

Pastor Mhlakela claims that Jesus Christ took him to the future in his dream and he was sitting on his throne telling him loud and clear that the rapture will occur on the 23rd and 24th of September.



Picture of Pastor Joshua Mhlakela

This took TikTok by storm! Christians left, right and centre prepared in there own different ways with many going as far as to sell there own houses and cars as the rapture will be happening on the 23rd. Many also responded in satire to the whole situation considering the Bible says and I quote (**Matthew 24:36**) "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." which poses the question of how people live out their faith and if they're doing it correctly.

Now as I am currently writing this on September 25^{th,} Pastor Joshua has received copious amounts of backlash for his false predictions as well as countless others who spread this misinformation on TikTok. An example being one Australian man, Tilahun Desalegn, who shared a clip of his car being towed away, saying: 'I won't need her beyond September, because I'm going home to where my father in heaven is.'. After the supposed "rapture" had passed, he publicly apologised and said that he "will never talk publicly about the rapture again".

The moral of the story, that I'm sure most of you have picked up by now, is don't trust everything you see on the internet and always fact-check and research on everything you're not sure about!

THE FALL OF MANCHESTER UNITED



DAVID 10H

I understand that at the time of making this article, Manchester United have beaten Chelsea in the Premiership 2-1. But that doesn't mean I'm going to take back the title of this article. Unfortunately, Man U have 1,000 problems, and Chelsea isn't one of them.

However, I think we can all agree with the fact that Man U as a club has been in an absolute mess for years now. I mean, school hadn't started and Man U had lost in the Energy Drink Cup to Grimsby Town - a team of rejects and part-time plumbers. Then, more recently, they got slapped up by their fellow City rivals, and helping put Phil Foden's career back on track. Defeats are a big blow to a manager who manages a club as legendary and big as Man U - and Ruben Amorim has had plenty during his short tenure.

I mean if we were to look at the stats, you'd probably think it's a piss take or something, but Ruben Amorim now has the worst win percentage of any Man U manager since the Second World War. Manchester United, formerly the greatest team in the world, cannot string together 3 wins in a row - and when you think they've hit rock bottom, they always impress us and dig even deeper.

Ruben Amorim has the worst win percentage of any permanent Man Utd manager since the Second World War		
0%	20% 40% 60	% 80% 100%
Amorim	36.17%	
McGuinness	36.78%	
O'Farrell	37.04%	
Sexton	40,3%	
Docherty	46.93%	
Atkinson	50%	
Busby (1)	50.45%	
Busby (2)	52.38%	
Van Gaal	52.43%	
Moyes	52.94%	
Solskjaer	54.17%	
Ten Hag	54.69%	
Mourinho	58.33%	
Ferguson	59.67%	

And that's just scratching the surface. Honestly, if you watch the Prem, it's clear that Man U are one of the worst performing teams in the league, and yet despite this Ruben Amorim refuses to change his system, change the philosophy. I mean, I'm loving it, because it just means the hatewatches are going to better each week, but if you support Manchester United, you are deeply worried right now.

I understand why United's manager was given the benefit of the doubt in his first year. He had no pre-season and no financial backing, but now they've spent more than the GDP of Tuvalu to bring in players and he also did have a full pre-season. And just as expected, United have not shown any change whatsoever - well, not positive change that is. But the problems at that club run way deeper than him. The best way to describe United under Sir Alex Ferguson was a superpower. Every year, they were just winning and winning like it was all for the love of the game.

In 1993, they won the first ever Premier League, then won it again in 1994 alongside the FA Cup - completing the first ever double in the club's history. Then they won both competitions again the following season - becoming the first ever English club to win the double twice. They retained the league again in then 96/97 season (with a game to spare!) and in 98/99, became the first English club to win the English Domestic Treble - consisting of the Premier League, FA Cup and the Champions League, the final of which being one of the most iconic in football history. Genuinely, the grip they had on football was ridiculous. They won the league again in 2000 and 2001, becoming the fourth club to win the English title three times in a row at the time.

Back then, even if they had a "bad" season like when they went trophyless in 2002, they would recover and win the next year. They were actually hungry to win - the complete opposite of the Manchester United we see now. I mean, in the days of Ferguson it was rare for the club to have a season. Now, it's a miracle if they can even string together two successive wins.

In other words, the United website is down, because they can't string together three Ws.

In 2018, Jose Mourinho lead United to a 2nd place finish, just to finish 6th the following season. Under Ten Hag, they finished 3rd in the league and won the Energy Drink Cup, to finish 8th the next. Even though they won the FA Cup that year, in 2025 they finished in the bottom half of the table. Amorim has also lead United to 5 home losses in 7 home games. In fact, the mentality at the club is so bad, Amorim himself has said that the team he coaches is the worst United team in history. It came after a 3-1 loss to Brighton, leaving them in 13th, their 6th home loss that season - their worst result from the opening 12 home matches that season since 1894. Yes, I kid you not, you have to back to times before cars was even an idea.

I'm sorry if I've drowned you with stats, so maybe have a breather, and let's continue. The thing that's most concerning about Man U is that somehow they're proven that they can always get worse - so much so that previous managers look better in retrospect.

United thought they were in a bad spot with Mourinho, but a 2nd place finish and a European title is brilliant. Most fans would give up their left nut for that. I, as an Arsenal fan most certainly would. Moving on.

Under Solskjaer, they weren't the best team, but played some nice football both in the league and Europe, and it seemed a foundation was being built before the transfer window that brought in Ronaldo, Sancho and Varane. Speaking of transfers, yes, they've recruited proven players such as Mbuemo and Cunha, but even they are struggling. But when players leave United, they suddenly get a stat boost and remember what it means to play football. I mean, just look at Rashford, Antony, just to name a few.

Fact of the matter is that there's no culture at that club. Manchester United's Class of '92 dominated at youth level and became the backbone of the first-team. Sir Alex Ferguson signed what he described as 'bad losers', people who hated losing more than they loved winning. I mean, the results speak for themselves.

What I'm getting at is - how can there be a consistent culture at a club where the manager is changing every 2-3 seasons? New managers keep coming in - with their own philosophy and style of play, so when he gets sacked, the next poor manager has to spend a lot of time getting rid of players that don't fit his system, and this cycle just rinses and continues. Many people still have high hopes for United to bounce back all because of Ferguson's era. And my response is that these people need to wake up and smell the coffee - the club is dead.

The relationship between the manager and players is just toxic. Yes, Ferguson fell out with some players - but the difference is he was the most powerful presence in the locker room. No matter how big a star you were, his word was the law. Other players had too much respect for Ferguson to even allow you to disrespect him. Nowadays, it's more likely that a Manchester United manager gets sacked than a player gets sold. United used to have leaders everywhere. Now, even the current captain Bruno Fernandes is being criticised over his leadership skills.

Fact is, there's always that manager who thinks that he's going to be the one to turn United around and get them winning again. Because to this day, United is a graveyard for players and managers, so unless you're a complete idiot (which most people in football are), I see no reason to go that club. I mean, Amorim looks like a shadow of himself, despite doing decent in his first season.

So the question is, what is next for the Red Devils? That's the thing about football - you will never know. But what I do know is that for the sake of Amorim's mental health, he should leave that club as soon as he can.

BEST OF THE BETHS









Thank you for reading the 36th edition of Best of the Beths!

Following 6 weeks of summer and 5 weeks of the new academic year, Best of the Beths has finally returned, and it has returned in style! As you may well have seen from the very first page of this one, this wasn't just any edition of the newsletter - it was one of celebration. The first ever edition of Best of the Beths was published on September 30th in 2019, which was also Miss Stevens' birthday! The newsletter introduced itself to our school community as a platform where students could (and now still can) write about what was topics that were passionate to them, ranging from politics to sports, from book reviews to school affairs... and far, far more!

And if you think about it now, where this newsletter is today is a far cry from where it started out back in 2019. It's now been a whole six years since the edition that started it all, and for this one, I (Faeq of 10B) decided to give the newsletter a one-off throwback look to celebrate its sixth anniversary, incorporating the colours that it used in that very first publication (as well as the following three) with the modern format. That may seem special, but what else is special is the turnout we got for this edition, with a grand total of 23 students contributing an article (including myself)!

When you add it all up, it equates to what is now the longest-ever edition in the six-year history of Best of the Beths, already breaking the record set last time (July 2025)! This is also a fourth consecutive edition with over 30 pages, and statements like those just go to show how hard we have been working lately to give you as much to enjoy from this as possible! Success like this isn't a given straight away, yet the team's members from all four of the last editions have done so brilliantly as of late, so a well-deserved congratulations go to all of them!

BEST OF THE BETHS





And as I mentioned in my own article, we should also congratulate **Miss Stevens** for her dedication, care and commitment towards the newsletter, which is now six years strong! From that interview she had one day in 2017, she set out to give students a platform to speak about their closest passions, and that vision from all those years ago has thankfully been fulfilled! It wasn't easy with things like Microsoft Publisher, her workload and COVID at first, but she's made some changes and made it work! She's the main reason reason why it's here today, and this couldn't be done without her! Best of the Beths isn't just a newsletter, it's one made by students for the rest of our community to enjoy. So, make sure you keep reading it in the months to come, as there could be something related to what *you* are most interested in!

Now, why don't we recap what was covered this month? Given the nature of this edition, perhaps it was reasonable for us to begin with the 6-year history and evolution of Best of the Beths, as well as welcome our new Year 7s and 12s to our school community! From there, we had a vast range of topics yet again, including book reviews, a perspective on agnosticism, student experiences, sports and an interview with one of our new members of staff. All of that made for a jam-packed edition to get us started for the year...

And there will be far more to tell you about in the near future! That'll do it for now, but until we come back, I have a red 'button' that will take you to the 'Newsletters' section of our school website. There, you can revisit over 30 of our past publications on the dropdown menu for Best of the Beths, from 2019 up to the current day! But for now, and as mentioned, thanks for reading the 6th anniversary edition of Best of the Beths; we hope you enjoyed it! Until next time, goodbye!

Haven't had your fill of the newsletter? Please click here for more past editions of it, from the one that started it all back in 2019, to the one that started this current era! Enjoy!

Regards from the Best of the Beths Newsletter Team! See you next time!