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Prof. Barbara Dyer

CAA #1

I am tasked with an impossible challenge here, one that has loomed over my head for weeks. “George, give me a story. YOUR story. And relate it to music.” It took some time and introspective thought, but thinking about my life in the context of music is something completely avant-garde, until I considered my freshman year of high school. Obviously, with COVID being unbridled, I had no organized athletic outlets at my disposal, and I was stuck at home with three chirpy older sisters, one straight-armed father, one homemaking mother, and two rowdy puppies. With all this chaos around me, I found solace in music. This time period was controlled by rock music, especially the heavy drum set tunes that shifted my mindset to one of discipline and an intense desire for personal growth. This grounded me through a tumultuous period in my life, and I distinctly remember the song *I Am Defiant* by The Siege playing in my ears as I walked to my local park, picturing myself in a motivational YouTube video, or as Rocky on my way to train for my next big fight. Fast forward to my junior year of high school, where I went on my school’s senior “Kairos” retreat with the intent of leading it the succeeding year. I was brought to tears by the lyrical masterpiece of *Slow Down* by Nichole Nordeman, which brought a storm of memories that flooded my mind of my childhood. By the time I lead my next retreat, I wanted to evoke those same emotions to my 56 brothers that I had felt the previous year. To close out my 45-minute speech of my life story, I played *Golden Years* by Christan French and felt pride when I made several 18-year-old hard-shelled high schoolers well up with tears. Skip ahead to my older sister Katie’s graduation from the University of Oregon. The song *Last Day* by Two Friends played all weekend, and to this day I feel the immense emotions of being with my entire

family, celebrating a milestone of life when I hear that track. Allow me to take you to the recent past, where *Fair Trade* by Drake will forever hold a special place in my heart. That very song was playing the first time I stepped onto the court for a home game against Pepperdine after I formally walked-on to the team. I am reminded of all the sacrifice and training that lead me to wearing that jersey today when the melody begins to play. Now, this is merely a snapshot of the 19 years of life I have spent on this planet, but nevertheless I have begun to acknowledge the commanding emotions that overcome me when I play certain songs from my Spotify account. They take me back to a place so real that I am convinced I am living those moments all over again. Music will continue to define important moments I experience in the future, and I am damn sure there are more songs out there to transport me to places only they can take me to.