

Learning is a Marathon

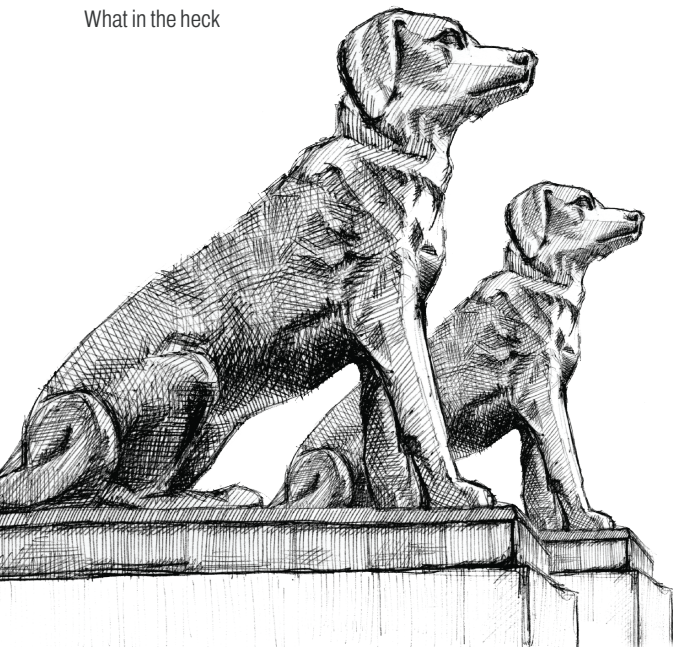
A Poem for Mary Baldwin, Delivered at the Inauguration of President Jeffrey P. Stein

Learning is not a destination, it is a journey
Learning is not a race
But rather it is a marathon.

It's kind of like running on a treadmill
And by the time you get to that finish line
You're probably like, "Phew! Good Lord, I'm glad that's over with"

It is the moment
You meet the end of the road
And look back
And see that all this time
There are others
Traveling behind you
And some may have fallen
Got a little lost along the way
Took the wrong turn
Scraped their knees
Tore their ankles
And you peer down this road
And see
There are people limping!
Bandages wrapped around their bones,
Bodies, hunched over, heads,
To the sky, with faces,
Wet from eye cracked tears
Some, a little thirsty indeed, some
A little sleep deprived, some
With their fingers wrapped into knuckles full of prayers
Beneath their whispering lips
And you say to yourself,
"MY GOD!!"

That it takes days into weeks, and weeks into months,
And months into years,
And nights into days,
And days,
Where you will question, "Mom!?
Dad!?" Or wait,
"Me!?"
What in the heck



Just remember,
That in this journey,
When you go, you grow,
and when you grow,
Keep going, yes,
There is no short-cut to learning, you will always learn,
Just remember in your learning, when you fall, fall,
And when you fail, get back up again

But what if it meant that learning something is also a part of you learning about yourself?
How else could you learn if you're not willing to learn the things that help you learn you?

I mean for me I wonder,
On this road,
If I am not growing then how
Do I mimic the growth of an un-wilting flower
That sprouts from water and light
To keep my head held high unwavering
In the waves of shadows that try and shroud me,
Tumultuous and torrential like
A cloud of rain, remember,
The hard times and the dark times,
The storm,
Is only here to allow you to grow,
So keep going

Always remember, that the road to greatness
Is often paved with...
Potholes
I mean can you imagine how silly it looks,
Half your body in a big,
Round
Pothole
I get it
It sounds silly

I'm saying there are times we got swallowed
In a dark spot on the journey
But its how we navigate our way through
That counts the most
So make every moment your best
And when you're tired
And running out of breath
Just know that this means you've been fighting
And its the bodies response to pressure
And although they say that's how diamonds are formed
And I'll admit you're not a diamond
And you'll need a little rest along the way

Again, when you fall,
And tumble against the gravel,
Know there is no letter that can equate to the language of your love,
Or the code of your creation
Do not forget the true iris of your intellect
Or the beauty of your being

Until then, keep in mind
That learning is not a race,
It's a marathon
Keep going

By Tramere Monroe '25