

## Ryan

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September settles in as Ryan  
throws  
papers into stacks and drumsticks  
into buckets while holding a pen  
between his lips. What he used  
the pen for I have no idea. His  
handwriting was too chaotic  
for anyone to read. I saw him  
in the hallway today, speed  
strutting  
with probably his fourth cup of  
coffee  
this morning. He smiled and  
waved  
to me before disappearing.  
He has negative three minutes  
to drive from the elementary  
school to the middle school. How  
do I  
know this? Because he tells me  
every Tuesday. Snow sticks  
while percussion goes to the back  
to get the jingle bells. Ryan yells

at the clarinets for missing their  
cue.

His face is sweaty and red. I  
worry that he will fall off the  
spinnny  
chair he stacked on top of two  
tables.

But he just drinks more coffee, his  
baton quivering from espresso  
shots. He apologizes to the  
clarinets

after class. I almost trip on the ten  
drumsticks by my chair as I walk  
out.

I see him in the hall again on  
Friday,

walking slow with no coffee.

The administration whispered  
as they passed his office.

Ryan resigned after our spring  
concert. He moved to Chicago  
to be closer to his husband. But  
he came back for our graduation.