

## College Supplemental Essay

The relationship I have with my violin is unlike any other. On May 19th, 2013, I played the best performance of my life. It was the last orchestra concert for the year, and it was the most memorable thirty seconds I have ever had as a musician. The hall was packed. Spotlights shining. It was time for our last piece, Aaron Copland's "Variations on a Shaker Melody," which, after this performance, became my favorite. The piece had its swells and dips, but the violin part was relatively boring to me. With one minute left, the big crescendo was approaching. When it finally came, words cannot describe how I felt. My fingers were racing across the fingerboard. The bow was pressing against the strings like a saw cutting wood. The sudden thump from the timpani made my heart beat out of my chest. In that moment of excitement, my violin did all the talking for me. It expressed all of the strong, passionate emotions I was feeling. When the piece ended, I saw my violin and I as the perfect team. To me, my relationship with my violin is equivalent to that of a brother or a sister.

Ever since I picked up a violin at the age of six, it has been my second sister. It might sound a little peculiar at first, but my violin and I have a human-like relationship. When my stereotypically strict Filipino parents put me in violin lessons at the age of six, I avoided my violin at all costs. I didn't want to be near it, I didn't want to practice with it, and I just wanted it to go away. Similar to an older brother talking about his annoying little sister, violin and I did not get off to a great start. Of course, with every brother and sister, we've had our ups and downs throughout my eleven years of playing. When I was around seven or eight, I remember us making audiences roar at local Baroque festivals. I also recall times when her perfect pitch pushed through my orchestra auditions, when her strings spontaneously became out of tune during a concert recital, and the numerous times her strings broke during my lessons.

Like any brother and sister, we've grown up together. As I started to grow, my voice got deeper, and I started to mature. So did she. She's gone from a quarter size to a half size until finally blossoming into a full size. Her sound has become richer, her appearance becoming a darker tint of brown, and her playing experience grows every day. She has aged with me. She, not calling her just "my violin," has always been there for me. So, let me tell you more about her. Her name is Alexis, named after my first violin teacher. Alexis and I are bread and butter. I provide the movements and the articulation, and she provides the sound. Our relationship has lasted eleven years and we will never stop growing. Sometimes she's difficult and doesn't want to cooperate with me. However, when we work together as one, the harmony we have produces a harmony for all to hear. When I'm up on stage, she's the only one who's right there next to me. And after tuning her A string, she subconsciously says to me, "We got this, Matthew."

While Alexis has watched me grow into a hardworking student and passionate player, I, in turn, have watched her become my second sister. Together, we share a special bond. Some say that it's the people around you who influence you the most, and I'm proud to say that my eleven-year-old sister has made an impact in my life at a much deeper and personal level. Without my talent and passion for violin, I wouldn't experience the true richness of being complete.

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