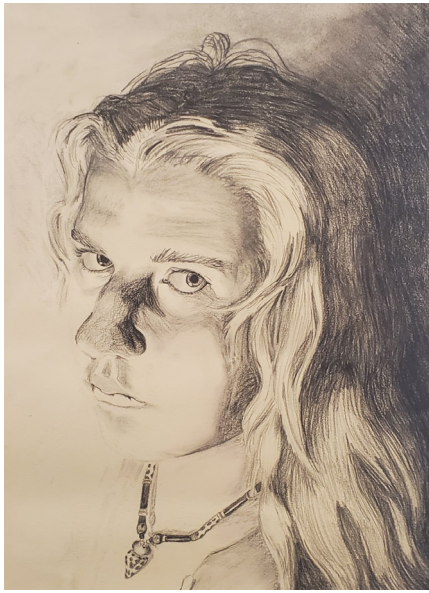


# After the Marching Pirates



## Margaret Lindsay

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## Abstract

This poem came about as the submission to the poetry workshop during the Introduction to Creative Writing 2815 course. It is an exploration of my nostalgia regarding the two years I spent as a member of the Marching Pirates and portrays what it is like now that I am no longer an active member of the organization due to schedule conflicts.

Between the hours of four and six pm,  
You can hear the fanfare  
of two hundred horns  
Playing their hearts out  
At the bottom of College Hill.  
When the band turns to face the imaginary boneyard  
and plays that phrase where second trombone  
starts the measure on the B flat atop the staff,  
The sound filters through closed windows and headphones.

The drums echo and rumble in your bones  
While watching the parade up the hill  
from your grave-quiet room on the fifth floor,  
The cascade of bass and tenor and snare and crash  
Leading the hooting and hollering, the yelling and cheering  
Of the players as they dance up towards the stadium  
For homecoming.

When you stand in the boneyard itself  
Before the game even starts,  
And tell the army to hit you with all they've got,  
They will take that challenge  
and bowl you over with their sound.



For two seasons, it was my job to deliver that,  
As a dot on the field, a horn in the line,  
One two-hundredth of the sound of pirate nation.  
Let me empty my lungs into this length of brass tube and help them deafen you.  
Let me sprint to my place for pregame, let me sing-scream the vocals to 400 Degreez,  
Let the band play Neck again.  
Let me tell our terrible football team to stick it in the end zone  
Let me dance to Seven Nation and choke on the acrid smoke  
That the cheerleaders douse us in when the team runs through the tunnel.  
Let me march, let me sweat, let me yell until my voice is gone,  
Let me find time to come back and do it all again  
Next season.



Image by Emmie Brooks  
On East Carolina University's Main Campus, Pee Dee the Pirate watches the hustle and bustle of pirate nation's students.