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Year In Review 2024





YIR
2024

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A Year of books

35 books read this year! That's 10 more than last year! I read everything from historical fiction to feminist sci-fi. I also gave myself a mini-challenge to read every unread book on my bookshelf, now I'm down to 2 unread books from 8. But, I still need to get rid of some books for more shelf space.

Some of my favorite books from this year were; Educated by Tara Westover, I Hope This Finds You Well by Natalie Sue, Babel by R. F. Kuang, and Tomorrow, and

Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin. There were tears and laughs but many of these books changed me. Reading this many books helped me remember my year better as well. I remember listening to Iron Flame in the dead of winter, trudging through A Court of Mist and Fury in the spring, and the summer book club session on the lake for Funny Story. Books can make you feel like you've live multiple lifetimes.

Speaking of book club, this is my second year in it. I've been going consistently, and we have a core group. It is so refreshing to sit with a group of ladies and enjoy the simple things like a cheap bottle of rosé and a good book. I think it's also great to build a community around shared hobbies. I can get recommendations and be excited together for new releases.

NYT 100 Best Books of the 21st Century



So far I've read 3/100 of the best books of the century. Off to a good start!



Reading Challenge

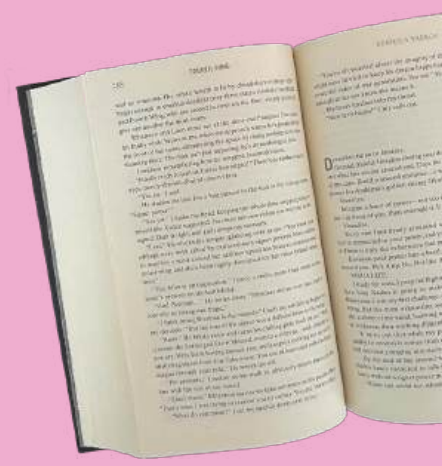
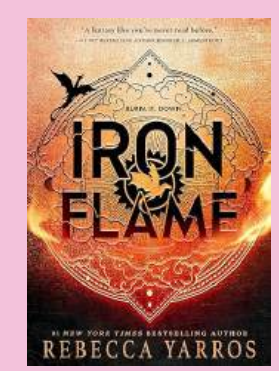
12,920 pages read

35 books read

Shortest Book
131 pages



Longest Book
640 pages



My Fourth Wing & Iron Flame book review has over 50 views!

Bookmark This

I wanted to do something special for my book club girlies for Galentine's Day. It was super fun to design and get them professionally printed. The finishing touch was sparkly laminate. Do I still use a receipt for my bookmark most of the time? Yes. Hey, maybe that's a good idea for another design.





Real Life Rom-Com



I've been watching Rom-Coms for as long as I can remember, but I never thought one would happen to me. While getting ready for our Valentine's dinner, Grant suggested buying tickets to Denver for the end of the month. It was impromptu, romantic, and the kind of adventure straight out of a Rom-Com. Almost as soon as we landed, the comedy began.

First, we were "upgraded" to an Ionic 5 (EV). The car was nice but gave us range anxiety for the rest of the trip. Then, at the golf course, I enjoyed reading ACOTAR with mountain views while Grant battled the wind. My hair blowing everywhere was

a sight worthy of laughs, but it was nice quality time together.

The real punchline came during our visit to Longmont to see Autumn and Reese. We had Indian food for dinner—a risky choice given we were staying on an air mattress in their living room, with the only bathroom inside the master bedroom. At 6 a.m., I made multiple mortifying bathroom trips through squeaky doors and thin walls, likely waking everyone.

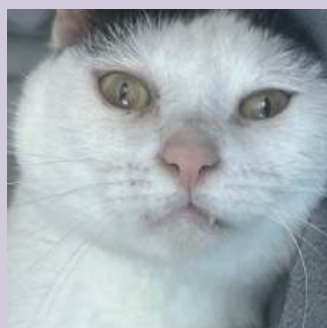
Despite the chaos, I remember the trip fondly—especially looking out at Denver under a full moon from Red Rocks Amphitheater.

BOBBY



Reviewing My New Mom

By Bobby George



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Girls Trip, CA

Birthday Bitch

24! This year, I completed a special project of 24 days of doodles before I turned 24. I turned the best of the set into a zine called "Woman Artist what is your state of mind." It was a great study to check in with myself. What do I think about each day? What are my hopes and dreams? What am I feeling? Plus, the birthday deadline made it like I was making a birthday gift for myself. There were doodles of martinis, sardines, hairy legs, and more abstract thoughts. I'm excited to do the project again in a year and see how my doodles change.

Besides the zine, I met Jariya, Kortney, and Victoria for a yap session at Pryes. It was nice to gather everyone, especially with how busy people's schedules can be. And they brought me gifts which were unnecessary but much appreciated. For so many people, birthdays are scary. You are getting older and it can feel like time is running out. I see birthdays as a chance to see how far you've come —also, a great opportunity to entertain your inner child. I doubt I'll ever have as magical of a birthday as I did back in elementary school, but each year is special in its own way.

I went to Toronto this year! It was so fun to see Mia and Claire. Mia I hadn't seen since the eras tour and Claire since graduation. In my mind, Michigan is much closer than it is. Our Air B&B was hilariously tiny, but a nice Pizza place was just a block away. The trip consisted of a daily Tim Hortons run, sunbathing in the park, rooftop cocktails, exploring the distillery district, window shopping, and a boat cruise through Niagara Falls. The boat was like a natural flume ride. Just when I thought we couldn't get any closer, the boat went further into the falls leaving us completely soaked.





Zinefest Success

This was the year of zines. It started when I randomly saw an opportunity to table at a zine fest. Did I have experience making zines? No. Did I know how I was going to fill a whole table with zines? No. But I did it. I started from zero zines and for about 6 months straight, any idea I had, became a zine. As the fest approached, I built up my inventory, gathered tabling materials, and made a hot pink sign to advertise who artfully_ange was. I even printed my own business cards with my art printer and a lino-cut stamp.

I was worried I would get to Zinefest and not be on the same level as other Zinesters but I was right on par. My booth rocked and I sold over 40 zines! It was a rush I hadn't felt before and I could see myself doing it again. Especially with an established backlog of zines.

Some of the zines I'm most proud of are "But I Still Love Technology: A Poetry Zine," "Woman Artist, What Is

Your State of Mind?" "Eat the Rich Eatery" and "I Want to be a Bitch."

Zineland

I made 20+ copies of each zine to sell at Zinefest, and created a zine hub on my website to host all of my zines in a digital interactive gallery. Zineland was my idea of an alter ego from my blogger self. Zienster Angela is bold, loud, and subverts the well-known channels of discourse. The hub itself is bright yellow with bold typography. It feels very different from my polished blog and shows off some of my creativity. I digitize the zines to make them accessible but the physicality of the zines is part of their subversive nature.



Ramen Lover

Ramen Kazama was Grant's and my favorite restaurant this year. We went half a dozen times and I would go again right now. It's hard to try other places because Ramen Kazama is so good. We even tried to replicate it at home (because it does get pricey) but our beginner ramen skills could not hold a candle to the original.

When Grant asked me to paint "something he loves" for a work team bonding exercise, I knew exactly what to do. I spent over 4 hours detailing a bowl of ramen on a 4X6 canvas in acrylic. The final product was something his coworkers were jealous of. One even offered to buy it from him. Another spread a rumor I used professional art supplies instead of the materials included in the kit. The controversy was funny, and honestly, exactly what an artist wants. Art that provokes people to feel and discuss is doing its job.

Lastly, I was excited to try ramen directly from the source on my trip to Tokyo. Mimi and I went to Ichiran Ramen in Shibuya. After ordering from a vending machine-style menu, we were shuffled down the hall to our private ramen booths. There was a tap of ice-cold water and the ramen was delivered through a window straight to our table. And obviously it was amazing.



"Paint What You Love" acrylic on canvas



Ramen Kazama with Jariya



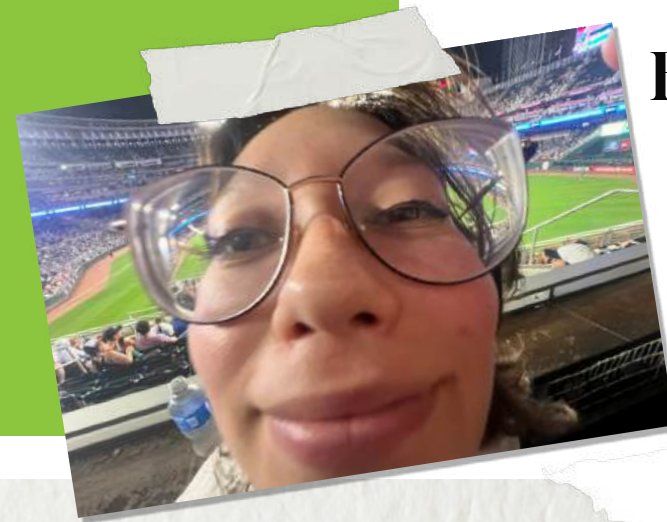
Ichiran Shibuya, Tokyo Japan

Fiber Chic

Maybe those not in the fiber arts community don't think of crochet as a summer sport but I love sitting in the sun, an ice-cold drink, a warm breeze, and my crochet hook doing its thing. This bolero shrug took about 13 hours to crochet and turned out beautiful. Perfect for a chilly summer evening or an accessory for more coverage. Plus it is breathable and cool on the skin since it is made with bamboo yarn.

brat summer

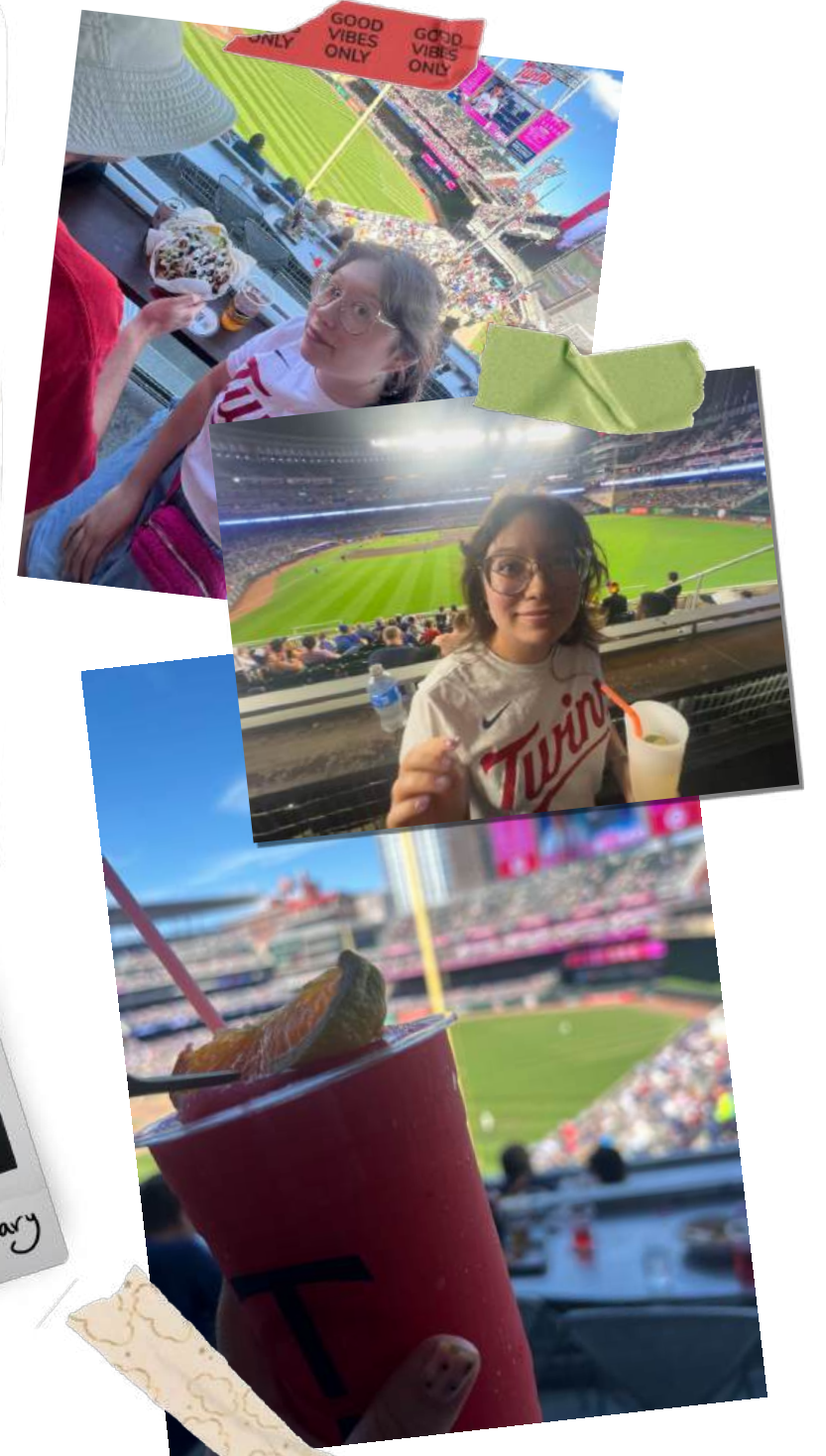
"Yeah she's in her mid-20s real intelligent." Brat summer took the internet by storm. How could it not with its wild, techno, YOLO-if-YOLO-wasn't-cringe vibes! The summer was filled with farmers' markets, ice cream, hot girl walks, and lots of time with friends and my BF <3 It almost hurts to look back at the warm pictures while typing this in the cold start of winter but that means I did summer right this year.



Baseball, Barbie, & Bahn-Mi

This year Grant took me to two baseball games and I loved it! The first game we attended was Barbie-themed with Barbie pink scoreboards and fuzzy pink fanny packs. At the second game, I drank a baseball bat full of Margarita and had a Bahn-mi hotdog from the Union Hmong Kitchen booth.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
14 JULY halo dirty BAD Billy Sushi	15	16	17	18 INDEED	19	20 farmer's Market
21	22	23	24	25 LOVE YOUR SELF	26	27
28 MINNEAPOLIS	29	30	31	1 AUGUST	2	3
4 NOR&EAST	5	6	7	8 MOMO SUSHI	9	10
11 WALKER Mini Golf	12	13	14	15	16	17



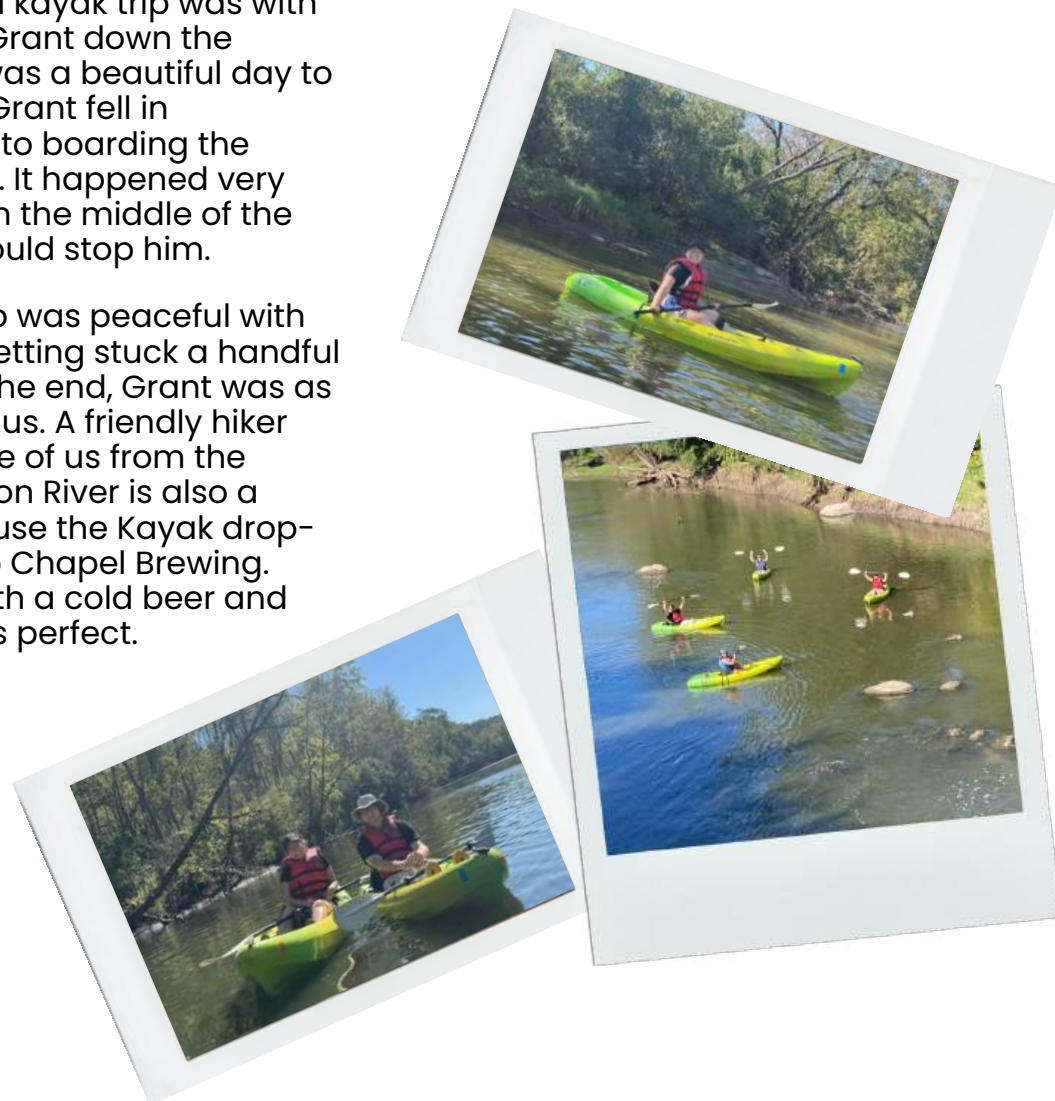
Kayak Cruise



If Minnesota is the land of 10,000 lakes it would be wrong not to use them at least once a year.

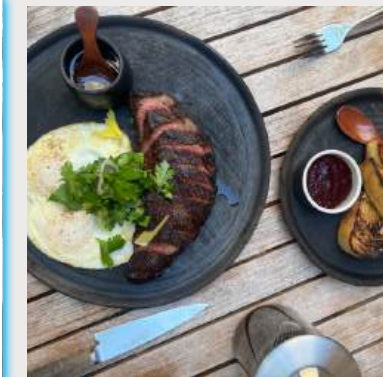
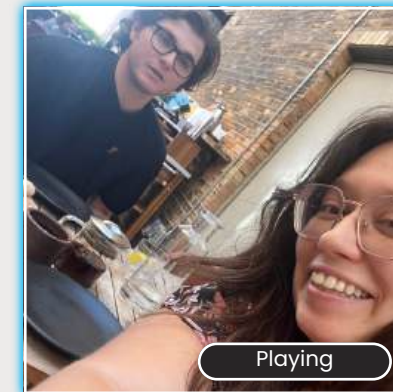
This year's annual kayak trip was with my parents and Grant down the Cannon River. It was a beautiful day to be on the water. Grant fell in immediately due to boarding the kayak on all fours. It happened very fast and he was in the middle of the river before we could stop him.

The rest of the trip was peaceful with each of us only getting stuck a handful of times. And by the end, Grant was as wet as the rest of us. A friendly hiker also took a picture of us from the bridge. The Cannon River is also a great route because the Kayak drop-off point is next to Chapel Brewing. Ending the trip with a cold beer and cheese curds was perfect.



2 Year Anniversary!

Porzana Brunch



The meal Grant and I shared at Porzana will stick in my memory for a long time. We arrived for brunch and enjoyed steak and eggs with tea and coffee. The servers were so nice in bringing us complimentary N/A white wine and an espresso donut. The espresso cream on this donut was life-changing. Each bite was a balanced blend of cream, sugar, and fluffy donut.

We spent the whole day together ending at the Foshay Tower speakeasy, Prohibition. There we enjoyed a couple of drinks, their tequila espresso martini is amazing. 2 years with Grant is a huge milestone.



Tokyo 東京都

What can I say about Tokyo that would convey how amazing it was? I've already done 3 blog posts, 2 podcast episodes, and 5+ presentations about this trip to my coworkers. It was short and sweet; a whirlwind of delicious food, sightseeing, and a reunion 5 years in the making. I'm so proud of myself for going. For years I've said I would go and finally, I took the steps to make it happen. Now I can travel anywhere in the world, even non-English-speaking countries! It showed me how much of the world there is to see.



Meiji Jingu Shrine
明治神宮

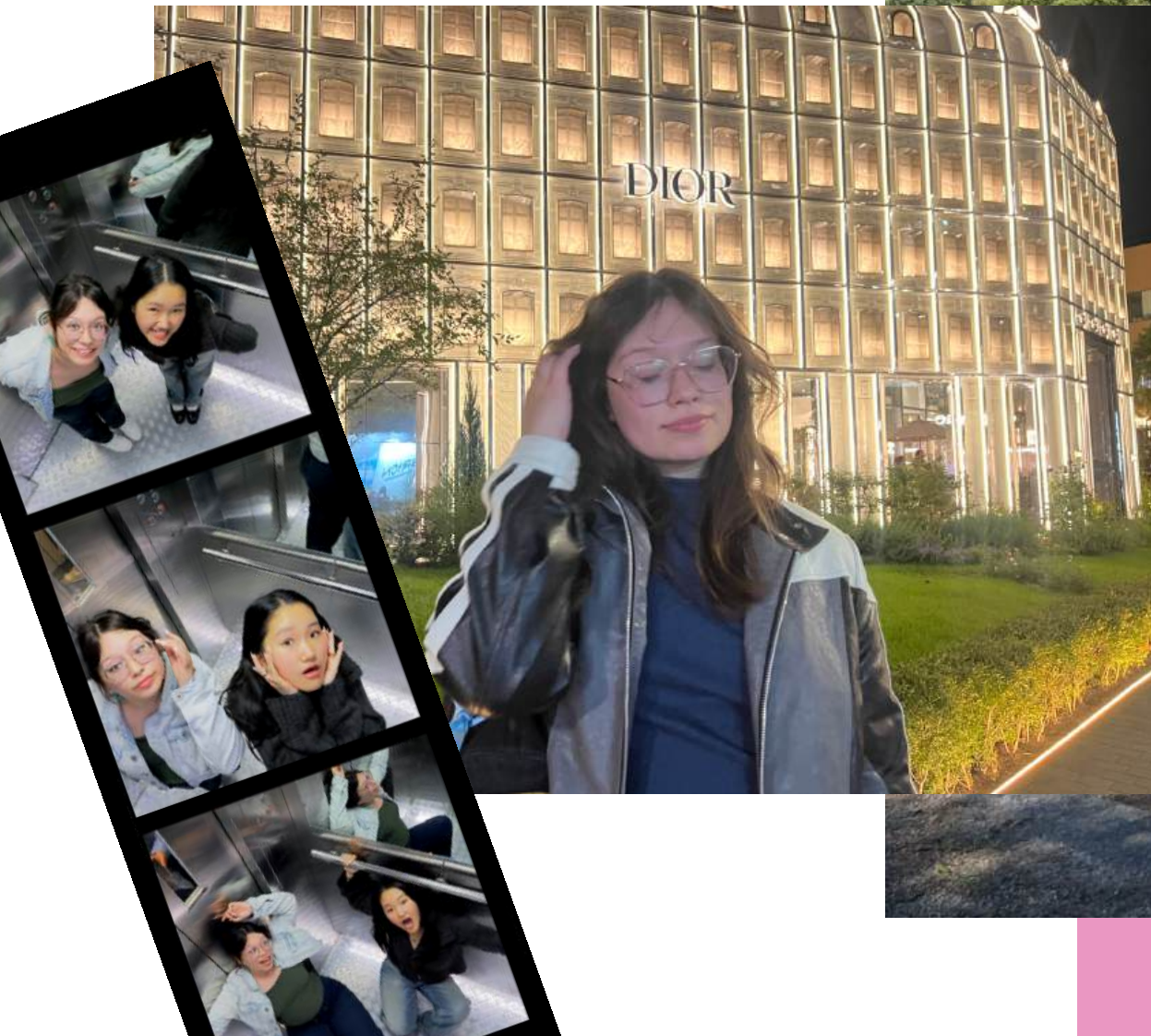
The Meiji Jingu Shrine was one of the most peaceful places we visited. The rest of the city falls away as you walk down the gravel path surrounded by large trees. Two traditional weddings took place in the short window we were there. Witnessing these ceremonies with everyone else paying their respects to the shrine made it even more special.



SEOUL

서울 사랑해

I loved being a tourist in Seoul: the cafe hopping, Gyeongbakgung Palace, the food, the nightlife, the shopping. Mimi wore me out with the itinerary but I got to see so much with her. Doing the cable car up to Namsan Tower was special since she hadn't been there either. Sometimes it takes your friend flying halfway around the world to be a tourist in your own town.



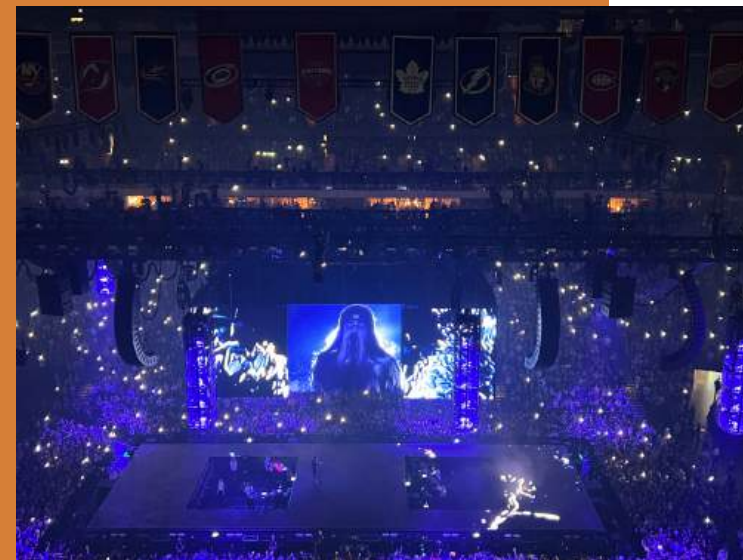


Stages & Streams

This year I saw three concerts: The Arcadian Wild at Fine Line with Jariya, Cigarettes After Sex, and Billie Eilish at Xcel Energy Center with Zach. The Arcadian Wild had a fun crowd moment when the lead singer accidentally called hot dish, casserole. Cigarettes After Sex has become one of my go-to artists for a more chill vibe, and Billie Eilish was incredible live. My goal for next year is to go to a show at First Ave and I already have tickets to see Charli XCX at Target Center in April 2025.

As for Spotify Wrapped, it was no surprise that Taylor Swift was my top artist. I was surprised that although my total listening time was almost the same as last year (37,000 in 2024 vs 39,000 in 2023) it was more evenly distributed across artists. This year had so many good albums it's no wonder I had to listen to them all.

1. Ariana Grande, *Eternal Sunshine*, March 6
2. Taylor Swift, *The Tortured Poets Department*, April 19
3. Billie Eilish, *Hit Me Hard and Soft*, May 17
4. Charli XCX, *brat*, June 7
5. Gracie Abrams, *The Secret of Us*, June 21
6. Sabrina Carpenter, *Short n' Sweet*, August 23



Season One Done

I uploaded the first episode of Voz Memos on Dec 15, 2023. Now 26 episodes later the first season is coming to a close. Having a mini project every two weeks has made time move slowly and faster at the same time. It made me reflect more often on what I was doing every week and kept me accountable for many of my goals this year. Those goals included going to Tokyo, my Goodreads reading challenge, and keeping up with my hobbies. I've been able to celebrate many milestones on the podcast such as a promotion, 10 years of blogging, and my birthday!

Now at the end of the year, it's amazing to see how my process improved and became more advanced. I upload the full video of each episode to YouTube and short-form content across multiple platforms. And while I'll admit I don't have 1,000s of listeners, the success is not in the numbers but in my consistency of putting out a new podcast episode every other week this year.



