

Step into Beckman High School's Moccasins at "Walk Two Moons!"  
written by Kathleen Shepard, a junior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Talking her way across the Northeastern countryside, Beckman High School's production of "Walk Two Moons" follows thirteen-year-old Salamanca as she journeys to Idaho with nothing but an old Chevy and even older grandparents. But when her past interjects the present, Sal must learn to confront new beginnings, unexpected relationships, and, most importantly, herself under the light of that peculiar, singing tree.

With eyes downcast and fingers curled underneath the folds of her sweatshirt, Naomi Hahn (Sal) captures the nervousness associated with growing up. She consistently slouches, wringing her hands and hugging herself tightly, to illustrate her encroaching anxiety. Yet Sal finds her voice through Emily Hsia (Phoebe). For, while arguing with her, Hahn now looks straight into her eyes, abandoning her usual whisper as Hsia contorts her face, eyes glazed and lips pouting, begging for a retort.

Juxtaposing such tension, Zoë Carter (Gram) and Austin Elkins (Gramps) embody the love and laughter of a married couple. Leaning against one another in the Chevy, Elkins cracks a toothy grin, gazing with wide eyes whenever Carter purses her lips, teasing him with a roll of her eyes. Elkins also portrays his emotional depth after the loss of Carter, exchanging laughter for heartbreak as he now clings to his hat, hands trembling as he chokes out words he can't bear to think.

Illuminating Hahn's storytelling, the Lighting Head (Sophie Martin) brings the past to life with seamless transitions as she calls lighting cues, ensuring clicks as quiet as the Chevy's blinker are accompanied by a simultaneously warm spotlight. Contrasting reality, she then flashes green and pink LED lights across the cyclorama's canvas to outline the silhouettes of Hahn's memory. Downstage, the follow spot operated by Emerson Brooks works in tandem, shining white light across Hahn's body, emphasizing the stark contrast between her present and imagination.

The Costume Crew Head, Ollie Tomczak, mirrors the fading of Sal's mother, Isabella Casillas (Sugar), through his hand-dyed designs. Stripping away Casillas' vitality, he abandons the memories of her navy jacket and blue night gown for Act Two's stark, grey cotton. Accompanied by the Blackberry flowers interwoven in her braids (Hair and Makeup's Rebecca Nazareth), he ensures that a mother's presence is absent but never forgotten.

Poignant and heartwarming, Beckman's talented cast and crew teach audiences how to remember in their unforgettable production of "Walk Two Moons."