

EDHS's "Failure: A Love Story" is a Beautifully Bittersweet Tale  
written by Megan Chapa, a junior at Tesoro High School

Set in 1928 Chicago, a young man named Mortimer Mortimer carelessly enters a clock shop, where he meets Gertude, the shop owner, and her younger sisters, Jenny June and Nelly. As a large clock hangs over the stage like a bad omen, each Fail sister dies before the year's end--but not before they all fall desperately in love with Mortimer.

Mortimer Mortimer (Tobin Cooke) first suanTERS into the clock shop with an upright posture, hands folded neatly over his chest as he playfully bashes Gerty. This suave persona crumbles when he first lays eyes on Nelly. His arms lay awkwardly at his side and he stumbles over his words. Cooke transitions to a frantic pace in the second act, then an emotionally exhausted trudge, until finally, in the play's epilogue, he takes slow, shaky steps across the stage, now an old man withered by age and heartbreak.

Aidan Mathewson contrasts Tobin as the aloof and animal-loving John N. Fail, the Fail sister's adopted brother. When he first meets Mortimer, he inspects him with a drawn-out sniff over his whole body. He shows his softer side when he is forced to put his beloved dog down, his head and arm resting over his knee like a kid as he says his last goodbye.

Gerty Fail (Makaela Moore) dusts her beloved clock shop with a brisk pace and sharp steps, showing her character's stress with managing the family and the business. After the death of her sister Nelly, she moves even quicker and stomps louder, showing her turbulent emotions as she grapples with the loss of her sister--and her forbidden love for her fiance.

EDHS Costume Team color coordinate the three sisters' looks with how they died: Gerty in red (coughing up blood), Jenny June in blue (disappears into a lake), and Nelly in green (blunt force from a bust knocked over by a parakeet). These differentiating visuals are kept consistent in their makeup looks (EDHS Makeup Team). Nelly wears a red lip that's as bold as her personality, Jenny June sports a pink lip akin to her adventurous spirit, and Gerty's soft nude lip shows her quiet strength and maturity.

With the combined efforts of the cast and crew, El Dorado's production of "Failure: A Love Story" is an enduring reminder of the ways grief can tear you apart--and how love can put you back together.