



the spyglass



summer issue
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Marlie Rose

In the marsh where the gulls fly,
And the frogs bounce in the day
The hot winds churn across the summer sky
And the deer canter away

For in the dank marsh, the creature lies
In deep slumber at all times
Awake only when a child's cry
Is heard amongst water's chimes

And on that very shadowy day
Little wretched Marlie Rose
Skipped down the path, on her way
To the gliding swamp crows

Her sweet humming melody lilts and warbles
Ringing richly out in the dawn
The creatures are wary, scattering with mumbles
As Marlie dances along

"Don't wander out to that swamp," said Ma
"The bears will turn ya to a feast,
The marshy ground will swallow you up
And don't forget the beast...."

But as Marlie played in the swaying trees
The mud started skulking far
Snatching her ankles in the balmy breeze
Making her sink down in the tar

An icy fear crept into her heart
As she shrieked and screamed to the sky
Then woke the mysterious Beast with a start
Hungry for the child's cry

It prowled in the mud, shaking sleep from its eyes
Closing in on little Marlie Rose
Its mouth opened wide against the sunrise
As it sucked the voice from her throat

That morning, against a new day
Marlie came crawling home
Her dress caked in mud, tear-webs across her face
Happy she wasn't alone

The men went hunting to find the beast
But to no avail, it had hunkered away
And they thought the monster had ceased
But to this very day...

It still roams around the marsh
Waiting patiently for the next child,
Through torrid days, and midsummers harsh
To wander into the wild

// REITA LIU
DESIGN // DORA DUAN

What's for

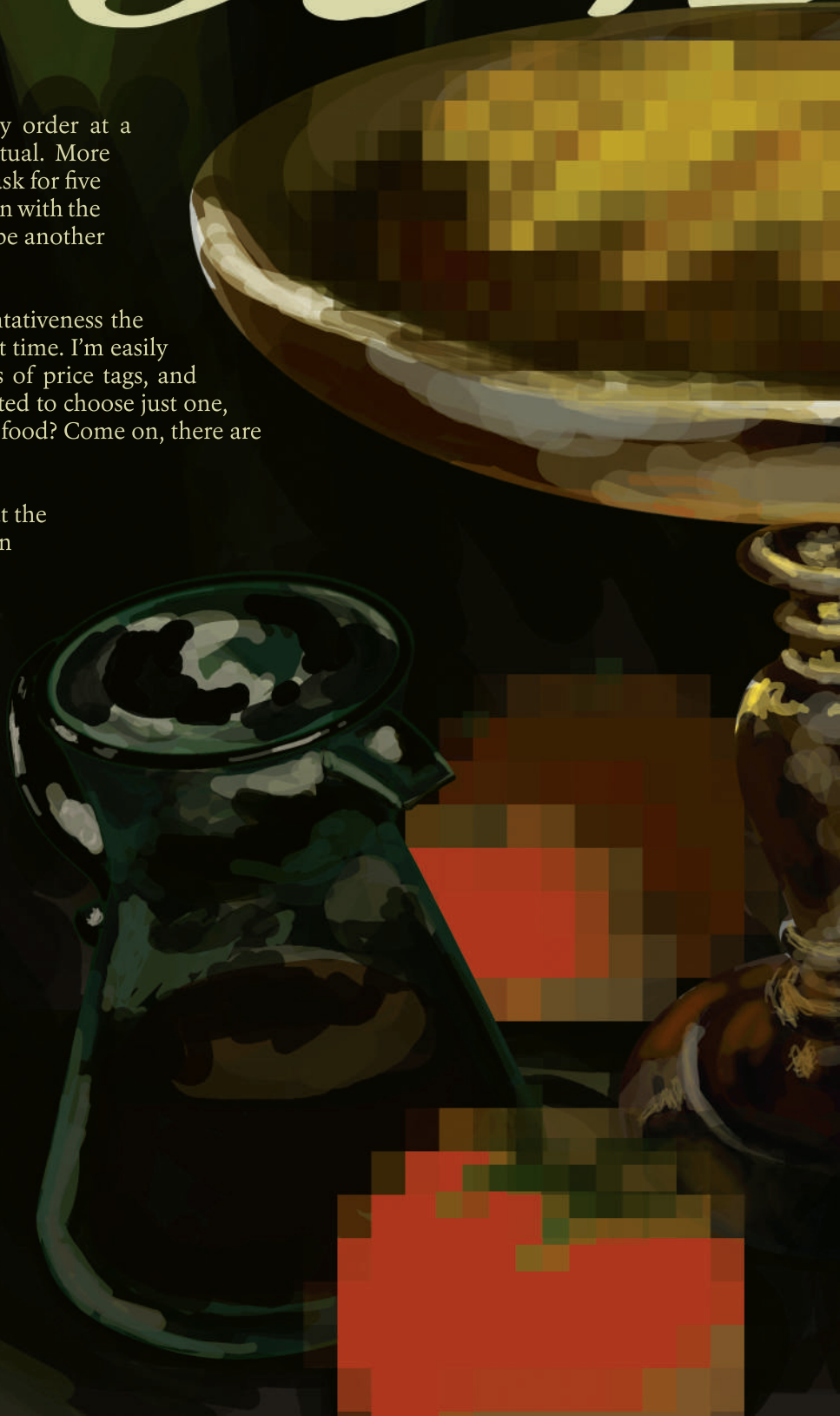
Dish

As an incredibly indecisive diner, placing my order at a restaurant is almost akin to a humiliation ritual. More often than not, I have to sheepishly shrug and ask for five more minutes to complete my intense staredown with the menu. Between me and you, it might actually be another ten.

For starters, or for entrées, I find this tasty tentativeness the worst when I visit an establishment for the first time. I'm easily overwhelmed by fancy walls of text, columns of price tags, and assortments of appetisers. How can I be expected to choose just one, maybe two, out of all these dishes of delicious food? Come on, there are close to a million things on the menu.

My decision-making skills aren't much better at the eateries I frequent, either. At Bueokae, a Korean place just past the one and only Bernard Plaza fabled by us high school kids, I'm predisposed to my carnivorous chicken katsu or my dolsoot bibimbap (both of which are the only meals I've ordered since my first time dining there). Still, it takes me at least five flip-throughs of the menu just to settle and order one of my usuals. In the end, I always adhere to this imaginary obligation. It's just a silly coin-flipping veggie vs. meat mental routine, but it holds power over me.

And believe it or not, Bueokae is where my cuisine choices are the most diverse. On school concert days, I sit myself down at Oyaji Sushi, the restaurant just across the street from the performing centre, and I ponder and I think and I order the chicken katsu. Again. Like last time, and every other time before that. It's remarkable how my order stays so consistent no matter where I go. The same dish, the same culture. You're probably thinking, wow, this gluttonous guy *really* likes chicken katsu.





// ALEX YANG

That's the problem. While I do quite like chicken katsu, and I am a little bit of a glutton, deep down I know I'm not choosing it for its flavour or its texture. I'm choosing it because in a sea of seemingly endless options, this is my raft, my safety. I know I'll enjoy it five bites in or just one bite out, but is my sworn satisfaction worth this stagnancy? After all, my default dinner is only that because I fear disappointment. Many a time I swear I'll order something special until the thought of a *bad* new dish consumes me and I chicken out once more.

If you're starting to see what I'm getting at, this strangling idea of staying in your safe zone is so much bigger than a dinner out on the town. For a lot of us, it's time to play pin the tail on the university offer, make up our minds about job applications, or get haircuts in time for the summer weather. We want to get to the "right" answer as soon as possible, but that's just not how life works. There are plethoras upon plethoras of possibilities, and while it's easiest to settle—especially when someone's waiting on your answer with a notepad and a pen—sometimes we need a little marinating (might I compare thee to my golden cutlet).

While I'm not saying a consistent chowdown is inherently stale, if your "go-to" dish is only your go-to because it's palatable, because it's unmoving and unchanging, then maybe you should take a second look at your menu. You know, forget the flavour profiles you eat all the time. Set aside your expectations and reservations for weird food combinations you never thought to try. You might hate them, for all I know, but a sour taste in your mouth is worth a try even so. Anyway, you can always come again.

I'll get the chicken katsu, thanks.
No, on second thought...

PHOTOGRAPHY // ANDREA TSUI
DESIGN // ANGIE XU

WANTED

PRODUCTIVE SUMMER

If you're anything like me, you've spent many a summer vacation aimlessly lazing around, eating Bomb Pops, and wondering if you're wasting your July and August. Ready to finally devise a plan to spend the season productively? Try this quiz for some insight.

Intention is the first step. What sounds the most like yours?

1.

- I want to do something to help me prepare for my future, whether it be university applications, a course I have next year, or any other sort of endeavor. [Progress to 2]
- I'd like to work on myself for the sake of it! In the words of Scott F. Fitzgerald, I want to start living a life I'm proud of. The world is my oyster, and I'm looking for pearls. [Progress to 3]
- Dude, that last guy said a lot. Uh, I don't really know? [Progress to 4]

2.

Thinking ahead is always good! Do you know what you want to do in the future?

- Yup, all set! [Progress to 7]
- Uh, no, not really. And I'm kind of worried about the whole deal. [Progress to 6]
- No... I'm in Grade 9. I literally just got here. [Progress to 4]

3.

Be honest... what's your relationship with the outdoors?

- All the vitamin D in my body comes from my diet. [Progress to 5]
- I exercise regularly! The sun's rays are nature's handshake with me. [Progress to 10]

4.

That's totally fine! Let's narrow things down a little, or rather, look ahead. What are your courses for next year looking like?

- I have to admit, some of these look kind of scary. Well, maybe not *scary* scary, but I don't remember how to draw the 3D shapes of molecules or what happened in 1812. Maybe I'm just in over my head for some of these. [Progress to 11]
- I think everything'll be okay! I have confidence that everything will be just fine. [Progress to 3]

5.

- I Maybe you should be less worried about getting work done this summer and more focused on working on maintaining your health—get outside and exercise! The weather will be beautiful, and even if it isn't, make the most of your time by taking care of yourself. Besides, wouldn't it be fun to come back to school absolutely ripped?

6.

ThExplore some future pathways you have! Hop on MyBlueprint or reach out to people you know for inspiration. Try working backwards by imagining your dream work environment. That way, you can narrow down professions and any necessary post-secondary programs.

7.

BeLook at you, big shot! When you look at where you want to go and where you are, what's holding you back?

- I don't have that much technical experience in my area of choice. [Progress to 8]
- I've got some prerequisites I have to meet and required courses to excel in. [Progress to 11]
- I'm actually pretty good in that department. If I'm lacking any technical experience, it's just not super feasible for me to get some over the summer. Anyway, I'm not worried about future courses right now. [Progress to 9]

8.

Put yourself out there by joining the work force or even just volunteering! After all, the best kinds of experiences are real ones you can learn from firsthand.

9.

- Create your portfolio! You seem pretty accomplished, so make sure people know it. Make record of any projects you've completed or organizations you've contributed to. Take it from a senior: if you're applying to university soon, doing all the paperwork now makes it waaaay easier later on.

10.

On a scale of nothing much to 12 different clubs, how much have you done outside of school this year?

- Not a lot, and I'm a little worried. [Progress to 8]
- A decent amount! I guess there's always more to do, but I'm not super worried about adding things to my resume at the moment. [Progress to 12]
- I've got so much to talk about between French and HOSA and Mock Trials and Math and so on and so forth... [Progress to 9]

11.

BeSelf-study some of your future material! Watch a few Crash Course videos, look over textbooks, listen to a podcast—you'll be priming yourself for success and keeping your brain trained over the break.

12.

As per the advice of the late Kurt Vonnegut, learn something new for the sake of becoming! Paint, learn an instrument, start coding, pick up a cookbook, write... Try anything that tickles your fancy!



THAT'S

// JONAH HEATH

DESIGN // SYLVIA DING

GRAPHICS // UNSPLASH

“It’s not me.”

I had uttered those words to the mirror nearly seven... eight years ago? It’s hard to remember what my life was like before the swap had happened. I was a child, no older than seven, but I remember it better than any other event in my life. It was the horrible realization that I had woken up unable to recognize myself in the mirror, a thought that had plagued my mind for as long as I can recall. Whoever I might have been at that point had been lost for ages, tossed aside in favour of the body I inhabit today.

The light shines through the window, the same way it has gleamed each long year. Morning. Its mother calls out to me. “Time for breakfast,” she echoes through the room.

She uses its name. Years ago, the body’s name would have spent an eternity bouncing against my eardrums, calling for help. It’s not me. But right now, who the body might have been is no concern of mine. It responds with a simple “coming, mom.”

Breakfast ends. I find the body now standing in the shower, just across from the bathroom mirror. The hot water had enveloped the room in steam, but it wasn’t enough to stop the body from looking down and seeing itself. It’s not me. It might not ever be.

I step out of the shower. The mirror is still foggy and unusable. As I brush my teeth, its glass surface slowly focuses once more. There is a curious silhouette of a figure standing there. Its hair is cut short, slightly curling into itself at the edges. You can see traces of baby fat on its face, but it’s fairly tall. I can just barely make out a few freckles on its face.



A dimly lit room with a window showing a patterned curtain and a yellow chair in the foreground.

ME!

It's not me.

The more I look at it, the less pleased I am. Almost every day, I tell myself I've become accustomed to the body. It's been years, and while I'm not exactly ecstatic about this body (as I'm quite sure I've proven), its existence simply never escapes me.

Reluctantly, I look back into the mirror. The body's hair has always been shorter than mine. Their neck is shorter too, but they're a lot taller than I am, their skin is healthier than mine... we look nothing alike. It's not me.

It is not me.

I can ignore the figure for hours, even weeks, but there's always that sinking feeling in the back of my mind. An itch I can't quite reach, a low hum, a whisper that echoes those same three words: "It's not me."

The body shivers. I'm constantly reminded of the existence of this being, and yet I retain my memories. However long has it been... years? A decade? It's begun to blur together, and yet I'm still myself. The body is a heavy burden. My sense of self has been hindered severely by its existence. But it's still there. The fact that I remember these parts of myself in the first place reminds me that the body hasn't won yet.

The body reaches into the closet, flipping through its clothes. I catch a brief glimpse of it all, before suddenly, standing right in front of the body is my favourite jacket.

I put it on.

I might not have my body, but that doesn't mean I'm not myself.

My English teacher starts interrogating me.

"So, tell me. Who is this Jeremy Lin person? Is he a friend of yours?"

I start to sweat. I'm nervous. Trembling. My heart is pounding, my voice quivering.

"He-he-he's..."

I pause.

"Well, he's... so much more than just a friend to me."

My hands can't seem to stop fidgeting. My fingers strike the table, making a desperate attempt to

suppress my worries.

How can I explain how

much of an inspiration

that this man is to me?

Feb 4, 2012

The New York Knickerbockers were facing the New Jersey Nets (they seriously considered becoming the Swamp Dragons at one point). Maybe it was sheer bad luck, or maybe it was the New York curse, but the Knicks' point guard rotation was a disaster due to player injuries. Even the backup's backup was out, forcing Coach Mike D'Antoni to turn to a benched scrawny Asian boy. This boy was a Harvard grad, a goof on NigaHiga's YouTube video, and a faithful Christian, but an experienced basketball player he was not. Still, he jogged off the pine, fiddling as he went (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3A6wJBZ7hE&t=23s>).

Somehow, he turned out to be the spark that the Knicks were missing, helping them end the first quarter on a high note with a score of 30-20.

The rest, dare I say, is history, with Jeremy Lin going on to close out the game with 25 points, 7 assists, and 5 rebounds, leading the Knicks to a 99-92 win. Then, over the next month, he scored 38 in the Garden against Kobe's Lakers and hit a buzzer beater to kiss Toronto goodbye on Valentine's Day, all while averaging 22.5 points, 8.7 assists and leading New York to a 9-3 record.

He became an ICON. He was the talk of every Chinese kid in the world, especially among young Asian-Americans, who saw an immigrant make his way to the biggest stage that was 99.9% Black and White at the time. It was magical seeing someone break through the stereotypical Asian barrier, showing the rest of us that we could be just as good if we chased our dreams, regardless of what they were or how hard the path could be.

Eventually, his journey took him to Toronto, where we all saw that beautiful run of '19, where he became the first Taiwanese and the first Asian-American player to ever win an NBA Championship. But that was his last dance. Despite his

valuable efforts and contributions, no team chose to sign him in the summer. He was left to head to China before bouncing back to the second-tier league of the NBA, the G-League. He was at the end of the rope, and he knew it. No matter how well he did, nobody was willing to pick him up. During a motivational speech with the Taiwanese Christian media outlet GOODTV, he even reflected on how his faith motivated him through this journey, despite his feeling like he had hit "rock bottom".

Ultimately, he headed home to Taiwan to play for three more seasons, set numerous local records, and mentored younger players. He also joined forces with his younger brother Joseph Lin to lead the New Taipei Kings to two league championships in a row.

Jeremy Lin's story is full of faith, joy, and basketball, yet it is also a journey of blood and sweat. It is the ultimate reminder for any aspiring Asian out there (ME! ME! ME!) that sometimes all we need is one lucky break: just remember to stay ready.

A CHINESE NUM

CHINESE LUCKY NUMBER 7

WHIRL
WHIRL

Back to
Dec 15, 2023

My hands are still now, and I look back at my teacher.

"He's the guy who showed me that even when the world stops cheering, you keep standing. He's not just a player, miss. He's proof that rock bottom is just a place to start over."

It might sound a bit corny, and it might sound a bit overdramatic, but it's supposed to be.

Words could never truly express the extent to which this man has changed my life and inspired me to become a better person, 1% at a time.

I'm up at 6:00 am right now, not wanting to miss a single second of Jeremy Lin's retirement. Finally, the game ends with a victory for the Kings over the Kaohsiung Aquas. The ceremony is starting, and as the camera pans to the tears rolling down Jeremy's face, I can feel my eyes start to get dry too.

As I watch his No. 7 jersey slowly go up the rafters, tears roll down my face to cement the fact that I'll never see him play professional basketball again. All kinds of celebrities,

12/28/2023

from pop singer Jay Chou to NBA Commissioner Adam Silver to even Yao Ming record retirement blessings.

He thanks his family, God, and all his fans.

Then he checks out, leaving from the players' tunnel one last time.

Linsanity Forever.

ADRIAN TENG
DESIGN // MAGGIE LI

HIGH SCHOOL

✓ To-Do's

// KATE SHAHIDI
DESIGN // KATRINA LAM

When they say that high school flies by, they are definitely not kidding. It seems like just yesterday that I had lined up outside the cafeteria for Grade 9 Orientation, excited to meet new people and start the next chapter of my life. Four years later, I've compiled a list of everything I learned, so hopefully you can apply these lessons too!

#1

Talk to as many people as you can, especially in Grades 11 and 12. While most people focus on establishing their core friend group in Grade 9, I made some of my best friends later on.

As such, it's super important to not close yourself off. You should still make an effort to build friendships, even when it seems like the "deadline" has passed.

#2

Celebrate other people's accomplishments, and always try to help out if you can. It's so important to build good relationships with other people by being a supportive friend, someone that others can count on.

WOO-HOO!

#3

Build good work habits in Grade 9 and Grade 10. The workload jump from Grade 10 to 11 is not insignificant, and it can definitely get stressful as courses become more specialized. Try to stay on top of your work and be sure to ask questions if you're struggling with any concepts!

#4

Everything that seems important in the moment will always feel way smaller when you look back on it. Whether it be a quiz you did badly on or a weird interaction you had with someone in your class, it will most definitely not matter in a few months, let alone a few years.

#5

Attend as many school spirit events as you can, and dress up for spirit days too! Even if you think you're too busy or you won't really match the theme, it's way more fun to just try than to miss out completely.

#6

Make an effort to go out with your friends at least once a week. No matter how busy you are, you can make time to hang out with your people for a minimum of 45 minutes weekly. This will help you balance out any other extracurricular or academic responsibilities you have.

#7

Take a bunch of pictures and videos! It's always nice to have memories to look back on, and photos and videos capture those moments perfectly. It doesn't matter how you look in them or if the angles are right, just try to document the fun that you have.

PHOTO PORTRAIT VIDEO PANORAMA

#8

Maintain good relationships with your teachers, even when you finish taking their classes. You never know when you'll need their advice on an issue or their help for a project, so always make sure to stay proactive and continue talking to them!

#9

Try things out for yourself before you make any commitments. While most of your friends and classmates will share their opinions about clubs and classes, it never hurts to try something yourself because you may feel differently than them! Everyone has different experiences, so stay open to everything.

#10

Enjoy it as much as you can. You may think you have all the time in the world, but it genuinely does fly by, so make the most of the time you do have.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

∴ JOIN SPYGLASS! ∴

