











Photo by Ivan Liew



# *L'eau fait pleurer, le vin fait chanter.*

YOU OPEN A BOTTLE  
OF AGED WINE.



YOU DRINK AND  
SOMETIMES YOU CRY.

BUT ON GOOD DAYS.



YOU SING.

AND SING YOU DO.



TO YOUR HEART'S  
CONTENT.

When the sun rises, you look up to the cotton candy skies, strawberry tinted and the wildflowers bloom at the side of the road. Who knows, maybe someone will pick them up and weave them into a pretty bouquet. The liquid gold sky tells the time, tells you it's the Rebirth of another new day. Remember when Sappho used to wax poems of her lover? When Rembrandt used to paint his people gold? Through Old is Gold, we sought to rediscover campus life after a year of being locked away indoors. Soft pastels, wildflowers and sunrises don't have to just be an aesthetic, but we'd like to give hope to our readers that even though the past year may have been harsh bright colours where everything turned upside down, or dull monochrome where routines were mundane and repetitive, we'll present this year to you in gentle poems and blooming spring.



*The Clair De Lune fades. We hope you came back in time,  
with a piece of yourself, old or new.*



# RETRO FUTURE

When the sun starts setting, the gold hues turn to bruising purples and moody blues, the night does not turn dark. The ferris wheel that keeps going, keeps spinning on and on lights up the night with artificial, fluorescent lights. It's not real, but don't they say your true self only comes out to play when the sun sets? Retro Future sets where you rediscover your old hobbies and interests as well as turning back time where going to eateries with our big bunch of friends was still a thing, going on snack runs at 2am at the convenience wasn't illegal. Taking a page out from the book where y2k trends have started making a comeback, we'd like to take you back to a trip in time, not too far back like we did in *Old is Gold*, but back to when our parents would've called it the 'Good ol' fashioned days'. Add a little bit of spice to it, and by spice, we mean the Gen Z humour and idealisms, we hope for you to envision yourself taking out a vinyl filled with your best memories with your friends, family or even yourself, place it onto your imaginary turntable, sit back with a glass of cherry coke and enjoy.

We see the old you and now, you want to see the present you, the new you. Don't worry, every version of you is beautiful to us. Your this, your that, and your everything, we love it all.



[Everybody hates goodbyes, endings, when 'see you later' becomes 'maybe next time' and radio silence.  
But it's never the end with **MONGA**.  
We'll always keep going, and that's a promise.]





*You had me at hello.*



# HOW TO READ HOW OW

## HOW TO READ MONGA'21 MEGA ISSUE

*(OK lah, it's not a PDF anymore, so don't be lazy ok?  
We heard reading books is a trend these days ;))*

### ① (DON'T) LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN

It's already bad enough that we're always looking at our screen from morning to night, so let's try to elevate the stress of squinting at your phone a little too often. Now that you have a physical book in your hands, why not close your TikTok for a bit or stop scrolling your Instagram feed? Close your blinds, or maybe open your window to let the cool breeze wash over you, light up a scented candle and make yourself your favorite drink in an aesthetic glass (if drinking Coke from a wine glass is your thing, that's fine too!), just sit back at your favorite spot on the couch or maybe your bed, relax and treat yourself to some well deserved me-time.

② Setting the mood is a fundamental part of enjoying MONGA, or anything really ;) Plug in your phone to your speakers, turn up the volume and press play on the Spotify playlist that best suits your current mood. Let's just say we have the dreamy angel and the dark angel, yin and yang.



Here, the Old is Gold (S1) playlist will remind you of the dreaminess of cotton candy sunsets and gardens filled with wildflowers and gold, dripping in honey.

And here, the Retro Future (S2) playlist will remind you of the long sunny road trips with your friends on a breezy highway, wind whipping through your hair and ending the day at a random cafe or bar, neon lights shining on your face with you thinking 'life is really worth living'.



P.S. Click the Spotify Code and you will be redirected to Spotify to view the playlist.

### AIYA, JUST READ ONLY! ③

Okay, maybe you don't have time for all that fancy stuff and just sitting around. You haven't held anything but your phone or laptop to read for a really long time but let's try to be optimistic! As you flip through these pages, you're looking at not just one person's hard work, but a collective effort of the person behind the story, the eye behind the lens of the camera, the words that came from the heart of an individual, the brain behind every design. Some stories even come with tears. These are things that make every page worth reading.

### IF IT'S NOT ON INSTAGRAM, IT DIDN'T HAPPEN. ④

How would you post a whole ass magazine on instagram? We took great care to make almost every page so aesthetic, you just can't help but choose your best filter (or maybe none at all! Sunlight is the new filter anyways), take a snapshot and post it on your IG stories! Which is your favorite page? Your favorite article? The best design? The prettiest photo? Let everyone know that you're reading the highly anticipated MEGA ISSUE of MONGA 2021, make your friends from other universities jealous that you have a magazine specifically catered just for you, and solely created by students! Is this a shameless promotion? Maybe, but we would really appreciate it if you could tag us @musamonga if you do post anything!





PSST! YOU CAN  
CLICK ON THE  
SECTIONS

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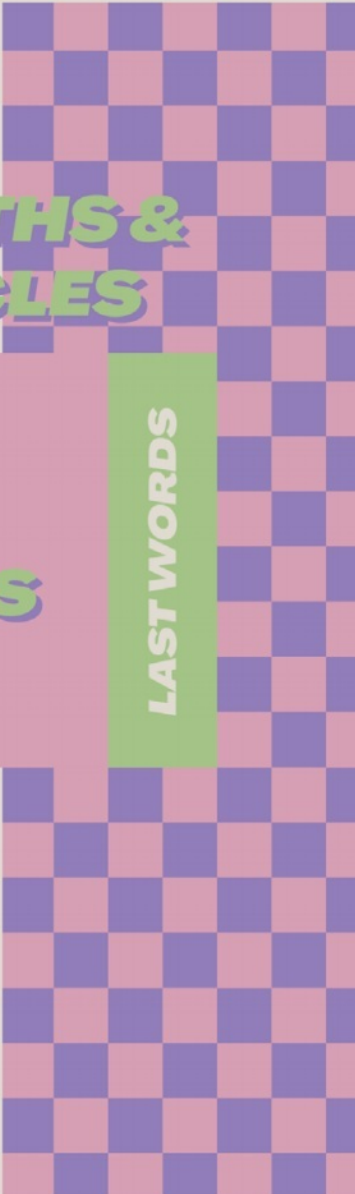






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LAST WORDS





Click on their pictures or go to @musamonga to read their full stories.

# HUMANS OF

Written by Christie Wong



INGRID

"I'm not perfect, but I don't think I deserved whatever they said about me."

Aren't we all just tiny humans,

Written by Christie Wong



Jiaying

I didn't want to be the average kid who had nothing to offer and I didn't want to be discarded, neglected or overlooked again. That's why I'm such an overachiever, because I'm afraid.

Awkward, anxious, exciting, adventurous, curious, reckless, headstrong, passionate, furious. The defining years of my life, my angsty yet compelling teenage years were spent abroad in two nations, Nigeria first, then Spain.

Now, when I'm referred to as the "Banana" I wear it as a badge of honour instead of disgrace.



Written by Shabnam Sidhu

WAF A



Written by Ashley Lim

ASHLEY

at the end of the day?

# MONASH

This project is inspired by Humans of New York



Written by Shabnam Sidhu

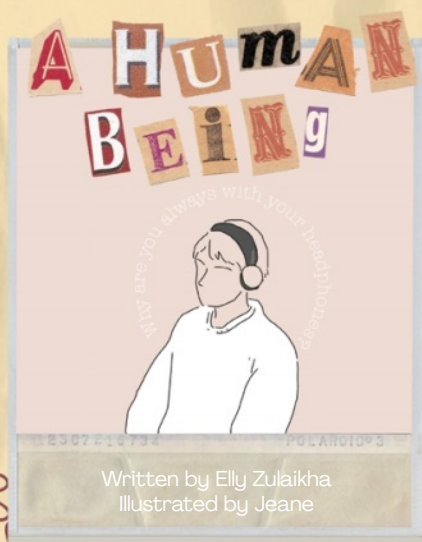


As rudimentary as it may sound, the expression “blood is thicker than water” is of immense significance towards the close-knit relationship I share with my family. Having lived abroad, and then moving back home, my family has been the only constant in my life.

It's ironic how I felt an overwhelming sense of loneliness despite being in a room full of people I was supposed to count on.



Written by Ashley Lim



I regarded any social contact with another human being as an intrusion into the safe space of my solitude, and it would seem best to avoid establishing new friendships. I thought the world outside still seemed to me, dauntingly noisy and clamorous. Until I met Amina.



When you feel like an outsider, that grass always looks greener inside the bubble. But as a solo rider, not affiliating to any bubble has driven me to look for belonging in the most unexpected and peculiar of places.

That's what brought both of us together.



I've had it, I really don't want to care whatever, whoever has to say to me because I know myself best. My pace, my mental health, I know it all myself. Even if it means failing certain expectations towards me, at least I know whatever it is, I tried my best.

The strength, bravery and perseverance of Myanmar citizens will continue to inspire me. I've never been more proud to be a citizen of Myanmar.





# RITHI

When it comes to grief, regret is a word that gets mentioned often. We all have things we wish we'd done differently or things we feel terrible about. For me, I wish to say goodbye one last time.

Just like how calico cats are considered lucky due to their rarity, her name Leap also means lucky in Khmer, and I really was lucky to have had her there during those dark, lonely times. People would call her my wife as an inside joke because we were inseparable. She always knew when I was feeling down, so she would stay near me and purr.

A lot of people may think that it's weird that I have this much affection for a pet more than I have for a human. Sometimes humans can be unnecessarily difficult to deal with and they're more nefarious in ways they show that they don't like you. Animals are more trustworthy, more direct than humans because they don't have this sort

of 'fakeness' that we do. It's something I appreciate more which made my view on humans much more cynical than the average person.

Ironically, it was my carefree view of life that became my undoing. Constantly choosing to free me from any kind of responsibility (running away literally) turns out to be the one that trapped me in my careless mistake.

I knew she was sick for a while, she was having stomach issues so we sent her to the vet, but I didn't bother going because I assumed everything was okay, which was reassured by the doctor. However, the next day, her symptoms worsened so we brought her to the vet again. She had to stay there for two days. I didn't see the need in meeting her within those days because I thought she was going to be fine. I am going to see her again anyway, right? She left us on a chilly morning in March three years ago. 10 years of my life squeezed into a cardboard box; not even a proper burial at first. Now she rests in the backyard of my girlfriend's house under two fruit trees.



After Leap's death, things went downhill from there, and I took a gap year before Monash. It really was by far the hardest year of my life, but her death marked the end of an era of hardships and started a new journey of personal growth and acceptance. While I still regret from time to time that I couldn't properly say my goodbyes, Leap's presence is still felt by keeping her memories alive through my self-improvement process: growing to appreciate the smallest things in life, understanding the consequences of not taking responsibility, and being more open in expressing my emotions.

I am still the quiet, cynical yet less-of-an-ass-now, carefree-yet-careful person and I suppose humans aren't as bad as I assumed. But I still rather much prefer the company of a pet than anything else -if someone were to ask me.

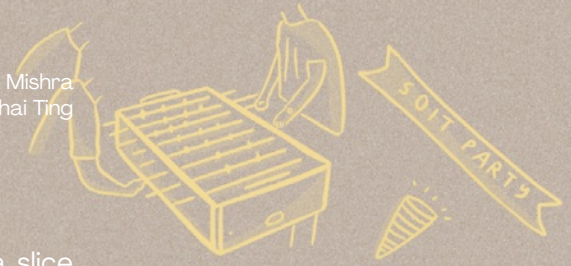
Written by Qistina Binte Bumidin  
Illustrated by Chai Ting





# 4 A.M. buddy buddy buddy

Written by Avantika Mishra  
Illustrated by Chai Ting



Sitting by myself on a lumpy bean bag, a slice of (cold and therefore disgusting) pizza in hand, I remember feeling excited and overwhelmed yet somehow fed up and underwhelmed by everything that was happening around me. The MUSA lounge had it all: unfamiliar faces of bored seniors, the occasional scream by that one guy who's way too aggressive on PS5, the clanking of the foosball table, the speakers blaring boring pop music, the usual. Long story short, I was regretting my impulsive decision of paying that RM5 fee for the SOIT senior party. For God's sake, it was still O-Week but here I was, surrounded by literal strangers.



Oct 19,  
batch?

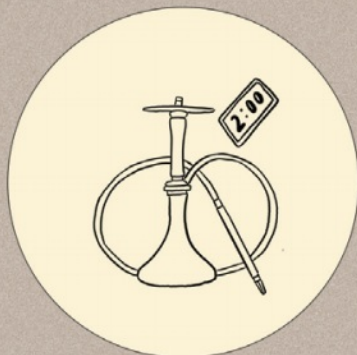


Just as I was about to give up and binge Brooklyn Nine-Nine with mediocre Thai comfort food (sorry not sorry), a guy whose face I couldn't quite place came up to me asking, "Hey, October '19 batch as well?". And I kid you not, I released a breath I didn't even know I was holding - What. A. Relief.

I hadn't known at that moment but I'd find out in the next couple of months just how grateful I was for this guy's presence (let's just call him T for now). When we first met, he literally told me his entire life story in one night and I just stood there listening, gauging how much I should believe this guy and how much I should tell him in turn. Later that night, we left and talked as if we weren't just total strangers 10 minutes ago, then he asked me out for dinner the next day. I was confused to say the least but he literally just wanted company.

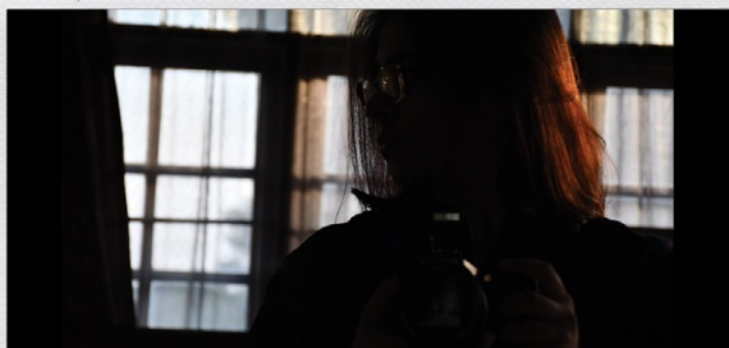






He was there when we'd need to grab a quick bite of shawarma and a 2AM hookah from that one Arabian place nobody could quite commute to (the server let us blast Bollywood jams - he passed all the vibe checks); he was there when we'd literally spend hours of our evenings just walking around the Canopy walk, Sunway Pyramid, random ass deserted streets where we once got chased by dogs at 4AM and had to hitch a ride with surprisingly friendly strangers (never again though); he was there with a bitter espresso in hand for me during those unbearable 8AM math lectures; and he was there to pick me up from the airport even when I thought it'd bother him - it cost us an RM1000 fine but let's not go there.

But I've been there for him too, I'd run over from my room in SMR to Subway when he needed urgent dating advice (a Herculean feat when you're sleep deprived), we'd stay together on campus until 6 in the morning figuring out how to do labs, I'd nod and reluctantly agree that whatever music he was listening to was "so great, so cool" when he'd insistently hand me his earphones (it was always Machine Gun Kelly or G-Eazy anyway), I'd rush down the building when he needed a smoke and a good conversation - we had a give-and-take sort of friendship going. We've talked about anything and everything without really judging each other for it.



Turns out, it doesn't matter in the end does it? Different groups of friends made sure that we wouldn't really see much of each other, well at least he had his people and I never was the type to fit right into a group that well - I've always kinda floated around solo, doing my thing. People mistake it for me being a stone-cold bitch and a not-so-approachable individual, so you can imagine my surprise when a guy comes up to me out of nowhere and introduces himself. Now I know this isn't as much of a story as it is a nostalgic rant about being friends with T. But I miss him and the time we spent navigating uni life together, and I don't know how to say this to his face. What would he even say to me?

We've been terribly awkward at texting anyway. Just want to end this by saying: Hey man, you're like the brother I never had. I don't even know if you feel the same way I do, what do you think of me? I know you probably won't ever tell me. And even if what we had lasted for just the first few months of our uni lives, I really wish we'd get to do it all over again. Can't wait to see what other shit we get up to once this dumb pandemic is over (though getting lost at Sunway Lagoon at midnight wasn't our best idea tbh) - if you're ever up for it again.

SUNWAY  
LAGOON

SUNWAY  
LAGOON



Written by Layan Alkaf  
Illustrated by Chai Ting



“Kimia, she has cancer”

Deafening screams were blasting in the background, but that sentence that came out of my mother’s mouth—I heard it crystal clear.

The call ended.

For a split second, every part of me comes to a halt as my thoughts try to catch up.

I sat in disbelief. We were supposed to go to the cinema the other day. She had to go to the hospital instead because of a digestion issue. I thought that the worst-case scenario would just be appendicitis.

I thought to myself: “How did this happen?”

Being a med student is already so draining. From studying all about the illnesses that the human body can bear to witnessing the disheartening and goriest of things. I wonder if I could ever be strong enough to endure these sights every day of my life.

# KIMIA

## trigger warning: death

I see myself being immensely disturbed, especially after seeing my aunt in this state.

I held her hand while she was in the hospital bed and told her how I don’t think I’m smart enough and can handle being in the medical field. Her kind eyes glanced back at mine.

“You’re a smart beautiful girl, you can succeed in whatever you try. You will definitely become a great doctor.”



Despite having to pretend she was fine, shave her head, and pose for the camera—she still didn’t know she had cancer. She’s been told that she had ovarian cancer that went away and she had to go through chemo to prevent it from coming back. I understand how hard it is for my family to tell her, but I still can’t fathom that we all lied to her. My grandmother even told me to photoshop my aunt’s pathology results to show her that it’s gastric ulcer instead of gastric cancer. I feel horrible for going through with this.

Anyone in the medical field agrees that a patient’s unexpected death is the most challenging aspect of their career. I can’t imagine being in the moment where I would put my coat back on and prepare to tell a family that literally the worst thing imaginable has happened.

It happened to us.

“Kimia, she’s dead.”

This time round, those three words bypassed my ears and directly hit my heart.

My aunt has always been the striving force of my life, despite not being present on the earthside. Generous, compassionate, and altruistic are all an understatement to what her character was. She even wrote in her will not to bring her flowers after she’s gone. She requested to donate the money saved up for the charity organisation she was voluntarily working for.

I stood in the cemetery, yelling her name whilst tears were running down my cheeks. I glimpsed at her peaceful lifeless face one last time.



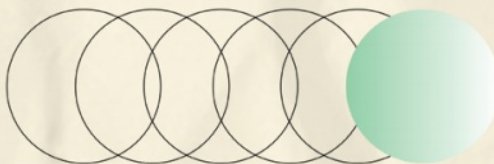
“I promise you, I’m gonna make it. I will succeed and will not let anyone else go through what we went through.”





“How would you tell an 8-year-old kid that they have an autoimmune disease and chronic illness with no cure?”

Written by Elly Zulaikha



I was that kid with Psoriasis. It is a skin disease where the skin cells multiply faster than normal skin cells. The skin will turn red and leave white scales behind. Plus, it can show up anywhere on the body. Since my skin was extremely dry, I had difficulties moving—walking, lying down, running, and even sleeping—without inflicting a new wound.

When I was eight, I frequently visited this salon to have my scalp cleaned by this Auntie. She knew I have Psoriasis and told my mom about it. ‘The doctors would just give her steroids’. It did not work.

This is not my first time being diagnosed with an incurable disease. The first diagnosis was at the age of six; an irregular heartbeat. Back then, I just did not understand, nor comprehend, the gravity of this news meant for my parents.

Later, I was diagnosed with Psoriatic Arthritis (Psoriasis + Arthritis) when I was 11. It was painful to walk and my knees were hurting, so I went to check for the doctors. But they—and the MRI—told me it was nothing. Deep down I knew it was.

I remember when my mom apologized to me about this when I was 15. Psoriasis was genetically passed down from my mom’s

family for generations. I assured her it was fine, and it was not her fault. But deep down, it must have been challenging for her, as she was helpless and forced to witness her own daughter grow up with it.

People generally did not understand what Psoriasis is, and they refused to understand it. Once, a roommate told me my skin flakes (caused by Psoriasis) were annoying as they messed up the cleanliness of the room. Another person even advised me that I should take better care of my hygiene.

At 19, I contracted dengue. Consequently, my Psoriasis caught up all over my body. My dad bought a bathtub for me, as there was none in our house. He even bought 20KG of Epsom salt! But showering was excruciating. Imagine putting soap on a big wound that is all over your body. At least the bathtub made it somehow less painful.

Later that year, I enrolled in a biologic program. It was a solution proposed by a doctor we found, instead of relying on steroids. But at age 21, I stopped going for the program for a year. I still have my Psoriasis, but it is bearable. I am in a healthier mindset and I can handle it better. I admit that Psoriasis is difficult and painful, but it makes me a stronger individual.



# SNAPSHOT



SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE  
SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE  
SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE  
SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE




# CAMPUS MEMORIES CAMPUS MEMORIES




# CAMPUS MEMORIES CAMPUS MEMORIES




MONOCHROME  
MONOCHROME  
MONOCHROME



WINNER: @ALLY.TEH.TZE.ROU



WINNER: @KC29\_



WINNER: @ISH\_JPEG



RECHARGE  
RECHARGE  
RECHARGE



WINNER: @YISHAANN



WINNER: @YENG\_DII



WINNER: @SANDAR28\_





WINNER: @JINGEYBELLS



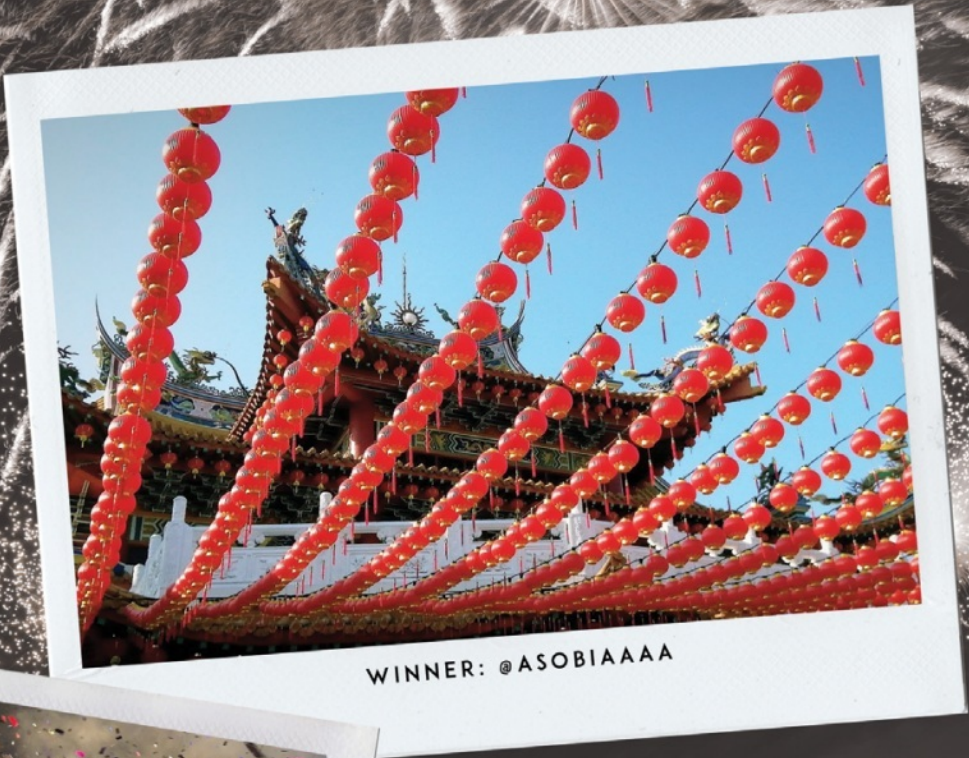
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WINNER: @GAN\_JOANN

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STREETS  
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WINNER: @ASOBIAAAA



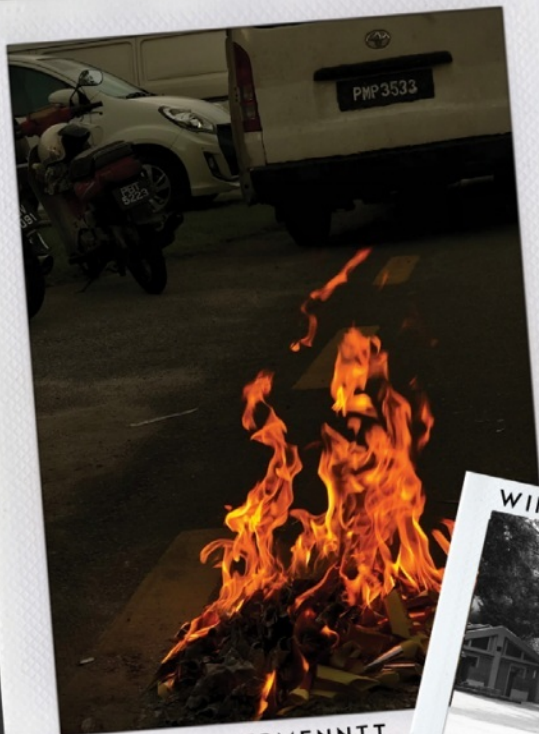
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WINNER: @CHUIYANG\_MOK

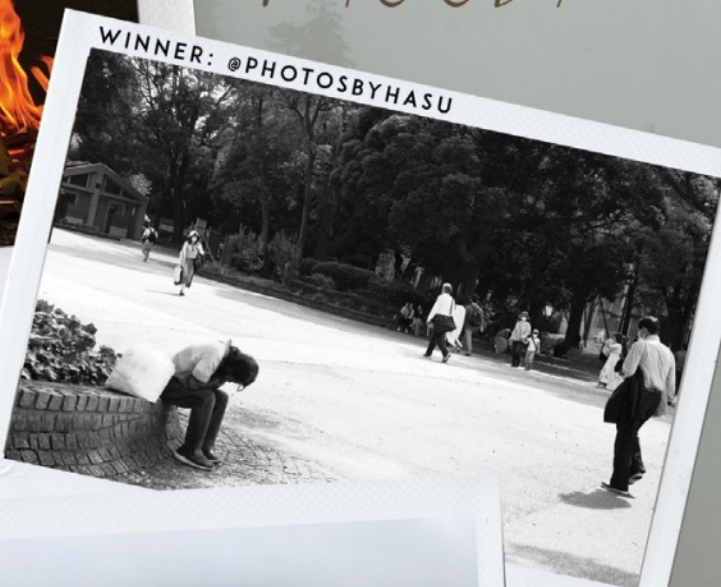
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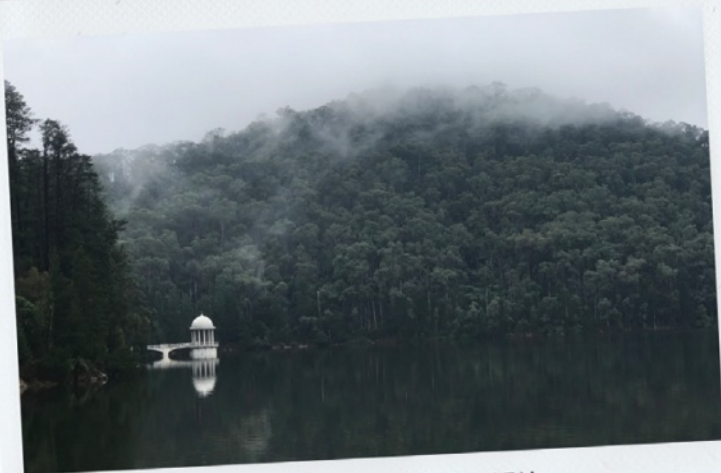


WINNER: @SHERMENNTT

MOODY  
MOODY  
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WINNER: @PHOTOSBYHASU



WINNER: @TKER\_SHIEN













# SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE



#MONASHSNAPSHOTS  
IN COLLABORATION  
WITH MONASH MALAYSIA  
PHOTOGRAPHY SOCIETY

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS  
PARTICIPATED IN SNAPSHOT CHALLENGE!

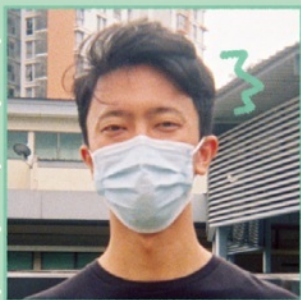




# portraits OF MONASH







# portraits OF MONASH







portraits  
OF MONASH 







# Rock Café

We know you miss it.



Photos Prissie Ong

| Article by Layan Alkaf

*DISCLAIMER: This article covers non-halal food.*

## “Eh abang, satu limau ais”

As I eavesdrop, I go down memory lane to a time where I would have to push through the crowds just to find a table, only to be seated under the scorching sun. Due to the new norm, the claustrophobia I used to bottle is all a distant memory. Despite current circumstances, it is safe to say that the vibrancy of the Rock Cafe is evergreen. I still found myself amidst an atmosphere filled with chatter and potent aromas, with an array of cuisines shown on the posters that are plastered all over the stalls.

If there is one thing that all Monashians have in common, it would probably be the fact that we have all eaten at the Rock at least once. The affordability of the food and generous portions never fail to fill up your growling stomach. The chaotic yet refreshing ambience is a breather from

the ingrained university stress. Whether it is a spot for gossip or an impromptu sports bar, it is fair to assume that going to the Rock Cafe is an integral factor of our time at Monash.

The open-air food court filled with infinite stalls is a true ode to the diversity that is infused within Malaysian culture. The assortment of available dishes shows no bounds; ranging from the different regions of Asia to the Middle East, specialising in recipes that appreciate and highlight the art of fusion cuisine. Whatever you're craving, be it at any time of day, the Rock Cafe has your back.

Before embarking on our culinary adventure, two small cups of limau ais were the perfect thirst-quencher duo to combat the radiant heat.



We then went on to order Kimchi (RM 5) and Fried Dumplings (RM 7) as a starter. The kimchi never disappoints as the cabbage and radish tasted fresh, just like we have always remembered. From the first bite itself, the dripping fish sauce leaves a strong tinge on your tongue. We immediately recognised the blend of chilli powder, garlic, ginger and sugar. The crescent-shaped dumplings arrived piping hot, seamlessly pleated and crispy in texture w(author’s note: the succulent yet tender pork filling oozed into my mouth, leaving me in complete awe).

It was then time to further explore our taste buds, as we ordered Mixed Beef and Chicken Teppanyaki (RM 13) from the Japanese corner. As promised by the appealing image that was present, we were anticipating the savoury and flavourful taste of the beef but were left with a disappointing and cold rubbery taste instead. The chicken, however, lived up to our expectations as it was nicely seasoned and lush, making up for the beef that accompanied it.

Next in line was the Ikan Bakar (RM 9) from the Indonesian vendor Ayam Bakar Jakarta, as we wanted to try something different other than their signature Nasi Bakar. Unfortunately, we found ourselves slightly unsatisfied. Although it passed the presentation test, the fish looked visually appealing with its charcoal-grilled texture. It was not as mouth-watering and seasoned as it looked on the poster. The sambal definitely saved the day as it added an element of moisture and flavour that the fish was lacking—making the meal more delightful.

Last but not least, we tried the Shish Kebab with Puri bread (RM 11.80) which was the last meal on our list. The blend of Middle Eastern and Indian flavours aided in ending our “global” food journey on a good note. The flatbread was soft enough to break yet crispy enough to feel the crunch and the chicken kebab was brittle and its flavour was also quite overpowering. Although the chutney was watery, it still had that subtle taste of mint that balanced out the strong flavour of the kebab.

Fried Dumplings RM7



Limau Ais and Watermelon Juice



Ikan Bakar RM9



Shish Kebab with Puri Bread RM11.80





Kow Loon bubble waffles and roasted duck. These stalls are part of the countless options available at Rock Cafe.

We then washed down the collision of flavours in our mouths with another round of drinks. The freshly blended watermelon juice hit the spot just as expected, as it is the perfect beverage to end a feast on a humid day in Bandar Sunway.

Stumbling upon this particular hotspot for Monashians gave me another opportunity to explore the food, those of which I never even knew was offered. Honestly speaking, we believe it was a great experience. Not only did it bring back fond memories, but it also made us appreciate the simplicity of the place. The Rock cafe caters to everyone's taste buds, be it picky or refined, and offers a variety of choices.

At the end of the day, there is no doubt that the Rock cafe will always be every student's "go to" pit stop to have a meal in Bandar Sunway. Whether it is Plan B, C, D, or E— the Rock Cafe will forever be in our minds.



FOOD  
7.5/10



ATMOSPHERE  
9/10



PRICE  
9.5/10



ACCESSIBILITY  
6.5/10

It is important to note that the Rock Cafe is not wheelchair friendly due to the rugged pavements. They also do not take into account people who have difficulty in hearing or affected by overstimulating environments. They also do not have many vegan/vegetarian options despite it being prevalent in all the cuisines mentioned above. There is also a slight issue with communication as some vendors don't understand English that well, posing a small risk of misunderstanding their customer which is a problem when it comes to serving food that may contain allergens due to this slight oversight.

**With that said, Rock Cafe is MONCH approved!**



# December Eighteen

Walking into the set of a Wong Kar Wai movie?



Photos by Vihaan Philip

Article by Shabnam Sidhu

*December Eighteen is halal friendly!*

## It feels like you're on the set of a Wong Kar Wai movie.

A working jukebox playing Chinese oldies, posters of popular East Asian films plastered on walls, and carrom boards being repurposed as dining tables draw attention to the lush recreation of 1980s interior that December Eighteen evocatively executes. Deriving its name from the date the owners of this stationery-antique store as well as restaurant got hitched, December Eighteen offers a pleasing dining experience, amplified by the artistic olde-worlde ambience.

A prominent aspect of December Eighteen's menu is that it offers a wide variety of local as well as East Asian delicacies, some with flavourful twists. It took us a while to decide on what to eat as almost everything looked delectable.

The Deep-Fried Dumplings (RM 10) and Sweet Potato Fries (RM12) were the two appetizers we decided to savour first. The chicken and vegetable filled dumplings were



well-seasoned but lacked remarkability as the wrappers were slightly too thick, giving off a rather doughy taste and texture. The sweet potato fries were crispy, but failed to impress us as they tasted just as you would expect them too, sweet and slightly salted.

The mains on the other hand is most likely where December Eighteen gained its popularity from. As it approached noon, we noticed the tables around us placing orders for the same dishes, relishing every bite, just as much as we did.

The Orange Chicken Rice Bowl (RM15.90) was the perfect blend of sweet and savoury. Topped with corn, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, as well as an over medium egg to accompany the strong orange and mildly peppery flavour of the chicken, this rice bowl was appetizing, every bite was distinct.

The Scallion Chicken Noodles (RM15.90) was equally delightful. The noodles and deep-fried chicken cutlets alongside a poached egg, and scallion garnishing, was a desirable combination. Although occasionally overpowered by the strong taste of scallion, the simplicity of this dish made every flavour stand out.

The final main dish was Nasi Lemak with Curry Chicken (RM18.90), a local favourite and comfort food. The curry chicken looked



Scallion Chicken Noodles RM15.90



Orange Chicken Rice Bowl RM15.90







mouth-watering, however failed to meet our expectations as it had a bland flavour to it, slightly tangy and lacking the spice that most Malaysians are accustomed to. Nonetheless, the fragrant rice, spicy sambal, and salted hard-boiled egg made up for the lack of flavour in the chicken, making this a piquant meal.

To go along with our meal, the drinks ordered include an Iced Matcha Latte (RM15), Signature Café Mocha (RM15), and Iced Chocolate (RM10). The matcha latte was creamy and sweet, with a mild earthy taste to it. The mocha had a bitter aftertaste but the high caffeine content does have its perks. Lastly, the iced chocolate was rather watery and lacked the sweetness one would expect from it.

December Eighteen possesses the interior and food presentation of a social media post worthy restaurant. The décor exudes the charm of a bygone era while the food was appetizing.

A functional vintage jukebox. You can select one of the many Shanghai Jazz tracks for only RM0.50.



Nasi Lemak with Curry Chicken RM18.90



**FUN FACT:**

This place is halal friendly and just a six minute walk from the Mentari BRT Station!

Iced Chocolate RM10.00  
Iced Matcha Latte RM15.00  
Signature Café Mocha RM15.00



**FOOD**

7/10



**ATMOSPHERE**

9/10



**PRICE**

10/10



**ACCESSIBILITY**

8/10

**December Eighteen is absolutely MONCH approved!**



# MONCH in KL

Photos by Tsheten Bhutia

Article by Elly Zulaikha

In the heart of KL

## KAFE KLEPTOKRAT

is also along one of the busiest roads during rush hour, you would probably miss this place if you travel by car.

Nevertheless, Kafe Kleptokrat is arguably popular among foodies and Foodstagram folks!

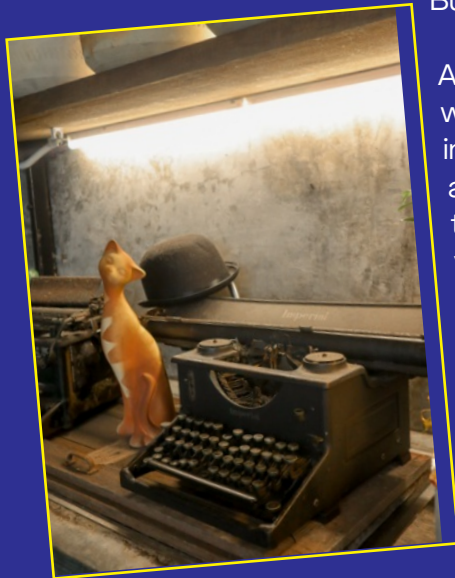
With that being said, this place can easily host long waiting lines if it's during office lunchtime and the weekends. So when we got there, we had to wait for a bit.

But good things come for those who wait, right? Exactly!

As we were ushered inside, the first thing we noticed was how the interior's aesthetic made it seem like you're in an authentic, Malay kampung (village) house BUT with a twist of making you feel like you're on a vacation. From their classic, colorful, glass window panes to a few vintage pieces i.e. mechanical sewing machines and old portraits placed throughout the restaurant, to even some familiar beach/poolside furniture, we were SO happy that we got here.

Meanwhile, for the seating arrangements, they have a concept of indoor-to-outdoor setting and, depending on the weather and the crowd,

you can choose to sit in either area. There is also a pool in the middle of the cafe, where it will make you feel like you're on a vacation— another noteworthy feature to look for when you're there!





Kafe Kleptokrat offers a fusion menu, though most of it consists of Malaysian dishes some of us are already familiar with. But because we wanted to savor the Malaysian cuisines and also save up some space in our belly for our next cafe trip, we ordered: **Soto Ayam with Begedil**, (RM24), a chicken/meat-based soup with fried vermicelli noodles, shredded chicken meat, some ketupat (packed rice) cubes as well as some bean sprouts and ground peanuts, whereas begedil is essentially a deep-fried potato patty. Don't worry, there is even a vegan option for this dish!

RM  
24

### Soto Ayam with Begedil



Growing up, I remember this is a classic, comforting dish I've had, especially during festive season and/or when I attended someone else's wedding reception. Seeing this on the menu, I knew I must order this. So when the food comes piping hot, I was delighted at the familiar components laid gloriously in a medium-sized clay bowl.

When I tasted the soup, it lacked some balanced seasonings, but the rest of the dish was okay.

Fun fact: Soto is a traditional Indonesian dish but is also popular in Singapore and Malaysia!

Next, we got ourselves **Laksa Johor** (RM32), a spaghetti dish with a thick fish-based gravy and some ulam (chopped veggies) on the side.

Generally, finding a good Laksa Johor is rare, as Johoreans are usually the expert in creating this dish. However, a good Laksa Johor can be distinguished by their rich gravy, which usually incorporates some spiced curry beef, a variety of other herbs such as lemongrass and blended chili, as well as ikan parang (wolf-herring fish), or ikan tenggiri (a family of mackerel fish) that are boiled until it is extremely tender before everything is blended together to form the gravy that is uniquely Laksa Johor.

### Laksa Johor



RM32

Another fun fact: Laksa Johor originates from Johor, a southern state in Malaysia, and is typically served during the festive season, which is the Hari Raya Puasa celebration!

However, their version of Laksa Johor lacks the 'oomph' factor, especially with its gravy, which is a bit on the watery side. Fortunately, its large portion did make it up for its price so, all is forgiven.



Last but not least, we went for THE classic national dish that is the **Nasi Lemak dan Ayam Goreng Berempah** (RM21), which is fragrant rice cooked in coconut milk and pandan leaf, topped with spicy, red chili sambal (paste), some slices of cucumber, a boiled egg, fried anchovies, and ground peanuts. Plus, we ordered Ayam Goreng Berempah or ‘spiced, herb blended fried chicken’ as an additional protein.

### Nasi Lemak dan Ayam Goreng Berempah



RM 21

The fried chicken and sambal were arguably the saving grace of this dish. The spiced blended fried chicken had that familiar savory yet, a slightly fragrant note from its herb marinate. As for the sambal, it was well-balanced, yet it is a bit on the spicier side. But hey, if you’re Malaysian, a little spice is absolutely mandatory and it’s something that we are used to!

Okay, final fun fact: A classic nasi lemak originally did not have Ayam Goreng Berempah but people began incorporating a variety of unique side dishes including this fried chicken a few decades ago!

Unfortunately, the fragrant rice didn’t live up to its expectations even though a good, classic nasi lemak should have both the spicy, well-seasoned sambal and the fragrant coconut rice. Good effort though for making the nasi lemak look visually appealing.

As for the drinks, we ordered one **Kamal Sutra** (RM15) with wild mint, lemon juice, and lime wedge. This is a perfect drink for when it is scorching hot outside, as the refreshing tinges of mint, lemon, and lime will make you go “Ahhhh”. Lest we forget, we also ordered a Little Princess (RM15) with a passion fruit puree, lime juice, and wild mint. You can think of this drink as the sweeter cousin of Kamal Sutra, with the same refreshing element as the former, yet as it travels down your throat, it leaves a sweet note from the passion fruit puree.

All in all, I still loved the overall aesthetics and ambiance of this restaurant. By the time it was late afternoon and the crowd was long gone, we then went up to the second floor for some pictures—and yes, you shouldn’t miss this session because I guarantee you, your Instagram posts will look BOMB AF!

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>6 /10</b>
<b>AMBIENCE</b>	<b>7.5 /10</b>
<b>PRICE</b>	<b>6 /10</b>
<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>	<b>8 /10</b>
<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>10 /10</b>

But of course, this is still a MONCH approved place to visit!



## A Room for Dessert FEEKA COFFEE ROASTERS

By the time we took a Grab from Kafe Kleptokrat to Feeka Coffee Roasters, it was pouring. But not gonna lie though, we got a little giddy as we made our way to this cafe by Grab. At first glance, you might've not noticed this cafe due to how 'hidden' it looks. Housed among a row of old, converted townhouses opposite Lion Office Tower, do look out for its semi-covered courtyard and green exterior, if you're on foot from KLCC Canopy Walk.

Remember, when in doubt, use Google Map for easy directions OR Grab is another option for you.

The name of the cafe, Feeka, or fika in Swedish, means "to take a break". So literally no matter what day or time you plan to visit this cafe, you'll notice everyone who visits this cafe will automatically just vibin' or chillin', thus making it a perfect spot for an urban retreat.



When we got inside, we were immediately welcomed with the smell of brewed coffee lingering in the air. We noticed the interior screams rustic with 'unfinished' walls, the lights are slightly dimmed which creates an intimate vibe perfect for some good ol' deep conversations with your friends or your partner. Yet, if it is during the earlier part of the day, its many windows provide an abundance of natural light to pass through— which means you can take some 'natural, gentle sun kissed' kinda selfie while you enjoy some good breakfast and coffee.

However, it was around 4.30 PM at the time, the light outside turned cooler which immediately made the cafe look even more inviting and cozy. In it, there was a modest-sized crowd where everyone was seen chatting away, relaxing and enjoying some good company.

As soon as we settled down at our seat near the window, their friendly staff came to us with their menu and asked if we're ready to order right away. While Feeka Coffee Roasters offer an array of freshly-made pastries, cakes, sandwiches and light meals, we did ask for their recommendations and told them that we wanted to try just a select few from their menu because we were quite full from our lunch at Kafe Kleptokrat.



They instantly recommended their best-selling **Almond Salted Mille Crêpes** (RM15), a 26 layer of crepes and cream with a salted almond glaze and bits of



**Almond Salted Mille Crêpes**

RM15

toasted almond. We quickly found out why it is a fan favorite—the sweetness from the crepe layers with cream were just nice and irresistibly smooth, but as soon as the sweet yet slightly salty note from their caramel glaze entered our mouth, it was a delight.

Nevertheless, we recommend that you pair this show-stopper cake with a double shot of espresso as the bitterness from the coffee will neutralize your mouth and you'll find yourself wanting more.

Apart from the mille crepe, we also got the **Lemon Ricotta Pancakes** (RM21), a poppy seed ricotta pancakes with lemon zest, earl grey crumb, and seasonal compote—arguably a favorite among breakfast goers. Although it is a breakfast item, the manager told us that she asked their chef to make one for us—much to our surprise and pleasure. As soon as it arrived at our table, we were blown away by how impeccably GORGEOUS the pancakes looked. It was almost too good to destroy such a beautiful dish, but our work calls for the pancake demolition.

We sliced the fluffy five-stacked pancakes carefully, then we took a swipe of the berry compote and a slice of the fresh strawberry before slowly indulging in it. The taste was as pleasant as it looks—light, yet you can still savor a tinge of sweetness from the vanilla pancake and the slight tanginess from the berry compote and the sliced strawberries. Nevertheless, it is quite a filling dish and aesthetically pleasing one—perfect to start a long day ahead.

**Lemon Ricotta Pancakes**

RM21





For the drinks, we ordered a **Hazelnut Twist** (RM16), a double espresso with Hazelnut syrup, milk, whipped cream, and red velvet dust, and a **Sticky Bun Latte** (RM16), also a double espresso with caramel syrup, milk, whipped cream, and salted caramel sauce. But, as a coffee person, I can vouch for their espressos—which are all locally roasted—hits on all the right notes. Although the syrup was a little on the sweeter side, the bitterness from the espresso quickly balances the aftertaste.

Apart from their coffee creation, they also boast a variety of drinks from teas, to cold-brewed coffee, and even some fresh juices if your caffeine tolerance level is low.

Overall, the whole vibe of the cafe can be described as a 'little hideout' for when you want to take a breather. With its quality comfort food and locally roasted coffee, we recommend you to check out this place once your exams are over.

So go and treat yourselves! After all, you deserve it.



Hazelnut Twist

RM16

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>8 /10</b>
<b>AMBIENCE</b>	<b>8.5 /10</b>
<b>PRICE</b>	<b>6.5 /10</b>
<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>	<b>8 /10</b>
<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>10 /10</b>

With that said, this is indeed,  
MONCH approved!



# MONCH GLOBAL

## XANDERS AND COLETTE

Photos by Zara Abbas | Written by Zara Abbas & Shannon Ho

### Karachi, Pakistan

Every Karachi-ite has a place reserved for the Xanders and Colette in their hearts.

#### Ratings

Ambience: 10/10

Food: 9/10

Service: 8/10 (just 'cause the wait is sometimes too long)

Nested in an urban garden, both restaurants sit side by side in one of Karachi's prime locations: The E-Street, Clifton. The busy crowds in this area, to my surprise, don't seem to turn its customers away. In fact, the ambience and lovely service that account for much of its enormous appeal to the newcomers make this place a popular destination for unwinding with friends on a Saturday afternoon.

Xanders, started in 2011 by Sikander Rizvi, is THE spot for getting fresh gourmet meals at an affordable price. The tone is set the second once you step foot in Xanders, the bright colorful mural painted recently by two famous graffiti artists, Neil Uchong and Sundus Tariq, contribute to the chic and artistic vibe of Xanders. Look up, white parasol umbrellas are spread across the lawn which at night are closed to create a cozy and romantic atmosphere with fairy lights. And what's more, that outdoor open-wood pizza oven produces what I believe are some of the best pizzas I have ever had.



(PEPPERONI) WOOD FIRED PIZZA made with Xander's Tomato Sauce, Beef Pepperoni, Black Olives, Onions, Mushrooms, Mozzarella & Parmesan Regiano and Fresh Basil. Mini for RM 15 and Large for RM 25

I ordered a Feta and Spinach Pizza and a Pepperoni to start off. Both pizzas are wood-fired and topped with Xander's special tomato sauce, which for the love of god, I wish I could get my hands on the recipe of. Then, the Penne & Cheese pasta. A classic dish of Xanders made with Gouda, Cheddar & Parmesan tossed with grilled turkey bacon and crispy breadcrumbs.

Well, we couldn't stop ordering. So as you can see, I have had the chance to try out a variety of their specialties. The Goat Cheese & Fig Pizza, made with caramelized onions, goat cheese and figs (of course), roasted garlic and parmesan white sauce. The Buffalina,





made with sliced tomatoes, buffalo mozzarella, parmesan regiano, and rocket leaves sprinkled with oregano and olive oil on the top... Full of rare and unique combinations that are definitely worth a try.

If you're reading this thinking 'so what's the big deal? After all, it's just pizza' Oh boy, I can assure you can never go wrong with a Xanders pizza. To be frank, Xanders pizzas had always been my top cravings back in Malaysia. If I could, I would voluntarily choose to eat at Xanders weekly just to fulfil my urges. That's how much I love it.

Then, I ordered the Xanders Club, which is a classic sandwich with grilled chicken, turkey bacon, and omelette. Remember how I said the service is just lovely? The thing about Xanders is that the dishes can be tailored to your preferences. I personally prefer brown bread but they provide a variety of other types of bread for you to enjoy your sandwich. You can also choose from a variety of fries like potato, sweet potato, waffle or spicy.

With just 1 minute of walking, there is the Colette cafe. While Xanders is more laid-back and affordable, Colette would be perfect if you're feeling more 'posh'. Colette, is an upscale cafe owned by the Rizvi opened in 2020, which brands itself as a French creperie and bakery. The dining area is fully Instagram-worthy with open indoor and outdoor seating and themes of blues and reds nested in greenery that create an intimate dining experience.

The food here is more 'fancy', and that of course, comes with a higher price tag. In less than a year, Colette is packed with the upper echelons of Karachi society; it's the place to see and to be seen at.



**(XANDER'S GOATS'S CHEESE & FIG PIZZA**  
made with Goat's Cheese, Figs, Caramelized Onions with a Roasted Garlic and Parmesan White Sauce. Mini for RM 15 and Large for RM 25 and **BUFFALINA** is a Light Pizza with Sliced Fresh Tomatoes, Buffalo Mozzarella, Parmesan Regiano, Rocket Leave & Sprinkled with Oregano & Olive Oil for RM 15 and Large for RM 25 )



I tried the Seasonal Mango Crepe made with fresh mangoes, whipped cream and a custard filling. Trust me when I say the crepes at Colette are to DIE for. Soft to the touch, slightly sweet and the perfect end to any meal. Safe to say I was in a mango coma afterwards.

Overall we Karachites LOVE Xanders and Colette and can never get enough of them. It has truly become a staple part of every Karachi-ites day out.

With this, I announce that both places are **MONCH** approved!



# HERITAGE VILLAGE



Written by Dina Ghazali  
Photos by Dina Ghazali

## **Ratings**

Food: 8/10  
Atmosphere: 9/10  
Price: 7/10  
Accessibility: 7/10  
Service: 10/10

## Dammam, Saudi Arabia

Entering a castle to experience Saudi Arabia's traditions and history through all your five senses...

Nestled quietly beside the sea-side lives what looks like a real life sand castle mirroring the look of the coarse sand from its tan and rough texture surrounding its wall. But if you look closer, the isolated palace looks like it's protecting something precious, keeping away enemies. Through the architecture, we can already tell the story the castle is telling. This is the Heritage Village in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. Though not a real castle housing a royal family, it does protect some of the most historic items that are worth preserving for as long as possible. Not only that, it holds a delicious restaurant that allows you to experience the Saudi way of dining with traditional Saudi food. Protecting the authentic taste of Middle Eastern cuisine. Once we've awed at the beautiful architecture, we saw intimidating wooden double doors twice our height open to step into. Here, our senses of sight and smell start to trigger. The kind hospitality of the staff instantly makes us smile. The various lighting coupled with the exotic decorations and art work makes us feel like we've







stepped back to ancient Saudi Arabia. The hint of Arabic perfume hits our nose but isn't strong enough to hide the dancing flavours of spices from the in-house restaurant across the room.

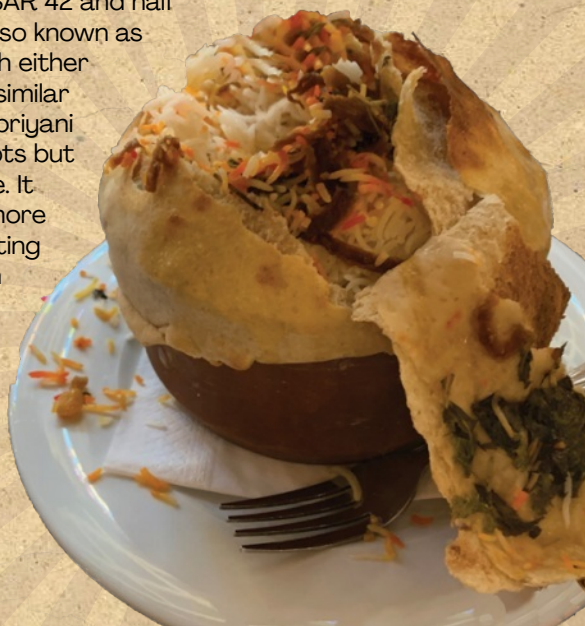
The assembly of the dining tables and private dining rooms let us know that the whole floor is the restaurant itself. Tables in the centre of the room are open to all visitors dining. For reservations for a private room to have a cultural dining experience, you get to sit on the floor while you eat with family and friends. The servers usher us towards a table while they greet us with their best English phrases. Not to worry if you are a foreigner visiting and not fluent in the Arabic language, the majority knows enough English to converse.

The tranquility inside the castle we noticed only after sitting down felt peaceful. We went in the late afternoon during a weekend but the village was serving only a few customers. It felt like the castle was only open to us and had been patiently waiting

for us to visit. The beautiful interior architecture with traditional designs and vibrant mosaic windows remind us that it is a place of significance.

Once we were seated, we looked over the menu to order and decided to start our lunch with a pot of Arabic mint tea - SAR 22 - while we waited for the food to come. Served in a humble metal kettle with small glass cups, we shared it together. The tea had just the right sweetness with the freshness of the mint to balance the light bitterness of the tea leaves. It was an addictive beverage that instinctively made us go for seconds and thirds and fourth. Some might not enjoy the flavour of mint in general, but this tea might just be able to make you turn sides.

We realised when we were ordering that some of the main and popular orders took at least 30 minutes to be prepared. The portions for traditional Arabic dishes also come with big portions as they like to share and eat together. So, we ended up trying half a regular Briyani Chicken - SAR 42 and half of the Makbos Chicken - SAR 27. Makbos Chicken, also known as Kabsa, is a popular Saudi Arabian rice dish made with either lamb or chicken. Both the Briyani and Makbos were similar to me. They were both spiced rice and chicken. The briyani was delicious with its tender chicken and fried shallots but it tasted similar to other briyani we've tasted before. It felt like it was missing something. Instead, we were more attracted to the Makbos Chicken with its unique plating design. The rice was wrapped with a bread dome on the top and baked until a crisp layer formed. We couldn't wait to dig into the dome and find out what mystery lay under. The chicken turned out to be juicier and more moist thanks to the thick and savoury marinade which the briyani lacked. It's definitely a win for the aesthetics but up to par with the scale of flavour.





But of course, we can't just eat rice. To eat along with the rice, we ordered side dishes of Grilled Shrimp - SAR 58 - and a refreshing Green Salad - SAR 18. The price was a little expensive for the shrimp. But remembering how we've never been disappointed whenever we ordered grilled shrimp in Dammam, we decided confidently and we were right! We could tell the shrimp was fresh from its scent and had the perfect amount of char on its shell. It was served with sliced pickled onions and french fries. The shrimp had a nice soft texture and a hint of natural sweetness from its tender meat. The green salad was a great finish for the meal to clean our palate with another last splash of tea before you leave.

The dishes seem quite dry without any sauces to complement all the carbs we're digesting. But in fact, when you order Arabic dishes such as rice and chicken, it usually comes with fresh tomato chutney. It gives that tangy and fresh flavours needed to complete the meal.

The destination is quite far from the main city and quite isolated from popular destinations. You have to go by car but the parking space is never full and there's a beach right next to the castle to enjoy next if you desire. It's also important to note that they open only after 12 pm until midnight. Remember, the effort to come here is worthwhile as you can indulge in both food and sightseeing. I also recommend trying their assortment of fresh juices such as mango and orange. It's amazing how easy it is to find such sweet and fresh juices from around Dammam, so definitely a must try.

And with that, we conclude that The Heritage Village is... **MONCH Approved!**



# MONCH GLOBAL



# NOSTALGIA

Photo by Dina Ghazali





# PULAUKETAM



# SAUDI ARABIA













# CAMERON HIGHLANDS





# JOHOR BAHRU



Photos by Jared Soh



# KUALA



# LUMPUR





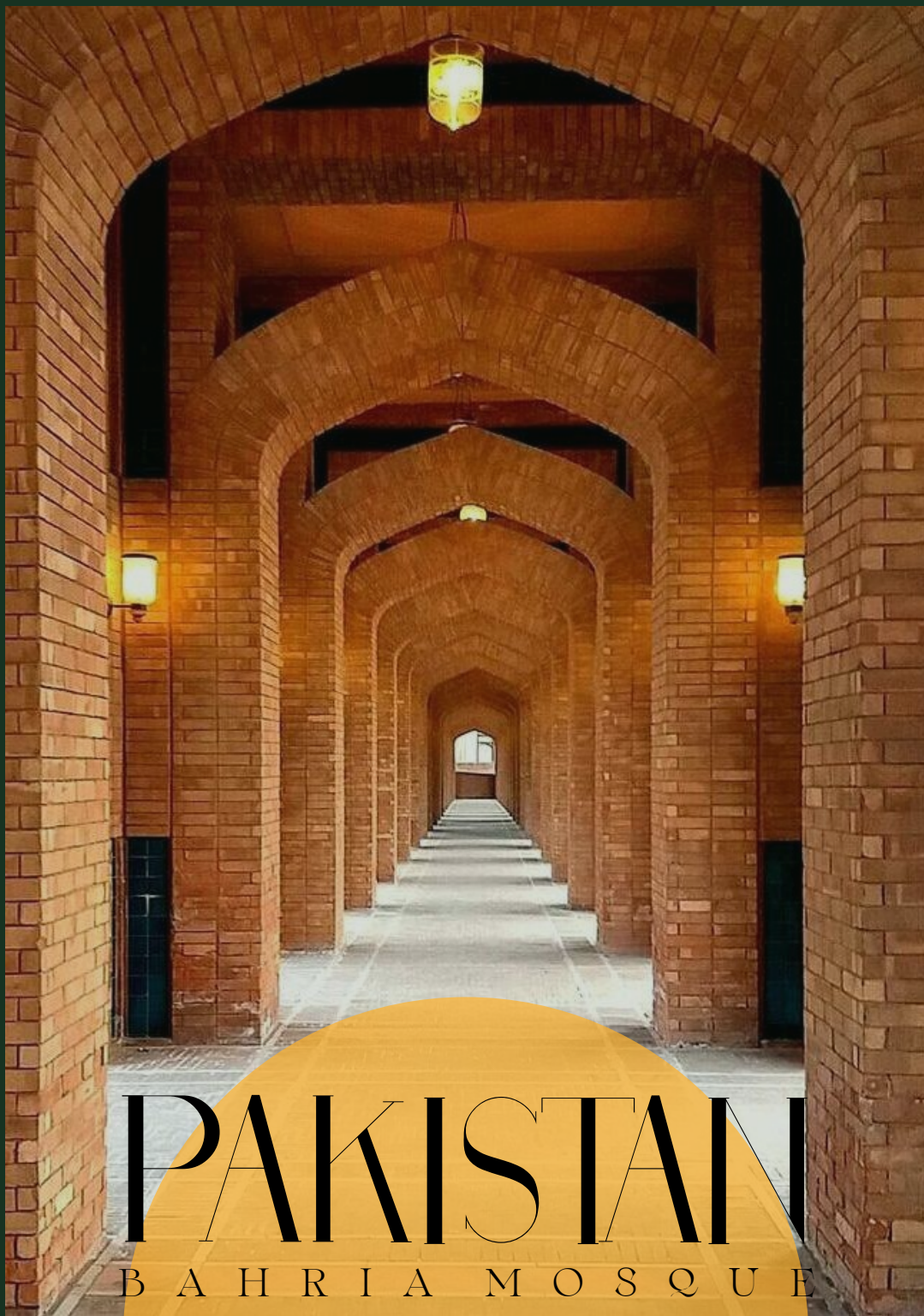


# INDONESIA



# BATAM





# PAKISTANI

B A H R I A M O S Q U E

Photo by Amna Shahid



# SEREMBAN



Photo by Prissie Ong



A photograph of a waterfront lake at sunset. In the foreground, there are vibrant purple flowers. The middle ground shows a body of water reflecting the sunset colors. In the background, several high-rise buildings are visible against a sky with soft orange and pink hues. The text 'WATERFRONT LAKE BAYROCKS' is overlaid in a large, stylized font, with 'WATERFRONT LAKE' in white and 'BAYROCKS' in black, all enclosed within a yellow oval border.

WATERFRONT LAKE  
**BAYROCKS**





# KAJANG

Photos by Wong Zi Yi





# MASJID NADWI MADINAH





# IPOH





# LIVING WITH THE VIRUS

## LIVING WITH THE VIRUS



We used to live with people around us. Socialize, party, jom mamak?

But those days feel so much like the yesteryears, the yesterdays that we used to have. These days we can't even fathom anyone standing even a hair closer to our personal space, how did we use to sit so close to strangers?

Now, we're living with the virus. We're living with the fact that the only way we'll ever meet someone is either through the camera or just by seeing their eyes above their masks.

How many times must we hear 'the new normal'? It's not new anymore if it's normal. But alas, we survive nonetheless.

MONGA presents 'Living with The Virus', a short photography project highlighting how we live the 'new' normal, as our normal.









Photos by Shawn Wong

















Photo by Wong Zi Yi



Photo by Tsheten Bhutia









Photo by Shannon Ho









Photo by Tsheten Bhutia



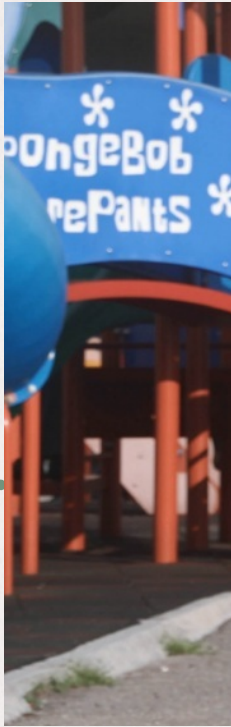
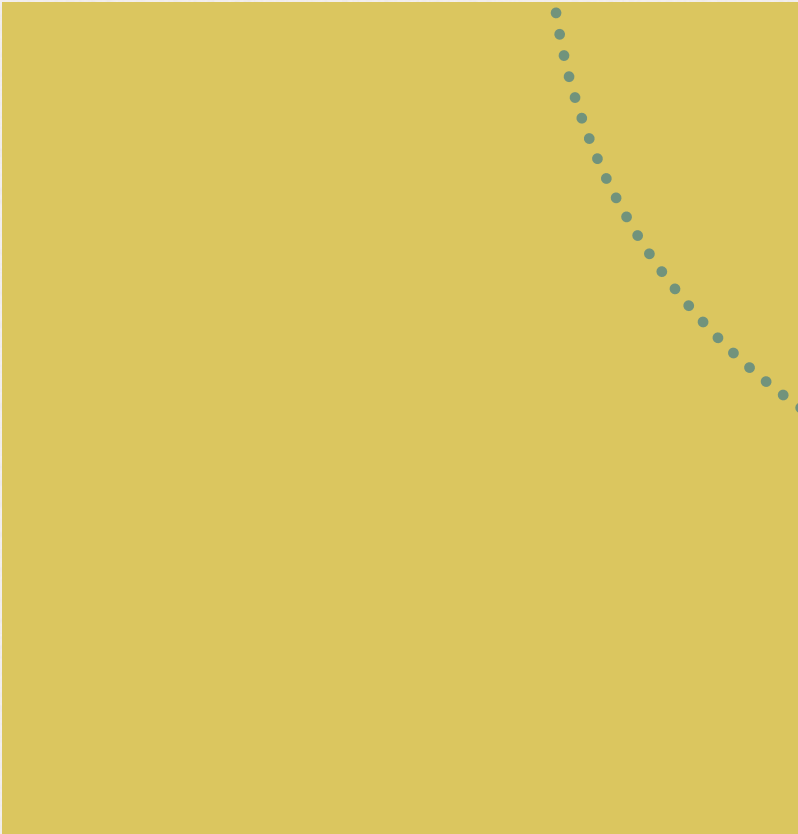
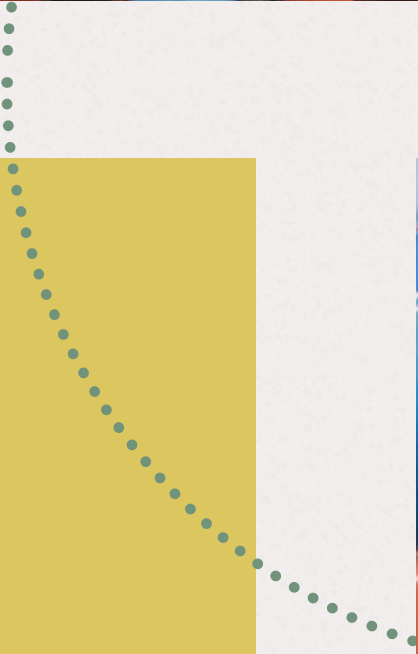


Photos by Wong Zi Yi

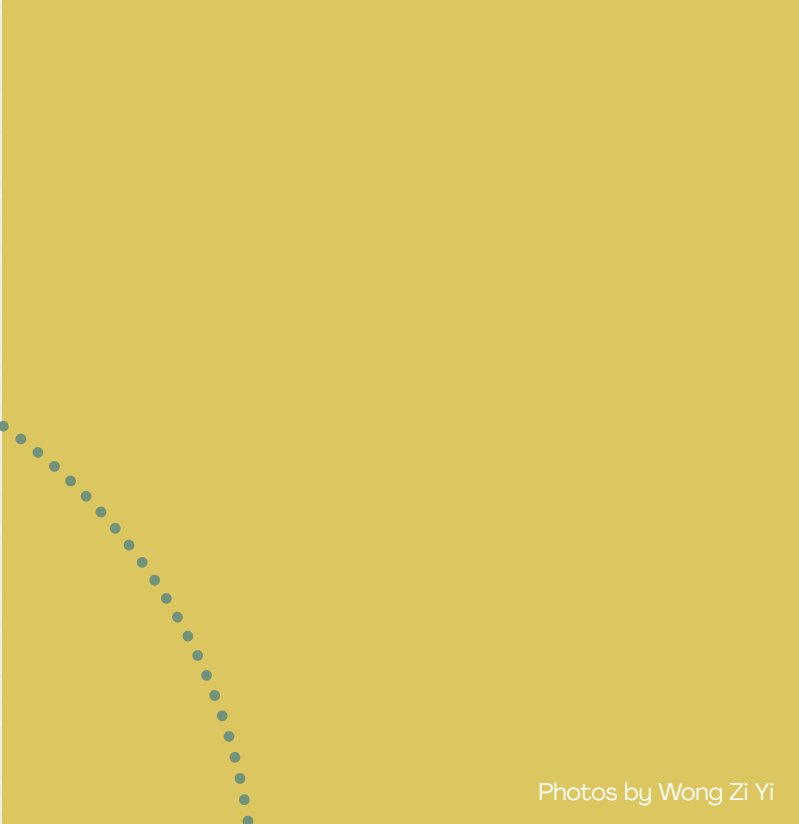












Photos by Wong Zi Yi







Photos by Tsheten Bhutia



# Shrimp Salad Deville'd Eggs

by Top Chef Winner  
Appetizer Round:

**Aurelie  
Wangsa**

Written by Shabnam Sidhu  
Featuring Aurélie Wangsa

A Food Science & Technology major with a passion for experimentation and deconstruction is Monash's Top Chef winner for the appetizer round. With a fresh, creamy, delectable, luscious, bruschetta inspired egg-tastic dish, Aurelie's 'fresh salad shrimp stuffed devilled eggs' truly is the kind of dish you'd see being made on a cooking show or served at a Michelin star restaurant. Not only is its name a mouthful, but this exquisitely well-prepared appetizer is a burst of egg-tastic freshness; fluffy, flavourful, and crunchy, a celebration of textures and flavours, delighting your taste buds.



**Have you participated in Monash Cooking Competition before or is this your first time?**

"This is my first time! I've always loved cooking and baking. Whenever I'm not busy studying, you'll see me in the kitchen constantly trying out new recipes, and experimenting with food, so I just knew I had to try my luck here. I would love to participate again next year."

**What's the inspiration behind this dish?**

"It really is something I just experimented and came up with! Let me tell you an interesting story... When I first saw MUSA's Instagram

post about this, I did not realise that eggs were the secret ingredient I had to use, and had initially intended to make bruschetta because I love fresh vegetables, especially tomatoes! Only at the beginning of the cook-off week did I notice that I had to use eggs and that certainly does not go well with bruschetta. However, I still wanted to maintain a similar concept and so, after doing a bit of research, I came across this interesting recipe of eggs stuffed with a tuna salad but I felt that tuna would have been a bit too heavy of an ingredient for an appetizer. It was then that I decided to substitute the tuna for a vegetable salad and came up with this interesting concoction of flavours, an already existent dish that I entirely modified and made my own. Not to forget, I topped it off with a piece of shrimp for that extra oomph factor!"



### How would you describe the taste of your dish?

“The vegetable salad would be cold and fresh, and because I topped it off with a soft egg yolk mixed with mustard and mayonnaise, it tastes really creamy, it just melts in your mouth.”

### What’s the inspiration behind this dish?

“I was thinking how to combine everything into one dish, one bite essentially, and so I just topped everything on top of each other, with the shrimp right on top, garnishing the entire dish with parsley. I really wanted each and every flavour to be prominent with each bite.”

### How are you going to spend your prize money?

“I’m probably just going to save it and pay my quarantine fee (laughs). I have to use it as beneficially as possible.”

### Finally, what’s the recipe?

1. Hard boil the eggs.
2. Boil the potatoes till it’s soft and then together with the cucumbers and tomatoes, cut them into cubes. Mix them all together with salad dressing.
3. Substitute the egg yolk with the vegetable salad.
4. Crush the egg yolk and mix it with mustard, mayonnaise, sugar, and a little bit of tomato to balance the taste of the mayonnaise. Mix it until a creamy texture is obtained.
5. Take a scoop of the egg mixture and place it on top of the vegetable salad.
6. Finally, just place the shrimp, balance it on top of the egg mixture and garnish with parsley.

**Thank you Aurelie for such a fun interview! Good luck on your cooking ventures!**





# Scalloped Potato Roll

by Top Chef Winner  
Non-Vegetarian Round:

**Fatima Jahangir**

Written by Elly Zulaikha  
Featuring Fatima Jahangir

Ah, potatoes. Who doesn't love a good, hearty dish with this starchy root vegetable? This widely accessible ingredient is so versatile, sometimes eating it just as is, can be soooo satisfying. You can bake it, deep fry it, stuff it-- you name it!

That's why we invited Fatima-- a first year food science student with a penchant for cooking and food-- who won this week's Non-Vegetarian course. Read on and find out her story on how she made a Scalloped Potato roll on her first try.

**Congratulations on winning the non-vegetarian course for this year's Top Chef competition! Can you tell me a little bit about your dish?**

I made a Scalloped Potato roll. It looked like a Swiss roll but this is the meat version. First I sliced the potatoes and baked them with eggs and cheese so that they would form a sheet. And then I made a separate meat filling using mushrooms, red bell pepper, green bell pepper with different kinds of spices like ginger, garlic, and red chili powders. After I cooked the meat, I placed the meat filling in the middle [of the potato sheet] and then just rolled it before I cut them into a few slices.

**Interesting! Sounds like a very technical dish you made there. What inspired you to make this dish?**

I've always been a bit of a foodie. I love cooking and even my degree is [in] food sciences. So when I saw a Cook-Off post on MUSA's Instagram page, I was like "I need to join this!". Then I told this to my family and they encouraged me, they said like, yeah, you should join this, join [for] all the weeks and see what you can win.

**Was this like a family recipe or did you look it up?**

I looked it up a lot and then [this dish] came up. I thought this would have the best flavor and it would complement this [challenge] a lot. It's not a traditional recipe.



### **Yum! I can imagine how filling this must have been. Can you describe what it tastes like?**

I think a mix of lasagna and a steak with some mashed potatoes, that kinda taste. Except that it doesn't have tomato sauce [laughs]. The main flavor came from the caramelized meat and you could taste a little bit of the potatoes as well, with a slight tone of sharpness from some cheddar cheese that I've thrown in.

### **Was it a difficult dish to make?**

Yes! It was kind of time-consuming. I think it took around three to four hours to make [laughs]. Three around three, four hours. When I found this recipe, I thought, "okay, I can do this and I should do it". But I was really worried with [making] the potato sheet. [The sheets] can get burned easily because they were [cut into] thin slices. It would be difficult to roll the meat filling but it worked in the end! Yeah, it was my first time making this dish.

### **How did your family react?**

They were waiting for me to take the photos so they could eat the dish [laugh]. So right after I took the photos, they tried my dish and they liked it. I enjoyed eating it too.

### **Since you mentioned that you enjoy cooking, how long have you been cooking then?**

I've been cooking ever since I was in first, second grade. Yeah, I've been cooking for a long time. So at first, I used to cook basic foods like fried eggs, or you know, cook instant noodles. I used to watch all the episodes from MasterChef Australia during my O-Levels because I love watching it so much! Then I started trying dishes on my own.

I think I first started with baking cakes. I thought baking simple cakes is easier than other dishes but no [laugh]. Eventually, I moved on to some more traditional Pakistani dishes, like chicken Karahi and all that stuff. I think my mom was my biggest inspiration. She loves cooking just as much as I do. She even took cooking classes when she was in college. She mainly taught me basic cooking and traditional dishes. Now since I love cooking and my family and friends enjoy what I cook, I thought I should pursue this as a degree. That's what inspired me.

### **Now the real million-dollar question is: what do you plan to do with your prize money?**

Honestly, I haven't thought about it! I was excited after finding out about this [laughs]. But I think I'll take my family out for a treat.



As promised, here's the recipe in case anyone wants to try their hand with this dish!

### Ingredients

2 russet potatoes  
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves  
3 whole eggs  
Salt and pepper for taste

### Beef Mince Filling

350 grams of minced beef  
1 tbsp tomato puree  
3 dried button mushrooms (rehydrated in water)  
Half of green and red bell pepper  
1 tsp ginger and garlic (formed into a paste)  
Half a teaspoon of red chili powder  
Salt and pepper

### Instructions

#### Preparing the potatoes

1. Thinly slice the potatoes (in a scalloped, circle shape) and place it into a separate bowl.
2. Add 3 eggs, followed with a cup of cheddar cheese, a tablespoon of chopped coriander leaves before adding some salt and pepper. Mix the ingredients together.
3. After mixing the ingredients, add the potatoes into the mixture and mix it thoroughly.
4. Take a flat baking pan and line it with a sheet of baking paper to prevent the potatoes from sticking to the pan.
5. Arrange each slice of potatoes side by side until it covers the entire pan.
6. Bake the potato sheet in an oven for 20 minutes at 180 degree Celsius.
7. Once done, let the potato sheet cool at room temperature until it is cooled to touch.

#### For the filling

8. Meanwhile in an oiled pan, add the minced meat and cook it until it turns light brown.
9. Then add a teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste followed with a tablespoon of tomato puree, along with salt and pepper and then cook it further.
10. Add a little bit of water and half a teaspoon of red chili powder to further cook the meat.
11. Once the water has evaporated, add some sliced red and green bell peppers and cook it for another minute until it is ready.

#### Assembly

12. Spread the meat filling evenly onto the baked potato sheet.
13. Use the baking paper from underneath to roll the sheet together with the filling until it forms like a Swiss roll.
14. Garnish with some melted cheese, coriander leaves and chopped red bell pepper.





# Vegetarian Mozzarella Pizza

by Top Chef  
Winner  
Vegetarian Round:

**Daniel Tee**

Written by Ashley Lim  
Featuring Daniel Tee

The rustic, warm brown tones in the picture contrasted with the bright white of hand-torn mozzarella and fresh green basil instantly transports oneself to the homely Italian countryside. Despite its simplistic presentation, this dish is definitely not lacking in flavour with bursts of sweetness from the cherry tomatoes, creamy mozzarella and freshness from the basil, all atop a warm and doughy bread vessel.

## What was your inspiration behind the dish?

Actually in terms of Western food, I'm a huge fan of pizza. (in fact at the time of the interview Daniel had just had pizza in the morning, talk about dedication!) But other than that, I actually wanted to do something that was pretty simple and quick to whip up. There was no huge "BOOM, okay I want to do this for Top Chef", it was more of a coincidence really that I decided to join this, the timing was very on point, I guess? Because honestly, I don't really cook, so when it was announced that I was the winner for the Vegetarian Main Course, I was actually really shocked to find out that I had won.

## Are you personally a vegetarian?

Honestly? NO, haha. I love meat but I have a huge respect for the individuals who do choose to go vegetarian whether it's for personal or health reasons. But, I mean well the advantage of this dish is that it's relatively cheap (perfect for constantly broke Monash students) and the key is its simplicity!



## What is your personal cooking style and what does cooking mean to you? Is it more of a hobby to de-stress?

As someone who is more of a foodie than an avid chef, I honestly don't cook a lot... this question is a bit difficult to answer haha. But, like my dish, my cooking style is something that I can whip up in a few minutes, not like tedious stews or stuff that takes hours to prepare and plate. However, I do believe that cooking itself is incredibly important, it's a basic skill that everyone should master which I'm slowly (but surely) trying to do before I graduate!

## What is your favorite type of cuisine?

Side note: He struggled a bit to pick a Top 1, but to make his life easier I widened it to Top 3, because in true Malaysian fashion, our love for food crosses all cultures and countries

My top three favorite cuisine would be local food, Japanese food and Chinese food (there was a tight competition between Korean and Western food for this position but Chinese food won out in the end).

## What is the recipe?

I would LOVE to tell you but it's a closely guarded family secret that has been passed down for GENERATIONS jkjk. Actually, it's pretty much the most basic pizza recipe you can get off the Internet. It starts off with flour-based dough which you can then roll out to the thickness of your liking (thin crust, New York crust, thick crust etc). Then you slather on some tomato sauce (store bought or homemade it's up to you and depending on how lazy you are at that time hehe). After that the toppings are just garlic-sauteed spinach, hand torn basil and chunks of mozzarella. One of the things that I love about this recipe is its versatility. You could add olives, chilli flakes or even some other protein just to be a bit extra boujee.

**Much thanks to Daniel for this really fun interview (we actually deviated a LOT and had a bunch of laughs) and congratulations once again for winning Top Chef Monash. By the way, this writer is still waiting for him to GrabFood his pizza to me!**

## Did you teach yourself cooking or did a family member?

Hmm, in my family my dad actually really really enjoys cooking so watching doing something he loves inspired me a lot. I'm trying my best to absorb at least 50% of his cooking knowledge before I leave the nest so that at least I can... survive on my own. For this competition in particular however, I actually consulted a friend who really enjoys cooking and sharing his culinary creations with us on our personal Whatsapp group chat. So, he did help me quite a bit for this.

## When would you recommend making and enjoying this dish?

It is my personal philosophy that EVERY TIME IS PIZZA TIME (someone print this on a T-shirt right now!!) It's the true embodiment of university food because it's perfect for dinner, lunch or even reheated for breakfast the next day.



# Red Velvet Cupcakes Basket

by Top Chef Winner  
Dessert Round:

**Simra  
Qaiyum**

Written by Avantika Mishra  
Featuring Simra Qaiyum



Always room for dessert no matter how much you've eaten? This one's for you then!

I'm the type of person who'd go anywhere for (hopefully free) dessert, it's called having a serious sweet tooth. So no wonder, looking at these gorgeous frosted red velvet cupcakes is making me want to order in a huge box.

Let's congratulate our winner with the most votes, Simra Qaiyum! A 2nd year student majoring in psychology here at Monash, Simra added her own twist to a classic sweet treat.

Honestly, I cannot wait to dig into one of these. Imagine this: you're biting into pillowy soft cream cheese frosting and getting a taste of the velvety crimson base that only a combo of non-Dutched cocoa powder and butter can achieve. Even better? Having a beautiful hand-picked selection of edible flowers complement this solid cupcake, it's a treat for all the senses! (Getting extremely hungry as I type this out, send help).

Before I blow up my kitchen attempting to bake these, let's get to know a little more about the cupcakes from Simra herself:

**Any reason(s) why you went for this category?  
What's the story behind your baking talent?**

I love to eat desserts. I've been baking since I was a kid, not much of a story there. My main inspiration has to be MasterChef Australia (I took the "dream big or go home" thing to heart). I am a super fan without a doubt, but the twist is, I don't want to be there as a contestant. I want to be the judge. I can't even begin to describe my fascination with all that delicious food! Maybe somewhere in my subconscious I feel like baking will help me replace a judge some day? :P



**Edible flowers are a unique twist, where did the idea stem from? (Pun totally intended)**

Ahaha love the pun! I just wanted to elevate the dish a bit more, you know? Add that MasterChef worthy twist to a seemingly normal dessert. I've seen people use edible flowers on cakes and totally wanted to try that out. After "snacking" on two flowers and feeling just a bit sick, I came to know that not all flowers are edible... but all's well that ends well right? Looking at the world through rose-tinted glasses feels a bit too real now.

**You've obviously got a good eye for arrangement and visuals, have you developed a personal style of baking?**

Contrary to the way the dish looks, 'messy' is the word I'd use to explain my style. I like to wear white while cooking because the splatters on my clothes give me a feeling of accomplishment, a feeling of freedom. As if in that moment, all is in control (even though that's never true, but who are we to stop ourselves from taking life one dance at a time?)

Also, that mess is kind of a parallel for life, like how life gets messy sometimes and we start scrambling for pieces, but in the end (more often than not), things turn out well. Just like freshly baked cakes!

**For those who would want to try their hand at these cupcakes (and not cause a fire hazard like me), would you please give us a recipe?**

1. Take eggs and measure that (with the shell), whatever the amount is just take equal amounts of butter, flour, and sugar.
2. Mix butter and sugar together first until it's fluffy, then add eggs.
3. Then mix in the flour (use a spatula for this part) and a few tablespoons of milk and voila!
4. Transfer the mix to your cupcake moulds and after 30-40 mins of anxiety (at 175°C) you'll have the most delicious cake ever.

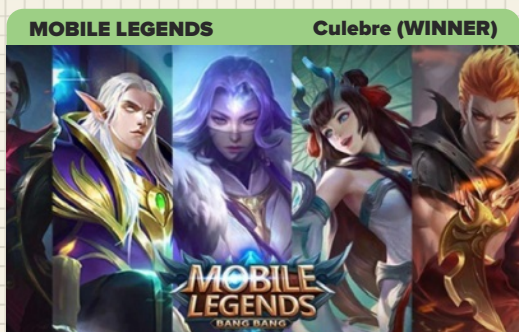
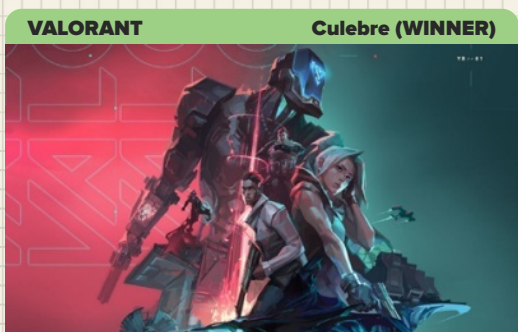
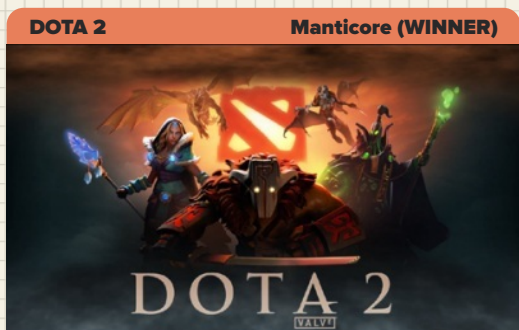
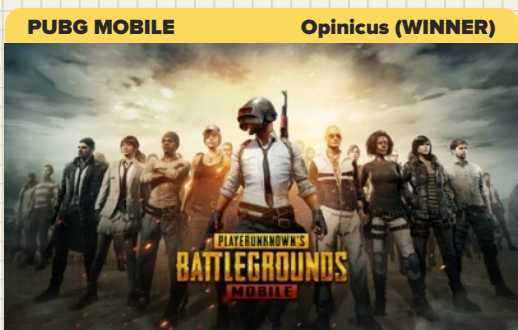
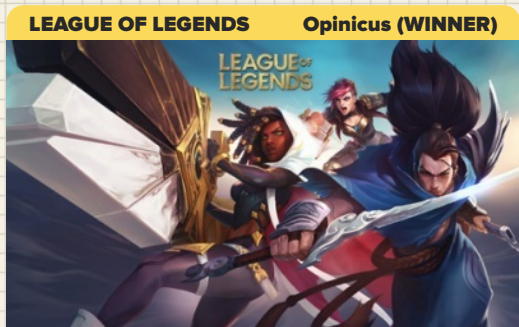
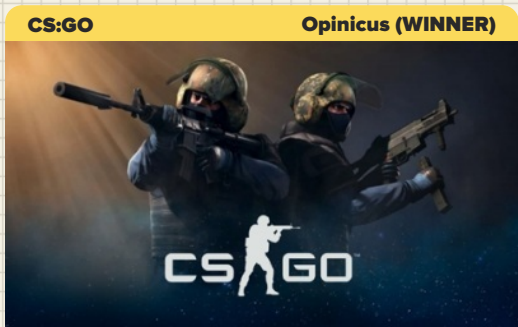
**Thanks for the easy recipe! Anything else you'd like to add for the other bakers out there?**

Bake whenever, and whatever your heart (read 'stomach') wants! Also, there are days when things in the kitchen don't turn out well, and on those days we stay calm. We remove the burnt part of the cake, call up our friends/family, and make them finish that thing in all its entirety because they don't want to miss out on free desserts (this is totally not a personal memory). Plus, everybody can use a free win (and a sugar rush) on such days!

**A huge thank you to Simra for being so much fun to interview! I hope all of you, like myself, gained a fresh perspective into the world of baking.**



# MONASH CUP



  
**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**OPINICUS**  
**MONASH CUP 2021 CHAMPIONS**





## **Work hard, play harder with Opinicus' captain, Ivan Tan.**

Written by Elly Zulaikha

Behind the warm smile and humble personality lies a hardworking, competitive person, with a penchant for sports and who is a social butterfly. That's right, it's Opinicus' Captain this year, Ivan Tan! Although he is in his final year and majors in International Business Management, he puts his faith in Opinicus and hopes his house will emerge as the champion for this year's Monash Cup, just like his house motto goes, 'Always Above'.

But since COVID-19 essentially pushed this highly anticipated event online, how did Ivan take on the captain's mantle and navigate Opinicus on their mission to conquer the House Cup? Find out as we sit down for a chat with him on a late Tuesday afternoon.

### **How has the experience been with managing your team virtually, especially training your members?**

For each of the gaming categories, the captains will have their preferred training time where they will set [it] to train weekly, depending on when they're free. I've attended most of the training to see how they're doing. I'm very satisfied with all my captains and they did a great job in properly training their team and making sure that everyone's doing their best. Sometimes training does get pushed back because people are really busy. We're in Monash and of course, our priority is our studies. It's not that they can't train, there's just too much workload to handle. But I think everyone somehow managed to get it together. Honestly, it's been really fun overall. I met new friends and everyone's been

amazing. I have an amazing team, some of them are my friends. The captains for each category were amazing too and they are very dedicated to their role. I'm really glad that everyone's putting in the effort. There weren't many issues and everything was solvable. Everyone's really friendly and did their job properly. Also, I'm glad that most of my captains are competitive and luckily because I'm very competitive too.

### **How has the transition been from offline to online hosting of Monash Cup?**

The streams are not handled by me. C&S handled it and they had a streaming partner this year, which is good. Although last year was pretty last minute, the organizer still did a great job. But this year is better because they planned out everything with a proper streaming company. I expect the result to be pretty organized and I think everything will be professionally done. Even though it's just the Monash Cup, players and non-players will get to experience the competitive scene in a professional setting. Audience-wise, I think it is not that big. I feel like the highest view will be during finals. But it's Monash, everyone's dead and busy so I'm not sure how it will go. As for the players, I think it's going to be a good experience.

### **Were there any conflicts that happened between your house members?**

Honestly, I would say it was a pretty smooth ride. Everyone's really straightforward and pretty disciplined, so there are no conflicts. That's the thing I like about all my team players. At most, maybe we have some issues with egoistic players but we managed to resolve it. It



wasn't like a very big issue. There might be drama during the Monash Cup, who knows? Hahaha. But not within my house, Opinicus, no-no.

**In the future, do you think Monash Cup should continue implementing E-Sports when we transition back to campus?**

I think they should. For me, I'm a very versatile person and I can do both physical and e-sports too. So, I feel like it's actually a good addition to add ESports into the Monash Cup. Some people don't do sports and they prefer to play games, so this will create an opportunity for people who play games to excel in this category. I honestly think it will be a good university experience, especially for people who join the Monash Cup. From my experience, I can see a lot of [players] started off as strangers, but now they're all very close friends because they played games together. But I guess it's up to the C&S, whether they have the resources to handle it. I remembered the C&S people told me if there was no COVID-19, they would bring everyone to a cybercafe, set it up like a proper tournament, and have a proper final where everyone would gather to watch them play, which sounds really cool! I was really excited about that but I understand we can't really do much because of COVID-19.

**If there's no COVID-19, what games would you play?**

Well, I'll play a lot like volleyball, frisbee, dodgeball, badminton, and captain ball. I think I would play 5 games, yeah. I'm a physically active person so most of the sports are fun and I love to play. I will definitely try to compete and play as much as possible for me last year and meet more new friends if there was no COVID-19. Honestly, I missed the physical [tournament] and I could have competed with my friends, which would be so fun. But it's okay, I've experienced the physical Monash Cup two years back. I guess the grass is always greener on the other side. For E-Sports this year, the friends that I made and the team that I

have been with are very memorable to me. My committees, my team captains, and my players.

**What is your favorite online game and how did you get into it?**

I play all types of games but the one I played the most is definitely Dota. I remember I was watching people play and then I decided to try it myself and then just slowly learned it throughout the past few years. I think I got in like 2016 when I was in high school, then I stopped a bit and played again. I like the game because it's very complex. But many thought that playing games are not useful, whereas, for me, I find it useful because you can meet new people, it taught me how to lead or communicate with strangers, [make] very important decision making and [train] your thought process. It does help me in real life. There will definitely be a very toxic community that you can't avoid and I feel like you have to get used to it. It can carry into your life too in the future where you are going to meet this kind of person in real life, which is worse. So you can actually use this platform to learn how to handle [difficult situations].

**When will we catch you in action?**

I only participate in one game which is Dota and I'm also the captain. The tournament for Dota has started and the finals are next Sunday, two weeks from now. I'm confident that my team can make it to the final. But I feel like each game will be fun to watch. We have different games like CS League, Valor, Dota, Mobile Legends, and PUBG Mobile. So if anyone is interested and free to watch the stream, go ahead. I believe the finals will be really exciting.

**Last but not least, what would you describe your house in four words?**

First place, friendly, fun, and family.





## ***A glimpse into what it's like being Manticore's leading lady.***

Written by Shabnam Sidhu

Manticore's team captain of the year is none-other than Yan Jun, a third year Strategic Marketing and Business Analytics major with a passion for all things fun and exciting. My interview with Yan Jun was truly the most wholeheartedly enthusiastic conversation I've had with a completely new person. Despite being in the midst of a pandemic, with university deadlines to meet, Yan Jun truly embodies what makes a good team captain; she prioritises communication, flexibility, freedom, and most importantly emphasises on having a good time.

Winning would be nice but it isn't a priority as Manticore is choosing to instead place greater importance on teamwork and keeping spirits high as it would reap greater benefits including exhilarating memories alongside prevailing friendship.

Having participated in swimming during her first, skribbl and vice-captaining her second, it is clearly a rite of passage for Yan Jun to lead her third and final Monash Cup. Despite not being an avid gamer, Yan Jun believes in the spirit of participation, or in her words "everyone's dying in Monash, have some fun man". Hence, this year Yan Jun is stepping out of her comfort zone and trying her luck in "PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds" (PUBG), a great game to play when you need to blow off some of that university essay-crisis steam.

**As team captain, how would you describe the experience of managing an entire team of players virtually?**

It's not been an easy job managing an entire committee and players, especially since I've not even seen them in person. Communication is mostly through WhatsApp and I am really grateful that despite the circumstances, I've been able to get to know lots of new and interesting people. I am also grateful that the team captains and players for each game Manticore is participating in are cooperative and easy-going. There have been some bumps along the way but nothing major that we couldn't get through as a team, and so it's been a smooth process so far.

**Since you've participated in both in-person and virtual versions of Monash Cup, what has been the biggest difference?**

I'd say that the "vibe" has been the biggest difference as the group of participants are very different people. Prior to it being held virtually, Monash Cup was like any typical sports day event you'd witness in high school, filled with stamina inducing activities. ESports used to just be a very small portion of Monash Cup, and so the group of participants were very sporty people but now there's been a drastic shift as the majority of participants are those who've always been a fan of the virtual gaming environment. I've also



noticed that there's more male participants as opposed to females, which is a bit of a disappointment because there needs to be more female gamers. I think this definitely shows that there's a different time for different people to shine. In my opinion however, an ideal Monash Cup would be one that's hybrid so that participation is maximised.

**Is the current execution of Monash Cup meeting your expectations?**

A pretty good-job was done. My expectations were not super sky-high but compared to last year it's a lot better. There's a legitimate streaming company (IRL Malaysia) streaming the games and there's been a lot of support throughout this whole process. I also do think slightly simpler games should be offered to account for more people.

**How do you train your team members for each tournament considering everything takes place online? Has it been challenging?**

I place 100% trust on my team captains. There's a lot of flexibility. I do have my expectations and I would communicate it to my team captains, but in relation to how they'd implement it, they have the freedom to do whatever they deem appropriate. I don't want my team to feel the pressure of winning. The most important thing is that my team members have fun.

**Do you think Monash should continue with the implementation of E-Games in the future?**

Yes, they should conduct a hybrid Monash Cup to cater to different needs, one that would work for physically sporty people and those who enjoy sitting in front of their desktops and gaming virtually. It would be a big project to implement, but it's definitely

worth a try. It would get the whole Monash community to participate in one massive event.

**Manticore's motto is "Hear Us Roar", has it been challenging to keep your team's spirits up due to the pandemic?**

The biggest challenge is once again definitely the "vibe" of it all. I've been to the opening ceremony of the physical Monash Cup back in 2019 and it's so different! It's a very ceremonious event, there's a stage, a gigantic board with the logo of the last winning house that gets removed to make room for the new winner, the house captains would be proudly waving their flags, and everyone's gathered in the field to witness. It's a very grand experience. Despite it not being like that now, I wouldn't say that the spirit is not there as I am glad to have enthusiastic players.

**How does being in Manticore feel, since you've been in it for three years now?**

I do feel a sense of belonging as I've been consistently playing for the house for three years. I've been into team sports since high school and I've always had a competitive but fun spirit. I'll be really sad though when I have to leave Manticore but I'm glad I got to participate in three very different Monash Cup's.

**If Monash Cup was in-person, what games would you be participating in?**

Swimming! Even though I'm not a pro-swimmer, I used to do water polo, so it's the next best thing. A few of my friends have suggested that I should try dodgeball, which is a lot of fun. I'd also probably try out for athletics as I'm into long-distance running.



# Captain Clement Chui: Leviathan's Honcho

Written by Elly Zulaikha



Leviathan's captain is Clement Chui, a Year 2 Sem 2 Global Studies student. Clement initially signed up for the vice captain post, but was astonished to see that the captain position was vacant. Clement was pondering how he'd handle the responsibilities and his hefty units at first (Very relatable). But, after some deliberation, he decided to seize this once in a lifetime opportunity and exclaimed, "Why not!"

Clement had to participate solely in Mobile Legends this semester due to his tight schedule. Fortunately, Clement has had a lot of extra help. "You're practically prepared to go if you have skilled secretaries, liaison officers, publicity, and vice. It's actually extremely easy as a job to station everything really properly if the entire subcommittee is eager to support you" (Shoutout to you, Leviathan subcommittee!).

During the semifinals, PubG, Mobile Legends, CSGO, Dota, League of Legends, and Valorant will all be available to stream. In addition, players will be expected to open their webcams in the game preview. Interestingly as well, the players wear jerseys with their names on the back, despite the fact that the Monash Cup 2021 edition is predominantly an E-Gaming tournament. How legit!

The players of Leviathan have been instrumental in helping the entire house to thrive, filling up Google Docs to add their size, measurement, and address in order to make the jersey endeavour a success.

Clement also graciously allowed me to ask him a few other questions.

## How has that transition been from offline to online hosting of the Monash Cup?

When it was offline, I didn't really have the experience with the Monash Cup.

But based on all of my seniors and how they talk about it, it felt really fun. All the cheering and the motivation, the outings with people in all the other sports you can do offline is good. I know the feeling because I've been competing before as well.

When you transition to online, it's more chill. For example, if you win a game against the other teams, you would just text in the group "Oh, we won. Ok I'll text you later" and "Oh, congrats." But you won't be there to celebrate together, so usually we go on a call together and be like, "Yo, congrats!"

It's a really new perspective to feel and experience it, so I will say it's quite good. Management wise, it's quite difficult but you get the hang of it after that.

## Following up on that, I mean, you kind of covered it, but is the current execution of the Monash Cup meeting your expectations?

Yeah, C&S is trying their best to reschedule here and there. What I like about C&S, especially covering the Monash cup right now, is that they're really flexible.

If you need rescheduling for the competition, because not everybody can fit within the time given. They'd actually give you the opportunity to reschedule. If you don't like the option, it's open for discussion, instead of saying, "Oh, no, I'm the authority you should listen to me this and that." So yeah, it's actually really good.



**So in the future, would you like to continue to implement the E-Gaming section for Monash Cup when transitioning back to physical campus?**

Yeah, sure. At first, when Monash Cup actually implemented this, they wanted, if possible, to implement both E-Gaming as well as offline. And I was actually really surprised because I was really hyped with both platforms.

Some people are really thriving online but some are really good offline, in outdoor sports and stuff. And I will definitely encourage both as well because it gives out more hype during the sport season.

**So I saw recently that there's a new initiative that's been very interesting and exciting, an online cheer pom competition! So how's that been and the engagement and response so far?**

Okay, so the first time when they implemented Online Cheer Pom, I was really confused. I actually had to talk with the Leviathan team captain of Cheer Pom and asked if they could give me a brief of what this is.

I know cheerleading, right? It's like, you know, a bunch of people just doing acrobatics and doing cheers and stuff.

I know that but so I asked them, how will online cheer pom be any different?

And to my surprise, they actually have an example video. And it's actually really interesting. They give you a timespan of five to 10 minutes. And in that 10 minutes you get to record yourself, as well as, any pictures or videos of you doing the stunts. And usually what they do is they put on one whole video, and there's different sections. So like, Cheer Pom 1, 2, and 3 are doing the same thing. And then below there, they have another three more cheerleaders doing the other things. So like the first panel, they go up, and then the other one below is going down. If you edit it nicely, and the timing is really perfect, it feels

really satisfying to watch because it's so synchronised. It's actually something that I never thought would happen.

**So has the response been good so far in terms of engagement and interactivity?**

So the response at first was honestly not good at all. Like, we tried to recruit members, but no one was interested. Like, we would ask "Oh, I think you have cheerleading backgrounds. Are you interested in this?" And the response at first was like "I would be in cheerleading but not this because it's online." Like I understand, you have to film yourself alone and stuff. but there's also some people who actually are willing to take part and try on this thing. But I think the start was like, No. But as the season goes by, people actually try and there are more and more people who are more curious about it. Like right now, I would say it's above average. It wouldn't be really, really high. But it's definitely enough to compete against.

**Describe Leviathan in three words and explain why you chose these words.**

Okay. The first one would definitely be chill. This team is the chilliest house I've ever met. Even in high school the different houses I've been in are really competitive. When I was managing Leviathan, I asked them, "Oh, aren't you guys going to train together?" They'd be like "Ah, it's fine, We're not gonna do that." I was like, wow, okay, let's chill!!

The second one is definitely, especially the team captains for each game, who are very patient and honest. Like, not only them, actually the majority of the members are really patient as well. You know, you know how people in games they're really toxic, especially in E-Games they don't hold back from typing stuff and emote themselves. But Leviathan is one of the most patient houses I've ever seen. Like, if they get stomped by an opponent they will just be like, "It's fine. Calm down. You don't have to start shit-talking other



people.” So that was actually really surprising because I thought I was being toxic. And then I met them I’m like, “Oh, well, I’m actually not just toxic. I’m very toxic”.

The last one is definitely teamwork based. They really like to communicate. Whenever they win or they lose, they will be like, “Guys pop into Discord. Let’s talk about the games, even though we had a loss, let’s discuss how to make it better.” We actually sync up and do it for the better of the team, especially those teams that went into lower brackets where they lost during the main stages. Because when you drop to the lower bracket, that’s the last chance for you to continue the competition. You could see the commitment they gave for the team.

**Leviathan’s motto is strive to thrive, which is pretty relevant in these challenging uncertain times. How do you, as a captain, keep the whole house motivated to partake in the virtual Monash Cup during the pandemic?**

What I found out was, it was a joke at first, I told them, “if you guys win this, the entire house will treat you guys to McDonald’s.” And they actually won the game! So now I had to treat them to McDonald’s in stock! It was actually really funny. Because, everyone is taking it really seriously. At the same time, it felt like a game more than a competition. You know? Like, yes, it is a competition, but they took it more to the fun side and positive side. So it’s really good because like I said, it’s our teamwork and the attitude from each of them. They actually like to take it very seriously but also have fun at the same time. You know, so it’s definitely how I motivate all of them with the help of my vice captains as well as my subcomms.

Finally, I asked if there’s any behind-the-scenes drama. Now, I have to be very vigilant while including the tea he spilled. “There will undoubtedly be tea everywhere, especially in this kind of competitive scene,” he remarked. The information given to the house captains was a little out of date. He was always up to date thanks to the Leviathan team captains. It got to the point where all of the captains of each house had to join a discord chat to work out the kinks.

While wrapping up, I had to bring up the “I’m going to shine a bright light on the Leviathan because we strive to thrive” line once more.





## **An insider look on how it's like being Culebre's captain for the 2nd E-Monash Cup**

Written by Ashley Lim

Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond my control and of course Week 7 (or as I personally like calling it, Hell Week) I was unable to secure a formal interview session with Culebre's Captain Reuben Ng for Monash Cup. Nevertheless, much like the highly anticipated e-sport event of the year, we adapted to this challenge and decided to perform our interview over WhatsApp instead.

We all know that last year's e-sport tournament for the Monash Cup was held with some chaos and confusion mainly due to the unprecedented circumstances. Therefore, as this year's finale looms (19th September, don't forget to tune in!) let's take an insider look into what it's like being a Captain during these trying times and their transition to an online format for the second time.

My name is Reuben Ng Wee Ming, and I'm in my last semester of Monash. I am currently majoring in Accounting and Marketing under Monash's School of Business. I got interested in the Captain position because this is my last year studying here and would love to make an impact before leaving Monash. At first, everybody thought that we could have physical sports and e-sports simultaneously. But as the number of COVID cases in Malaysia increased especially during the first sem, I knew that physical sports is a no-go. It's a blessing in disguise for me as the workload has decreased a bit since we would only need to focus on e-sports. However, I did not join any of the games because I'm not an avid e-sport player.

**Can you give a brief overview of the games that will be streamed (for people who are not necessarily active in e-gaming)?**

So this year, C&S had a collaboration with IRL(streaming platform for gamers) and with other sponsors too. Culebre got lucky this year as we were able to secure a gold sponsor for Monash Cup Online 2021, which is InsightzClub. We are very fortunate to have InsightzClub as our gold sponsor and the players would feel delighted the most as the cost for their jerseys would be absorbed so they can focus on their matches.

**How has the transition been from offline to online hosting of Monash Cup (management, streaming, student response, etc)?**

Personally, it feels much more relaxed compared to offline hosting but I would still need to be aware of the deadlines and take note of important messages in Whatsapp to keep me up to date. I'm glad to have a competent team behind me through the course or planning which made things easier. However, there'll always be some hiccups along the way but that's okay since that's how life is .

**Following up on that, is the current execution of the Monash Cup meeting your expectations?**

The current execution is much better compared to last year's, since last year was the first time Monash Cup was held online. Hence, there were many unexpected challenges thrown to us and things started to get messy. From my perspective, Monash Cup was much more well organized this year than last year. Cheers to the organizers and the team and keep up the good work :)



**How do you train your team members for each tournament considering everything takes place online? Is it a challenge?**

We started to recruit players during the semester break, then we scouted for captains. From then on, we let the captains decide who will be in the team. Next, both the captains and players decided on a time to have training sessions. This year, our excos tried out something different by arranging scrimmage games for the teams by contacting esports players from other universities. I would like to thank Mok, my handyman, the Vice(wise) captain for arranging the whole team and for promoting synergy among the members.

**In the future would you like to continue to implement an "E-Gaming Section" for Monash Cups when we transition back to physical campus?**

Sure, why not. I hope that next year's Captain will continue to have physical and online sport at the same time, or maybe have physical sports in the first semester and e-sports for the second semester. The inclusion of e-sports in Monash Cup practices inclusivity and more Culebrians can get to participate and enjoy Monash cup, be it physically or virtually.

**Describe your house in a few words.**

2017 to 2019 were our golden years, and we are just getting started.

**What are your top three online games and how did you get into it?**

Tinder, tatan and bumble lol jk jk. For me it would be Dota, League of Legends (LOL) and FIFA. I suck at gaming haha, I'm more into physical sports...

**If Monash Cup was offline what games would you be participating in?**

Most likely basketball.





Interview with League of Legends Teams



Interview with Opnicus Captain Ivan Tan



CLICK THE QR CODE TO WATCH THE INTERVIEW



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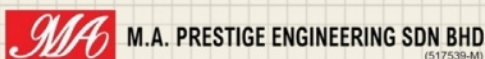
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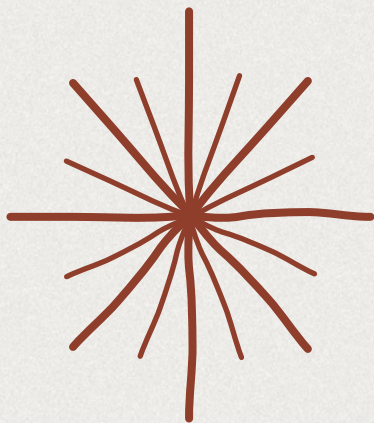
# #Being Minimalistic

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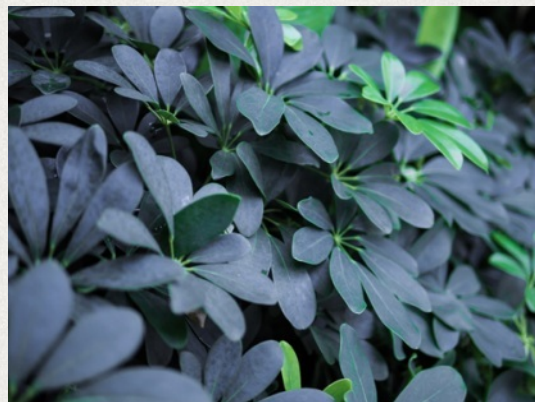
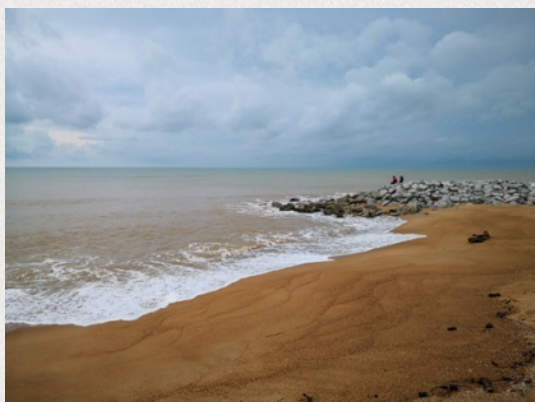


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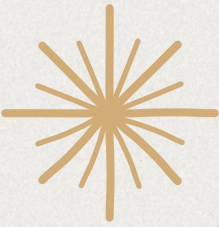


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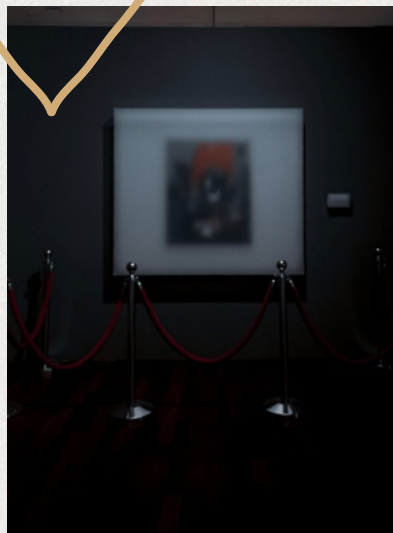
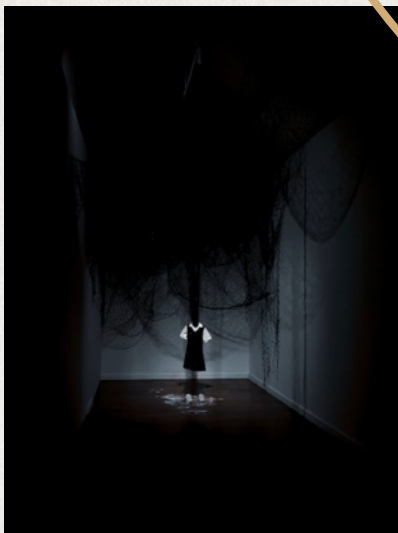
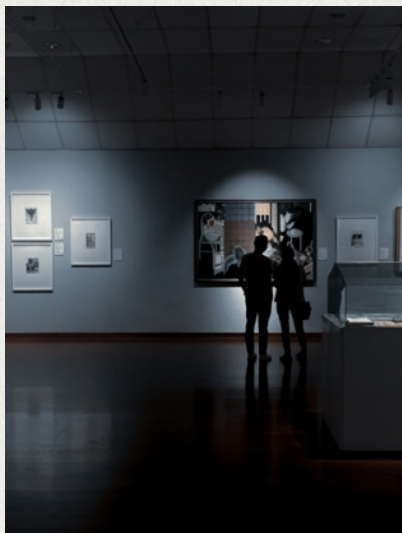




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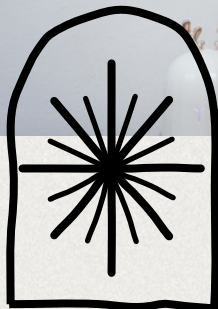




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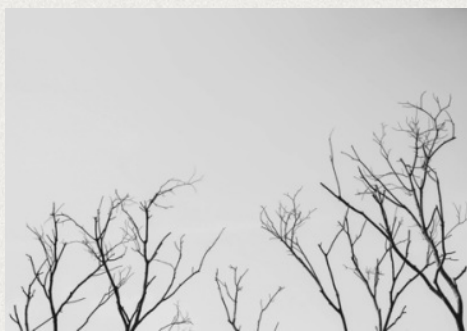


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Photos by Wong Zi Yi





# WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE

You're all grown up now, aren't you? Or do you just wish you could go back to the simple times, your childhood days where you didn't want to go to bed so early, wanted to eat all junk food for lunch, back when all you had to worry was how you'd spend your pocket money at the school canteen and how you'd spend your time gossiping at the back of the classroom.

Our parents have been there for us ever since we were young, while they remained a constant and reassuring presence, we have evolved from being a curious bumbling toddler in kindergarten, to eager primary schoolers exploring the world of new friends and new sceneries in school, to our rebellious phase as high schoolers where we used to scoff when they tried giving us advice that sounded so foreign to our ears back then. And even then, despite maybe having fallouts along the way, they're still there to guide us.

Some people may not have met their parents, or their parents are only parents by blood and name, but not by action. Some don't have a good relationship with theirs or they just simply didn't grow up around them. We hear you and we acknowledge you. People who have been there from the start with us don't necessarily need to be directly blood related, it could be your best friend, your brother from another mother, sister from another mister, your guardian, your aunt, or your grandparents, your foster parent. Nonetheless, we want to celebrate the people who have been there for us since Day 1. The ones who have rooted for us since the beginning.



**JIA YING** What is the one thing your parent(s)/ guardian told you that you'll never forget?

I remember being stressed out over an assessment that I hadn't done well on when my dad called to check on me. I thought he'd give me a lecture about being more careful and prepared, but to my surprise, he told me not to worry, instead, take it easy and to learn from this experience. It's such a common advice but it was so, so valuable because we're so often caught up with what's in front of us that we rarely see the bigger picture and we fail to learn the lessons embedded in past experiences. My mom told me the same thing when I called her to talk about it later that day, and since then, it's been the advice that replays in my head every day.

What is the funniest story your parent(s)/ guardian has told you? Or your funniest memory with them?

As a toddler, I would have banter with my parents and looking back at those memories, I really have to give my parents props for dealing with my bullshit back then.

Exhibit A.

My dad used to call me 小蔡, meaning 'Small Chua' and so, I started calling him 中蔡 which means 'Medium Chua' because there was a third Chua, my Grandpa! Because he was the oldest, he was meant to be 大蔡 'Big Chua'.

Exhibit B.

My mom would feed me a mouthful of rice topped with some fish meat when I was younger and she'd tell me to look out for bones '看骨', to which I replied, "How? I don't have have eyes in my mouth..."

Lame, I know. But, my mom used to think I was the smartest 2-year-old on Earth so...

What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

This was something that my Dad told me shortly before my Grandpa passed. At that time, I was spending a lot of my time studying in the dorms or on campus, barely going home once a month.

My dad called to tell me that I should come home more often, to spend some time with family and take breather. I was nearing finals and graduating from college soon, so I wanted to receive the High Achiever's Award so I could show Grandpa my name and picture published on the newspaper. Unfortunately, he passed 3 months before graduation and though I did make it onto the list, he wasn't there to see it. I wish I had taken my dad's advice and went home more often.

Life is finite, cherish every moment you spend with those you love so that at the end of the road, you'll be able to look ahead with no regrets.

**SEL** What is the one thing your parent(s)/ guardian told you that you'll never forget?

Failures and mistakes do not define your capability, it's just the process to success.



**SANDARRR28** What is the funniest story your parent(s)/ guardian has told you? Or your funniest memory with them?

Cracking jokes and laughing together.

What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

Never take decisions without thinking carefully.

**CHAI TING** What is the one thing your parent(s)/ guardian told you that you'll never forget?

A few years ago, I got myself into a sticky situation and felt like there was no way out of it. In the midst of all the anxiety that I was feeling, my dad came to me and told me this very sentence "Ting, don't worry. We are all here for you. You are my daughter, and I will protect you okay? Don't worry." Till this day, what my dad said still makes me tear up. My dad isn't the lovey dovey kind of dad, I guess you could say that he's the typical Asian dad, so the fact that he said those words of reassurance really warms my heart and it holds so much of weight till this day. And it's definitely something that I'll never ever forget.

What is the funniest story your parent(s)/ guardian has told you? Or your funniest memory with them?

My mum told me that back when my dad and her were dating during their uni days in Perth, they went on an ice skating date thinking that it would be a cute bonding time. Turns out they spent 90% of the time falling in the ice skating rink because they couldn't skate HAHHAHA. It was really funny thinking back of this story, the thought of my parents in that skating rink makes me laugh so much.

What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

I wish I took my time with my dad more seriously. With his new job, he works everyday now and he only comes back at night. We used to spend more time together, playing chess, going for weekly Saturday dinners as a family, etc. I feel like I took those times for granted :')

**NONU** What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

Save money.

**EVILBAGUETTE** What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

Be as independent as you can be.

**HAMBURGER** Do you think your parents/guardians have influenced you a lot?

No doubt! I am who I am today cuz of them, I'm always appreciated for the values they've instilled in me.





**QIS** What is the one thing your parent(s)/ guardian told you that you'll never forget?

"You should consider marrying someone after the 3-month mark of your relationship". My parents dated for only 3 months before getting married. You would think because we're Muslims, so it's good that she married quickly to prevent, well, 'temptations', but she vehemently disagrees. "I've dated so many people before that and well these temptations you talk about can easily be controlled (if you wish) when you're with a man who respects your choices". My mother doesn't hate my dad, but whenever I asked her if she loved him, the slight hesitation and silence is always there, so I wondered if she stayed only to raise me and my sister. As I grew older, I kept her advice a lot. I don't ask her a lot about the reason why she married him anyway (I am not born out of wedlock in case you're wondering), but it sort of become a guidance in any relationships I'm in, where I should keep an open mind towards the guys I meet and not just settle for someone just because things looks rosy for a short period of time.

What is the funniest story your parent(s)/ guardian has told you? Or your funniest memory with them?

My parents said growing up I am a wanderer. Literally anything would grab my attention, and distract me. Once, we were at a department store, and my mum turned around and saw me gone. My parents panicked hard and made announcements and even ran around the store frantically looking for me. Then they decided to go to the toys section and saw me blissfully unaware of my surroundings and playing with cooking sets. I still have that same short attention span today, and I have gotten lost, away from my parents before, even literally up until a few months back. Sometimes I think God came through cause I ended up in uni, a place where you need focus like at all times.

What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously? I've always been a very black-or-white person. I point out people's mistakes when they are wrong (black) because whatever I learned must be right. But my mum always tells me that we should not call out people who make mistakes and tell them to follow your way. It took losing a best friend in college to finally knock some sense into me that the best way to help people who make mistakes is embrace the fact that they made it and intend to amend it. WE have differing opinions in the world and that's fine. What's not fine is when we impose that opinion on others, and expect others to follow (unless your opinion involves the abuse or violence of people though = I'mma call you out if it is).

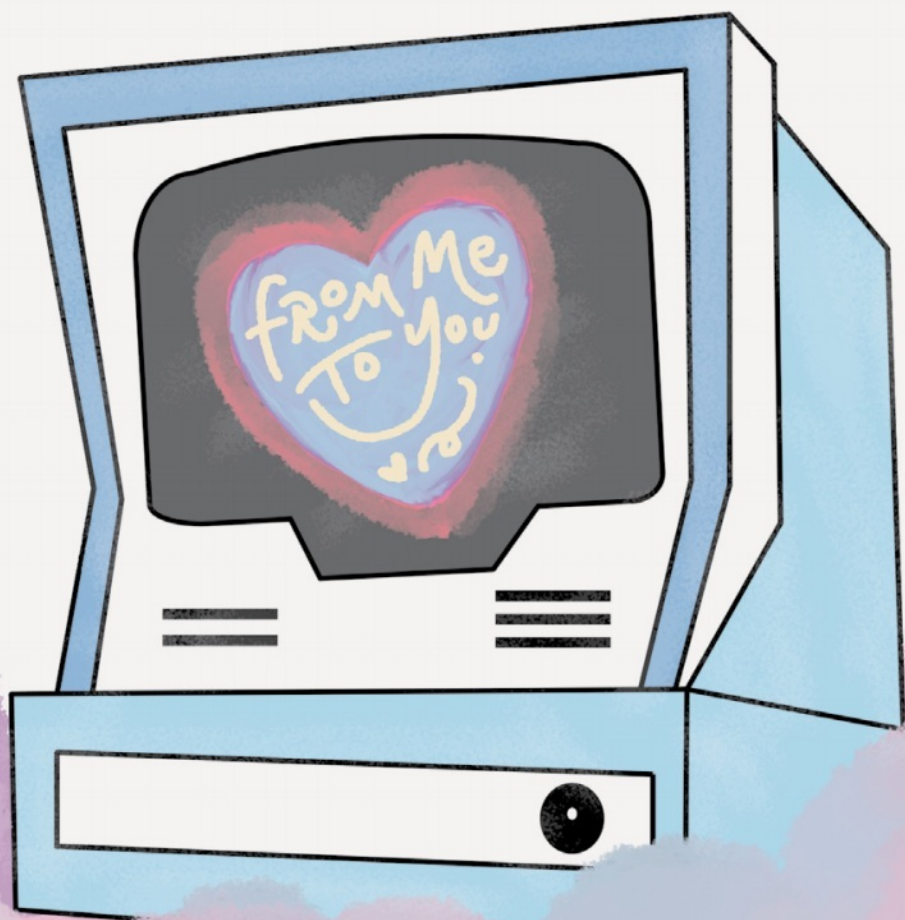
**ME** What is the one thing they told you that you wished you took more seriously?

Money is important.

Do you think your parents/guardians have influenced you a lot?

My father is terrible at educating, luckily he didn't educate me much, now i know what are the things you shouldn't do as a parent cause it will hurt your children.

Letters for your *fifteen-year-old* version of you  
and words of encouragement for the  
*future version of yourself*





## From\_Me\_To\_You



What is something you wish would have done differently if you knew today's outcome?



I wish I would have put her WhatsApp on pin."

Attending that invitation where she asked, "where are you?"

Confessing to her, face to face even though the risk of losing the friendships or either being affected by COVID.

-Nelson



I wish I never doubted myself so much back then and see my potential as it is and not downplay my talents :)

- CT



To not be too emotional about yourself. People come and go, and majority might not care about what you feel, so just accept the situation that had happened.

- Adam

## From\_Me\_To\_You

It's ok to not have a group of close friends, sometimes it's ok to mingle with almost anyone, and also face things on your own. Who knows, the outcomes might be better than expected. Family is also important, as much as you wanted to mingle with your friends, you will never get the same loving environment with family, their love is always unmeasurable although it may not seem like so sometimes.

- Adam

What is one thing  
you would  
tell yourself  
if you could go  
back in time?



Nelson

Go and confess to her, you dumbass!!! Even though it scares you. That's something to be achieved with the heart of a lion.



You're not what people said about you. You're not your past mistakes. You're an art in progress, growing every day. A flower that's flourishing, leave by leave, petal by petal. A garden doesn't form overnight :) Don't put too much expectations on yourself, it's okay to mess up sometimes and have fun with the process.

- CT



## From\_Me\_To\_You



### Do you have any advice for the Future Version of you?

Dear Future Adam,

Maybe you would be hustling for your passion in the workforce, or maybe you would be working on one of your multiple side projects for income. You would have some experience in the adult world by that time. However, do remember that, it's entirely okay to slow down and take good care of your mental health. Even though who knows that, one day, everyone started to hate you for what you do and think, it's okay, they may be right, or they may be wrong, but all in call, if they found happiness from what you have contributed (in a good way), then that's all it matters. As long you sole intention is to help or give back, it doesn't matter if people have had bad impressions of you. The most important thing is to know what you're doing is morally right and that your intentions are pure. As much as the world is sickening, it doesn't hurt to make someone's day better because you will also feel great when u do it. Work hard, but at the same time, Enjoy the little things in life.

Sincerely,  
Present Adam

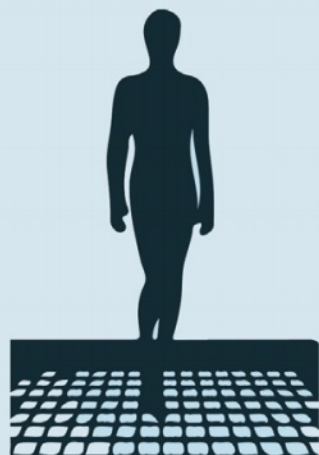
Things are going to work out! Every trial that you've faced, and will face is only meant to make you stronger. Embrace it; keep your head up and be brave. You got this even when you feel like you don't, everything is going to be okay.

- CT



Everything that  
scares you?  
That's the dream.

-Nelson





"Do-over", a messaging application that allows its user to have a one-time only do-over, a chance to send any number of text messages to their past-self, for 5 minutes.

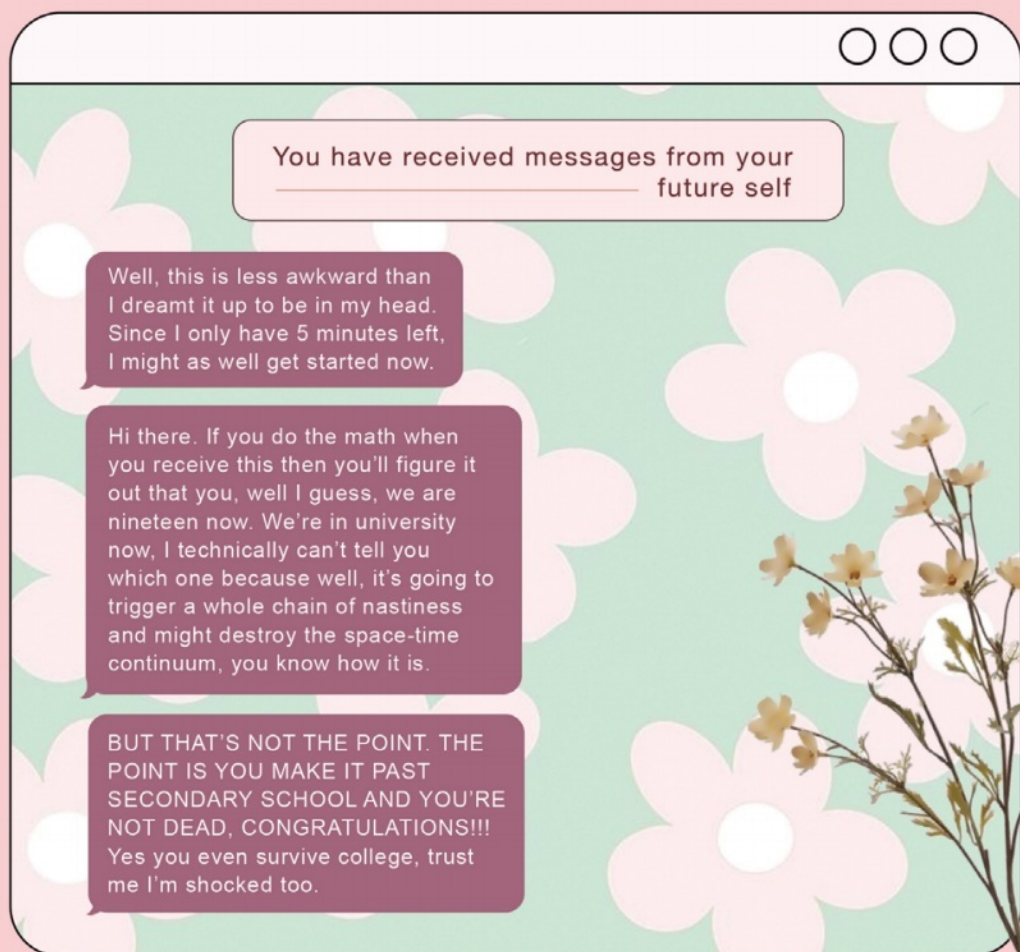
CURRENT YEAR: 2021

"DO-OVER" YEAR: 2015 [AGE: 13]

"You have received a message from the year 2021. Please click the link below"

Rules & Regulations:

1. The allotted time for this conversation is strictly 5:00 minutes.
2. Once you have clicked the link, you will be unable to re-enter.
3. Your future self CANNOT EXPLICITLY REVEAL ANY DETAILS ABOUT THE FUTURE.
4. This is a ONE-WAY FORM OF COMMUNICATION ONLY.



You have received messages from your \_\_\_\_\_ future self

Well, this is less awkward than I dreamt it up to be in my head. Since I only have 5 minutes left, I might as well get started now.

Hi there. If you do the math when you receive this then you'll figure it out that you, well I guess, we are nineteen now. We're in university now, I technically can't tell you which one because well, it's going to trigger a whole chain of nastiness and might destroy the space-time continuum, you know how it is.

**BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT. THE POINT IS YOU MAKE IT PAST SECONDARY SCHOOL AND YOU'RE NOT DEAD, CONGRATULATIONS!!!**  
Yes you even survive college, trust me I'm shocked too.





Niceties aside, there are some things I really do want to tell you.

First things first, I know that right now, you're on the cusp of entering secondary school and have that inherent desperate need to be part of something, part of a group that accepts you for who you are. You crave it so much because bouncing from school to school and friend group to friend group hasn't been the easiest thing in the world. You just want to feel like you belong somewhere, don't you?

You're worried that it's going to be awkward, that you're going to be, well I'm going to be harsh here because that's who we are, ostracized, cast out from the pack because you're the girl that has her head in the clouds, the one that finds more solidarity in words than other beating hearts. Heads up: you're going to be called a nerd... several times over, honestly I'm still called a nerd by some people. You're going to miss outings and you're not going to be able to understand some inside jokes because it just seems that the kids you hang out with have more in common than you do. Well there's the language barrier too but it is what it is right?

And you know what?

That's. Okay.

Trust me, you're going to want to fit in so badly that you'll try to reinvent yourself (several times) just to try to fit into this little, "niche" pocket of high-school that to you now, must seem like the entire world. Or even when you reach college and when you see that OH MY GOD THERE ARE SO

You're not

what they

say you are



MANY COUPLES, SO MUCH HAND-HOLDING, SO MUCH HUGGING EVERYWHERE, you're going to feel slightly hollow on the inside because look everyone has someone and here you are...again...alone.

To that I say: the biggest fattest LOL in the world

I know it sounds like truly the corniest thing in the whole world but shit like this? It doesn't matter once you reach nineteen. I'm not saying to become a hermit and vanish from society forever, that's dramatic even for us. I'm telling you not to be disillusioned by the prospect of high school and popularity and being in a relationship because I swear it isn't all that it's glamorously painted to be.

It's high school for fucks sake, not the end of the world. Don't let society shove you into a tiny little box, to slap a label on your forehead so that they can pack you neatly away into their tight system of conformity just because it's convenient for them.

And as for the second one, you're going to realise in your own time that being in a relationship doesn't change jack shit. Sure it feels great and everything but...it's highly overrated. Being single or not being single doesn't define who the hell you are, although it may seem that way when you go to college.

Do not pour yourself so much into these tiny aspects of life because, in the grand scheme of things, the one that you're going to live is so much more than that. You are multi-faceted, messy, a combination of infinitely complex emotions and experiences that there is absolutely



no way to classify yourself as one thing entirely. And even if you could, why would you want to? You're not a nerd, geek, bookworm or whatever other names that they're going to call you in the future. You're you. And if I'm being honest? That will always be enough

You may be reading this now and rolling your eyes because we're irritating like that, but I swear to God it's true. It's true that you are enough and it's true that you don't have to prove that to anyone else because who died and made them king huh? So go forth, break boundaries, be obnoxiously loud, be unashamedly weird or any of the other numerous adjectives that there going to use to try and fit you into their conventional view of the world. Because honestly? The world that I live in right now? We're going to need more of that. More of you.

Before I leave, I'd like to say one more thing. No, we don't have everything figured out. Yes, we still struggle with our mental health. Yes, we will fight with our parents better. But most of all, I want to say this because for the next six years you don't say this enough to yourself.

No matter what life throws at us; it's literally us against the world, kid. We got this.

Oh and one more thing.

I'm so, so damn proud of you.

# SLOWLY, BUT SURELY.

WRITTEN BY ELLY ZULAIKHA

*\*I wrote this while listening to Ludovico Einaudi's Experience. the slowed. reverb one.*

To the girl in high school,

I know those were some of the darkest times of your life. I remembered it clearly as if it was yesterday, how you had given up on school. Seeing your grades spiraling down while everyone around you told you to “You gotta study harder! You have a lot of potential, y’know?”

Or how you felt you’re not exactly the brightest student in your school despite being in the ‘first-second class of what was supposedly the place for ‘smart’ kids? I know. It sucks. Like a lot LOT. The only subject that you excelled in was English, but then, you were the big fish in a small pond.

Your teachers were so wrong for putting you through hell. Two agonizing years of studying pure science? Even when your grades in the past clearly screamed ‘SCIENCE AND MATHS ARE NOT FOR ME!’? Damn, they’re blind and dumb as f\*\*\*!

And OMG, their audacity to tell you to ‘work harder’ when you tried but you still can’t? That’s torture. Well, at least, in the end, you passed everything in your final exams, so pat yourself on the back!



IT'S OKAY



# TO FALL.



On another note, I wish I could go back and give you a hug. In the midst of you giving up on your studies, you found out the bitter truth about 'family' and subsequently influenced your negative perception of having children and the idea of marriage. Because of that, it accelerates your maturity, to the point where adults are always taken aback by your thought processes.

But you know what? You're wiser now. Who cares if people think you're a bitter person for thinking marriage is not always beautiful, or how it riles you when you see would-be parents excited to raise a child, when you're mortified at the prospect of the sheer responsibility of it that so many boomers have failed to realize, which, the result is now everyone is struggling with some form of mental health issues!

Anyway, to the past me, if you could see how you are doing right now, you would be wondering, "How the f\*\*\*did I get there?" Yeah, it's still a mystery. But you have some pretty darn good character development going on right now!

I know this sounds cliché but to the future me, let's just take it slow, one step at a time yeah? For now, you gotta get that degree. Go finish and start new sewing projects you want. Hustle and get that moolah so you don't have to worry about looking at price tags. And if things don't look up and you fall along the way, that's okay.

Yours sincerely,  
Future you.

# TO THE ME

Written by Christie Wong

To 2018/ 2019 lost college underachiever Christie Wong, I've got a lot of good things to tell you! You'd think that I'm the biggest fattest liar out there, but I'm not.

**Today you ate your favorite comfort food, Kimchi Stew, in fact, you made it yourself!**

You're no longer eating pre-packed meals from Family Mart or Cup Noodles every evening for dinner and fun fact, you haven't split your sandwich into 3 sections for a while now. Things have been on the uppy since years ago, you haven't screamed in pain, in your bed at 5AM and you haven't hid in the closet in your bout of anxiety attacks for a really really long time. Can you even believe that you made it this far? Better believe it, because here you are, still alive at 21 when you didn't even think you'd make it past 19.

**To the Me who hid in the college bathroom,**

you no longer time your journey and go to classes exactly 5 minutes late and let me tell you something very surprising, you're actually okay with sitting anywhere alone now! But fortunately, you found your footing in university and you actually have friends! (And you now spend your lunch breaks eating food you actually enjoy! PS: You have not touched Lunchbox in a very long time and for a very good reason too.)

**I'm so very grateful that you didn't pull the other leg through the window.**

**The 'Me' in the present does not feel like life is taking me anywhere,**

I'm in a loop of 'I don't want to do this anymore' to 'I'm free to the point where I'm overthinking, I don't want to rest' to 'I'm so fucking burnt out'. Feels a lot like regression from where I was once, where I fought to be in a better place. The alcohol only drowns the sorrow into a daze, and cigarettes only numb for 5 minutes during and



5 minutes after. I used to be so high, constantly on-the-go, achieving things left and right and now when things are slowly dwindling down, it feels like my world has been put to a stop. Not a steady stop, but a stop that feels like a sudden break on the highway, I'm spiralling down to nowhere. Pain has always been my catalyst to write, but what happens when the pain wants to plant itself in your chest, seeds that become shoots and roots tangle within the crevices of your ribs and flowers, ugly ones, bloom between the spaces of your ribs. I can't breathe.

### **Sometimes, I wait for the replies that never come.**

Sometimes, I hope for the affection that never arrives. And sometimes, all the time, I wonder what the fuck am I doing with my life?

### **To the Me in the future, knowing you, you'd definitely come back**

to read this article when you're in a better headspace maybe a few more months down the road and you'll think to yourself 'How did I get this far again?' Maybe then you won't be scrolling through LinkedIn and feeling hopeless, useless and stuck. I hope you know that internships or achievements don't actually double up your invisible net worth above your head, that is not how it works. I hope by then, you don't feel an ache in your chest when you look at loving couples because I know you've always envied those who have had proper dating and relationships, but you've never had anything close to that. I hope that the haze of confusion is gone and that you've taken off your rose tinted glasses, no more 'la vie en rose' 24/7.

### **And if there's anyone that you've been eyeing?**

Nothing will happen knowing my ability to be dense as hell and I probably won't be doing anything about it.

If it didn't go well or simply nothing happened, I'm sure you've found a way to bury your emotions by telling yourself that you don't care. I hope by the time you reread this, you have found something worth caring about. Or maybe, just maybe, you'll be brave just once? :) (Tell them they're cute, go on, do it.)

They say things will always get better, even if you feel like it won't.

To The Me, whenever and wherever you are, you are worthy of good things and you are meant to be where you are right now.

**See you whenever I see you,  
but not on the other side.**

YOU DESERVE  
ALL THE GOOD THINGS  
LIFE HAS TO OFFER





**RANDOM SH\*TS  
IN MONASH**

**WARNING!** ~~THESE~~ **CAMPUS SICKNESS MAY EMERGE  
FLIP THE PAGES AT YOUR OWN RISK**



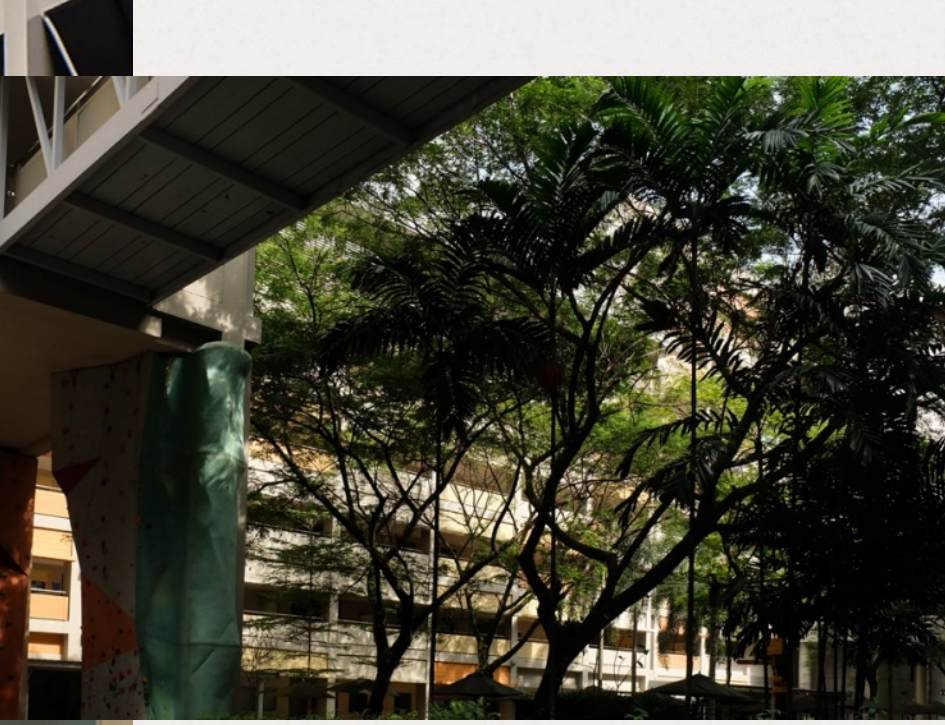






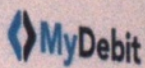








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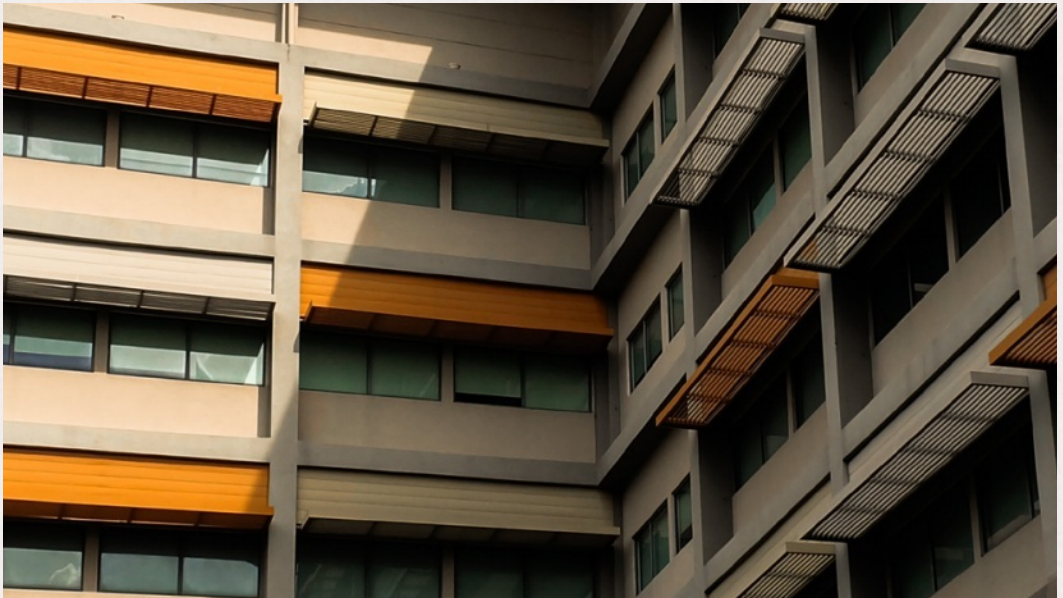
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# expression: the right to be

In  
middle school, I would run from  
the bus to catch Rosie O'Donnell's talk show.

She fascinated me. There was something about her that  
felt so familiar. A few years later, I found out what that something  
was: in 2002, I met my first girlfriend at freshman orientation and O'Don-  
nell came out publicly at a comedy club.

Celebrities have come out in all sorts of ways. A stirring speech. A short tweet. A  
solemn statement. But years before same-sex marriage was legal, amid heavy speculation  
about her sexual orientation, O'Donnell came out during a stand up set. "I'm a dyke!" she  
declared. And she followed that up with material on everything from Anne Heche's relationship  
with Ellen DeGeneres to Florida's law prohibiting gay men and lesbians from adopting children.

For most queer people, coming out is a process. I assume that was true for O'Donnell; it certainly was for  
me. It doesn't always feel freeing to tell your friends, family, or the world that you're queer, but a sense of  
freedom is exactly what you feel when you read about O'Donnell's set. In that moment, she no longer felt a  
responsibility to be the "Queen of Nice," that close-sect character I related to while eating cereal and watching my  
13-inch TV so many years ago. She was simply herself. Bold. Bawdy. Brassy. And queer.

— Kate Childs Graham

In the eighth grade, I dumped my boyfriend for Harvey Milk.

Alright — it was a little more complicated. But barely. In the eighth grade, per the suggestion of my favorite teacher, I  
chose Harvey Milk's Hope speech for a research paper our class was assigned on historical texts. This was the fall of 2008,  
when "hope" was a buzzword for a wholly different reason, associated with a wholly different man. But I first had eyes —  
and ears — for Harvey. I'd stay up late each night, my eyes glued to the tiny computer monitor in my kitchen and a pair of  
wiry airline headphones wrapped around my ears, bringing all the footage I could find of the country's first openly gay elect-  
ed official delivering his signature stump speech the next month or so. I memorized the text in full — and then the pauses, the  
pacing, the pitch of his voice.

I used to joke that the speech was a gateway drug to so many of the identities I now claim. It awoke my inner politico and  
made me a Democrat. It hooked me on the power of words and led me to my current job. Still, for most of my life, its actual  
content — a call for the LGBTQ+ community to come out of the closet, to replace stigmas and stereotypes with family and  
friends — felt beside the point. I was straight, I thought. As straight as words weren't aimed at me.

Then, a year ago, I fell in love with a woman and the speech went from poetic and powerful to deeply, deeply personal.  
Though mine is a generation that spurns labels and terms, calling myself queer felt important — and freeing. Like coming  
up for air. "Without hope, the us's give up," Harvey Milk said to eighth-grade me.

Today, I can still recite his whole speech from memory. But it reverberates differently. Now, when I talk about hope, I'm  
speaking from experience. And when I talk about "the us," I'm included.

— Jordana Narin

Sometimes a great speech deserves a sequel. That was the case on December 10, 2011, International Human Rights  
Day, when Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared "gay rights are human rights" at the United Nations (UN) in  
Geneva. Echoing her famous "women's rights are human rights" speech, Clinton sought to elevate LGBTQ rights as  
the next frontier in the moral arc of history.

Clinton spoke before an audience that included delegates from countries with harsh anti-LGBTQ laws and  
attitudes. She pulled no punches in describing the legally sanctioned violence imposed on the LGBTQ  
community, and called for all countries, rich and poor, to recognize the basic dignity of its citizens.

Her words were ever backed by action, as she announced policies to protect queer people around  
the globe.

In 2018, I stood in the room where Clinton delivered this speech. As I reflected on its  
importance, I realized for the first time that I could be both out and safe. Clinton —  
and the Obama Administration — imagined a world where queer voices are  
heard, and queer lives are valued. In a time of rising phobias, this speech,  
delivered not even a decade ago, may seem but a relic of some  
bygone age. But so long as ordinary people stand up for  
our rights, its dream of a bright future will never  
disappear.

— Violet Lhant



#MONGALovesYou  
#MUSAEditionsLoveYou



the colors *the Colors of my Flag* of my flag

i was born pink. maybe purple.  
 a bit blue.  
 and some saw me through the  
 tucked-in  
 flannels inside the cuffed jeans.  
 i remember  
 my best friend laughing,  
 "u know what my dad said?  
 is abigail a lesbian?"  
 i laughed so hard  
 i couldn't breathe.  
 i remember thinking,  
*oh well. i might be.*  
 like moth to flame, i remember  
 the  
 colors in my hands when i bled.

pink, purple, blue.

i hear often:

*good girls wear a nice dress,  
 smile nicely.*  
 i don't want to smile if you  
 don't give me the respect  
 my identity demands.  
 i will wear dresses over  
 leather jackets but i would  
 not live in woe of what  
 was expected from me.  
*that's not how girls should act.  
 as a girl, you need a husband.*  
 or about my sexuality,  
*that's not very bisexual of you.  
 swinging both ways makes you  
 a slut.*

i did not find myself in  
 this black and white of  
 how i should settle or how  
 i should dress.  
 in my own body, in my  
 own skin.

i am just existing.

i found myself in side-  
 glancing of pretty girls  
 and having fictional boys  
 in my head.  
 i found myself comfortable  
 in the baggy clothes, in the  
 short skirts, in the cute  
 dresses, in cuffed jeans.  
 in anything i wore that  
 made people think,  
*that's a little gay.*  
 i found myself  
 in they/them pronouns.  
 i found myself in the saying,  
 "gender is a social construct."  
 and it is.  
 i find myself saying out loud,  
 frequently, even right now,  
 "oh. i'm bisexual.  
 that's alright."

and it is.

- bee



# A Nominated Major in Gender Studies

written by Aiman Aiman

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Gender is a spectrum.

I eat up this spectrum as much as I can, I lift the lid of it open and stick my girl fingers in its gut and I pull it out and I bite on gender as hard as I can- I gorge on its contents, I let gender slip into the crevice of my nails. I eat up this spectrum as much as I can.

The neck is the biggest give away.

Biologically, the 'male' sexes have broader necks- it is sectioned in threes with a jutting middle and that middle is jolted again with an adam's apple. it should be revealing then, that at the ripe age of sixteen, that I was born into the wrong body.

I can close my eyes, and fix my puberty all the way back in my head- physically, my breasts would form into tiny french lumps because this is what my mother has her's made of. I would be allowed to have my hair grown out long in school, and would decisively wear my pinafore every day opting out the modest praxis of the 'kurung' - but none of this matters now. You are a boy born then bred and you will die off suppressing the need to replace a hormone for a hormone.

My mother is outspoken in nature; but there is a conscious practice in her to adhere to housewife culture. She occupies herself in the practice of conforming traditionally to femininity but the theory fails to fit on her. She makes my father dinner, and he presses her on when he notices a stain on his glass so she gets up from the table and immediately runs to the back to have it washed. She comes back and my father has already started on his meal without her.

I love my boyfriend.

He is lanky and tall, and has the biggest neck I know. It stretches down into his collar bone before running itself down to the symmetry of the lining of his stomach. He enjoys rap music, and for the most part, I reckon, is a 'boy' boy. We met in theatre school, and I recognised a Richard Siken writing about him- the one where you hold a boy's hand for the first time in a car and you choke down the need to tell him you love him. I love my boyfriend because I wear my high waist denim and he says nothing; I love my boyfriend because he is a boy and he understands that I am the definite opposition to that: I am a girl.

We hate going shopping and we like the theatre.

We have the Wes Anderson filmography collection revised, and are now on the momentary fixation onto the Japanese New Wave incline.



Funeral Parade of Roses (1969) is a transgressive film on the queer culture that operated around 1960s Tokyo. It is tragic, confiding in its black humour and like any other revolving facet of being queer, eventually was imitated later on by a cisgendered, heterosexual man (Stanley Kubrick did his unfavourable attempt at copying Funeral for his adaptation of A Clockwork Orange just two years later). I know this was my favorite of the binge list.

Funeral and I were never politely accommodated by God, we were violently thrashed into this and left to figure out the route of a labyrinth that promised only a murky way out. You can shave all the facial hair you want, I will grow my hair out until it passes my belly, I wear silk underwear in bed and my wired bra catches no fat under my chest area. I can be so angry with myself when I face a mirror or when I park myself in a public situation outside of my boyfriend and the social exertion comes along that I do not look the way I feel- but I can feel the way I look so much. The labyrinth is so wide, and so tiny at the same time and I am thinking if you mean that gender is a spectrum: That this is the spectrum.



I made my boyfriend dinner and it is my birthday.  
 I baked this cake and I am housewife tonight. This cake is pink and it is littered with edible glitter by its brim.  
 We blow the candles out and the light passes by us in smoke before we slice gender open.  
 We eat up this spectrum as much as we can, we lift the lid of it open and stick my girl fingers in its gut and we pull it out and we bite on gender hard - we gorge on its contents, we let gender slip into the crevice of our nails. We eat up this spectrum as much as we can- now there is only bone.



We gazed in each other's eyes. We talked. We were teenagers and we dated for a while, but then we went separate ways. Was I attracted to him? If so, I must be straight, right?

It was dark and the music roared with the crowd. We kissed and my heart was racing. Was the feeling mutual or was she drunk? Does that make me a bisexual, or a lesbian?

We cuddled and I felt safe. I wanted to stay but I was afraid of what was next. So, I left. Why didn't I want to do it? Could it be that I'm asexual, or demisexual?

I'm not sure who I am.

Hung out with some friends and casually dropped the words "I think I'm bisexual... or a lesbian". As soon as I uttered these words, I froze. Some thought it was a joke and laughed, some eyed me silently and dismissed me, few stayed back and talked to me. I opened up to them, and they supported me. I felt comfort.

Growing up in a country that considers a marriage to involve only one man and one woman makes you think that this is the only type of relationship that can possibly exist, and the only one that is acceptable, and that you're expected to follow this rule. School only teaches you about two genders, male and female. Men wear shirts, trousers, and shoes. Women wear make-up, dresses, and heels. That's it. Then you educate yourself about other genders. Now you're an adult and you're filling up forms, you're confused about which box to tick: male, female, or other. Sometimes you feel like venturing in a different section of a clothing store—

but you find yourself compelled to stick to the same old department. You start questioning. Why can't men wear make-up? Why can't women be shirtless?

At home nobody is aware of the LGBTQ+ community because nobody talks about homosexuality. When the topic is briefly highlighted on the television, one would either change the channel or comment on how 'ridiculous' it is. Every time that would happen, I would recall videos of people who have come out in reality, and TV shows about homosexuality such as 'Feel Good', 'You Me Her', and 'Orange is the New Black'. Then I would inhale deeply and imagine myself bravely coming out of the closet to my family. But then my brain starts to play out all the different scenarios of how wrong it would go, and how I would probably be cast out of society. I would then exhale and scream internally.

You have to get married in your twenties. You have to have children before thirty. What if I don't want to get married early, what if not at all? What if I don't want children? What if I wanted to be polyamorous? For some of us it's never been an option, and it won't be so any time soon.

It is hard to believe that we are in a century in which there are still people who are not prepared to accept other people of different genders. To be honest, living feels more like trying to survive. Set aside religious beliefs for a moment and ask yourself, what really makes us different? If you think about it, we're all humans made up of the same basic elements of life. Then what is it? I'm guessing our thoughts are what makes us different. Is that it? What else? Hmm... So, where do we go from here?

THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT ME

WRITTEN BY TIMED CENTURY





THE HOUSE OF  
RESIDENCY  
PENANG

Star Cafe

Photo by Ivan Liew



# Reminiscence

REMINISCENCE  
REMINISCENCE

## remembering

Written by Tasia Khoo

Graphic by Sakura Matsuyama

I stand blinded in the mist of tomorrow's  
morning  
to greet my melancholy who—in a heady  
haze—  
hums their sweet melody.  
That song as woody nightshades, those  
berries bittersweet



Lull me into deep slumber, only half asleep.  
My remembering is foggy like the murky  
water  
of yesterday's rain.  
But still, that laughter of a time passed  
rings clear as day—  
What heavy echo brings this solace, this  
pain?  
It seems my memory has come again.

I find you there,  
on the path among the paddy fields.  
You rise at dawn to watch the dragonflies  
wake.  
You barefooted little thing,  
too busy to notice your feet aches.  
I watch you—me—  
play pretend in the garden;  
soft in the warmth of the sun,  
quiet in the winnowing wind.  
Thinking—  
thinking tomorrow will never come,  
and so be it.

I hold your hands—my hands—  
but I cannot hear you.  
You reside only in fading sight,  
a fleeting light.  
My memory came and left, and I awake.  
Still, the remembering is always.



# PASSENGER SEAT

By Joeyee Chin | Graphic by Prissie Ong

being allowed on the passenger seat was  
always a special treat being able to see  
people walk down Bangsar's street  
watching the scenery along the freeway  
fleet

not being in control of the direction  
seems to make the experience just that  
much sweeter

funnily enough,  
not being in control seems to have taken  
the crown to be my biggest fear, maybe  
that's why when my therapist told me to  
look back and find similarities between  
all my past relationships  
relationships were alliances  
and I was the tribe leader killed by  
stray bullets caught in the cross fire  
the helplessness of being in those  
partnerships  
made me hopeful about the future and  
felt  
needed, wanted, guarded, bonded.  
I've always taken the passenger seat.

then you came in my life and took the  
passenger seat  
a talented humorous kind and healing  
soul,  
too precious to be put in a spot of  
helplessness

so, I navigated, I navigated the lines of  
compatibility and complement-ability  
I navigated,  
the line of extroversion and introversion,  
trying to match or even complement  
yours with mine  
I navigated and took you on a ride  
of ego and safety  
of chaos and serenity  
of kindness and empathy

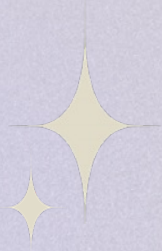


the passenger seat smells like you,  
a mixture of tobacco and your newest  
shampoo  
yeah, I smoke now,  
I've always hated the smell of cigarette and  
how it blurred my eyes while my attempts  
to navigate the way between us  
the blurry eyes blended into the streetlights  
and  
your hatred for my electronic cigarette,  
and so I complemented you  
from the driver's seat.

you've shown me places all while being in  
the passenger seat, you held my hand while  
my eyes blurred,  
you've shown me places that I know will one  
day be in ruins  
and be ruined for me, just like how  
macNcheese, Klpac, and alcohol have been

you've taken over the car radio  
queuing bad mandarin pop while being in  
the passenger seat, shot-gunning the seat  
but skipping the song shotgun  
and god forbid if car radio by 21 pilots  
comes on





**you've asked me,  
when did I fell in love with you.  
I fell in love with you, when you held  
my hand and navigated the car.  
I fell in love with you, when the fog  
blurred my vision,  
but you were on my shoulders.  
I fell in love with you, when you  
smiled at my attempt of following  
along to the mandarin pop you  
queued.**

but maybe, just maybe  
I fell too hard  
complemented too hard,  
toned down too much  
being in the driver's seat when I  
should've navigated more. I didn't  
want to overpower,  
overshadow,  
overtalk.

but maybe, I do belong in the  
passenger seat after all  
and you weren't supposed to have  
road anxiety

when you told me, we are not  
compatible  
I wished that I was in the  
passenger seat  
that I did not just get by  
that I did not just complemented  
maybe I had something to prove  
even to you after all`

when did complement-ability burn into ashes  
reborning as compatibility with the shine of  
the Phoenix? I don't want to be in the  
passenger seat

I wish I was in the driver's seat,  
I wish I did not agree to the open chest  
surgery  
I wish I took you to places,  
my places.

I wish I played Ride by 21 pilots more, cause  
maybe just maybe, we really are not  
compatible.  
I'd live, die and kill for you,  
but would you ever do the same?

you got out of the passenger seat  
"turn it off now, don't burn the engine"  
but how else could I show you that, I love you  
without letting you shine  
and without burning myself with fuel.  
but I was driving from the passenger seat,  
and I guess, the rule of going by, but to never  
go by, shouldn't have been what I lived by.



# Sun-dappled Memories of Childhood

By Sreana Habiba | Photo by Sakura

It's 3am. A song is softly playing on my phone, the singer emphatically but mournfully lamenting over the loss of childhood and the bitter-sweet experience of growing up. I look up to the flood of lunar-esque glow strewn on my ceiling from the dim blue lightbulb in my room, and the blue makes my heart hurt; the blue reminds me of good things and then drowns them, takes them away. Lying on my bed, the thought that runs through my mind is this: I wish I never turned an age older than ten.

The light of the world around me seemed to have dimmed after that age, the saturation going down, all the lovely, hopeful things that living connotes turning murky and desolate. Is that what growing up entails or is nostalgia lying to me like it always does; is this a case of rosy retrospection? Maybe just a smidge, but mostly I know this to be true at the very core of me: that childhood was iridescent and green and the kind of blue that doesn't make you ache and soft breezes and rain and running through grassy, yellow fields and the bliss of limited self-awareness, and it was magic. I miss being somewhere and actually, fully being there, my corporeality not a hindrance but a blessing, a means to amplify every experience I was having.

I turn these memories of adolescence in my mind over and over again like stones, picking them up from the clear, glittering stream of recollections in my heart and inspecting them. Echoes of carefree laughter, distant memories of spending time with family and friends, a kaleidoscope of painting and singing and playing with abandon.

Eating mangoes my mom had lovingly cut up and given to me, the saccharine taste and smell of it filling me with joy; cycling to this lane then that, falling off and scraping my knees numerous times yet still persisting; going to my grandma's house and listening to her telling me stories of her own childhood, the warmth and the tenderness of her hugs; playing with my uncle's labrador, stroking its fur, thinking I could never love anything on earth more than I love this dog; falling asleep while watching TV or in the car and somehow magically waking up in my bed, swaddled in a blanket; summer vacations and all its sickly sweet, humid charm, when it felt like the world was opening up and blossoming just for me. However dappled with sunlight these reminiscences are, it quickly and inevitably gets shadowed by the bleakness of adulthood, of life as it is now.

No friendship ever matches up with the ones I had experienced as a child, no sight seems as beautiful, no love seems as pure. I want it back, I want it back, I want it back. Would returning to these wistful, nostalgic places and recreating these memories make me feel placated, content? For a fleeting moment, perhaps, but I think it would intensify the loss of youth and the lack of it all even more. So I let it go. I let the stones fall back into the stream, watch as the water caresses them and ripples around them.

The song reaches a crescendo, then slowly fades out and ends. I let a single tear fall, wipe it away and try to fall asleep with the memories of my childhood drumming like a heartbeat inside me.

# hiraeth

By Fatima Omer

I look at you  
And I see yellow  
Dotting my vision with hope  
Promising new horizons  
And opportunities we could explore

I look at you  
And I see blue  
A certain tiredness  
Tinting your eyes  
As you leave me  
And go  
There is a low  
To your highs

I look at you  
And I see red  
Colouring your vision  
Exploding out of your veins  
As you take me by the throat  
And throw me  
In the rain

I look at you  
And then I look away  
The world is a brilliant kaleidoscope  
of colours  
And I realise that to see  
I never really needed you to stay  
(My world is more beautiful without  
you.)

Thinking back of all the shade in  
the world

It's funny how black and white  
made so much contrast  
and tho they are not colors

Unlike roses with pointy leaves,  
or skies with a tint of yellow

He's so different,  
but always falls back to the  
same category

Deprived as I smell the scent  
of jasmine tea,  
I knew he was here  
Although he is lost behind  
white curtain,  
promises are along with him

His gentle smile tells a story

"Tian Yi", he said, "My brother"  
"It is not your fault."

To whom I am sending this too,  
hope you are doing well,  
as this is a message from your  
brother.



# searching

By Kar



By Ashley Lim

## innocence

If I could turn back time,  
I want to experience,  
My innocence as a child.  
The innate curiosity and wonder,  
I experienced back then,  
Was something I reminisced frequently.

Now I notice patterns of deception,  
Of harsh truths and uncomfortable  
reality,  
Or pondered life after death,  
I can't help but wonder,  
'Why did it happen so quickly?'  
I am suffocating underneath it all.

My innocence has been replaced,  
With a bitter gift that others glorify as  
'Maturity'.  
How could people celebrate this?  
I happened to grow up so soon.

People say I'm way mature for my age,  
I suppose I should say, 'thank you?'  
Oh, what choice do I have?  
How do I turn off this part of me,  
Even temporarily?  
For I sometimes wonder if,  
Ignorance is bliss.

Even as I lament this,  
Someday I will come to my senses,  
And thank this maturity.  
Until then, I should say, 'Curse you!'  
For making me so bitter with life.

innocence,  
replaced.

By Elly Zulaikha

"I can't wait to grow up."

These were the words that, honestly I've uttered the most often as I progressed through life. It was always about getting older, to leap out of the nest as soon as I could fly, to savour that sweet nectar of freedom that comes with age. It wasn't just me, my friends too were enamoured with visions of independence.

So much so, that we turned our backs on our childhood, choosing instead to press the fast-forward button on the remote control of our lives without even goodbye to our younger selves.

But that's the problem with going through life at the speed of light, we lose that child-like innocence and wonder that causes everything to glow with a golden light.

Simple games of "Rock, Paper Scissors" and the quintessential "Hamburger", piling our palms on top of one another now seem childish and a waste of time.

I no longer feel the same jittery sense of glee as I did when the Milo truck came to visit our school. We would eagerly clutch the paper cups handed out by Prefects as they shepherded us into neat rows, hopping from foot to foot, impatiently awaiting our turn. When it finally came to my turn I would stare up at, to my eleven year old self, was an enormous, shiny vat of ice-cold Milo, condensation dripping against its surface. Unsatisfied, we would sneak to the back of the line again, giggling as we were caught and sent back to our classrooms for violating the "only one drink per person rule".

Now, daunted by the fear of taxes, job interviews and the thought of spending the rest of my life chasing a paycheck, I ask myself when I burst that bubble of innocence, wondering if I could ever go back to the days where a visit from the Milo truck could fix everything.



# underwater

Voices are muffled, there's a weight on my chest weighing my breath down, I watch as everything goes by my eyes in flashes but I'm stuck here with watery images. My toes curl but land on nothing, my fingers stretch but grip on air. It's cold, I think. I can't tell.

Is this a bathtub or an ocean?

I breathe in but I feel the sting of loss too much, I think I'd rather have a noose around my neck than have a knot around my chest, slowly cutting me off, depriving me slowly.

I wish I had never known love, if the withdrawals were like this. Won't it be easier to wonder? When I didn't know warmth, I endured it so well, not knowing the coldness exists.



Time pushes the world into its place. But what about me?

Regret twists in my stomach, it rears an ugly feeling. I open my mouth now, to take in the waves hoping that it'll wash the nausea away.

I feel the loss of the burn when I resurface. I breathe but it's empty, painless, it's unfamiliar, I don't like it.

The lack of empathy people hold for the person who pulled the trigger surprises me, but I'm not disappointed in them, but rather in myself, for trusting other people to keep the waters warm for me.

They swear that it's still the same, but when they reach in to grip my hand, it slips from their oily fingers.

I drown the 'Sorry's and the lies with water. I wish with all my might that the waves would take them out to sea and never come back. I'm done and tired trying to anchor them down, saving them from the monsters of the sea. Take them.

The shores turned to monsters, tsunamis

# underwater





# tidal waves

By Sakura Matsuyama  
Photo by Sakura Matsuyama

at times when the moon is at its  
brightest  
and the only light in my room comes  
from its glare  
i remember the feeling of numbness  
as i begged for the universe to be  
spared

i remember how easily i could have  
fallen  
captive to the waves ashore  
how the sea foam would engulf me  
like a child to reassure

gone are those woeful days  
like treasure swept by the sea  
hidden but not forgotten  
ingrained in my memory

# getting better

By Joejee Chin

When you told me  
The stars were not aligned  
While we stood, there under the  
crescent moon  
I tasted copper, alcohol, and bitterness  
all at once  
The tears  
Pain  
Tears  
Death  
Smile.

*better?*

The concoction of copper and alcohol in  
my mouth,  
And the lingering taste of it  
made me  
Crafted dejected words,  
Trying to scrape together  
whatever that is left

The bitterness made me wish  
You were doing worse  
In pain  
Bleeding out

But now, the taste of tea, smiles and  
lavender  
Wherever you are  
The lingering taste makes me,  
Wish and pray, and manifest that  
You find happiness,  
That you are safe, and you are happy.

And may we meet again,  
On another shoreline,  
Under a full moon.



i replay the same daunting  
moment  
again and again  
until the tears roll down my  
cheeks  
and onto my sheets

praying that this time  
it won't happen again  
hoping the night will pass  
without an unfamiliar creak

because no matter where i go  
no matter what i do

you have stripped me from me  
the feeling of safety  
in the comfort  
of my own home

# loss of a home

By Sakura Matsuyama

## the heartbreak letter

We never did make it to forever. And we never did make it old and grey. But I can promise you that I loved you in every way.

And hey—I know you're sorry. I am too. Sometimes things don't work out the way we planned. But I would do it all over again if I could. From first dates and first kisses to the last time I laid my head on your shoulders.

For a while now our visions will be blurry and our nights will be sleepless, but we'll be alright. I know we will be. We have to be.

And look—don't worry. If it's meant to be, we'll find our way back to each other.

But now we can finally love each other without being hurt.





# One Day

Maybe we'll finally be ready a few years from now. But this doesn't mean that I never loved you. Because I did. I do. I loved you yesterday, I love you today and I'll love you tomorrow and the day after that. We just have so much time to grow and learn. If you love me as much as you say you do, then we'll find each other again. And perhaps then we'll finally be ready. And I know you're confused too. We don't have to hold back for each other. I love you completely and wholeheartedly, no matter how far you are. Don't worry about me. I'll be fine here. And I know you'll be fine there too. Sometimes in life, we have to leave the things we love to know how much they really mean to us. Hopefully it'll be enough to draw us back together. Until then I hope we find what we're looking for along the way.

By Sakura Matsuyama

# One Fine Night

Some nights I sit and wait. I'm not sure for what. Sometimes the tears fall, and other times not. I wonder about who I am underneath the skins and bones.

And I wonder how someone could love me if I can barely love my own. I wonder about the leaves falling from the trees. And

I wonder how it would feel like to be free. I think I'm empty. Like something is missing from me.

Memories I never had. Memories I've never felt. But a million emotions run through my head.

I think I'm in a rabbit hole. There are no other places for me to go. But I'm hopeful. For a little bit better tomorrow.

D(ARK), that is how the world felt like when we met  
 E(XAGGREATING), what people thought me when I told them you were my only friend  
 P(ANIC ATTACKS), a bi-product of spending too much time with you during those  
     nights, I wept and wept  
 R(AGE), what I felt when people told me to let go of you, as if forcing me to 'mend'  
 E(XHAUSTION), the strange feeling I had after the 'productive' nights we spent  
 S(TRENGTH), what I needed when I decided to put our relationship to end  
 S(ELF-ESTEEM), what I gained when I let you go, a wonderful achievement  
 I(NTELLIGENCE), a skill of mine, coming back to me is something I won't recommend  
 O(PTIMISM), my new way of life, started practicing when you left  
 N(OTEWORTHY), what I think of our experience even though it's time for 'THE END'

# D.E.P.R.E.S.S.I.O.N

By Naheen Maseem | Graphic by Shannon Ho

## longing and reconciliation

By Joeyee Chin

How can I speak of admiration  
 When I am left behind  
 Trying to get on the same page  
 With you, your interest, and your love?

How can I speak of longing  
 When I'm building our future in my head  
 While you're in bed trying to build a  
 Convincing enough argument to break  
 my heart?

How can I speak of love  
 When my home is built on stilts of  
 Clinginess, trauma, fear, and despair  
 One that you fear, and you hate?

I no longer long for, neither do I  
 expect  
 Reconciliation, forgiveness, or peace  
 But I know, and I hope  
 That the days ahead, be kinder to me  
 heart.



By Akriti Sethi | Graphic by Theresa Lie

Rummaging

Keys, card, books, pages

Scrambling going through everything once, twice, making sure that you don't leave anything behind while the merciless clock blares 9.05

Frantic steps towards the BRT station

and hastened pace while stepping down to be welcomed into a vibrant bustle of

You

Me

Us

just embracing the university culture and making it our own.

When I step down the same station today, all laid in front of me is the carcass of old memories shrouded with the intricate threads of my complex emotions that drive me to insanity with each passing second.

How do I even begin to comprehend, let alone convey, because most people cannot fathom

That what I lost and mourn the most

Is the feeling of tangibility.

The touch, feel and smell of an abstract campus atmosphere that is no longer mine to have.

The detachment of reality as my very lived university experience has been captured and imprisoned behind the realms of this stupid, stupid glass screen.

What if this is all we have anymore?





# Pantomime on REMINISCENCE


By Naveen Subramaniam | Graphics by Shannon Ho

Now is the time  
Realising the value of a normal life  
Thinking of a time  
When we failed to live a fulfilled life

Realising the value of a normal life  
I went to my campus  
When we failed to live a fulfilled life  
Recalling that my life started with a prospectus

I went to my campus  
I lamented  
Recalling that my life started with a prospectus  
I realised what had been implemented

I lamented  
Thinking of a time  
I realised what had been implemented  
Now is the time





"I once purposely walked on a strip of grass that had 'do not walk on grass' signs placed all over."

*scandalous much?*

"I had a fivesome (3 girls and I'm one of them) and it was amazing. The straight girl ended up being the best kisser I've ever had the pleasure of kissing. I had the chance to fuck a model."

"Sometimes I still think about fucking my ex(es)."

"I was in a squad with another 2 female friends. It was Christmas and we decided to rent an airbnb for 1 night. We bought some chips, bottle of vodka, and played poker games. One of them drank a tad bit of the bottle and fell asleep. Me and the other friend had no choice but to finish the rest of the bottle. We ended up both drunk as hell and started making out. Yes, right next to our sleeping friend."

PS: I am straight and I am still best friend with her. We sometimes joke about this."

"When someone asks me what is my deepest darkest secret, I usually actually keep digging deep but I couldn't find any. I am the type of person who shares my issues, secrets and doubts to my partner. They say if you and your best friend were not to be friends anymore, everyone will know, right? As for me, my partner is my best friend. That constant doubt of "will he leave me" always runs in my head."

Being a virgin at the time, I was really really insecure about my body and those thoughts doesn't help. I keep thinking, what if i don't look good enough, what if I am not good in bed. I didn't worry much on how i perform in bed would affect my partner since we were both Virgins.

When he arrived to visit me from another country, it was all fun and games. Until night time, we both thought we would be a nervous wreck. But on that specific night, it was no doubt magical. Everything happened so slow, so smooth, and it was pure bliss.

And honestly, till this day, that night is tattooed in my brain, implanted in my chest. And when I think about that day, the only highlight is that. When someone asks me if I had sex before, I can only replay that scene in my head. It's like a broken record, replaying over and over again."

scandalous.  
scandalous.





## "I'm Mr. K and this is my story:

*content warning:*  
 infidelity, depression

I've always been in a scandal since the first spring of 2019. It started when I was alone without my roommate at night. I went on a dating app and was attracted by a girl the same age as me. I found that we had a lot in common. After few days of chatting online, I finally had a chance to date her in real life.

Her name is Snow. It started well and she became my girlfriend as expected, but I realized something shocking after a month. She was married! I was pretty sad that time when I knew this reality. She apologized and even wanted to break up with me. Still, we didn't break up because I didn't want to give up this relationship, neither did she. We continued our relationship without her husband knowing.

After a year of relationship, I felt that our relationship wouldn't last. Snow always wanted me to find another girl which can lead me to a normal relationship because she knew she wouldn't divorce. I loved her deep in my heart but she started to keep away from me. We didn't meet for more than a month and only keep in touch through WeChat.

Tired of being lonely, I went on the dating app again and met a girl named Abbie. I dated her out and this was the first time I had sex with another girl... Maybe I was guilty or I really liked her, I lied that I'm single and asked her to be my girlfriend. Apparently, she said yes. Since then, I was dating two girls at the same time.

Unfortunately, Abbie found out I was also dating Snow because I didn't delete my chat history with Snow. Abbie was so sad and depressed, I really feel bad for her. I told her how much I love her (this is not a lie, I swear) and promised I would break off all relationships with Snow. She believed me and gave me a chance.

Before breaking up with Snow and deleting Snow in my contacts, I had to return all her belongings to her house. I didn't tell Abbie about this and I went to Snow's house early in the morning. I called Snow out when I arrived at her house. She sat in my car and we talked so many, including that Snow actually knew I had a new girlfriend and told me that I should be nice to Abbie.

After the talk, Snow wanted to leave and say the last goodbye to me. Maybe I missed her too much, I didn't let her go and drove to the nearest hotel... to had my last sex with her... but with Abbie in my mind. When we finished it, Snow cried and I realized how much hurt I caused to these two girls. I'm really sorry and this is really the last time I met Snow.

I told Abbie that I had broken off all my relationship with Snow and finally we can have a good time together. However, I did not expect Snow would message Abbie and told her everything including me having sex with her! Abbie was really depressed after receiving the message and almost having mental health issues due to my betrayal. I knew she wouldn't forgive me but I still confront her with my love. I've forgotten how we came through that period of the "Great Depression", but now Abbie and I started over, as great as new.

I knew I hurt Snow and Abbie very much, especially Abbie. She is innocent from the start but she is the one who suffers the most. I accompanied her to encounter her depression because I knew it is my responsibility. She is the most adorable, lovely, and kind girl I met. I was very grateful and sorry at the same time that she was willing to forgive me and start over. She even cooked porridge and take care of me when I'm sick, which none of my exes did for me. I swear I would love her as much as I could for the rest of my life because I had such a nice girl.



My first relationship was bad. Really bad.

Everything went well for the first few months until one day I saw a text message popped up in his phone. From that point onwards, I found signs of him cheating and lying to me almost every month.

When he was working as an intern during the summer break, the place where he worked was too far away from me so I only visited him from time to time. The days I didn't go, he'd call random girls he know to have lunch together without me knowing. He'd send pics of the lunch to me, and what I didn't know was that a girl was actually sitting next to him when he's sending me those pics.

He'd would on and off text with girls he know, saying things like 'wyd' and 'I miss you'. When I confronted him, he told me "When I'm bored and you're not replying, I just like to find others to chat with".

Because of what he said, some days I'd wake up from my naps and the first thought in my head would always be 'oh no, I dozed off, is he talking to other girls?'

When I was on my period and I didn't want to have sex, he asked "What about anal?" As a dumb and innocent person I was, we did try it. We put a towel underneath us so my blood wouldn't stain the bed, but I was in too much period pain so we stopped. When I was washing the blood off of the towel in the bathroom, I looked out to the room and saw him chilling on the bed watching Youtube videos. It then hit me, 'what am I doing?'

There was one time when he had fever so I walked him back to his house but he insisted on having sex. I didn't want to so I struggled to leave while he was on me. That was the first time I realised how much strength a guy has, even when a guy's sick, he's strong. When I finally managed to get out, I left the house immediately. Walking back to my house that day was unlike the other days. My legs were weak, I was shaking, I felt as if like I survived from someone attempting to rape me.

It certainly did not help the fact that the person who made me feel this way was my boyfriend at the time.

He begged and promised he will change. He really did, but I caught him going on dates with another girl again not long after. I broke, I thought to myself: This is the end. But on the same day, he came to my house and apologised with a surprise gift.

I forgave him, again.

The relationship continued for 1 and a half year from here.

Fast forward to almost the end. I knew our relationship was dying and he'd never do LDR with me so I decided to give him a meaningful present, wishing that maybe I could remain special to him. I made a photo album with the polaroids we took and wrote him a long loving message. I gifted him in the morning of his graduation day before going to my classes. That afternoon, almost all the students in the graduation ceremony including him had left, I got a message from his friends. The message was a photo of my gift, sitting at the corner of the stadium where the graduation was held hours ago. His friend asked 'Is this yours?' I thought to myself: Oh, he forgot to bring it back. It hit me again, 'what am I doing?' That day I went home with my own present.

One day, a friend of mine texted me that she saw his profile on Tinder. I confronted him again. He acted as if it wasn't a big deal and told me 'I just wanted to try'. And that's when I broke up with him over text. He didn't beg for apology, didn't ask why, didn't do anything, all he replied was 'ok'.

That 2 years of dating him was as if something had been pressing on my chest, suffocating me. The second I broke up with him, that feeling was gone and I was finally able to breathe again.

Heard he got a new girlfriend recently, I just hope he's not doing the same to her.



# What are some things my ex would never know

1. THAT I MADE OUT WITH OUR MUTUAL FRIEND AT A CLUB THE DAY WE GOT TOGETHER.
2. THAT I WAS FWB WITH HIS GOOD FRIEND BEFORE WE DATED.
3. THAT I USED HIM AS A REBOUND IN THE BEGINNING.
4. THAT AS MUCH AS I WAS A PIECE OF SHIT BACK THEN, HE CHANGED ME.
5. THAT I REGRET EVERYTHING I'VE DONE THAT HURT HIM.
6. THAT I STILL LOVE HIM.
7. THAT I LOVE HIM NOW AS MUCH AS HE LOVED ME BACK THEN.
8. THAT I STILL THINK ABOUT HIM AFTER TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE WE BROKE UP.
9. THAT I WISH SOMEDAY WE COULD CROSS PATH AGAIN AND FALL IN LOVE AGAIN.

-H



# BEND MY BACK

by Christie  
Wong

He only kisses me behind closed doors.

When our friend excuses himself to go to the bathroom, he comes over to caress my face, pushes my hair away from my face and kisses me, steals my breath, propels my heart. And when said friend unlocks the bathroom door, 'click!', he drops his hands and steps away.



It's as if he loves me, then he doesn't. As if he wants me, but doesn't want to be with me.

His gentleness makes me want to cry all the time.

It's clear what we are, in my eyes. Both my eyes are wide open but why is it that my traitor mind says just close them, pretend like nothing is wrong. Go back to your self-destructive habits, it says. I say.

When we're in front of other people, it's as if now I'm invisible. But when the doors are locked, I can't help but listen and believe the sweet nothings, like I actually matter that much. Like only my body matters. How does he do it? My sweet liar.

Use me, my love.

I love his attention, I crave it, I feel so alive because of it and I never see anyone else get the exact same unless she is me. Did he just call me 'baby'? Must've been my ears, but I won't ask.

It's crushing me inside out. He holds my hand, and then he doesn't. He acts like he cares for me but I can't seem to tell if it's for my body or me.

Does he think of me like I think of him? I think not. I've always been a victim to fall trap to my first love.



# Illicit Affairs

by Elly Zulaika



I regretted giving Will a second chance when I knew this relationship was not meant to be. *'Take the road less traveled by, tell yourself you can always stop.'* But how can I? If all I felt when I was with him were butterflies, sweet kisses, and just being in the moment? How can a love seem so innocent but consume the life out of me?

Perhaps my eagerness to fall madly in my first love clouded my judgment. When he revealed he was engaged with another woman, I denied it. The initial revelation resulted in out for dinner. He was clearly guilty

of it. He apologized profusely and still defended his love for me. He told me how special I was, and not even his fiancée could rival.

My naiveness forgave that, and so I took this torture upon myself for the next 5 years as that 20 something who still believe in love at first sight. I couldn't tell if 1) this was pure infatuation from myself, 2) emotional manipulation from his end or, 3) if this love we shared was simply two consenting adults who chose to indulge in an *illicit affair*.



The whole of our being was so forbidden, and we remained as secrets. But as sinful as it was, we were in delirium.



On those happy days, we enjoyed each other's company as if it's our last day to live— from a simple lunch date to those times when surprise kisses led to hot, messy sex— I worked hard to bury the moral guilt in the back of my mind. A part of me argued, 'Why not, right?' Everything is fine, so long no parties speak up on this secrecy. Another side of me protested that this was so, so wrong. How would I react if my future husband cheats on me? *'Take the words for what they are, a dwindling, mercurial high.'*

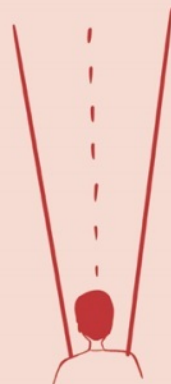
The first 2 years of this affair were turbulent. Navigating this forbidden relationship— while balancing my seemingly mundane life as a university student— wore me down. My mood swings and insecurities often sent us into petty arguments but it can't be helped since we sow the same toxic roots in this relationship. But unlike others, he patiently weathered until my storm died. *Oh, no wonder I kept coming back to him.*

He convinced me that the irrational insecurities I experienced then were 'normal'. I went to war with myself. I was torn as I overthought the impending doom awaiting my relationship. *'A drug that only worked the first few hundred times.'* In the end, I made peace with the fact that "I will continue to love you for as long as time permits us".



I should warn you that, as I dissected this shameful past of mine, I figured his actions mirrored his father's choices in marriage. He was a child of divorce and, of course, he begrudgingly carried his emotional baggage.

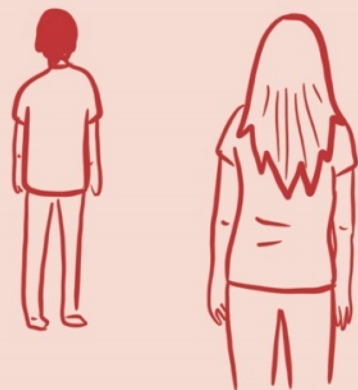
When he shared that piece of him, it hit me that, as much as he despised his father, he ended up straying down the same path as his father when he started this relationship with me. I can understand why others might say this was all his fault, after all, an affair is born out of choice.



I wondered if he had an unspoken issue with his fiancée because if he didn't, why would he commit a serious relationship with someone else? Has he given up the fight? Has he given up on her? I wanted to ask these questions when I was close to breaking point, but I decided I didn't have the heart to say such a painful thing to him. How much is he going to be truthful to me anyway?

Despite how passionately real our relationship was— that is, what we believed— nothing could possibly replace this broken piece of me. *'Look at this godforsaken mess that you made me.'* I realized my first love was nothing like in the movies, nor like what my friends experienced because for the first time ever, I wished I were like them. No secrets, no lies. *'Look at this idiotic fool that you made me.'*

When I decided to end this with him, I thought it would be catastrophic. We parted ways peacefully (minus my utter breakdown), but perhaps, deep down, I sensed that he truly loved and cared for me. "I'm sorry for wasting your time. I regret that I didn't stop myself. I hope you find a guy that's worthy for you because I know you deserve better than me."



*'You taught me a secret language I can't speak with anyone else, and you know damn well, for you, I would ruin myself, a million little times.'*

So, this is me moving on from you, Will. I wish you all the best with her.

Sincerely, Em.

pretty pretty pretty pretty  
 enough enough enough enough



But never enough to Love.

(He slowly brushes his lips against my nose, slowly trailing down to nudge gently against my lips. He rolls above me and I brush my hands under his shirt to feel his skin. It's warm. Warm is good.

Why does it feel so wrong when I walk back into his arms after that.)

It's cold today. Sometimes he brushes his knuckles down my cheek, I feel desolate. Empty, like I'm surrounded by sand dunes, just mindlessly wandering around. In my head somewhere far away I wonder how do people show so little, do so little and mean so little?

He's something new, I'm excited of the prospects of having to focus on something that's not always the same in front of me, the same breath fanning across my face, the same fingers gripping my thighs

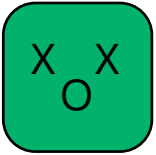
(It's not wrong, because this is nothing. And nothing is what we are. In a space full of nothings, here I am floating from one point to another. There is no string, but perhaps maybe I'm the one pulling myself along.)

Do i stop?



# zoomers

Join a meeting



## Shannon:

So this is my friend's story and everytime I hear it I cringe so hard. One day she whatsapped us saying don't ever Facetime when you're on Zoom. We're like what.. and she continued her story saying she asked her bf to call and wake her up for class just in case but she ended up waking up herself before the bf called her.

When the bf facetimed her while she's in the tutorial, WHAT SHE DIDN'T KNOW was when you accept a Facetime, Zoom automatically UNMUTES you thinking your mic is opened because of the call. For a hot minute, she was sweet talking with her boyfriend without knowing that everyone..in..the.tutorial..can..hear...



## Qis:

It was during a film tutorial and we were all discussing about a certain Hollywood actor, and one of the other students said that she did not like him/watch him/get the hype surrounding him (I can't remember), and I found it slightly funny and weird. I ended up being in a breakout session with her and she turns out to be really nice and smart. However, my itchy fingers failed me. I used the Zoom feature to chat with my friend in the class, and told her "Oh my god, I got the girl who didn't like [this actor] in my room" (or something a little less nice, I did not insult her for sure. I think my mind has completely tried to block it off because it was too embarrassing). My friend told me that I sent the message to everyone instead. THE HORROR. As if it could not get worse, my microphone was still on from the breakout room, and I kept saying expletive after expletive, and then screaming so MY SHAME COULD BE HEARD AS WELL. The lecturer was in confusion as to what was going out, after reading my message and hearing my screams. I just slam the laptop hard and didnt go to that class for awhile. HOWEVER, she turned out to be in ANOTHER CLASS WITH ME, AND I GOT HER IN THE BREAKOUT ROOM AGAIN. I felt so bad but I was still too embarrassed, so my friend pitched in and sent her an apology message (private this time) to her for me, and when I had the courage, I reiterated the message as well. TURNS OUT SHE DIDNT READ THAT MESSAGE IN THE FILM CLASS AT ALL, AND DID NOT KNOW WHY WE APOLOGISED. welp. Basically she was cool about it anyway, but by a stroke of luck (or punishment really), I ended up being in TOO MANY Zoom classes or breakout classes with her. That was a year ago, but that shaped every single response I automatically adopt during tutorials: every 2 minutes, I religiously check my camera, microphone, and chat messages. To the girl reading this, you're really cool, thanks for not thinking I was an ass, even though I kinda was that day.

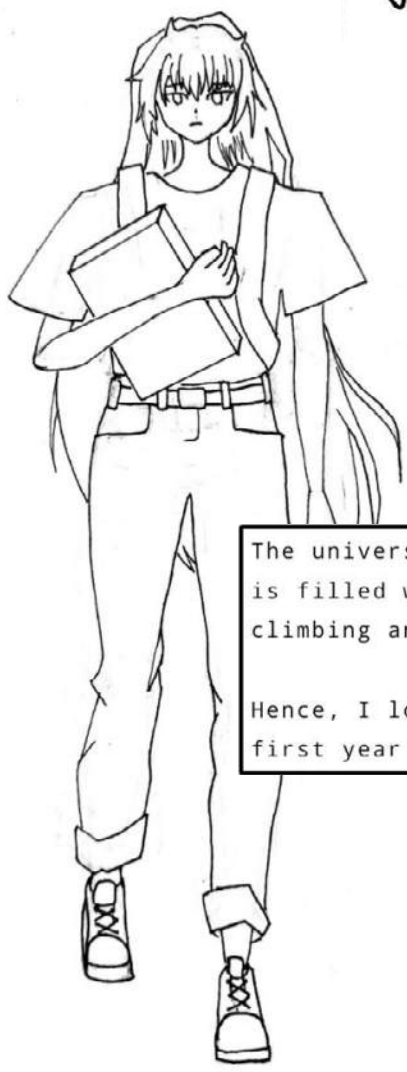
# Mikaela: The day I woke up

## to full online learning

by comyqgal

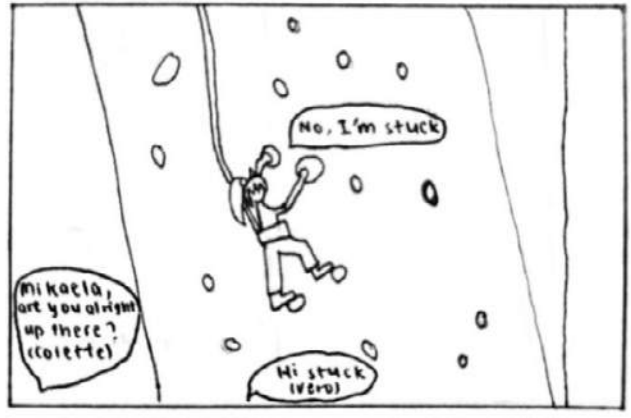


Hi everyone, I'm Mikaela. I am a Monash university student and the main character of this story.



Friends

Rock climbing

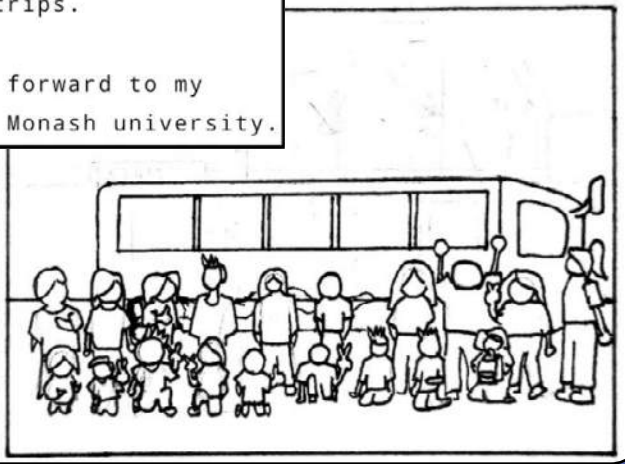


The university life I imagined is filled with friends, rock climbing and trips.

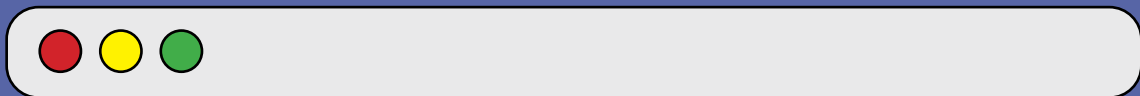
Hence, I look forward to my first year in Monash university.



Field trips







But all of that did  
not happen

Because COVID-19 had other plans

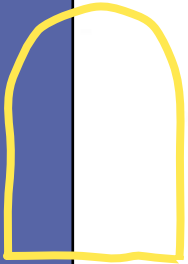
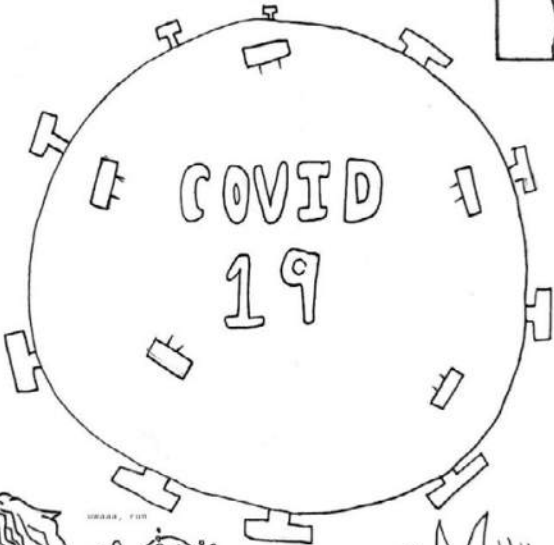
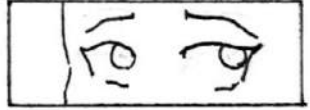
The white area contains several circular icons with rectangular protrusions, resembling stylized virus particles or network nodes. One is in the top-left corner, one in the top-right, one in the bottom-left, and one in the bottom-right. A central text box with a black border contains the text "But all of that did not happen". Below the text box, the text "Because COVID-19 had other plans" is written in a smaller font.



Hey, look, what is that?!



I think we should run



(2) That should be my line, you're not even wearing heels.



(4) Why are you guys arguing?

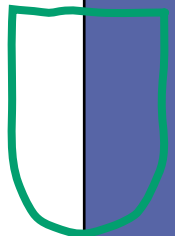


(1) I'm tired. when can we stop running, my legs hurt.



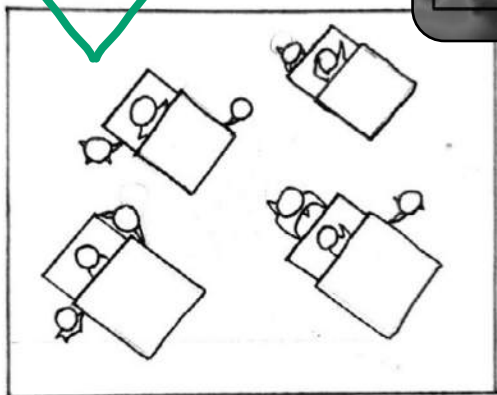
run run run

(3) Arguing is the worse thing to do now, the virus is airborne. You're going to get infected.



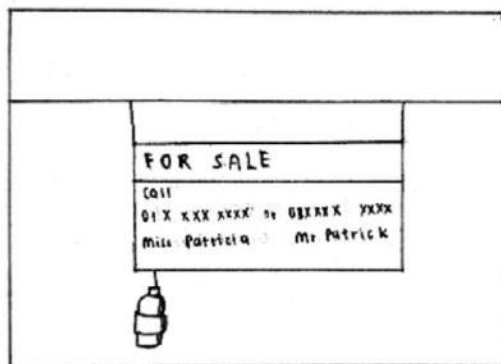


The existence of one virus turned the whole world upside down

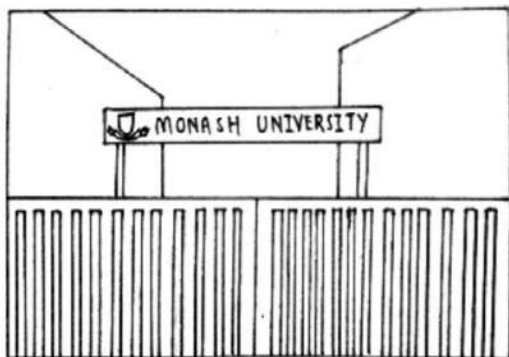


Many businesses experienced failure

People were sent to hospital

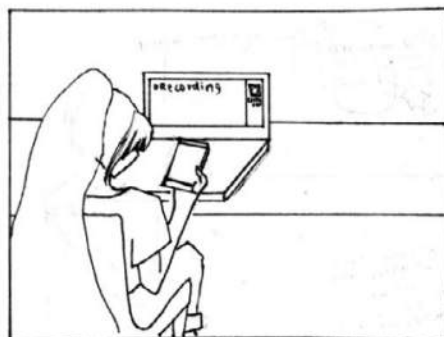


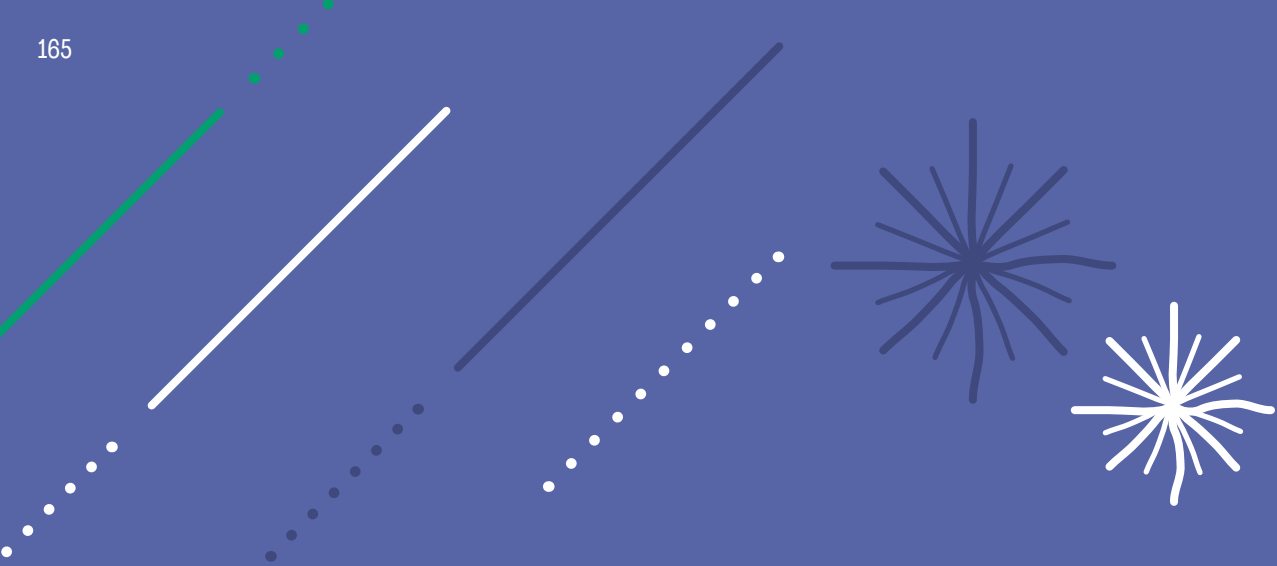
Entry to universities were prohibited



Malaysia went into Movement Control Order due to the increasing COVID-19 cases nation wide

Us, as university students have to stay at home and study online





The next few chapters will illustrate  
my life in Monash zoom university.

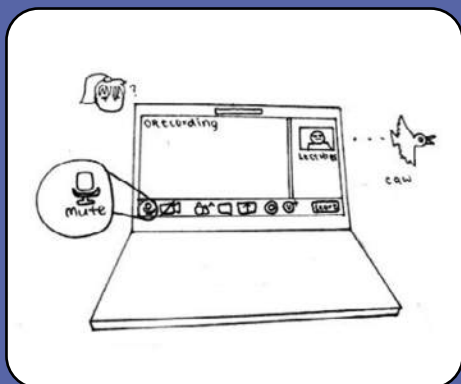
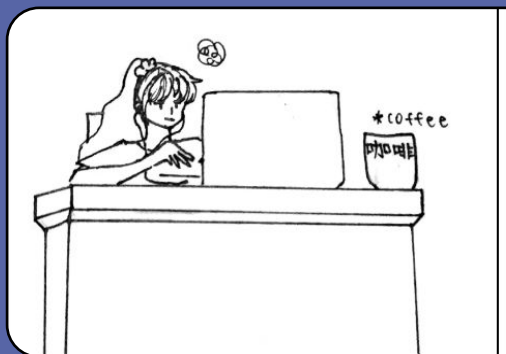
Side note: Due to an overwhelming amount of zoom classes,  
I'm starting to become a zombiie. \*pun intended\*

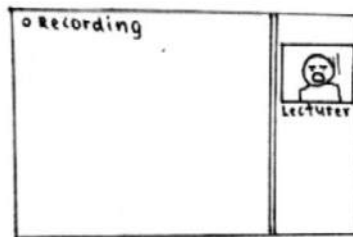
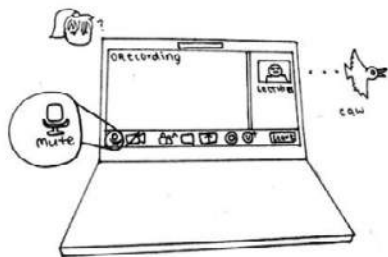




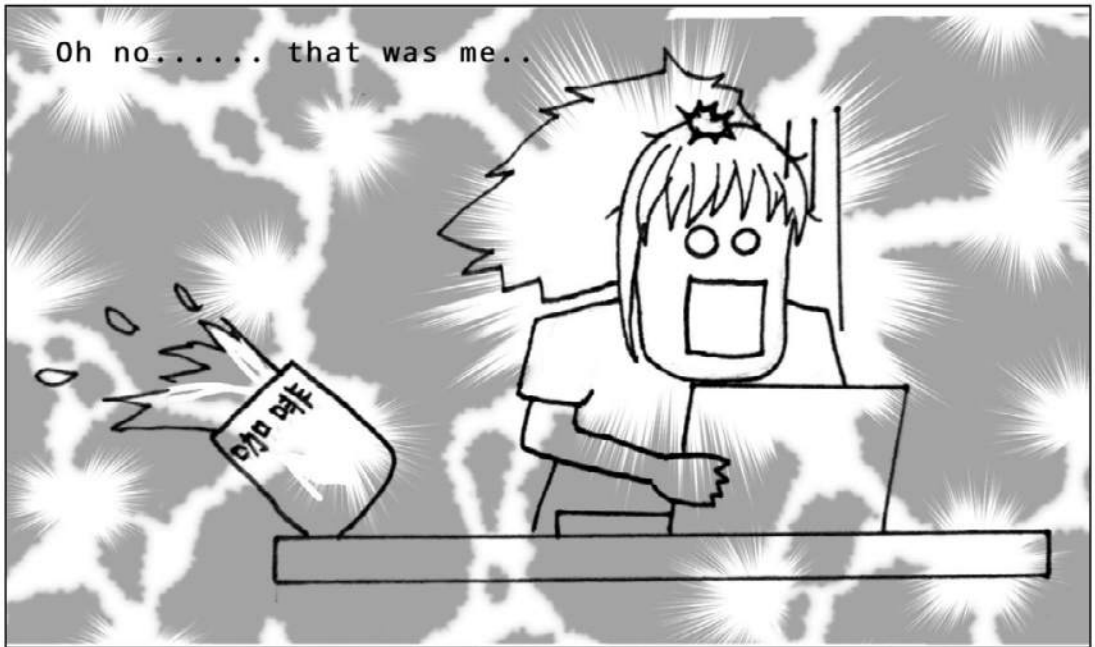


# Chapter 1: Have you muted yourself yet?





Oh no..... that was me..



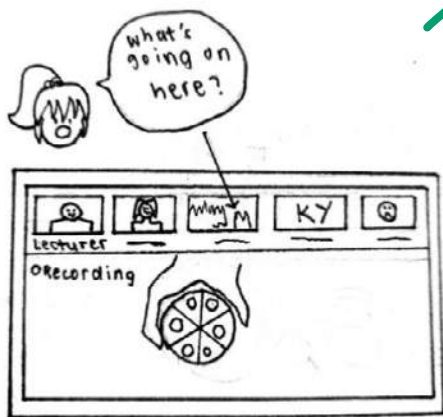
When the recording is uploaded...



Lesson of the day:  
Check if you are muted before saying anything.

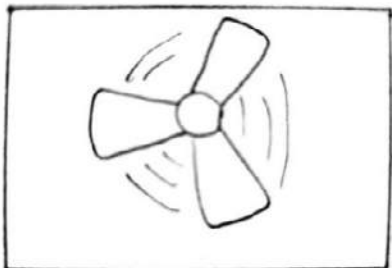


Chapter 2: A handsome young lad was caught on camera, what are the odds of him listening to the class.

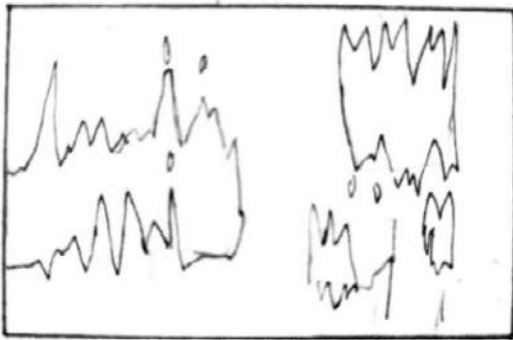


There was chaos in the mini video. The screen tumbled crazily, as if it was on a landslide.

Out of a sudden, the video halted.



A fan spun in the center.



Looking into the video, a whirl of colours flew past. I observed the motion in the tiny zoom video.

After a while, the phone was lifted upwards...by a handsome young lad...



...who was half awake...



The young lad then fell asleep again...in class with his camera on.



**THE END**



Dear reader, you have reached the end of this comic.

I hope you enjoyed reading these 2 chapters.

On a sidenote, remember to stay safe and stay at home during the pandemic.

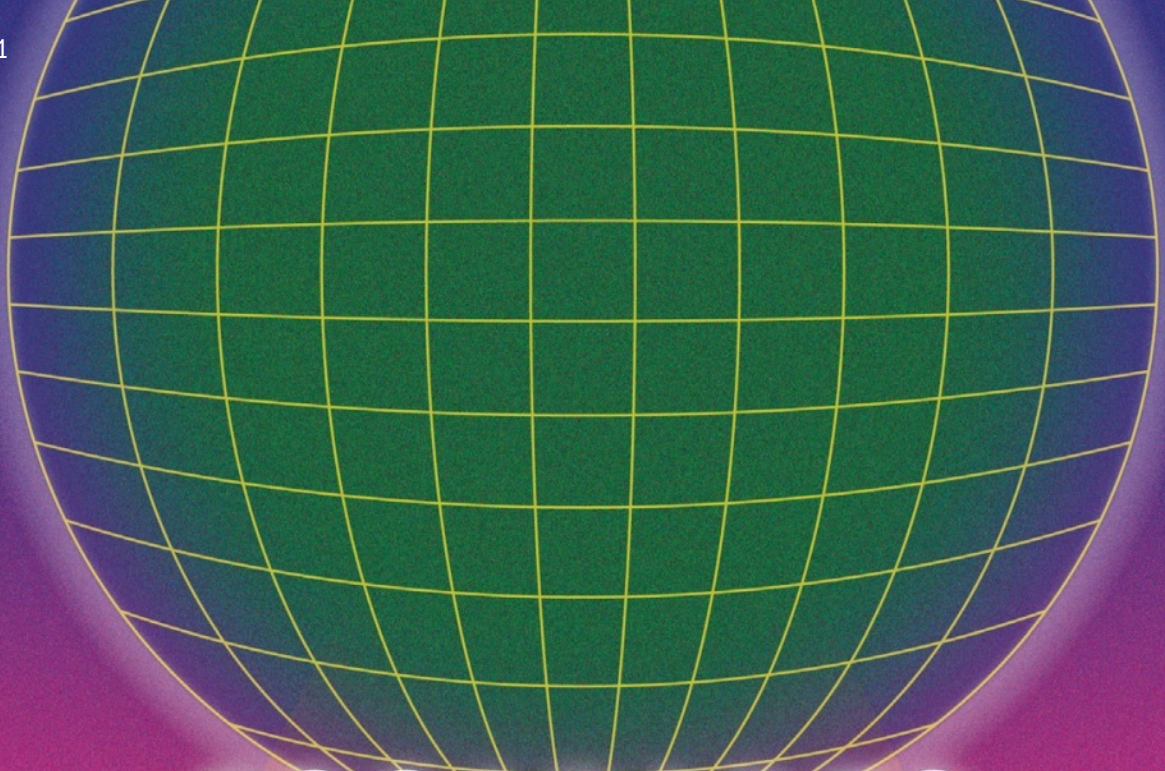
Last but not least, good luck for your final exams.

Author: comyqgal

Editor: comyqgal

Scriptwriter: comyqgal





# ESCAPADES





# TORN

Song: Never Enough (LIVE)

Written by Ashley Lim

“Don’t read when you walk la, you’re going to get hit by a car.”

These words pull my head out of the clouds and slam me back to the cold hard reality that life unfortunately is. Visions of towering castles, demigod summer camps and dystopian universes dissipate like fog hit by early morning rays. I grumble and fold down a tiny corner of the love-worn book that I’ve been reading, forced to leave my imaginary worlds behind temporarily.

At one point in our lives we have all felt like we’re “out of place” haven’t we? Like we were somehow meant for something that was larger than ourselves. A higher purpose, let’s call it.

That maybe underneath our everyday, mundane routines we were destined to be sorted into Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw or Slytherin, to become the morally ambiguous hero/heroine in a tyrannically iron-fisted government or one be bestowed with supernatural powers that defy the laws of physics (spider bite, gamma rays or shrapnel in the heart take your pick). But as we grow up, we finally begin to realise the futility of these dreams, these daily escapades that we take, tossing our material problems aside for trials and tribulations more easily solved by the flick of a wrist (or a wand). I try, I swear to God I try to “romanticise my life”, to “appreciate the little things in life” but in all of that trying, something always brings me back to worlds that I have no hope of living in.

Why do I still hold out for that Hogwarts letter? Why do I constantly feel the urge to escape to shed the logic bound shackles that keep me tethered to this reality?

Maybe it’s because we live in a world where the ice caps are melting, specieses are dying, hatred runs rampant in the streets and I need a break, a reprieve from all the ugliness that we have created.

Maybe I’m just delusional in the most idiotic manner possible

or

Maybe this world, no matter how much I want to embrace it as my own... will just never be enough for me.





ESCAPE





# FALLING APART (AGAIN)

I'm falling apart again  
Spiralling to where the sky is  
Voices calling from below  
It is not easy to live again

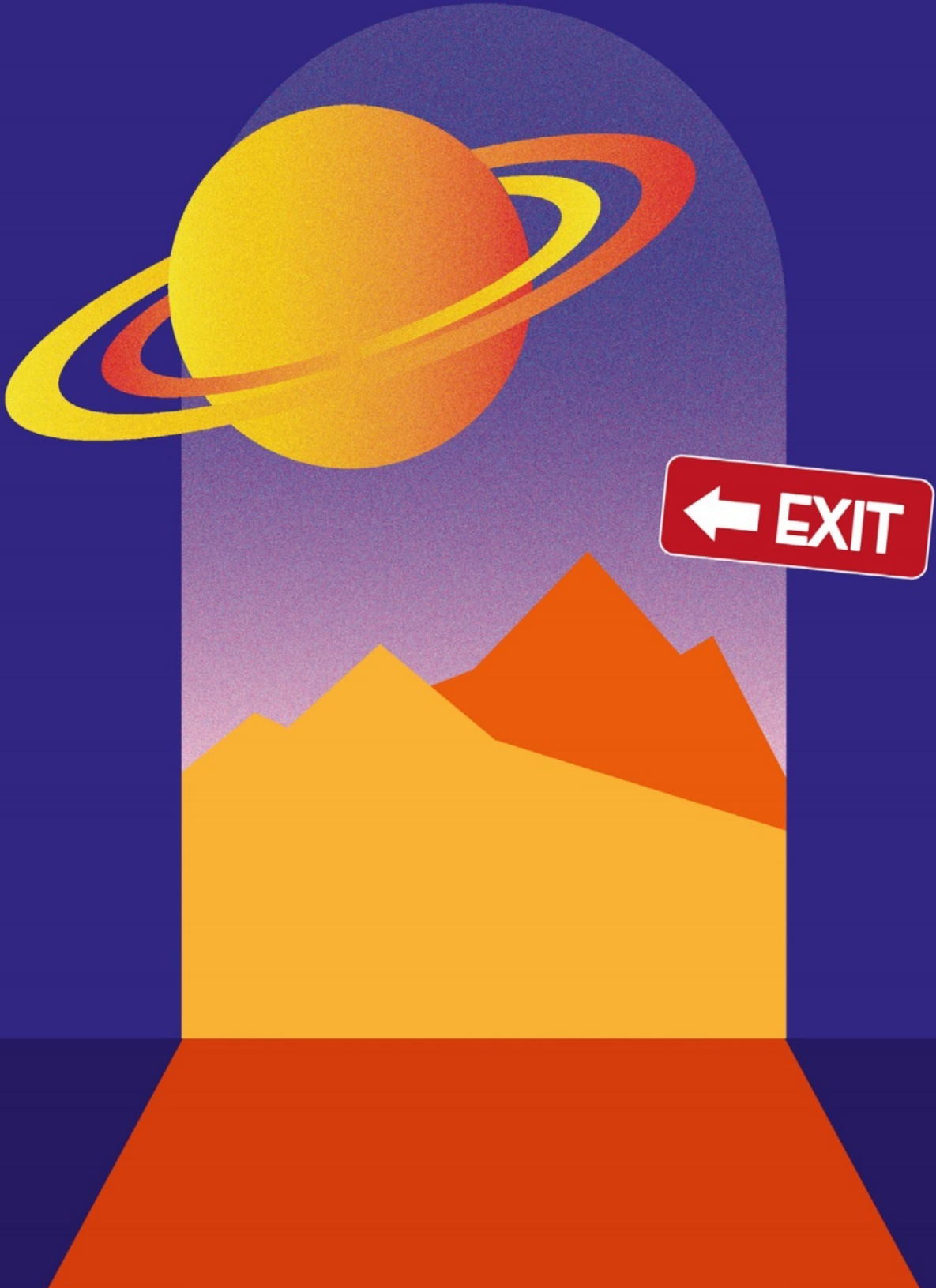
A name long forgotten  
This place where memories don't exist  
Feelings never kept alive  
It is too late to breathe again

Woke up in soundscape  
Amid neon streets and fleeting lights  
All the voices echoing  
Is it too late to breathe again?



We're falling apart  
again  
Fade away and watch-  
ing us dissolve  
Wherever we may go  
Is it you that I'll meet  
again?

Written by Shawn Wong  
Photos by Shawn Wong







We conspire theories  
 And  
**Dim the lights to our realities**  
 To take flight in the  
 thrills that our mind has  
 to show  
 Only if we could realise  
 the power of our minds that  
**It distances us from our  
 truth and**  
**Joins hands with our fake  
 desires**

-Mser





# THRILLER NIGHT.







## Have you ever experienced sleep paralysis?

I remember as a kid, I used to bring this up with my friends, describing how scary the internet makes it seem to be, wishing that I will never experience it.

Then it did :) And to this day, I still can't wrap my head around whether what I saw was actually what happened or just my dream, or a mixture of both.

It was one ordinary night like any other. I was sleeping soundly and all of a sudden, I woke up, surrounded by the darkness. Looking back at it now, I think it was some time around 3AM. Waking up in the midnight was no rare case for me so I didn't give much thought as to why I woke up. Though a moment later, I realized something was up. Someone opened my bedroom door.

I clearly remember it was closed when I went to sleep, and I thought perhaps my memories got mixed up. No, something still felt strange. My eyes were trying it's best to glance to the right, to figure out who that person was, that person who's hiding behind the door. There was no face, it was a shadow. A shadow of a man.

Why's it so hard to see? Because my neck couldn't turn. So I tried to speak, "who's there?", I failed. Have you ever had a sore throat? Do you know the feeling when you try to talk but all you could do is whisper with the softest voice possible, so soft that people need to lean in and put their ears close to your lips to hear what you're saying? Yea, imagine that but much worse. So of course, no one answered to my raspy whispering voice. I tried my best to shout but no words could come out.

Then, I fell back asleep. My consciousness was cut off.

The next time I woke up, the shadow moved. He was closer to me. He came in to my room, and even closed the door, like how it was before I went to sleep. I looked at the shadow. It never moved while I was awake. Never spoke as well, just stood there in silence. I tried to sit up, but failed. Fearing for myself, I attempted to move even more, yet it's as if my muscles were non-existent, I was, indeed, paralyzed.

Again, I fell back to sleep.

My eyes opened again, and the shadow was next to me now. Though his face was not visible, I could tell he was looking down at me. I shouted and shouted and shouted desperately. Again, I couldn't make any voice. And it was at this moment when my memories of this incident became vague. I remember the shadow tried to lean in, and I tried my best to move away and shout. Yet no one came to my rescue. And I fell asleep again.

The next time I woke up, it was morning. Nothing happened.



## Do you believe in the existence of the supernatural?

That they are living amongst us? Have you ever had a contact with them? Let me tell you a story about a boy with a scent of jasmine tea.

“Why did you do that!?”, as she stumbled onto the ground. That little boy just stood there, listening to his mother’s desperate calls for her eldest son. He was so young to be cremated. Barely can move after that accident, he was hospitalized until God finally calls him to come back home. People can’t really see what i have encountered in the past, and this is so far the most interesting thing when you get to see one. Your body dies, but your soul lives on. Searching for ways to contact the world.

He called me into the room. I can tell that he is there by his distinct scent of my favorite tea, Jasmine tea. “I’ll try my best to find him” is what i said, but I’m not really sure about my capabilities. His cause of death lead him to find me in the first place. He is in debt to his little brother, but try to contact him without a body is merely impossible. Days after days of searching this brother of his, his days to stay in the overworld keot on shrinking. “There is no time left”, i said, “I’ll promise to send him the message.” The first promise I have ever made with a heart full of uncertainty.

He was unable to walk throughout his life hospitalized after the accident happened, but this doesn’t stop his from smiling. He is a cheerful guy, until some of his symptoms started to cause him pain that grows everyday. His smiles slowly fades and painful screams approached his family and his little brother included. “He was so young”, he told me, “It wasn’t his fault.” He is right, his poor little brother have to face the consequences of his eldest brother’s ego, but the pain consumes him. You might have guessed this, yes, he asked his little brother to cut him from his life support and close his eyes forever. And so, he did. The pain stops, but so is the heartbeat.

This is his story, and yes, this is a true story, I am currently looking for his little brother and in hope for this media to spread the word. Little brother, if you are reading this, I want to tell you that this isn’t your fault, your brother chose this path and don’t worry, he can walk on now.



**IT'S AS MUCH FUN  
TO SCARE  
AS TO BE SCARED**



# passion

DO WHAT YOU LOVE





# My love...

by Aminah

is found on my prayer mat, the peace I feel just sitting there and letting out my struggles, taking me away momentarily from the world and giving me a sense of comfort and purpose. It lifts the weight off my shoulders and reassures me. I also love to sit in bed, reading webtoons on my phone, the air conditioner on and breezy but not too cold, afternoon sun lighting up my room. I love the music that comes from some episodes and tranquility from the outdoors. I love the sound of my cat calling me out of my room, me scooping her in my arms and taking her in the room with me. My happiness lies in simple daily routines and relaxing under the blankets.





by Mavis

# My Destiny



I love performing especially on the theatre stage, I love the sense of achievement I get after a performance and the teamwork of everyone in rehearsals, the training is exhausting but it is a very fulfilling time for me. it's hard to describe this love, I can only say I really love it, my heart beats fast every time I talk about it, it's as if I met my destiny, my love.

...er in television and film,  
...ing for places where moments  
...ght not be needed."

...o does she not have ambitions to

...ry fiction? "None.

...ly. And the more I

...erican Pastoral

...e first time), the

...o all these great

...d I couldn't begin

...rs do what they

...aordinary lonely

...ow they sit down

...agine what it is

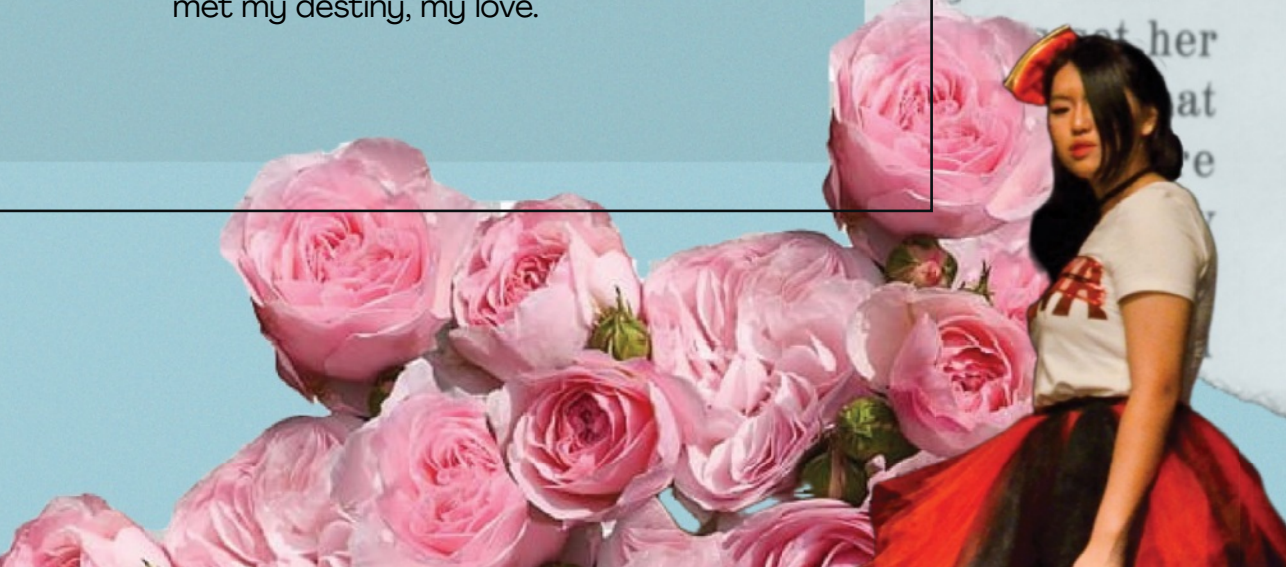
...d a good book."

...et her

...at

...e

...y





I never really had an affinity for makeup growing up. In fact, I always felt like I had lagged behind everyone else in terms of this specific skill. Maybe it was because I was always afraid that even with layers of pigment on, I would not be 'feminine' enough or 'pretty' enough compared to other girls my age.



## SELF-EXPRESSION

by Raegel Cha

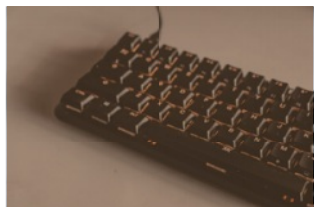
And so, I approached makeup as a form of expression instead of a means of 'self-improvement'. I approached it as an additional medium to the skills that I've developed through painting and drawing over the years. This new hobby of mine has renewed my enjoyment for the arts, and I'm so happy for finding something that sparks joy & passion in my life.

# #alwaysfnatic

## #alwaysfnatic

by Shawn Wong

Gaming and watching Esports have been my biggest passion throughout my teenage life till now. Or particularly the game League of Legends has completely turned my life upside down, in a good way of course.



I would even go further to say that without this game, I wouldn't be who I am today and it truly saved my life from worse places that I could not have imagined.

League of Legends

Passion

eSports



Just like every other Esports tournament, League of Legends eSports has its own major event where top teams around the world would compete in their own regional tournament and face off against each other in the World Championship (aka Worlds). It was 2015 and I was regularly waiting for my game to start and started browsing through YouTube and I saw this team called 'Fnatic' playing in the European League of Legends Championship. The team has completely dominated and aced their opponent in that game, happy smiles and proud faces on the players and the coaches.

WOW. I thought. I fell in love with the team instantly. Clean logo, black and orange. What got me into them wasn't the fact that they were much better in the game in that particular match. But the truly lovely thing to watch was the seamless coordination between the 5 players, they had the same passion towards the game, they had their hands together with the same goal ahead of them, they are one. It was almost like they were on a mountain, and only the game ahead of them matters, and they were willing to give everything to reach the very top of the mountain.

Teenage-me acquired an important life lesson: This is life, isn't it? You fall, you get back up, you rebuild and you move forward. People will talk, people will hate, but you know what you love and you know what's up. With the right people that you're surrounded with, life always finds a way to get back to you. In every clutch moment in life, you have to step up when it matters. And when you do, win or lose, life is meaningful in every possible way. I imagined life as a mountain, only the goal ahead of me matters, I take small steps, it's slow, but I won't fall. I'm never a hashtag guy. But...

Here's to #alwaysfnatic

# Unspoken

by Crystal

# words

"I'll be sitting at the table alone again, at 3.30AM. Just finished my third cup of tea. The devil's hour really stays true to its name, setting an ambience so familiar to the past, that it brings back the memories and pain that I've tried to block out on the gloomiest days of my life. In those moments, I remember people. People who I love, loved and resented - though these feelings aren't mutually exclusive to one another. I also remember all the words I wanted to say, yet for some familiar reason, I couldn't.

Many years later, the guilt of not saying those words weigh out on me at 3.30AM. I open up a Google Docs file, tired of Microsoft Word after the countless crashes, and start typing... anything at the back of my mind. This was something I did quietly for many years, writing letters to those that I had so much to say to, yet couldn't. I'd keep documents with just names on them as titles, just to write things in there that I didn't have the courage to say to these people. Words of love, support and joy, but also words of pain, heartbreak and broken friendships. I've lost count of how many letters I've written, but I do know that I remember every moment spent as though it happened yesterday. Over the years of growing up, where friendships were broken in instances over trivial matters, where the human heart played a role as the home of unrequited loves, during the days I smiled brightly as I enjoyed the essence of my youth. I've held back saying "I love you", "I'm grateful for you", "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you" many times until it's too late, and now, they just sit worthlessly in a network cloud... but never destined to reach the person it's meant to.

These letters sit in my Google Drive, sometimes untouched for long durations, sometimes opened four days a week. Internalizing what I've written had made me a much lonelier person than I would prefer to show, but what would be the cost of actually letting them know?"





**SAME SAME**



**BUT  
DIFFERENT**



OLD WAYS

WON'T OPEN

NEW DOORS








**You decide everything you are.**



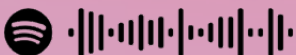
I SENT OUT A

# *SURVEY* to all the men WHO'VE GHOSTED ME



As a 21-year-old in my physical prime and mental rock bottom, my ego could not handle being unwanted. So, I got a little passive-aggressive, neglected my social reputation and structured out a self-deprecating survey to send out to a handful of men who've ghosted me. This is not the first time I've tried contacting the 'dead'. I have double and triple texted, and even sent out a satirical 'ghosting' playlist to the men who've ghosted me. To top off my tragic predicament, I've even practised the art of manifesting contact inspired by incredibly vague tarot card readings I've come across on TikTok (a scam!).

As the injured party in this scenario, I was so deeply aggrieved over the sudden disappearance of these men, that I could not bring myself to just drown in irrelevance. Thus, my feminine urge to know why I got left on "seen", "open", or "delivered" motivated my unhinged 'ghostbusting' pursuit.



**you look so much cuter as a ghost:  
a satirical 'ghosting' playlist**

[click the code to be redirected](#)





## It all started with a swipe...

..., and very anti-climatically ended simply with a disappearing. It was so nonchalant of them to just pull a disappearing act, to refuse to communicate how they were no longer interested, but to instead leave me completely anxiety ridden, distracted, compulsively checking my notifications for a sign of contact.

After having spent a year on dating applications, participating in endless cycles of conversations, my terrible luck would ensure that they would all eventually end up nicely tucked in a virtual grave, one that I itched to dig up. My inability to accept this inevitable cultural zeitgeist, due to the desire for closure, an explanation as to why my virtual relationships had so abruptly halted, impelled me to capitalise on my impulsive nature and confront my ghosts.





It was so blatantly obvious that the lack of reply was a reply in itself, but the spectre of these men incessantly haunted me. I perceived the act of being ‘ghosted’ as a reflection of my weaknesses, my inability to come off as authentic or interesting enough over text. Was I overly vulnerable and overshared too much too soon, or was I fictionalising these men, creating plots in my head of what we could be, placing them on a pedestal, perceiving them to be something they were not? Either way, such emotional cruelty really only resulted in my detriment, that is until I would find someone new to obsess over, jinx getting ghosted, and look forward to a new run of this toxic cycle.

No, I was not bored, and no, I did not want to get laid but my absolute clusterf\*ck of a personality needed to exploit this situation. Supernatural times and the helplessness to accept that they just don’t like me prompted my investigation.

**p.s. it's an actual survey!  
click to take a look.**





# HERE'S HOW MY SURVEY WENT...

## (i) Am I the problem? I can't be the problem.



A prominent question posed in my survey was the explanation as to why I had been ghosted, and to my disappointment, other than one person having started dating someone else, all the other respondents just blamed their lousy communication skills. To quote, they were either a “bad texter”, “felt lazy”, couldn’t keep up with the energy I projected in conversations and hence called me “intimidating”.

I couldn’t help but feel slighted that an explicit reason as to why they weren’t into me wasn’t given. I wished that the responses to this question had been more confrontational. Nonetheless, the realisation that hit me was that other than being completely insignificant, the act of ghosting, especially one that stems off from a virtual relationship, is almost always not a conscious thing. I may have presumed the conversational chemistry I had with these men as good, but to them I suppose, it certainly was not memorable enough.

However, despite ghosting me, one respondent did say he found me “pretty interesting”, so yay for me!



## (ii) It's not you, it's me.

No, it really is a 'me' thing. I say this because based on my survey, despite 80% of my respondents confirming that they too have experienced being ghosted, unlike me, they weren't as petty about it. To quote, one very bluntly stated that they "didn't care at all", while the rest expressed that sometimes people just "fall out of contact", or have "their own thing going on", as well as the notion that ghosting is something that usually occurs at the "very beginning of getting to know someone".

I suppose the pace of modern life does make it impossible to ever properly form genuine connections with individuals virtually. You really can't simpatico with everyone you meet online. Similarly, with potential romantic interests, the ever-so-present paradox of choice on dating applications would always make someone feel that they could do better, that they should not settle for this one person

they're currently talking too. It is a depressingly undeniable fact that there is always going to be someone who's better looking and a lot more compelling, and when you get ghosted, you can't help but feel that you'll never be good enough for people you actually want.

It's the gamification of dating applications and the cruelty of such unwanted honesty that left me hurting in a way I shouldn't have. When I think back about it, each individual conversation I had before getting ghosted was really not that deep, but it was coming to terms with the fact that I viewed these abrupt endings as a reflection of myself as a person that provoked my desire for closure.

A majority of the respondents also didn't reach out to the people who've ghosted them, confirming that the dead should really be left to rest in peace. This is a skill I have yet to master.





## (iii) It's just plain dickishness

It caught me by surprise to learn that all my survey respondents have ghosted anywhere in between five to 'too many to count' people in their lives. Contradictingly however, they all then proceeded to explain why ghosting would never be an acceptable way to end things with someone.

To paraphrase the responses, it was highlighted that disinterest in someone should be communicated and that the online dating sphere enables an easy exit from actually having to let someone down. There never is a satisfactory explanation but any closure is certainly better than no closure at all.

One respondent did say that "if I don't block you, it means I might strike up convo in the future". I initially found this rather flattering but then I realised the ambiguity of this made me extremely uncomfortable. I sent him a text, very subtly asking him out, to then get ghosted again. Sometimes I just completely miss the mark, but at least I'm not plagued with ambiguity anymore. He really is just not that into me.

It would be a colossal understatement to say that being vulnerable virtually is not hard, because having gone through it personally, the amount of overthinking it takes to try to reconnect with someone you've ghosted is scarily hard. Even so, explicitly rejecting someone would always be the less dickish move as opposed to leaving them in limbo.



## My dating life is a disaster...

...but I don't hate it. If anything, the responses to this survey, and my overall virtual communicative experiences in the last year have made me feel equal parts wistful and vindicated. Despite not entirely receiving the responses I wanted, to quote the Dalai Lama, "not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck". Getting ghosted sucks but the experience of it helped me overcome my fear of confrontation, and to never try to change what is so incredibly inherently within me. I may love dick but that's sure as hell not my only option.







give me a  
nineties  
kind of  
LOVE





# WONDERLAND LIES

written by Shawn Wong  
photos by Shawn Wong

## What's the most beautiful lie you've been told?

We've all been told a lie:

Pronouncing every alphabet and counting every number on the numbers letters playmat is going to win praise from my parents. Scoring full-As is going to guarantee me a bright future. An imaginary girlfriend is going to help me go through all high school problems.

Sometimes we lie to ourselves.

Life is getting better. Next semester I'm going to study harder. I'll watch that particular Netflix show soon.

What is life without lies?

People don't stick to the truth, people don't even know what the truth is. What's the origin of human beings, what is the real meaning of time, do unicorns exist? Sure you can google or ask your grandparents about those truths, but the truth is nobody knows 100% about anything.



A hand sanitizer is going to kill 99.99% of germs, but what about the remaining 0.01%? Is the manufacturer of the hand sanitizer lying about the functionality of their product? If they are, why do they do that?

The ultimate goal of people telling a lie (good or bad ones) is to live with their lives. Imagine every single human being on this earth is telling the truths, how many more keyboard warriors will be born? How will the suicide rates increase due to criticism? How cosmetic companies are going to survive?



Admit it, we feel good when we've been lied to and we cultivate this nature of human being by telling lies to others as we assume they will feel good too.

The harsh truth of lying is we need to lie and to be lied to. It's the nature of human beings. If lying about one's appearance can save one's life and lying about a product can save a dying business, why not lie? As long as we maintain a good position and a good starting point, we are good to go to lie.

Next time you've been told a lie, move on and be ready for more lies.

WOMEN  
REWARD

LIES



# WRITERS' CORNER

*August's Theme:  
WOMEN, SEX AND  
OPPRESSION*

The Past and

WRITTEN BY ASHLEY LIM

①

WOMEN, SEX, AND OPPRESSION.  
PALACE, KINGDOM, AND MONARCHY.

*The Present*

THE MALE GAZE  
GOES FURTHER  
BEYOND  
FLAT-  
SCREENS.

Now You See Me

*Now You Don't*

WRITTEN BY  
AVANTIKA MISHRA

②

Femininity & Feminism:

③

IS FEMINISM ALL  
ABOUT CHOICE?

*Damned if we do,  
damned if we don't*

WRITTEN BY  
ELLY ZULAIKHA



CLICK TO READ THE AUGUST CORNER



September's Theme:  
*PORNHUB BUT REALISTIC*

WRITTEN BY  
 LAYAN ALKAF

①

# The Role of Size *in the Bedroom*

DOES IT MATTER?

WRITTEN BY CHRISTIE WONG

# Things I Wish I Knew *Before I Had Sex*

②

NAVIGATING THROUGH THE BIG 'S' WORD THAT USED TO BE A TABOO FOR ME

# The Pandemic

WRITTEN BY  
 SHABNAM SIDHU

③

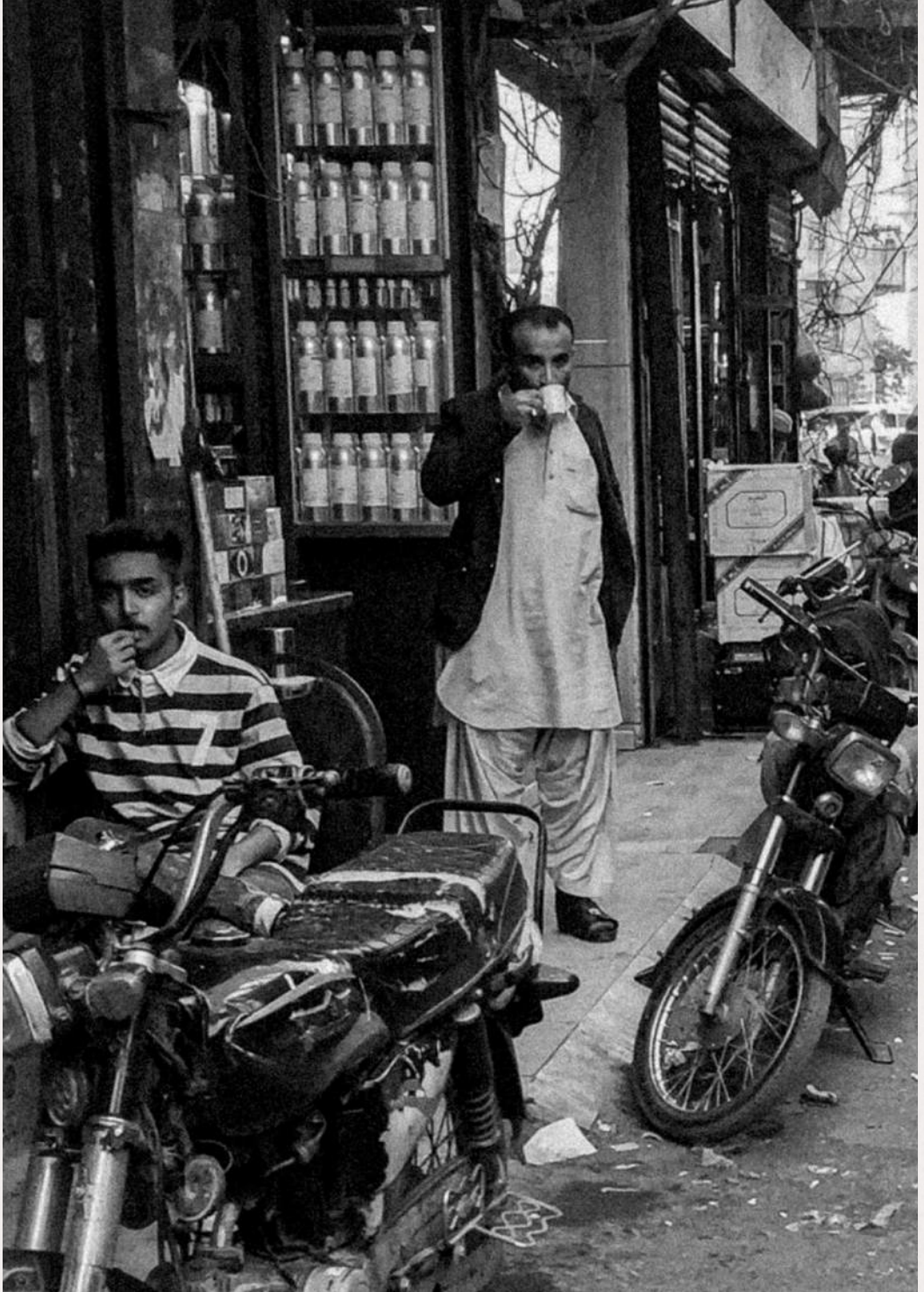
# Made Me *F<sup>UCKING</sup>*

JOIN US AS WE UNFOLD THE JOURNEY  
 OF A "VIRTUAL SEXUAL AWAKENING."

# *HORNY*



CLICK TO READ THE SEPTEMBER CORNER





# NOT AN INVITATION

BY ZARA ABBAS

There's this strange impulse I feel as a woman in the streets of Karachi. An impulse to grip my bosom almost as if to conceal it behind crossed arms. An apologetic head bow as I cross the road, as if my arms are the only thing concealing my naked body. I walk sucking in my hips and chest, minimising my female silhouette. Even through a chaddar, I fear walking against the sun, the filtered light that will make apparent my anatomy. Walking in broad daylight feels no better than walking in the middle of the night. Walking in a burka feels a little better than walking in a kameez shalwar. But I know that's just to make myself feel better. My choice of clothing has no bearing on the voyeurism I am about to be subject to. Bowing my eyes feels no better than staring into those that pierce through me and as I scurry through to my destination, the sensation of terror dissipates but a new one dawns upon me- one that lingers. One that makes me feel filthy. And isn't that ironic. In 7 years of doing street photography, I don't feel safe, let alone welcomed on the roads that lead to home. I fear what if. And living in fear is not fair. It's not fair.

My existence is not an invitation for you to stare.

My existence is not an invitation.



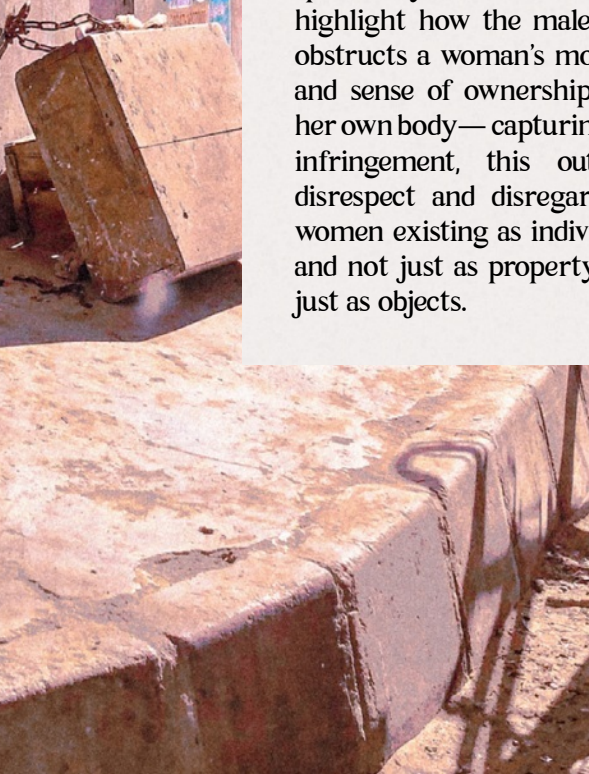




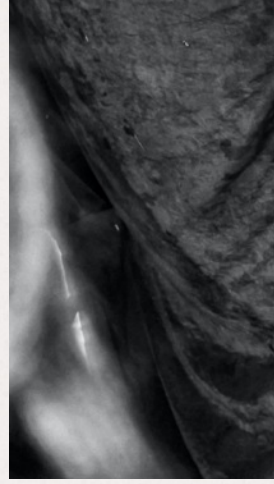




As a woman, my autonomy is up for grabs everywhere. I feel these men at all levels with all their entitlement, feel they own us women and they owe us no decency. Having no regard for my autonomy over my own body in my space, in my city, is what I have been forced to see with this series. My work as a street photographer, and this series specifically is one way to highlight how the male gaze obstructs a woman's mobility and sense of ownership over her own body— capturing this infringement, this outright disrespect and disregard for women existing as individuals and not just as property. Not just as objects.



































The intent of this series is to educate men and women on how difficult life can be when a woman chooses to exercise her right of simply existing in a public space. While this series only focuses on a very specific strata, does not take away from the intended purpose of raising awareness of how a basic human right — of walking in a public space is seen as a debatable and “foreign” concept. The series is an attempt to publicly display how scared I feel along with many other women everyday. It is an attempt to demonstrate that women do not exaggerate the trauma they go through on a daily basis. And it is more prevalent than any of us realise. And yet my existence shouldn't be a reason for men to behave the way they do.



# EXNOTCÓS

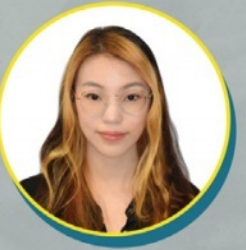


# BUDGET COMMITTEE





# EDUCATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



# ACTIVITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE





# MEDIA AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



# WELFARE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE







## CLUBS & SOCIETIES



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SERVICES



## SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES







## PUBLICITY OFFICER

### Joseph

The experience and the thrill I had gotten from being in this position can not be described by anything. I am really grateful to everyone that made me enjoy this experience. But one thing I can describe is sleep deprivation. May you have the rest to make your day better.



## TREASURER

### Namira Seraj

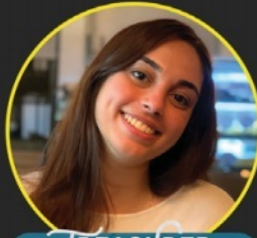
After I realised the true workload of Treasurers. I looked at my resume and had only one thing to say, "you better work b\*tch."



## ACTIVITIES CHAIRPERSONS

### Niraen Paranjothy

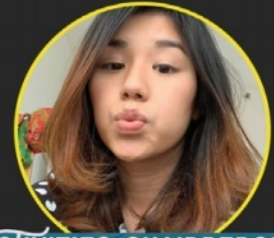
I joined MUSA for the drama, then I became the drama 🤩



## TREASURER

### Haresha Kaur

May the universe work in your favour. Good luck!



## ACTIVITIES CHAIRPERSONS

### Rachael Dukes

MUSA 2021 was fun but THANK GOD it's over! Ran for the second year and Ms Rona disappointed me once again. Lost sleep and my sanity working for MUSA so good luck to the future years, it's all about the CV and the experience at this rate. P.S. don't expect to be paid and if you do get paid, I hope you do share some of that money with your successors ;) OK for real I met the best friends from MUSA that helped me grow and most of them are legit on crack 24/7 so to more ever-lasting friendships.



## WOM\*NS OFFICER

### Keerthi Rajesh

Apparently all my photos have food in it 🍝

Being the Wom\*n's Officer was both empowering and intimidating at the same time. I learned a lot (sometimes read as 'lost my mind') during my term. I definitely couldn't have done it on my own. So, I want to thank my insanely capable subcoms, my (super) supportive predecessors & finally, I want to thank me [insert Snoop Dogg meme XP].

Also, if the name of this department bothers you, its a sign, look into the concept of gender-sensitisation ✨

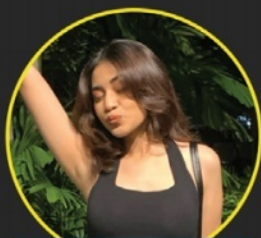
Thank you!



## WELFARE OFFICER

### Alyaa Menon

We went through hell and back. We went through hardcore drama & tea then BECAME the drama & tea. But can't say I regret joining MUSA because now I have my own lil Welfare family and I had the best partner ever ... Can't wait for the next MUSA's tea tbh sksks 🥰



## WELFARE OFFICER

### Saleha Aisyah

Thanks for the headaches MUSA, 10/10 would do it again tho <3



## HEAD OF CLUBS & SOCIETIES

### Alia Acepah

Don't do things half-heartedly. Enjoy what you do, make it a fun and memorable experience. The C&S team definitely had lots of fun planning for the events, especially Monash Cup 2021. Would I do it again? Probably not. But there are things that are best experiencing once anyways.



## HEAD OF CLUBS & SOCIETIES

### Dominic Lee

2021 has been an exhausting year for all of us, but we've come so far now, everyone deserves a pat on the back! MUSA 2021 is comprised of amazing individuals, and I will always treasure my time spent together with everyone. But looking to the future, there is so much to look forward to, and I'm excited to see what comes next alongside friends old and new. Thank you for all the memories, good and bad, and I wish everyone all the best for the future!

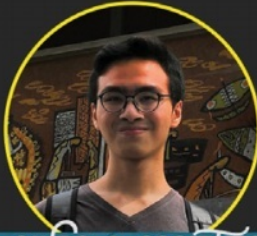




**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
PUBLICITY OFFICER

### Justin Wei

Can't wait for my retirement life 😊



**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
SECRETARY

### Timothy Ooi

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, it's been a great experience serving in C&S alongside a group of amazing individuals.



**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
EXTERNAL OFFICER

### Luke Mooi

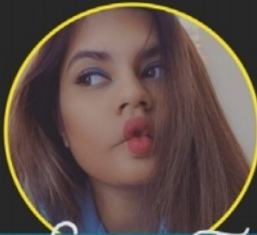
Started as a Liaison Officer, had a breakdown, bon appetit. 😊 In all seriousness, it was a great privilege for me to be given the opportunity to serve the student community and work with all the amazing people in MUSA :D



**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
TREASURER

### Brandon Lim

Sad I didn't get to know and get closer to everyone but there's always time for that. Hoping to see some of you on campus and show you why they call me the short king. It's been a fun, painful yet enjoyable year. Does that make me sound like a masochist? Well... If so, then you got the right idea (okay, jk). See you all soon!



**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
SECRETARY

### Samanza Samreen P,

2021 has been an amazing year working for Musa. I loved every bit of it. Although at some point it took my sanity. But hey! I have had amazing team members who are cute as hell and supportive. And I am so thankful for that.

Here's to the sleepless nights, to my team, to the friendships and to the amazing bunch of people that I have worked with.

MUSA should hire me again ;) And finally a quote everyone can relate to

"They said do not give up on your dreams, so I went back to sleep!" 😊



**CIUBS & SOCIÉTÉS**  
SPORTS OFFICER

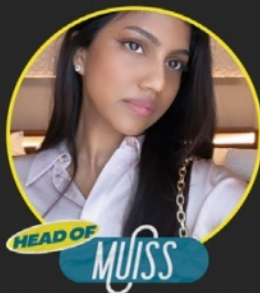
### Nezza Othman

Strived to improve the Monash Cup experience for the students of Monash this year and proud to say that we somehow achieved that. There were hurdles and struggles, sure, but those were to be expected anyway. Dedicated an entire semester's worth of results for the event- would I say it was worth it? Maybe, maybe not? \*sad twerking\* I'm still trying to figure that part out as exams approaches (just kidding/not really). Nevertheless, experiences are invaluable and I'm glad with the outcome :)



### Ali Shah Afzal

It's been a roller coaster ride at MUISS for me. The last three years of being part of MUISS has groomed and shaped me into a better person. Just a fun fact that my current relationship was also started from a MUISS event and so I will always be grateful to MUISS 🙏❤️ So, on a serious note always attend university events you never know if you meet your soulmate there 😊 Lastly, Monash is your first step towards reaching greater heights so fly at your own pace & conquer the world ❤️  
Signing off, Ali.



### Nida Mehaboob

Here's my 2 cents. 2021 was a rollercoaster. Learned a lot. MUSA doesn't get enough credit for the shit that it does. Y'all don't see the BTS. It is fucking hard work. We didn't get the chance to have fun. Maybe cause I'm writing this in week 11 🤔 We should be paid. Juggling time zone difference, university, MUISS, work, social life (lol) is killing me slowly. Probably the most challenging year in MUSA history. But I'm so proud we made it. We did it guys. We fucking did it. Forever grateful. Nida out.



### Gerald

It was honestly one HELL of a rollercoaster ride, where the highs were very high and the lows were extremely low, but hey, we survived it y'all 😊👏 Also the fact that I probably won't meet my MUSA 2021 team ever due to Covid.... AND not being able to experience my office??? Regardless, I had fun serving the student community, and I really hope I can meet and bond with my colleagues in real life!! Hit me up please let's talk smack about our experience JSJSJS <3



### Hanan Naushad

Okay, bye.



### Evelyn Nathalie

I can't believe one period just passed by LIKE THAT! A big shout-out to all of my g for sticking with me this year in MUSA <3. Lowkey still feeling ROBbed that i won't be able to work in the office. But nevertheless! 'Twas a fun year all together. <3<3



### Nameesha Chhabra

I had a greatttttt experience, and good luck to the next ones!





**Jovan Kristanto**

Thank you to the MUISS team who guided and helped me a lot me even when I entered as a newbie with no experience at all, this was a quick but pleasant experience. Even more thanks to my subcomms (sorry I asked a lot from you guys hihi) who helped me throughout this brief period!! Finally, thank you for the chance to experience being an OB and meet new people :) Good luck to my successor hope you can do better than me and enjoy an offline term~



**Sacheev Rajesh**

Throughout this pandemic I have learned a very important lesson which is that people leave but chicken nuggets don't :)



**Amina Nadeem**

This year has been one hell of a ride, but I gained so many new experiences, made precious friends, and enjoyed even if it was online (sadly cries) but overall I loved this journey. I will miss this so much!  
Thanks everyone! ❤️



**Bunga Azzahra**

What a roller coaster ride and thank you for the experience.



**Tarasha**

MUISS in office would have been fun 🤩, COVID made it an experience 😬 We outtie 🙌



SCHOOL OF ARTS &amp; SOCIAL SCIENCES

REPRESENTATIVE

### Ralph Jafnawan

My time here has been a wild ride. All love to SOB, but you guys have too much drama within yourselves. Please give us some of the heat :) Dom, please don't impose weird rules. I got to go my own way. Loved my time here! Also please give Aminah a bigger budget. Now what am I suppose to do? I'm leaving but I'll miss you. Goodbye my friends, you have been the one, you have been the one for me. I am a dreamer, and when I wake, you can't take my spirit, that's my dreams you take. And as you move on, remember me, remember us and all we used to be. And y'all need to start paying us. Stop bossing US around. WHO do you think you are running around leaving scars. I highkey wanted to be in the office at the start of the year, but also highkey think it'll be very awkward. To Aminah and Naeem, take care of this lil family monSASSh have. Small in number but huge, humongous, and big, in Heart. When in doubt, please call the 10 people in the SASS 2021 team first before you call me. Stay SASSy. Goodluck and Ba bye.

Yours Truly,  
SASS 2021 Team and J.



SCHOOL OF ARTS &amp; SOCIAL SCIENCES

REPRESENTATIVE

### Fathimath Imthisal

Take life as if its' a box of chocolates!



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

REPRESENTATIVE

### Jessy Wong

IT'S FINALLY OVER! 🥳 Time to pick back up my games and hobbies that I have left behind. No regrets, just stress and sleep deprivation. Thank you to my partner, EJ, all the MUSA members and my subcommittee members who went through this fruitful journey with me! You guys are great! Hope to see everyone in real life soon! CHEERS! ... 🍷



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

REPRESENTATIVE

### Eu Jiunn

Honestly, this whole experience was a hell of a ride and I wouldn't have gotten through it without my Other Rep/GF. Having heard there were about 5 SOB Rep changes in a year was scary but having gone through it all really made me understood why, yet here I am writing this and so I sincerely hope the streak ends with me. But anyways I just want to thank the subcommittees that stuck through all the way and I truly hope the best for MUSA and my SOB successors cuz you're GONNA NEED IT HAAAA





SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Imaya Minuri

Being a part of MUSA 2021 was the highlight of my year! It was the most rewarding experience to have served the students even with a few challenges that we had to face. Finally, I would like to thank our amazing, passionate subcommittee members, we would not have been able to do what we did and achieve it all, if it was not for your hard work, effort and dedication ❤️



SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Mikey Hao

It sucks that we're experiencing another online year in 2021. I hope when campus reopens, y'all take your chances and enjoy the heck out of your campus life! University is much more than just hustling okay?

Sleepless nights but it was worth it, s/o to my team Kai, Zoe, Arya, Minhao, Vane, Jul, Johnny, Kean, Peiji, Aidan, Tshee for the good vibes, and to Ange for being the best so it rep I could've asked for! We're so disorganized but we made it work 🥰

Also s/o to Stacy for her support :D ✨💕



SCHOOL OF PHARMACY  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Mok Shien Loong

2021 is full of uncertainty, but we overcame all the hardships! Thank you for giving me this opportunity to be your SOP rep. Good luck peeps in the future!!



SCHOOL OF PHARMACY  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Lin Wei Xuan

Super grateful to be a part of MUSA 2021 and get the opportunity to serve the beloved Pharmily this year!!! I would like to say a big THANK YOU to my awesome subcoms (Brigitte, Pui, Jia Ying, Cassandra, Leann, Hao Xiang, Iris, Yee Ning, Yi-Ann and Janice) and Mok for your hard work and support throughout the year. Couldn't have had made many successful events without this superb team~ Thank you for everything and all the best to our successors :)



SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Dulana Weligepolage

The picture says it all; my expression throughout the year!



SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**REPRESENTATIVE**

### Angeline Tanvy

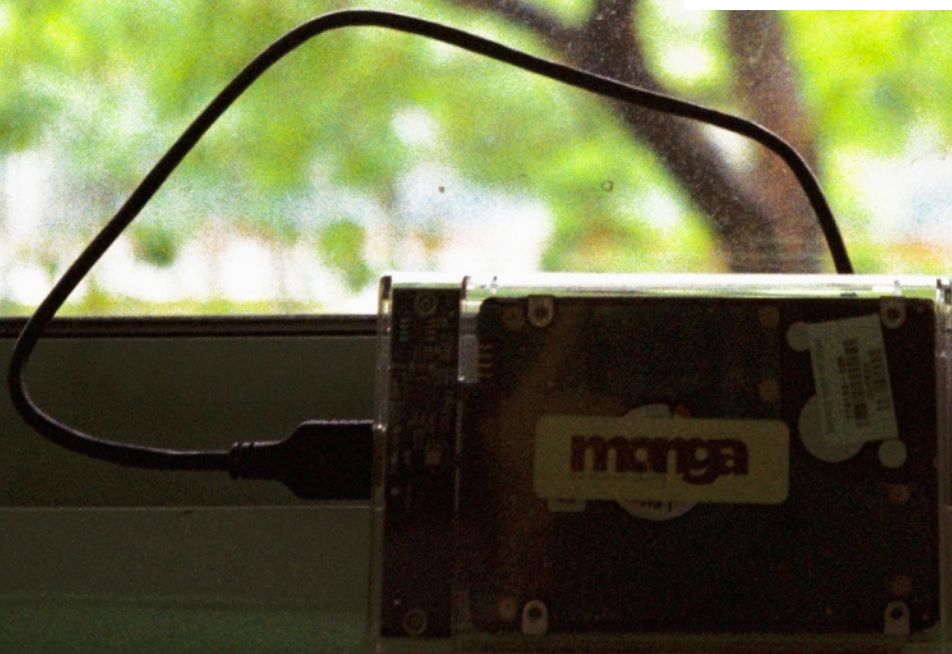
Tons of events, crazy sub-comm team, waking Mikey up, lots of paper work. Yet a very memorable term :D





time for us to bid farewell  
here goes our last words

(MONGA 2021)







SUPER GRATEFUL FOR MONGA THAT ALLOWED ME TO PICK UP ON SOMETHING I TRULY LOVE ONCE AGAIN AND FOR BEING MY SHORT ESCAPE FROM ALL THE NUMBERS AND CALCULATIONS IN MY MAJOR EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE TO INDULGE INTO THE WORLD OF ART AND DESIGN. IT WAS TRULY A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH SUCH AN AMAZING AND CREATIVE GROUP OF PEOPLE!

BEING IN MONGA HAS HONESTLY MADE MY 2021 WAY BETTER THAN I ANTICIPATED, I GREW SO MUCH AS A DESIGNER AND TBH MY EXPERIENCES HERE CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO MY GROWTH :) MONGA WILL ALWAYS HOLD A SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART, LOVE THIS FAM! <3



MONGA WAS SUCH AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE. I GOT TO EXPRESS MY ARTISTIC SELF BY DELVING INTO SO MANY PROJECTS THAT WERE GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCE THAT BOTH PUSHED MY BOUNDARIES AND EXPAND IT. I ACQUIRED NEW SKILLS THAT I AM GRATEFUL FOR. IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BE PART OF THIS FAMILY IN 2021!

THIS WAS A PLACE WHERE I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT WORK AND WAS JUST ABLE TO FOCUS ON MY CREATIVITY. LOVED MY TIME AT MONGA AND DEFINITELY LOVED THE PEOPLE I WORKED ALONG WITH. FROM THE IDEAS WE SHARED TO LONG DISCUSSION MEETINGS TO THE OVERALL THEMES FOR THE MAGAZINE. THE EXPERIENCE WILL BE GREATLY CHERISHED. THANK YOU MONGA!







MONGA 2021 BEST TEAM C33

2021 BEING SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN 2020? WE TAKE THOSE. THANK YOU MONGA FOR ALLOWING ME TO EXPLORE GRAPHIC DESIGN ALONGSIDE A PASSIONATE CREATIVE TEAM. IF IT ONLY GETS BETTER FROM HERE, I'M EXCITED TO SEE WHAT COMES NEXT!



I'M SO THANKFUL THAT I HAD SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO MONGA. IT FELTS SURREAL TO SEE YOUR WORK OUT THERE. I MAY NOT HAVE SPENT MUCH TIME IN MONGA, BUT IT DEFINITELY HELPED ME SURVIVE GOING THROUGH THE LAST YEAR IN THE PANDEMIC. XOXO LOVE Y'ALL BYE

IF THIS PANDEMIC HAS EVER CHANGED ANYTHING, IT IS THE TIMES THAT I PICK UP MY CAMERA. MONGA HAD GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO PICK UP MY CAMERA AND UNCOVER IT FROM DUST AGAIN. A TRULY BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE INDEED.





MONGA WAS SUCH A FUN EXPERIENCE! I LEARNT SO MUCH AND I'M SUPER PROUD TO BE PART OF THE TEAM. I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO BE IN CAMPUS AND COVER FOR EVENTS BUT SAD THAT IT'S ANOTHER YEAR OF ONLINE UNI :) FK COVID AND BYE 2021 \*JOBS

RICK AND MORTY, S1:E11, 00:20:51



JOINING MONGA WAS REALLY FUN.  
10/10 WOULD RECOMMEND

I LOVED EVERY SECOND OF BEING A PART OF MONGA. ALLOWING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE A PIECE OF MYSELF TO EXPRESS. I'VE MET SO MANY GREAT PEOPLE AND UNDERSTOOD MORE ABOUT THE WORKS OF OUR UNIVERSITY THROUGH IT.







TSHEE!

i'm SO PROUD AND GRATEFUL TO BE A PART OF THIS FAMILY :) i LEARNED SO MUCH AND MET SO MANY AMAZING PEOPLE THROUGH MONGAAA 🥰. LOOKING FORWARD TO MAKE MORE MEMORIES NEXT YEAR <333

THANKS MONGA, WAS FUN WHILE IT LASTED :)



\* VIHAAN



SHI TIAN

i ENJOYED WORKING WITH MONGA THIS PAST YEAR AS i HAD THE CHANCE TO WORK ON DIFFERENT PHOTO AND VIDEO PROJECTS. WITH THE CURRENT PANDEMIC, THESE PROJECTS GAVE ME A REASON TO TAKE A BREATHER OUTSIDE. i'm GRATEFUL FOR THAT i WAS GIVEN THIS CHANGE TO BE PART OF MONGA.

BEING PART OF MONGA MADE ME FEEL LIKE i BELONGED AT MONASH DESPITE COVID19. ALL THE VARIOUS PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECTS KEPT MY SANITY ATTACHED AND AIDED THE BOREDOM. i GOT TO PUSH MY CREATIVITY AT HOME, GO TO RESTAURANTS AND TAKE MANY IMAGES TO SHARE WITH YOU ALL. i WILL TRULY MISS BEING PART OF THIS GROUP. THANK YOU ALL !!



ZARA



BEING A PART OF MONGA COMMUNITY WAS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE THAT HELPED ME FIND NEW FRIENDS AND PRACTICE MY FAVOURITE HOBBY - PHOTOGRAPHY. I AM GRATEFUL TO BE A PART OF MONGA 2021, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS CHALLENGING DUE TO PANDEMIC. AND I HOPE TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH MONGA IN THE FUTURE. ♡



IT WAS A PLEASURE WORKING WITH MONGA ONE LAST TIME DURING MY FINAL YEAR. I AM SO GLAD I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIMENT, LEARN AND GROW AND BECOME A PART OF A VERY CREATIVE AND LOVING FAMILY. ADIOS AMIGOS!



BEING PART OF THE MONGA 2021 HAS BEEN A... UNIQUE EXPERIENCE GIVEN THE PANDEMIC BUT WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE NONETHELESS. I'VE LOVED THE CREATIVE DIRECTION WE'VE TAKEN THIS YEAR BUT MOST OF ALL, OUR AMAZING TEAM OF TALENTED INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE COME TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR COLLECTIVE VISION A REALITY DESPITE THE CIRCUMSTANCES. SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO CHRISTIE OUR WRITER IN CHIEF FOR CULTIVATING OUR IDEAS AND NEVER LIMITING US IN OUR CREATIVITY!

"I'D LIKE TO THANK MONGA FOR BEING THE MOST CHILL AND OPEN TEAM TO EVER WORK WITH, IT'S BEEN SO MUCH FUN! I'VE BEEN ABLE TO WRITE THE WAY I WANT TO AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF HOW WE'RE FREE TO EXPRESS OURSELVES - THIS IS HOW WE MAKE SURE THAT THE CONTENT NEVER DISAPPOINTS :)"

LOOKING FORWARD TO MORE!"







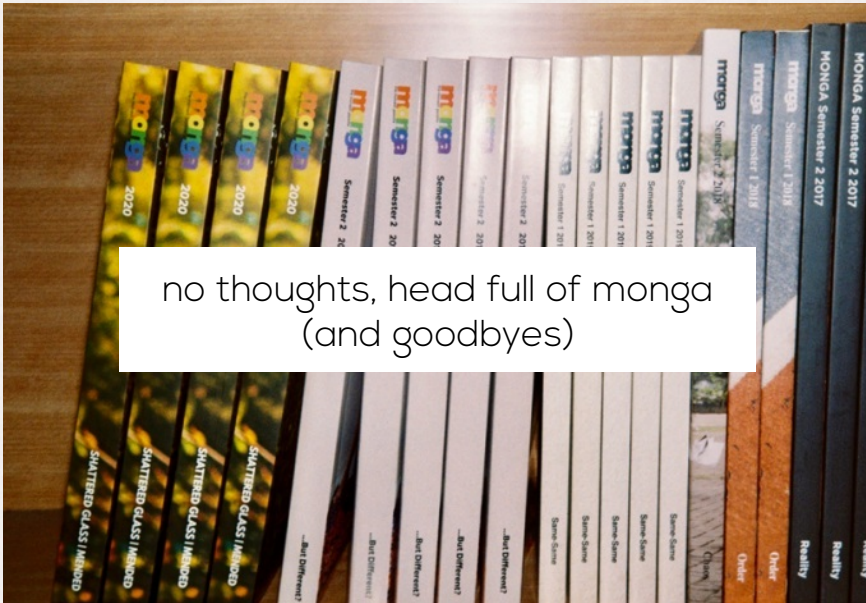
WRITING FOR MONGA WAS SUCH AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE! THE GIVEN CREATIVE FREEDOM HAS ENABLED ME TO ENHANCE MY WRITING SKILLS AS WELL AS PEN MY THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS IN SUCH A LIBERAL VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT.

"A HUGE HUGE SHOUTOUT TO MY INCREDIBLE TEAM OF CREATIVE WORDSMITHS AKA MONGA'S WRITERS! LITERALLY THE CHILLEST BUNCH EVER <3

ALSO, CAN'T FORGET THE ENTIRE MONGA 2021 TEAM AS WELL, FOR YOUR HARD WORK WITH PUBLISHING TWO EDITIONS THIS YEAR! I LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT 2022 HAS IN STORE~"



THANK YOU MONGA FOR PROVIDING ME WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO HONE MY WRITING ABILITIES ONCE MORE AND PARTAKE IN EXCITING PROJECTS THROUGHOUT 2021. BEING A PART OF MONGA DURING MY FINAL YEAR AT MONASH IS AN EXPERIENCE I'LL CHERISH FOREVER.





*You always think you have enough time, until you don't.*

Christie

A very corny start to my letter, but believe me when I say I remember being 18 and crossing through Monash's campus on my way to college, watching all my seniors gather around the main building for a bazaar.

I can still clearly see in my mind how my eyes zoomed into this one colorful logo 'MONGA'. Odd name, odder colors.

I had no idea what it was but I searched it up on Instagram, it clicked in me. I liked this, writing and covering events, creative works, this is something that I want to do when I'm in university.

HEAD WRITER



Hand-drawn doodles on a chalkboard background including hearts, 'xoxo', 'Boo!', stars, and a spiral.



I always knew I wanted to take care of MONGA, I've never felt more passionate about something than when I'm curating MONGA, and I've felt happier even when I'm churning out a 1500 word article in 2 hours. It's true when they say 'If you enjoy your job, it'll feel more like a hobby than a job'. While I used to joke that being talented at words and writing is boring compared to other talents, doing what you love really does conquer all. Everything about MONGA, I love it all.

When I was elected, I swore on my life that We would take care of MONGA to the best of our abilities. I sure hope that we have.

With all my heart, with my hand on my chest, thank you to everyone who I have had the honor of meeting on my journey in MONGA.

To Weishang, Head Writer of 2020, thank you for being the first person who I've met in MONGA, the person who gave me the final push to have the courage to run for Editors in 2020. I recall vividly the day I came into the office as a first year for my subcommittee interview. I was in such awe of the work that MONGA does, of how cool the office looks and I thought 'I want to be just like them one day'. I kept asking you over and over if anyone wanted to take up the Editors position in 2020 because I was scared and hesitant. You told me to just close my eyes and take that leap of faith, I just did it. And everyday I'm so glad that I did.

I almost want to continue writing this letter into oblivion so I don't have to say my bittersweet goodbyes, but unfortunately, all good things must come to an end.

To my teammates, Angie, Shannon and Jared, or is it Jeremiah?, my biggest regret is that we could not have had our lunch breaks in our office together, no midnight editing work and no supper snacking in person. But I am eternally grateful that fate has led us all together, from meeting each other 1 day before elections close, navigating hurdles together

to being great friends. May our friendship last years after we leave MONGA and Monash, because what would I ever do if Angie and Shannon don't fangirl over cute stickers in our group chat? Or if Jared doesn't accidentally call me Chrissie? Or if we one day stop making bad jokes and gossip together? Let's go out one day, take our dusty cameras off the shelf and have a proper shoot once we're all done with this.

To my subcomms, your support has been my drive to continue on as the Head Writer when I thought I couldn't go on, and seeing all of your works being brought to life on MONGA, makes me so immensely proud of all of you! Please always be happy wherever all of you go, I wish nothing but the very best of life to all 6 of you.

To all aspiring writers, the pen is truly mightier than the sword so be bold, be brave and write away, say the most daring things and break all boundaries! Because who else will, if you don't? Say it, and do it, because why not?

To Ashley, don't worry about being 60% of me. Just be 100% of you.

Thank you for the amazing year, amazing friendships, amazing experiences.

Well, I guess this is it. I've left a piece of my heart with MONGA, and with MONGA it will always stay. When I look back at my university life, I will always be proud to say I was a part of MONGA, I will always carry that part of me with full pride, wherever I go.

To myself 10 years down the road, if you do stumble upon this magazine wherever you are, remember and know that you did this with happiness. You deserve to be happy. Please be happy.

With all the love,

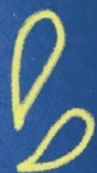
Christie Wong

(Writer Subcomm 2020, Head Writer 2021)



# Shan

HEAD  
ADMIN



## How to stop time?

Feels like it was just days ago when Christie and I had a spontaneous run to the photo shop at SS15 to get our photos taken for the application documents, just days ago when I felt clueless on how to DM Ivan nicely about Monga's job scope, just days ago when we had countless Zoom meetings for hours, brainstorming and churning out every possible idea for the new year. In the blink of an eye, we're the ones helping the Editors of 2022 to get onboard, briefing them on the best practices, finalizing every part of the year-end magazine, and finishing our projects.





The four of us, we weren't friends to begin with. Out of pure lovely coincidences, we were grouped together because the team simply needed people. With Christie forming the team, asking if anyone's interested on her Instagram, me replying to her, NOT knowing a thing about "Editors", Jared getting baited into running the Election (this never stops being funny), and Angie coming in last, saving us from our 3/4 Editor crisis. All year long, the four of us communicated and worked as a team (healthy workplace lol), and when the serious mode was switched off, we'd just chill and vibe, send some cute and a lot of disgusting and weird stickers (y'all know who i'm talking about), we'd spam the group chat, spill some tea.. Everything feels so right and I can't imagine how would the Editors of 2021 be like if even just one of us was replaced by some random dude, no offense.

While you all will be busy with your studies and work, don't ever forget to take a break and rest. Binge some Netflix, listen to some chill indie and Kpop, and uh for Jared, idk play some games maybe BAHABA Love you guys <3

To students in Monash, I hope MONGA 2021 brought some joy to you this year.

If you've stumbled upon our posts while scrolling your feed and smiled a little, perhaps when you see your friends was being featured in one of our interviews, when you see them won the monthly Snapshot Challenge, or maybe when you're just re-sharing a post that you've contributed as a subcomm, then my job is done here.

To myself, joining MONGA is a step I'm glad I took and a decision I'd never regret. I've always dipped my toe into all sorts of projects yet my experience was always alone, never with a team. I would keep it to myself thinking it was not good enough to be shown to the public but being in MONGA, being with all these amazing talented people, changed that. My works can be appreciated, is what I thought, even as amateur or as simple as they are. And I hope everyone in our board felt the same. I felt comfortable sharing and contributing to the content and our magazine, all thanks to my teammates and subcomms, who would always cheer at each others' articles, designs, and pictures and make me feel like "why is everyone just so nice ;-".

To everyone in MONGA 2021, please please please keep on writing, designing, taking photos, or whatever that brings you joy. The world needs to see more of you guys' talent, I mean it really (a little cringey but you get my message). For those who hope to be in MONGA, or even become the Editors in the coming years, I hope you enjoy yourself and have the best experience one could ever wish for.

While labels don't define people, I'm glad one of my labels is "editor of MONGA 2021". Anddd I shall end my rant now

Shan, signing off.

Nov 16 Tue, 2:25AM

(writing this while lying on my bed with lights off in this emo hour, let's hope I don't wake up and delete a whole bunch of my writings out of embarrassment)



Jared

HEAD OF MEDLA



CLICK



*Recalling my first semester in Monash in 2019.*

I remember going to games to support some of my friends during Monash Cup 2019. During the games, I saw photographers around the sidelines capturing all the memorable moments. It was that moment that really made my interest grow in going to MONGA, and two years later here I am, stepping down from the Editor position.

Two years in MONGA, and truth to be told, there was a lot of regrets along the road. The pandemic really hit the photography department hard. The ruthlessness of the virus meant that rules and restrictions were imposed and completely shut the world down. Many plans were halted and the department had very less to work with. Regardless, the team managed to pull through with some amazing work along the way.

To my subcomms, I am really happy with the work that everyone has put out throughout the year, and I am really proud of all of you. I do apologize if I haven't been able to make our projects and initiatives much more fun and fair to every single one of you. Not being able to bond the team as I intended is the biggest regret and I really wish that we could have met in person, have fun together and create more memories together. Lastly, I wish everyone of you the best and continue your passion in photography and videography.

To my teammates Angie, Shannon and Christie, I'm really grateful for how much you guys made this magazine come to fruition. Rarely do I come across such fun teammates with endless amounts of stickers in the chat, with a lot of random talking but I'm pretty sure those random topics are going to be one of the best memories I have in MONGA. It's pretty sad that we didn't even get to go to the office and take a non-photoshopped group picture. Knowing them was one of the best things in MONGA and I hope our friendships will last long and we get to really hang out for once!

It has been a ride with MONGA and I am very proud to be a part of it despite all the challenges that we faced in these challenging times. I wish the future of MONGA all the best and you can bet I will be there to grab every single edition!

Jared  
(Media Subcommittee 2020, Editor 2021)





Angie  
HEAD  
DESIGNER

*I am not very good with goodbyes.*

I get attached too fast and end up not knowing what to do after leaving. Joining MONGA was a decision made on a whim and I never exactly knew what I was initially signing up for because all I wanted to do was nothing else but to design. Yet here am I, erasing my words every time I finish a line or two because I don't want this whole thing to end. (Or maybe I'm just an emotional blob to begin with.)



Maybe it's because I did not expect much affinity to be involved. Turns out it's not strictly business at all. The push that Kieran gave when she offered me to become a contributor and the morale boost I received after submitting a handful of designs for last year's magazine, the encouragement that Celine sent to me when we first posted the MONGA 2021 team introduction design on Instagram, and the uplifting cheers and boost of serotonin that followed even up until this moment; they have been the highlights of my 2021. It is a very turbulent year; a lot of things happened and it was the positive messages that kept me going.

Right at this very moment, I'm sneakily typing this whole thing before my next work schedule starts. Juggling the magazine while working full-time is stressful. Sometimes I wonder if it would be less burdening had I not applied for intermission and the only things I had to care for are only uni assignments and MONGA. Looking back at my journey in the crew, there are still so many things that I want to do in and for MONGA. I wish I performed better as a designer and head of design to my subcomms, I really do. However, despite everything, I believe that I did try my best to serve MONGA. I have done my part, so a little pat on the back wouldn't hurt, right?

To our predecessors a.k.a. MONGA seniors, thank you so much for the assistance you have given! I always refer back to every past issue every time I get a creative block. It never ceases to amaze me how you handled the magazine with such care and love.

To Christie, Shannon and Jared, I wish we could have done this together on-site. There are many what-ifs that we did not get to experience, but I hope the future MONGA team gets to experience them. Thank you for the entertaining chats, memes and WhatsApp stickers throughout the year. I couldn't ever

ask for a better team, really. No more virtual gatherings, photoshopping everyone into the same frame and screenshotting group pictures - let's meet soon!

To my graphic design subcomms, each and every one of you means a lot to me. I love how chill everything was, but I can only imagine how much more fun it would be if all of us met for real. Everyone did amazing despite some being new to designing and/or having had to cope with uni/work (we all know how time-consuming it is to design a page). Kudos to everyone!

To all MONGA subcomm peeps, thank you for being on board with us! I enjoyed compiling every single piece of writing and wonderful photographs, all forming this splendid, thicc (yes, with double C's) 2021 Mega Issue. Thank you for your contribution. MONGA 2021 would not last this long without you. I sincerely wish nothing but the best for everyone.

Letting go means losing the routines I had for each design prep, not being able to open WhatsApp and see the tiny reminders whenever we had a meeting to attend, no longer confirming with Shannon or with the group every time a design is finished, and spamming random stickers whenever we were at it. But it's time to hand everything over to the Editors of 2022 (you're all so gonna do well!), so here it is; it's time for me to end the letter. What started as an IG story campaign with Clown Pepe and pictures of us that probably deserve a place in the hall of shame has now ended with this beautiful magazine of ours. It is what I initially signed up for, rounded off with amazing moments and memories.

Stay hydrated and wholesome!  
Angeline Ho



SWITCH & HIATING

different?



same same



Yong 4  
Jimmy Bay 1  
Mak E Lize 1  
Student lounge 3

guess this is really goodbye



Level 2, Sports Centre  
Monash Malaysia





# we asked for your input and collected your responses

FULL NAME  
STUDENT ID  
STUDENT EMAIL  
WHICH SCHOOL ARE YOU FROM?  
ARE YOU IN MALAYSIA AT THE  
MOMENT?  
YOUR ADDRESS  
POSTAL CODE  
PHONE NUMBER  
IG HANDLE  
HAVE YOU DOUBLE CHECKED?

**LEAVE A NOTE** → REMEMBER THIS?  
**TO MONGA? :D**

IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL COPIES,  
STATE THE QUANTITY HERE

Love your work!

Thank you :D

Can't wait

Love u 3000 <3333 xoxo

Thanks and keep  
the good work

y'all are awesome!!  
keep up the good work :D

Can't wait to see it!

MONGA be clutching with  
them high quality photos sheesh

Good Job Guys ♥

Keep up the  
amazing work!

Thank you!!! ✨

Always proud of your efforts in bringing  
the best parts of Monash student life in writing 🥰

Thanks for all the  
amazing contents!

Thank you!

Thank you to the  
MONGA team for this!

Keep up the good work!

Thanks for the effort!

Thank you very much looking  
forward to have a read on it

Thank you

Great job on the  
magazine, looks great!

<3

Niceeee

Thank you for your  
hardwork 🥰♥

Thanks for the hardwork!!! Rmb to  
drink more water and rest well!  
Stay safe too ^^

Thanks for your  
hard work!

I LOVE YOU :D

Thank you! (๐▽๐)

Can't wait to read the  
new magazine woohooo!!



Always looking forward to MONGA's publications every semester. Keep up the excellent work :)

Thanks for always staying with Monashians!!

Super excited for it!! U guys always have great content and I applaud ur efforts in this!!!! ❤️

Keep up the good work!

Will look forward for it!!! :))

Y'ALL ARE THE BEST. THANKS FOR MAKING THIS! :D

Y'all cool. <3

Thank you for your hard work! ❤️❤️❤️

as well as many other positive comments we have previously received.

Thank you for organising this event. To be honest, I am so shocked and excited to be selected.

iandrewljm  
Articles about traditionally 'taboo' topics in Malaysia like LGBT issues were great!

Reply

raegelnotrachel

y'all always have the best content!!! can't wait to see what sem 2 has in store 🤩

Reply

Hiii just wanted to say thank you for introducing the nostalgia project! I received so much feedback about my project that it's insane! Honestly I was a bit nervous because it was my first project and I'm literally so overwhelmed by all the responses I got. Thank you again for believing in me 🙏

3:32 pm

shannon

JJaying mentioned there r some extras so will let u know... yayyyyy thank u monga is the best department

6:51 PM

hey guys! I've just done a proper look at the magazine you published very recently and I just had to say what an impressive job you all did! thank you so very much for including so many if not all of my work ❤️ it means a lot to have a piece of my work somewhere hoping it might help someone feel less singular! I hope you all feel very very satisfied and happy with what you've created because I still can't believe how beautiful the magazine is. I'd love to please have a copy, but I'm not in Malaysia (and won't be back any time soon), so I won't be able to see it in the near future 😞 But if you do plan on doing prints do let me know! I could always ask a friend to receive it in my place till I get back ❤️ thank you again and I hope you all have big smiles on your face the whole of this week 🤩

Omgg thank you for pushing me 2:45 AM

I've been wanted to try taking films for so longgg 2:45 AM

Thanks for the extra activities held to keep us not bored! 😊



Glad I could share it this theme is awesome 🌟🔥



Tshee  
I SERIOUSLY LOVE MONGA GAHAH

Tshee  
I LOVE MONGA



goodbye :<

**we sincerely  
thank everyone  
for staying with us  
throughout 2021!**



we love you too <3



SIGNING OFF IN A TRUE  
MONGA 2021 FASHION  
A.K.A. WITH PEPE



# CONTRIBUTIONS

The MONGA 2021 Mega Issue would not have been possibly made without the contribution of everyone who was involved. Thank you so much!



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MUSA 2021  
Gavin Chee Zhi Lin  
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### Disclaimer:

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Photo by Ivan Liew

