



the spyglass



winter issue
twenty nineteen



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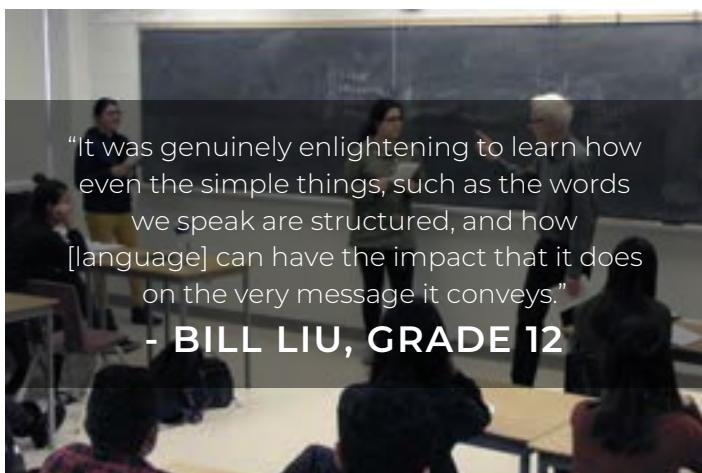
SHAKESPEARIENCE:

A Workshop in the Forgotten Calculation of Language

FOUR HUNDRED and seven years have passed since William Shakespeare penned his final play, *The Tempest*. Both the verse and prose that constitute his 37 plays outlive him, and are as alive now as they were prior to Shakespeare's death in 1616.

Marvin Karon, a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada and teacher, visited Mr. Pomakov's 12th Grade English class in early November of this year. With writing such as that of William Shakespeare's, where everything is given and almost nothing is explained, we tend to give up hope. Having acted in several modern Shakespeare productions, as well as teaching English for many years, Karon's message was to embrace Shakespeare's writing, regardless of the difficulties brought on by his language.

As he watched the students perform their respective scenes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Karon reminded them to understand, and to not simply communicate the words provided on the script. As the students experimented with the scenes, they began to realize the universality of the words spoken in the play, without letting their unfamiliarity scare them off.



"It was genuinely enlightening to learn how even the simple things, such as the words we speak are structured, and how [language] can have the impact that it does on the very message it conveys."

- BILL LIU, GRADE 12



"It was surprising to be transported into Hamlet's world."

- SHIYAO LI, GRADE 12

And, from error to error, the class discovered the whole truth of the Bard's words.

The origin of our words and the meaning under them are both exceptionally delicate, Karon echoes. Society and contemporary language have but little connection with such beginnings, or as Karon describes it, "the unlawfully forgotten calculation of language." When we do forget, we lose everything around us, including the very words to describe it.

High school students, some to which we credit as our own, refuse to acknowledge or accept the depth of Shakespeare's words. Most students see Shakespeare's work as something used to fill a space in the English syllabus, and that there are better things to be taught.

It's true. Oftentimes, you will come across unlawfully forgotten things. However, nothing is unlawfully remembered, it is simply a matter of coming around to the responsibility of realizing it.

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QUIZ: My Last Two Brain Cells



WINTER
EDITION

- 1.** **What do you usually do on the very first day of the Winter Break?**
Begins with the letter "G" and ends with "rind" (9 pts)
Sleep (5 pts)
Ten tabs of Netflix, Youtube, Crunchyroll, or Viki (5 pts)
Go out with friends (4 pts)
- 2.** **What can you usually find in the pockets of your winter coat?**
A pair of warm gloves (10 pts)
Food wrappers (-5 pts)
Money (5 pts)
Your phone (2 pts)
Nothing (2 pts)
- 3.** **The best Christmas playlist must include:**
Mariah Carey (5 pts)
Michael Bublé (5 pts)
Pentatonix (8 pts)
Christmas covers by your favourite artist (3 pts)
- 4.** **Which of the following is the superior holiday movie?**
The Grinch (3 pts)
Elf (3 pts)
The Nightmare Before Christmas (5 pts)
Home Alone (5 pts)
- 5.** **What is your favourite holiday treat/drink?**
Hot chocolate (3 pts)
Sugar cookies (2 pts)
Chocolate anything and everything (8 pts)
Apple Cider (5 pts)
A whole gingerbread house (-5 pts)

(Negative - 13 points) You have - 0 Remaining Brain Cells

Congratulations! You currently have zero remaining brain cells. Stress is the most probable culprit, as it has fried the remnants of your intellect and has caused you to lose control over your rationality. But looking on the bright side, you know that you really couldn't care less. As the saying goes, "Life is short, so you might as well enjoy it to the fullest" (especially if it means guiltlessly consuming a whole gingerbread house by yourself).

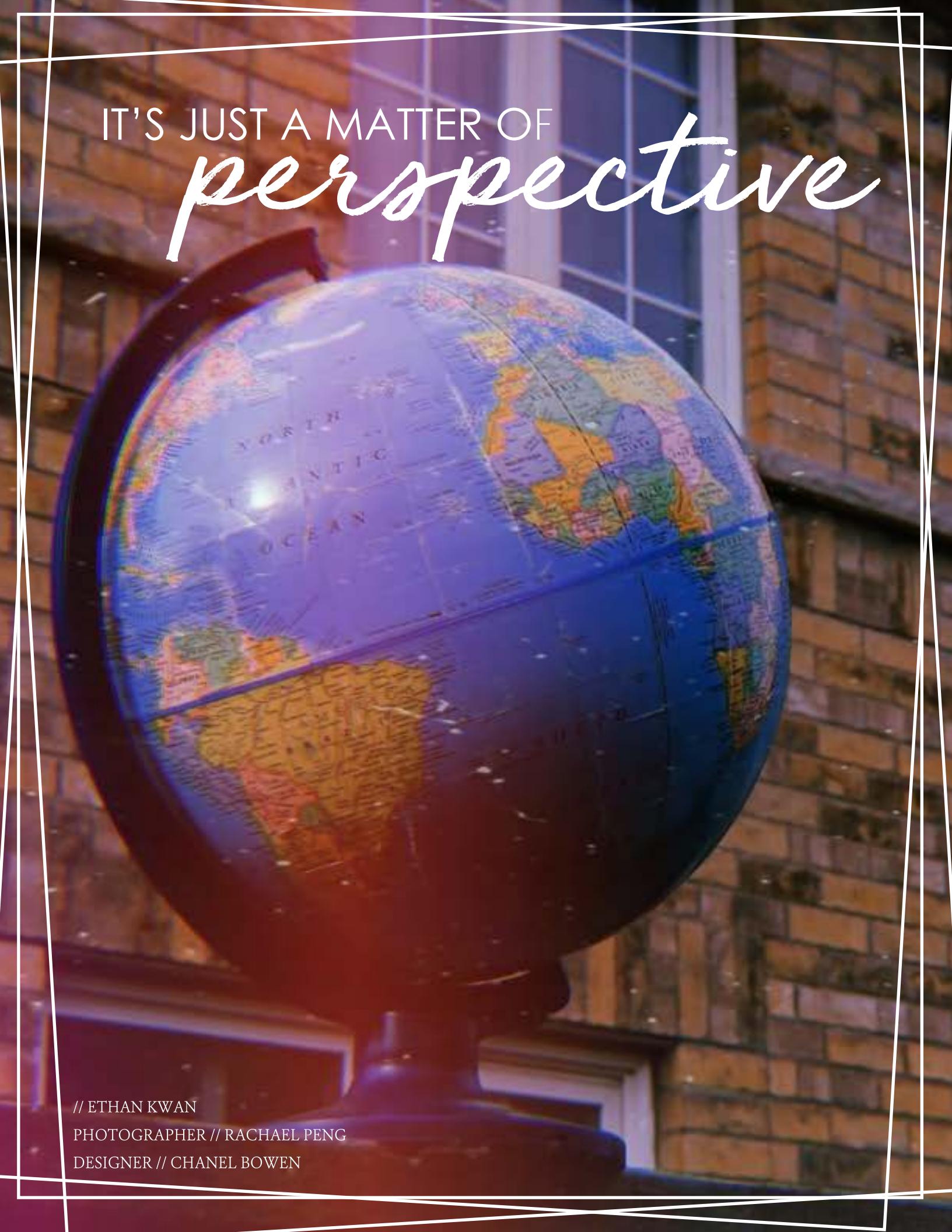
(14 - 27 points) You have - 2 Remaining Brain Cells

Your last two brain cells are perpetually dancing to "La Macarena - Just Dance 2015" on double speed, but at least they're still there, you know? Collectively, they are quite the circus act, somersaulting in your brain while you are trying to recall the trigonometric identity required to solve a thinking question out of five marks. Although extremely useless at the best of times, they are the only things stopping you from saying, "You too" after the waiter tells you to enjoy your meal.

(28 - 40 points) You have - *Multiple, Functioning* Brain Cells

You, my friend, are one of the few, true intellectuals. This elite species resides at the very top of the alleged high school food chain due to their possession of multiple, functioning brain cells. Instead of feeding on cafeteria cookies and blue juice, this top 0.1% feeds on the shortcomings of the weak. While others are suffering from the unforgiving Canadian weather, you are already wearing winter gloves and thanking your superior intuition.

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF
perspective



// ETHAN KWAN

PHOTOGRAPHER // RACHAEL PENG

DESIGNER // CHANEL BOWEN

"We are insignificant and ultimately, nothing that we do matters," I say into the mic.

The crowd boos. I begin to walk off in shame, when a voice speaks and commands silence from the room. "He's right," they say. I look for the owner of the voice. There, in the third row, stands God himself.

I'm sure you've seen it in a screenshotted tumblr text post while scrolling through the recommended tab of your Instagram feed, or maybe it briefly crossed your mind at 2 AM while contemplating the meaning of life in the aftermath of finishing up a big project - "Why did you work yourself ragged for an assignment you'll forget in a month?" "Why did you stress yourself silly over a test that won't matter in a year?"

Time is arbitrary, but spare a second, a minute, an hour right now and stop, stop as if God has stood up in the third row and silenced the room. Stop and realize the absurdity of it all. Our planet is but a hydrogen atom in an ocean of nothing, a single page in an infinite library of paper-bound worlds. We're so small that no amount of adjectives can even come close to describing how small we are.

We are goldfish swimming around in the universe's 180-gallon aquarium while ascended beings watch us and drop fish flakes in the tank every so often. We are the apple moving in CVPM, exacting a force of 5 N on the hand in your physics homework while another one just like us hangs from our bottom. We are a slowly spinning globe, 53 cm in diameter, strung from the ceiling in someone's bedroom, untouched yet in perpetual motion.

See the dot on this 'i'? Great, tag yourself, that's us.

But enough with the analogies. Our true reality is one of unrelenting insignificance, and although we often convince ourselves that the things we do in our daily lives matter, how can they? When we're living on a hunk of space

rock, literally drifting through the void with no direction, waiting for the universe's heat death, how can we care so much about our marks? About what we do in life?

How can anything matter at all?

Despite our deepest, most profound after-midnight ruminations, I'm willing to bet that neither you nor I know the answers to these questions, and we continue to hit the grind just because that's what we, as a society, do.

Cool. Now that we've come to terms with the realization that nothing matters in the long run, what doom does it spell out for us? Should we just stop caring, sate our innermost desires, overthrow the hierarchy and become agents of entropy? After all, if Queen's lyrics "nothing really matters" ring true, then Earth will continue to float around in space and we'll all still perish in about five billion years, regardless of what we do or accomplish.

That's definitely one way to look at it, and with this standpoint, it's perfectly valid. However, there's another approach you can take, and it's objectively better.

We deal with stress on the daily, that much is obvious, but whether it's feeling harried as you sprint to school late or getting psyched out five minutes before your English presentation, keep this in mind: when you're sitting in your rocking chair fifty years from now, surrounded by your 12 cats (or dogs, or children, really, anything goes), you won't be measuring yourself by your success. You won't remember the time you stood up and people booed you for it. Forget what anyone else thinks - that doesn't matter.

Don't be scared of the fact that nothing matters, take solace in it.

Now go out there and live your best life.

I really
like this
course

(and other lies to tell)
yourself

You check the calendar on your phone. You've been overworking yourself for over two weeks straight now. Yet, those nasty assignments and upcoming tests won't loosen their grip on you anytime soon. Like a dog chained to a fence post, you can't escape, and all you can do is sit there, sulking in your misery.

But you're an expert in this field; you've been through this situation countless times. You are deeply familiar with these feelings of melancholy and desperation. When other people say they've experienced the five stages of grief, you politely correct them and proudly say you've experienced all fifty of them. You glance around, searching for something to distract yourself from your troubles for even the slightest second. Your math textbook catches your eye and for the moment, you feel superior to its authors for making so many mistakes in the answer key. That helped a lot. And suddenly, the most alluring question comes to your mind: "do chimpanzees imitate us humans as often as we imitate them?" To fuel your curiosity, you read the most credible paper that you can find (because Heaven forbid you read a work written by a sham scholar), and you rejoice in the fact you now have one more conversation starter in your already comprehensive arsenal.

The pursuit of knowledge sure is tiring. In your exhaustion-induced delirium, you convince yourself that once you look past the tedious, no, iterative practice, the course is really not that bad. It's amazing actually, because you get to apply learned concepts to real life situations. Maybe this isn't completely true, but you need to take advantage of any confidence boost you can get to make it through the week. You also might convince yourself of things like, "I'll feel much better by tomorrow," "I enjoy the challenge," and "I'm almost finished." This is no longer a matter of truth; this is a matter of survival.

If this sounds like you, you're in luck. After speaking to multiple self-proclaimed health professionals, they claim that there is an easy home remedy to work-related insanity amongst students. They said something about "inhaling an amethyst crystal doused in essential oils" and wearing "face masks made with mud from the Dead Sea" to "rinse out the toxins." I was personally thinking solutions like "taking a break every so often" and "creating a feasible schedule" would be much more effective, but then again, I'm not an expert in either crystal-infused aromatherapy nor aquatically-enhanced cosmetology so I'll give them the benefit of the doubt.

On the off chance you're one of those unfortunate souls whose mini crises impact you around the clock over the course of the whole year, you have to work extra hard at finding what can distract you from your sorrows. Maybe it's performing an in-depth philosophical analysis of your entire Calvin and Hobbes collection. Maybe it's memorizing an entire dictionary of a language you don't know to win a foreign Scrabble tournament. Maybe it's reading up on the latest updates of illegal Lego building techniques. I have no idea what you're into, but I hope you find whatever it is that helps and isn't harmful. As a wise psychologist (oxymoron unintended) once said, "if it ain't bad, it real good," words that I revere to this day.

With a little bit of willpower and mental elbow grease, you would be surprised at the changes you can make to your life. It never hurts to take small steps at first and work your way up from there. But I guess the moral of the story is, if there's anybody you should be dishonest towards, it should be yourself. I wish you the best in your future endeavors.

Joy to the World

We all know and love the holiday season. School's out for two weeks, a beautiful array of multicoloured lights line the houses on the street, and we get together to celebrate with food and good cheer. It's a truly joyous occasion, but like anything, there's no universal way to do it.

North America

Beginning here, the most obvious and prominent holiday towards the end of December is Christmas. For those practicing Christianity, Christmas Eve is a night for church-goers to rejoice in the birth of Jesus. In Mexico, Posadas is celebrated from the 14th to the 26th, where hoards go from house to house and reenact Mary and Joseph's search for a place to stay. Commonly, we can see a beautifully decorated tree lit up in a living room, heaped with piles of presents that children scramble to open the morning of the 25th. However, shopping outlets fill to the brim with gift givers—part-timers working in retail: don't get trampled!

Europe

Like us, many European countries have Christmas determined as a national holiday. One of the more unique, however, would be Yule, celebrated on the winter solstice mainly in modern Germanic-speaking areas and Northern Europe, including Sweden, Denmark and Norway. In fact, many so-called "Christmas traditions" are believed to stem from this Pagan holiday. Several common examples of traditions integrated into mainstream culture include a tree adorned with natural ornaments (intended to honour the gods, of course), burning logs in the fireplace to cozy up the living space (believed to banish evil spirits), and decorated homes with holly (representing hope and potency), mistletoe (the symbol of fertility), and wreaths (symbolic of infinite joy).

Africa

Split into dozens of smaller countries and further into individual cultures, there are endless festivities throughout the year. January marks the important Feast of Epiphany (Timket), one of the holiest days in the Ethiopian Orthodox community. The 18th is alight with dancing and traditional wear, while ceremonies and processions happen on the 19th. Christmas throughout Africa is also celebrated: meats are roasted, carols are sung, and families get together for the holiday. In Malawi, children go door-to-door to perform dances and Christmas songs, earning a small gift in return.

South America

Originating in the African-American community mainly in the USA, Kwanzaa is growing in Brazil due to the country's significant amount of people with African heritage, connecting them to their roots. From the 26th of December to the new year, houses are decorated with traditional art, cloth, fruits and vegetables, and people dress in special clothing. The celebration focuses on seven core principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. These, we can learn from.

Asia

As the birthplace of many globally widespread cultures, the continent of Asia houses a number of different celebrations for the winter season. One of such is Bohdi Day on the 8th of December, when Buddhists across the south-east commemorate Buddha's enlightenment. Buddhists spend the day meditating and studying Buddha's teachings, celebrating with tea and cake, and hanging lights in their homes to symbolize their pathway towards the future. Another holiday is, of course, Hanukkah, an eight-day Jewish holiday that celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. For communities all over the world, some traditional rituals include lighting the nine candles of the Menorah, singing songs, reciting Psalms, and (especially in North America and Israel) exchanging gifts.

Australia

Summer is beginning in Australia. Students are on their summer break with the coming of Christmas, celebrated just as any other European-colonized nation in the world. Carols by Candlelight is a popular service in each of their State's capital city, often broadcasted on TV across the country. On a darker note, Australia's national day also falls on the 26th of January, but we must remember that it is also considered Invasion Day to the country's indigenous population, who are more oppressed than ever. Christmas is not their tradition, neither is Hanukkah, and they're followed by the birth of a country at the cost of their culture. Do not forget them.

THE POWER OF *Language*

Not everyone gets to meet their idol, which is why I consider myself lucky. The star I'm talking about is not a Hollywood celebrity, but a local hero from our very own city of Toronto: John Steckley. This world-renowned linguist is the leading expert on the Wendat language and has lead many conservation efforts for Canada's indigenous languages. Working closely with the city of Toronto, he has helped to add bilingual street signs to some of Toronto's best known streets such as Spadina Road, which is called Ishpadinää in Anishinaabe, a word that means "a place on a hill". I've attended one of his presentations, in which he mentioned the origin of the word Toronto itself; it's Mohawk for "place where there are trees in the water".

Skeptics who don't see the importance of the field of linguistics may doubt how preserving endangered languages does any good. What they don't realize is how important it is to cultures all around the world. In September, a fire ravaged Brazil's national museum, taking out the entire linguistics section. This section held the only records of the languages of many Amazon tribes, which will now never be heard again. José Urutau Guajajara, a spokesperson for indigenous rights in Brazil who had been researching at the museum, said that the monumental loss was like seeing the European conquest happening all over again. "This is like a new genocide, as though they had slaughtered all these indigenous communities again," he stated.

Language is inextricably linked with our cultural identity. For many, every word spoken in their native language is a powerful act of resistance against colonialism. This is an important factor to consider if we want to change education worldwide to be more culturally inclusive. In a 1919 essay, the Centre of Indian Culture by Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, it is argued that using a foreign education system could never address the needs of the local inhabitants of a country. He went on to say that it was wrong for all higher education in India to be in English, and for textbooks to always be printed in English and never in India's vernacular tongues. It's something that's still relevant to us when we look at the British patterned education system in Canada. To some, it may still seem too rigid and strict, even with all the changes that have been made to it. This raises the question of whether our education is really intended to help us learn, or if it's only meant to teach us to follow orders and obey colonial-like authority.

Language is not just important for education and decolonization, it is a tool for change. Our voice is the best weapon we have against injustice. Unfortunately, many fail to see why protecting linguistic diversity is important. Though it is true that the world seems to be moving in a direction of linguistic homogeneity, this movement, which is meant to unite us, is actually tearing us apart. If people in a foreign country learned English they would be able to understand you and follow your instructions, but you could never expect to reach their heart without speaking to them in their mother tongue. You would never be able to inspire them to fight for a cause. Anyone who truly cares about making a difference should put mastering the art of language as one of their top priorities.

// FREYA ABBAS
PHOTOGRAPHY // RACHAEL PENG
DESIGNER // ELINA NIE

how to give relationship advice

when you're single

Relationships are “heavy” friendships.

Romantic relationships are a lot like friendships in some ways. You need trust, loyalty, and most importantly, you need to like the other person’s guts. In some cases, treating an issue between your friend & their partner as if it’s an issue between your friend and their friend is the best way to deal with it.

The good news is, I’m assuming you’ve all had friends at some point in your life. Congratulations! You’re already a friendship expert with plenty of transposable skills to resolve relationship drama.

Here’s an example: Your friend can’t go out with their S/O because they have another commitment. They’ve been blowing off their S/O for a while now, and there’s some visible tension between them. You need to step in before this escalates. Something similar had happened to you with one of your other friends before, and you resolved the issue with mediation. A little bit of distance and non-accusatory conversation devoured the tension in your situation. So why can’t your friend and their S/O try that? Hint: they can! Contrary to popular belief, not every argument between romantic couples has to end in a steamy makeout session.

Use works of fiction to your advantage.

Romantic comedies & dramas have tons of good life-advice if you know where to look. A lot of them feature innovative ideas that you can adapt and fix to suit your personal needs.

For example, In To All The Boys I’ve Loved Before, Lara Jean writes letters addressed to her hopeless crushes as a form of therapeutic relief, but never mails them. If your friend is crazy for their lab partner (who just so happens to be in a committed relationship), maybe writing a letter & turning their feelings into ink is the best way to deal with their crush. Burning that letter is optional but highly recommended.

Movie tactics should never be used in place of therapy. However, fiction is still one of life’s greatest teachers and just like math, fiction is a useful tool. Either way, solving your friend’s relationship problems is almost as easy (and addictive) as binge-watching movies on Netflix.

What did you do wrong?

Let’s face it: you’ve messed up before when it came to relationships, dating, etc. Your singleness may or may not be your own fault, but you’ve learned some valuable and possibly painful lessons from it all. Because you’ve been so unsuccessful in your endeavors, you know exactly where you went wrong and what not to do. Using all of this knowledge, you can prevent your friend from travelling the same dark path that you so fatefully voyaged. Sometimes, failure gives you the experience to ensure that history doesn’t repeat itself.

While your friends continue to sob about their struggles, you’ll be prepared to deal with it all. Knowing these witty tips, you’ll scrub emotional messes with movie wisdom and dish better advice than reddit columns. After all, in times of need, what are friends for?

THROUGH ANOTHER LENS.

A friendly neighbourhood review

The one acts is a Raiders' tradition. Each semester, the graduating drama class puts on a spectacle to entertain the masses. They make their presence very known by gradually annexing the cafeteria and adorning the halls with showy posters.

Whether you've demonstrated outstanding school spirit and supported your peers by attending or you've succumbed to "other commitments", I'm positive that you care very much about my extremely subjective and unprofessional opinion.

Will

Chairs. They are spaced apart like strangers in a bus stop, masterfully practicing the art of personal space. I can't help but wonder if an evening of one act plays has expanded its horizons into cabaret.

Sophia Wan emerges from the ether as an elderly woman. She limps into her seat stage right and six other actors follow sequentially. It soon becomes evident that they are all playing the same character at different points in her life. The stage is filled with vibrant dialogue: regrets, anecdotes, firsts, fights, lasts. The story of Sara pours out through seven editions of herself.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of Will is its immaculate casting. Unlike Disney Channel, every character is captured so believably that you are immersed in a parallel universe and forget that its walls are made of script. My only remaining question is: who is Will?

The Blizzard

I'll admit that I didn't fully get this one. Maybe it was designed for intellectual audience members who paid attention in English class? I will say that Zachary Silver and Isabel Borisov put up extremely compelling performances as psychos. I will remember to lock my doors at night.

The physicality of the actors in this play was exceptional. There wasn't an unventured corner of the stage or an unmotivated action. By the end, I was left deeply uneasy and in suspense. I am still waiting for the sequel.

Off The Map

Some penguins hunt while others haunt...the RHHS stage. Yes, no play is complete without a six-foot tall, dad-joke delivering penguin. As hilarious as this play was, it really puts the "disastrous" problems of our lives into perspective.

Scott has really hit a wall in his marriage. Luckily for him, he meets an amorous sea-bird who has a much spicier love life and is willing to spill his secrets. Watching the twenty minute transition



from bleakness to a heart-warming ending reminds us that even the worst of situations and lowest test marks are mere nicks in the enormous journey of life.

Arabian Nights

Arabia is known to be a land of bone dry deserts and nothingness. Ironically, this play's delivery was quite the opposite.

The story anthology of the same title is centered on intelligent people who outsmart for a living. The interpreter, or more accurately, the manipulator of this play makes the two other characters behave at his will. Whoever said that you can't force love has clearly never seen the eccentric Arabian Nights.

The chemistry between the actors was quite a few notches above even the best of titrations. This powerful trio reminded us that acting is a team event and that the magic just is.

The Customer is Always Wrong

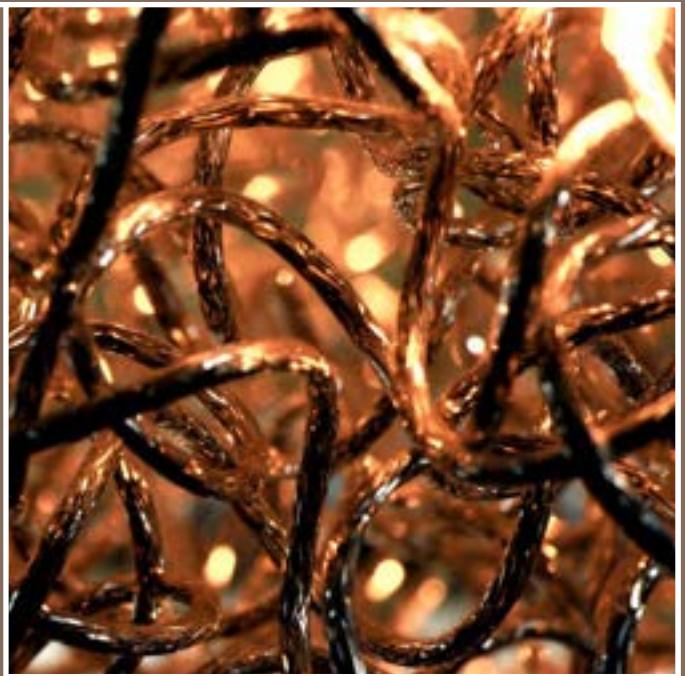
This one hits close to home where certain individuals feel the need to hear the cashier list all of Ten Ren's add ins four times despite the conspicuous sign mere inches in front of them. Yes Sandra, bubble tea is too hip for you.

The Customer is Always Wrong is a piece about discovering your hidden talents and interests as much as it's about difficult people. This play was almost as funny as yours truly. With sharp pacing and outrageous characters, these actors continue to redefine comedy.



// LLOYD FAN
PHOTOGRAPHY // MAHIUR RAHMAN
DESIGNER // DAMON LIU & ALLAN FANG

Cheap Thrills



// KATELYN WANG

PHOTOGRAPHER // MAHIUR RAHMAN

DESIGNER // CHANEL BOWEN

The music industry is fickle. One season an upbeat dance song like Uptown Funk is topping our charts, the next we are listening to the lackadaisical tunes of The Weeknd.

Lots of songs, of so many different styles and colours have taken the world by storm.

So what makes a song popular? Is there an underlying pattern connecting the dots?

Why, of course.

CHORD PROGRESSION

This is an obvious one. For example, the popular DJ duo The Chainsmokers love applying this strategy. To illustrate, "Closer" and "Something Just Like This" feature the exact same chords! Their secret formula is bVI - bVII - Im7 - bVII. Both songs feature this progression in F minor. They slip this in by making the chords very quiet in "Something Just Like This", so it's imperceptible to the unsuspecting listener. Outrageous!

Regardless, the fact that the music industry can extrapolate so many melodies from the same underlying structures is rather fascinating. The interesting part is we, as consumers and their audience, never get bored of it. So they continue churning out hit after hit, with no impetus towards change.

Other famous chord progressions include I – V -VI – IV, which is found in many different songs. For example, some verses of "Let it Be" by The Beatles, "Don't Stop Believing" by Journey, and "Hey Soul Sister" by Train were all developed using this chord progression. You can also find it in songs such as "Love Story" by Taylor Swift, or "Someone Like You" by Adele.

Artists like Zedd, reuse similar sound effects, instrumentals, and bass drops - see if you can hear the repeated motifs Zedd uses in "Stay" and "The Middle". Hint: tick-tock. They also generally follow the same structure - relatively unaccompanied vocals, quiet marimba-like backup in the bridge, and then strong electronic background in the peak of the chorus.

Another great example to highlight certain popular chords, are Christmas songs. In fact, two very famous Christmas songs, despite being produced more than 50 years apart, share a common chord. Take a look at Mariah Carey's, "All I want for Christmas Is You"- a fantastic song, I concur. She begins with a tonic major chord, followed by a major 7th chord, then a subdominant chord, and ended with a diminished 7th chord. In Irving Berlin's "White Christmas", we see almost the exact same progression, ending in that special diminished 7th chord!

In addition, Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas" intro sounds awfully familiar... perhaps you're thinking about "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" sung by Darlene Love in 1963- they both feature those lovely, upbeat triplets.

REPETITION REPETITION REPETITION
Humans like patterns. This one is yet another easy grab for music producers. Often, more repetition leads to catchier tunes. You are more likely to catch a song bug if it has basic

repeating parts which are easy to cycle and remember. Bam! You now have that song stuck in your head.

Interestingly, the pop music landscape has seen more repetition than ever before. For some songs, their repetition is apparent- in Beyoncé's "Halo" the title word is mentioned 67 times. For others, it's not that obvious, although repetition is still subtly applied.

Colin Morris of the Pudding wrote an excellent article analyzing a bunch of songs for their repetitiveness. He applied the Lempel-Ziv algorithm, a data compression algorithm to evaluate how much song lyrics can be reduced. Something interesting to note is that Taylor Swift's album 1989, which marked her complete transition to pop music, contained 5 of the most repetitive songs of her career. Moreover, there has been a general increase of repetitiveness in today's pop music, which has been increasing by the decade since the 60's. Not only is this disappointing for consumers paying for music (I mean, shouldn't we at least be paying for originality?), but this also speaks to the decreased creativity we face in our generation.

SEX, MONEY AND DRUGS

Not surprisingly, many of the top songs these days centre around some key topical pillars. Although you may not know it, many of your favourite songs contain innuendos or references you miss due to the catchy melody. For instance, "Chocolate" by The 1975, seemingly features adolescent teens making mischief and having fun. But in fact, Chocolate is a euphemism for marijuana, which they hide in their car and explains why they're running from the police. Further examples are Lady Gaga's "Poker Face", Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and Journey's "Don't Stop Believing", which all contain sexual references.

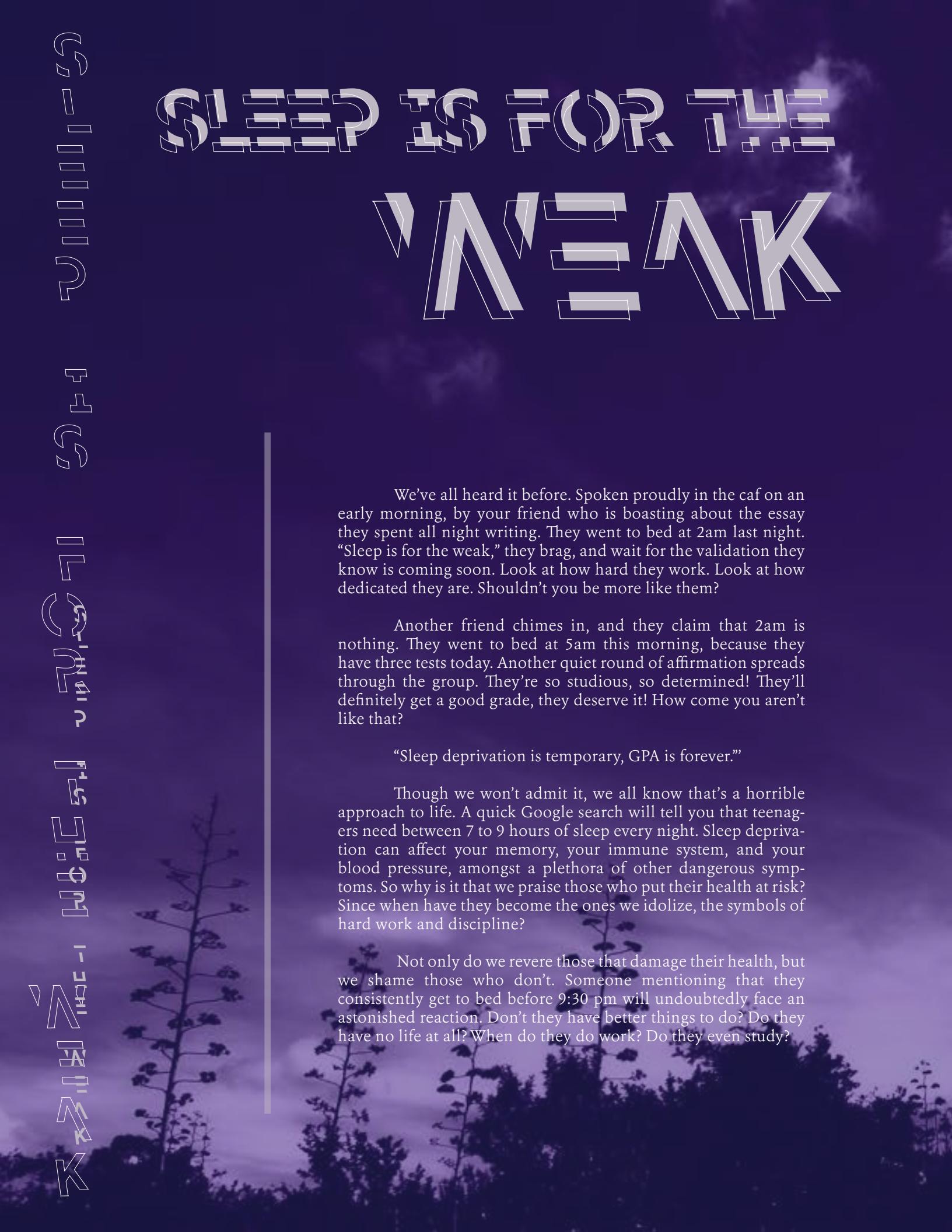
Moreover, rap lyrics feature the greatest number of double entendres and hidden meanings. Nicki Minaj is known to show off her wit and command of language with cleverly written lyrics. For instance, there is a number of innuendos in "Side to Side", "Bang Bang" and "Super Bass", to name a few of the many.

In fact, it's difficult to find a rap section of any top song which doesn't contain references to these sort of vices. Honestly, just think of any popular rap piece, and there's almost always content related to sex, money or drugs.

Ultimately, what does this mean for us consumers? Actually, very little. Despite these similarities among pop songs, there's a reason they're considered pop songs: they're popular, meaning they sound good- to the majority of the public, at least. So, unless you're one of those strictly indie music listeners (which is completely cool), you're probably going to continue enjoying such radio tunes. It's just interesting to recognize the work (or lack thereof) behind the music.

Simply put-

Stay woke, folks.



SLEEP IS FOR THE WEAK

We've all heard it before. Spoken proudly in the caf on an early morning, by your friend who is boasting about the essay they spent all night writing. They went to bed at 2am last night. "Sleep is for the weak," they brag, and wait for the validation they know is coming soon. Look at how hard they work. Look at how dedicated they are. Shouldn't you be more like them?

Another friend chimes in, and they claim that 2am is nothing. They went to bed at 5am this morning, because they have three tests today. Another quiet round of affirmation spreads through the group. They're so studious, so determined! They'll definitely get a good grade, they deserve it! How come you aren't like that?

"Sleep deprivation is temporary, GPA is forever."

Though we won't admit it, we all know that's a horrible approach to life. A quick Google search will tell you that teenagers need between 7 to 9 hours of sleep every night. Sleep deprivation can affect your memory, your immune system, and your blood pressure, amongst a plethora of other dangerous symptoms. So why is it that we praise those who put their health at risk? Since when have they become the ones we idolize, the symbols of hard work and discipline?

Not only do we revere those that damage their health, but we shame those who don't. Someone mentioning that they consistently get to bed before 9:30 pm will undoubtedly face an astonished reaction. Don't they have better things to do? Do they have no life at all? When do they do work? Do they even study?

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"I'm so sleep deprived, I don't even feel tired anymore."

The culture of sleep deprivation that has swallowed high school students does nothing but harm us. We all know the feeling of waking up in the morning, eyelids heavy, limbs sore. It's never a feeling we greet with joy. Yet we act as if it isn't a direct consequence of our actions. We leave things to the last minute, we survive on large coffees and energy drinks, and we work so late that we fall asleep at our desks. We deal with headaches and achy shoulders, suffering quietly. We wear under-eye bags like badges of honour, but deep down we regret not having started our work earlier, or watching that one YouTube video that could have been replaced by an extra ten minutes of sleep.

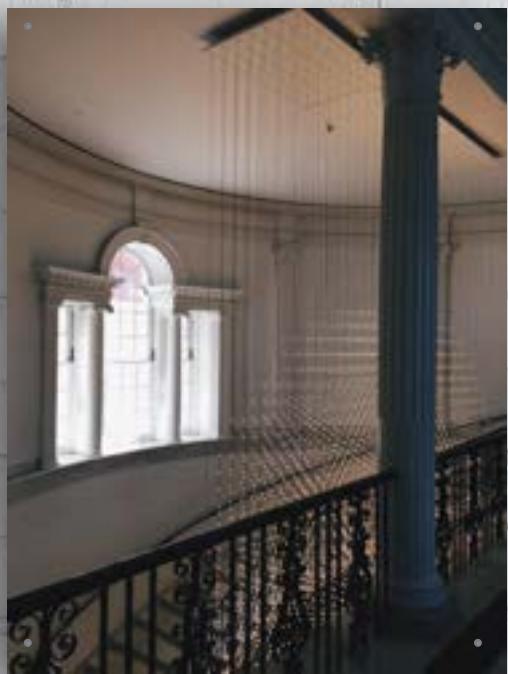
The all-nighter life only seems cool when you hear about it from a "diligent, persevering" pal, and hear the commendation your friends give them the next morning. Realistically, the best way to prove how hardworking and disciplined we are to our peers is by having a strong work ethic, a good and balanced diet, and healthy sleep hygiene. But will we really put in the effort that it takes to do that? Probably not.

Our stubborn refusal to change our ways is the only thing that continues to perpetuate our behaviour. We can set goals and write new year's resolutions on sticky notes posted next to our beds, but as long as we keep hearing about it, we'll fall back to the same circle of doubt and fear that lead us to such harmful behavior in the first place.

"It's fine, I can sleep when I'm dead."

It's not fine, and it's not heroic. This semester, be nicer to yourself and those around you. Sleep isn't for the weak. It's for those who know their boundaries, who understand their health. It's for those who are able to see what is good for them and admit when their actions are unhealthy. Sleep, rest, and self-respect are for the strong. Don't let anyone try to convince you otherwise.

// MICHELLE SKIDELSKY
DESIGNER // IRIS XIE
PHOTOGRAPH // MASAI MARA



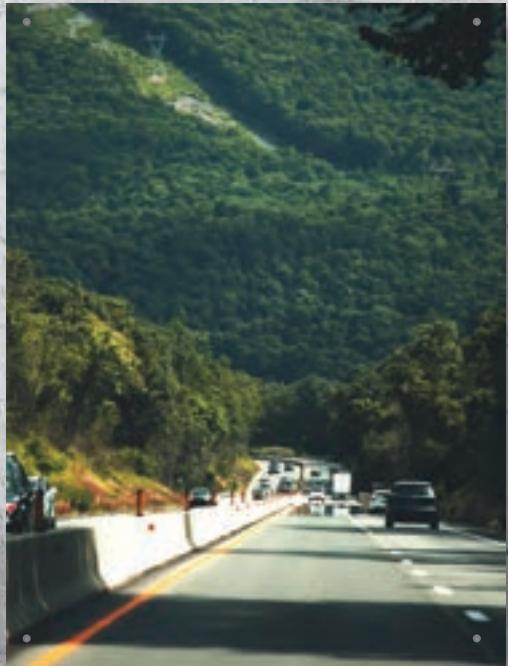
“Corinthian”
Idin Fakhrjahani



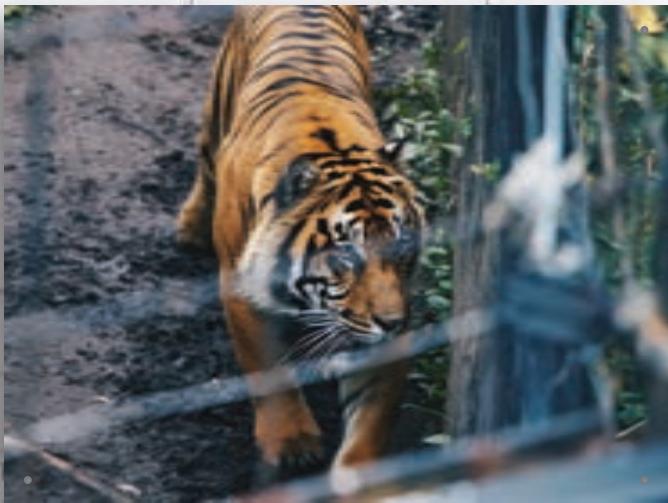
“A Window”
Ella Xu



“Good Otherword”
Iris Xie



“On my way”
Mahiur Rahman



“Tigress”
Idin Fakhrjahani



“Wilt”
Reina Dingman



“Suspended”
Ella Xu

PHOTO SHOWCASE



THE RHHS CRYSTAL BALL

You plod down the empty street, icy wind clawing at your face. A solitary candle, flickering in a window rimmed with frost, draws you near with the promise of warm refuge. You slink towards the doorway and raise your hand to knock against the gnarled oak door, before discerning an elegant inscription behind your frigid knuckles.

It reads:

FORTUNE TELLER

♈ ARIES | MAR 21 - APR 20

Your path is a dangerous one, but it will lead you to glory.

Fear not the physical obstacles, but rather the moral temptations. Greed and selfishness will beckon you from the dark underbrush, coercing you to abandon morality in favour of glory.

Beware! Ethical depravity will cost you everything.

Let your success blossom naturally, in the light of virtue.

♉ TAURUS | APR 21 - MAY 20

You are afraid that I will show you the truth.

Trapped inside your imagination, you cringe away from imperfection. You prefer Polaroid pictures to mirrors, masking insecurity with laughter, loneliness with shadows.

Shatter the picture frame, and breathe in the fresh air of reality.

♊ GEMINI | MAY 21 - JUN 20

In you, I see an infinity of futures.

They shift in and out of focus even as you sit there, taciturn, covering your indecision with a front of calm. No, don't strain to control it: embrace transience.

Pursue your interests as they come and go, for life is too short to stand and wait for inspiration.

♋ CANCER | JUN 21 - JUL 20

You are a coin, balanced between success and failure. Regrets mitigate accomplishments, the burn of mistakes never quite soothed, but pride embellishes disappointments, for you have always given your all.

This year will either plunge you into despair, or lift you on currents of revelry, but no matter the outcome, you will face it with unexpected courage.

Let's flip for your fate, shall we?

LEO | JUL 21 - AUG 20

Do not trust the voices who spit venom in the dark, even if they speak honeyed words by day.

There are many who will use you, enslave you through fear, or wipe you clean for their own construction. Covering the rotten relationship with sweet fragrances will not heal it.

Make the cut.

VIRGO | AUG 21 - SEP 20

Dissatisfaction is etched in your every feature, even in your smile.

There is a compass within you, guiding your thoughts, but every day you ignore it. The needle threatens to pierce your skin, and still you feign satisfaction.

Go where your heart leads, for this half-life is not worth protecting.

LIBRA | SEP 21 - OCT 20

Thousands of years ago, the stars were laid bare for us to admire, their arcane secrets carried in the caress of the cool twilight breeze. Our hearts were tied to the planets with gossamer strings of faith, and when they shifted, we followed. One by one, however, we burrowed away from ancient mysteries and wonder became an obsolete currency.

Look up, and perhaps you will see infinity.

SCORPIO | OCT 21 - NOV 20

Ghosts follow you with hollow eyes, their icy grasp leaving you dazed and shivering. These phantoms, bred from your regrets, do not belong in this world, nor in your mind. I can see the mistakes you have made, the people you have pushed away, and the pain you have caused. I also see that you have undergone more than your due punishment.

It is time you dispel the spectres permanently, through self-forgiveness.

SAGITTARIUS | NOV 21 - DEC 20

Your heart is decorated with the scars of betrayals and broken promises, but your enemies are not solely responsible. Optimism leaves your heart exposed as it rushes blindly towards any glimmer of affection, and leaves you surprised when it is cut down once more. You are no longer a defenceless child, naïveté excusing you from all reproach.

Do not blame the glass for having sharp edges: next time, look before you step.

CAPRICORN | DEC 21 - JAN 20

With a steely gaze and a clenched jaw, you are as deeply embedded in your ways as a fossil trapped in sedimentary rock. You measure information with a ruler rusty from years of reuse, and toss to the curb ideas that fail to align with its warped edge.

Remove your goggles, fogged up with prejudice, and look upon the unknown without fear.

Only in the alien will you find the answers you seek.

AQUARIUS | JAN 21 - FEB 20

The warmth of the hearth envelops you in a gentle embrace, and the still, perfumed air weighs heavy on your eyelids. You have been running for so long, working until your fingers bleed and your mind runs in feverish circles, spiralling ever downwards.

But this is not where your story ends.

Close your eyes for a brief respite, and you will find the strength to carry on.

PISCES | FEB 21 - MAR 20

You still think I am a con, but I have something that will convince you.

It holds the weight of restless thoughts and sweet memories, its every page imbued with adoration.

You can call it a memento or a gift.

I call it the Spyglass.



TO THE ONLINE RESOURCES OF YRDSB

People say that the spirit of education lies in our thirst for knowledge. I'd say that this ghostly entity has wires for veins and a silicon brain. Yes, like the CIA, YRDSB lives in your computer and it has made a comfortable home there, complete with a hearty collection of scholarly furnishings.

Being a digital landlord, I have words for these cyber-tenants of mine. So to the electrons that make up the very fabric of the: get out your subatomic pens and paper. It's time to get schooled.

Teach Assist

You are the Doritos of online resources. Your addictiveness can only be compared to the chemical tang of MSG and god knows what else. You are so destructive; I open your app only to be crushed by the mass of free-falling marks and tumbling trendlines. Yet still, I cannot release myself from your chalkboard teeth.

You may look benign enough. Your friendly exterior and neutral colour scheme act as cheap veneers to the brutal truth. But if I look past my measly knowledge mark and the angering mistakes I shouldn't have made, you are a handsome resource.

You're easy to use. Even a technologically incompetent fool such as I can effortlessly navigate your deepest bowels. You're also objective. You provide concrete numbers without an ounce of judgement, and leave me to make the final verdict.

At the end of the day, you are what I make of you. One part anxiety and ten parts motivation bring me nine steps forward.

Career Cruising

RIP. You will be remembered for making a confusing course selection process slightly less confusing. While the idea of you is certainly attractive, you're not much more than a glorified form. You've coerced me into numerous surveys, consisting of hundreds of questions, and every year, you insist that taxidermy is my life's destiny. Perhaps I'm still too early in this journey to recognize your brilliance. It's likely that your passing was for the better and you're in a happier, careerier, place now.

Moodle

You are the darkness that devours bathrooms and lets Bloody Mary into this earthly realm. You make demons shudder and angels weep. You've regenerated about four thousand times; there are just that many versions of you. With that many opportunities to improve, you've got some serious explaining to do.

Your graphics are of an ancient century. At a glance, I'd speculate that you don't know the meaning of the word *aesthetic*. Google it. Hint: the Spyglass is consistently aesthetic and you are not. On top of that, you malfunction more than the ice cream machines at McDonald's. With such unreliability and poor ease of navigation, you are undoubtedly the worst resource on my list.

At the very least, there's no other way to go but up.

Like Jolly Rancher flavours, you are not created equal. Some of you are my babies and others are my banes. But as long as I remain beneath the summit of learnedness, fervently reaching for my OSSD, I shall need you (almost as much as you need my insightful comments).

With the exception of Career Cruising, I'll see you all very soon

Google Classroom

You are Moodle's successful twin. You serve the same purpose, but you're dinner and a show to Moodle's barren plate. From your attached assignments to Google Drive links that house every single handout of the course, versatility is your middle name.

Your elegance lies in your affiliation with the other Google apps. Every post is coupled with an email notification and every attachment is already a workable document. There's no hassle required to download a million PDFs and my storage is forever grateful.

They say that children are our future. But unlike children, Google Classroom actually makes your life easier. So maybe Google Classroom is our future?

Remind

Spyglass 2018: Reminder to finish the Remind portion of your Spyglass article. This is very urgent. Do not delay or forget. Text back to reply. To Remind: despite your nagging, I forgot.

Instagram-worthy

IF NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS DETERMINED INDIVIDUAL WORTH

7 AM.

BEEP BEEP BEEP.

The jarring whine of the alarm clock disrupts the few hours of sleep you managed to scavenge, but your first waking instinct is not to hit the snooze for ten more minutes. Instead, you reach blindly for the cellular device perched on the edge of the bedside table. As your fingers curl around its sleek frame, you peer ravenously at the dozens of notifications crowding the lock screen, all vying for your undivided attention.

The exhaustion in your body is suddenly replaced with a surge of energy when you see it: the rounded edge, the gradient of peach to pink to mauve, the white border that outlines a polaroid camera—Instagram.

The bright light from the screen is blinding, but you squint through it and begin to scroll down your feed. Like. Scroll. Like. Comment. Scroll. Repeat.

But the most important part of this incredibly convoluted routine is the activity log. How many likes did your latest selfie amass in twenty-four hours? Who replied to your comment forty seconds ago? Only the activity log can tell.

Swallowing the pungent taste of anticipation soured by dread, you skim through it with trembling hands. The pit in your stomach only deepens. Sweat gathers on your brow. All common symptoms of one realization that you confirm with a quick swipe to your profile.

Sure enough, you had not gained a single follower overnight. You've endured the same number for days, weeks, perhaps months, while your peers are effortlessly climbing the insurmountable mountain of social popularity.

When all you will ever amount to is 37 followers, less than that of a spam account, all the effort of staging the post of

your Starbucks latte in sepia tones surely went to waste.

10 AM.

The hideous stench of undisguised contempt pervades throughout the room as you step into period two chemistry, and the culprit is none other than the two digit number of your followers.

Many of your classmates don't bother to acknowledge your presence, others swivelling away and continuing idle conversation.

How long has it been since you've checked your follower count? The temptation to unlock your screen to just take one peek is nearly overwhelming, an addiction more compelling and shallow than religiously refreshing Teach Assist itself.

Besides, who needs academic accomplishments or learning skills, when your value is equivalent to the quantitative count of followers?

3 PM.

Fifth period, at last, and you finally succumb to the lure of opening the app. Eyes widening, your grip tightens as you gape at the miracle that has occurred.

37 had skyrocketed to a staggering 2260.

As soon as you see the exponential growth of your follower count, congratulatory compliments and flattery are strewn in your direction. You savor the adoring glances and the privilege of power coupled with instant fame, ignoring the undertones of insincerity and jealousy. What matters is that you have proven your worth.

After all, all you've ever wanted to be was Instagram-worthy.



// ADRIANNE TANG
DESIGNER // ELINA NIE

Naughty vs. Nice

When thinking of holiday icons, it's easy to see why figures of popular culture such as Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Santa Claus, and the legendary "All I Want For Christmas Is You" singer, skinny legend Mariah Carey come to mind. Though it's understandable to be found waltzing down the halls while blaring hit Christmas carols, there's a darker counterpart to our merry band that's faded quite considerably out of the public eye.

You may or may not have heard of the Christmas fantasy/horror film that was released in late 2015, *Krampus*. The film got a 65% according to Rotten Tomatoes, but the real legend behind Krampus brings up slightly more...*questionable* aspects of the otherwise mostly-cheerful holiday spirit.

Krampus, a horned, anthropomorphic companion of Saint Nicholas described as a goat-demon, was a key figure in Central European folklore. In contrast to his (obviously more popular) counterpart, Krampus punished bad children for misbehaving. His origin is unclear, and many anthropologists believe that stories about this furry but angry demon date back to pre-Christian eras. Originally, Krampus was a son of the Norse goddess Hel, but since the 17th century, it became a popular belief that Krampus and Saint Nicholas were essentially the "dynamic duo" of Christmas gift-giving- aside from the fact that only Saint Nick gave presents, of course. Unless you're willing to get coal or birch branches for misbehaving, I wouldn't technically count Krampus as a gift-giver.

However, not all stories of Krampus revolve around his partnership with Nicholas. In fact, there is a very prominent date for all of you Krampus cult members- December 5th, the day before the feast of Saint Nicholas, is celebrated as *Krampusnacht*, or "Krampus night". Krampus visits homes and businesses either on his own or with Saint Nick. Perhaps if you offer him some *schnapps*, which is a strong, distilled fruit brandy, he'll forgive you for your sins. If you don't have any on hand, just hope and pray that he accepts Schweppes ginger ale as a satisfactory replacement.

So the next time you think about writing your English essay without double spacing, ordering water with whipped cream at Starbucks, or pulling the fire alarm when there isn't a fire, remember- your teachers might forgive you, but somewhere out there, a hairy goat demon is waiting to swat you with a bunch of birch branches and feed on your misery.

Speaking from personal experience, don't try and call him a furry. You'll regret it.

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