

MEGA ZINE



Content Advisory: Dangerous Ideas & Bodies

Welcome to the first issue of the second volume of the cult favourite *NFGphoto Magazine!*

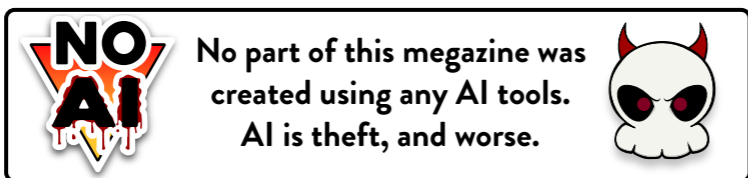
It's been a long time since the last issue came out, back in 2017. The first volume was painstakingly created with love, sweat and so many tears. This volume is more of a shotgun blast of random stuff.

Now the curious reader may be asking themselves *what, precisely the fuck, is the point* of this magazine?

There isn't one, sorry. Or rather, there is a point, or six, but they're sort of uninteresting. Suffice it to say your editor, old man NFG, had a creative itch.

I hope you find it worth reading.

-NFG



IN THIS ISSUE

Photos! Lots of pretty pictures. Not all of them taken by NFG. You may safely assume anything not labeled otherwise is a photo by NFG, except where that's incorrect.

Stories! From interesting people doing interesting things. Ol' NFG on his own tends to stick to three or seven topics, but this magazine brings together several wonderful voices, bringing you interesting things.

There are some **driving lessons** here too, and for some reason NFG talks about his logos.

You'll see at least one **QR code** - go ahead and scan it, we dare you!

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THEY USED TO PUT INTERESTING THINGS IN THE MARGINS? THOSE WERE THE DAYS.

Video Games! Apologies are hereby offered, because there are some games in here. I've tried to keep it to a minimum, but you know what they say: write what you know. Sadly NFG don't know a lot, so you get games.

There's a lot of talk about **AI**, because it's current and it's important and some of us, yeah we got stuff to say about it.

Do ya like **podcasts**? We got you, friend.

Maybe **bedtime stories** are your jam? You are so in luck.

Scroll on, traveller. The horizon is yours to discover, and if you need to take a break from the usual, or line a digital birdcage, this megazine is here for you.



Body: Jen

Cover Body: MJ

The history of the NFGphoto logo!

The first NFGphoto logo was a simple modification of the old NFGgames website logo, which was heavily influenced by a Japanese gaming mag called Arcadia.



I started using this logo in 2007, back when I was mostly shooting the Brisbane parkour scene on weekends. I didn't make the shift to full time photography until 2011.

In mid-2012 I came up with something new. I'd always liked logos that were sort of part of themselves, and this one was designed with that urge in mind. The G forms the N of NFG. I was pretty happy with this!



I drew a verbose variant too, which was used on a few posters.



For a brief moment I toyed with something more impactful. Ultimately I never used any of these more than a handful of times, if at all.



I really tried though! This went through a huge number of iterations. I even tried a maple leaf!

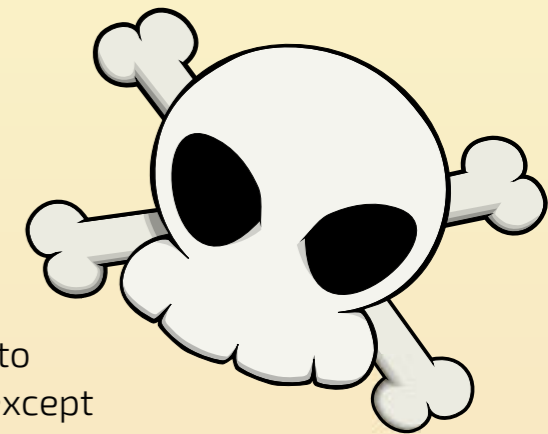
But it wasn't to be. I had to finally concede that it just didn't fit my vibe.



And then, Skully!

Skully burst into existence in his final form in one session. It took a few hours to get it all lined up right, and except for cleaning up some errant lines, he was perfect from the start.

After a while I edited his eyes to be happier. This was definitely my vibe now.

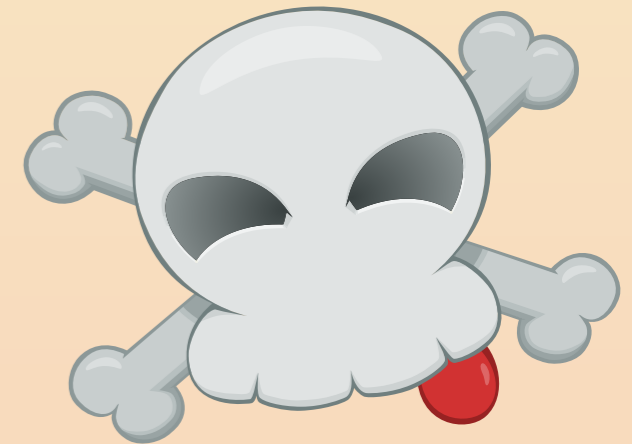


I loved it but had a small concern that maybe it wasn't quite a professional image. A designer friend had some feedback to offer:

"FUCK THE WORLD MY LOGO IS A FUCKING CUTE SKULL AND CROSSBONES AND WHY NOT THROW AN OCTOPUS IN THERE TOO"

Why not indeed.

(Thanks Jen!)



Meet JODIE!



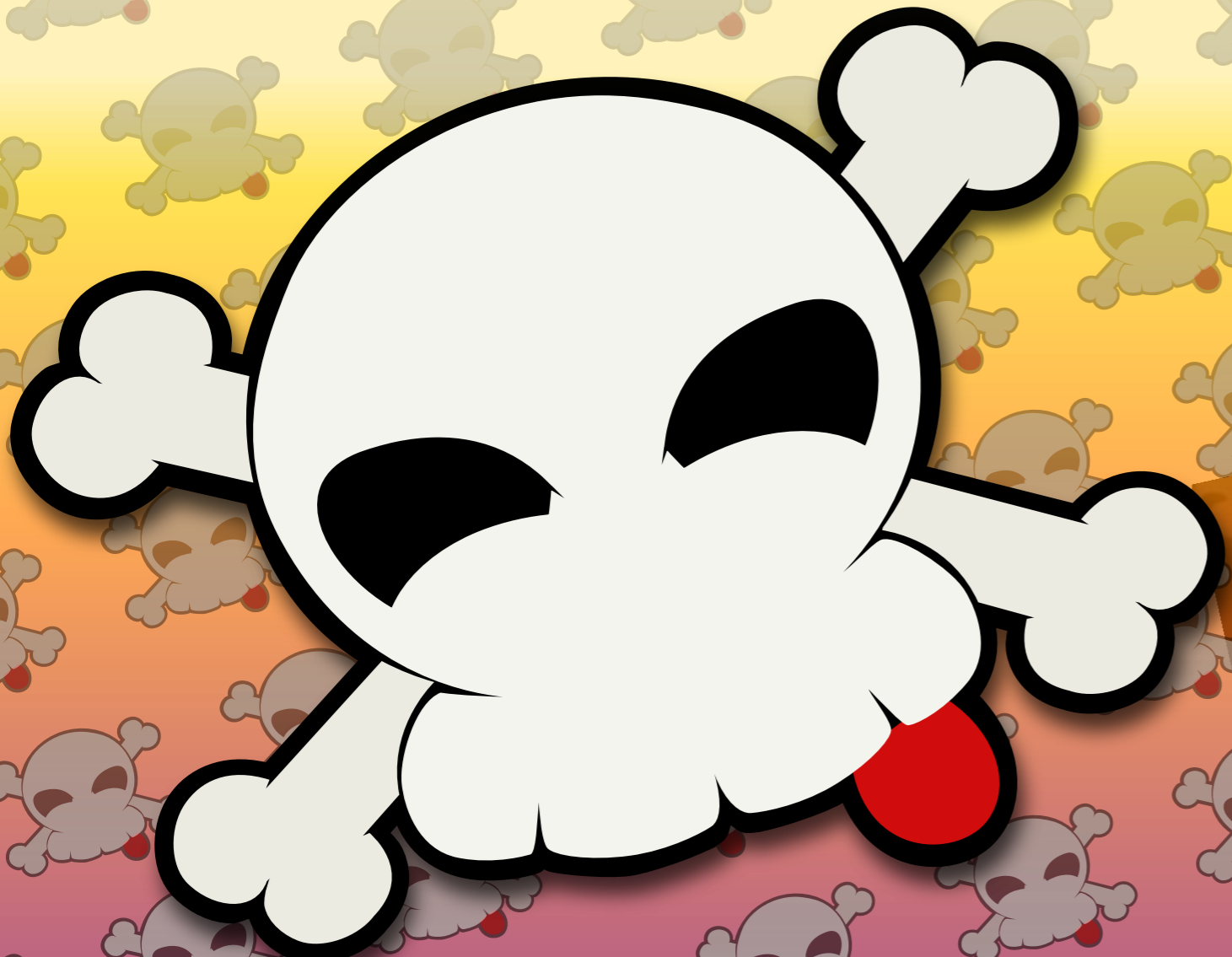
Jodie has an easy going attitude and a weird enthusiasm for my shenanigans. When I asked if she wanted to play with my sock, she didn't ask questions, she just showed up.



“The NFG studio is a safe place to express and empower yourself, any which way you desire.

Don't do a shoot with NFG unless you want to have a session full of banging music and an all round good time! You have been warned!”





hey kids!!



Skully Wallpapers



Spruce up your boring chats with hi-octane skull action! Choose from three sock-knockin-off designs and watch your friends turn an intense jealous green!

[Klicke hier!](#)

Or scan!





Body: Kacey



Body: Lauren



REMEMBER ARCADES?

Arcades were once the cutting edge, driving the progress of computers and graphics more than any other force. Back in the day wealthy companies sometimes placed an arcade cabinet in the staff room, but this was something only they could afford to do. The idea of an arcade cabinet in a home setting was, at that time, preposterous.

With the ever increasing power of game consoles and downsizing of the grip amusement centres had on peoples time, the commercial value of old arcade cabinets have been in a slow decline. In lock step with this trend is the devaluing of legacy arcade cabinets, along with the rise of cheaply available flatpack arcade cabinets and other arcade by-products and replicas. This means lower prices and more choices.

With the decline of large commercial arcades the privateer market has risen to supply and maintain the hardware in a home/garage/shed or workspace. The long legacy of older arcade cabinets is today very widely distributed.

Fans of this hobby, no matter the gaming interests, are now spoilt for choice, there is a viable avenue of choice for every room/space, intended genre and budget.

Japanese general-purpose cabinets and Australian-made machines are both easily found thanks to the efforts of dedicated fans and companies like Blue Spring Express. Despite a rise in prices after covid, the barrier for entry to arcade machine ownership is now the lowest it has ever been.

And if you're looking for something that's maybe

Atari Tempest, by Arcade1up



less authentic (and less work) the local electronics superstores like Harvey Norman and JB HI-FI have licensed cabinets from Arcade1UP.

For some, this smaller size and arcade aesthetic provides enough of a nostalgia trip, and it must be said that a handful of these machines lined up together looks mighty sweet. Arcade1UP cabinets can be purchased easily second hand, and they'll fit into even smaller vehicles for transport.

Casual fans and enthusiasts alike often view an arcade cabinet as a gaming bucket list of sorts, something they'll purchase when they have the space, buy a house, get a better paying job. But now, there's an option for just



about every space and budget.

So why not take a dive into this exciting hobby? You might be amazed at how arcade cabinet ownership can enhance your enjoyment of gaming, and bring a social aspect to your games you didn't know you missed.

Written by MD, edited and ruined by NFG!
MD runs cqbarcade.com, an Australian source for quality arcade controls. Check it out!





16!

Bodies: Ash & MJ



17!

Body: Ash

The promise of a dream

held for over a decade, finally becoming a reality, is exciting. Except when you have to leave everything behind.

Journal Entry

Wednesday June 26th, 2024
(5 days before departure)

Though this is scary, and I told Hope I'm terrified, it is exactly where I'm meant to be and what I'm meant to be doing. Which makes sense because the initial I'm doing this felt decided for me not by me. I'm trusting God's nudges.

Journal Entry

Saturday, June 29th, 2024
(2 days before departure)

When I focus on the realisation of not knowing when I'll see loved ones again, every organ under my skin disappears, and the emptiness is an echo-y hollow ache. I'm sleeping my last night in my room tonight, too (for the next few months), and it feels strange. Though I like the total minimalist vibes.

Let me share something interesting with you. Well, this whole adventure will be fascinating, so let me share my first interesting insight with you.

To those I said *see you later* on the first day: I cried as I drove away. Blurry-eyed again, every organ disappeared once more, leaving behind a hollow ache that drowned my whole body.

I should have realised that feeling would be amplified when I dropped my parents off at the airport a few days later. I drove away with the same heavy emptiness but with the added unease of not being able to see the road through my tears.

Because this would be the first time I lived alone, and I was doing it in a car.

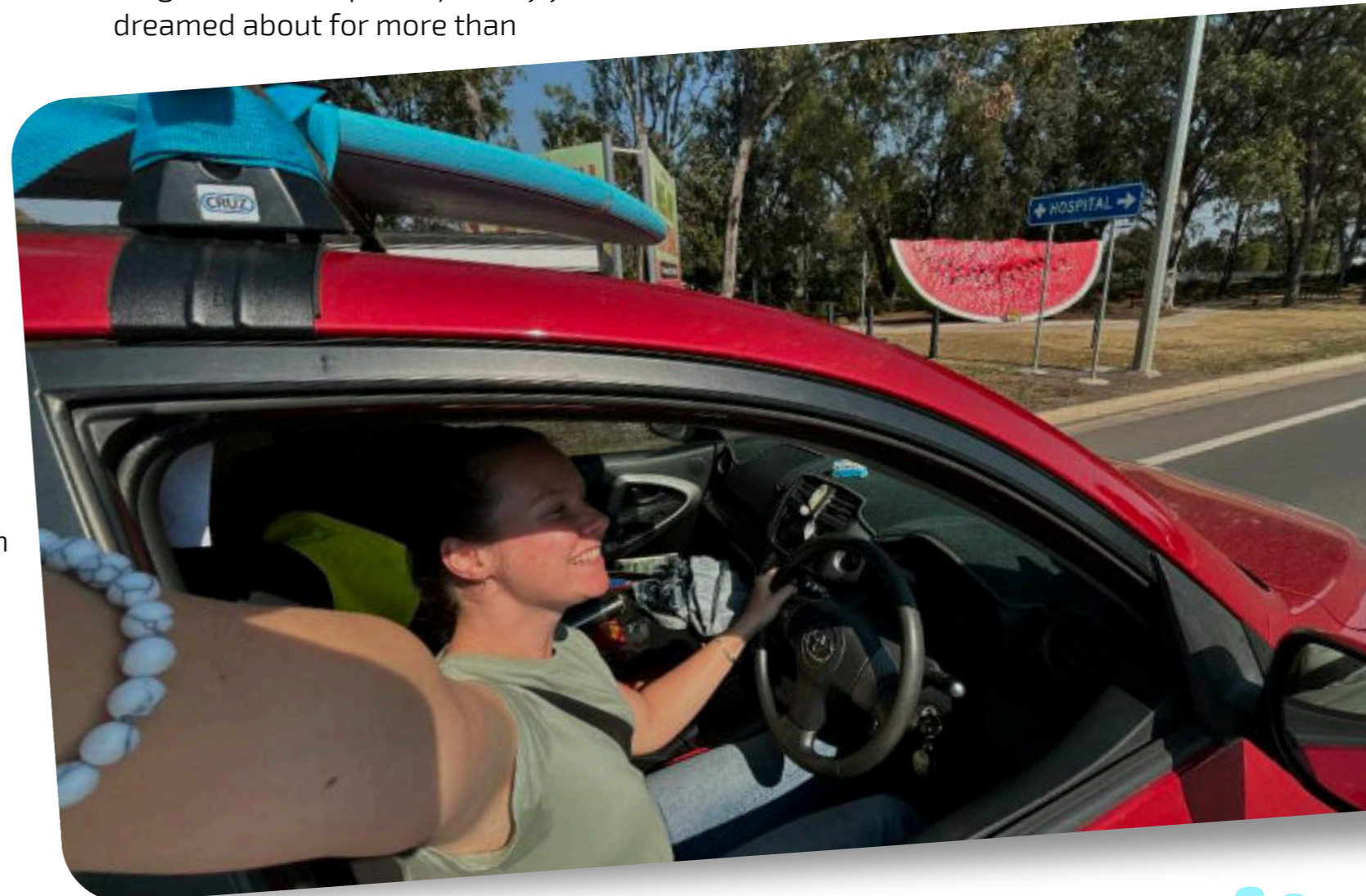
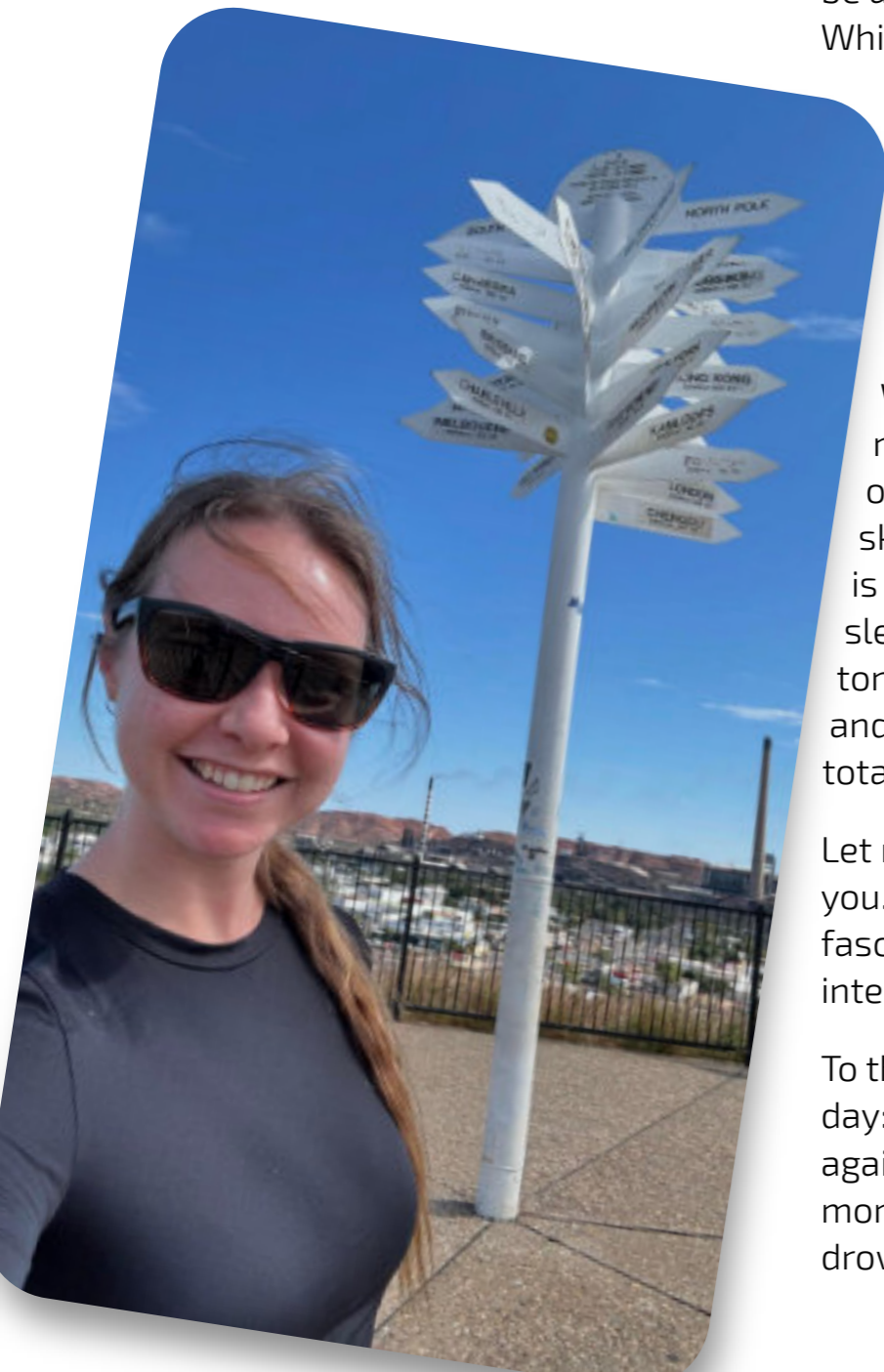
But, here's the funny thing: five minutes later... I was on cloud nine. I was singing along to my 'Roadtrip Playlist,' driving with the windows down and fully being present.

Now, the moment you take that first long-awaited step on a journey you've dreamed about for more than

a decade, that is a step into another plethora of emotions. Especially when you're met with a level of anxiety you've never experienced before.

Friday the 5th of July was my first completely solo day, which I began by watching 'Inside Out 2' at the cinemas. For those who haven't seen it yet, I'll wait...

Okay, so you know Riley gets some new emotions, and Anxiety is one of them. I look back now and think it was so fitting, if not divinely guided, that I watched that movie on day one because I learned Anxiety was something I could personify in myself and understand what its true





purpose was.

(Thank you, Pixar! I'm available for any job, internship, or chair in the musty, cobweb-covered corner of a writer's room you have on offer).

Journal Entry

Wednesday July 10th, 2024

(10 days in)

Friday through to Monday morning I got a lot of anxiety. Unfriendly thoughts going through my head and paralysing worry at night.

I would park in a place where I saw other vans and nomads. But instead of getting the car and myself prepped for sleep, I would sit and watch everyone and everything happening on the other side of the windscreen. I was actively looking for threats, cops to get me in trouble, and shadows that would open my car doors. For an hour every night, I would wait for something to happen.

And you know what... nothing did.

I cried almost every day, overwhelmed by the brimming emotions. And on the

days I didn't shed a tear, I had a physical, invisible weight slumped across my shoulders. Doubt constantly constricted my chest. Would this fear and uncertainty be how I would feel for the next four months?

I didn't want to continue if it would be.

Before I left, friends and curious strangers asked what I expected the experience to be like. I'd said, "I have no expectations. I'm not sure what it'll be like." And that was true.

But I was soon asking myself, is this really what I signed up for?

I also didn't want to go home and have to explain to everyone who expected me to be doing my Lap of Australia why I wasn't. Atop the cake made from layers of anxiety frosted with fear, I placed the people-pleasing cherry.

I couldn't change my plan! I couldn't do what I wanted! That's not how life works... right?

On Sunday, the cake was made, and I

wasn't sure I wanted to lie in it. Wait. I'm getting my metaphors crossed. Anywho, I spoke to two trusted friends, their advice was this:

It does get easier (give it a week).

My cousin Krystin said "I know you, and your heart. Maybe give yourself two weeks." I laughed because I had thought exactly the same thing only moments before.

It will be worth it & you'll enjoy it.

Just keep your mind busy. This turned out to be the best practical advice! And (future Imogen speaking here) all these feelings have definitely been worth it.

I expressed safety concerns and described sitting and worrying at night, to which my friend, Munae, said, "There is a fine line between scared and vigilant."

She never told me to be afraid; in fact, she assured me that the town I was in and would be passing through would likely be safer than where I grew up. That gave me another layer of encouragement.

(Future Imogen again. It was incredible how friendly all the towns I passed through were! People would always look you in the eye and smile. Some would

even say "Hi", and almost everyone was keen for a short chat. Returning home to the Gold Coast was a tremendously unwelcome shock after that wonderful experience!)

You will meet so many incredible people. And I did! That pivotal Sunday afternoon, I met Mackie and John, a married couple in their fifties, travelling in their van. I approached them sitting at a picnic table in the afternoon's promising glow and asked them if the car park we were in was a place we could stealth camp for the night. What I expected to be a one-minute conversation turned into an hour and a half!



(Road Trip Lesson #1: Never leave the car without your jumper. You think you'll be a minute, but you never know.)

John and Mackie told me about their kids, life on the road, struggles and secrets. God came up, and they prayed for me. Mackie gave me a book she said she'd read for the first time at 26 (and here I am at 27 reading it). Mackie also wanted to bless me with a small gift, as if their time, advice and books weren't

enough! She gave me a delicious-smelling bar of handmade soap she'd picked up on her travels. And ON TOP OF THAT, they asked if I wanted to follow them to the camp spot they would check out for the night.

do about my route.

That evening, parked not too far from Mackie and John, I called my parents. I spoke to Mum and Dad about the advice and encouragement from my friends

I had to stick to my word. I resisted the idea until Mum said these magic words...

"This is going to be the Spectacularly Imogen Lap, it's just a little wonky."

"...it's just a little wonky." That line got me. I was in. What a story! Aussie girl embarks on a wonky lap of her country, 'cos why not? I'm a type 4 enneagram, known as the Individualist. One of Type 4's defining characteristics is that we like to be different and seen as distinct from others, so when Mum said that, the resistance toward changing my mind released me. Doing whatever I wanted, that sounded like a fun plan.

Gasps! Shock! Horror! What about all the people back home expecting me to do a "Lap of Australia"? What will they think? I'm not sticking to my word, I always stick to my word. What madness is this?!

And so, I began a side quest: shrugging off the expectations of others (and secretly the expectations I didn't realise I placed on myself). For my well-being, I would become okay and comfortable doing something other than what I initially said or intended.

My parents helped me realise that I can do what I want, go where I want, and change my mind at any point in time.

I am in control of my decisions. And it's ironic, really, because I didn't truly feel like I was even allowed to go on this journey until I was no longer living with them.

This first week of my journey taught me to call on the people who have been through what you're experiencing, the people who know you better than anyone else, and those who are currently in the same phase of life because you'll get tremendous insight,



I said yes, and thank you, and God bless. This couple was right there when I needed a final hand of encouragement to keep going. I'd spent hours on the phone that afternoon with two friends who know me better than most, and though their words were encouraging and advice was sound, God must have known I needed a little more.

This was the first encounter of the road trip that made me feel that God was looking out for me and helped me realise that there are good people out there who are kind to strangers and support them where they can. I had received encouragement and assurance that the journey would get easier and that I wouldn't feel these feelings forever, but I still had to decide what to

and wonderful strangers. I told them my desire to change my plans and not do my Lap Around Australia shackled to the thought that I had to because I said I would. My parents gave me one last piece of advice:

Go to the places that bring you joy.

They reminded me how long I've been dreaming of doing this road trip and that I was only seven days in (four days on my own). They told me I could change my mind, my plans. But I couldn't do that. Could I?

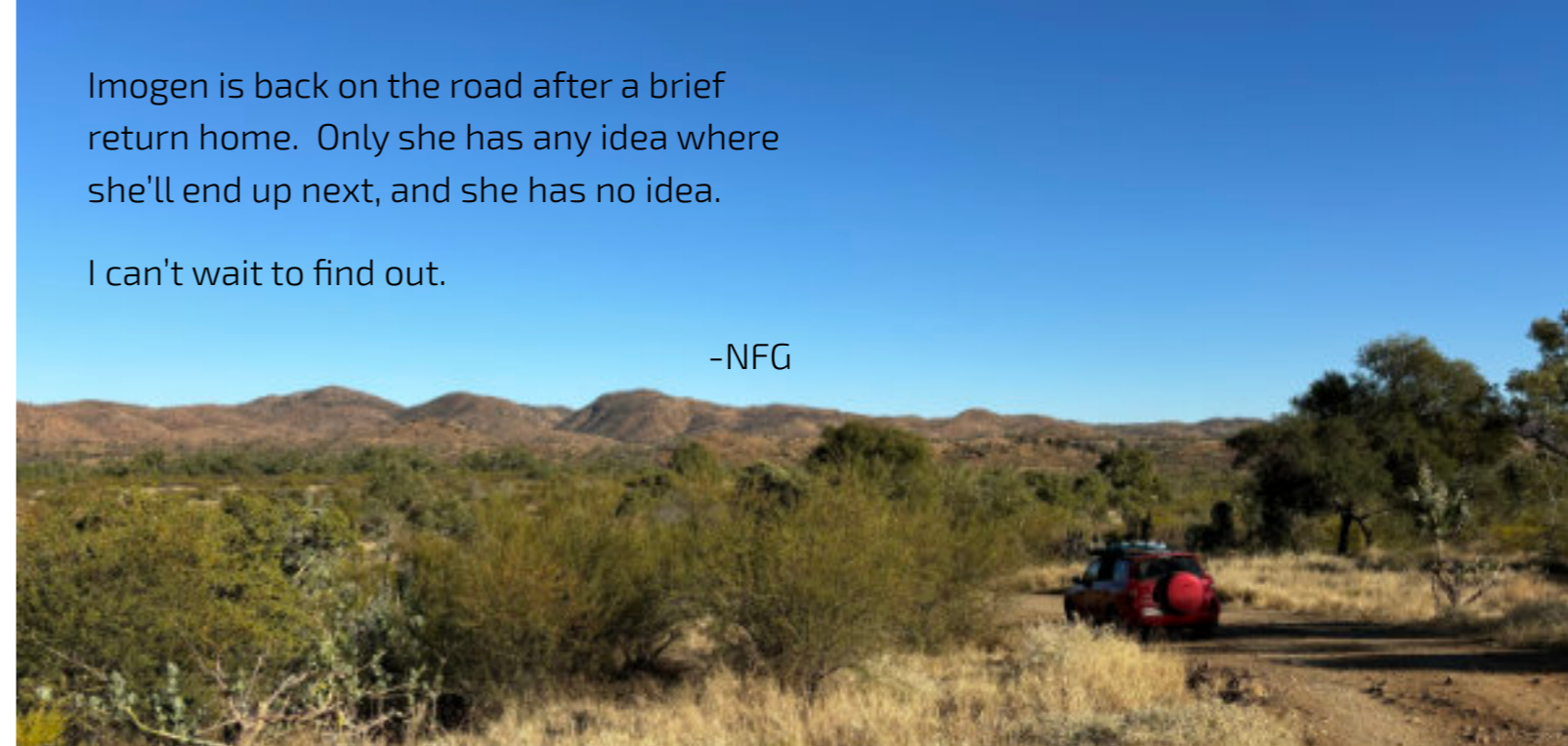
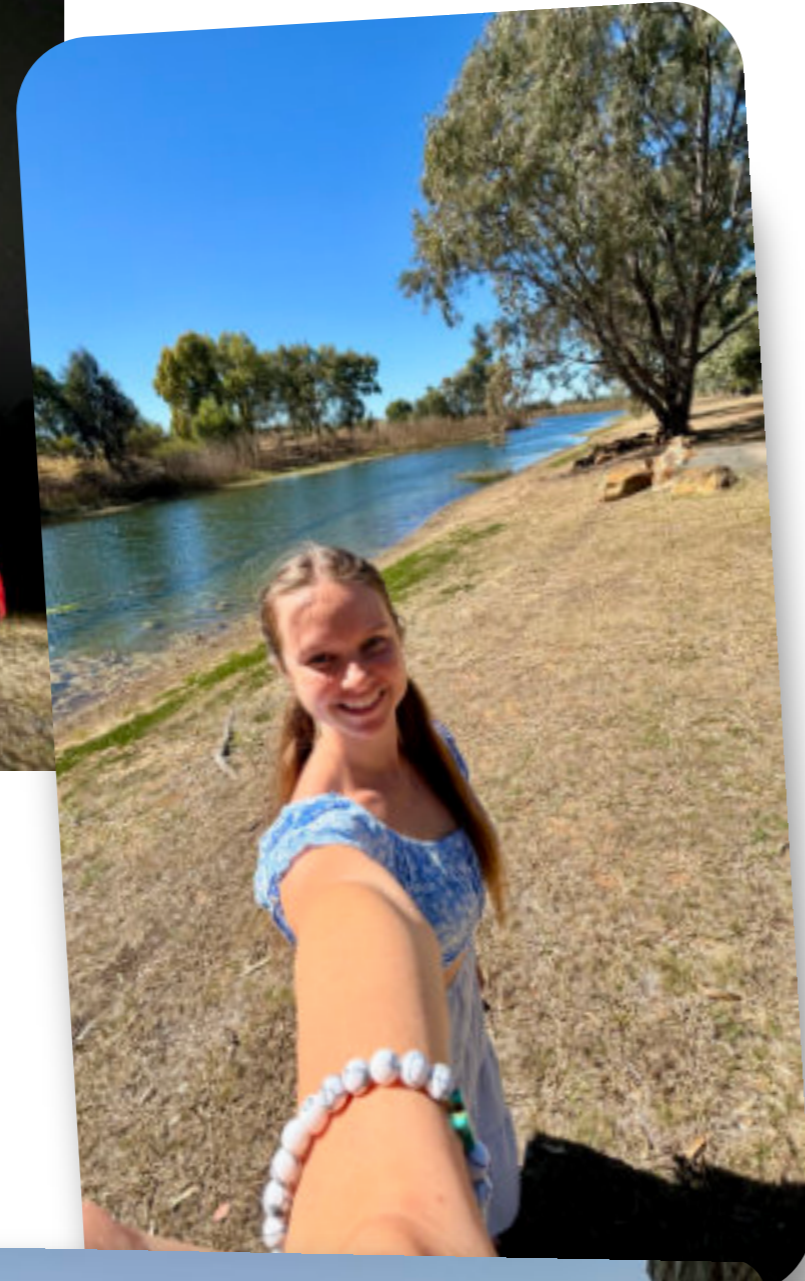


But every great story starts with an inciting incident, and this kicked my heroine's journey—**The Spectacular Imogen Lap**—off in spectacular fashion.

Imogen is back on the road after a brief return home. Only she has any idea where she'll end up next, and she has no idea.

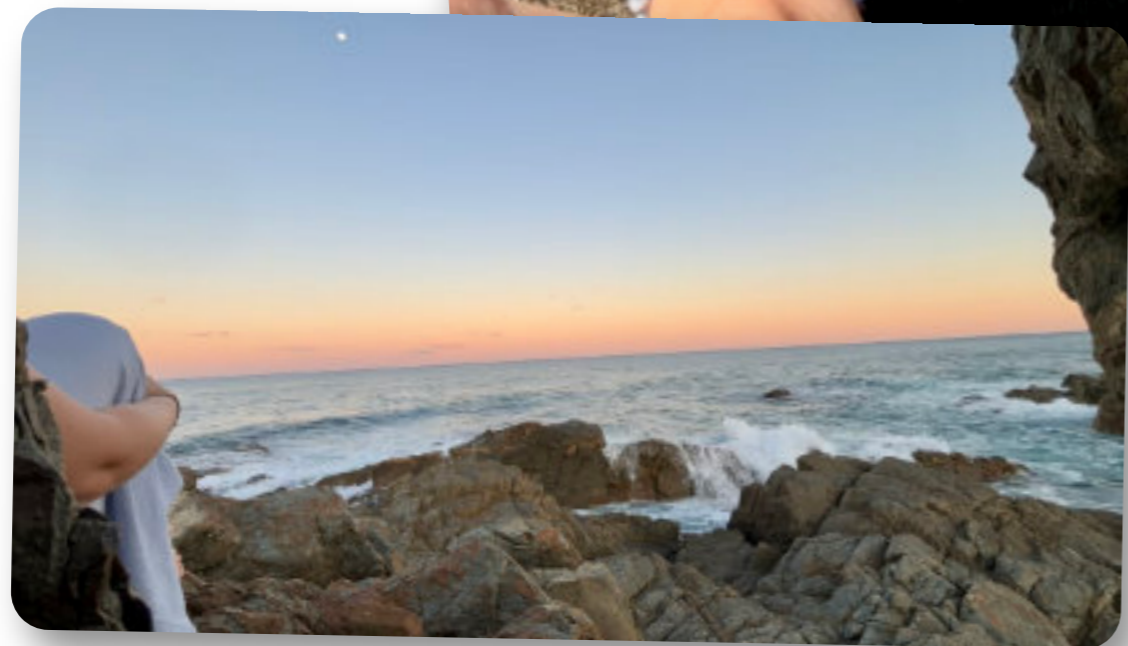
I can't wait to find out.

-NFG



advice, and encouragement from them. Then, it's your job to take it on board and apply it.

Looking back I'm so proud of myself for getting through that first week, for reaching out for help, for deciding to continue, and for the way I acknowledged and dealt with these overwhelming feelings. Week one was a challenge. It was hard.





CHRISTOPHER'S 500TOPs OUT OF THE ORDINARY PODCASTS

God Awful Movies

"If you love *The Muppet Show*, but you've only ever seen it through the crack under your door at the asylum where you've been kept for the last forty years because you massacred your family [...], you will love this movie."

Another comedic podcast where (usually) three atheists review and discuss horrible Christian themed movies, as well as

decidedly dodgy documentaries with anti-vaxx leanings, conspiracy theories and more. With frequent guests and frequently hilariously awful movies,

This podcast always has a lot of laughs while exposing the dangers of these pieces of sh... media.

Recommended starting point: Episode 293, *Bells of Innocence* with Dan and Jordan from the "Knowledge Fight" podcast is a personal favourite.

I'm sure at least some of you out there listen to podcasts – long drives, exercising, train rides or, perhaps, like me, while you're trying to fall asleep.

You might be familiar with the big, successful shows, but how about a few recommendations of more diverse, less well known podcasts to possibly pique your interest?



Doughboys

"I often have fun. I do frequently have fun. I've had fun several times this week."

Doughboys is a funny and fun podcast which reviews fast food chains (primarily in the US), hosted by comedians Nick Wiger and Mike Mitchell and usually with a guest or two. They have a fun dynamic, busting each others' balls and aggravating each other while entertaining the audience. It hasn't gotten old for me yet, and I've been listening to it for years.

Recommended starting point: Episode 100, *Nugget Power Hour* with Nicole Byer and Jon Gabrus.

Lions Led By Donkeys

"It gets worse."

A weekly military history podcast which covers some downright hilarious and some incredibly horrifying history with educational details and hilarious bits in equal measure. The hosts are military veterans themselves, with occasional guests, and I've always found it well worth listening to, even on the more harrowing subjects. A four part series on the Cambodian Genocide had a rule for the guest to ask for a cute "Animal Fact" whenever the details got too much to take, as an example of the kind of balance they try to take.



Recommended starting point: Episode 169, *The Nazi Rocket Plane That Melted Its Pilots*

If Books Could Kill

"All I know is that it's the perfect book for women that want to start a family, and also help Mark Zuckerberg do some genocide"

Michael Hobbes and Peter Shamshiri host, reviewing and discussing non-fiction books which were successful on release, but perhaps haven't aged so well. If you've seen a book in an airport gift store, possibly with a massive discount on the price tag, they'll probably cover it. It's funny, it's interesting, it encourages critical thinking, and is definitely worth some time.



Recommended starting point: *Going Infinite*: Michael Lewis takes on Sam Bankman-Fried.

System Mastery

"I'm kind of offended that it exists, honestly. This game.. is real bad."

Hosted by Jef Aldritch and Jon Taylor, this is a podcast which reviews role playing game systems (and supplements) from older to newer, indie to mainstream and more. Without disappearing too far into the weeds, the episodes are usually



fairly short, they cover the bases of a system's setting, its rules and character creation, and give useful insights into the writing process, being authors themselves. Definitely a light hearted tone, but also informative and useful if you're curious about tabletop role playing games, or a dedicated fan.

Recommended starting point: Episode 4, *Prime Directive*

Did you know? NFG has listened to only one podcast. Ever.

AI IS A PRODUCT OF THE MASS SURVEILLANCE BUSINESS MODEL

--Meredith Whittaker

Because of course it is. If they didn't have all of our information, they couldn't build the systems.

Modern life is about choosing the least worst option. Subscribing to a service to manage our business, streaming music though we know the artists get screwed, and choosing simplicity over managing our own library of files.

None of us love Facebook, but we can't leave. Instagram never shows us what we want, and the things we share are buried under the algorithm, or shadowbanned. Twitter is a cesspool of trolls and shit disturbers, but we remember the time before it sucked and we keep checking it.

We're trapped.

“People have to use it because you can't participate in society without it. [...] That's coercion..”
--Meredith Whittaker

We don't own much anymore, we lend our eyeballs to companies who give us the least possible benefit to wring the most money out of us. Spotify pays artists a fraction of a pittance, but we keep streaming. We keep subscribing to services to send our invoices, to count our inventory, to run our businesses.

Meredith Whittaker is the president of non-profit company Signal, the encrypted messenger.

Because life is hard and sometimes the choice is between life with less friction *most of the time*, or solving an endless number of small problems *all the time*. More and more often we don't even get to choose.

Someone above us chose convenience, took a kickback and signed up, and passed that pain down. Higher prices, fewer choices, and less flexibility to accommodate the wild variety that life is all about.

It was all shit, getting shitter, and then computers got good at recognizing patterns. Give them enough input and they'll notice some things that repeat, and how they correlate to other things that repeat.

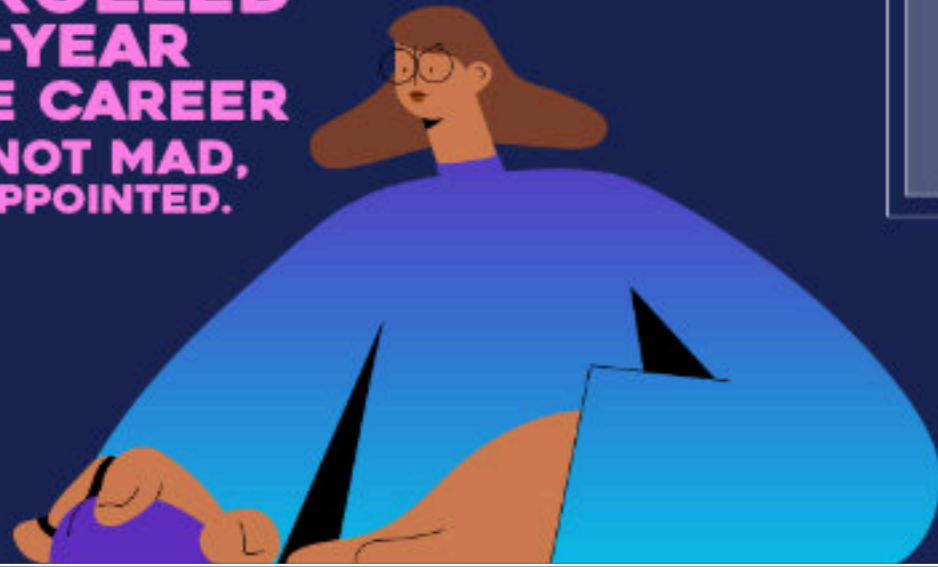
The AI companies took the things we shared, the words and art and dreams and confessions that connected us to each other and eased our pains. They took them without asking, swirled them together, and sold them back to us as AI.

And we'd better like it! Because we don't have a choice, do we?

--NFG



AI STEAMROLLED MY 11-YEAR CREATIVE CAREER AND I'M NOT MAD, JUST DISAPPOINTED.



It was a beautiful career getting paid to make pretty pictures move.

My generation of animators have developed during a unique timeframe having access to computers to assist with speed of animation and automation of limb rigs, while still being able to maintain the beauty of frame by frame traditional hand drawn techniques from time to time.

Life was good.

I started hearing about AI and dismissed it as a utopian thing that will never threaten my job. We are creative! Computers do maths and could never actually be 'creative'? Surely?

For a long time it lingered in the background with a distant rumble, slightly disrupting other industries and automating other fields. But for now life continued being awesome.

Then it seemed that AI went into hyperdrive.

Deep fakes were on the news and people started getting worried about the ethics behind the tech. AI turned mainstream, integrating into social media without any sort of warning or 'opt-in'.

I started seeing pole videos generated with AI. They created a cool otherworldly look but the comments section was a mess with "this is so cool" and "AI is stealing".

Now I don't know a whole lot behind the mechanics of how AI generates images, nor will I even try to explain it here. All I can talk to is my experience on the other side. Being that creative person seeing a computer generate what would take me hours, days even, in mere seconds.

For people not in a creative industry, this is a fun and entertaining concept.

For people in corporate, this means no longer having to outsource designers, just sign up to AI and you're set.

Sure, it sounds like a thing that's helpful!

But for those photographers, illustrators, animators, voice over artists and more who have spent their lives honing a skill, this is outright war.

The funny thing is, although this is war, some people in my industry are embracing AI. Using it to generate ideas, quickly mock up images and to generate voice overs. Businesses are jumping on the bandwagon of "this entire ad was created using AI".

I'm stuck in a place where although it feels icky, if I don't start understanding AI and leveraging its power I will quickly be left behind. But this isn't the crafty, tinkering, rose

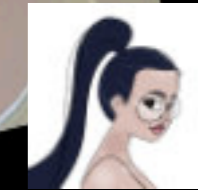
tinted world I signed up for. This feels fast paced, roll it out, make it pop, make it rain.

This tech was inevitable. Humans are clever, so clever. Throughout history jobs have become obsolete with the invention of tech, so why should we care?

Just because we can, does it mean that we should?

Next time you see something generated by AI, think about me.

Meanwhile I'll be over here, planning an alternative career path just in case. You'll see me baking cakes and cupcakes to express my creativity off the screen. Humans need sweet treats and AI can't generate them... yet?



Jen is an animator and designer who's facing the spectre of AI-generated extinction. The images on these pages are hers.

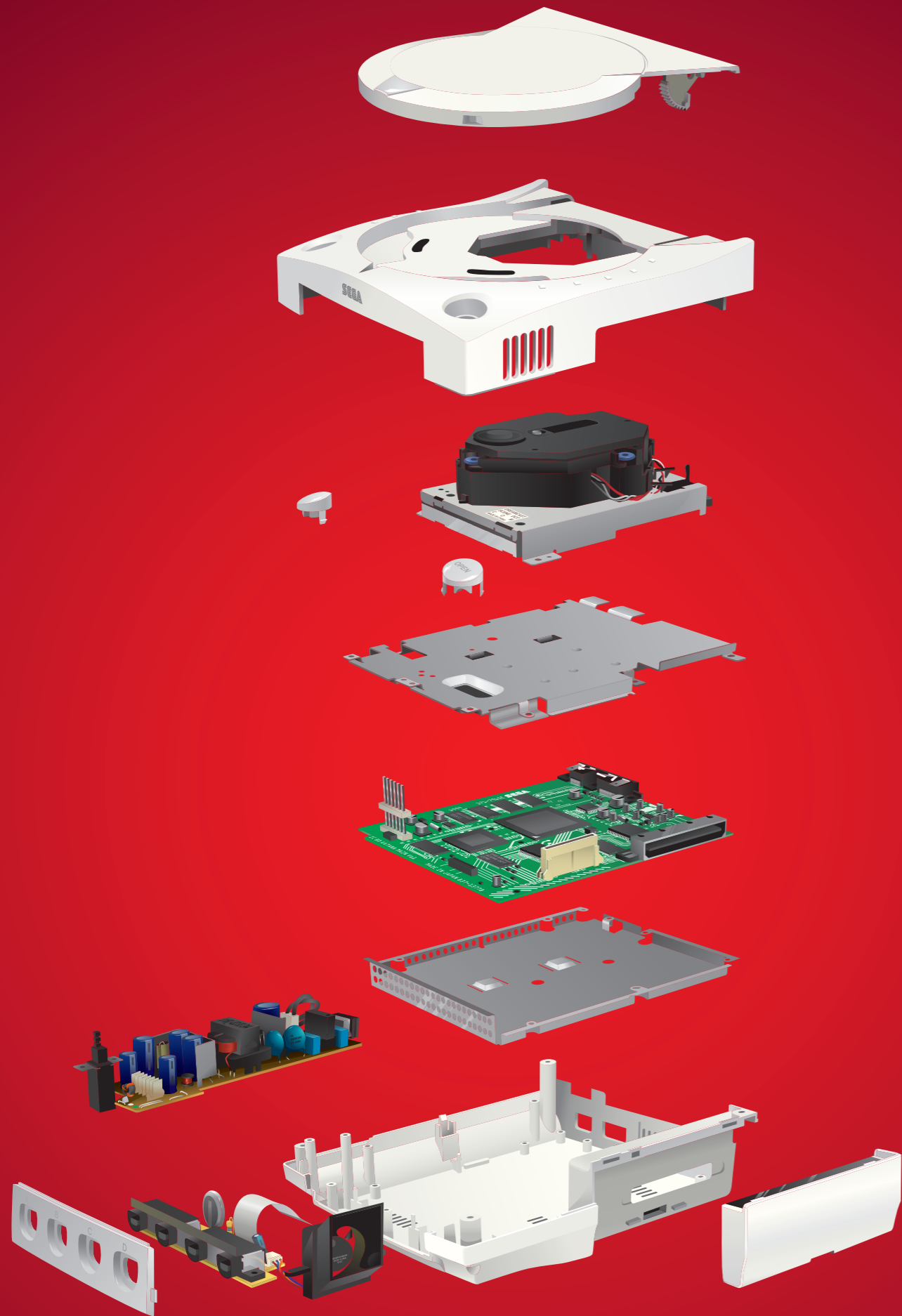




Body: Chrissie



Bodies: Mel & Ash



SEGA'S Dreamcast

The year was 1999, and Sega was hurting from the devastating beat-down delivered by Sony. The Playstation trounced the Saturn around the world.

This time Sega was ready to take the lead. The Dreamcast system was small, powerful, and it came with a built-in modem for online play.

Sega hit the ground running before the Playstation 2 launched. TV ads, big name games, Sega had it all.

But then Sony said the Playstation 2 would play DVDs. Sony said it was so powerful they had to get government clearance to sell it to some countries, lest it be used for weapons. It could be a computer too. And it played your old Playstation 1 games.

Playstation 2 sold more than 150 million systems, the Dreamcast shifted fewer than 10 before Sega pulled the plug.

Launched 25 years ago, the Dreamcast was Sega's last, best console.

It is missed.





Every night my friend Mouse gets a bedtime story. It started simply enough.

"Guess where mouse is!" she demanded one night, after retiring to bed.

"Gasp! Not... the moon?" I asked.

"Whaaaaat?" she replied. "How did you know? Can you see me from down there? *waves!*"

I told her "your typing sounded high pitched, like it wasn't getting enough oxygen."

"And it was bouncy," she added. "Like there's not enough gravity."

"Very bouncy typing." I agreed.

We couldn't have known it then, but a tradition was born that night. Every evening Mouse goes to bed and demands I guess where she is.

And every evening I do.

Over time, the guesses became more elaborate and silly. But I had to ask, because how could I be sure she wasn't on the moon, or worse?

After I make my best guess, she tells me that I am, in fact, very wrong. Sometimes I'll guess again, before figuring out that she has slithered between the sheets once again.

"Mouse is not on the moon." she says.

"Hmmm..."

mouse wiggles in anticipation

"Oh, wait" I say. "This happens every day!"

"Yeah!" *mouse waits*

"It's something that rhymes with 'addepatated'."

"Wait, what?"

Sometimes her stuffed or real animals appear in the story. She has several of them on her bed, including an owl named Owly, Alpacy-boi the Alpaca, and Elly Friend, who is a pachyderm. It may help to know the members of this menagerie.

et cetera
Every bed should have a menagerie.
Or a ménage.

Guess where Mouse is!

On the freeway swerving lane to lane with flashing lights in the rear view mirror?

Gasp! Are you watching the helicopter live feed?

I'm in the chopper! I've been flashing the searchlight in Morse!

Well I'm a little distracted!!!
Throw me a rope!

All I have are shoelaces. And just two, the pilot is refusing to let me take his.

Take them by force!

Um... Um... Um... That seems like a wildly bad idea.

Mouse is ahead of me.

Why? He can fight you for his shoelaces and you both die, or he can let you take his shoelaces and you both live.

It's the first one that worries me.

Mouse is sanguine about this.

I know which choice he's more likely to make.

I am less so.

Yeah but if his shoes are all loose and floppy we might die anyway. Maybe just take this offramp.

I think it's a launching ramp.

Mouse jump. You catch. Wheeee!

Well I was planning to accidentally miss your escape with the spotlight, but... Hellooo there! Welcome to the helicopter!

Hallo! *Mouse tosses the pilot out the door*
He had a parachute, right?

This is not how I expected this day to go, at all.

That's what the pilot said too!

et cetera
I worked in helicopters once.
That's how I know pilots don't like you messing with their shoes.

AUSTRALIANS DON'T UNDERSTAND FOUR STOP SIGNS

We've all seen this happen. Two or more cars approach an intersection, with a stop sign on every entry road.

One car waves to another, the other car waits, the first car starts to go, the second car lurches forward and stops, the first car stops, and then a third and a fourth car reach the intersection.

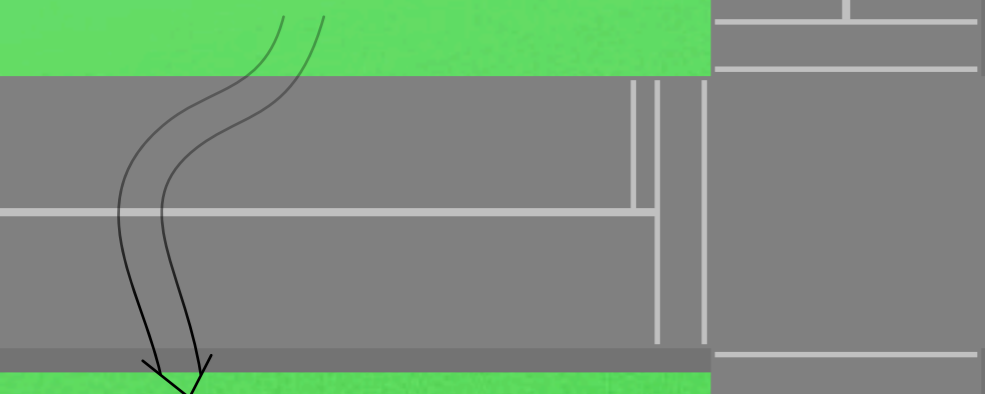
No one knows who goes first. It's chaos, with the lurching and the stopping and first one car gives up, then another.

WHOEVER STOPS FIRST GOES FIRST.

- 1 STOP**
- 2 GIVE WAY TO TRAFFIC ENTERING THE INTERSECTION**
- 3 PROCEED WHEN SAFE**

If someone else stops first, they can go before you, because you haven't stopped yet. After you stop, give way to them, then go.

If you stop first, you can go first, because they still need to stop.



A taco truck approaches, sets up shop. A local DJ turns up the tunes. Soon, it's a dance party. People get tired, they sleep in their cars. Eventually they admit that they live at this intersection now. They change their postal address. A local government is formed, taxes are levied, and Australia Post celebrates the birth of a new post code.

It doesn't have to be this way.

Four-way stops are easy!*

CANADA IS AWESOME

Canada's four-way stop signs have little '4-WAY' signs, so everyone knows what's going on at this intersection.

If more than one car arrives at the same time, we give way to the right.



* This is where it gets sticky in Australia. The rules for giving way are fiendishly complicated, and when more than one car arrives at an intersection at the same time you might need to negotiate.

Hand signals, or a promise that they can go first next time, or (perhaps most likely) a promise to burn their entire family to ash and scatter the ashes in three different oceans if they don't back the fuck off.

The alternative is accepting defeat, and forwarding your mail.

But come the fuck on, you useless bastards. Stop, give way, go. Fuck is wrong with you.





Stephanie is a garden gnome sales specialist who, like many of us, faces life's mountains, tops them, and looks for the next. Not long ago, that mountain was her self image.

For over half a decade, climbing has been a core part of my identity. It came into my life at a time where I needed it the most, and quickly evolved into a building block for both my physical and mental endurance.

It's an outlet that requires strength, focus, determination and grit - cultivating a resilience that can only be achieved once you've pushed your body to its limits.

Despite all of this, I still found myself struggling with a severe disconnect between my *outer self* and *inner self*. Whilst my outer self was seemingly strong and disciplined, my inner self was anything but.

Deep down I wasn't just neglecting my feminine, I was being outright nasty to her.

No amount of hard work or brute strength allowed me any reprieve from insecurity, and most of the time, my head wasn't a very nice place to be. Something needed to change, but what?

As an eldest daughter and big sister, hyper-independence was practically my birthright, and I naturally gravitated to more masculine roles. So much so that over time, I completely lost touch with the softer, more sensual side of myself.

My life had become entirely focused on being self-reliant, and whilst that had its merits, something was missing. I needed to engage in a practice that helped me reconnect with the delicate, graceful energy that I had spent so many years unintentionally trying to squash and make small.

One week later, I stepped into my very first pole studio.

At first I thought I had made a HUGE mistake - I had very little in the way of a dance background, and more importantly, I didn't have a clue how to "let go" and move my body in a way that celebrated sensuality and flow.

Not only that, but walking into a room full of mirrors in no more than my underwear seemed like adding more fuel to the self deprecating fire that was my inner monologue.

My first few classes were unsettling. I was used to focusing on muscle and technical precision, which to a degree were both transferable skills, but pole also required something completely foreign to me: confidence in how I moved. This pushed me to confront insecurities that climbing never did, which was feeling comfortable in my own skin.



Like anything though, practice makes progress - you just have to keep showing up.

So I did. I kept moving with the rhythm of the music, kept learning to trust my body in a new way, and kept tapping into my sensuality until I eventually began to uncover parts of myself that had long been buried.

The more I committed to my new found expression, the more I began to feel a shift in my daily life. I walked taller, spoke with more assurance, and began to embrace my femininity as something fiercely powerful rather than a vulnerability.

Pole isn't only about conquering tricks, but conquering the inner critic too (which is much more fun in 9 inch heels and sequins).



So if you're reading this and have ever felt disconnected from your true sense of self, or feel like there's something inside of you screaming to be expressed but you just don't know what, I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and try something that's the complete opposite of your life as it stands today.

Maybe all you need is a little balance. The hardest part is taking that first step, but the woman I am today is forever grateful to the girl who faced those few hours of discomfort, because she saved herself a lifetime.



enshittification

“Here is how platforms die: first, they are good to their users; then they abuse their users to make things better for their business customers; finally, they abuse those business customers to claw back all the value for themselves. Then, they die. I call this enshittification.”

--Cory Doctorow

“The Facebook feeds started off as exclusively content from people you followed, your friends. Then it was friends and creators.. And then the algorithm was showing you a lot of stuff you’re not following directly. Because, in some ways, that’s more interesting stuff than just the things you’ve chosen to follow.

The next step is content that’s generated by an AI system that might be something that you’re interested in.”

--Mark Zuckerberg



* paraphrased for clarity
scan for source:



What is the point of a service that gives you a feed filled with stuff you didn’t ask for?

A feed designed to keep you scrolling, distracted, disconnected from your real life, one that reloads and hides that thing you just saw, hoping you’ll keep scrolling to find it again, but never revealing it.

What is the point of that feed which has given up trying to show you interesting people and things, and is now inventing out of whole cloth a make-believe world that no human ever breathed life into?

Are we so desperate to escape that we’ll drop a like and comment on *literally fantastic* bullshit? We’re paying with our time, slice by fractional slice of our lives, to see things painted without intent, without cause, without that spark of a dream that every creator grants to their art?

Max Read described this as ‘publishing demented nonsense into a void.’

Perhaps we need to leave the void behind, create our own world, and live in it.

Create. Be good to each other. Be human.

--NFG

fantastic (adj.) - late 14c., “existing only in imagination, produced by (mental) fantasy”

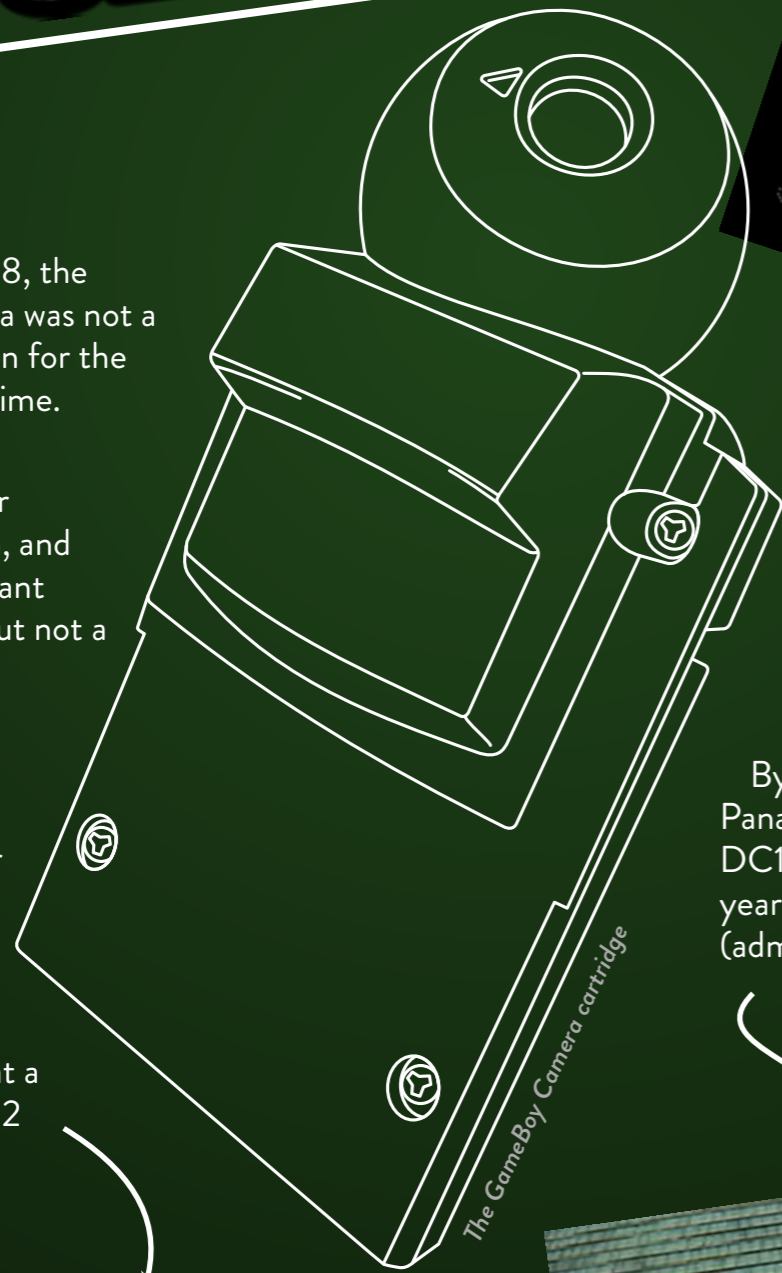


Rediscovering the GAMEBOY camera

Released in 1998, the GameBoy Camera was not a great camera, even for the standards of the time.

Plug it into your GameBoy system, and you've got an instant digital camera. But not a great one.

It took photos using only four shades of grey (or whatever not entirely *unlike* grey colours your GameBoy screen could show you) at a whopping 128 x 112 pixels.



The GameBoy Camera cartridge

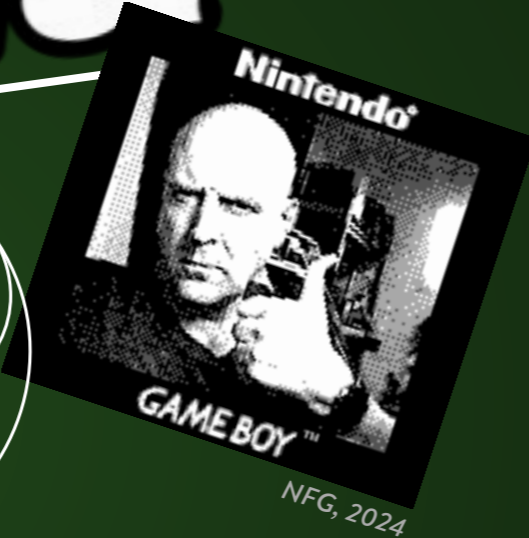
By comparison, the Panasonic PalmCam PV-DC1000 camera, released a year earlier, created images in (admittedly shitty) colour with 320 x 240 pixels.



NFG, 1998



NFG's game store, 1998



NFG, 2024



NFG, 1998

Taking photos with the GameBoy Camera is not an easy thing to do. It's not fast, and it's not sensitive.

You need a lot of light and a patient subject. This photo of Bean was the only one of about ten tries that is recognizably a cat.

And ten is a lot, on a device that only stores 30 photos. Once you fill all 30 spots, you either delete some images - which takes about five seconds each time, or print one on the tiny GameBoy Printer, and *then* delete it.

If you know what this scene contains, you can almost be impressed with the detail captured in these 14,336 pixels. If you don't know there's a monitor on the left side, a receipt printer on the right, you might never figure it out from this image. There's a person in this image too, but not the spooky one with horns.

The GameBoy Camera was fun, with built in mini-games, stickers, a doodling function, and different frames that could be applied.



But it was cumbersome, slow, and limited. It was hard to see it as more than a novelty.

I almost never used mine, after filling the 30 available slots. But now, 26 years later, the battery still works, the images still exist, and I found a way to download them with a \$300 tool and a \$3 cable.

The GameBoy Camera sold well. Total sales figures don't exist, but within three weeks of release over half a million had reached GameBoy systems in Japan. It was released around the world, and it was in production for four years.

That's a lot of photos taken and smiles made.



Bean



NFG's store, front counter, 1998



GRYFFIN DOES COSPLAY



Gryffin has been a goddess (twice), a radio demon DJ from hell, Frankenstein's monster, a Viking, a mermaid, Nebula, Beetlejuice and most recently a wild west saloon girl.

I love cosplaying characters and regularly incorporate them into my aerial performances and MC gigs. No one bats an eye when you turn up to a competition or event with green hair, fake scars or huge pointy teeth....

OK, actually the teeth did cause a stir once but that was because I used Polydent to secure them and everyone was extremely concerned I wouldn't be able to remove them easily, none more so than my husband!

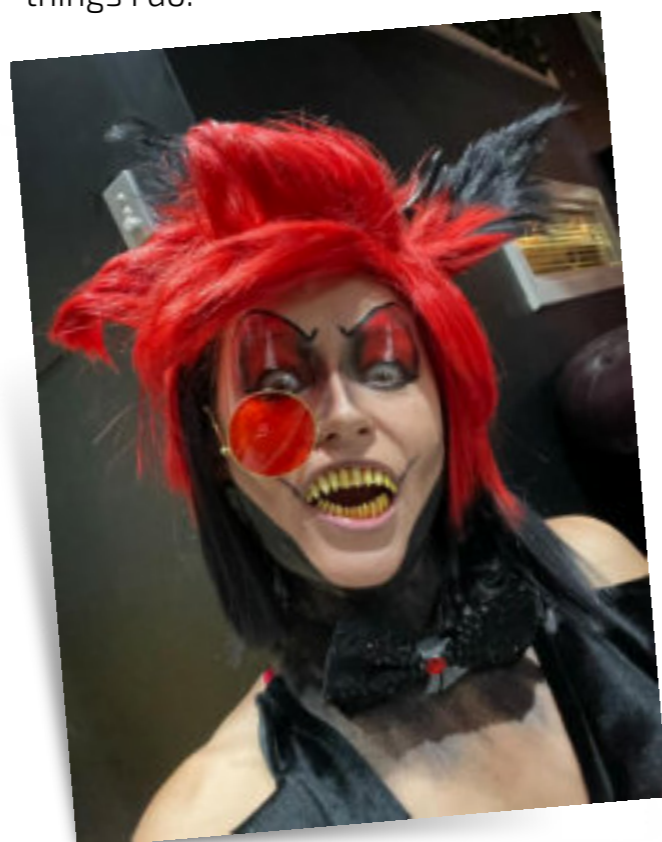
The biggest compliment I get when cosplaying is when someone I know sees me and doesn't recognise me, then I know I've done a good job.

As Alastor, the radio demon DJ from hell, I had a 5 minute conversation with my sports physiologist and when they called

my name to go on stage she was shocked and exclaimed that she hadn't known it was me. That was fun.

Slipping into a character allows a certain level of dissociation.

I can forget that I am a wife, mother of four and have a 'muggle' job that would probably be extremely confused by half the things I do.



Instead, I can put on the skin of someone else (not like Ed Gein you sickos!). I can hide behind their persona and just *be*. I learnt how to do cosplay make up before I learnt how to do regular 'glam' make up and I literally just follow YouTube tutorials for all of it. I make most of my own costumes and props and enjoy that almost as much as the performance.

Once I made an entire stag's rear from wire and paper Mache and asked (made) my husband play a centaur on stage that I killed... in hind sight that backfired on me because no one remembered the awesome tricks I did on stage but they all cheered for and commented on the amazing stag and his tragic death.

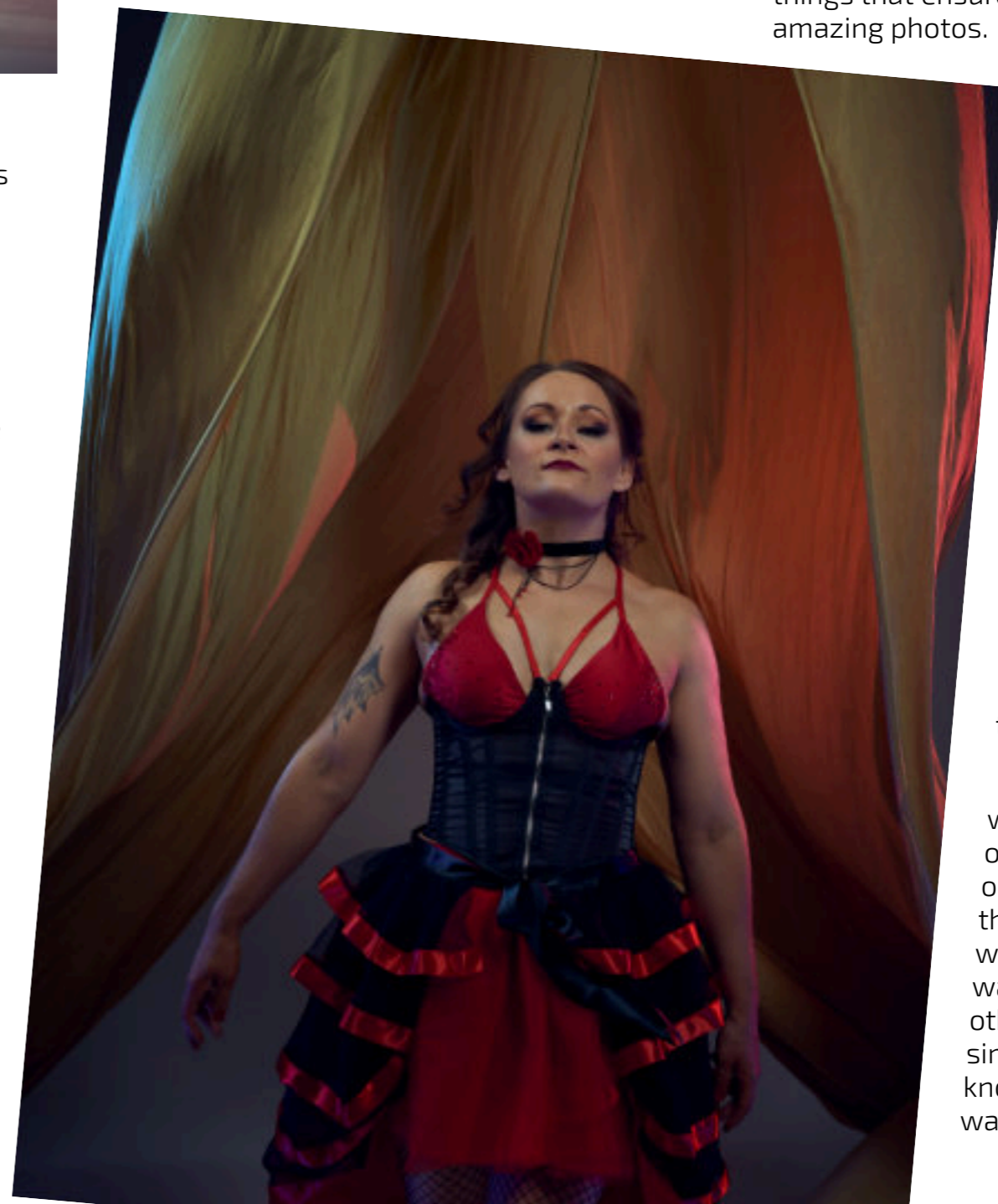
My second favourite thing to do on stage is make a mess. I have emptied an entire feather pillow out, the photos were totally worth it. I have popped a balloon filled with gold paint over my head, I released wind up mice into the audience from inside a coffin and most recently I stripped so many pieces of clothing off during a performance they literally littered the stage.

This was a saloon girl performance which I did a photoshoot for with NFG to create some promo shots.

I had put off doing an aerials photoshoot for a while, worrying that I didn't have the high level skills yet to be able to create epic shots but on the day there were three things that ensured we got the most amazing photos.

1. I had a visual list of the shots that I wanted to achieve and I had ordered them according to how much strength and energy I would need to actually achieve them. One of my faves was an 'American Beauty' style shot that involved me lying on the floor and NFG having to do all of the heavy lifting, ladder climbing and positioning in order to get the shot – 10/10 can recommend making your photographer work to get the shot.

2. I had a clear idea of what I wanted to achieve out of the shoot – it turned out I didn't actually want the hard/ elite skills, I wanted silks drama and watched heaps of videos of other people creating similar shots in order to know how to get the look I was chasing.



3. I had a fluffer... ok so I didn't actually know what that was when I started calling my friend that at the shoot but NFG kindly informed me and honestly I'm not mad about it 😊 She helped make sure I was facing the right way, she adjusted my costume if I was at risk of having a nip slip (yep, we're waaaaay closer now!) she, along with NFG, told me if what I was doing was shit and not worth the effort, she threw my silks in the air just right to create those epic drama filled shots but most importantly she made me laugh, we had fun and I will 100% return the favour when she relents and books the photoshoot I am adamant she needs.

NFG's note: lol



My take away message from this little article would be, *stay weird*, keep it interesting and book a photoshoot because I honestly walked out of that day, after putting it off for so long, feeling like the FMC from one of the smutty fae novels I read!



Body: Montanna



That's it!

Thank you for reading. It was my pleasure to work with some weird and wonderful people (mainly the former) this issue.

Next issue, more of the same, but more! And different! See you soon!