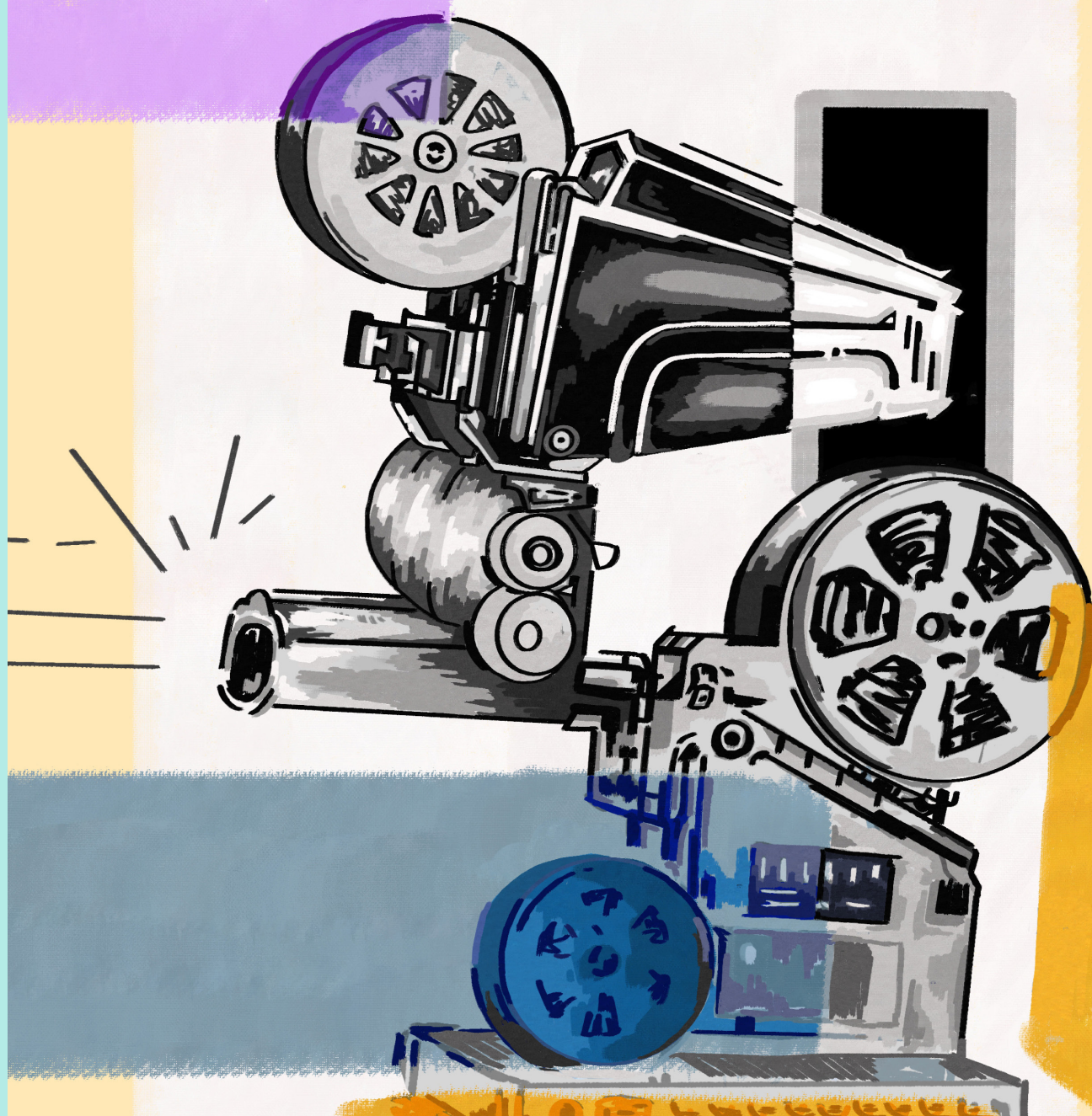


WLIFE

CINEMA JUL-SEP 2025



Records From Cinema
Cover by Cracia Chen



WLIFE

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Dear Readers,

“The world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

— *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

My 2025 New Year’s Resolution was to watch more movies. I started off this goal by immediately creating a Letterboxd profile, an app to log all my watches on. I was determined to give a beautifully composed review for every movie, but not long after it also began to trouble me during my watching experience. How much was I saving by writing it down?

I forget most of the scenes in a movie I watch, somehow especially the ones I really like. Most of the time, I’m only left with a quote or two, a frame, and the lingering feeling. But I think there’s something magical about knowing you like something even if you’ve forgotten it.

There were a bunch of words thrown around when deciding the theme of this issue, but none felt entirely right. Then I remembered the issue was set in summertime, and that summer was the one time of the year to be unapologetically teenage.

Your word of the season is Cinema, whether it be popcorn mall-date Rom-coms or late-night alone-in-the-bedroom tear-jerkers – preferably both, and everything in between. We hope this issue catalogues the amazing ideas that run through our student body’s heads on a daily basis. It may only be a fraction of these inspirations, but a well enough screening to kick off the new semester and close off the summer.

Grab your snacks and sit tight. The show’s starting.

(Almost) The End,
Emmie Zhang
Editor in Chief

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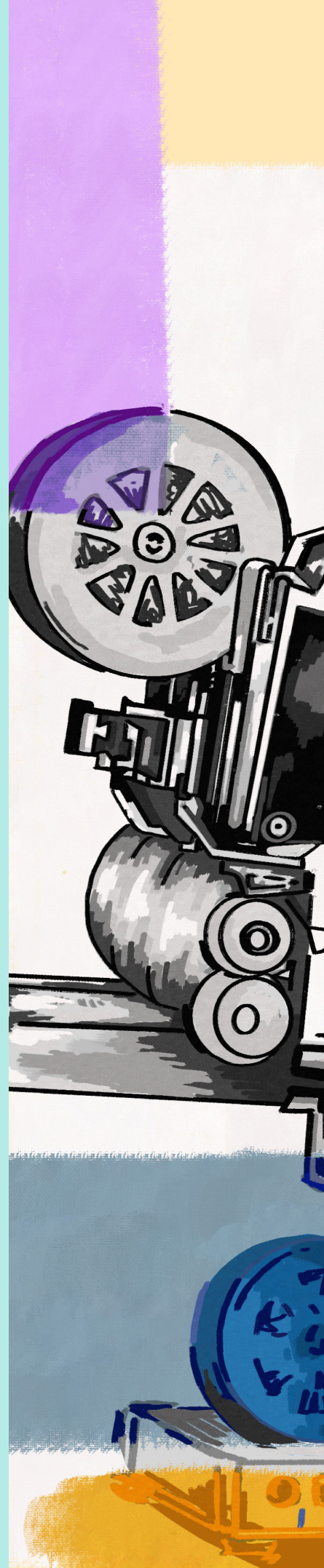
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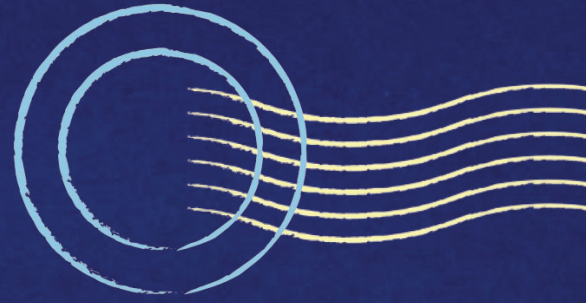
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01 Literature

1986 Radio Ballad



Two doves in a pit. There were letters addressed, but short, and barely plural. A few more phone calls, but mostly static and twisted wires. August was a small world to live in. Summer heat hasn't been kind to either of them, cloaking their skin like a murky wet towel. *Small-town Boy* by Bronski Beat plays on loop in their Walkmans – “run away, turn away” – doctrines from their braver selves. They both think there's nothing sadder than to feel distance where it isn't due. Time moves differently for people stuck in its tail, so both can look at the same sky and for the same stars. One always fails, though – he has a clock sternly set to Eastern Time hanging low over his bedframe despite moving to California eight months ago. Only one still smells like his childhood bike from rotting Indiana copper. The other is learning leather Chevy seats and Marlboro Reds. They both take the brick road home, the one that's canary under the bedded sun and feels like the fall leaves they'd tread crunch together. Back then, no one would bat an eye at their holding hands, it was just kids being kids. Boys being boys. Neither will wish the other Happy Birthday now, but the candle smoke will dither in their moldy half-shut windows. Both will wish not for more time, but a different one.



The Summer I Turned Pretty

Author: G12 Theta Seven Xu

Designer: G12 Gamma Alice Qin

(Light ready, camera ready. Three, two, one...)

In the heart of summer, just past three in the afternoon, I skipped my coffee and stepped outside to gaze at the trees.

Can trees absorb humans? I wondered. Why else do we feel so calm, so at ease, the moment we enter a forest? Walking beneath their canopy is like drifting through life, brushing against the edges of summer's warmth. Sunlight filters through the leaves—soft, gentle, bathing every inch of my skin in a warm glow.

I become a plant, shedding my human identity and embracing a natural existence. For a moment, I run full speed down an empty path, sweating, feeling vibrantly alive.

Here, “life” is my only label. In my own story, I’m both the star and the observer. The cheap ticket to the botanical garden in my pocket reminds me: you

don’t need to spend much to have a beautiful day. Every forest has its own guide, its own care instructions. Some plants stay small; some crave shade; others thrive near water. Some stand bare in summer, some bloom in winter, and some never flower at all. With plants, we know to provide the right soil, the right conditions—all they need is to “live well.” To live well means to take root, to sprout, to endure winter and summer alike. But with ourselves, the rules grow stricter. We say, “Love yourself,” yet we judge harshly and demand more.

What if we treated ourselves like plants? The only rule: Live well. Find the right environment and grow as you’re meant to.

One bright morning, I sat beneath a tree and wrote my own care instructions:

Seven, a lazy plant.

Writing down my laziness isn't about changing it—you can't force a plant to be something it's not. Instead, I crafted a guide to grow well while staying true to my lazy nature:

Care Guide:

1. Stay very hydrated.
2. Needs plenty of sleep.
3. Place near cats or other adorable animals.
4. Keep in sunlight often, in open air (parks, hikes).
5. Avoid excessive milk (severe lactose intolerance).
6. Requires steady doses of books, TV shows, and podcasts.
7. Loves other plants—let it grow low, leaning on bigger trees.

After all, nobody scolds a plant for needing support.

Blooming Season: Seven is a sunflower, blooming fully for about seven days a month. Some love its flowers—not too showy, not too lonely. Others find it plain. But Seven doesn't care. It's just being itself, following its own rhythm. When it blooms, it talks too much and laughs too loud, unconcerned with others' opinions. It's simply happy.

Note: Don't push Seven. It moves at its own pace. Low energy or bad moods? Perfectly normal. No fixing required—just follow the care guide.

Keep these instructions close and read them often. We forget, since we rarely visit nature, how much we're part of it—tiny, special, each with our own ways of growing, our own seasons. All we can do is find the right soil and let ourselves grow as we are. That's how the blooms last longer.

(This is a snippet from *The Summer I Turned Pretty*. Two episodes will be updated in the first week, with one episode following each week thereafter. For more bloopers from director Seven on how to become a sunflower, email [seven.xsy@hotmail.com](mailto:xsy@hotmail.com)—she's happy to answer all your questions!)





Where Do You Call Home?

My body is my home. I think it is because I strongly associate my identity with my mind, and only my mind—in fact, I feel much more comfortable if my mind can exist independent of my body, because though my body is where my mind resides, I prefer my mind much more to my body. I don't especially like my home, but I'm not spiritual, so if my body is not my (mind's) home, I am nonexistent. And most of the time, I don't want to be nonexistent.

Regardless, my body is where I eat, I digest, I sleep. I switch from introspection to extrospection using a pair of windows called eyes, I move my home around with two crutches called legs, I interact with other bodies with a loudspeaker called mouth that can sometimes be kind and sometimes be vile.

My body is where I can keep all independent thinking to myself, and where I can entirely be myself. I might nod and smile like a polite, civilized lady when listening to you educating me about manners, roles, and responsibility, but I could scream and curse and flip the bird at you in my head. I don't always want to show you what my mind is doing, so I should be thankful for my body—so yeah. Maybe I do like my home.

Author: GII Gamma Angela Li
Designer: GII Gamma Angela Li

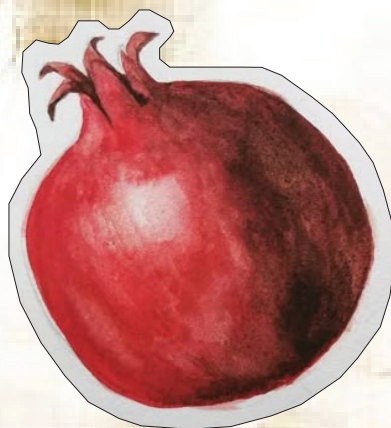
That midsummer's night, the air was thick with a sticky hush. The whole world had forgotten how to breathe. Crickets clicked beneath the withered grass. The backyard pomegranate tree stood squat and crooked, yet still.

Then came the crack.
A sudden, sharp split. One fruit, swollen and dark, had split open with a tiny kkhhh. Strange. The pomegranates weren't supposed to ripen yet. But this one had burst prematurely. Its rind red, deeply stained, teetering on black. The crack curled along its curve. The grown-ups murmured it must've been the abnormally hot weather. Climate is off this year, they said. Everything's out of track. But I didn't believe it was just the sun.

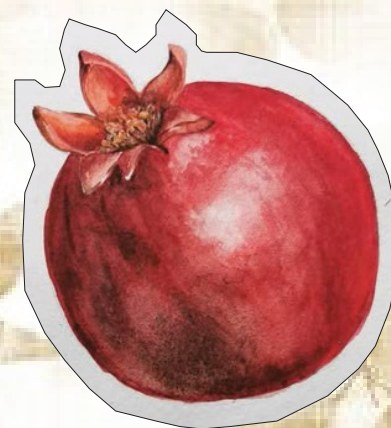
Some things are simply born out of time, cracked into the world before they're meant to be.

And I knew, in the dark click of that night, that I was one of them.

The crack in the fruit stayed with me. Maybe it followed us, rattling softly in the trunk as we drove home with my grandmother. She had broken her leg at the end of spring. We weren't supposed to be there; silence had stood between us



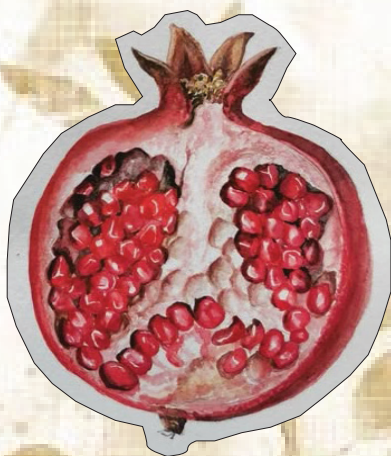
for years. I couldn't talk to her; she spoke a dialect I didn't understand. Her murmuring voice was cracked, like the skin of a pomegranate at the middle of splitting. Perhaps she wasn't forgetting. Perhaps she was erasing memories.



Perhaps she was being drawn back into my former self as I was being pulled toward who she had been.

The Crack

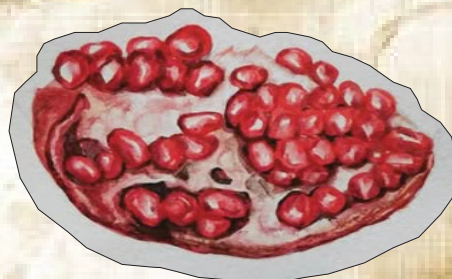
Author: G12 Gamma Nina Chang
Designer: G12 Eta Amanda Jin



That year, her hand let go, and mine was clasped by a smaller child.

My nephew smelled like the stuffed gorilla toy my brother gave me. I changed his diapers. Played dead. Let him climb my back. But I hated how easily he fit into everything, how they made space for him they hadn't made for me. I wasn't angry at him for being young. I was angry because he arrived too soon. He bloomed; I was forced to shrink. To vanish into something useful.

I yelled when he joked about my mother. Told him to stop thinking life was about playing. But I wasn't punishing him. I was punishing the part of me that had longed to be small and loved and forgiven for it.



Like a pomegranate split too


early, I mistook the crack for a beginning. I thought if I held still, I might be the seed.

I wore the shape of stillness, but it never fit me well.

My nephew wasn't the cause of the split. For years, it had been growing. I was six when my brother returned from college with the gorilla. My mother said I screamed when he greeted me. I only remembered the silence when he placed that gorilla in my lap.

Then, the sound of porcelain cracking. I watched myself smash a rice bowl. My brother's face was red. My father stayed seated. My mother pressed a napkin to her lips.

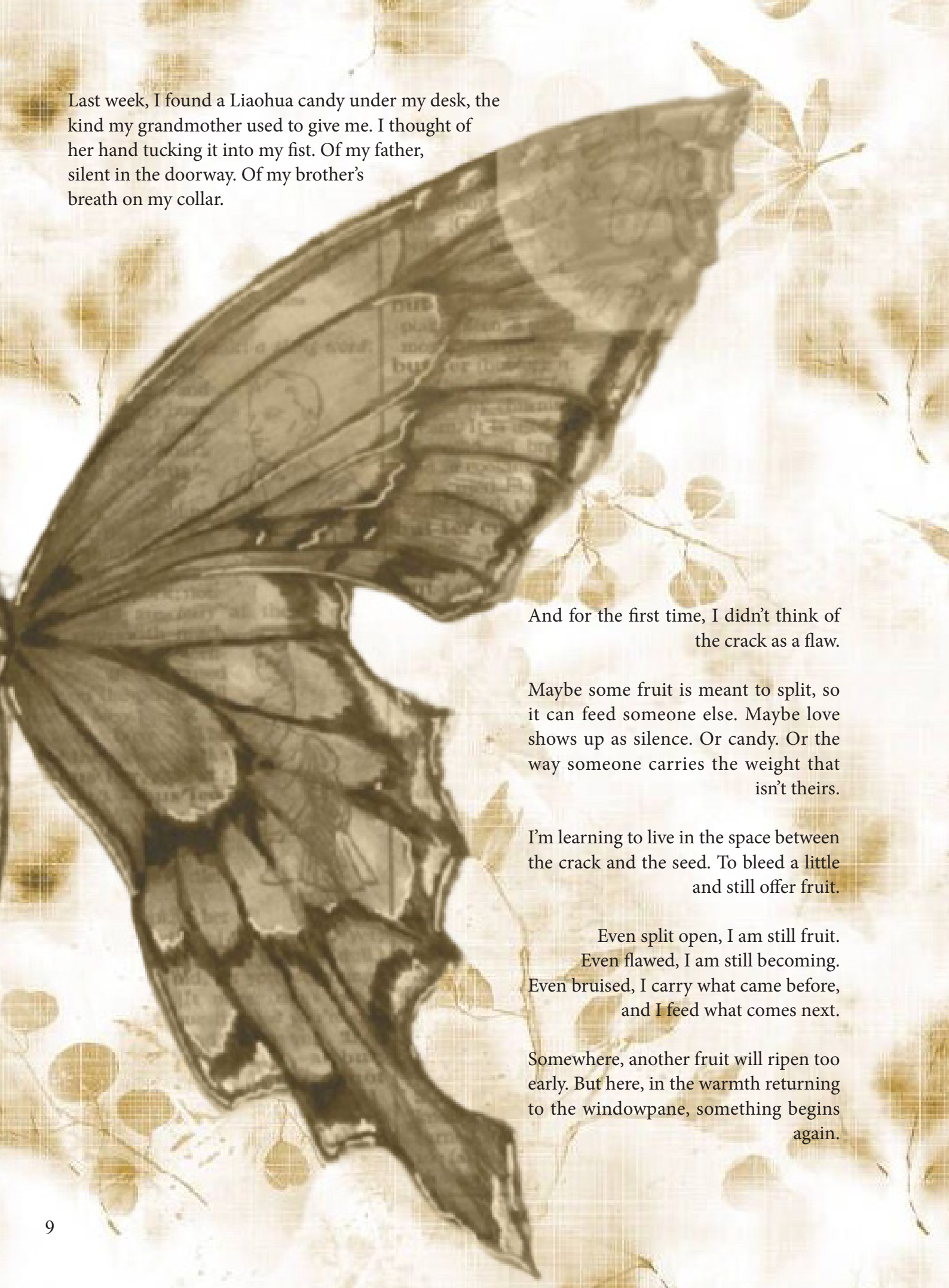
Before that—or after—I was the flower girl at his wedding. I recited his vows, crying. Everyone thought it was sweet. No one knew I didn't understand how he could love someone so clearly when



he couldn't speak to me like I mattered.

Not everything ripens at the right time. Some hands never reach in.

Now he's a seasonal guest. On New Year's, he asks how school is. I say "It's fine."



Last week, I found a Liaohua candy under my desk, the kind my grandmother used to give me. I thought of her hand tucking it into my fist. Of my father, silent in the doorway. Of my brother's breath on my collar.

And for the first time, I didn't think of the crack as a flaw.

Maybe some fruit is meant to split, so it can feed someone else. Maybe love shows up as silence. Or candy. Or the way someone carries the weight that isn't theirs.

I'm learning to live in the space between the crack and the seed. To bleed a little and still offer fruit.

Even split open, I am still fruit.
Even flawed, I am still becoming.
Even bruised, I carry what came before,
and I feed what comes next.

Somewhere, another fruit will ripen too early. But here, in the warmth returning to the windowpane, something begins again.



Dear Youth,

The first thing that came into my head when starting this letter was how to end it.

“Love”? I think I’ll save my love for you when I’m older.

“Best”? Too much for what sometimes seems too little.

“Sincerely”? See, that’s another one that I feel takes more time to say and mean, time I don’t think I’ve had enough of yet. But you’re friends with time anyway, so while we’re at it, tell her to visit me more.

“Warm Regards” seems bigoted, because there is no warmth in what you have to bear: pain, worry, aimlessness, irritation. Elastic bands around the wrist, packed suitcases hidden in the closet, unsent letters, unreturned calls. Air – a lot of it.

I envy you, Youth. But not in the same way most do.

Most would probably sign off this letter without anything but their name, proof that they were once your resident. A reminder for you, of what to carve into that cemetery you keep behind our homes. We’d do anything to know the sultry dirt we step on remembers who we once were.

“Tiger”. “Champ”. “Doll”. “Kiddo”.

The discontinued Monopoly pieces, the dust on the SpongeBob DVD stacks, the bits of left-behind crayon stubs, the crumpled and torn pages of the diary. I know you keep them. I see them everywhere.

Dear Youth, I think it’s cruel you have us live in a graveyard.

But I envy you because you aren’t burdened with the stress of how to sign off a letter. No images of unapproving adults or chatter from the popular kids; least of all the echoes of your shower thoughts when you lose at the staring contest against the mirror.

You are all of that, but you don’t have to live with it.

So it’s a pity I’m writing a letter to you that you won’t understand, an offering of my piece of you that you already carry. After all, I am only another infectant of your being.

But take care of those behind me. Remember their names.

Yours,
Emmie



遥望

涛雨霏霏风袅袅，
袅枝点水碧波迢。
迢望青山云曳腰，
腰中杯水心陶陶。

Gazing Afar

Soft rains weave through the whispering breeze,
Breezy twigs trace ripples on the seas.
Seas mirror hills in waists of mist,
Mist like, my cup holds joy kissed.

Author: G12 Phi Richard Li
Designer: G12 Gamma Alice Qin

02 Journal

“Cool Dad” or “Dad Dad”:

Why would the creator of a trillion galaxies become angry if you have sex with your boyfriend or eat bacon for breakfast?

Author: G12 Kappa Tony Liu

Designer: G12 Delta Rebecca Kuang

It is common conception that the average Chinese child in a conservative family is raised on the father's yardstick. That is a completely delusional, falsified, and prejudiced perception of our education system.

We are taught the metric system, so it's actually NOT a yardstick, but a meterstick. It's always better to be precise.

Faced with this social context, naturally God, the “father” of all beings, may be perceived as a punitive “Dad Dad” rather than a friendly “Cool Dad”; the “Dad Dad” exerts punishment for deviations from his instructions and demands the strictest of discipline, whereas the “Cool Dad” is happy as long as you grow up to be a nice, smiling kid. Educationally, both types of dads have their merits and drawbacks; religiously, well, I personally prefer to pose the question in person as late as possible. What type of “Dad” is he, then?

In the cosmic office, the CEO in his office is chuckling at the employees' construction: a gigantic Lego tower stretching from the coffee machine to His glass doors. He notes with a mixture of pride and exasperation, “this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do”. Even so, the Lego tower would be a futile effort, trying to reach Him who is unreachable except by a devoted heart; a nudge in the right direction was pivotal. With that He split the immature yet ambitious young people into project groups on five isles, from which they, despite initial difficulties in communication, made full use of their initiative to generate ideas that would light up the world (“Tower of Babel”, Genesis 11:1-9).

Why did God show such lenience to mortal impertinence? Indeed, if the conception of God were harsh and vindictive, and if he should be angry for bacon as breakfast or sex with one's boyfriend, shouldn't he also exercise divine fury for the fact that mere mortals may dream of reaching His residence?

Instead, this divine nudge – corrective, not punitive – was a serenely confident acknowledgement of mankind's initiative, of humans having nothing “restrained from them” in their exercising of their free will, which the creator has endowed upon them so that they could utilize it wisely under His proper guidance. In this essay, I am going to argue the alignment of



mortal free will and divine will as the ultimate, desirable condition of human conduct, whether in consuming a commonplace breakfast favorite or in conducting sexual intercourse with devotion and mutual consent. If mankind meets this condition, they have also met God's desire, and will not be met with divine anger.

How then, may such alignment be achieved? The answer, as Jesus explains, is to love one's neighbor as oneself.

During an initiation event, a rookie raises his hand and asks: "how can I get myself a lifelong contract?"

The CEO says in reply, "what does the employee manual say?"

"Well sir," the young man says uncertainly, "you love the company with all your heart, your soul, your strength, and your mind; and love your co-worker as you would love yourself."


So, the CEO replies, "U-huh, spot on: care for everybody. It seems your road is clear!"

Trying to save face, he persists, "like, everybody everybody? Who is 'co-worker' then?"

The wise explains patiently, "there was once someone who had a heatstroke in the company elevator and his coffee spilt all over his shirt. An HR rep ignored him and passed him by, and so did a manager, carefully not to step onto that puddle of Latte, but a secretary stopped, checked his pulse, drove him over to the hospital, and covered the medical bills. Who do you think was a real co-worker to the fainted man?"

"The one who had mercy on him."

"You're damn right." Thus, the conversation ends ("The Good Samaritan", Luke 10:25-37).



As such, God's demand for universal mercy is exemplified by the Good Secretary, who succeeds in "loving thy neighbor as thyself" and showing sympathy rather than selective apathy. More importantly, the Good Secretary performed the words of God by his own free will; focusing on this instance, one may further interpret the interaction between free will of the mortal and divine will of God.

Regarding mortal freedom, John Locke defines it as being able to govern oneself while being bound only by the laws of nature. As he argues in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, liberty is "the power to act or not to act... according to the determination of the mind" (*Locke, Essay 2.21.47-48*); in his *Two Treatises of Government*, he elaborates on our constraints imposed by the creator: the "law of nature", which charges everyone with reason, harmony, and prohibition of mutual harm (*Locke, Second Treatise 2.6*)

Within these arguments, an explicit tie is observed between the "workmanship of one omnipotent, and infinitely wise maker" and the maker Himself. Individuals are deemed free to operate as they please, obliged only by God's rational principle to preserve oneself and others for the benefit of mankind; in spontaneously performing goodwill, the Good Secretary does just that. Such is free will of mortals and God's guidance under which free will is most suitably exercised.

Back to religion, the holy son himself conducted the most noble action of compassion to the world – being crucified for the sins of the world – voluntarily. Out of similar rationality and compassion, though on a different scale, the Good Samaritan aids the fainted man while others avoid the coffee spill. In this way, the determination of the mortal mind aligns with that of the God divine – the free will with God's will, the moral law of individuals with the ultimate "law of nature". As the Good Samaritan preserves life and dignity and banishes the tempting negligence, God's will is merge

with an individual's free will, and this alignment is manifested in an appropriate decision based on the rulebook of morality and reasonability. Thus, it can be argued that individual actions founded on the basis of compassion and "coworkerly (neighborly) love" are desirable in the eyes of God, for these actions, whether or not they bear His name, have fulfilled His divine will for the harmony and wellbeing of His subjects.

However, on numerous occasions, our well-intended actions, such as having bacon before work and conducting responsible sexual intercourse before marriage, may be at odds with God's apparent commands; on what basis should we act, then?

One morning, the cosmic CEO calls His assistant over, and tells her to notify Pete, His trusted department manager, to hold a lecture for the interns at the company. As soon as she leaves the office, He Skypes Pete, and says the following:

"Hey Pete, I just bought us a Google Drive subscription so we could work on cloud from here on out!"

"Surely not, boss!" was Pete's reply, "I mean, I have never used anything unstable and immature."

The CEO speaks again before hanging up, "Do not call anything unstable that I have bought for us".

With that, he ponders over his dilemma, and his impending lecture to the interns- immature punks, the lot of them, says Pete under his breath.

However, as he kicks off his lecture and sees the curious and freckled faces in the audience, he starts to realize the potential of the youth, and the vigor that the company would gain by embracing the dawning tech and talent. With that inspiration, he says to the crowd,

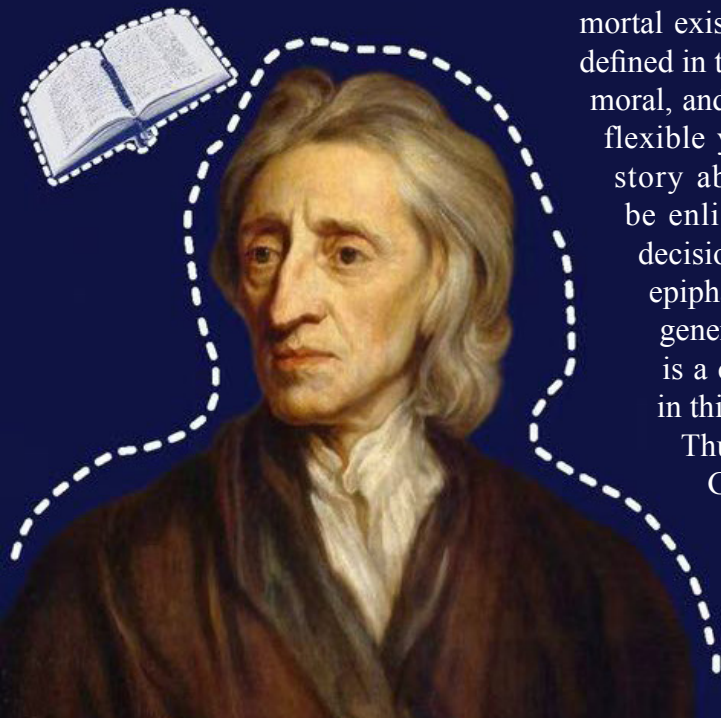
"From rumors you probably heard I am no fan of interns. But today, the big brass has shown me that I should call anything unstable or immature. To everybody here: welcome!" ("Peter's Vision", Acts 10:9-16)

In this story, "Google Drive" represents the foods that Peter was religiously barred from, and the "interns" stand for the Gentiles, who had previously been excluded from the Christian faith. As God upturned His rules with divine revelation, He reminded Peter to do the same, to speak to the Gentiles and spread the Gospel. While it might appear as God being untrue to His commands, God's will for harmony and wellbeing remains unchanged.

Peter's unwillingness to use consume products made from "four-footed animals" –bacon included – was a reflection of the Old Testament dietary laws which distinguished Israelites, god's chosen people, from others, and the mortal reliance on established rules to guide behavior. Yet God's will far exceed the confines of secular laws, for as Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE), prominent Christian theologian, philosopher, and bishop, explains in his City of God, "the true God... disposes and directs all things to the end which He has appointed, according to His own good pleasure" (Augustine 5.11, p. 201). In other words, God's disposition may involve the guidance of

mortal existence, rules and men alike, to fulfill his desire, which is defined in the previous section as harmony achieved by spontaneous, moral, and rational decision-making. An example of this outwardly flexible yet intrinsically adamant pattern could be found in the story above: He bends the dietary rules so that Peter could be enlightened. In this case, the rational and compassionate decision, as requested by God, was to draw from the heavenly epiphany and embrace Gentile interns to promote harmony and general good; to adhere blindly to pedantic conventions, then, is a choice of questionable wisdom for it would achieve little in this scenario.

Thus, rules that mortals may perceive to be set in stone by God are in fact flexible under His disposition, to encourage the exercising of free will for universal love and wellbeing. If a mother were to prepare for her children

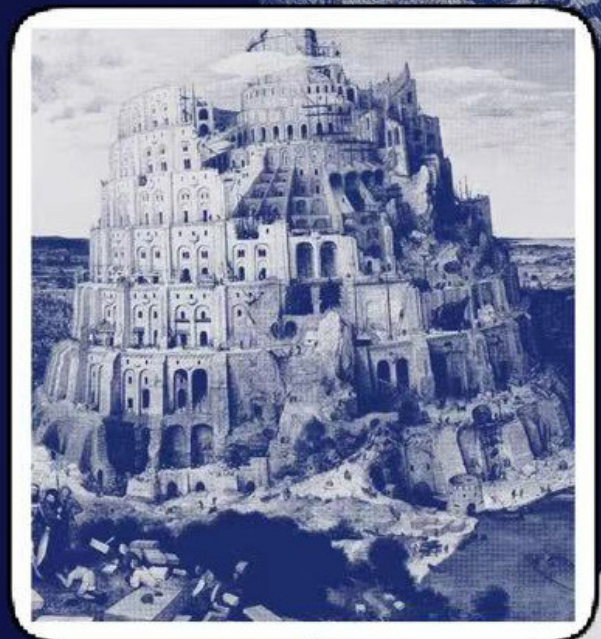
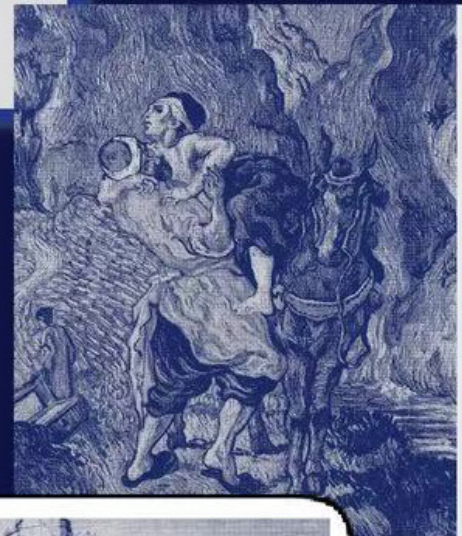


a hearty breakfast of bacon-and-eggs, energize herself with the food before they get up for school, and hurry off to work, she has indeed served God's will by exercising selfless love, an act comparable to the Good Samaritan in caring for others without return. On what basis should God, any god, be infuriated by her devotion to family, her genuine love for her offspring, and her ultimate attachment to God's will, regardless of her belief? Similarly, a love-bound couple, when conducting responsible sexual intercourse, have not deviated from God's disposition; rooted in mutual respect and trust, such demeanor, instead of being sinfully and irreverently flirtatious, reflects love ordered toward the good of others; such love is not incompatible with one's love for God. After all, marriages at the time of the Bible were mostly hurried social arrangements involving two kids in around their high school Junior year (Coogan, p. 87); their immaturity would deem them only fit for following established rules, rather than reflecting on the essence of their relationship: is it built upon mutual respect, love, and devotion for each other and for God? Or is it an unfeeling routine, a regrettable choice, or worse: nothing at all? The 2000-year-old "boyfriend and girlfriend" imagination cannot encapsulate the timeless perspective from which God sees mankind; modern loving couples, in contrary to utilitarian marriages, boast no less devotion than God demands. As long as compassion, love, and care guide conduct, free will is still in accordance with God's will for harmony.

he same framework of reasoning may apply to every manifestation of mortal will, which is to say, nearly every mortal demeanor: if the "determination of the mind" aims at harmony and wellbeing of the world beyond oneself, then the free will is in alignment with the divine will: the will to choose to lend a hand to a neighbor in a puddle of Latte, to choose to embrace the stranger after a godsent epiphany, to perform selfless love with scrambled eggs and crispy bacon, to demonstrate devotion and absolute trust with mankind's oldest and most innate know-how.

If mortal choices are made rationally and compassionately for the wellbeing of others, such as those explained above, God has no reason to exercise fury on individuals adhering to His will.

At the end, a simple and straightforward answer to the prompt would be: no, He doesn't look back in anger for free will exercised for moral ends. Whether you store your sheets locally or on Google Drive, eat Spam or Greek yogurt for lunch, as long as you love your co-workers and do what you can for the company, rest assured, the celestial CEO won't fire you.



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Air

Author: G12 Gamma Joshua Ma
Designer: G12 Eta Emmie Zhang

I particularly love Russian movies about World War II. Recently I watched a movie called *Air* (Воздух). Story is about a group of young girls who, during the most difficult time when Stalingrad was surrounded, joined the war to form a flight special forces, with the mission to quickly take to the skies and counterattack the German airforce in a suicidal manner when the Germans launched surprise bombings on Stalingrad.

One reason I love Russian movies is because I long for Russia. Although I have never been there, I have experienced the vast snowy fields of Russia through Yesenin's poems since I was a child. From Repin's paintings, I have seen the pain and perseverance of the barge haulers as the ropes cut into their shoulders. I know Tolstoy's 'War and Peace,' and how General Kutuzov, defeated the previously invincible General Napoleon.

Russian films often favor poetic long shots to showcase the vast natural landscapes: birch forests, snowy fields, endless wheat fields, and leaden, heavy, flowing clouds. Then, the camera slowly pans down to reveal small figures, one by one, in tattered clothes, with steam rising from their

breath when they speak, weathered faces, and only the undying light in their eyes.

Air starts in a similar way. The protagonist is a ballet dancer who carries the stigma of her family being traitors, and were exiled to Siberia. As a soldier, she is too thin and small, but her pure and determined blue eyes and high-bridged nose already indicate that she will be a strong warrior.

The background of the movie often features intermittent symphonic fragments by Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich. Especially when the heroine appears alone on the screen, facing the death of her comrades, personally shooting injured warhorses to death, etc., her inner monologue often reflects that she is still an elegant ballet dancer. She spins madly on the stage until she collapses.

When watching Russian films, I am repeatedly struck by the portrayal of suffering, which is so comprehensive and detached. The characterization is done with very few words, often by subtle facial expressions. The heroine of this movie has very

very few lines throughout the two-hour performance. Memorizing lines for the actor was an easy job, but the practice of body language and facial expressions must have been exhausting. Her love for her comrade is shown simply by putting her cigarette into her mouth. The sorrow over the death of the warhorse is conveyed by her trembling hands as she tidies its disheveled mane. The brutal battle was depicted by the sudden splashes of blood on the fighter jet's canopy. After finally killing the German ace pilot who had long threatened Stalingrad, she ran out of fuel and was unsure if she could land safely. She heard her teammates calling her over the radio, urging her to land. However, the greatness of this movie lies in the fact that, to avoid crashing the plane into her own camp, she chose to plunge into a nearby icy lake. As she approached the water, she called out her parents' and teammates' names, saying, 'I'm coming!'"

These scenes embody the so-called collectivist spirit of Russia, a silent protest demanding individuals to sacrifice unconditionally for the collective and so-call slogans. The heroine chooses to participate in the war not for any ideology, but for her parents and her hopeless stage. She chooses to die in the end also for her beloved comrades. She is not a traditional heroine with any ideology.

This movie is completely different from Hollywood blockbusters. There are no flashy war scenes, no larger-than-life protagonists, and the motivation for fighting is not to save all of humanity. The heroine's performance as a fighter pilot is amateurish from beginning to end, but the spirit of 'living and dying with dignity' runs throughout the film.

Again, there is an omnipresent sense of desolation and grandeur. The director uses snowy fields, wastelands, and leaden yet transparent lakes to showcase a profound Russia.



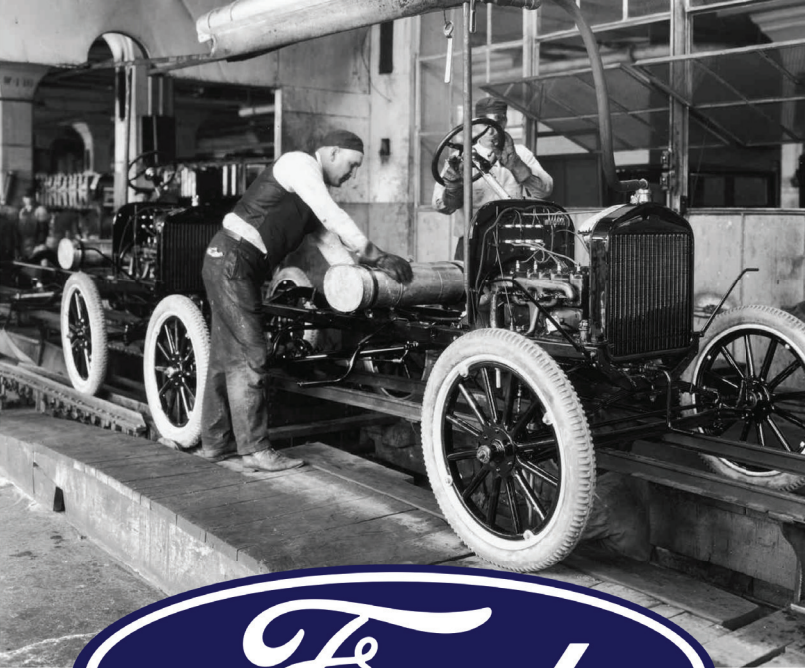
The Questioned Value of **GOVERNMENT-OWNED** **ENTERPRISES**

Author: G12 Kappa Jessica Tao
Designer: G12 Eta Lucas Zhang

Imagine one day you work in an environment where all firms are owned by the government and charities. Of course, everyone has stable employment without having to worry about losing their jobs, but the opportunities for advancing in career are nearly impossible. For example, in countries like North Korea, the government regulates the production level for most products, and nearly one hundred percent of firms are controlled by the state (Heritage Foundation, 2025). These enterprises are more stable and focused on the citizens' living standards and the country's development, but they have fewer incentives to innovate, impeding long-term economic expansion. In contrast, most people currently live in countries where most companies are profit

motivated, with a small number of industries controlled by the government. Take the United States as an example: over ninety-nine percent of firms are held privately chasing profit only (Pernell & Wodtke, 2024). Under this situation, firms actively engage in market competition and innovate to gain profits more frequently, improving market efficiencies, but sometimes commit amoral behaviors, harming consumers and hindering the country's growth. While profit-driven firms may engage in deceptive practices, democratic governments can rectify such issues through regulatory policies or legal frameworks. In contrast, reforming state-controlled enterprises is inherently challenging due to bureaucratic inertia and systemic rigidity. Thus, profit-driven markets, when balanced by effective governance, remain more adaptable to societal needs and economic evolution.





BEHAVIORS CAUSED BY THE PROFIT MOTIVE

Profit-motive firms often engage in market competition to improve their efficiency to generate more profit. Given limited market capacity (consumer demand for goods and services), enterprises must actively outperform rivals by optimizing production, enhancing product quality, or differentiating services to seek more profits. By contrast, as Khikmat stated, failure to respond to consumer needs or adhere to competitive norms results in market exclusion, underscoring the importance of firms to engage in competition (2021).

This rivalry fosters productivity gains; firms adopt cost-cutting measures (e.g., organizational reforms, supply chain optimization) to produce higher-quality goods at lower cost (Hong, 2022). Hong cites Buccirossi et al.'s finding, demonstrated that "aggregate competition policy indicator (CPI) has a significantly positive correlation with productivity growth", validating competition's efficiency-enhancing effects (Hong, 2022).

Furthermore, to secure a long-lasting place in the market, profit-active entities invest in innovation to make irreplaceable products. Through innovation, profit-motivated firms reduce production costs by refining production techniques. Additionally, consumers benefit from lower product prices, made possible by enhanced production methods.

For instance, Ford designed the moving assembly line for building cars and evolved the automobile assembly process in 1913, which increased daily production from hundreds to thousands of cars and reduced the assembly time from twelve and half hours for each vehicle to just ninety-three minutes (Green, 2024). This mass production of the Model T enabled Ford to cut production costs substantially, driving down the price-per-car from eight hundred and fifty dollars to two hundred and sixty dollars, which also make them more accessible for more middle-class people (Green, 2024). Such breakthroughs not only drive profit margins via cost reduction but also benefit consumers through affordability.

Despite these benefits, profit maximization can incite immoral competition, monopoly, and excessive emissions, causing market inefficiencies and negative externalities for society. Profit-driven firms may fabricate "optimistic and unrealistic messages in annual reports" to achieve previous financial targets, thereby inflating investor confidence and distorting capital market (Vlad et al., 2011). In addition, to face the intense competition these firms sometimes commit fraudulent financial reporting, employee fraud, and money laundering (Vlad et al., 2011). Competition and innovation also foster anti-competitive behaviors: dominant firms may leverage cost advantages to deter new entrants, driving markets toward monopoly.

Moreover, profit-motivated firms overuse free-fee shared resources, which causes environmental degradation, such as overfishing, deforestation, or air pollution, finally transferred the externalized cost to the public. These immoral practices lead to some negative consequences for the economy and society like misleading investors, disrupting the operation of the capital market, and misallocating resources to less productive producers. Also, corporate tax evasion reduces federal fundings for important sectors such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social welfare, which hinders economic growth in the long run. However, firms controlled by the government encounter more severe corruption issues due to more centralized power structure and larger capital volumes. With fewer people managing the funds and greater potential profits from corrupt practices, these firms are more prone to bribery.



BEHAVIORS OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Government-owned and charitable firms prioritize societal stability over profit. Unlike profit motive companies pursue long-term profits, state-owned companies rely on state funding or endowments, enabling them to pursue non-financial goals such as employment maintenance, industry participation, inflation combat, defending against foreign owned enterprise, foreign currency accumulation, and regional development (Zhou & Hui, 2003). These measurements not only promote greater socioeconomic stability by ensuring job security, but also foster national development through inflation control and domestic industry protection. Similarly, with government-owned enterprises (SOEs), charity-owned companies also aim to solve social problems, increase opportunities for science development, provide charitable assistance, and enhance human development possibility (Kovalchuk, 2021). Given the similar objectives of government-operated and charity-owned enterprises, these entities will be referred to as non-profit motivated institution.

Non-profit-driven companies exhibit profound innovation barriers rooted in agency risks and performance measurement gaps. Managers in these companies prefer status quo maintenance with conservative decisions over risk R&D investments as innovation carries high personal accountability costs without corresponding profit rewards (Jia, Huang, & Zhang, 2019). On the other hand, due to the market's inability to establish metrics for evaluating managerial actions and the real effects of innovation, non-profit-driven companies were judged solely by the number of innovations rather than the actual changes brought by innovation. Under this inefficient evaluating system, non-profit-driven companies could gain a good reputation through simplistic means: prioritize the quantity of innovation over quality, paying less attention to enhancing the products' novelty, usability, and convenience (Jia, Huang, & Zhang, 2019). This kind of innovation demonstrates limited practical impact, failing to enhance productivity or contribute to societal welfare.

The multiplicity of objectives in non-profit motive entities often leads to contradictory strategies. As Verhoest et al. (2004) argued, managers face a dilemma between the public welfare initiatives and economic goals by generating cash flows. Under this situation, managers may implement the “don't rock the boat syndrome” policy to prevent alienating any powerful groups (Verhoest et al., 2004). Therefore, “redundant workers are not dismissed, error-prone staff are not disciplined, obsolete plants continue to operate, and necessary organizational changes are not made,” which erodes the firm's efficiencies (Verhoest et al., 2004). Even worse, the conflicting strategies sometimes foster factionalism and form power relations (Verhoest et al., 2004). Specifically, managers would strive to increase influence and consolidate their power in the workplace, ultimately wasting resources that could be used to improve the industries, which further creating barriers for company development.

Comparison between profit-driven companies and non-profit motivated firms

As noted, profits motivate enterprises to improve economic development by stimulating competition and innovation, yet excessive focus on short-term gains may jeopardize long-term market ecosystem and lead to market failures. Facing the trade-off between short-term development and long-term sustainability, many people prefer non-profitdriven institutions to control all companies to maintain stability. However, market failures - such as amoral behaviors, monopolization, and pollution caused by profit-seeking - may be addressed through government policies. Yet insufficient market development caused by governments' conservative approaches is more difficult to prevent.

Specifically, fraudulent financial reporting by profit-driven firms and employee data leaks may be prevented through strengthened corporate governance, enhanced internal controls, firewalls, and password protection. Money laundering can be solved by the Patriot Act, which intensified the government's surveillance and investigative powers, and “communication and information sharing between regulators and the regulated organization” (Suryanto & Komalasari, 2021). Moreover, monopoly has already been inspected by the federal laws, such as the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890, the Clayton Antitrust Act in 1914, the Federal Trade Commission Act in 1914, and the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act in 1976. The government also limits the companies' pollution through a combination of laws and agencies, such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency, and huge fines for excessive sewage discharge. These laws and policies mitigate the harms of market failures while fostering a stable, long-term market environment.

As noted, profits motivate enterprises to improve economic development by stimulating competition and innovation, yet excessive focus on short-term gains may jeopardize long-term market ecosystem and lead to market failures. Facing the trade-off between short-term development and long-term sustainability, many people prefer non-profitdriven institutions to control all companies to maintain stability. However, market failures - such as amoral behaviors, monopolization, and pollution caused by profit-seeking - may be addressed through government policies. Yet insufficient market development caused by governments' conservative approaches is more difficult to prevent.

Regarding non-profit-driven institutions' dilemma, some argue that incompatible practices could be resolved by separating social, political, and economic objectives. However, managers in these organizations may resist implementing such reforms due to high risks of negative outcomes. Worse still, active and effective innovation appears unattainable without oversight from higher authorities. As these non-profit-motivated organizations operate directly under government control, the state cannot effectively monitor or manage them. Unlike profit-driven enterprises, the deficiencies of state-controlled firms prove difficult to remedy. Consequently, the optimal solution may be to permit natural market development with profit incentives under governmental policy guidance.

In conclusion, profit-driven enterprises continue to serve as the main engines of economic growth, while regulations help restrain their ethical shortcomings. Their embrace of sustainability stands in stark contrast to the innovation stagnation in non-profit systems. The ideal economic model combines market dynamism with stakeholder governance, ensuring productivity benefits both shareholder returns and societal welfare. As institutional economics demonstrates, true resilience emerges from balancing competitive incentives with social accountability - a synthesis that will shape the future of global capitalism.



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Feeling Economy: How AI Redefines Resource Allocation in China

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| 1. Introduction

Human labor has experienced three major economic phases starting from the Physical Economy through the Thinking Economy up to the emerging Feelings Economy. Recent transitions reflect rising complexities in work assignments while technology, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI), brings profound changes in these assignments. AI is increasingly taking over logical tasks, pushing humans to focus more on emotional tasks. The progress of AI technology leads human work to move toward emotionally complex activities, establishing the Feelings Economy.

The Feelings Economy transformation has created substantial effects throughout every sector of the economy, from primary industries through secondary industries to tertiary industries. AI is increasingly being integrated into various production sectors, with different effects depending on the industry. Workers in agricultural and manufacturing sectors must develop technical skills, social awareness, and empathy to achieve

successful automation-human integration. In agriculture, manufacturing, and production industries, workers increasingly need to combine technical skills with empathy and social awareness to ensure effective integration of automation and human collaboration.

The rising dominance of the tertiary sector in the economic industrial structure requires professional employees to show strong emotional capabilities across different service sectors. Emotional intelligence is becoming a critical factor in various sectors, especially where human interaction is crucial. Healthcare professionals need to display empathy toward patients, customer service staff need to maintain professional relationships with care, and educators need to connect emotionally with their students. The human ability to handle emotional responses remains essential for these positions, even though AI demonstrates excellent performance in logical and analytical duties.

| 2. Macroeconomic Analysis

2.1 Unemployment

The rising implementation of AI and automation technologies leads to job losses for manual, cognitive, and routine tasks. Robotics and self-driven AI systems now do the work of assembly line workers, while financial sectors use AI algorithms for data studies and trading operations that formerly required human intervention. Technological advancements have displaced many workers because their skills correspond to automated roles.

2.2 Income Inequality

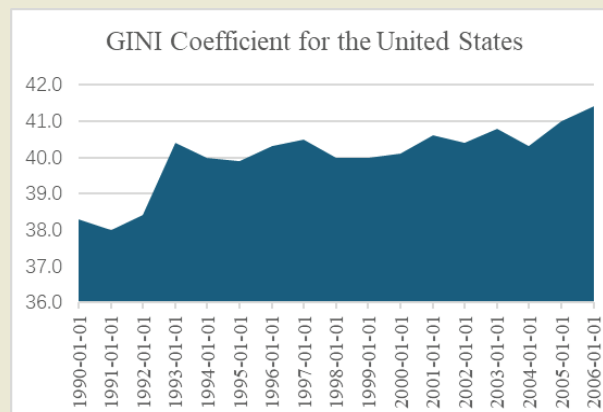
AI technology development creates a rising problem regarding income inequality. The value of capital and intellectual properties generates earnings that expand faster than earnings from labor. Wealth is increasingly concentrated in tech-centric economies, leading to greater disparities in wealth distribution. This results in an expanding gap between wealthy people and ordinary working people, reflected in rising Gini coefficients across many nations.

2.3 Immobility of Capital

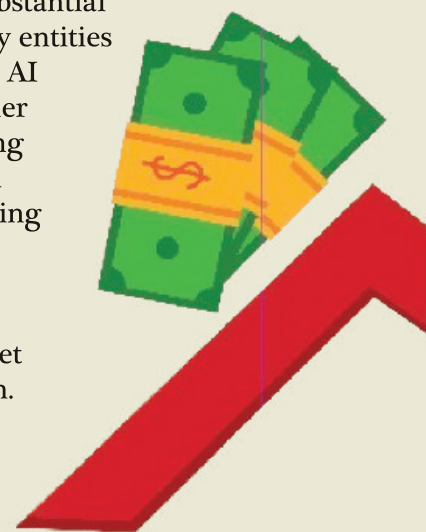
Economic structural reforms generate unintended negative consequences, including harm to social mobility. The development of AI and new

technologies creates barriers to job transition for workers who need to learn new skills, as training opportunities often lack sufficient support and equality.

2.4 Market Monopolies



Large corporations with substantial capital reserves are the only entities successfully implementing AI solutions, preventing smaller businesses from maintaining competition. This results in larger organizations obtaining marketplace superiority, controlling markets, and building monopolies or oligopolies, reducing market competition and innovation.



| 3. Microeconomic Analysis

3.1 Consumer Hotspots

The transition to the Feelings Economy provides new consumer hotspots. Consumers are drawn to products and services that offer both functional benefits and emotional values, such as sustainable or ethically produced items. Emotional intelligence is becoming a critical factor in sectors like customer service, healthcare, and education, where human interaction is crucial. Consumers make decisions based on intuitions and justify them with logic, increasing their purchase of products with added emotional values. This shifts demand curves to the right, indicating an increase in quantity demanded and price.

3.2 The Impact on Traditional and Emerging Industries

In the long term, some monopoly of emotional products may emerge due to branding, which can establish customer loyalty and low demand elasticity. Traditional industries, such as finance and banking, face challenges adapting to this new consumer behavior. However, they can adapt by combining AI technology. Emerging industries have advantages in meeting emotional needs but may face a lack of funds and professionals compared to traditional industries.

3.3 Changes in the Nature of Human Labor

The nature of human work is transforming from the Physical Economy to the Thinking Economy and now to the Feelings Economy. In the Feelings Economy, emotional intelligence and soft skills are becoming the most valuable assets. Jobs in customer service, for example, require employees to empathize with customers, understand their feelings, and resolve issues in a caring way. The top industries in the Feelings Economy, such as community and social services and healthcare support, all require strong soft skills.

| 4. Challenge of Transition

To adapt to the transition from the Thinking Economy to the Feelings Economy, the core economic problem lies in resource reallocation amidst industrial structure changes. If not addressed, workers unable to transition to the Feelings Economy will face reduced earning potential and job loss. Traditional companies may need to transform to produce goods with emotional values, facing challenges. Emerging companies that serve customers with emotional products. Companies will experience a decline in productivity and lose

their competitive edge, while countries may face difficulties in international trade.

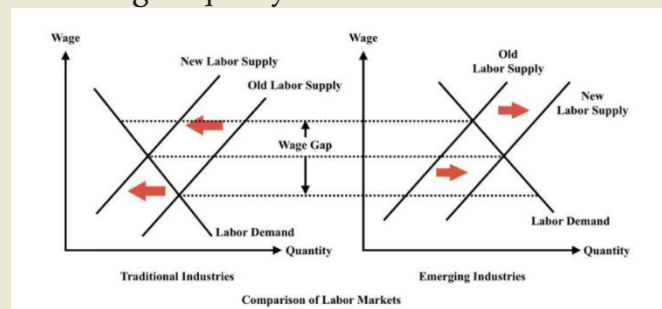
| 5. Solution I: Skill Training for the Unemployed

The change from the thinking economy to the feeling economy can be done smoothly through skill training (re-education of labor). The skill training should be provided for unemployed people because they are most vulnerable economically. If it is hard to start re-educating the large unemployed population at once, the government can divide the unemployed into groups based on their age and education background and start the education program from the group with the youngest members with the lowest education background. The reason is that as the marginal cost of training one more individual is the same, the younger the individual, the larger the marginal social benefit, because he or she is going to work longer after the education program. Furthermore, citizens with lower educational backgrounds are more economically vulnerable because they are less unique and competitive in the labor market. As a result, the elasticity of demand for firms choosing employees is high, leading to workers suffering from low wages. The money should be provided by local governments through issuing new bonds, and the participants of the program should pay back the money and the interest after being employed. The program should continue a ten-year cycle, starting with the next re-education program after the bond from the previous phase has been paid off, because this program can constantly update the human capital to match the development of technology and keep the country ready to meet new challenges.

Our team developed an "Education Cost Model" to evaluate the feasibility and affordability of this policy for both individuals and the government. After calculation, we found that employees who get new jobs only have to pay 5.24% of their earnings annually for ten years to pay off the loan and interest.

This solution is effective in resource reallocation. Nowadays, the labor supply for traditional industries is

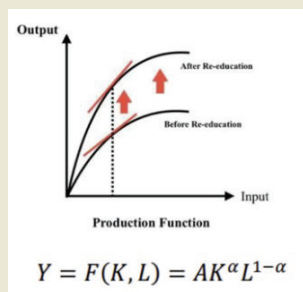
high while the labor demand is decreasing with the introduction of artificial intelligence. Comparatively, the labor demand for labor in emerging industries increases while the labor supply remains low because many people do not have the opportunity to learn to be qualified for these jobs. As a result, a wage gap exists and causes inequality. By providing affordable skill training to workers, the labor supply in the emerging industries will increase, gradually decreasing inequality.



In sharp contrast, the solution can bring tremendous benefits in the long run. It can decrease the structural unemployment problem caused by the transition from the thinking economy and the feeling economy by reallocating the labor resources effectively, while all the stakeholders can benefit. Workers receive affordable skill training, earning higher wages and more equal working opportunities. The government obtains an increase in human capital, promoting the economy and enhancing the country's international competitiveness. Companies attract skilled workers, improving their productivity and expanding their profits. Consumers process more choices for products, increasing their opportunities of buying a satisfying product with a high utility. Indeed, this national program itself provided numerous working opportunities as well. Therefore, this is a win-win-win-win-win solution.

Modelling the national output using the aggregate production function against the three economic variables, it's clear that the value of the variable grows given the re-education of labor. Re-education make workers more skillful to handle emerging jobs, increasing the marginal product of labor, which not only increases labor employed, but

also their potential wages. Accordingly, the total production curve shifts upward due to the increase in marginal product of labor. As demonstrated in the book *The Indispensable University*, "increasing



relevance" of education "counts for much of the" economics.

In the short term, this policy may slightly influence the economy negatively. As government deficit spending increases, the interest rate will increase. This increase may depress investment. According to the AD/AS model, the aggregate demand will shift to the left, and a negative output gap is created. Meanwhile, in the short run, part of the labor force is not able to work because some workers need to attend the training.

6. Solution II: Collaboration between AI and HI

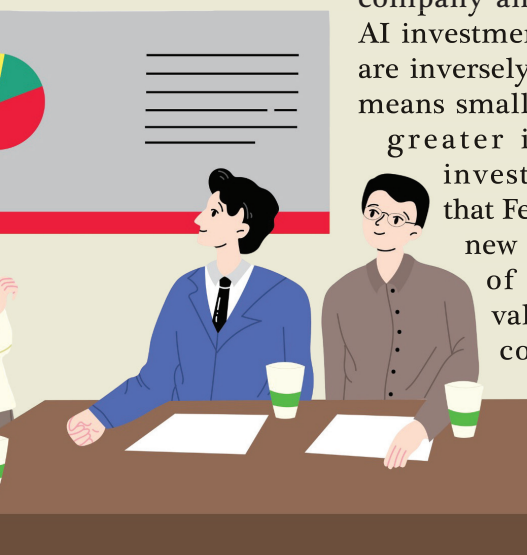
To transit smoothly into the Feeling Economy Era, corporations across industries should embrace the collaborative intelligence of Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence. The general trend of integrating AI has become an irreversible trend since corporate AI investment witnesses sky-rocketing growth to maintain their competitive advantages and differentiate in the competitive market. Incorporation of AI proved to be a strategic move for companies aiming to drive growth and innovation across industries as nearly half of early adopters of generative AI (48%) expect investment returns of 100% or more over three years.

Specifically, the 3 levels of AI will cooperate with human workers for different services, reshaping the nature of work. Repetitive or physically-demanding work will be done by mechanical AI to reduce cost and boost productivity. In terms of thinking tasks including data analysis and intelligent push, humans will be augmented by AI's strong analytical and learning abilities. Furthermore, humans with strong socialization and communication skills will be responsible for managerial and service work to meet consumer's increasing utility on emotional values. In this way, the cost

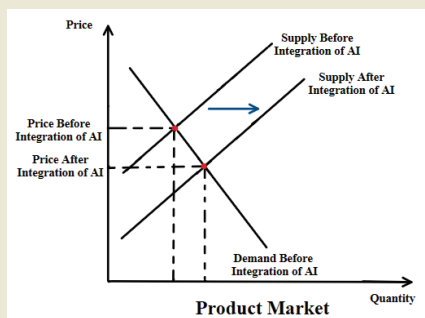


for both labor and capital will be minimized while personalization benefit of thinking AI and relationship enhancement from feeling people will be maximized, contributing to profit maximization. By integrating the advantages of both humans and AI, the specialized division of work moves capital to the area in the greatest need: empathetic human capital to feeling tasks; productive physical capital AI to thinking and mechanical tasks. As a result, collaborative intelligence propels mobility of capital.

In addition, firms with varied sizes require different levels of collaborative intelligence. There is a positive and significant association between company size and total AI investment. Moreover, the size of the company and the proportion of AI investment in the total assets are inversely proportional, which means smaller companies attach greater importance to AI investment.



Considering that Feeling economy offers new market opportunities of emotional product values, small-scale new companies are more likely to focus on AI investment as a key to easier market entry, higher profit and innovation that creates more inelastic demand. As new companies adopt AI investment strategies and tap in to emerging consumer hotspots such as AI therapy and elderly care, the capital will flow into frontier markets that requires development and expansion, facilitating efficient capital allocation. Therefore, start-up companies with smaller size should allocate a large proportion of their total asset towards AI investment.



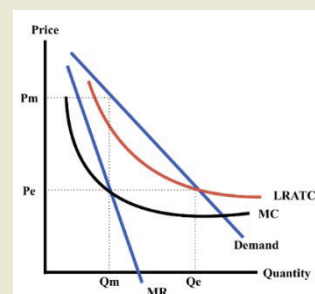
The reduction in marginal cost in turn influence the product market where supply shift rightward as well, achieving higher affordability and equilibrium quantity.

Consequently, the additional emotional value and tailored services improves product quality and consumer satisfaction, leading to surging marginal benefits and consumer demand. This positive feedback loop propels more in-depth collaboration between AI and humans, raising consumer surplus even further.

Nevertheless, since AI system training is based on existing data online, which reflect societal stereotypes, this method creates asymmetric information where AI made unfair treatment of marginalized communities based on biased data. Accordingly, overreliance on AI in dealing with ethic-based jobs such as criminal justice, lawsuit and healthcare raise the serious concern of discriminating decision making and further exacerbating social inequality. Initiatives in establishing algorithm justice is required to eliminate this marginal external cost and negative externality.

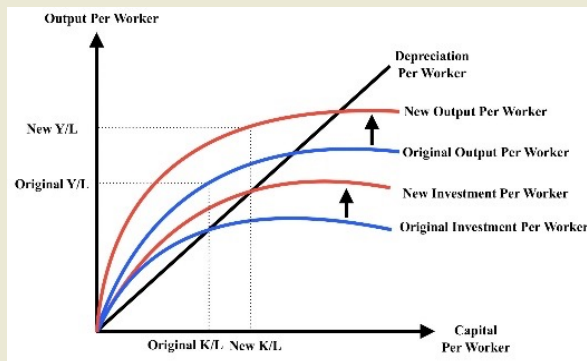
Transitions towards the collaboration of AI and human labor poses short-run challenges and long-term sustainability for corporations. In the short run, AI investment serves as large initial fixed cost for companies amid the fierce market competition. This reduction in firm performance is particularly pronounced in technology-intensive and small firms.

Over time, the introduction of AI systems in corporations enables automation and data analysis operating 24/7 with diminished additional expenses, significantly reducing marginal cost. What's more, the combined system of AI and human labor lead to lower costs and higher productivity, fostering market efficiency. AI incorporation is linked to increased sales, employment, and market valuations, primarily through product innovation such as trademarks and patents. Thus, the high fixed cost and low marginal cost firm structure is similar to natural monopoly, further contributing to technological advancement and economies of scale.



On a macro level, wider incorporation of AI in the original working structure of greater

number of firms will promote technological progress of the whole country. Based on the Solow Growth Model, both production curve and investment curve shift upward after AI investment. As a result, the country can achieve a new steady state where capital per worker burgeons, stimulating long run economic growth. The promising prospect of AI for macroeconomic development suggests that AI



investment could boost China's GDP by 26% which is equivalent to \$7 trillion in 2030.

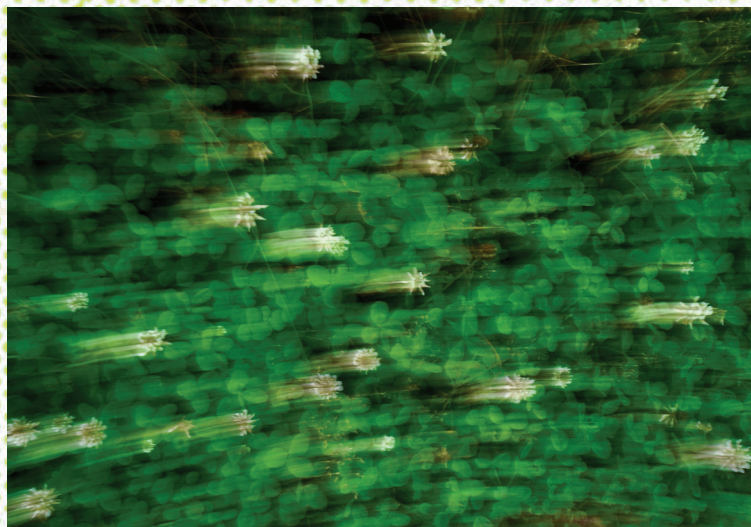
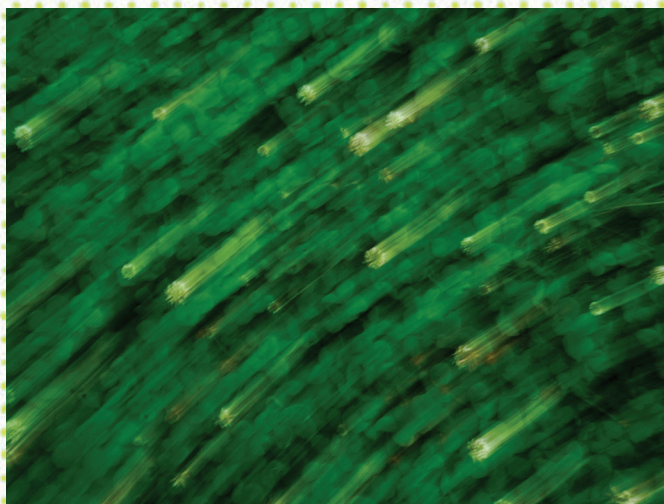
7. Final Decision and Conclusion

A Feeling Economy transformation strategy must consider the irreversibility of technology as well as social equity needs. AI-human collaboration solution (Solution II) is the most optimal since it aligns with irreversible global trends and assures more economic profitability. Allotting tasks to individual artificial intelligence systems ensures minimal operational expenses, increased innovation levels, and service quality. Small companies demonstrate adaptive resilience by reallocating higher value to AI investments, enabling them to expand into unexploited sectors such as AI-assisted care services for the elderly and mental well-being. In comparison, Solution I, though it can reduce inequality, involves significant government spending and could lead to short-term economic challenges, such as higher interest rates and a potential negative output gap.

Nevertheless, Solution II involves indirect threats that include wealth disparities and technical biases, which require active remedy. Heavy dependence on artificial intelligence technology presents the main concern about it reinforcing existing economic

disparities. The existing capital-intensive and technologically advanced firms will take the largest share of AI-driven productivity benefits while forcing less advanced sectors and workers to remain relinquished. Extreme dependency on technology exposes organizations to system vulnerabilities, thus requiring strong regulatory measures to protect against such potential risks. Therefore, integrating elements of Solution I (Skill Training) is critical. The viability of Solution I (Skill Training) depends on the conversion of AI-adopting firms to sponsor retraining of employees, which allows underemployed employees to secure new work while providing business innovation and job security. The AI-human collaboration model needs proactive employee development processes from Solution I to guarantee technological development without sacrificing social equality. Organizations that implement systematic skill training programs for their employees ensure adaptable workers who can benefit from AI technology at the same time. Thus, implementing Solution II by integrating Solution I enhances business efficiency and market competition while creating an inclusive economy, which establishes social stability for the long term.

03 Art



Summer, Life, & Passing Time

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Designer: G12 Eta Emmie Zhang

Clusters of white flowers waving in a summer breeze are a common sight on a hazy afternoon in mid-July. The gentle swaying of the flowers conceals an unutterable beauty that allures passers-by to sit down and indulge in a momentary tranquility. This series of photos captures the nameless flowers in their natural, dynamic state. Using a slow shutter speed, the traces of the flowers in the wind are etched into the pictures. A month later, they would finish their brief stay in the world, wither and dissolve into the vicissitudes of life, awaiting their return next year.

The painting depicts an old man who holds an umbrella and a cigarette while strolling in the rain alone. His frowning expression may imply that something in life made him exhausted, so he wants to relax himself by taking a walk alone. However, the setting of a rainy day somehow romanticize such passive emotions, which is due to the misty color of the background--a mix of light purple, grey and blue, mimicing an ambiguous dream or a starry night. This not only magnifies the profile of the man but also enables him to blend with the foggy environment. Thus, the posture of the man and the the misty setting make the the act of strolling in the rain a very romantic thing.



Designer: G11 Sigma Sherri Sun

Author: G11 Omega Doris Tao

Strolling in the Rain

04 School Events

BAZAAR: A CELEBRATION OF ART & EXPLORATION

Author: G12 Gamma Joshua Ma
Designer: G11 Pi Isabel Wan

On May 30th of this year, the school held a truly exciting bazaar. Students showcased their diverse talents in music, dance, performance, design, academics, and presentations. Their hard work lived up to their expectations, making the school summer vibrant and full of energy and enthusiasm.

Entering the gym, the dancers performed the classic musical "Lala Land," opening the bazaar with graceful movements and youthful energy. Following this, students showcased their favorite art forms, such as Chinese dance and a K-pop medley. To the sound of romantic and passionate music, the students began their respective bazaar activities.



The students then noticed an art exhibition next to the stage. These exhibits were projects from art classes like Studio Art. They fully demonstrated the students' craftsmanship and collaborative skills. Furthermore, the students combined a variety of artistic styles, from Modernism and Symbolism to ancient Chinese and Gothic influences. These works perfectly aligned with the bazaar's theme of "Unite, Innovate, Excel." Through collaboration, the students innovated, unleashed their imagination, and pursued artistic excellence and perfection. They were undoubtedly cross-cultural thinkers.

On the other side of campus, students and teachers with special performing skills continued to showcase their talents and enrich the campus. The drama troupe performed an innovative and interactive skit that delighted the audience and instantly dispelled the students' usual academic and application pressures. Meanwhile, the orchestra continued to perform elegant music, introducing the audience to the elegance and gentleness of music. The folk music ensemble, focused on playing the guzheng and flute, brought the vast landscape of ancient China to life before the audience, inspiring the students to marvel at the grandeur of traditional Chinese culture.



The students in the choir and band used their microphones and guitars to highlight the colorful and youthful energy of campus life, and also expressed their longing for the future world. Back in the gymnasium, the school was holding a Best Singer competition. The classmates, familiar and busy on weekdays, had now become idols on stage. They sang their beautiful visions of life and the world, as well as their nostalgia for the past. Each one had found their own stage, a place to be the protagonist.

Outside the stadium, the Science Fair was underway. Students collaborated in groups, conducted experiments and analyses within their science courses, and presented their findings in academic language, demonstrating their exceptional academic and creative abilities. Some students leveraged their programming and engineering knowledge to design a ball-throwing device that actually managed to shoot a basketball through the hoop. Others, drawing on their passion for food, experimented with physical chemistry to create unique ice cream. Others studied the sound characteristics of musical instruments and analyzed their relationship to acoustic principles.



After a day at the bazaar, the students not only had a blast, but also gained a wealth of new knowledge and showcased their talents. A semester can be incredibly busy and demanding, but gatherings like the bazaar allow students to de-stress and relax, allowing them to focus more easily on their studies and applications.

With another class marching towards their exciting future, our school honored its graduating students in a heartfelt ceremony filled with tradition and celebration. This year, the graduation ceremony was titled “Chuanhai” (Rivers and the Ocean). To our supportive faculty, Chuanhai is a metaphor for the relationship between them and the students—the ocean, full of knowledge and support, guides and unites the rivers. To the honorable students, Chuanhai is where they sailed through their hard work, embracing the bright future. Chuanhai is also a representation of inclusiveness, which reflects the spirit of our campus.

The gymnasium is filled with memories for students here, it marked the beginning and the end of their high school journey. Today, it looked a little different—flowers and balloons decorated the hall, chairs were neatly arranged on a red carpet. Parents and teachers witnessed with pride as students walked inside of the gym, with gowns and caps neatly worn, and smiles on their faces. Upon the stage, our hosts, also our memorable graduates Thomas Zhang and Izzie Fang warmly welcomed every guest and announced the start of today’s event.

川海

Sailing Toward the Horizon: Graduation of Class of 2025

Author: G11 Phi Avery Liu
Designer: G11 Sigma Sherri Sun



The ceremony began with a warm and uplifting speech from the principal, Dr. Jia. He congratulated the graduation of the class of 2025, and expressed his gratitude to the board, the faculty and the parents who supported the class along the way. It is this very communion spirit that bounds the WLSA community together, empowering the students with courage to explore and keep challenging themselves. "In the future, many things in our lives might change, but there will be one thing that keeps persistent, that is your emotional bond and your connection with WLSA", he said. Indeed, as our principal, Dr. Jia has always been encouraging students to embrace the opportunities and the challenges the AI era brings to us with a broad view and a firm attitude. With a goal to cultivate leaders, he makes WLSA to be not only where students learn knowledge for school and for life, but also a warm shelter for us as international students who challenge themselves in their travel across the globe.



As the ceremony continued, International principal Marcel Gauthier took over and gave another inspiring speech to the listeners. Learning from his own experience with distance running, he took it as a metaphor for students' academic life in college. With over 40 years in the field of education, he reminds us that we should start slow, observe and keep learning. He acknowledged the difficulty of handling academia and life, emphasizing on building a pace, just like in distance running. He also underscores the importance of perseverance, saying, "If you want to lead the run, do what others don't dare to do. After you climb up the hill, you are going to find independence, leadership and pace."

Graduation is not only a farewell, it is also a celebration of growth and new beginnings. Our valedictorian Nancy Wang told her story with WLSA with the theme of “voice”. The alarm in the morning campus, the laughter and shouts on sports fields, the singing and chanting in Encore, her musical club... Looking back her story with WLSA, she expressed her firm belief of “never hide your passion”. In the end, Nancy encouraged that students should take passion and intrepidity with them, taking over the voice of WLSA along their way. Parent representative Ms. Li ended up the speeches with her story with her daughter Clinton, sharing heartfelt memories and expressing her gratitude for the support and growth they experienced throughout the school years.



Following the opening remarks, Mr. Gauthier and Ms. Frances Zhang conferred students the diploma, marking another milestone. Graduates walked across the stage one by one, each name met with cheers and proud applause. Right after, Mr. Taylor Stockdale and Mr. Raymond Yin awarded the students who made distinguished efforts in their Capstone and EPQ programs with honor diplomas.



Perhaps the most emotional moment came when the students expressed their gratitude to the faculty and their parents. Graduates presented flowers to the faculty with genuine appreciation, and teachers responded with a warm smile, just as they always had throughout the years. Students then opened envelopes and read heartfelt letters written by their parents as graduation gifts—letters that looked back on the journey so far and offered hopeful wishes for the future. This was the moment when the emotional bond revealed itself, when students, teachers, and parents were no longer just roles in a school, but a tightly woven community bound by years of growth, care, and shared memories.

As the ceremony came to a close, smiles, hugs, and a few tears filled the room. It was not just an end, but a new beginning—one filled with hope, gratitude, and the promise of what lies ahead.

Cinema Picks

Designer:
G12 Eta
Emmie Zhang



Recommended by G11
Gammu Angela Li

Recommended by G12
Eta Emmie Zhang

The perfect movie - period. Every time this movie is brought up, my immediate response is that every single aspect was executed to perfection. An especially crucial movie for our current normalized lack of intimacy from social media, and growingly, AI.



This movie took what worked so well in the first film and expanded on the idea. What is introduced in the sequel are more complex, intimate, and relatable emotions like anxiety. If you have anxiety or have had it in the past, this film will be somewhat cathartic, allowing you to experience healing and normalization of a rather isolating experience.



Recommended by G12 Theta Seven Xu

The one movie that perfectly intrigued me into liking F1. The roaring engines, camera work, and killer plot, along with the lovable character of Brad Pitt, make it irresistible. It is SUPER immersive! Highly recommend it, even if the portrayal of female characters could've been better. Now I'm a huge Leclerc fan and never miss an F1 race.



Recommended by G12 Eta Emmie Zhang

An unbelievably charming story that ends up extremely emotional even with its slice-of-life tone. This movie is the perfect example of a comfort watch that can both make and break your day, with my experience often wrapping up in unexpected tears and bursting laughter. It has spent time on my Letterboxd four favorites!

Blackout Poetry Challenge!



Instructions:



Scribble over the following collection of movie titles however you please to create your own work of poetry!

Good Will Hunting Captain America Whiplash Saltburn Ocean's 8 Dead Poets Society Fight Club Little Women the Perks of Being a Wallflower Parasite Pulp Fiction Black Swan Avengers aftersun Mamma Mia! Inception Dune Back to the Future Sleeping Beauty In the Mood for Love 10 Things I Hate About You 2001: A Space Odyssey Tangled Gone Girl Brokeback Mountain Almost Famous Hereditary Paris, Texas her Baby Driver Knives Out Moonlight La La Land Challengers But I'm A Cheerleader Portrait of a Lady On Fire Wicked Mean Girls the Good the Bad and the Ugly Joker The Sound of Music Poor Things The Hunger Games High School Musical Twilight Life is Beautiful Manchester by the Sea Lady Bird The Notebook 13 Going on 30 My Neighbor Totoro Pearl When Harry Met Sally American Psycho Stand By Me Barbie Soul Dirty Dancing I Saw The TV Glow Carol The Conjuring Whisper of the Heart Blue Velvet Legally Blonde Singin' in the Rain The Greatest Showman Anora Catch Me If You Can A Complete Unknown Do The Right Thing Alice in Wonderland Bring It On No Time to Die She's The Man Tick, Tick... Boom! Final Destination Companion A Real Pain Romeo+Juliet Me Before You Midnight in Paris The Edge of Seventeen Smile Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs Crazy Rich Asians Train to Busan Freaky Friday Rocky How to Train Your Dragon Everything Everywhere All At Once To All The Boys I've Loved Before Pretty Woman Girl, Interrupted Buffalo 66 Love Actually Home Alone Before Sunrise Anyone But You Anatomy of a Fall Bottoms About Time Past Lives Don't Worry Darling My Policeman Eternals Turning Red Your Name The Little Mermaid The Lobster Grease A Star Is Born It Lost In Translation Requiem for a Dream Guardians of the Galaxy American Beauty Despicable Me Brave School of Rock Pirates of the Caribbean Scream Fantastic Beasts The Great Gatsby Nope Superbad Fantastic Mr. Fox Zodiac The Godfather Spider-man Shutter Island Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind The Grand Budapest Hotel The Shining The Watermelon Woman Saving Face Never Rarely Sometimes Always Girlfriends Nickel Boys Sinners It's Such a Beautiful Day The Iron Giant Mary and Max Memoir of a Snail Robot Dreams Finding Nemo Fallen Angels Tokyo Story Boyhood The Florida Project Brighter Summer Day Queer Call Me By Your Name The Goldfinch Silence of the Lambs