

Deep Down – Leonardo, Year 6, VIC

Sometimes I forget who I am. I forget why I am here. I forget what I'm doing. I forget everything that leads me to this moment.

My subconscious consumes me and steals my focus away, just like I was never there... When this happens, I begin to search my memory and piece back what I lost. So I begin the dive deep down, into my chamber of memories.

Who am I?

My back is aching! An irritating squeal echoes through the cabin. A little screen plays a movie hazily. I look around. A small panel overhead reads, "China Airlines, Melbourne to Taipei Taoyuan Airport." Of course, my trip to Taiwan. I'm sitting next to someone, my sister.

"Nice nap?" she asks politely.

I nod tiredly and smile. I pull the plastic curtain up and stare outside at the pitch black, dark clouds floating the roaring ocean. I remember this memory.

Is this who I am though?

An adventurer? Ready to explore a new land? No, it can't just be this. There must be more. So, I continue my journey, deeper and deeper down...

In this memory, I'm holding my tennis racquet. Anxiously waiting for the opponent to serve. My mind goes haywire. Match point for them, you're gonna lose!

He tosses the ball up and slams his racquet over the ball. The ball rockets through the air at sonic speed. Blood pumps through my body. I extend my arm. It feels like it's going to break. Adrenaline driving me, I hit the ball. It soars through the air and lands. Out. My opponent cheers and dread fills my body. It squeezes its way through my body and pushes all joy out like a ravaging storm taking over a pleasing and sunny day. I want to scream, at the top of my voice, I never want to stop, never. I want to cry, and let the waterfall run down my tense face. Luckily though, it never comes.

Is this who I am?

A loser? It can't be. I just have to dive deeper. So I dive again. Deeper and Deeper.

I'm running. Faster than ever before. I'm tired though, so insanely tired. The 800m, yes, it has to be. I enter the final corner. I see an opponent following on my shoulder as I enter the final 100m. He goes all out and pulls ahead at extreme speeds. 80m left. I begin my sprint,

and launch off the ground. I begin to close the gap. 60m left. All out! My heart pumping against my chest. The lactic acid burning my throat. 40m left. Exhale, inhale, exhale, inhale. I reach into my body and begin to take all my remaining energy out and use it. 20m left. I bound harder and make my legs sprint vigorously, my body screaming in pain, but I ignore it, I begin to pull ahead. The finish line in sight.

Now that I'm ahead, things can only get worse from here. In a few unmemorable seconds, it's over.

I'm a victor. A winner. That can't be all, a competitor, I'm more than that. I continue my dive. Deeper than ever before.

I need to find who I am.

I'm sitting in an agonizingly hard chair. My brain buzzing! I stare at the page... A lot of scribbled numbers and letters spread all over the page. Maths? Specifically the Maths Olympiad. What are you concealing? I ask the page. My hand begins to move. It scribbles down words, numbers, and images. Minutes pass. I get closer and closer to solving it. Tell me. My hand continues to move to scribble more and more. I voyage deeper and deeper through the vast world of numbers. I do it. I find the answer. I begin to calm down.

Is this who I am as a learner?

It's not, I need to find myself. So I dive one last time. Deeper and Deeper.

I stop. I've hit rock bottom. I'm confused. That's it? That's when it comes to me.

I know who I am, I'm a winner, a loser, and adventurer, a learner but best of all I am me. And no one's the same.

I sit back in my chair and stare at the blank piece of paper. I know what to write. My hand begins to move.

Sometimes I forget who I am...