

# My Relationship With Reading

*by* Jowell Tan

What if I said;  
I never liked actually *reading* -

the black words on white paper  
straining my eyes  
flying through my mind  
forming sentences I struggle to make sense of  
before the next Capital Letter arrives  
before I eventually slam the book shut  
veins in my brain throbbing from overwork  
and I have to close my eyes to rest

what if I said;  
I liked *everything else* about reading -

the weight of it  
in my hand as I carry it  
on my shoulders as I put it in my bag

the feel of black printed ink  
on white matte paper  
words, worlds apart  
coming together to create story  
and plot  
and emotion  
the soft *smack* of pages meeting each other when I close the book  
closing my eyes to capture the world materializing in my mind

the sense of accomplishment I get when I finish a book

“yes, I've done it!”  
I've done something that wasn't the Internet  
or my phone  
but me  
in a room, with my hands and my imagination  
watching something being made  
and I feel like I'm being involved  
in something great

and that's what I have to say  
About reading.

