WEEKEND *LUXURY*

PERSONAL ESSAY

Today is not a beach day

// ESMERALDA VAZQUEZ-FERNANDEZ

Almost every day in Southern California is a beautiful day. Except for this past winter break, when we got enough rainwater to fuel a couple AI generators. In California, there is a certain ease about not having to carry a puffer everywhere and never needing to open the weather app. As a SoCal resident, I've never known a real winter. However, I quickly learned what winter entails and it was at first a cultural shock.

Every morning here in New Haven, I study the day's weather forecast before going outside. Don't get me started on wind chill and water pouring from the sky. I learned about the water cycle in eighth grade, but I had never seen it in action until now. Weather is an added stressor to my day-to-day schedule. I remember dropping my study guide into a puddle during a midterm season rainstorm. Torrential rain is harsher than sea spray. I longed for the days where I would take a beach trolley to work. Picking up my study guide made me wish it was still possible to get a sunburn — a comfort I didn't appreciate until now. In general, outdoor activities are more of a rare occurrence in New Haven as the temperature declines. This is an unfamiliar phenomenon for those who grew up frolicking outside all year round. This time of year, there are no more hikes up East Rock with friends. Twin treadmills in the Morse basement will have to do. In the peak of the cold, I wish I could just drink an iced matcha latte without my fingers suffering from hyperthermia. Maybe that's why they invented gloves.

There is a loss that comes with winter. In a literal sense, sunlight is robbed by the winter season, leaving room for seasonal depression to creep in. That impending loss is often compounded with dread and anticipation of the sunless season.

I could be thinking about my life at home, where there's sun and beach days all year round. Instead of dwelling on what I can not control, I choose to see the new experiences with the new season. The infectious joy of seeing people excited for the first snow. Feeling partly jealous of people's beautiful Penny Lane coats. I have a newfound gratitude for the sunny hours in the afternoon. Winter can be romanticized, just like a tourist beach town in Orange County. New daily traditions, like waking up early in the morning to drink my iced latte inside of the Acorn instead of outside. Sleeping over at my friends dorms instead of bracing a cold late night walk back to mine. Movie and game nights seem more appealing than wandering the streets. There is almost a child-like wholesomeness that comes with winter. Maybe it's the nostalgia of the season, but either way it's a new feeling.

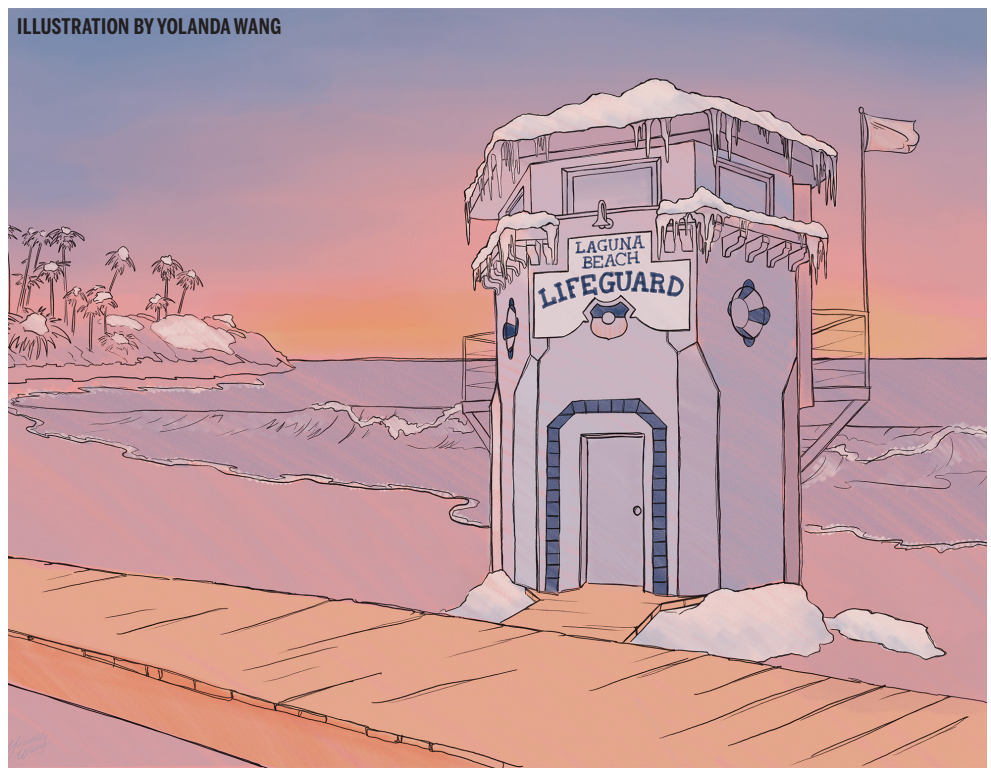


ILLUSTRATION BY YOLANDA WANG

I still long for the comfort and pleasure of SoCal's undeniably great weather, but I never forget why I moved across the country. I moved to grow, experience the unfamiliar, and be in a city where I would likely never get the chance to live in. Winter is just a season, just as college is just one experience. Embrace it.

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REVIEW

Serving ego and ping-pong in "MARTY SUPREME"

// BY STEPHANIE ALSTCHUL

The phrase "MARTY SUPREME CHRISTMAS DAY" was plastered across my social media for three weeks preceding the release of Josh Safdie's newest project. Before I knew what the film was about, I associated it with traffic-cone orange, an exclusive bomber jacket that seemed to adorn every A-lister's outfit and a blimp that flew over Tyler, The Creator's set at the Camp Flog Gnaw festival in Southern California. The elaborate marketing scheme for "Marty Supreme" blurred the lines between promotion and performance; it promised me one of the best movies of the year, and I'm pleased to report that, in some respects, the film delivered just that.

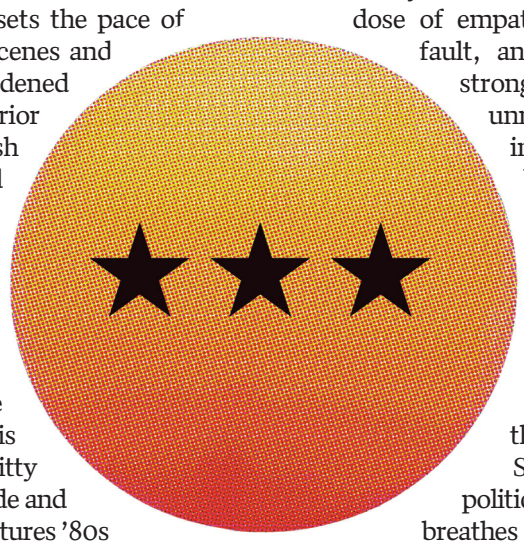
The film follows Marty Mauser, played by Timothée Chalamet, as he hustles around '50s Manhattan preparing for the International Table Tennis Championship. Marty sets the pace of the film, running in between scenes and falling through floors, emboldened by the notion that he has a superior purpose in life. He can accomplish anything he sets his mind to and hasn't a shadow of a doubt that he will achieve his life's singular goal.

The camera loves Chalamet; he's often center frame and is rarely out of the audience's view. In this way, Safdie builds the setting around his title character. We see the gritty visuals of the '50s Lower East Side and Brooklyn, but the soundtrack features '80s standout tracks with textured synths from Bowie, Blondie and Tears for Fears. The characters, too, seem to be plucked out of a 1970's "Godfather" version of New York. This disorienting collision of eras is at odds with Marty's fierce sense of direction. As viewers, our North Star is an acne-scarred, unibrowed protagonist who, surprisingly, is an Olympic-level athlete on the ping pong table … and in bed.

The hustle-mentality seems shared by actor and character, and in many ways Marty's desire for stardom parallels Chalamet's own exponential trajectory. Many view Chalamet's Marty performance as a highlight of Chalamet's career. The range demonstrated by Marty's Machiavellian self-preservation — which is so at odds with boyish sensitivity of Chalamet's Elio in "Call Me by Your Name" — is particularly striking.

As a character, though, Marty fails in his simplicity. We see little of his backstory and rarely, if ever, see a different side of his neverending drive. He's an antihero, at his best, and entirely dislikable at his worst. Marty's idea of his "purpose" is perhaps intended to inspire audiences, but the numerous consequences of his ego, namely the iconic spanking scene in which Chalamet refused to have a butt-double, leave me unconvinced. Many of the arthouse films A24 produces and distributes have incredible, intricate messages that can be illusive to the viewer on a first watch. Films like "Moonlight," "The Florida Project" and "Lady Bird," also starring Chalamet, are incredible examples of the studio's most auteur-driven projects. "Marty Supreme," boasting the slogan "Dream Big" as though it were a radical call-to-action felt a little more shallow than I would have liked.

In fact, the film's message seems most aligned with Chalamet's co-star Odessa A'zion, who plays Rachel Mizler, Marty's married girlfriend. She has the "big dreams" that A24 proposes: dreams for a better life and freedom from an emotionally abusive relationship. She has her own kind of hustle, but unlike Marty she seems to balance it with a healthy dose of empathy. She's unafraid to admit fault, and even less afraid to stand strong behind her beliefs. Marty, unmoving and uncompromising, in turn highlights Rachel's own humanity, but their dynamic is anything but mutualistic. Her absence on screen during the finale seems a consequence of Marty's egotistical self-preservation and obsession with legacy. The camera, perhaps intentionally, mirrors these vices.



Set in such a tumultuous time politically, "Marty Supreme" breathes life into its depiction of the Jewish experience in America and abroad. While visiting England to participate in the first Table Tennis Championship pictured in the film, Marty labels himself as "Hitler's worst nightmare." The film treats each Jewish experience uniquely, culminating in a wonderful display of reinvention, self-determination and pride in individual struggle. Wally, a supporting character played by Tyler Okonma, or Tyler, The Creator, introduces the Black struggle into the mix as well. His casual antisemitism seems to roll off the tongue, deflected by Marty's casual racism in return. The two are a dynamic duo, with Wally being the one character who comes close to checking Marty's inertia.

As a whole, the film is a rollercoaster of plot twists, class clashes and a struggle for greatness against all odds. While it runs the risk of idealizing the self-centered egoism that is precisely what our world needs less of, it ultimately presents several stories of humanity in the face of all sorts of hardship. In the end, the slogan "Dream Big" may be a reckoning with who is allowed to do so.

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SEX ON THE WEEKEND

Back to Basics

Pining after your FroCo? Dying to get on the orgy panlist? Sick of seeing khakis on men? You're in luck! Welcome to Sex on the WKND, the Yale Daily News's anonymous column dedicated to answering your burning questions about sex, love and anything in between. Obsessing over sex is a Yale tradition as old as the Oldest College Daily itself. Whether you have a seminar with a hookup-gone-wrong or accidentally sent a raunchy text to your chemistry study group, Sex on the WKND is ready to help.

You've made it through a long and hard and messy semester. Too many failed threesomes, bisexual awakenings and hallway crushes that left you alone on Friday nights with your hand in your pants. Some of you left your dorms for winter break with an unopened Trojan condom in your desk and an itchy ingrown crotch you shaved for no damn reason. But don't worry, it's college. Somebody, somewhere, will be willing to bump uglies in the Sterling 6M stacks. You don't need to be that desperate — unless you were dropped during fall Leo rush — but for all the sexually-interested goons gracing our campus this spring, here's a guide to the possible experiences this campus has to offer.

THE MARRIAGE PACT PARTNER: Whether it's true love at first sight or a last ditch effort to avoid being single for a brutal New England winter, the two of you can shack up like a Discord moderator and his kitten until April. You can eat every meal together and do all the things that couples should. Are you sexually attracted to him? No. Is he consistent with the "good morning princess" texts? Hell yeah.

THE HOT MESS: Emphasis on hot. You didn't think she'd be that clingy when you asked her out, much less so when you shackled yourself to her with a bottle of champagne. You only figured out her attachment issues after Thanksgiving break, when you were stuffed with more "I miss you" texts than the turkey. She spends her days, and nights now, liking Instagram reels about yearning and ex-boyfriends. You might've missed her if she hadn't plastered herself all over your Instagram feed with faux-hickeys that were a little too hard to miss. She's hot though. When running it back this spring, proceed with caution and clear expectations.

ABROAD PIECE OF ASS: You left this summer with experience, but it wasn't in the classroom. You were too busy sexting, sucking, and jumping on that guy from your Econ 115 lecture that you reconnected with abroad at LSE. Is it still called crabs in England? If you're not sure, ask your crotch and the nurses at Yale Health.

THE GIGGLER: She giggled when you kissed for the first time. Cute. At your frat's formal, you told her it was your favorite thing about her. Sweet. That changed when she couldn't stop laughing before or after you put it in. Only her gay best friend knows why. The two of them will make eye contact with you from across the Berkeley dining hall. He will look at you with sympathy and a bit of pity, hard to tell. And she will giggle.

Submit tips to Sex On The Weekend on yaledailynews.com.