

ONE: Jimmy's Diary



The warmest of welcomes from Amy, Andy W and myself. I'll do most of the talking, Amy will do the pics and Andy W will steal the show.

We weren't sure where or how to start, so we've plumped for Jimmy's Diary. On face value it's poignant and wonderful and then, all of a sudden, you can't breathe.

Be warned, Jimmy's Diary has a mic-drop moment ...

He hadn't been up there for years. In the faint light of the attic, the old man shuffled across to a pile of boxes that lay near one of the cobwebbed windows. Brushing aside the dust, he began to lift out some old photo albums.

His search began with the fond recollection of the love of his life. She was long gone but he knew that somewhere in these albums was the photo he was looking for. It was the black-and-white one, when she had that smile.

Setting aside one of the dusty albums, he pulled from the box what appeared to be a diary from his son's childhood. Opening the yellowed pages, he glanced over the entries and his lips turned up at the corners in an unconscious smile. His eyes shone and he chuckled aloud. He realised he wasn't just reading the words ... he could hear them, spoken by his young son who'd grown up far too fast in this very house. In the utter silence of the attic, the earnest words of a six-year-old worked their magic and the old man was carried back to a time almost forgotten.

The spidery handwriting reflected on important issues for a six year-old – school, football, holidays, arguments with his big sister – entry after entry stirred a sentimental hunger in the old man's heart. But it was accompanied by a painful memory that his son's simple recollections of those days didn't tally with his own. The old man's wrinkles became more deeply etched.

He remembered that he'd kept a business diary from around the same time. He closed his son's journal and turned to leave, having forgotten the cherished photo that had triggered his initial search. Hunched over to stop himself from bumping his head on the beams, the old man stepped down the wooden stairway to his office.

He opened a glass cabinet door, reached in and sought his business diary. He placed the journals side by side. His was leather bound, his name embossed in gold. His son's was tatty and frayed with a hand-drawn picture on the front. The old man ran a bony finger across the name 'Jimmy' scribbled on the cover.

He turned the pages of his business journal and read some of the entries. There were notes from meetings, often very detailed. Every single day was crammed with business appointments. Sometimes the evenings too. He remembered back to those times ... he sure was driven in his career. It was for the love of his family that he'd chased success so hard. The old man was drawn to an entry much shorter than the rest. In his own neat handwriting were these words, 'Wasted a whole day fishing with Jimmy. Didn't catch a thing!'

With a deep sigh and a shaking hand, he took Jimmy's journal and found the boy's entry for the same day, 4th June. Large scrawling letters pressed deep into the paper read ...

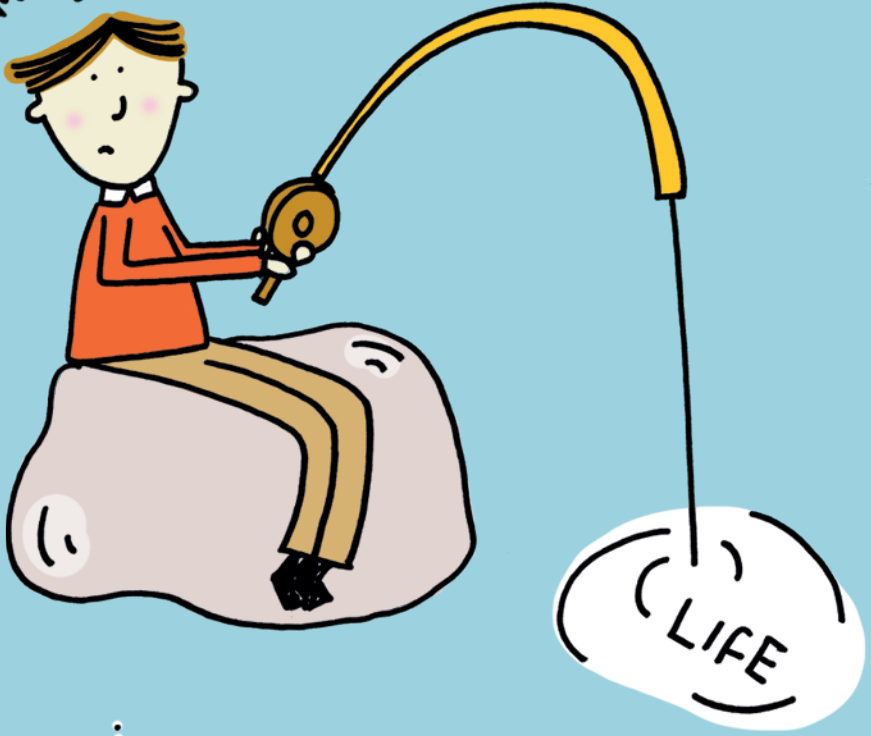
'Went fishing with my dad. Best day of my life.'

[Mic drop]



#ArtOfBrillBook #JimmysDiary

Nothing biting



Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing it's NOT fish they're after

Henry David Thoreau

philosopher, poet and political activist