

Your favourite glass - when I was a child, there was always the one glass that one just needed to hold in one's hands to enjoy cold drinks. I had several of those favourite glasses, depending on where I was or how I felt. After all, a child's world is full of new and important adventures and stories, and I'm sure if we think about it, we all know how much that teddy bear or pillow case helped us through those rough and scary times, as well as making those special days just a bit brighter. And once grown-up, we still built these relationships with objects, not necessarily to the same extent as we once loved (and possibly still love) "Muuh", "Landrover Ted" or "Muschel", but we form a bond with every day-things. My grandparents lived on a small farm in the same village I grew up in and when I visited them, my grandmother would cut an extra thick piece of the most beautifully baked German bread and make the best snack in my entire child world (although I couldn't possibly eat it now...kind of freaky combination....anyhoo, I'm digressing...) and serve it on one of those small wooden chopping boards, the kind that becomes more and more attractive as an object the more use it has seen in its life. And I would get a glass of lemonade with it (and again, I'm not sure how I actually managed to consume so many things I don't actually like (anymore)...), but the point is, I had a special glass. It lived on the shelf, next to my sister's and cousins' ones, and would only be used when I was there - at least that's what I told myself back then, and I still kind of believe it. It was a chunky tumbler with white lines and hearts printed on. The lines formed a sort of net or grid-like textures on the otherwise smooth surface and there was a small red heart printed on every other square. I loved this glass, and the lemonade or even water used to taste so much better when drunk out of this glass. My other grandmother lived a 30 minute car journey away, which took twenty minutes if my dad was driving (which, as a kid seems like magic) in a completely different world. Until you learn how distance and time works, being somewhere different to where you wake up every morning, is special and just different, even if it's just down the road and you could be home in less than five minutes. And because my gran lived in what seemed to be a different

world, I had a completely different glass when I was visiting: a small glass tankard and instead of lemonade, I would always drink apple juice with cinnamon. And once again, I loved the glass. Just seeing it meant being there, away from home, playing with fabric swatches and hearing stories. The glass symbolised a different part of me, compared to the much loved tumbler back at the farm, which was just another personality-trade I was developing. Both objects were equally as important to me and back then I connected each glass with an individual scenario or visit – I created a token symbol for an activity in my life. To be very honest, I didn't really have a special glass at home, I had several not-so-special ones – I just used any one of them. To me, being away from home was being somewhere almost out of my control, so having a reminder and emergency-comforter that I knew *belonged* to me, helped getting over those first anxiety-ridden but important journeys into the world. Once again, I used an object to help me cope and feel happy - a glassy base camp for explorations, something I could return to when I needed it the most, although back then, I wasn't conscious of why I needed the lead crystal helper, I might not even be fully aware now – Analyse this Sigmund... As much as the objects signified a place and a situation, a feeling and different activities, the glasses had their personality, fed with notions and curiosities, tactile experiences, well, actually many sensorial information and personal, well, *Lisa'ness*. They were part of me; as much as I was part of them – they are characters in my story and without me, they wouldn't exist to the same extent in terms of their own being as they do now. Fast-forward a few years and we're on one of our family holidays in a small wooden cottage in the forest, sitting on one of the large tables in living room, which was covered in sketchbooks, pencils, glasses and plates with half eaten biscuits. And guess what, jep, I did have a favourite glass there. The cottages became more like second residence for my family. We went there at least twice a year and usually with the same people – another family who had children around about the same ages as my sister and me. And all of us had a special glass when we were there – and you wouldn't want to be the one using one

of them while we were there, it wasn't pretty, but again that's a different story.

Take any self-catering family holiday and there was a special glass to connect the memories, and even now, when I open the corner cabinet to get a glass out, I favour some over others, just not quite to the same extent.

We choose objects to express ourselves and our personality; our houses and flats are filled with belongings that either we or others close to us choose, often for reasons that are not easily pinned down. After all, as a design student I am not going to write "I chose this because it's nice or beautiful" or "I like it!" (Please bear with me here), but we often have this feeling of connection with something. As much as we unconsciously decide whether or not we like a person when meeting them for the first time, we do the same for objects. We want to play with objects as much as objects want to be played with – take a common ballpoint pen for example. I'm sure, if you haven't done it yourself, you witnessed it at least once in your lifetime: the often very annoying clicking sounds of a pen top being pressed repeatedly for no obvious reason whatsoever – just like an urge – "The top must be pushed recurrently – I cannot stop myself" [please read with a low toned in voice for maximum effect!] And the same applies to any other common objects that surround us. We use them to express our own personality, they help us cope in stressful, scary or boring times, and they are part of us as much as we are part of them. Our story would be less interesting if they didn't contain our favourite mug that we got given as a birthday present by an old school friend, or the old and rusty nail that holds an old picture frame together, or the almost ugly green plastic train that we used to play with, the squeaky chair in the corner of the garage that has a broken leg... there are millions of objects and stories surrounding us every day. Take a look around, I'm sure you'll find one object you haven't paid much attention to recently, but deep down you know you would miss it if it wasn't there anymore. Or think of the second hand shop in the next village, how many great stories are sold there every day? Objects that meant a lot to someone getting another chance to impress a new owner, dining room chair become kitchen chairs, an old radio

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become an ornament, the mismatched set of knives and forks become the latest addition to the hip café around the corner, old books hand out stories to a new generation. Old objects and old stories become new objects and new stories – and somewhere amongst all those things are my childhood heroes: my tumbler and tankard. I wonder which chapter they are on...