

Jason Lammersen

I love garage sales.

Like Indiana Jones on a great quest, I smile at the carboard sign, twisting in the wind barely holding on with the stingily applied tape, slowly but surely revealing its hidden message, 5 Wiltshire Drive. Turning my wild stallion, or more realistically, my Honda to the right, my wife, my daughter and her stuffed friend Penelope which resembled a strangled tomato held on for dear life as I slipped into the side street, ready to battle the masses that may be already there, or perhaps on approach, to the local garage bazaar.

The sale was well on the way having started about an hour ago, people from close by carrying their bargains home, a pot plant here, an old mirror there as the custodians sat quietly in their weathered camp chairs, collecting their winnings at the same time as dispensing prices.

Escaping the confines of our little white Honda, approaching with excitement as the garage looked alive with hidden treasures, our little one ran ahead as the happy and curious faces came and went. We approached the owners, they were an elderly couple, there was a certain confidence about them as they sat, I had already spied what I was looking for, a Japanese style wardrobe, tall and slim.

"Hello, I am interested in that wardrobe over there, just wondering what your best price is on it?" I asked.

"You have a keen eye, go take a good look, tell me what you're willing to pay for it, then we can go from there." the elderly gentleman spoke in a confident tone.

*A smart choice of words* I thought, heading over to inspect.

A mix of dragons and samurai, it was quite the artwork upon the outer carpentry, dragons climbing the corner poles, a battle ensuing across the front, I opened the doors, and that's when it happened, the garage sale that took me home, not to the most pleasant of thoughts from that time, but home none the less.

On opening the doors, a smell emanated from the empty space between the shelves, musty, poignant, old and airless. My nostrils filled my mind with memories of my parent's hallway linen cupboard, the hiding place for blankets and sheets alike located in pretty much the centre of the old 1900s property, wooden door of similar colour to the wardrobe before me, half a dozen shelves or so, wallpaper used as shelf lining, overfull as my parents found it difficult to let go of things. This resulted in an odd smell that never left me, I appreciated the journey as it had been years since my last visit.

A tap on the shoulder brought me back to reality.

"You alright? You look a million miles away!" my wife spoke gently, turning to look at her, she knew what my expression meant.

"\$250, and I can collect this afternoon." I blurted.

“Done.” came the response followed by me prying the cash from my wallet, passing on my number in case it was needed, my wife and I perused the rest of the couple’s wares, and yet another teddy made it into the car at no charge, not sure if I was grateful or not for that really.

But like I said earlier.

I love garage sales, so how could I be upset.