

COMING SOON

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RCA WHITE CITY CAMPUS



OF
FOOD ^ LONDON
FOOD LOVE

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY
NAYANIKA SINGH | SASKYYANA PERMYAKOVA

OF FOOD A LONDON FOOD LOVE

What does London taste like?

Thumping my head, my taste buds ask me

Is it perhaps the salty crispy flakey bite of fish and chips, oh so British.
Or is it a long found sibling from another land like
the 'national dish' of modern Britain
a warm hearty bowl of chicken tikka masala;
warm to the soul and not too hot on the tongue,
British too, but more unexpectedly.

An unconscious affair with colonialism in every bite and sip

Milk rising and simmering, with tea leaves sugar and spices
complexifying, we call it 'chai'
a cup of tea: black, with a splash of milk,
of course, not microwave heated

Questioning the complexion of the cuisine

Indian, it is not, call it Anglo-Indian, says my mind.

Maybe you bring the taste to London.

A figment of our past wired to
all senses, sometimes tangible

A fishy smell reminding me of Portugal
I dislike fish though.

The clash of cultures in a cacophony of herbs and spices
Asian fusion, as if one can't be bothered

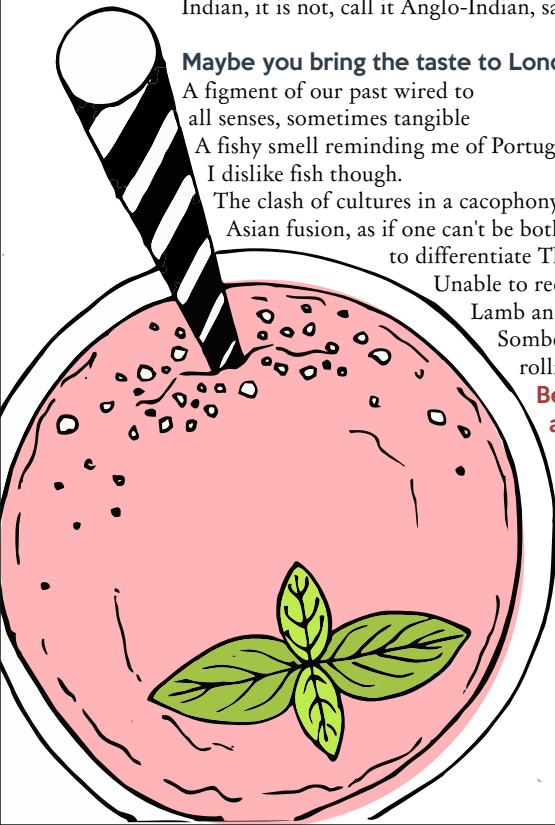
to differentiate Thailand from Japan,
Unable to recall aubergine and

Lamb and broccoli in 'Punjabi' mixed vegetables
Somber with nostalgia, reel of memories still
rolling

Between the blurry lines of appropriation and appreciation

Street food: a menagerie of adulteration

contested and celebrated alike, grown
out of love or necessity



How does London talk to your memories?

Is the taste a prism of memories made in London?
Whether we choose to gulp these delicacies down our
throat or not...

Hash browns at Maccies in the morning after a night out,
whether we entertain our taste buds with these tangible figments of past,
50 wings eaten during a night in,
their mere presence may throw us in a time capsule
ice cream from your favourite parlour against the summer heat.

The taste of London might be found at The Taste of London

these prodigies of rich yet clashing sensory opinions,
How does it smell? What does it taste like?
walking through these street food markets,
people flocking to the food stalls:
cronuts, crispy taco, katsu curry chicken
Mmm.... Hunger crawls up my throat
My taste buds ask me if akin was what you want.
The thought alone makes me gag,
but maybe that is what makes it like London.

May I call it bastardisation?

Food for thought, though not anything I would actually eat.

You are self-contradicting.

I am not alone to feel this way!

A beautiful synesthesia of colours and smells

Or should I call it renderings for acceptance

A mixture, a fusion,

Too much, mashed up and messed up.

A two-way street:

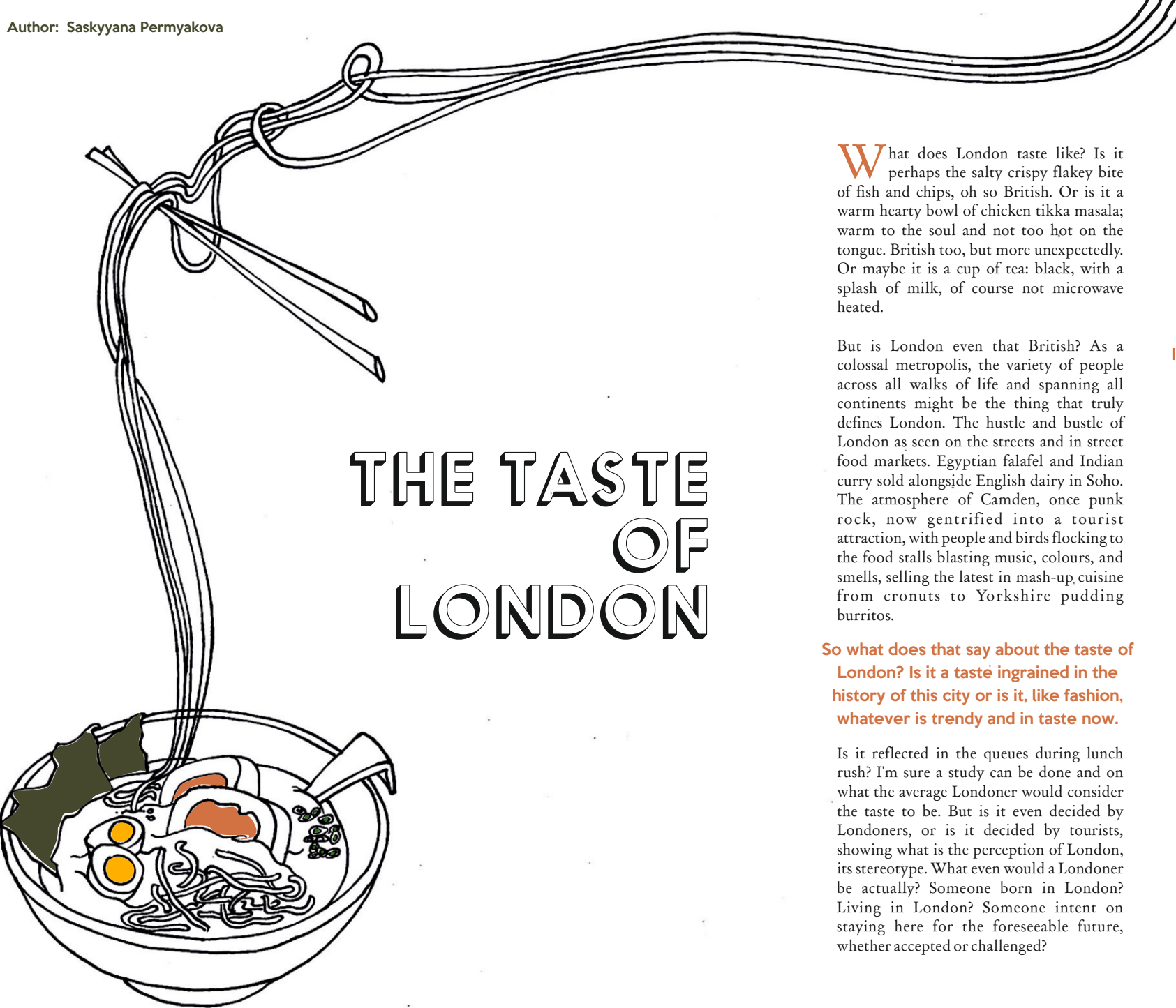
You grow it; it grows back on you!

Ambling towards Sonita's psychedelic

Indian-kitsch kiosk, I apprehend

What will you colour your London today?





THE TASTE OF LONDON

What does London taste like? Is it perhaps the salty crispy flakey bite of fish and chips, oh so British. Or is it a warm hearty bowl of chicken tikka masala; warm to the soul and not too hot on the tongue. British too, but more unexpectedly. Or maybe it is a cup of tea: black, with a splash of milk, of course not microwave heated.

But is London even that British? As a colossal metropolis, the variety of people across all walks of life and spanning all continents might be the thing that truly defines London. The hustle and bustle of London as seen on the streets and in street food markets. Egyptian falafel and Indian curry sold alongside English dairy in Soho. The atmosphere of Camden, once punk rock, now gentrified into a tourist attraction, with people and birds flocking to the food stalls blasting music, colours, and smells, selling the latest in mash-up cuisine from cronuts to Yorkshire pudding burritos.

So what does that say about the taste of London? Is it a taste ingrained in the history of this city or is it, like fashion, whatever is trendy and in taste now.

Is it reflected in the queues during lunch rush? I'm sure a study can be done and on what the average Londoner would consider the taste to be. But is it even decided by Londoners, or is it decided by tourists, showing what is the perception of London, its stereotype. What even would a Londoner be actually? Someone born in London? Living in London? Someone intent on staying here for the foreseeable future, whether accepted or challenged?

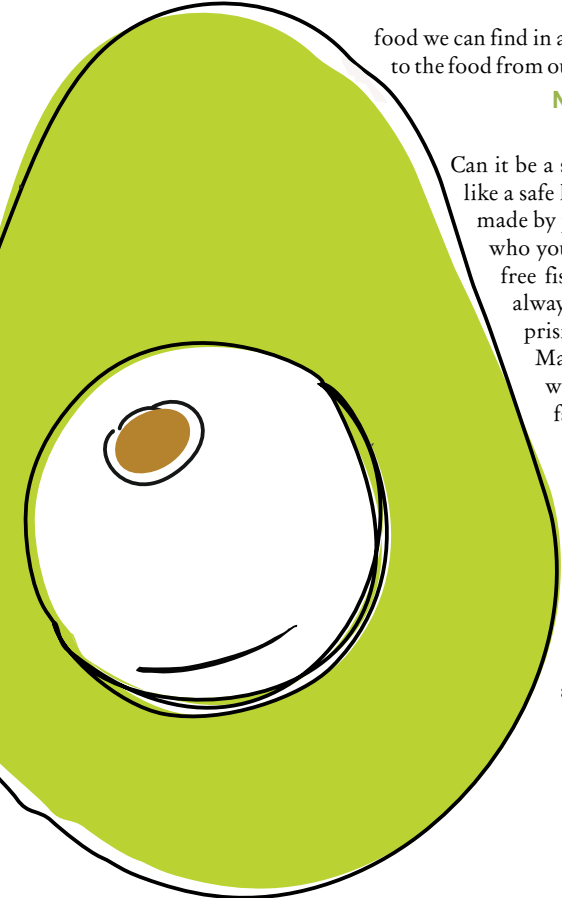
If the taste is exotic to London, which many things are, how can we define what the city's taste is? Can we define it as a crispy taco or maybe a more authentic soft one? Or is it a ceviche, sour and fresh, tangy truly. Can it be Russian rye bread or a steaming bowl of ramen. Vegan, trendy, and hip, a millennial meal, or some traditional grub, like bangers and mash. Maybe it's a £4 Scotch egg. Maybe a 60p one from Sainsbury's.

Is it all of the above or none of the above?

Is it from one of the many chain shops scattered around: the Wasabi chicken katsu curry surely, London's favourite lunch. Or maybe it's the bland middle ground found at a Pret. A pumpkin spice latte, as there's a Starbucks on every corner. Or alternatively a cup of Costa coffee or Caffè Nero. The taste of London might be found at 'The Taste of London'. One of the stores or restaurants at this festival must have found it by now. Or is it found at a chicken shop or, perhaps, a Waitrose? Which one is it?

Maybe you bring the taste to London.

Your own history with food and memories transcending time and place. A cheeky Nando's with its chilli pepper lamps and bottomless drinks, popularising the piri-iri I grew up around in the sunny south of Portugal. Akin, but certainly no churrasqueira. The condiment sauce, as opposed to oil infusion, used too liberally, the choice in heat is different too. Maybe more South African than Portuguese? Disappointing at first, but realising that my own memory of piri-iri doesn't invalidate someone else's memories of Nando's, I shrug and take another bite, the spice flooding my mouth, washed away by a sip of Coke. And so do all of us have our own memories of

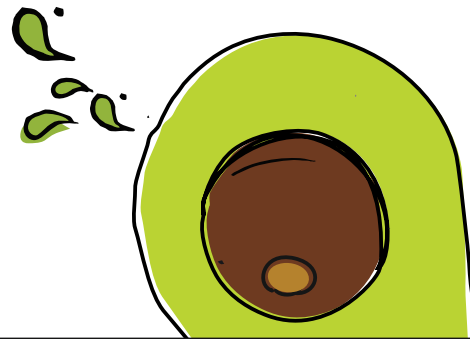


food we can find in and around London; equal, akin, or entirely different to the food from our past.

**Maybe this elusive taste is found in
our own history with the city?**

Can it be a salt beef sandwich, plain on rye, from a shop that is like a safe haven from the crowds on Oxford Street, served and made by people who call you a regular, who know your order, who you make small talk with, who occasionally give you a free fishball or extra stamps on your loyalty card which always fills up as you keep coming back. Is the taste a prism of memories made in London? Hash browns at Maccies in the morning after a night out, 50 Wing Wing wings eaten during a night in, ice cream from your favourite parlour against the summer heat.

Perhaps, like in *Ratatouille*, shown through beautiful synesthesia of colours, shapes, and sound when Remy tastes cheese and a strawberry and then the cheese with the strawberry, the taste of London is something new, a combination of everything. A mixture, a fusion. Fusion, so modern, yet around for forever, only now we can start considering it the colonisation of food. Contested and celebrated alike, grown out of love or necessity.



**But fusion brings with it
the question of
AUTHENTICITY
and the blurry line between
APPROPRIATION AND APPRECIATION
found in our modern food culture.**

Asian fusion restaurants, as if one can't be bothered to differentiate Thailand from Japan. Or maybe fusion is a symptom of an ever shrinking world, the inevitable clash of cultures in a cacophony of herbs and spices.

Chop it. Slice it. Dice it. Mince it. Mix it.

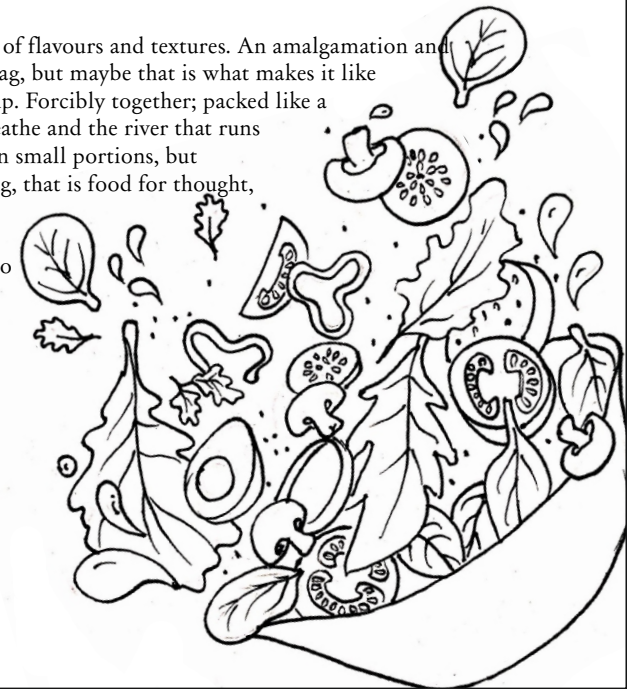
If London can taste of anything, then presumably it would be a fusion, though likely not the most elegant of fusions. Perhaps we can get everything available in London (it might take a while, but surely it's possible) and stick it in a blender.

A shake, or Franken-freakshake more like it, of flavours and textures. An amalgamation and abomination. The thought alone makes me gag, but maybe that is what makes it like London. Too much, mashed up and messed up. Forcibly together; packed like a tube train. Gross, like the polluted air we breathe and the river that runs through the city like a spine. Maybe alright in small portions, but overwhelming in larger quantities. If anything, that is food for thought, though not anything I would actually eat.

But ultimately should we even force a taste onto London. Everyone colours the world, and thus London too, differently each day.

**So, what will you colour your
London today?
How does it smell like?
What does it taste like?**

Mine will taste like a hamburger.
One bacon burger and a drink, please.'



OH! LAMB AND AUBERGINE ?!

The trees start to strip their summerness, the fall foliage sways before twirling onto the cobblestones. Flesh basking under the warmth of the summer sun, my sense of hearing perplexed with the overlapping wavelengths of rock, pop and hip-hop, the cold breeze heightening the bustling aromas from a heterogenous array of grills, as I stood in front of Sonita's with a grumbling tummy. The dishes on display look familiar, as I reminisce the crackling of the spices and the pepper infused fiery smoke rushing into my nostrils and realise the duplicity at hand.

Ambling towards Sonita's psychedelic Indian-kitsch kiosk,

I apprehend

In the rush of the minute came the freshness of coriander
Accentuating the strong sense of spice, it led me home
A partial home or was it any close to home?
Would you like lamb and aubergine curry: she asks, mindful
meticulously mapping around the vegan.
Her words echoed and lost at a lumbering rhythm
Overcast by the clatter, sputter and sizzle of the noisy
Delhi's dingy, forbye flavoursome footways
encroached. As I follow through her elucidation, hazy
somber with nostalgia, reel of memories still rolling
Unable to recall this juxtaposition of aubergine and lamb
Overwhelmed. Hunger crawled up my throat;
no but thank you, smilingly I said
before walking away, questioning the complexion of the cuisine
Indian, it is not, call it Anglo-Indian, says my mind.
Deprived to relive likewise, my senses envy.

Milk rising and simmering, with tea leaves sugar and spices
complexifying, appends to it the earthy scent of soil
as poured in the earthen pots, we call it 'chai'.

An unconscious affair with colonialism in every sip.

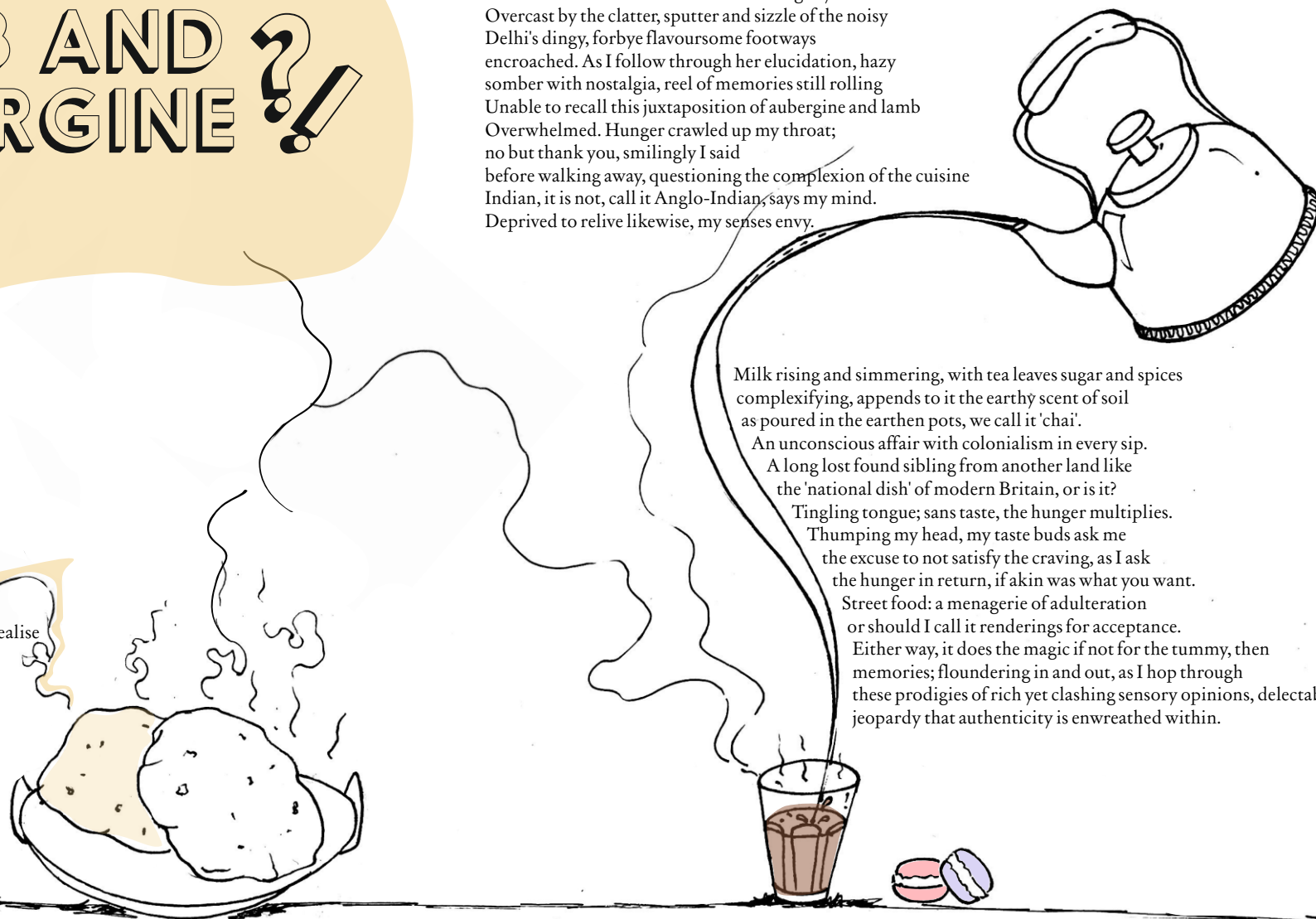
A long lost found sibling from another land like
the 'national dish' of modern Britain, or is it?

Tingling tongue; sans taste, the hunger multiplies.

Thumping my head, my taste buds ask me
the excuse to not satisfy the craving, as I ask
the hunger in return, if akin was what you want.

Street food: a menagerie of adulteration
or should I call it renderings for acceptance.

Either way, it does the magic if not for the tummy, then
memories; floundering in and out, as I hop through
these prodigies of rich yet clashing sensory opinions, delectable
jeopardy that authenticity is enwreathed within.



A stylized illustration of a meal. In the center is a white bowl with two handles, filled with a brown soup. Three white dumplings are floating in the soup, each topped with a small green herb. Above and below the bowl are two skewers. Each skewer has five pieces of meat, alternating with two pieces of green and yellow striped vegetables. The skewers have pointed ends.

The people, infusing their food into what we call Londoner's, didn't set out on a voyage with any tangible possessions, save memories and skills. They brought forth their palate to the English and let the city's blend into it.

Like humans, food accommodates to its surroundings, as evident in case of London. So, is it fair to say that every Londoner holds a different set of memories for a bowl of Indian-but-not-so-Indian curry, just the way I do, making every version justified? Maybe. That's me. But, how does London's taste talk to your memories?

