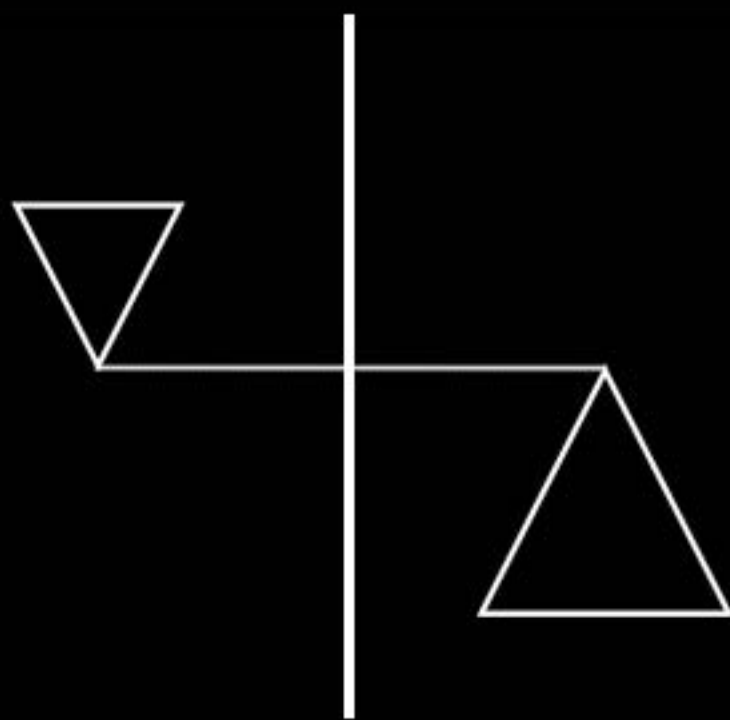


# INTUITIVE HANDS

The Master  
& The Student



By Jesse Di Michele

Most people I have met see boxing as a violent sport.

I started boxing for protection and revenge, on those that beat up on me while growing up.

I found my first days training to be aggressive and out of control  
HITTING THE BAG AS HARD AS I COULD OUT OF ANGER  
HAPPY TO SEE THE BAG SWING FROM SIDE TO SIDE

Back in those moments I thought I was moving mountains, that each punch was healing that pain I felt when I was bullied, beat up or even knocked out.

This story is about how something that started out purely based on power and aggression, turned into "HUMAN ART" without the need to hurt anyone, including myself ever again.

The first fight that I ever got into  
I FROZE

I saw everything happening, but my body froze

I had to walk away scarred that day  
I heard a girl call out telling me to get out of there  
SO I DID

I felt so ashamed of my self  
I was only 14 years old, it happened at school during lunch break  
I never went back after that day



I decided to sign off my dads signature each day

I spent time with other friends, that saw school had no purpose

I lied about my face to my family and friends

I told them how bad the other boy looked and that I had alot fun during the fight

At home when I got the choice of movie on the TV, I'd watch any movie that had fighting in it.

I'd mimic the moves over and over

Not really worried about the story of the movie

I'd also fight some make belief demons in my own backyard,

SHADOW BOXING

Just simply playing around with ideas. I noticed the neighbours voices clearly through the winds, they were talking about me. It didn't feel right, infact I knew it wasn't right.

Invading my privacy and fun, they had nothing better to do.

One day I caught the neighbour peaking through a hole in the fence,

I calculated the time and day they kept looking.

One day standing by that hole, I gave the neighbour a nice little poke in the eye. MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

It wasn't any real training but I noticed that I was getting better

I was feeling more confident to face my fears

However I still continued to sign off my dads signature, to skip school

Almost 30 days straight hiding



I knew I had to face the music and go back to school.  
However things weren't getting any better.

## LIFE AT HOME AND SCHOOL IN FACT GOT WORSE.

I avoided places at school that I used to hang around  
And my parents were just about to divorce

Training to box felt like the only thing that brought me peace and quiet  
within my mind

16 years old

Where I started some real training in a small boxing studio  
Located in some back streets of a town under a train station  
Admission was \$ 2

Put your \$ 2 in the tin at the front entrance, find a free bag and run with  
the 3 minute round timer.

This was where I started swinging the bag around angry of course,  
with no control.

There was a boxing ring in the middle of the studio, the trainer of the  
studio was in it.

He had focus pads on each hand and each round he'd call up a new person.  
I got excited and couldn't wait to show him what I could do.  
Instead of calling me up when it was my turn  
He yelled out 'Stop!'



## EVERYONE STOPPED

He jumped out the ring and came over to me, he didn't look happy.  
He stopped the bag from swinging  
Then he told me the simplest peice of advice that stuck in me till this  
present day

The trainer said "You are the one that moves, not the bag."  
It's not about how hard you hit all the time  
It's about how smooth and fast you can move straight after you've  
made that hit

He left that tip with me and jumped back in the ring, then he called up  
another guy up next to me  
Before I started to hit the bag again  
I began to watch all the others on how they moved  
Seconds later I hear  
'Move!'  
It was the trainer in the ring looking my way again pushing me along

I HAD NO CLUE WHAT I WAS DOING  
I COULDN'T GET ANGRY  
AND I FELT POWERLESS

Dancing around a bag tip tapping punches  
When I looked in the direction of the trainer, he made eye contact with me  
He smiled, nodding his head



He was happy about something  
So I kept going

Not long after  
He called me up to the ring

He asked if I wanted to spar with another young guy  
He also told me that he'll go easy on me, knowing that I was very fresh  
So I said sure

A lot was going through mind  
When I look back writing this  
Too much was going through mind to just be  
To just box  
Too much to even see what was happening around me

The trainer was saying some things before we started  
But I was just eyeing down the other guy

I heard "Do you understand?"  
I gave him a thumbs up with the gloves on, then the trainer said "Begin"  
I watched the other guy move around  
I had my gloves up, one on each cheek

Not even 10 seconds in and I got a punch to the face  
My gloves made a nice border around my face for him to hit right in  
the middle



The trainer stopped us both and showed me how to hold my hands  
in front of my face

Telling me to leave only enough gap just to be able to see over the top of  
the gloves

He also added

“Tuck your shoulder into your jaw and when you see an opening to punch,  
go for it.”

This first ever sparring match doesn't end with me knocking the other  
young guy out, infact I never even got a punch on him in those few minutes

Something did shift in me that night

It was my line of sight

Angles

How far objects were from me

## SHADOW BOXING

I began visualising, creating the monsters that I faced and lost against.  
I brought them to the front of my mind to size them up, I then created  
angles and patterns that allowed my new learnt information to flow  
around them. Keeping my guard up while moving, each time I made a  
mistake I allowed that monster to beat me. Also feeling inside the pain  
of loosing that mini battle.

I didn't spend 1 hour or 2 hours to practice

I made it part of my life.



There's always a flinch moment in all of us  
There's always a distraction about to appear out of no where  
There's always part of our flow that gets disrupted.

I wanted to master the thoughts and feelings of those problems so my  
actions became like clock work

I slowed each move down to a second by second basis  
Reminding my self to not be afraid

## YEARS PAST

The real movement began at 22 years old  
I'd already by then understood my mind, my flow

My parents divorced  
I spent 3 years in jail

When I got released  
The government systems in place supported me with a 2 bedroom unit  
For good behaviour while behind bars  
I managed to quit smoking before I got released. Saved \$ 1500 dollars  
in jail while working as the head Gardner

I had previous experience working as a butcher  
And it was cash money  
So it wasn't going to be too hard for me to find a job and get back on  
my feet



Being a butcher required speed and accuracy on all the cuts  
And also long hours

My previous shadow boxing training ticked all those boxes  
I found a job in the market place on the other side of town

I travelled to work by train in the early hours of the morning  
And finished before sun down

After work I found a mixed martial arts training studio half way home.  
I liked the atmosphere

I had spare cash so I signed up for a year which got me a full set of gear  
to train in all the classes

I started that night  
Set my self up in a corner of the studio  
Strapped my hands up and began to work the bag in front of the full  
length mirrors

Back then I didn't have a cell phone to record my movement  
It's now all upstairs in my mind

I'd spend 3 hours on the bags and attend all 3 classes in a row each  
night after work  
6 days per week



The Owner/Trainer of that studio always asked me if I wanted to fight  
He wasn't always there  
But when he was he'd always commend me on what I was doing,  
and sometimes he'd show me tips on ways to do things

I took them on board

Adding them to what I knew

Some moves and thoughts complicated my flow

So.....

Knowing that it was potentially going to mess up my flow that I was  
comfortable with, I made a decision to stay at my own pace.

My moves were getting faster

My punches were returning to me with accuracy

My kicks started to feel like they were rounding up the winds around  
me before impact

I had snapped 2 heavy bags off the chains during my time spent at  
that place

The Trainer and I both realised that I was heating up the metal on the  
chain, to the point where it snapped

He asked me very politely the 2nd time with a comical smile, to work  
on 3 seperate bags in 5 minutes intervals after slapping the fallen bag  
and mentioning that he didn't wanna have to buy new ones

I agreed and kept that promise

It also taught me to respect my equipment as it is allowing me to feel



more confident, while finding my happy place within my mind

The studio had gradings on a Saturday, which I couldn't make because that was the busiest day at the markets

I also didn't fight in any comps because my boss didn't want me to show up behind counter with a black eye, I couldn't get out of that one.

There's no way your going to enter a boxing comp and not have marks to show later. It's a good thing anyway because I really started to feel as though I had no reason to hurt anyone anymore.

Friday nights were sparring nights, I wanted to play along with the other guys but I also didn't want things to get messy. They always do even if it's just sparring.

I asked my Sensei if I could spar with him, just until I felt more comfortable.

HE AGREED.

My Sensei was very helpful and made sparring fun

## TOE TO TOE WITH A CHAMPION

For an entire month the champion of Thailand lived at the studio and helped out with the classes

He was great

I learned so much from just watching him

We sparred sometimes, he was very fast.

I was on my ass more than standing, not from his punches but from well executed sweeps on my legs.



The power he brought on when he landed a punch

OUCH

he barely even moved his arms and I felt like a truck hit me

He was really nice to show me first hand what he was doing

I was sad to see him leave

We spent the last night together around town, we just walked and talked. His English was good, we never went to no bar or Night club it didn't interest both of us.

He enjoyed talking about Thailand and how he lived back at home

He just enjoyed feeling like he had a friend

Me too.

Later that week

I decided to join in with the other guys in sparring

Sometimes I'd say I wanna just use one arm to work on that skill, even for them to just hit me so I can defend

A new guy came along

And exactly what I didn't want to happen, happened

He got angry cause I got a punch in on him

I defended his anger and frustration, but the intensity he threw at me.

It was enough for me to pull back and stop.

It almost over powered me to the point where I started to build a rage too. As soon as I heard cheering from the other guys I stepped out of the boxing ring, I said.

“This is not learning for me, I'm sorry I gotta go.”



They were telling me it's okay it's just a bit of fun. I said it's not for me.

I told them

"I don't like anger and the champion that was here also taught me don't fight with aggression."

These guys didn't understand

Meat heads just wanting to smash each other

After that day

I just went back to the bags and the classes

One Friday night it was very busy, even a few girls were there to spar together as well. The atmosphere was energetic

Sensei asked me to come over and spar

I said as I approached pointing to him

Only with you

He gave a look to other guys rolling his eyes

He wasn't happy but he agreed to spar with me

He gave an understanding look my way and waved me to come over

So we sparred

While sparring he wanted me to go harder on him

I didn't know what was happening at the time

Looking back now of course I do.

He was trying to bring me to some level that matched the other guys

He really wanted me to be a fighter

He knew I had skill, but my intentions were just for the art of



hand eye co-ordination

During our sparring it was getting heated

He kept saying loudly as we broke away from each other

COMON HIT ME.

I saw an opening and as you do when your sparring, I weaved my way in there and hit his chest and stomach using both hands

It's a punch I saw in a movie by Van damne

Both fist at once.

Sensei flew into the corner of the ring after impact

While he lay on the ground

He gave a quick glance over at the girls by the side of the ring

I felt something wrong with that

He got up and once again said

COMON HIT ME

He came at me with so many kicks and punches with the intention to knock me out, I saw it in his eyes. I could feel it

I blocked all several hits he threw then in a moment of time apart I took one deep breath and threw my gloves on the ground

I left the ring and never went back, actually never looked back either.

On the way home

I looked to my hands with no need to strike



A feeling of a calm emptiness

A few years later I got myself into the personal training scene

I ran boxing fitness classes and trained students 1 on 1

I made it all fun and enjoyable

Cause that's the way I saw it

LIKE A DANCE

HUMAN ARTS

MARTIAL ARTS

I know being a teacher my students sometimes have been better than me or hit me where it hurt

Not on purpose but because I slipped up

I never got angry at them

My comment always to my students was

There's nothing wrong with that

Infact I always commended them

For catching me off guard

Or having more power at that present moment than me

If I am as good as I say I am

Then I should also be able to back that up in defence in each moment



I state

I do not own the energy floating around  
However with great training and a peaceful mind within each moment  
I can harness a portion of that energy  
And so could my clients

I wanted them to feel what I felt

Intuitively speaking within only the slightest understanding of the  
spirituality behind my hands, and so far what I know

LEFT IS PAST  
RIGHT IS FUTURE

I'M A SOUTH PAW  
SO I JAB WITH MY RIGHT

Jabbing my way through life, lining things up  
Angling the best moves to get into those hard to reach places in  
the world

MY LEFT IS MY HAMMER

JUDGEMENT  
THE PAST

I only bring it in when necessary



Time to step forward  
Weave my way once again  
Right, Right  
I'm healing the wounds of my past

## STARTING WITH A DIARY

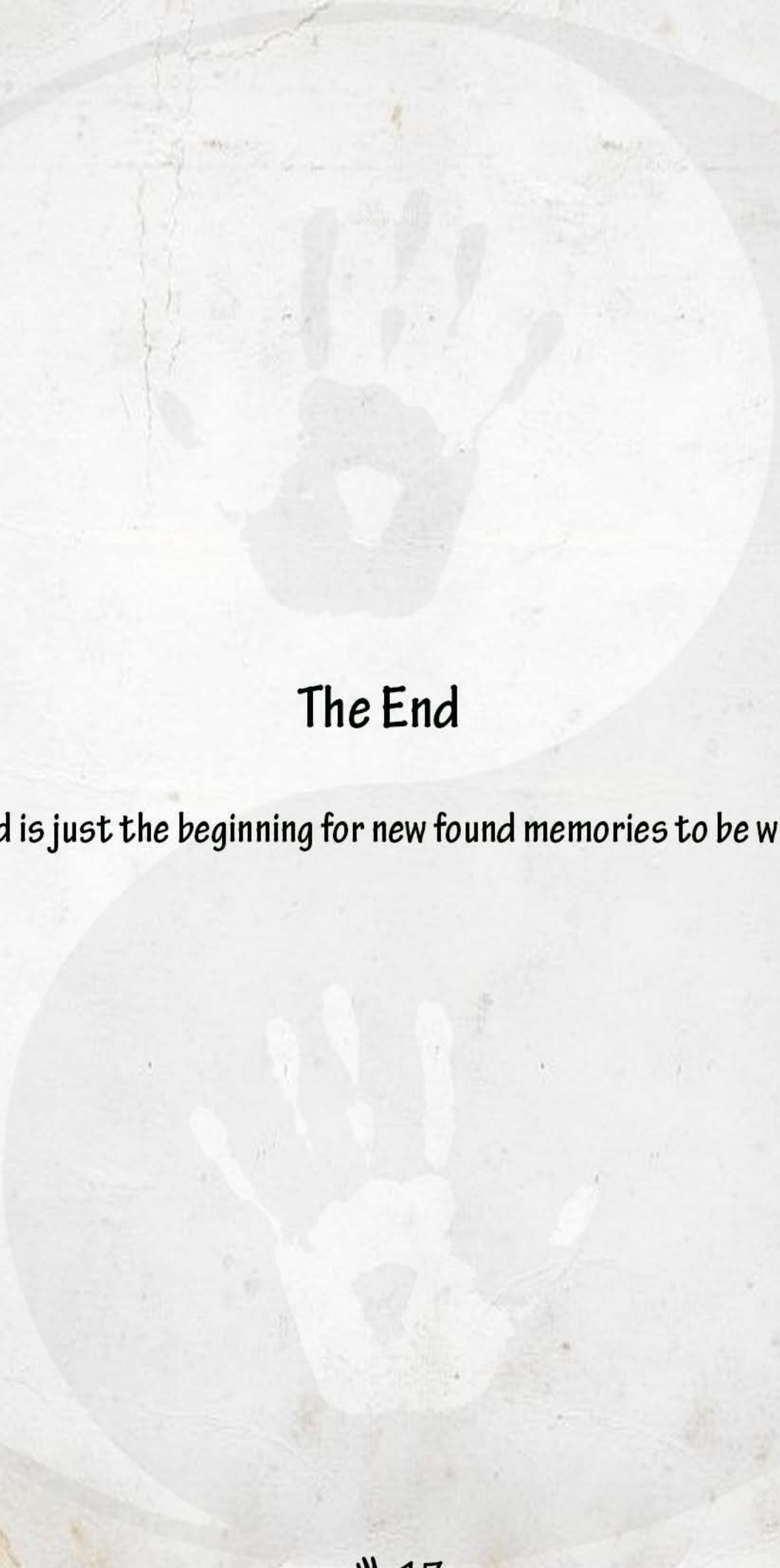
If my past was brought up it would hurt  
So along these new steps I'm sharing my past with all of you

Opening up and facing the truth  
Facing the left  
The hammer of judgement  
My drawing and writing hand

Everything has gotta come out  
So there's no reason for it hurt or feel numb anymore  
I started on a path of destruction  
Along the way I've always kept my awareness of what's out there in the  
way of a student and a master

I will never say I'm just a master  
If I do  
Best beware for my mistakes that will follow  
I am a student always  
Even if I am in the presence of some one I am teaching





**The End**

**“The End is just the beginning for new found memories to be written”**