

it's
BOBA
Time
for Pearl Li!

NICOLE CHEN

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I first decided I wanted to write for kids, I was laser-focused on picture books. The idea of a whole novel, with no visuals and thousands and thousands of words, never crossed my mind as something I could ever write, let alone get onto bookshelves. Then my agent, the wonderful Jamie Weiss Chilton, dared to suggest I consider writing long-form so I could tackle some of the more complicated and nuanced themes that my early writing veered toward.

For planting that seed and helping me discover the joy of writing middle grade, I owe the biggest thanks to you, Jamie. I'm so fortunate that I happened to pass you on the way out of the Big Sur workshop that year and you said those hopeful words to me, "Please keep

in touch.” Your patience, encouragement, and critical eye continue to push me to become a stronger writer and bolder thinker, and I couldn’t have done any of this without you and the ABLA family.

To my editor, Jennifer Ung, wow, oh wow. Every interaction we have shines with your love of this story, of Pearl and of our shared identities as proud Asian Americans. Your guidance has made Pearl Li and her world pop brighter than I could have imagined. Celina Sun, thank you for all your thoughtful feedback and for your help with the pinyin! Kat Tsai, you’ve captured the essence of Pearl and the energy and heart of this story so beautifully in your cover, and thank you to Kathy Lam for your meticulous attention to craft and detail in designing this book.

To the Quill Tree and HarperCollins teams, I’m so lucky to have your support and passion. Thank you for doing so much to get this book into the hands of real readers!

Behind every writer is the support and camaraderie of their writing communities. Laura Lee, you were the first flesh-and-blood person I knew who actually wrote a book and got it onto bookshelves. It wouldn’t have occurred to me to dream of doing the same if you hadn’t done it first, so thank you for showing me what’s possible. Arree Chung, you were the second person I met in

my kidlit journey, and it was your guidance on the craft and business of writing stories for kids that took me and my writing to the next level.

You also introduced me to Belen Medina, who's been my tireless advocate, critique partner, and friend as we both navigate this world of kidlit publishing. The world is going to absolutely fall in love with your beautiful stories, and I can't wait to keep building our long, productive careers as creatives together.

When I first put pen and paper on Pearl's story, Carrie Jones's encouragement gave me the energy, joy, and confidence I needed to actually finish the whole thing! You were the best writing coach I could have asked for. Bethany Hegedus, without the Writing Barn's WSS program, this book might never have come to life. To Sana, Claire, Kirsten, Susan, Marzieh, Adaela, Gen, Deb, Linda, and JoAnn—thank you for your thoughtful critiques on my first attempts to craft this story.

The intersection of the arts, technology, and business have always fascinated me, and it's funny to look back and see how all the dots in my professional career eventually connected and led me to anchor on those three themes in my first novel. To all the amazing creatives I've had the pleasure of working with over the years, you inspire me.

To my family . . . Lisa, thank you for being the first

Chen to read this story! Mom and Dad, you encouraged me since I was a young child to draw, paint, and make crafts. For that, I'm eternally grateful. Ironically, it was that freedom that led me to the emerging design and tech world as a young adult, which then pushed me to want to understand business as well.

Alex, you never doubted that I could do this. Thank you for putting up with my random meanderings as I geek out about the creative journey I've embarked on. I feel your love and support in every fiber of my being. And to my amazingly creative, smart, and cuddly grinch—I write my stories for you, so that you can see yourself in the books you'll be able to read on your own one day.

Twenty years ago, I'd go to a tea shop in Cupertino Village with my college friends and we'd chat with the owner as she prepared our drinks. Her hair up in a messy bun, she'd bustle about her shop, taking shots of tea to make sure your drink was just right. Your dedication to your craft struck me and has stayed with me over the years. I hope this story somehow makes it into your hands.

And finally, to every young reader who picks up this novel and sees a piece of themselves in it, I hope, with all my heart, that you dare to dream big and pursue your passions. There's a place for you and your layered selves in this world, I promise.

GLOSSARY OF BUSINESS TERMS

Best Practices: methods to run a business that have been generally accepted as best-to-follow

Business Partner: someone with whom a business is shared, usually through co-ownership

Capital: money needed or used to start a business

Expenses: money that is spent by a business in order to make money, or revenue (common expenses include the cost of materials and labor if people are hired and paid to help run the business)

Inventory: all the items, goods, merchandise, and materials held by a business for selling to earn a profit

Investor: a person or company that contributes money to another business in hopes of making more money

Pilot Test: a type of software testing where a group of

users are invited to use a software before it is widely available to the public to gather feedback and identify bugs

Profit: the difference between the money that flows into a business (revenue) and the money the business spends (expenses); profit is how much money your business actually earns

Revenue: the amount of money that flows into a business, usually in the form of sales

Revenue Projection: an estimate of how much revenue a business is expected to make over a certain period of time

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): the practice of getting a webpage to come up higher on the results page of an online search

Sole Proprietor: a person who owns and runs a business by themselves

HOW PEARL CALCULATES PROFITS FOR KAWAII CROCHETS

Kawaii Crochets Sales Kawaii Crochets Sales

	Item	Revenue	Expenses		Sent?	Profit	Total Profit
			Shipping Fee	Craftsee Transaction Fee (5% of Revenue)			
1	Robot	\$10	\$3.00	\$0.50	✓	\$6.50	\$6.50
2	Cow	\$15	\$2.00	\$0.75	✓	\$12.25	\$18.75
3	Donut	\$15	\$2.50	\$0.75	✓	\$11.75	\$30.50
4	Avocado	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$41.75
5	Octopus	\$15	\$2.50	\$0.75	✓	\$11.75	\$53.50
6	Unicorn	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$67.75
7	Honeybee	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$76.00

Kawaii Crochets Sales

	Item	Revenue	Expenses		Sent	Net Profit	Total Profit
			Shipping Fee	Craftsee Transaction Fee (5% of sales)			
1	Robot	\$10	\$3.00	\$0.50	✓	\$6.50	\$6.50
2	Cow	\$15	\$2.00	\$0.75	✓	\$12.25	\$18.75
3	Donut	\$15	\$2.50	\$0.75	✓	\$11.75	\$30.50
4	Avocado	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$41.75
5	Octopus	\$15	\$2.50	\$0.75	✓	\$11.75	\$53.50
6	Unicorn	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$64.75
7	Honeybee	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$76.00
8	Jellyfish (replacement for Octopus)	(\$15)	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	(\$18.75)	\$57.25
9	Pink Cupcake	\$15	\$2.75	\$0.75	✓	\$11.50	\$68.75
10	Ice Cream	\$15	\$3.00	\$0.75	✓	\$11.25	\$80.00
11	Cat	\$15	\$0.00	0	✓	\$15.00	\$95.00
12	Duck	\$15	\$0.00	0	✓	\$15.00	\$110.00
13	Robot	\$15	\$0.00	0	✓	\$15.00	\$125.00
14	Purple Cupcake	\$15	\$0.00	0	✓	\$15.00	\$140.00
15	Pineapple	\$15	\$0.00	0	✓	\$15.00	\$155.00

The formula to calculate profits is revenue minus expenses:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Profit of Individual Item} &= \text{Revenue} - \text{Expenses} \\ &= \text{Revenue} - (\text{Shipping Fee} + \text{Craftsee Transaction Fee}) \\ &= \text{Revenue} - (\text{Shipping Fee} + (5\% \times \text{Revenue}))\end{aligned}$$

Example—Robot:

$$\text{Profit} = [\$10.00 - (\$3.00 + (0.05 \times \$10.00))] = \$6.50]$$

To keep calculations simple in this story, material expenses were not deducted from Pearl's sales chart. For Kawaii Crochets, the cost of yarn, felt, crochet hooks, and stuffing could be subtracted from revenues to calculate profit.

AUNTIE CHA'S SPARKLING MANGO GREEN TEA BOBA RECIPE

Below are instructions to make Pearl's favorite Boba Time drink. One of the great things about boba, however, is that you can adjust the recipe to be just right for you! So feel free to experiment with different flavors and combinations.

Please be sure to ask for help from a trusted adult when preparing this recipe. Have fun!

This makes a single, 16-ounce serving of boba tea.

INGREDIENTS

Green tea (Auntie Cha uses loose tea, but a tea bag is perfectly acceptable)

1 cup of diced, ripe mango (fresh or frozen, but if frozen, thaw it first)

1/3 cup of uncooked tapioca pearls
agave syrup or honey
sparkling water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Steep the tea:

Follow the steeping instructions of the tea you've chosen, but use half the amount of water (you'll be adding sparkling water later).

Put the tea in the fridge to cool it down while you prepare the other ingredients.

2. Prepare the mango puree:

Put the diced mango into a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.

3. Make the boba:

Boil four cups of water on high heat in a small pot or saucepan.

Add the uncooked tapioca balls and stir them a bit so they don't cook in a big lump. Be careful when you stir, though—the water is hot!

When the boba floats to the top, turn the heat to medium and cook for another twenty minutes.

Turn off the fire, cover, and let the boba cook for another fifteen minutes (you can cook it for

longer or shorter depending on how QQ, or chewy, you would like the boba to be. Cooking longer makes it softer and less chewy.)

Strain the boba and toss gently with cold water.

Dribble some agave syrup or honey onto the boba and toss. This will coat the boba so the balls don't stick together.

4. Assemble the drink:

Pour the mango puree into a serving glass. Add the cooled green tea and mix.

Spoon the boba inside and stir.

Fill the rest of the glass with sparkling water.

Sweeten to taste with agave syrup or honey. Stir gently, though, so the water stays bubbly.

Enjoy!

Some other fun things to try: add a splash of milk, puree other fruits with the mango (Pearl likes coconut or strawberries!), or use flavored sparkling water.