

DAZED

Slipping Through The Cracks



JAKARA WATTANASIN

Following the life of



SLIPPING THROUGH THE CRACKS

A self proclaimed nepotism baby and his challenges, a Thai supermodel growing up in the limelight.

Sitting down in a cosy corner of a cafe on the strand, Jakara Wattansin and I sit down, sipping our coffees in a desperate effort to keep warm. Dressed in the most incredible pair of Louis Vuitton jeans, JM, as close friends and family refer to him, was effortlessly stylish.

“Okay”, he starts out, “My name is Jakara Wattanasin... III”, cautious to not sound too obnoxious. JM, 18, grew up in Thailand with his, now divorced, parents and two brothers. To start our interview, JM begins to talk about his new life at Kingston university and how it has felt studying photography, “It feels... free. I’m not the centre of attention, I have control,” Jakara states, having been a model and in front of cameras for many years.

Jakara next gives us what most celebrities don’t, “Can I say nepotism?”, he says with a bellowing laugh in answer to my question of where his fame stemmed from. His realism and dry humour was refreshing. “Well if you want to sum it up quickly, I suppose it is nepotism but to dive deeper it’s the history of our family”, he pauses as if embarrassed to be sharing his rare and honestly spectacular family history.

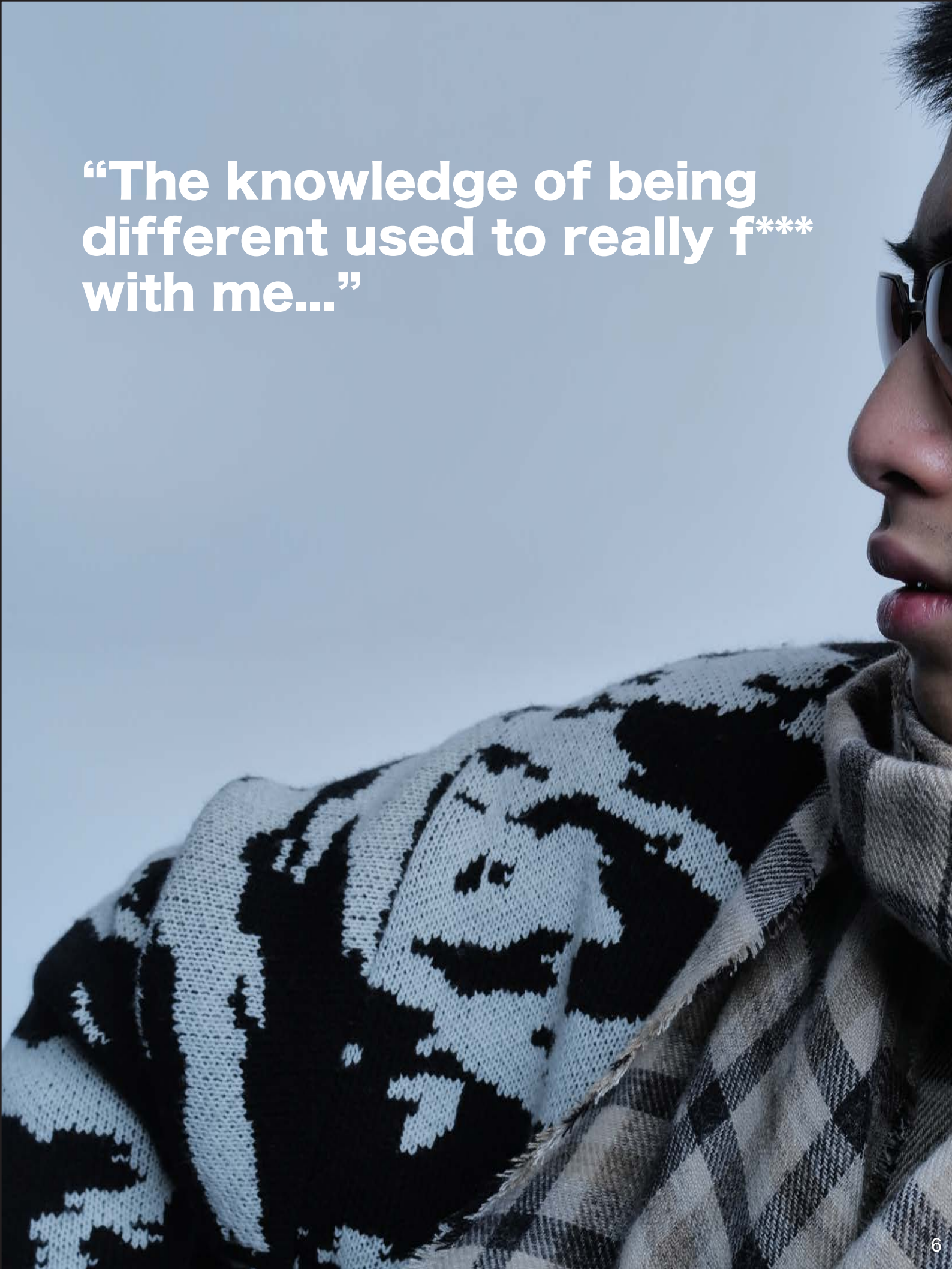
Jakara’s grandfather, Charoen Wattanasin, was a badminton player who was asked to play for the Thai king at his personal palace, Charoen’s fame in the sporting world has skyrocketed. Charoen had a child, Jetrin-Wattansin, who became a popular singer in 1991.

Jetrin had three kids with actress and model, Kejmanee P, the oldest Jinjett, Jakapat, and Jakara - all of whom are invested in the arts and modelling. JM continues to tell me the ways in which his family is connected to the royal family of Thailand, honest in saying that his name carries a lot of weight there, a very true account having seen first hand swarms of fans circling him and his brothers.

“Do you enjoy modelling with your brothers?”, I ask. Featuring on the covers of several magazines, including Thai Vogue, Elle men and Louis Vuitton with both JK and JINJET Wattanasin over the years, a large majority of JM’s success can be pointed to various successful shoots with his siblings. “No I do not” he says with a cheeky smile, “I despise it”. Moving to face me front on, I ask surprised, “You do?”, knowing how successful the three have been. “No I liked it as a kid, growing up we always did magazine shoots as a family. I hadn’t had a solo shoot until recently. I realised how nice it is being shot alone. I have this control without feeling cringey or awkward with my brothers being there”.

Does he prefer results from solo shoots or from those with his brothers? With no hesitation he answers, “Solo. I felt like my most recent shoot with L’hommes official was the first time I felt like people saw me for me and not for my family so that was something special”.

**“The knowledge of being
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“What’s been your favourite shoot so far, your favourite company to work with,” Curious, knowing he has worked with many brands and companies over the years. “Louis Vuitton”, he says without blinking, taking sips of his second coffee. His family has long lasting connections with the brand, it’s account visible all over Jakara’s instagram grid. “I don’t want to take away from brands that have also helped me out but I feel like Louis Vuitton was the company that always gave me a lot of creative control.” He continues, “There was one project that they gave me full creative control to promote a new garment on social media. I made it look professional and from there I started getting photography jobs from other brands. That’s how I’ve used my family’s fame to help me with my own goals in the industry”

“Do you think you have an influence on youth society?” I probe the question, curious as to whether or not he acknowledges the platform he has. “I’d like to believe I do with my following”, he answers briefly, referring to his 750K followers, less extreme than that of his more extroverted brothers residing at 1.8M and 2.1M. How does he hope to positively impact, especially his younger following? “As i’m doing now, posting inspirational reels and videos”, Jakara states, referencing his daily (if not more) posts onto his public story that discuss hard to talk about topics, mental health and, very important, reminders, especially for his younger fans, that everything is going to work out. He continues, “I think that part of my platform is inspired by a deeper version of me. I wouldn’t wish what I have going on mentally on anyone. I make an effort to make sure no one feels alone in how they feel, especially in terms of feeling trapped and confused whether it’s in your gender, life, career - most of my stories revolve around reminders to live in the moment and live life like it’s your last”

I begin to question Jakara into why being so positive online and mindful toward his younger, potentially struggling audience,



“I feel a



is so important to him. He begins to open up, fidgeting with his fingers and coffee, “With people being fake with you from such a young age, it’s hard to know who you actually are”. Having been shipped across the world for boarding school at just 12, no one else having lived this life of fame in a way, the distance from understanding himself that he describes, is not surprising. “That knowledge about me being different really used to f*** with me, it was like I almost didn’t know myself”, he pauses, “The thing is I’ve had this question my whole life. The ‘fame’ has played a big part in my growing up. It’s not that I’ve felt isolated but ‘separate’ because my experience was so different to what everyone else was experiencing. I tried to live a normal life as someone who wasn’t normal and I think I ran into a lot of issues with trying to fit in that way. I mean you know me, I have always been introverted, more comfortable being alone. Everyone handles growing up in the limelight in different ways, I can’t blame how I am solely on that”.

What’s next for JM? His answer comes without hesitation, no doubt being one that has been thrown his way many times, “I plan to expand my modelling more globally, get out of Thailand.” He continues, “I’m really excited about the prospect of opening an exhibition for my photography, and I want to start releasing music at some point”. JM refers to his love for singing while at boarding school, following in his elder brother’s footsteps. Curious, as to why he hasn’t released any yet, I ask why. “Growing up, my brothers dove into music head first at as young as 16, they both told me ‘don’t start yet don’t do it too early’, while going through school and uni they both found it was all way too much. I feel a lot of pressure in the position I’m in. If I release something s***I’m done and there’s pressure in that. I want to be taken seriously so I am going to take my time and not release anything until I’m sure”.

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