

# DEFY

## Nail Polish

## A Refreshing Take on Souvankham Thammavongsa's “How to Pronounce Knife” Collection

### INTRODUCTION

This project is an exploration of Souvankham Thammavongsa's *How to Pronounce Knife*, a collection of 14 short stories portraying the lives of Laos immigrants. Told with humour and blunt language, the stories capture acts of love, defiance, and frank honesty. The goal of this project was to create a product that enhances the reading experience and communicates the themes of *How to Pronounce Knife* in an original and unique way. This could be anything from an object found within the book to an item that crafts a particular experience.

### METHODS

#### MOODBOARD

A moodboard is a collection of images, textures, typography, and colours that captures a specific mood, emotion, or visual style. This sets the stage for the design and what it will look and feel like. I wanted shapes and colours that were bright, bold and made a statement.



#### PACKAGING RESEARCH

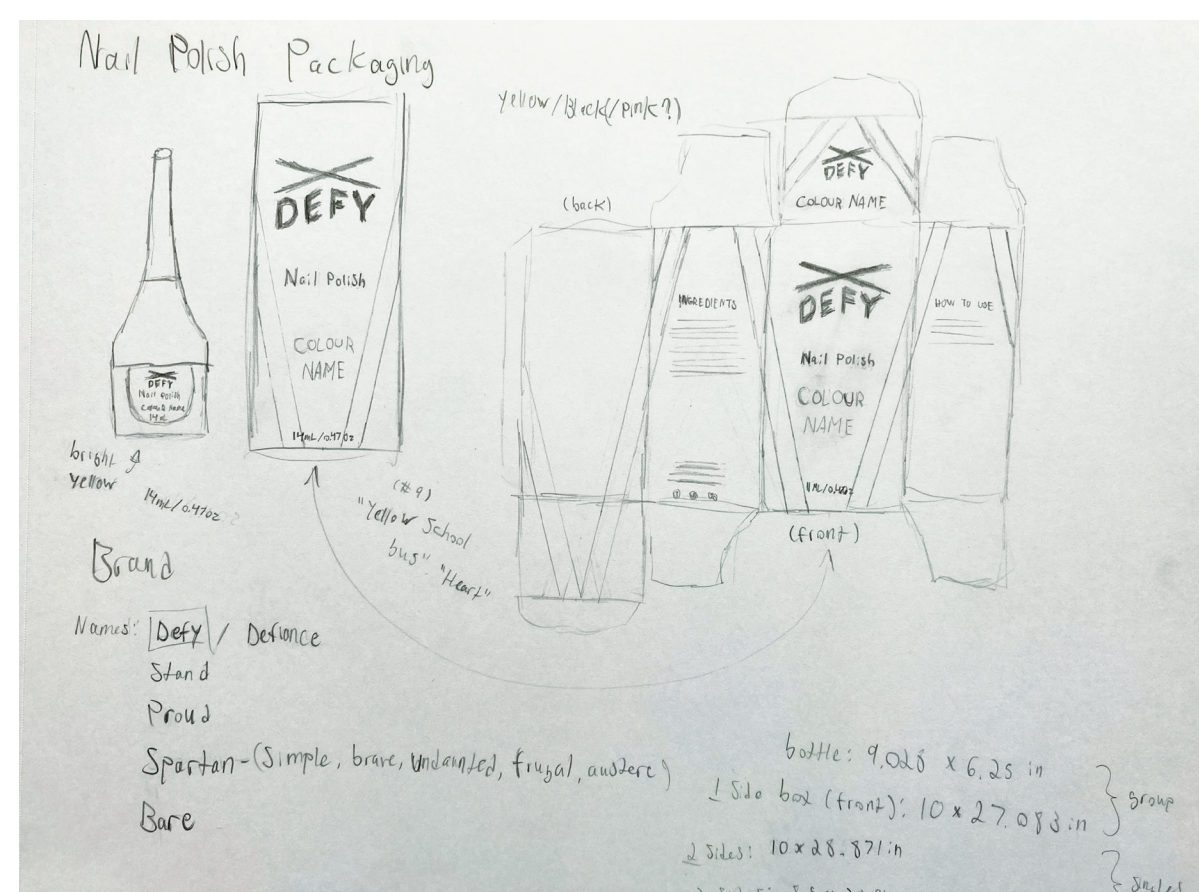
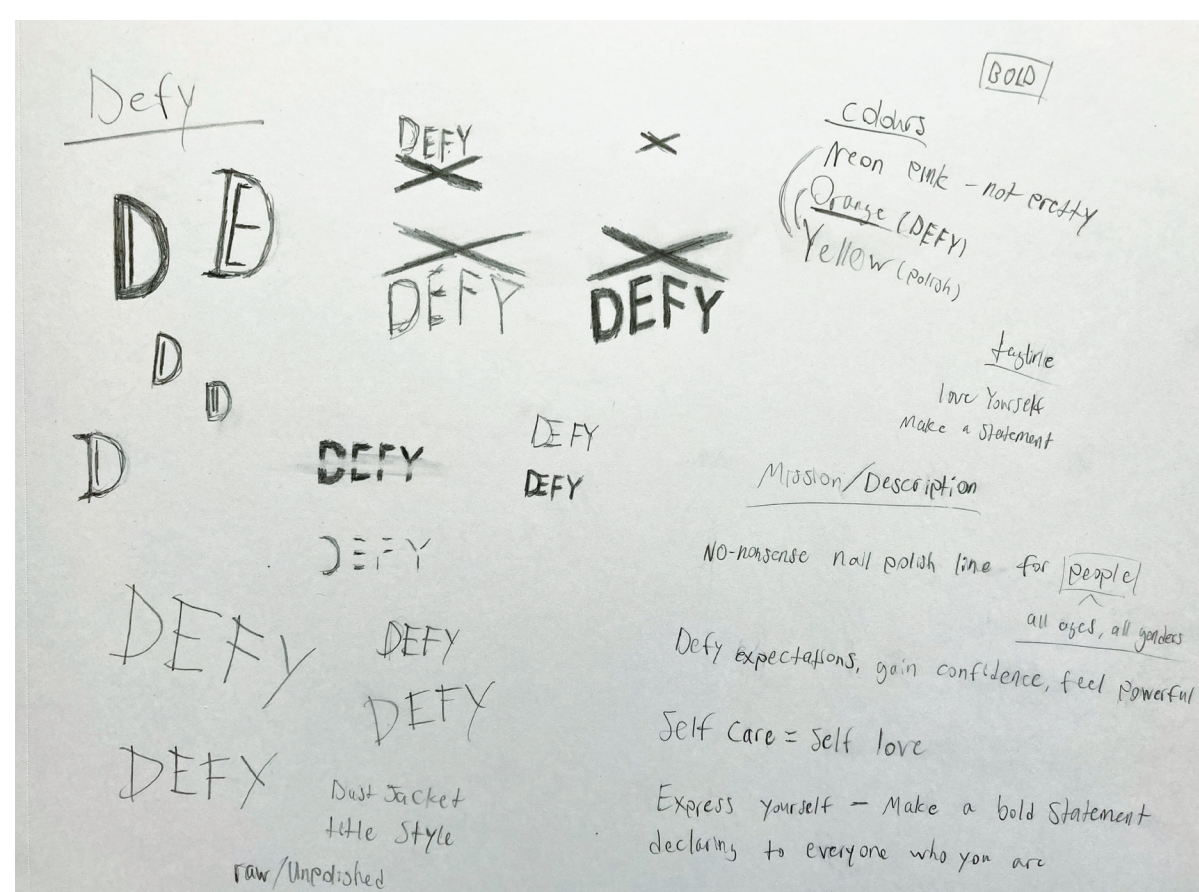
Cosmetics packaging is an area I hadn't explored before this project. I carefully researched the do's and don't's of the industry and examined physical packages to better understand the demographics, box content, and design commonalities.



### DESIGN PROCESS

#### SKETCHES

Sketching is helpful for designers to unpack all their ideas and pick the best ones to explore further. I sketched a few different ideas for my brand identity and the package design, making notes of any additional thoughts or important bits for later. For both the brand and package, I wanted something clean, bold, and visually defiant in nature.



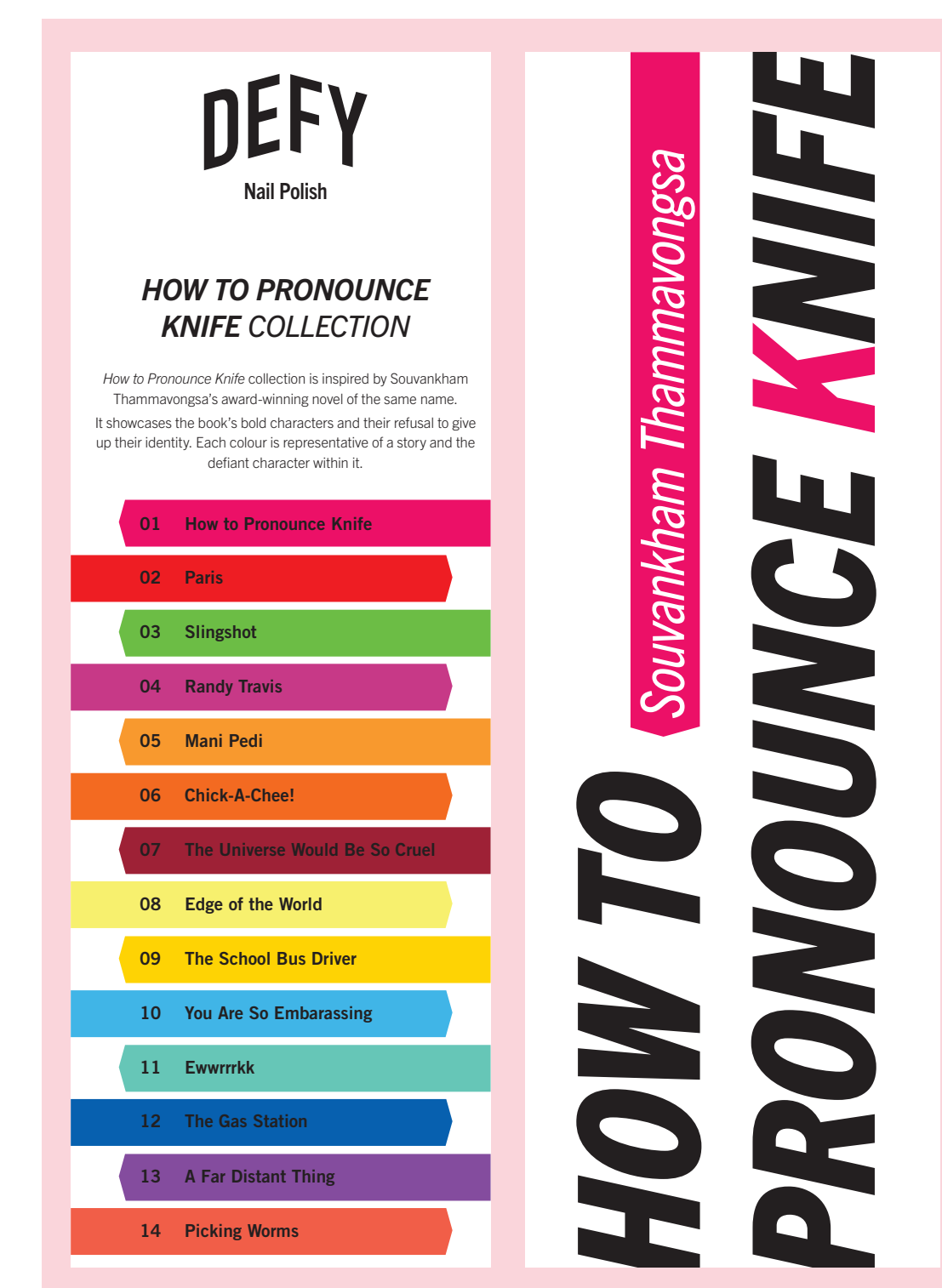
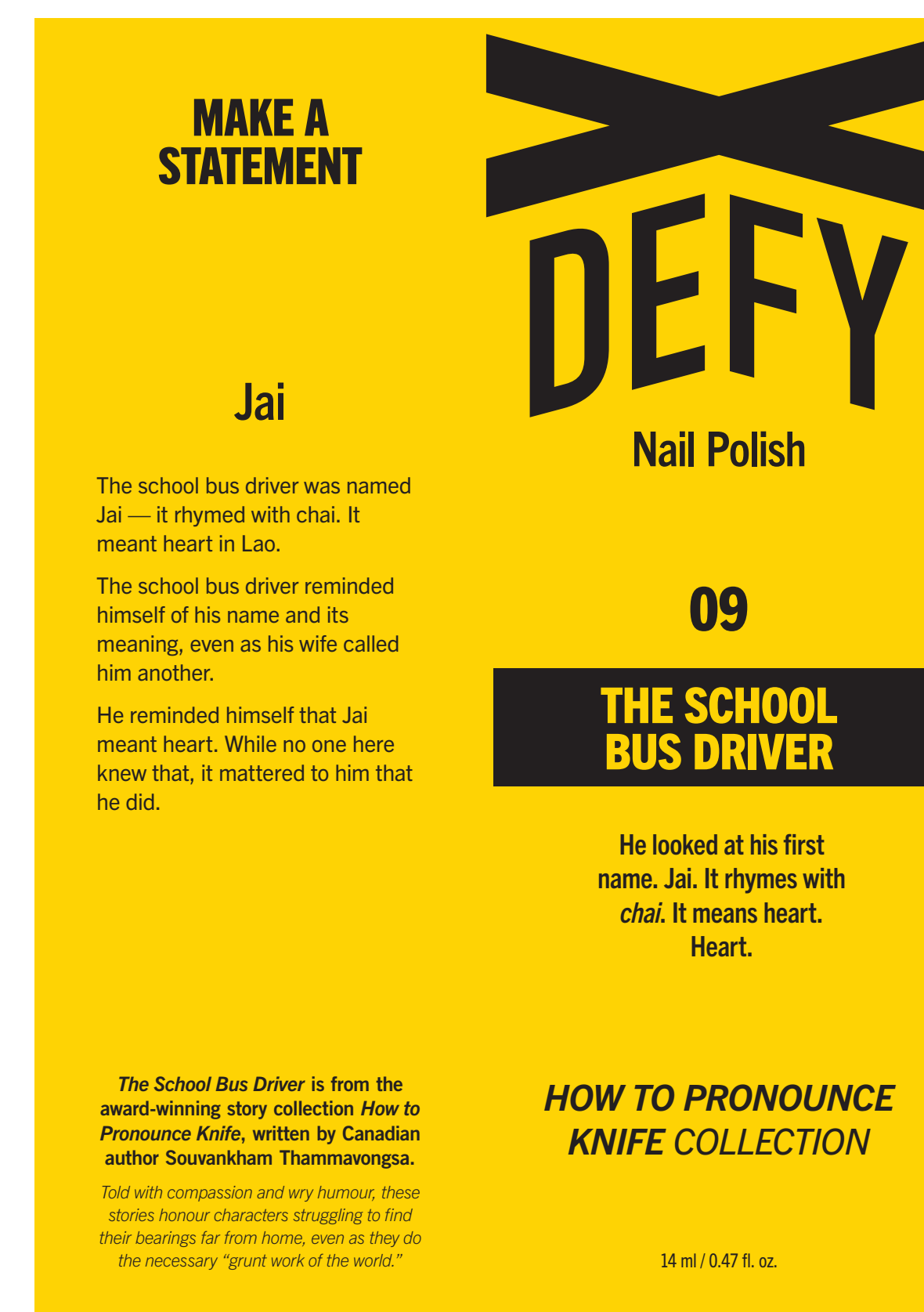
#### DIGITAL ITERATIONS

Designs go through many iterations before the final version is reached. This project involved several rounds of critique. The first iteration is overtly minimal and visually quiet. The second iteration achieves a louder appearance and begins to challenge the norms of nail polish packaging, taking the design one step closer to the third and final iteration.



### RESULTS

The end product is a nail polish brand that is inclusive to everyone and encourages you to be proud of who you are — to feel empowered by your strength. A design centred around strong, bold shapes mirrors the ferocious, unshakeable will of the characters in Thammavongsa's *How to Pronounce Knife*. An insert is included in the box with fourteen colour swatches, each inspired by the story it represents. On the box itself, there's a quote from a moment in the story that cements the character as defiant, as well as a profile describing what makes that character act in such rebellion. It inspires the people buying the nail polish to be bold and make a statement about themselves, just as the story characters do.



#### REFERENCES

*How to Pronounce Knife* (Souvankham Thammavongsa, 2020)

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