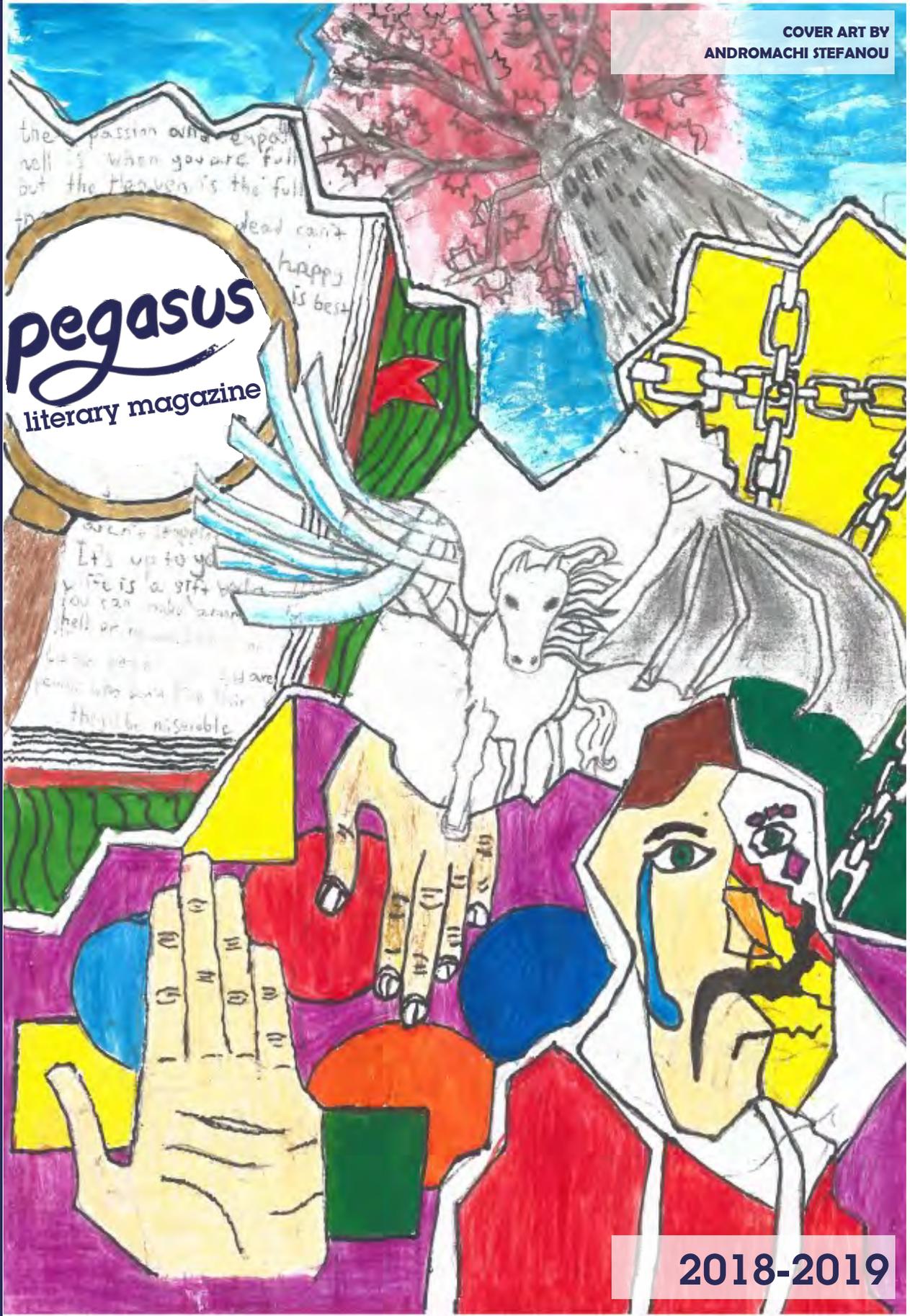


COVER ART BY  
ANDROMACHI STEFANO

the passion will expa  
noll is when you are full  
but the Heaven is the full  
the dead can't  
happy  
is best  
aren't stopping  
It's up to you  
wife is a gift  
you can only  
hell or  
Lack of  
id are  
could who want  
they'll be miserable

**pegasus**  
literary magazine



2018-2019



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## PEGASUS 2017-2018

### CORRECTIONS:

The editors apologize to Evgenia Georgia Neftetzidou for failing to credit her in the 2017-18 edition of Pegasus as the photographer of "Symmetry" (page 10) and for incorrectly crediting her untitled photo that was chosen as the overall winner of the photography competition (page 19).



"Symmetry"



untitled

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# *Animals / Nature*



ANDROMACHI STEFANO

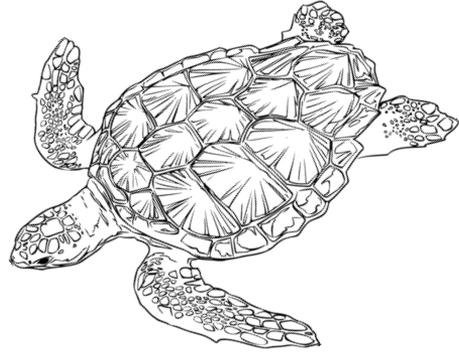
Swiftly swims she  
 through the salty water  
 Deep in the sea  
 Alone she swims  
 But as she swims  
 What does she see?  
 A jellyfish wandering  
 in the peaceful ocean.  
 She spots it  
 Now she rushes  
 To get her prey.  
 Was this a jellyfish?  
 Doesn't matter now  
 She ate it all up.  
 Little did it feel good  
 Like a jellyfish would  
 A plastic bag found  
 its way from the seashore  
 To the ocean  
 and now in her throat  
 fewer breaths could she take  
 until she couldn't  
 Now she sinks  
 no longer does she swim

## THE TURTLE THAT USED TO SWIM

---

a fable

by Maria Eleni Samamidou



Always watch out.  
 Not everything is  
 what it seems.

# THE EARTH AND THE SQUIRREL

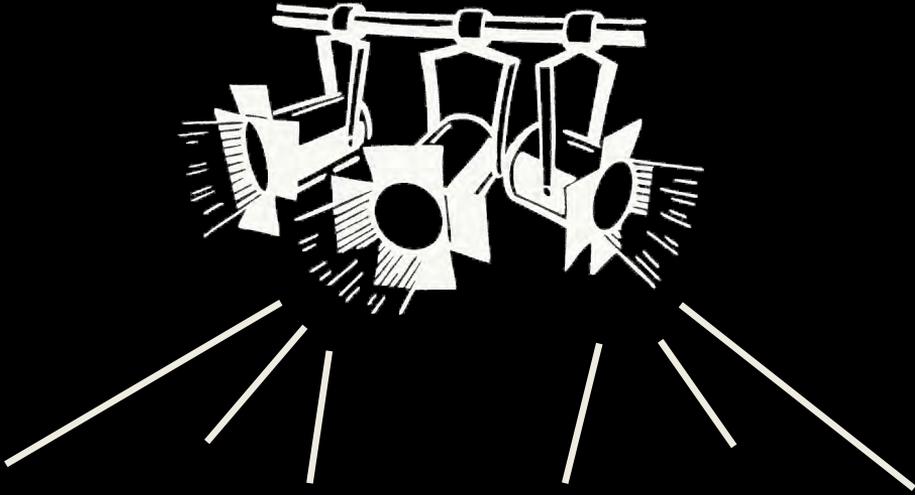
by Aristotelis Tsalopoulos



The Earth and the squirrel  
had a quarrel  
And the bigger called the smaller “Little Thing.”  
Squirrel replied,  
You are doubtless very big  
and you can change the weather.  
But, if all things are taken together  
You are just a sphere.  
Spinning round to make a year,  
And I think myself no disgrace  
I wanna see you, take my place.  
You won’t stand a chance  
of travelling all that distance.  
You are big and I am small.  
I am right and you are wrong.  
As I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you, a nut crack.

# STAGE FRIGHT

by Dimitra Sarri



Behind the curtain a lion stood still,  
The play was about to begin,  
His inner self, though, did not know,  
If he was ready for the show.

The crowd's applause he could now hear,  
Only solution: not to appear,  
He started stepping back and back,  
Till someone grabbed him in the dark.

In baggy jeans, with messy hair,  
He suddenly felt weak up there;  
The audience may criticize,  
And what if I forget my lines?

His friend, a tiger, was standing by,  
She smiled at him and closed an eye,  
Holding hands they entered stage,  
Acting together every page.

When things seem frightening or stark,  
Just like a starless night, turning black,  
Invite a friend to be by your side,  
Your sky will become again full of light!

Fifty hundred pounds of shrimp  
Are laying in the ice  
Fifty weeks of sailing,  
Anchored only thrice

My hands are cold and dry  
They smack of fish and salt  
Yesterday the bay almost filled  
Tomorrow I'll kill a rat

The wind has now steadied  
"Orza!" - my Captain's cries raise -  
Then turning to the looming shapes,  
The seagulls cheering I praise

Take heart, dear mop  
And sweep the deck with hope  
Aye-aye! my captain, hear me hum  
And watch the water slop

Now as I cover my shift  
I see the beacon's glow  
And my darling's handkerchief  
And my children that have grown

Fifty hundred pounds of shrimp  
And fifty weeks have made me limp  
Now dance with me my dearest mop  
Soon, the ship, we'll dock

## THE SAILOR'S SHANTY



by Agathi Nikolaidou

# FABLE FOR WHEN YOU DOUBT YOURSELF

by Artemis Kritikou



Resting in the canopy  
of a pine tree,

Unwieldy, charcoal Crow

and graceful Canary in yellow elegance  
chirping about its exquisite tone.

Crow in insecure silence  
hushed, stifled, muffled.

The dark-feathered bird  
crouches on the branch,

almost whispering, not talking.  
Instead thinking to himself

how nice it would be  
to trill, whistle, chirp.

But noisy Canary  
teases and mocks, crowds the air.

What a parody, he thinks,  
for Crow to sing.

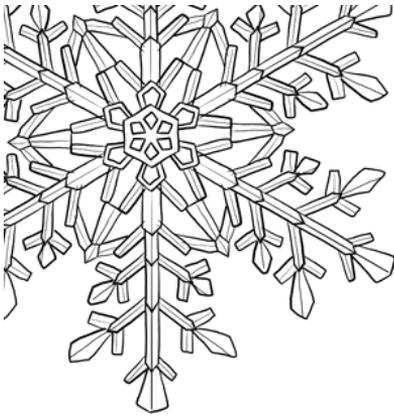
Suddenly the bleak beak cracks  
and not croak, but grace comes.

The Canary now  
hushes and chokes, swallows its song.

Dreams comes true  
when you believe in you.

Ignore those  
who reprobate you.





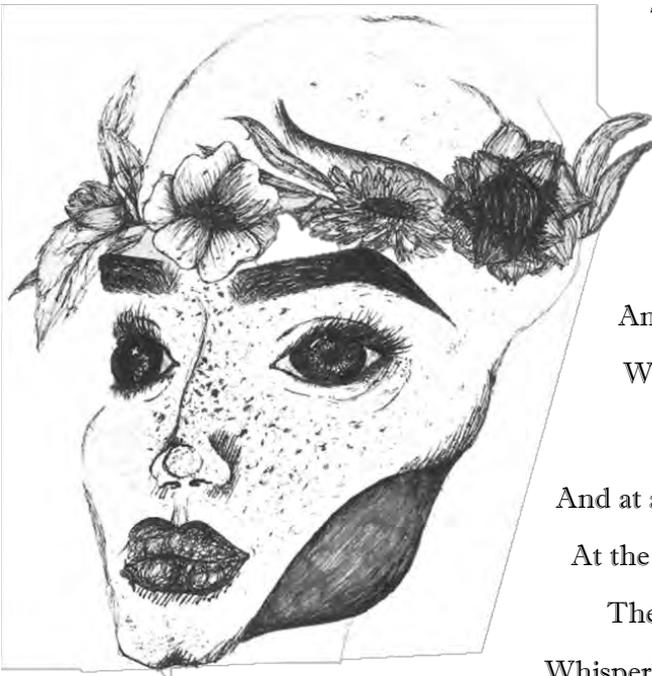
## **SNOWFLAKE**

by Anastasia Spyromitrou

My mother is a cloud  
white, clean and lovely.  
My father is a gust of wind  
cold, noisy and angry.  
I am a snow flake  
ivory, icy and adorable.  
It's the time! It's the time!  
I grew up so, it's the time  
to go to the Earth.  
I'm falling and falling and falling  
for three minutes or three decades?  
I finally touch the ground  
It's so rough and dusty.  
I want to go back to my home  
but I have to stay here,  
to beautify the Earth  
and delight the little children.

## *Withered Love*

by Olga Mauromati



Dancing, swinging around a trellis tower,  
 A beautiful, fragile, coral flower,  
 Looked up and instantly fell in love,  
 With the warm sun shining above,

As if designed for a royal princess  
 Was sewn the fabric of the flower's dress,  
 Delicately shaped as the dragonfly's wings,  
 Soft and thin it surrounded the fledgling,

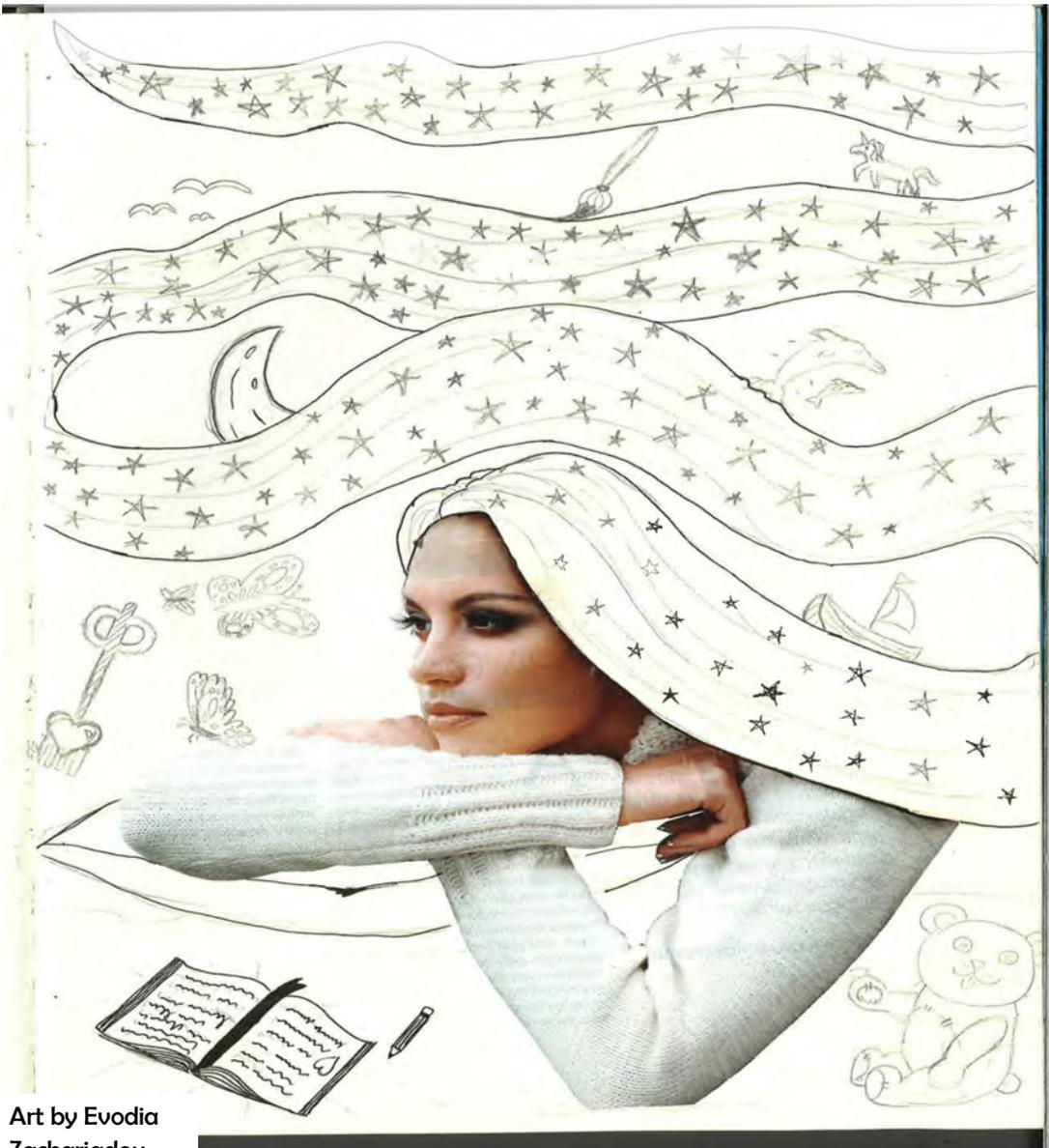
Blooming and growing,  
 Their passion spreading inside,  
 The sun's kisses burned,  
 With fire and lust.

After a few months,  
 They separated hearts,  
 And the bloom started to dry,  
 Withering as time passed by,

And at a dreadful moment flower stares  
 At the edge of a cliff the sun despairs,  
 The beautiful sunset in the sky,  
 Whispering to the flower its last goodbye.



# Music & Rhythm



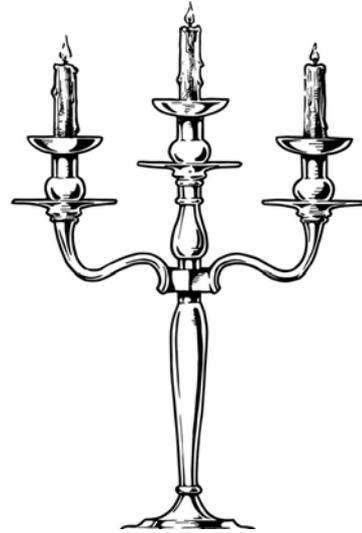
Art by Evodia Zachariadou

## *A Dyslectic's Waltz*

*Agathi Nikolaidou*

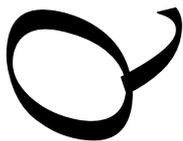
Near the gramophone I stood  
Subtly tapping my foot  
My being no longer discreet  
After reading aloud in Lit

I was dragged on stage  
By a classy A in Mary Jane's  
To the twin Ls I was passed  
Who both twirled me at once



And after stepping on E's tapping shoes  
And ripping both G's and O's matching tutus  
In the wrinkled arms of oldie R I fell  
Whose hands travelled my lower back well

To Y I bowed, defeated and drunk  
The regal ballroom, just a crass prank  
And when I stumbled and daftly coughed  
The teacher frowned and all the kids laughed



The world ends in major key  
A drizzly Wednesday afternoon.

*The World Ends in Major Key*

By Niki Chatzigeorgiadou

Stagger into a worn out crescendo  
By the broken strings of lonely quartets.

It pulls the covers up  
in its astral cradle  
and time starts counting in negative numbers

As our windows fog up  
with the thin veil of mist  
of what could have been



**TANGO  
EN  
SKAI**

By Agathi Nikolaidou

Into the air I sink  
And on your frets I dry  
Laborious is our routine  
To your chords my legs submit  
The pulse no longer shy  
Dance me into this dream  
To touch down, don't try  
For this is our feat  
Our Tango en skai

# PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WINNERS



*anastasios marios chatzidimitriou*  
/b

**Anastasios-Marios Chatzidimitriou**  
*High School Street Art Winner*



**Stergios Bogatinis**  
*Junior High Street Art Winner*



**Asimina Lazaridou**  
*Junior High Portrait Winner*



**Alexandra Vyzantiadou**  
*Junior High Portrait Winner*



**Konstantina Cheiladaki**  
*High School Portrait Winner*



**Georgios Axarlis**  
*High School Nature Winner*



**Gabriel Karapanagiotis**  
*Junior High Nature Winner*



**Asimina Axarli**  
*Junior High Architecture Winner*



**Zoe Konstantinidou**  
*Junior High Fashion Winner*

**LOVE**

**I**

**AND**

**F**

**DEATH**

## I SAW YOU TODAY

*By Venetia Billia*

I saw you today,  
 steel under the sunlight in a room full of bricks,  
 with a face that makes me believe God is an artist.  
 You were the air that kept me from suffocating,  
 my only source of oxygen in a city of plaster,  
 but still I stood and still I stared at you,  
 the masterpiece at the museum.  
 I couldn't break the window.

I saw you today.  
 I saw the wounds of her lust.  
 They grew inside me,  
 I felt them stuck in my throat,  
 hurting, burning, choking me,  
 but still I had to swallow.

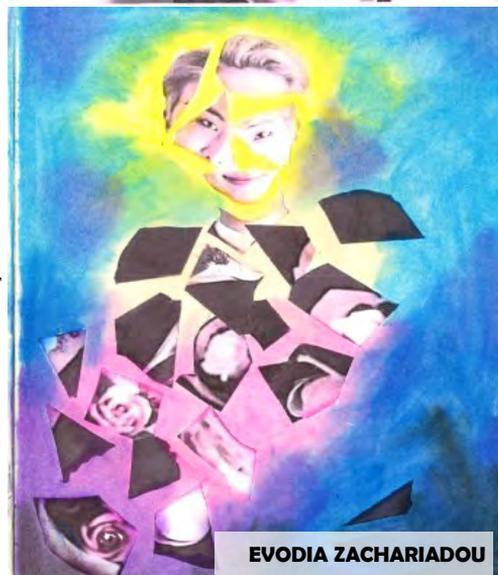
And I swallowed.

I was strong enough to hold the arsenic  
 and keep breathing.

But it was still there.  
 Still poison.  
 Still in my blood.

I saw you today,  
  
 steel under the sunlight in a room full of  
 bricks.

And I walked out.



**EVODIA ZACHARIADOU**

## ***WHO TO PITY?***

By Melvin-Solomon Berkowitz

Don't pity the dead. The  
dead have their future.  
The dead have true life,  
the kind the living lack.

Don't pity the dead. No longer  
are they sinners. No longer  
are they sad. The dead are now  
pure, clean, light. They are  
now angels with wings, angels  
with white souls.  
Angels with friends,  
with a Friend, God.

The dead are better off. They live not in horror.  
Or pain. Or sorrow. Don't pity the dead, for they are  
in a glowing world. In a world with love, and peace  
and stars.

Don't pity the dead, handsome as they  
are. Beautiful they look, in their new  
clothes. Shiny. Starry.  
Don't pity the dead, for they live not  
in this  
hell.

Pity the  
living. Pity  
us. Pity you.

A hat of sin we wear, a  
burden on our heads. A  
weight of pain.

Shoes of good we  
use. Shoes of joy.  
Shoes.

Pity the living. The loveless, for they are dead, long  
before they should be.

The walking dead,  
you should pity, not the dead.

Pity the violent, for they lack the love of life.

The walking dead,  
you should pity, not the dead.

Don't pity the dead. They don't deserve it.

Pity the living, for they do. Help them. The  
living. They need it after all.

What if I wrote a poem about the color red?  
 What if I made you the main character?  
 What if I wrote every line thinking about your blood and  
 my eyes rolled back in pleasure? What if the deeper the red,  
 the deeper the pleasure?

**LIFE**  
**POEM**

What if I said that I was going to keep that poem forever?  
 What if you thought that I was going to fold it neatly and hold it  
 protectively against my heart?  
 What if I wanted you to believe that I would always keep my  
 tongue rolling to its rhythm?

*By Foivi*

And what if one day I burnt it?  
 What if one day I brought you the ashes and told you that I  
 didn't want to keep you alive anymore?  
 What if I burnt you with it.

## Love is...

By Anastasia Spyromitrou

Love is louder than hate

Love is all around us

Love is

a hug on an inky stormy night

a hot cup of tea when you are frosty

a kiss from your sweet grandma

a very bubbly bath before your sleep

Love is inspiration to fly to the sky

Love is our extraordinary dreams

Love is the only force capable of  
 transforming an enemy into a friend

Love is all we need

Love is the only thing faster than the darkness

Love is light.



# DEATH POEM

The death of an era  
is when they eventually decide to release the skeletons,  
and then these skeletons start replacing everything you  
once knew.

And then everything you love  
can suddenly only be found in antique stores  
decorated with spider webs  
still haunted by the shards of dreams of others like you.

*Mamabouka*

You see, a graveyard is just a peculiar antique store

Both a macabre display of death.



## Memories.

By Konstantina Cheiladaki

The sunrays ever playing on  
the silver jumping rope,  
the sounds of children laughing  
down the street,  
hiding in the bushes, and waiting  
for this storm to pass,  
laughing, pointing fingers, screaming,  
HELP.

Freshly backed cupcakes  
with frosting blue as school,  
wishing I could run.

Away.

And 100, 92, 91, the everlasting  
countdown for cache-cache.

# ALWAYS

by Eugenia Strataki

I would always find her in absurd places. Truly odd ones. The first couple of times this would cause my breath to stop dead and questions would rush into my head. It slowly grew into me. I got used to it much like a little child gets used to his little sister. At first uneasy. Kind of frightened, not really sure whether it's a blessing or a threat. And so it became a habit.

The first time this happened I found her in the basement of the performance hall, inside the costume room, hidden away from the rest of the world. That's sort of how she made everything feel—as if it were hidden. I did manage to revisit that very basement some twenty-five years later. It seemed dull. First time I visited her down there I had the aberrant sense that it wasn't the thick piles of clothing, hangers, shoes that hid her. Nor were the distracting, flamboyant colors melted around the room functioning as a distraction for the hunter looking for its prey. No. It was the scent. It had always been the scent. Thick, yet light, as it crawled into the nostrils. It was peculiar, too. It was sort of like someone slowly and agonizingly passing away in a deserted library aisle, reminiscing past opportunities, crying

loudly, knowing he'll never have them back. I've never met a woman with that scent before, and if I have it was never able to hide a woman so well. The smell made the clothes and the colors bounce ready to attack you. It made the piles thicker, the room broader and her . . . prettier.

When I found her that day she was so much more than simply pretty. She had an odd glow around her collarbones, a spark of lightning and thunder in her lips and eyes, a delicate glow of sweat from the heat of the room. Thinking back that couldn't possibly be. The basement was always freezing cold. No matter how hard we had tried to warm it up, it always remained damp and cold. Every single time.

Each encounter was like that. The same maze rising around me, almost suffocating me, the same scent that made me forget my name and any sense of self-comprehension. My own reflection seemed distant and blurred. Not hers, though. Never hers. Her image was carved within me, my every part seemed devoted to her. And if I had to sacrifice my own self to keep a fraction of a memory of her aura, I would. And I did. After all this time,



time spent in numbness and apathy, devoted to small things, human distractions. If I were asked again whether I would make that deal with the devil . . . I still would. I would do it all again. Every mistake.

I never failed to discover her, despite her noble attempt to make it difficult for me. We'd sit down together and instantly burst into laughter when our eyes met. There was something so unbelievably hilarious about her existence in space that killed me. Her hair that she constantly pushed back behind her ears, her eyes were shapes shifting behind her lids and lashes, her nostrils dancing when she breathed. It warmed me. Her laughter was like being caressed around my waist and back, much like water hot water running from the shower late at night, a school night. My laughter was peculiar too, like chewing almonds on Christmas day. She always had chocolate with her. An odd kind I'd never seen before. It was Milk chocolate with vanilla filling, but each time it was different. The vanilla and the chocolate danced a different dance every time; they walked a different path each time. Each bar made me forget the previous, but I still remember the last: suffocating under

cold, salty water.

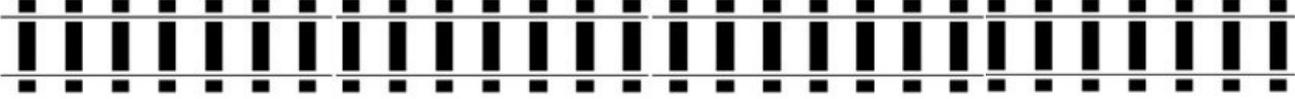
We shared everything, talked about everything. The small things that people seemed to walk by without noticing. In things that to other people were shapeless, gray, we found shapes and movement within the gloominess. I felt at ease around her. My muscles would relax. My fingertips would tense, they felt like they were able to lift my whole body. Words lost all meaning, letters, images, colors too. My breasts would sweat, like my neck, my palms. Happiness. I knew what it meant. I let it pierce my brain again. Her breath on my hair came back to me in the form of a fairy combing me, stroking my cheeks, slowly flying down my lips and neck.

I laughed and screamed like never before.

And then it all came to me. All at once. Dances in the blue lights, penetrated by people's gaze. Laughter in the dark while holding wet, strong hands. Sandwiches, coffee, cigarettes lying half-finished on the floor. I thought about each one of the moments, cherishing them, keeping them in my heart, forming their names with my lips like a prayer. All thanks to her. I snapped. Thanks to me.

*Reminiscing My Mistakes*

by Melvin-Solomon Berkowitz



To the journey I never began, I write.  
To the lost freedom and home.

A letter of sin to myself,  
and of forgiveness to God.

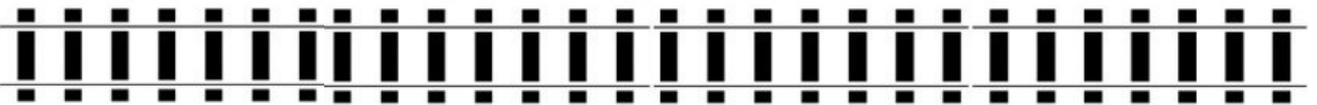
I look at the trains beneath my home,  
they are like snakes,  
twisting around the world,  
like a constricting hand

I look at my hands,  
wrinkled as they are,  
and then at my face,  
that was once young.

The trees of my heart have grown,  
as tall as the sky,  
and have roots long enough,  
to reach the once innocent ground.

I sit in a chair,  
as deep as my soul,  
and my mind is watches what could have been,  
my best and finest of times.

But in my youth I committed perfection,  
the biggest mistake of all  
And though it may seem an advantage,  
to me, my perfection is a flaw.



My longest quest is done.  
Though unsuccessfully,  
some might say.

Sitting in this chair,  
I see them all,  
the mistakes.

My life is wrong,  
I only see it now.  
I will never know love,  
in her red, dressing gown.

I hear voices. A passionate call.  
Life may be finally calling me.  
Or is that Death.

A bird I was not,  
and now I will have to pay,  
For my sins.

Life is kicking me out.  
No apologies accepted.

“I am sorry, Life” I tearfully say.  
Maybe she heard me.  
Maybe she forgave me.

# KNOWLEDGE + POWER



EVODIA ZACHARIADOU

# I am God.

by Foivi Mamalouka

Where are you?

I am everywhere.

Where is that?

Inside the infinite sphere  
of the cosmos.

I'm there too. Does that  
mean I'm everywhere?

No.

Why?

Because you're not God.

Maybe I am.

No.

What do you see now?

**I see** the beautiful flame of the stars. What do  
you see?

**I see** that – and the flame of the bullet leaving the gun.

**I see** the oceans collide from above. What do you  
see?

**I see** the oceans collide, breed and destroy.

**I see** the history of man unravel before my eyes.

**I'm part of it.**

Well, maybe you are God.

Maybe I am.

What am I then?

**Maybe you're nothing.**

Then how do I see?

The power of the brain is daunting.

And... how are you talking to me?

...I don't know...

Maybe you're nothing too.

But then who is God?

Maybe we both are. But we have to stick together.

**Maybe together we are God.**

But what is God?

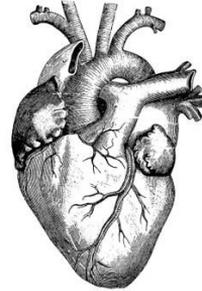
It's a drug for sadness... doesn't always work though.

**Yeah... we could be God...**

# THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

by Konstantina Cheiladaki

Body of a fowl,  
of a king,  
heart of a weak,  
feeble rewarder.  
Scorn the borders  
of your virtues,  
your dishonor,  
I will await you.  
I, myself, will dare  
to invade you.  
Woman; king  
of every realm  
of my punishment;  
of England too.  
I, myself, will take up  
arms in the field,  
or should I rather  
not think?



What is faith  
And what is love?  
Can they be explained at all?  
The hormones clouding like a storm  
The breeze that passes through the door  
The rain that soaks through your form  
The chill that makes you embrace the cold  
The stabbing pain in moon-lit nights

Logic, like a train, collides  
With faith watching from the sidelines  
It brings you joy  
It brings you grief  
Why do we even  
exist?  
To rise and fall  
And rise again  
Until the very end.

---

## L<sup>2</sup> Of Faith

by Marialena Kapetanaki

# The real reason I like math

by Foivi Mamalouka

I like math because in the dimension of numbers and shapes when something is infinite we don't try to define it. In math we are not desperate to limit the unlimited, fit in our simple mortal brains the infinity of the unthinkable. We simply say:

**"Not Defined".**

In math you would never set starting and ending points where they don't exist.

You'd never establish a *smallest* or **largest** number, because that would mean that the others would have to alter their values to [ **fit that frame** ] you created, and you'd have to delete those that wouldn't.

It's not just numbers that are infinite. It's also people's individual or collective imagination, wisdom, *mental horizons*, **thoughts**.

But unfortunately that is not part of **math**.

That is why I hate literature. Because it's not math. Because it doesn't only attempt, but strives to **define** the infinity of the human brain through rules, generalizations and pages and pages of restrictions.



I'm a writer. And because of this I'm *infinite*. And that is precisely why I am not recognized, because I am too much of a writer for human standards. And instead of people accepting their inferiority before my infinity, they have to ~~scratch me out~~. Me and all the other writers that dared to

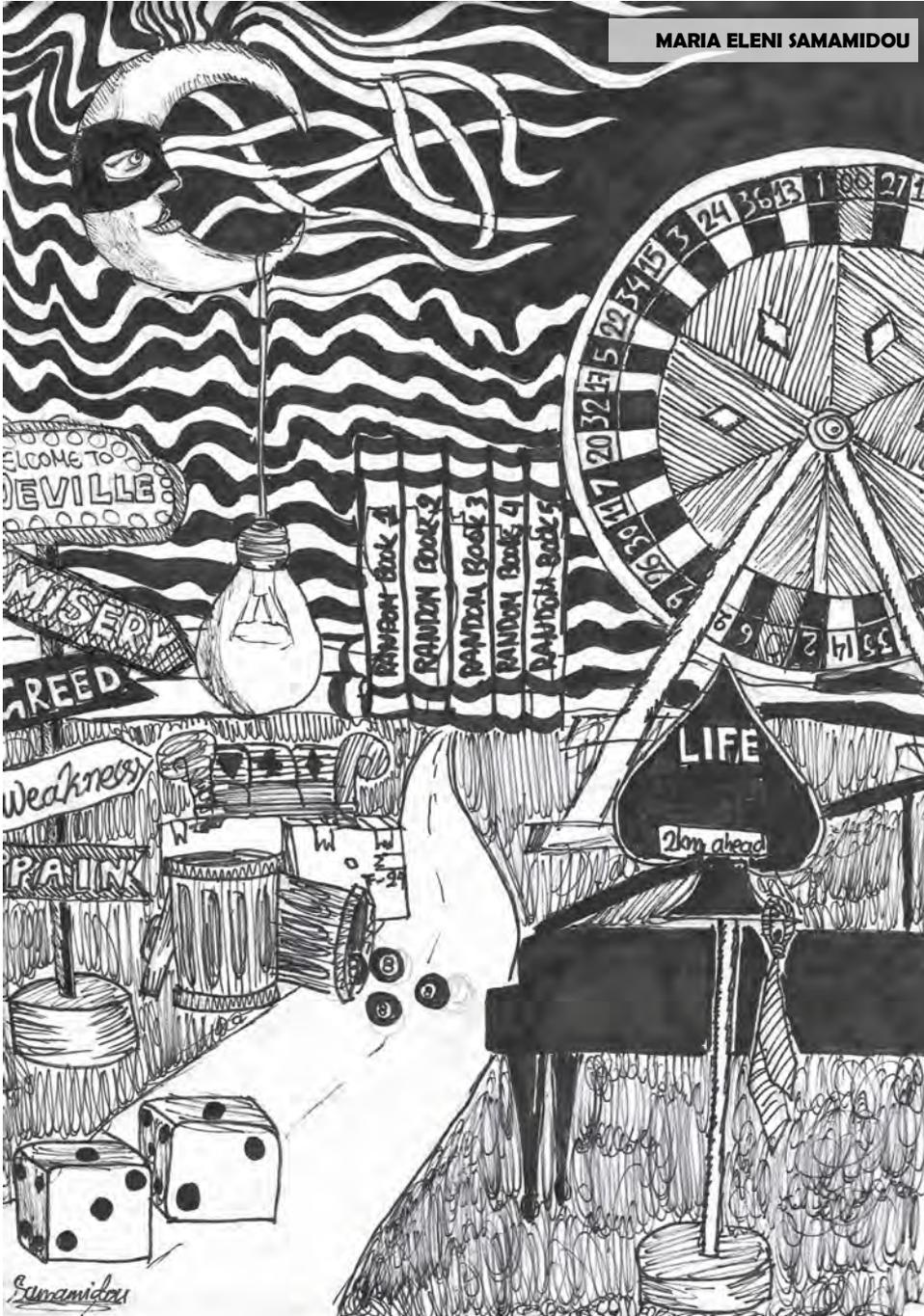
peek out of the box.

My place is in **math and science**. After all, I'm just a **NUMBER** too. I am a fraction whose denominator equals zero.

That's why I belong in a place where no effort is made to define me.

*I am infinite.*

# permanent



# ephemeral

# GHOSTS OF DUST

---

By Konstantina Cheiladaki

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It was a sunny morning for Peter. And it stayed that way for him even though the sky was covered with debris falling slowly to the ground, like the most peculiar snow, along with papers drifting through the air like weightless birds. And it was so because some minutes before Peter was lying motionless on the floor of his office, blood covering his forehead, as the floor was falling, and falling, to crash to the floor below, setting it on fire. And the date was September 11, 2001.

This is the story as the world knows it. Another name added to the memorial, another photo to the pyre that burnt into the sky, made out of candles, drawings and wishes to the stars.

But if I were to tell you the story, well, lots of things would change. Peter was my cousin. Ten years older, a boy in his twenties, with the brightest smile in the world. He knew how to make the best toys out of wood, and so I often teased him, telling him that he should leave his newfound job at the World Trade Center and work as a carpenter. And when he asked how would he made a living out of it, I just laughed, and handed him some of the money I loved to make out of dirt, telling him that he was now rich.

If only he had listened to me.

Today I found his business card while

cleaning the attic, the place with such a low ceiling that only I could fit. After all these years we were finally moving out of that old house that creaked with every step, in which I had spent all of my childhood, and I hated almost every inch of it. It reminded me of him.

But now the wound had almost closed, mending over time, until all that was left of it was just a little scratch that bled from time to time. So, upon stumbling over the little rectangular paper, I didn't cry, I didn't even flinch. I greeted it just like a long forgotten friend and blew the dust off it, revealing the series of little black digits over the white background.

And I still don't even know why I did this. For I took my cellphone out of my back pocket, and after registering the time, it was 8:43, I called.

Call it curiosity perhaps, wanting to know if somebody had gotten his old business number, wanting to completely heal that wound in my chest, I don't know.

A male voice answered the call. "Peter Jenkins, here," he said in a serious, but rushed manner, with an enthusiasm evident even under all that professionalism.

I found myself speechless, struggling for breath. No, it can't be him, Sarah, he died years ago, he-

"Hello?" the voice repeated, and this

time it was evident, it was him.

"Peter?" I asked with a voice that creaked through a closed throat. "Is that you?"



"Who is this?" he replied, and I knew him so well that I knew he was pinching his eyebrows together, trying to recall something, looking to his right, confused.

"It's Sarah," I said, pressing the phone so desperately against my ear that it hurt. And although I couldn't see myself, I knew that I looked paler than a sheet at the moment, I was like a ghost speaking with another ghost, because I had seen his body, laying motionless next to all the others, his eyes closed, that black metal railing sticking out of him, his fair hair turned gray from all the ash that had fallen on it. "Your cousin."

"Oh, hey, sweetie!" he exclaimed in

recognition. "What happened to your voice?"

I ignored him. "Peter, what's the date?"

He paused for a couple of seconds. "September 11, 2001. Why?"

I didn't care how this was happening, or why. "Peter, I need you to get out of your office. Now. Right now." I said, realizing that I could save him, save the man with the curly blond hair, so blond that I called him "my sheep".

"Sarah, sweetie, I can't hear you, there is a weird noise, and-"

There was a scream, the sound of something falling, and then the line was dead, making me jump to my feet, my head crashing against the low roof.

I checked the time with shaking fingers. 8:48. The time the plane crashed into the North Tower, into Peter's floor, killing him on impact.

I pressed redial; my hands were shaking so much that I nearly dropped my phone twice. Only a generic voice came through, a lady saying something along the lines of "The phone number that you are trying to reach does not exist."

I had a general rule: Never cuss when angry. I broke it like I never had before.

Because Peter was now dead once more, the person I had loved more than anyone else in the world, but for these five minutes he was alive, and oh god, I had missed his voice more than anything in the world. And it was I who found his body all those years ago, another nameless

## Cheiladaki, continued

man next to the nameless ghost, the sky on fire, the blue lights of ambulances and police cars blinding me as they rushed by, the people pushing through the crowd, holding photos of their loved ones, but I didn't need one, I only had to reach out my hand to touch him, and knew that it was him, my insides on fire, a distraction so that my heart wouldn't stop, a trick, because I knew that I would be missing him forever. And "Never Forget" was written on the cars full of dust, but how could you, how could you forget the people running away from their deaths, the pavement cluttered with corpses, the blood and the smell of despair hanging heavily in the air. The rescuers collecting names and shouting to each other, the broken bodies carried on the streets, the body bags, and Peter in the middle of this, with his mischievous smile still on his lips, even when everything else was gone.

Praying that it was just another nightmare, one of those where you run, but you're not fast enough, just like this one, being able to hear his voice, but not being able to save him, with the throbbing of my head reminding me of the truth, that I was alive and he was not, and the wound in my chest was still pulsing blood, just like that day all these years ago.

I can't remember how the rest of the day went by. I only remember some hands lifting me, being wrapped in a blanket, still clutching the phone tightly in my hand.

Whispering in soft, considerate voices, the word "concussion" over and over again.

I woke early the next morning. Checking my phone, I saw the digits 8:00 shining white on the screen.

This time when I called, I was directed to voicemail; his familiar voice directed me to leave a message after the distinctive sound.

"Peter?" I said through a closed throat. "This is Sarah. As soon as you hear this, you need to get out of the building, do you hear me? This is not a joke; I swear, you need to listen to me. A plane is going to crash into your office. And as unlikely as this sounds, you need to trust me. *Please*. I love you," I whispered the words that I should had said all these years ago, when he left for work to never come back.

I remained curled on the couch not knowing how I got there, my eyes glued to my phone, willing it to ring, for something to happen. And it did. It was 8:43.

Five minutes to convince him. *Again*.

"Sarah, sweetie, what's happening?" he asked in a concerned voice. Of course he didn't remember anything from yesterday. September 11, 2001 was a sunny day for him, and nothing more. This had to change. "Another nightmare?"

I grabbed at the prompt he gave me. As a kid I usually had these weird dreams that aunt Sue considered prophetic, and sometimes they were.

"Yes," I said with an urgent voice. "A hijack. By terrorists. If you stay there, you are going to die."

He laughed. "Sweetie, don't you worry, I'm in one of the safest places in the world, remember? And besides, if I don't finish this report on time, my boss is gonna kill me!"

"Peter!" I snapped. "Screw your report! For me! Do me this favor! Just for-" I checked my watch, "two minutes! You need to get out of the building!"

His sigh came through the line. "Fine, sweetie. Just for you."

All I could do was listen to his steps.

"Peter? Talk to me while you're at it!" I

pleaded, because I could save him, I had to.

"I'm walking down the stairs right now," he said, and in truth, the sounds confirmed his words. "The big ones, with the black railing, remember?"

And I had a terrible feeling, for I remembered the black railing sticking out of his chest all these years ago, and I wanted to shout something to him, but he shouted first, a raw cry, along with the a deafening roar, and the line was dead once more.

## S É A N C E

You never really liked waking up. I remember how you'd first pretend not to notice or feel my hands on your body, running through your hair, tickling your sides, and then how you'd slap them away sleepily when you'd see I still persisted despite your unresponsiveness. You'd hold on stubbornly to the blankets that I half-heartedly tried to rip away from you in an effort to get you cold enough to get up and get dressed. "Have some mercy on me, heathen," you'd giggle. "It's way too early. I need my beauty sleep after all."

As it is, it wasn't about me being unmerciful, but rather about the fact that now you had an actual job. Particularly one that required getting up at "some ungodly hour of the morning," because, as you frustratingly announced, yet still beaming after your job interview, "Seriously Frankie, I swear my boss is a bat or something."

Attempting to logically reason with you to get out of bed had proved to be impractical quite early on, and using any kind of electronic device with an alarm had dangerous side-effects. Particularly

By Niki Chatzigeorgiadou

**EVODIA ZACHARIADOU**

after three brand new alarm clocks and my own cell phone had gone flying out of our bedroom window. Remember how you hit our poor neighbor, Lindsey, straight in the forehead with one of them? You apologized profusely and treated her to coffee the next evening. Of course, the first friend you'd manage to make here would be a person you accidentally attacked with a blaring airborne alarm clock. You being you, I had expected nothing different.

Coffee had proved to be my greatest ally in those early morning battles. It kind of creeped me out sometimes, the effect it had on you. The moment I'd enter our room with the freshly brewed hot liquid (how you ever managed to drink that mud with absolutely no sugar is beyond me), you'd sit up immediately and I could

literally see the grogginess leave your eyes as the coffee's scent hit your nose. You'd sniff the air eagerly, ridiculously like a puppy, and make grabby hands at me. "Frankie, gimme it," you'd whine. You'd down half of the mug in five seconds and then pull me into the bed to thank me with a morning-breath kiss. Sometimes I'd laugh and say you loved that darn stuff more than me. You'd kiss me again.

I try to lift the misty haze that clouds my mind and remember what happened to those days, but I always find that I can't. Today, an unsettling feeling nestles in my chest again. I peel my eyes open to find you sitting cross-legged at the foot of our bed. You're already dressed, but your clothes lack their usual vibrancy, the stamps and colors looking as if they've

## Chatzigeorgiadou, continued

been washed one too many times. I look for the brightness of your hair, dyed valentine red or of your hazel-green irises, but you're hidden beneath a veil that seems to muddy your vitality.

"Good morning," I say.

You look at me pityingly. I move around the bed a bit, my muscles still sleep-weary, but I don't quite feel your weight in the bed. Have you not been eating again? It's been a long while since I've had to put up a fight to make you finish what's on your plate, to remind you to take a snack regularly. We got through that together. You and me.

You get up from our bed and step on your untied shoelaces--why are you wearing shoes? You tilt your head slightly, beckoning me to do the same. "Are you coming?" your eyes say. The air suffocates me for a moment. I get up.

Your footsteps are light, inaudible, swallowed by a thick invisible carpet. Mine echo sharply in my ears. My feet are bare against the hardwood floor, yet they somehow sound to me like heels clicking against marble. You had shut all the windows last night, but a breeze chills my fingertips and calves as I follow in your wake.

I expected us to go into the kitchenette, but you lead me into our living room. There is an empty coffee cup sitting on our beat-up mahogany table, but I'm fairly sure it's mine, from last night. Now I

drink coffee at night too, you know. Sleep doesn't come easily anyway and the hot cup is comforting between my palms. It gets cold way too soon.

You perch yourself on the armrest of your favorite armchair. I want to come sit next to you, wrap my arms around you, feel your skin on mine, breathe in your scent. I don't. Instead, I stay standing, my arms tucked tight to my sides.

"Are you okay?" I ask.

You don't answer. Why won't you answer? My hand twitches as to reach for you, but ends up waving uselessly in the air.

"Why aren't you talking to me? What's been going on? What is it?"

The corners of your lips twitch upwards in a mockery of a smile. I now realize you haven't showed off your perfect teeth in one of those smiles reserved only for me in a long time.

"Nothing," I think you whispered. "There's nothing anymore." Maybe you didn't. I don't know.

We stand like that for a long moment. Perhaps two seconds. Perhaps an hour. The air feels stuffy and I look away as your eyes harden a bit, that not-quite smile frozen on your face. I turn to stare at one of your paintings hanging on the opposite wall. It is a figure, not quite human, lost in the shadow of the towering buildings, the smoke, the claws reaching down from the sky. It's reality mingling with the ever-

present gore in your style. I used to love staring at your art for hours on end. I'd lie down on the paint-splattered floor of the room you had claimed as your art studio and watch as your nimble spidery fingers wrapped around thick and thinner brushes and brought the empty canvas to life. You weren't the type of artist to paint scenery and still lifes and such; instead, you'd draw and capture in your sharp angular style the supernatural, yet you'd portray it in a way that transformed it into an image hidden in the subconscious of our realities. I had first fallen in love with you, and then with your art.

I'm brought out of my musings by a knock at the door. Neither of us moves to open it. The knock sounds again. And again.

"Frank? Are you in there? It's Nathan. Hey, open up, man."

I approach the door tentatively. "What's your brother doing here so early?" I ask you. You shrug.

I open the door and he steps in quickly, an expression of relief on his face. His eyes dart around for a few moments, from my face to the coffee cup and then back to the bags that have undoubtedly formed under my eyes. He's scanning my body, looking around the room and then focusing on your oversized shirt that I'm wearing as a pajama. He doesn't acknowledge you; you don't even turn to look at him, you're only staring at me, your expression unreadable. His hands shake slightly before one of them comes to rest on my shoulder.

"Hey, hey there, buddy." He chuckles nervously. "How you are doing, Frankie? You doing any better? Have you been getting any sleep at all? You kinda look like crap honestly, seems like you could use some help with house too, yeah?" He tugs at my arm until we're both seated on the larger couch and then gazes imploringly into my eyes. I feel like, if I don't speak quickly, he'll carry on firing off questions without taking a single breath. "How are you?" he asks more gently.

"I'm fine." It comes out plastic. "I'm alright," I try again, "Really, I'm doing okay."

Your eyebrows pinch together slightly. "Really, are you now?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm good."

Nathan sighs and gives me a weak smile. His hands tighten and untighten around a small plastic bottle he's holding and his voice comes out forced. "Alright then, that's uhh, that's good to hear, man. You haven't had breakfast yet, right? You're supposed to take these on an empty stomach, remember?" I shake my head and he extends the white bottle to me. "I'm just here to give you these and then I could ring Sean to come drive us all there. We could buy some flowers if you want, to leave beside the stone. Or we could just stay here, keep you company." He runs a hand through his hair and sighs. "We know it's hard, Frankie, but we're all here for you okay?"

I don't quite understand. "What's hard?"

“Well, I know, maybe that’s not the right way to put it, it’s not that you’re not capable of taking care of yourself, that’s not what I’m saying, but we don’t want you to be alone all the time, yeah?”

“I’m not alone.”

“He’s not alone,” you say.

Nathan’s posture stiffens. “What do you mean?”

What *could* I mean? Can he not *see*?

“What do you mean?” I snap.

“What’s going on, Frank? Are you sure you’re alright?”

It’s that question again. It makes my chest tighten the same way your pitying eyes do; except it also wakes up the fiery urge within me to make him shut up... make *everyone* just shut up.

“I said I’m fine, Nathan, how many damn times are you planning to ask? Leave me *alone*.”

“Ok. Ok, alright dude. I’m just making sure you’re doing okay and stuff, I’m just worried. We all are. I know you miss him, but he wouldn’t want us to leave you—I don’t know—to rot in here alone. And I’m sure that you really wouldn’t... remember to take one of these by yourself. So I’m not leaving until you do *that*, at the very least.”

I can hear you chuckling in the corner as I’m overcome by the familiar rage at the thought of having to be *babied* and worried about like a helpless child. But my fingers grip and tear the lid off the Alemoxan bottle anyway, throwing it harshly to a corner. I swallow a pill dry and let the bottle fall with a shallow *rattle* on the

ground.

“He is right here and you need to leave *right now*. Get out!” I grab Nathan’s arms, my nails digging into his skin, and drag him off my couch, pushing him towards the still open door.

“Frank, what, what the heck are you tal—” I don’t let him finish, I don’t want to hear it, I don’t need to hear it. I violently shove him outside our apartment and shut the door with a deafening *bang*, that makes the ringing that had started rising in my ears intensify and consume me. My palms are sweating and I’m cold, I’m freezing, but I’m sweating, and the floor refuses to be still beneath my legs.

I sprint towards you in a drunken stupor and finally, finally, grasp your hand; I hold onto it with both of my hands and start dragging you into our room in a fit of despair. Nathan is pounding at the door like a madman, he is shouting but I can’t hear him, I can only feel the sting in my palms from holding on to your icy skin.

I throw you on the bed and curl up next to you, hugging your pillow to my chest, chasing your scent. I grip your jacket between my fingers desperately.

It’s the first thing that disappears.

Then your figure fades away, little by little, and the space on my bed empties once again.



## AMBIENCE

By Niki Chatzigeorgiadou

There's a lamppost across the street  
from the café I spend my evenings in.

A shiny new black pole  
that does not yet bear its own  
brown, rusty marks of age.

An intricate metallic head  
in which a tiny light nests.

There's a lamppost across that street  
and I always take a fleeting look at it,  
when entering the café.

It stands there, as rain-soaked and flickering as  
me,

But never joins my back-room table inside  
to warm our feet by the old heater  
and our hearts with some steaming cocoa.

It stands there alone

The only lamppost on that pavement

Trying to lift the darkness of that corner of 36th

All on its own.

Sometimes, when it's misty,

I gaze out the café's window

And a floating ball of light

Keeps me company.





Many ask me: “Where is Neverland?” As if I know the answer. I’m not Peter Pan; I live in an era where such foolishness is forbidden. Perhaps they see something in me. Maybe some fragments of foolishness that haven’t yet been destroyed by the speed. The speed of Time, I mean. It moves too fast, you see, so it feels like it’s chasing us all.

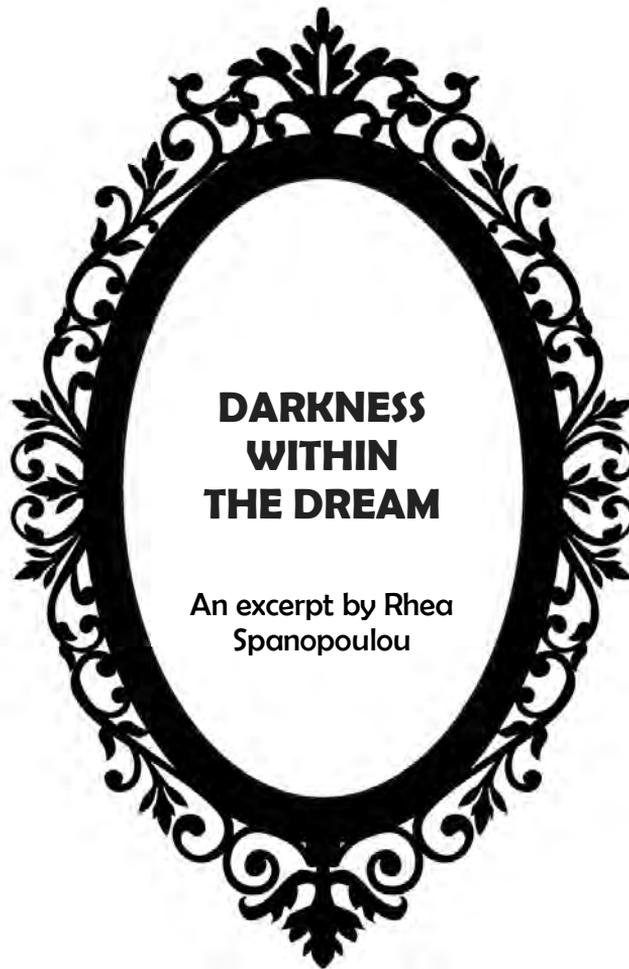
Where is Neverland really? What if we could find Peter Pan himself and ask him? But of course that couldn’t happen, for he must be dead by now... Before you rush to say I’m ignorant, I’m not. I know the story, I know he says he’s immortal, but at the end of the day, don’t we all think that?

Or maybe no... we don’t. We live for others, we think that since we didn’t choose to be born in this world, we have no obligation to live at all. So we die. We die as soon as we understand. Isn’t that a bummer? The only moments that we’re alive move by so fast that we don’t even remember them. They move fast because we’re living, and of course Time notices anything alive, so It hunts us down and contaminates our happiness. The first rays of light are those contaminated fragments of memory they implant in us. “There are no fairies,” “You can’t live forever,” “Someday you’ll grow old and die.”

Maybe each one of us is born with an imprinted map of Neverland, maybe this is even where souls are born. But of course Time has to move, It can’t accept this foolishness so It washes it away. Most of us lose all contact with it.

Others don’t. Some people are made of little pieces of Neverland put together, so they never forget. They look at themselves in the mirror and see the sparkling lakes in their eyes, so they close them to take a closer look. Then they realize that if they listen a little too closely, they can barely distinguish the sound of birds chirping and children laughing playfully, so they cup their ears to keep the beautiful noise from flying away. Then they feel their hands and they remember the flower wreaths they once used to be, the ones Peter Pan and the children brought to life with just a little fairy dust and a lot of imagination. So their muscles, those petal constructions, feel the need to move, react to the thought, tell their story somehow. But since no one understands the buzzing of the bees still drawing nectar from their stems, the hands automatically seek the pen and paper, only handy tools in their quest for creation.

So I’m guessing those are the people you’d have to ask about Neverland, for I’m a mere imitator of their glee. And who knows, maybe you’ll be lucky enough to take a glimpse at their heart – they all keep a key you know, it’s made of blood – and then you’ll know what Neverland is. If I’m not dead by then, you might want to tell me what it’s like. And then we shall both live forever.



Run, run—you can't escape. There's no way out. You are trapped in here forever. You can't wake up. This is not a dream, it is a nightmare...

Reina slammed the door in rage causing it to break into a million pieces and dissolve into the air. Sometimes she crossed over like that. She slowly laid on the stone cold floor, her face drained of color, sweat running down her skin. Looking around the unfamiliar room

which was dominated by mirrors of all sizes, one of the smaller ones caught her attention. She carefully picked up the perfectly carved handle of the mirror from the floor and stared at its delicate frame around the fragile glass.

Her reflection stared back at her, a girl, a young lady perhaps, with long, wavy, chocolate-brown hair and the deepest hazel eyes. "Is this real?" she muttered to her own image. "How did I

even get here?"

Each of the mirrors in the room represented a different dream, a unique journey, but she had to choose which path to follow. The first one, a silver frame with unusual carvings, was definitely a path she would avoid as she could tell that it contained dark magic.

Reina walked around the mirrors studying each one with her gaze. They were all different from each other. Others taller, others darker, some lighter. Each mirror contained a different story. She had to choose one, there wasn't another way out. She was then intrigued by a tall mirror with sparkling stones, standing on a wooden frame. Her palms and then her whole body became sweaty. She froze for a few minutes, both because she was afraid and because she was unsure of how to enter. Her anxiety became more intense, but counting to three she took a deep breath and ran towards the glass, not knowing where it would lead.

In this void, Reina cautiously moved along the path extending her hands out of the mirror into the unknown space she was about to enter. She sensed a light breeze. The warmth and the fragrance of flowers in the air made her curious, but she remained cautious, hesitant. Suddenly, she was pushed through the mirror.

An unknown destination...

Her hands were trembling. She was in another dimension--or so she felt. Her eyes, stained with running mascara, were wide-open and she stared at her own trembling hands, unable to believe what had just happened. It was always like that when she crossed over. Fear claimed her entire being.

But as she looked around, what she saw reminded her of an enchanted forest in a fairytale illustration. Emerald green trees swayed overhead while the deep grass blew back and forth mesmerizing Reina. The sunlight through the trees shined upon her worried face as she slowly got up from the ground, not closing her eyes for a single second. The birds were chirping and flying happily around the woods. It almost felt like paradise. The images before her eyes were impossible.

She began walking slowly, following a path that formed in front of her, looking around at the stunning view and listening to the birds singing. Tears of confusion trailed down her rosy cheeks until she saw it. It was a tall willow tree whose leaf-covered branches cascaded to the ground. It stood alone. Reina rushed toward it. As she walked under it, it felt like entering a room with an uneven floor. The tree seemed old, as its roots, some of which were exposed,

looked as strong as arms. Reina thought she heard ticking above her head. She looked up into the tree to discover countless pocket watches.

This instantly reminded Reina of her lovely mother, who always used to say our lives are made up of time. Seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years. It's all just time, but people get to shape their lives around it. Reina, though, understood that time is never enough. The only thing she wished for was more time with her mother who had been a wise woman, Reina's anchor during hard times. Reina thought she heard her mother whisper, "stay strong," as she used to do.

That's what Reina had to do. She sat down at the base of the willow tree and let her thoughts fill her mind. She found herself watching the sun slowly set on the horizon.

Reina was always enchanted by sunsets and the sky. The evening sky had a calming effect on her. Perhaps it was the way the bold colors faded into a smooth tranquil canvas. And now, even though she felt lonely, beautiful memories returned to her in this hypnotic environment.

Nothing made sense anymore and all Reina wanted was a hug from somebody... anybody. She wanted to cry on someone's shoulders. Her feelings were mixed up. The stunning orange of the sunset made her feel relieved, but as it faded to dusk, she

became nostalgic. She didn't know where she was, or how she got there, if she would find someone to help her, if this was even real. Tons of questions, but no answers. Her mind was truly tormented. She was too tired to continue searching for an exit. As night settled, her eyes slowly shut and exhaustion overtook her.

Some say dreams are the key to the soul. Dreams are the imaginative stories and visions our unconscious creates for us while we sleep. But... how can we separate reality from illusion? What if all that we see or seem to see is but a dream within a dream?

Reina hadn't the slightest idea of what she was experiencing or what the future held for her. She slowly opened her hazel eyes as the sun rays delicately touched her face and reflected in her eyes. She noticed smudges on her long, light-blue, velvet dress, which had become dirty from sleeping on the ground. Her eyes wandered to the tall green trees surrounding her, the soft whispers of the forest and its unique magical atmosphere soothed her. But as she remembered every tiny detail of what had happened the previous day, Reina's chest became heavy as a rock and beads of sweat began forming on her forehead.

Standing on her feet, she wandered, until she realized something odd was going on beyond the willow tree. Slowly pulling back its long leaves

that formed a curtain, she saw a small green swamp. It was like another forest. The willow tree separated the calmer and prettier side of the forest from the other one, which was darker, more isolated. There weren't any birds chirping in order to fill the space with their happy song. The trees were darker in the dim light, taller and without many leaves.

It was like all the light suddenly disappeared and darkness took its place. The green curtain had closed behind her. Reina's stomach felt heavy and her fists clenched. She wanted to return to the other side, she wanted bright places as her innocent heart couldn't stand the darkness.

The darkness has won many people, it has played games with their minds, but her mind? Her mind had always been the brightest and safest place.

She pushed at the leaves and branches trying to find an opening to return to the other side of the woods, but it was impossible. The willow tree had become a solid wall. She heard whispers, but this time they were rough and sounded threatening, as if they wanted to hurt someone.

Sweating and shaky, Reina struggled to keep her calm, reminding herself to not let herself lose control. Her breathing was getting heavy. The whispers were getting even more intense. Something had awakened in

the forest.

In a panic she ran as fast as she could. Running... and running with tears trailing down her cheeks. Her eyes were watery, she couldn't see beyond. She'd lost control again.

She saw the branch but it was too late. Hitting her head, she stumbled and fell on the exposed roots of a big tree. She was thrown into the abyss between light and darkness. Her chest heaving, she struggled to get up.

Weakness filled her body, making it impossible for her to move at all. The deep roots were closing around her, clawing and drawing her into their dark magic.

Engulfed by the tree, she was being drawn into the ground. Only her mud-covered head remained out. She couldn't speak, she couldn't react. She was half asleep, half alive. A divine dark spirit appeared out of the shrinking space.

The mysterious figure drew closer, as she saw a blinding light and then felt a presence directly picking up her body. The spirit ripped through her dreadful nightmare and guided her out of the tree and misery.

And then everything went black.

## Fly High

By Anastasia Spyromitrou

Peace never touched the moon  
But tonight is the longest rain of  
stars, hopes, dreams, changes  
Time will not stay awake  
Sun will look like fire  
And love will finally embrace planets  
If you fly with your heart like fireworks  
you may find the lights of heaven  
that laugh out loud.

