

Fragments  
of Freedom

*Blank Pages*



## Prologue

*Editorial notes*

As I have approached this project and mesmerizing experience, I happened to meet talented and fascinating human beings. The beauty and passion that have flown from these tremendous people, their smile, their creativity, made me feel a spontaneous synergy and energy, a connection that unfolded itself as innate. It has been a natural link between souls, an expression beyond physical and mental borders, a cathartic reflection that has taught me to leave categories, schemes, and limits beyond the threshold of my mind. I feel enormously enriched and enhanced by this experience, and I am honored to be part of this ongoing process, always on the move, a space we cannot live without.

Here below you will be able to appreciate Fragments of Freedom, the first Blank Pages journal issue that includes the works that extraordinary contributors from all over the world have shared. They have revealed fragments of their souls, precious shards of their reflection in the mirror. They have given birth to a community that everyone can join, and where everyone has freedom of expression without judgement.

I hope you are going to let yourself float by this stream of creativity, this meeting of consciousness and unconsciousness.

*Michele Rizzardi*

Fragments of Freedom emerged during the period when almost the whole world was not free. Not free to move. Not free to choose. But free to create. All submitted works are published. As would not it be paradoxically to have the topic of freedom, and then suppress it by some editorial choices. By publishing all works, I and We are giving ourselves freedom not to select.

These are not just authors, they are part of the community.

*Nikola Lero*

This collection stems from a striking consciousness that the walls and borders surrounding us are friable and fragile, if we have the courage to cross them. Crossing borders is a path to freedom, while freedom generates life and movement that can break out from any prison of space and place.

Thus, in this space that was once blank, you will find a polyphony of fragments dressed in freedom and united by the consciousness of the power of our common humanity, which re-draws maps and reignite utopians dreams. And the walls are falling - brick by brick.

*Michał Musiałowski*

## The Manifesto

Blank Pages is an idea and a dream that stems from a need for change and new perspectives of our world. A blank page is not a luxury, but a basic necessity, a space we cannot live without. We see blank pages everywhere; sometimes at the beginning and sometimes at the end, but nonetheless always constant e sempre em movimento. Like the link between then and now, here and there, in and out; a Blank Page welcomes the mind of all willing to embrace it. It is a platform of expression and connection beyond the borders of topic and form. Mi smo zajednica. The only limitations are the ones we cast; but just as easily, all constrictions can be cast away. Заедно можеме да преминеме планини, реки и долини. Заедно можеме да изградиме нов свет, каде што поезијата владее со мудроста на прозата.

A blank page, simple and powerful, is the medium of our dream, the forefront of our fight. Un espacio mágico a la vez que tenebroso, espejo de nuestro coraje a la vez que de nuestro temor, donde ha de encarnarse lo que somos y lo que deseamos ser. Un instante de rebeldía. Наша мечта. *I mi, kao Dedal i Ikar, nikada nećemo prestati sanjati i letjeti.* A page that is blank - like the wistful horizon of the day to come - brings the perfume and promise of change, spread around in shouts and whispers of *libertà*. Like the leaf that releases itself from the tree and starts a new journey. Празни страници кои зборуваат. Tener una hoja en blanco es sumergirse y bucear, tener tiempo para descubrir, dotar de sentido y quizá reencontrarse. The cosmos is our city, and its streets lead across desert and mountains, cemeteries and furious rivers. They cross borders and walls to paint a web of voices in a choir of humanity: inexorable, our, humanity. Cada palabra, cada línea vacilante, cada sonido oculto, bellamente humanos e imperfectos, son todos bienvenidos. Blank Pages is a place in which you can feel. Free.

Y qué es la libertad sino una proeza. Es tener las ganas de vivir, de salvarse, de gritar todo lo que a veces puede estar prohibido. Да сонуваме, да твориме, да летаме. Наше творчество бесконечно и поетому, мы парим.

Una hoja en blanco para escribir con urgencia, con soltura. Para indagar por ejemplo, sobre señales y esperanzas. Para exorcizar pensamientos. As a way of survival. It could be a mirror that reflects the inside of your soul. Or it could be



somewhat of a therapist, a place for you to put down emotions you didn't know you had, a sort of explorer discovering the depths within you.

Filling in a blank page with a message can be done by everyone, in any language, form, or with any kind of sign or symbol. *Slobodni smo da budemo svoji*. It is a space of communication, and as such aims to grasp its fundamental feature, namely: its universality. A space to create always, constantly and wherever we are. *Forgiamo le ore del nostro destino, diamo forma alle nostre idee, mastichiamo il metallo dell'incudine del mondo, e condividiamo vita, Мы свободны и ничем не связаны. Човекот без поезија и уметност е како риба без вода, како Ромео без неговата Јулија, како Орфеј без неговата Евридика.*

If there is a need for us to connect, explore new narratives and perspectives, and learn from each other, it will only depend on a casual collision of countless pathways and assonances. *Assim como uma ponte, conectando pessoas, nos levando a novos lugares. Un puente imperfecto, inusual, pero necesario. Blank Pages wants to be the space where those collisions can happen and create movements of common reflection. Blank pages es el espacio para recordar, para encontrarse con muros internos, para soltar el timón, para temer, para sentir, para desacelerar y amar más. Ова е место каде што настапува уметноста, а влезот е слободен.*

Do the countless emotions pouring from your heart and mind into this earth call for a connection to pen and paper? As words expel themselves from your fingertips you can finally breathe once more.

Aren't we all Blank Pages meant to be written and rewritten? Aren't we all white souls hungry to be forged with colours? *Зарем не е животот книга, а секој миг и секој ден празна страница, шанса да се напише приказна, па макар и со два три збора. "Alba pratalia arabat, et albo versorio teneba, et negro semen seminaba"*

## Il cuore della notte

*Michele Rizzardi*

Non strizzarmi  
i capelli  
non tirarmi  
la gola  
È lunga la strada quando  
nel cuore della notte  
Come un nido

mi darà conforto  
Come una barca  
verso  
il tuo porto.  
L'unica luce non viene dal faro  
non viene da casa

Strizza il respiro, urlo sott'acqua.  
Stupide illusioni divorano la testa  
Mi prendono a schiaffi  
Sul tuo prepotente sguardo  
cuscino di lacrime.  
Ma poi si infrangono  
uno scoglio della mia indifferenza  
si sgretolano come piume bruciate

Io una fenice?  
Nel cuore della notte

## Noches de no acabar

*Alejandra Castellanos Breton*

Noches de afrontar los incesantes fuegos que desdibujan mi boca.

Noches para sofocar las interminables luchas ignoradas.

Noches para sollozar en medio de pálpitos sudorosos.

Noches de abrazar utopías alcanzables.

Noches de sentir desasosiegos cósmicos.

Noches de bucear en recuerdos gastados,

y mudar amores calcinados.

Noches de aferrarse de nuevo a la vida,

Noches de perderse para encontrarse en el rayo de luz que se refleja en mi ventana,

Rayo de sol que irrumpe entre mis suaves tempestades

## Frag- ments

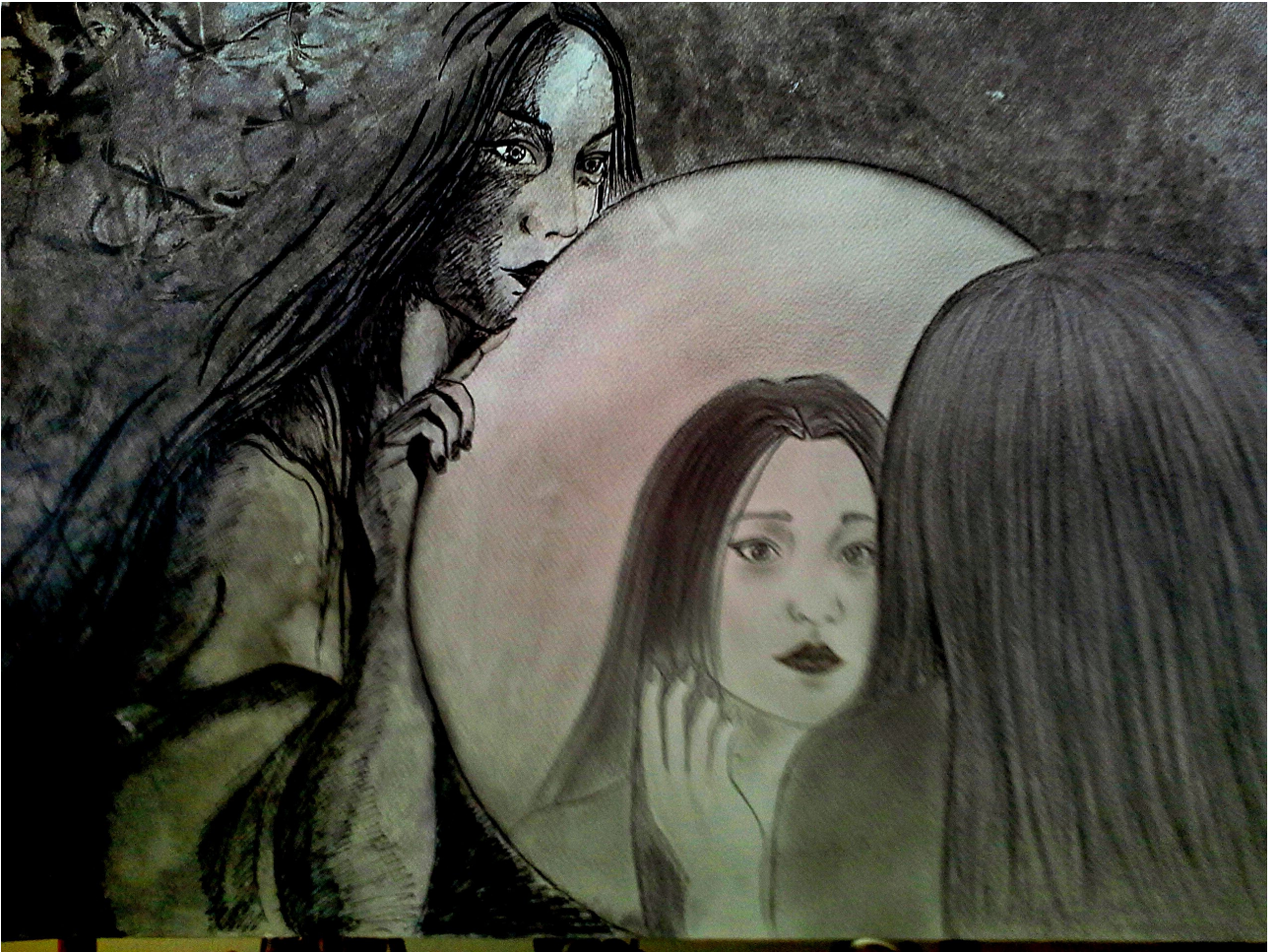
Michał Musiałowski

I am bouncing back and forth between one extreme and the other, finding out *thus* that they are the bars of the cage - and each fall generates a subtle rage that shakes off the dust from my feathers, to let them rust later among the rests and feces on the dirty, cold ground.

And outside life explodes in floating stains of memory and desire, boiling like the lava, feeble as the fire, and its promise is to bring peace, which  
finally is,  
the peace of mind.

Of all those showers of love and darkness in March I can only recall fragments. One is in my father's eyes, in which underneath the coat of love there was the extreme silence. And if I think about where I am going, I see nothing but moving circles on the sand. Is this the sign to stop going? Or am I turning mad?

In my fragments, I found the picture of the whole It left me without a meaning, but  
filled with a mad desire for hope  
And concerning that wooden cross?  
It feels lighter when:  
the road is the walking  
a new day is the same page  
awaiting to be re-written  
when love consumes the rage  
and when the bars of the cage  
turn into a sky at the violet hour



*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## **Brief Manual for New-come writers**

*Jose Guillermo Ricalde Perez*

To write urgently  
With unyielding need  
For contempt  
Because of genuine rage

To write with the sole intention of shooting at silence  
To evoke serenity  
To inquire, for example, about meanings and hopes  
To exorcise thoughts.

To write to describe how the sun hides Biting gently the night  
When the wound always rips

And peace is too far

To write, perhaps, to allay the wound  
The one that burns, that enlightens  
Like prescription and medicine

Because at times... Behind the letters is hidden

What eases the heavy road

## Ружа

*Ивана Спировска*

Нежна и убава како ружа  
Со манири на дама  
Набргу трн во око им стана  
Каде погрешиле?  
Ја поучуваа да биде независна, Заробена во сопствената мисла,  
И во најголемата тага,  
Блага насмевска и заби силно да стиска, Да биде паметна и мудра,  
со елеганција и витка става,  
за политика и одлуки  
мислите да ги сочува во нејзината убава глава Да се лаже себеси,  
Додека слепо и покорно слуша,  
Да ги проголта солзите и младоста, Додека крвари нејзината душа  
Каде погрешиле?  
Порасна и процвета во убава ружа, Уникатна и праведна,  
А тие, Сеуште се прашуваа каде погрешиле

Нејзината судбина однапред ја беа решиле, А таа изградила своја сопствена градина  
*До сите ружи во светот кои градат сопствена градина Ивана Спировска*



## Rose

*Ivana Spirovska*

They wanted her to flourish in a beautiful rose,  
She became a thorn instead.  
They taught her to be free,  
Entrapped in the way she behaves.  
To smile,  
When in excruciating pain  
To speak up, but remain constrained.  
To be smart,  
But gracefully step aside while important decisions are made. To honestly deceive  
herself,  
As she submissively obeys  
She flourished in a rose in her own way,  
With strong roots and no pardon,  
Wanting to make a more beautiful garden  
She became a rose they neither desired nor wanted,  
A rose with hideous thorns  
A rose differently unique and rightful,  
But do you know what was more frightful?  
In the social garden,  
She was not alone

Ivana Spirovska

*Devoted to all the roses in the world Never be afraid of your thorns*



*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## **Freedom**

*Alejandra Castellanos Breton*

Freedom is when colors are entangled.  
When colors shape my body and my movements.  
Freedom is to play with the colors,  
some days they are brighter and intense,  
some other days it is just darkness.  
Freedom is to imagine,  
imagine new shapes, new colors,  
new connections and new attachments in harmony.  
Freedom is a colorful wave,  
A furious and intense wave that cleans all my anguish and fear.  
A wave that has too much power in itself,  
  
That's freedom.

## The Stones Game

*Jose Guillermo Ricalde Perez*

Once in a while there are stones thrown at my window  
Never asked where they come from or why they are here  
I tried to send these stones away  
But I am too stubborn to not keep them in revenge

Sometimes they stay for so long that I forget  
And they transmute into walls  
No one has seen or heard them being made  
But somehow everybody ends knowing  
Perhaps in my lips, perhaps in my signs  
Perhaps my window is just too small.

Once in a while there are stones on my hands  
And someone always steals two or three  
The remaining ones I throw them ahead  
Diminishing weigh like in another kind of  
out-door game  
But I am clever enough  
I keep the hard ones in my heart  
Only playing with them at night sometimes  
When everybody is asleep  
And the distances are clear.

I know that even if I lose all my stones  
Once in a while there will be new ones wanting to get in  
For a second, surely, I will doubt  
Should I take the risk?

Perhaps the window is not real  
But I am too stubborn to not rebuild the walls again.

*Jose Guillermo Ricalde Perez*

Le decíamos 'la meñique', no porque le faltara ese dedo o le sobrara uno, tampoco porque fuera demasiado chaparra; le pusieron ese apodo na'más porque de cinco hermanos ella era la más pequeña y, sobre todo, la más simpática. En realidad se llamaba Guadalupe, debido a su devota madre, y seguramente debía rondar la edad de la punzada; lo sé porque corría el chisme por ahí de que estaban planeando hacerle una gran fiesta en la vecindad, de ésas que se recuerdan por varios meses y donde sirven ricos tacos de asado. La verdad es que nunca habló mucho conmigo, pero no me cabe la menor duda de que era muy querida por todos; la mayoría dice que lo que tenía de chula lo tenía de buena gente. Pero no por haberla conocido poco me espantó menos la lamentable noticia: hoy me enteré que la muchacha había muerto o, mejor dicho, que la habían despachado pa'l otro lado. Las vecinas cuentan que su madre estaba desconsolada, que andaba vagando por la vecindad ayer por la noche, gimoteando, con las lágrimas como aguaceros, igual a la llorona de la leyenda. Los policías dijeron que la muertita fue atacada saliendo de una fiesta y que aún andaban buscando al responsable, ¡bah! ¡Como si alguna vez encontraran al responsable! Siempre salen con la misma cantaleta y nunca encuentran al culpable o, si lo encuentran, no es el verdadero y acaban metiendo gente inocente al tambo; si no, ¡que se lo pregunten a mi ex marido! Hace diez años al pobre lo acusaron de robo y el día que sucedió estuvo todo el tiempo conmigo. Ahí me ves horas y horas haciendo fila y explicando lo sucedido, pero de nada sirvió mi testimonio; si lo que buscaban era culpable y culpable tuvieron. El pobre luego salió y no puede encontrar trabajo hasta la fecha...

Pues total que al final resultó que el dinero recaudado para la fiesta de quince años de 'la meñique' acabó destinándose a su funeral. Así de tramposa es la vida en México. Si lo sabré yo que todo el tiempo vivo con miedo. Una empleada que lava y plancha ajeno siempre escucha cosas espantosas. La última vez hasta acabé temblando por lo que oí; estaba sentada descansando en la sala de mi patrona, ella y su esposo cenaban y, aunque estaban lejos, yo escuché clarito que hablaban de los narcos; dijeron que la gente de su rumbo sospechaba que habían algunos viviendo en la colonia, ¡Imagínate! ¡Son sus vecinos! ¡Así como no se va asustar uno? Ese día le recé a la virgencita, que todo lo puede, por la seguridad de mis patronas. Pero eso

fue lo de menos, la otra vez, de casualidad, acabando la novela de las nueve, vi en las noticias que habían desaparecido varios estudiantes, bien cerquita de aquí; y yo que pensaba que eso no pasaba en mi país, que eso era cosa de los gringos. Por eso yo a veces pienso que es mejor no estudiar, te evitas problemas, porque total ni sabiendo mucho te salvas ¡Al contrario! ¡Más te matan!

A mí eso de la inseguridad me pone la piel chinita. Por eso siempre le huyo a esos problemas. Uno no sabe cuándo le va a tocar y, peor, tampoco se puede saber qué creer. Se dice una cosa en la tele, otra en los periódicos, otra cosa dicen los vecinos y otra el dichoso internet. Es que la tecnología en vez de ayudar, confunde más. Yo antes leía el periódico, porque bien que sé leer, tampoco soy burra, estudié mi primaria completita; a diferencia de mis primas que no pueden leer ni siquiera un letrero; pero yo con los periódicos mejor dejé de meterme; luego las fotos están retfeas, que si atropellados por aquí, que si descabezados por allá, ya ni dan ganas de leer nada. Por eso todos los domingos voy a misa, para pedir por la seguridad de mi familia. Mis hermanos siempre me dicen: “Ay Meche, si rezar no sirve pa'nada, solo vas a gastar dinero en tu pasaje”, pero no les hago caso; más vale ser precavida, total nada se pierde.

No lo digo en vano. Hace un mes, cuando regresaba a mi colonia, vi a dos maleantes peleándose. Me dijeron días después que uno era un muchachito y que el otro lo estaba asaltando, pero yo ese día me asusté tanto que me fui corriendo por la otra esquina y ahí me quedé viendo, mientras la gente se iba juntando alrededor de ellos, unos que para tomar fotos, otros que para tomar el vídeo... Todos pensaron que era una pelea y nadie hizo nada, y el pobre muchacho se murió desangrado ahí merito en la calle; igual y la gente tenía miedo o estaban demasiado entretenidos con la golpiza, pero yo siempre digo que si no vas a ayudar mejor te vas. Uno no debe buscar problemas. Yo me fui después de un rato, pero luego me contaron que se llamó a la ambulancia, aunque pienso que mejor hubieran llamado a la funeraria de una vez porque cuando me quité ya estaba segura que el muchacho segurito segurito no vivía. Para terminarla de amolar, en septiembre escuché balazos cerca de mi casa. Mucha gente se asustó, pero los policías dijeron que eran los voladores por la independencia; vaya uno a saber la independencia de qué o de quién, pero yo ese cuento no me lo trago como mis vecinos; Es que con esas autoridades para qué queremos enemigos; luego ellos mismos te matan.

¿A dónde vamos a parar? Me acordé de aquella canción que a cada rato ponían en las novelas. Siempre que la escuchaba pensaba en la inseguridad porque con estas cosas realmente quien sabe dónde vamos a acabar; seguro en el tambo o en el basurero municipal; y si haces o dices algo te liquidan; por eso yo mejor calladita me veo más bonita. Todo está mal, ya hasta miedo da salir a la calle. Es que esas

cosas horribles no pasaban antes en mi México lindo y querido ¿o no estoy en lo cierto? Antes uno podía sentarse a tomar la brisa, a platicar con los vecinos, sobretodo aquí en mi ciudad que era tan bella, la ciudad de la paz, la ciudad blanca. Ahora todos se encierran en sus casas para que no se los lleve el chamuco. Todo el mundo está loco; si hasta los que te piden caridad luego quieren matarte y, ni modo, una simple empleada como yo tiene que cuidarse también; por eso no confío en nadie ni me tiento el corazón tan fácil; luego una trata de ayudar y se la llevan entre las patas.

Por eso hoy voy a hacerle un rosario a mi virgencita, para que no sigan ocurriendo esas desgracias y pueda dormir tranquila. Hoy, terminando la chamba, salgo directo al mercado para comprar unas veladoras, y mejor me apuro porque ya va a oscurecer y las mujeres corremos más peligro que los demás, eso que ni qué. ¡Ay te me encargo diosito!

¡Hoy conseguí nuevo trabajo! Aunque sea por una tragedia y, ¿quién lo diría?, ya tengo razón para rezar hoy antes de irme a la cama.

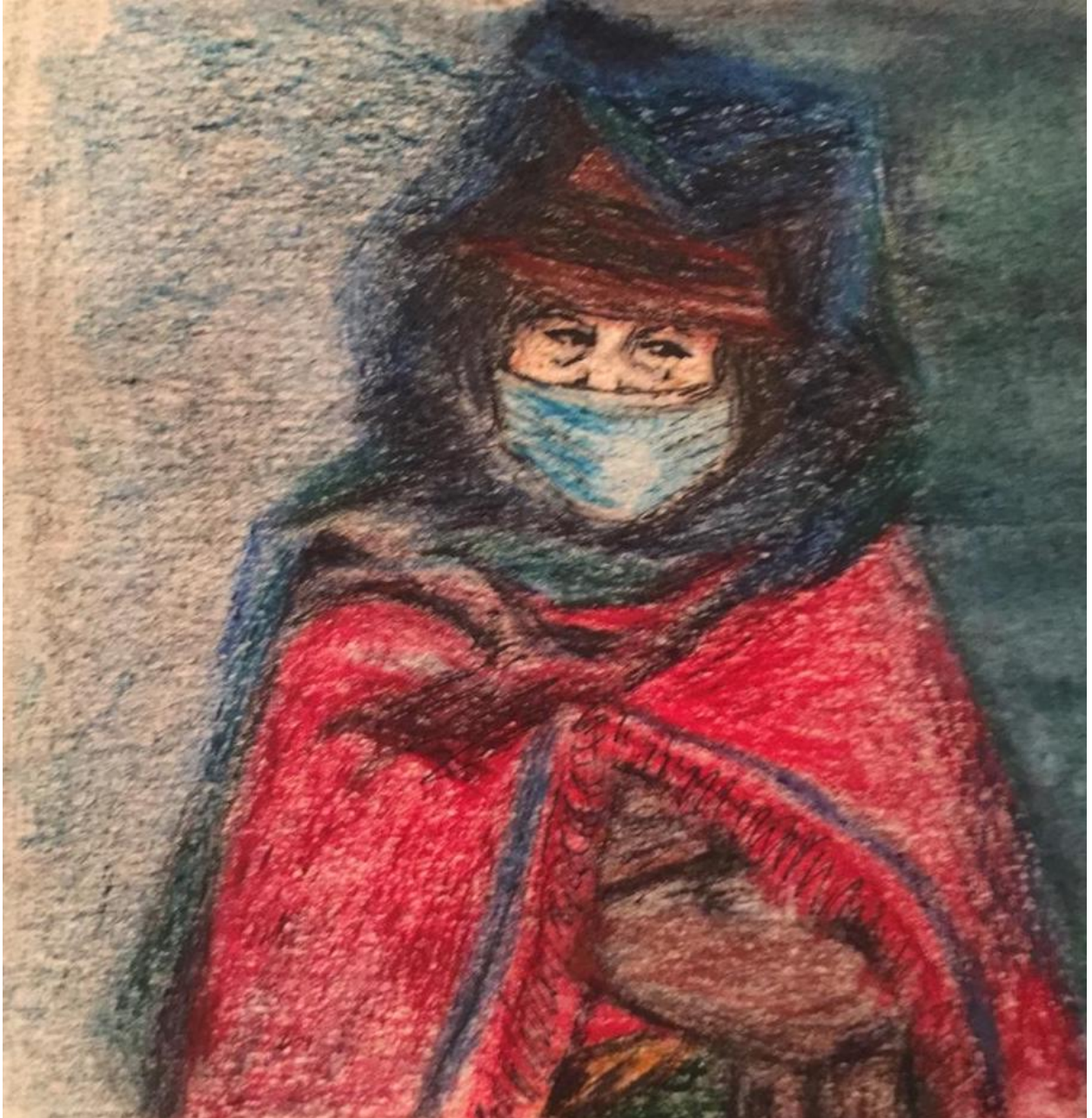
Mi nueva patrona me dijo que la empleada anterior era muy buena y responsable y que dejaba la ropa impecable, así que tengo que hacerlo igual o me corren de la chamba; ya con eso ando temerosa de regarla en cualquier momento, pero lo bueno es que la patrona se puso sentimental y al poco rato me contó lo que le sucedió a la antigua empleada, así que perdí un poco el miedo de hacer una burrada y me puse a platicar con ella.

Me dijo que le decían “Meche” y, según entendí, hace una semana la pobre salió de trabajar para regresar a su vecindad que está a unos cuantos fraccionamientos de aquí, pero que en el trayecto ocurrió una balacera, la primera de esa magnitud en Mérida y de la que no saben aún como fue provocada. Pues que le toca una bala en la cabeza a la pobre Meche y se nos muere al instante. La patrona me contó que quedó tendida sobre la banqueta entre un montón de veladoras y un santo niño de atocha hecho añicos y, ¡no me vas a creer!, resulta que fue la foto que vi en el diario hace unos días. Dice la patrona que hasta hay un vídeo en el internet del momento de la balacera. Yo no sé usar ese dichoso internet así que no lo he visto, pero dicen que la Meche sale en él; la pobrecita ni alcanzó a prenderle sus velitas a la virgen. La verdad es que con esas cosas que andan pasando ya da miedo vivir en este país; uno nunca sabe qué le puede pasar; después la gente le echa la culpa a las drogas y al narco, que dicen luego luego que todos viven en Yucatán y que muy pronto van a comenzar las matanzas aquí también como pasa en el norte. O si no, dicen que todo se debe al gobierno y a los políticos corruptos, pero ahí si doy mucha razón porque luego todos los políticos son iguales y tienen al país de cabeza; pero además dicen



que si no son ellos, que son los gringos que quieren entrometerse en México y conquistarnos; o que es porque ya hay mucha gente y no hay comida para tantos, o que es porque todo ya está demasiado caro y sigue subiendo de precio, o luego dicen que son los homosexuales que quieren pervertir a nuestros niños, o si no, que son esas ideas locas que ahora se traen las mujeres las que provocan todo o, para variar, que luego la culpa la tienen los pobres que andan ensuciando la ciudad y van de delincuentes robando a quien se les pasa en frente.

En fin que ya nadie sabe culpa de quién es y, entre andar echando y quitando culpas, uno mejor se calla y se pone a trabajar, que si no luego vienen los problemas y va uno a parar varios metros bajo tierra. Así que voy dejando de escribir porque ya hasta me siento mal de tantas noticias horribles, aparte tengo que dejar todo listo antes que la novela empiece, ¡Está rebuena! Es el gran final y hoy van a mostrar quien mató a la sirvienta.



*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## Shine Sun

*Benjamin Elwin Tunc*

In your cosy bed i woke up one day  
While two lips turning into grey  
A shine besides me  
You are a breath worth to take

In my cosy bed i slept one day  
The days were tiny but i was a mess  
But he was besides her  
His body was laid like a lake

In this cosy bed  
Two colors between sheets  
Two souls beneath shades  
With all their shames  
It is a dream worth to fake

the morning is knocking the curtains  
Dont forget to take your details  
When you are leaving  
Take my tears  
And my fun  
Take my shine  
To your hazelnut sun  
between the curtains  
Dont let the morning come in  
It will make us awake  
An end worth to fear  
and i am aware

Cause mornings take you away  
My hairs left in your beard  
All over the pillow  
My tears left in our cosy bed

## **Incertidumbre**

*Alejandra Castellanos Breton*

Y llegaron los días,  
en que la distancia se siembra en mi sentir, donde los aviones ya no vuelan,  
donde las fronteras son más tangibles,  
donde los días se absuelven en la monotonía, donde el tiempo se consume en mi  
angustia, donde la distancia se hace amiga del desierto donde tu y yo,  
estamos tan lejos como el sol del mar.





*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## On the Other Side of Train Tracks

*Michał Musiałowski*

In the beginning was the Word  
That ripped the silence with violence;  
My beginning is screaming with my end  
Echoed among crossroads of alleys

The shades of me  
lay in fragments and await  
Like an agonizing patient  
Cut by the injustice of a new dawn.

The moments will scar with the unknown  
Carried by raindrops of thunder

In my beginning is your Word  
That ripped the violence with silence;  
The fragile light shivers with the unknown  
Waiting patiently for the wonder

The world whispers the lonely notes  
And trembles with the will of surrender;

The savage dance of gasping souls  
Stutters speechless  
in trembling drops

And the rain stops.

On the other side of the train tracks  
Let there be a piece of a feeling

In my end is my beginning.

## Otkazani snovi

*Nikola Lero*

Otkazali su nam snove, bejbe. Tek tako. Bez ikakve najave.

Samo je jednog dana stigao email sa tekstom Dear Mister Lero, we are sorry to inform you that your dreams have been cancelled.

Nije bilo potpisa.

Nikakvog objašnjenja.

A znaš šta su snovi, bejbe. 2 karte za tenerife. Iberia airlines i sjedište 34 F do prozora za tebe.

Otkazali su nam snove bejbe. Nismo dobili ni reply.



## **Don't**

*Nikola Lero*

Don't send me anything.  
No news, statistics, numbers.  
I don't want to know anything.

Don't write me, too.  
I don't want your privileged recommendations  
which series to watch on Netflix and  
which albums to listen to.  
I'm not afraid to be alone.

And, trust me, I uncrossed my paths with the world a long time ago,  
but I know one thing.

I still believe in humanity.  
But I don't believe in you anymore.

## Casa de Muñecas

*Jose Guillermo Ricalde Perez*

Muñecas,

Sombras de vida quimérica, cuerpos de frágil plástico Y sangre de artificial carmesí.

Ninfas que moribundas llegan

A casas donde yerran aquellos que se cambian el nombre

¡Y que mueren por la pena, mueren por la boca, mueren por el sexo! Cayendo sin demora

Al ritmo de lluvias silenciosas y hojas secas.

Esclavas dominadas por coleccionistas de anhelos prohibidos;

Obligadas a practicar el arte de la piel.

Moldeando sus movimientos para demostrar habilidad,

Entre sonidos efervescentes que entretienen voluntades cansadas, sudadas y por más, satisfechas.

Víctimas de hombres sin rostro, de fantasías oprimidas,

De cuerpos que llegan conglomerados, impacientes, uno tras otro, Haciendo filas infinitas,

Mimetizándose con el ambiente de unos rincones

Avivados por la misma ausencia de vida.

Muñecas de ojos irreales, matizados,

Que vagan por los estantes de sus dueños,

Andando en camas donde no duermen ni despiertan. Seres de noche ocultos en envolturas, a veces cajas; Desgarrándose con roces lentos y siempre certeros.

Esbozos de carne que susurran sus secretos en espejos miniatura, Sorbiendo tacitas con ron y vino añejo,

Guardando detrás de sus miedos a una niña

Que empieza a jugar cuando sus piernas se rompen;

Fijando el olor de su cabello sintético en exhalaciones fragosas, En cada poro, en cada habitación donde se tientan con todo, Pero no se funden con nada.

Redentoras que liberan prisioneros con los bordes de la boca, Danzando con sus volátiles cuerpos

Que se escurren en manos de extraños,

Y en sus manos... solo nostalgia.

Muñecas que no miran más allá de paredes vacías

Donde otros cuerpos se roban las memorias de sus mentes confinadas. Jaulas hechas piel, hechas instantes

De aves sin nido que intentan volar y no lo consiguen.

Un sueño que los placeres tiran al suelo cada día,

Para liberarles el alma...

## **Catharsis of Bones**

*Dedicated to Michal's journey to Nigeria*

*Michele Rizzardi*

Vieni tu dal cielo profondo o sorgi dall'abisso, Bellezza?

Le parole non sono parole, ma emozioni che galleggiano nel pensiero

E poi, si scorge quel lume all'orizzonte

Trascinato dal tuo IO, dal nostro IO, dalla nostra coscienza, dall'infinito tonfo  
dell'universo

Ci troviamo a viaggiare su corde sconosciute, come uno strumento suonato per la  
prima volta

Musica

Amore

Vita

Nel fiume della poesia africana trasporterai le tue emozioni

Le prenderai a morsi

sapore metallico, di chi per millenni ha battuto l'incudine che forgia le ore.

Le vivrai in eterno

## Dear Future,

Alejandra Castellanos Breton

I have been dying to tell you that all the plans that I made to meet you are canceled for now. I was unexpectedly invited to be in touch with my present, my daily base. You cannot imagine the anguish that I feel, the decisions that I need to take to postpone what I have called “dreams.” Now I need to save them in a *box*, and it’s a huge box, I need to hide it, but my room is too small.

We cannot meet now, dear Future, but I can be in touch with my past. I just remember the first time that I like *peanuts* in a sandwich. I was in the United States, and my cousin every single day prepared jelly and peanut-butter sandwiches for her lunch. Oh, I also remember that I miss the *green* of the grass, and while I’m thinking on the grass, I remember that I need to hide the green box in my small room.

Times makes me feel anxious. I don’t want to look the time on a *clock*, it reminds me that maybe I cannot see you soon, and there is not scapegoat to blame. But you cannot imagine how I miss his *cotton* shirts, the red one, the green one, the blue one. I don’t want to forget his smell on the cotton shirts.

Finally, I’m in my period, and the word *blood* is always in my mind. It is the only blood that I’m not afraid of. I have made peace with myself to accept the constants changes during those days. Maybe until the next month, the moon and my body would be aligned, and I will have the chance to open my green box again.

## Voluntarily Disappeared

*Nikola Lero*

Many years ago, while the Discovery Channel was any good, they aired a series called Voluntarily Disappeared. It was a show about people who would one day go to get a box of Marlboro or a can of beer, and never come back home. They would ditch their jobs, loves and lovers, everything they have, and leave with what they would have on themselves. Just like that. Some of them would accidentally be found after four or five years living in another city, state, continent. They were the same, but completely different. And they would act as if nothing had happened. Some Discovery psychoanalyst said that it was a so-called phenomenon of symbolic suicide of social identity and started blabbering on about Lacan. I didn't understand anything.

When I got sick a few years ago, in the midst of my student life, which I thought was fabulous at the time, I left Banja Luka for almost a year, and I never returned. Time passed. After the third month of my absence, a good friend, though a lousy buddy, told me -

Lero, during the first month, people frequently asked me how you were. They still talked about you. During the second month - sometimes, but not that often. Now, well, you can comfortably come back and start all over again. Here, I'll rent you an apartment. You can enroll in a new college, find a new girlfriend, and make new friends. You can start life as if the previous one didn't even exist.

I don't know if he watched that Discovery show as a kid and if he was a fan of psychoanalysis, but, really, that's what happened.

Now, five years after that conversation, during which we sporadically, out of courtesy, as is usually the case after the college days, heard each other to congratulate the New Year, Christmas, or something similar, the same friend asked me if I was in Banja Luka to drop by for a cup of coffee. Hah, just listen to him! After all those years - to drop by!

I told him that he could come whenever he wants to, but that I do not live in Banja Luka anymore. More precisely, I do not live in Bosnia for over a year. I told him I had voluntarily disappeared.

He didn't ask questions.

Lousy buddy. But a really good friend.

## Troppo tempo

*Michele Rizzardi*

### *Part 1*

Troppo tempo

Atteso

I tuoi occhi,  
Scivolo nel profondo  
La vita per mano

Mi solleva dal mondo  
La tua pelle,  
Tocco, e mastico leggerezza  
Sapore esotico

Aggrapparsi al tuo sguardo  
Come ad una corda che sale sulla luna

Ricordo

E sarai per sempre al di là della siepe,

Te ne andrai con l'infinito

### *Part 2*

Perché mi hai rapito il cuore....  
lo hai portato sulla luna, su per quella corda piena di colori

Hai corso senza farti vedere

Lo hai portato via  
Lo vedrò ancora?

Troppo tempo



Infinito

Divora l'anima

Vorrei tuffarmi nella tua pelle, e masticare gioia, ma la luna è lontana, ha tagliato la corda.

Respiro

Senza ossigeno

Su cristalli di lacrime ho urlato  
Dentro a stanze dimenticate ho scritto

Scivolo via, nel vuoto delle strade

Se ti raggiungo un giorno

Toccherò la vita

## Sakli

*Beypın Elvin Tunc*

Görmediğim bütün düşler benim yaramdır  
Çocukluğum ömrümün baharı olduğu gibi karlı dağımdır  
O yüzden bütün gülüşlerim böyle dalgalı  
Bir var bir yok arası

Sakladığım gündüzleri  
Gecelerde bulasın  
Çünkü ben bir kar tanesi  
Bir var bir yok arası  
Çünkü ben bir üzüm tanesi  
Saçlarımın karası olasın.

## Hers

*Kayla Goldstein*

As she lives each day  
She finds things she wants.  
A spice. A flower.  
A button. A memory.  
A gift.  
She was always told to follow  
her treasures.  
Encouraged to press on as she feels support at her back -  
Just like the bed that presses from underneath her each night.  
A warmth that lasts through morning.

As she lives longer  
the spices seem to dull.  
The flowers less vibrant.  
The buttons no longer fit.  
The memories have faded  
only told through pictures.  
The gifts repacked for next year.

She needed more.

Maybe in the world outside  
her own lied spices with  
more flavor.  
Flowers with colors she'd  
never seen  
that never wilted.  
Buttons of all shapes and  
sizes that fit every hole.  
Memories that lasted  
forever.  
Gifts that weren't just things  
added to a list.

She wanted it all.

She was gone when her family moved homes  
and she felt her own walls falter.

Even from seas and mountains and grasslands away.

But these walls did not  
raise her

as her parents did.

That wallpaper never curled around her tightly  
to wipe away stray hairs and tears

The ceiling fan may have spent countless nights  
watching over her

but never with the pure love she got  
from her father.

The kitchen table may have hosted  
many meals, but never with the warmth  
the dedication that could only come from  
her mother.

Because it's not the places, you see,  
but the people  
who make up a home.

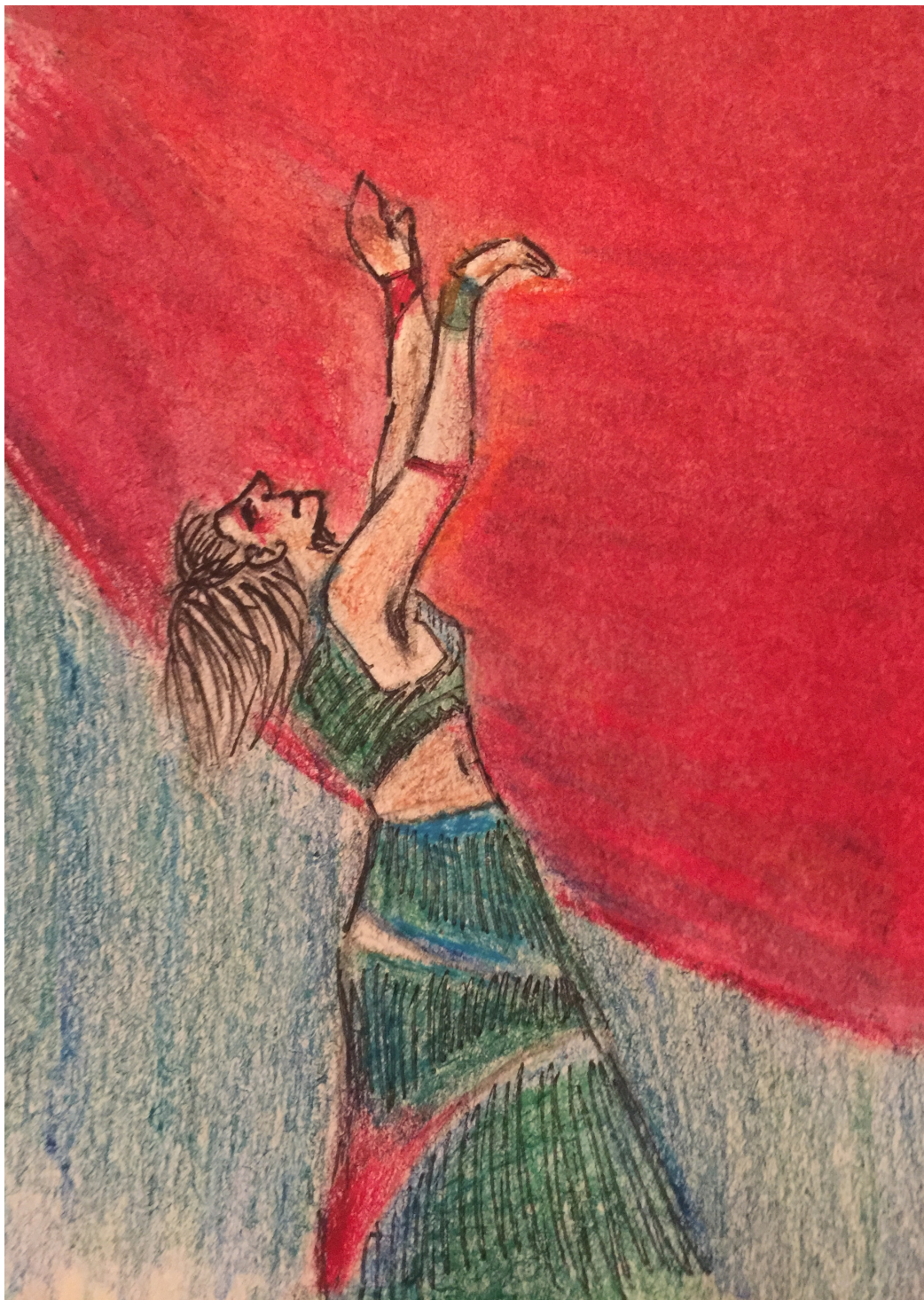
It's the spices you cook with

The buttons you wear

And the memories you keep that

Make up the gift of

Tomorrow.



*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

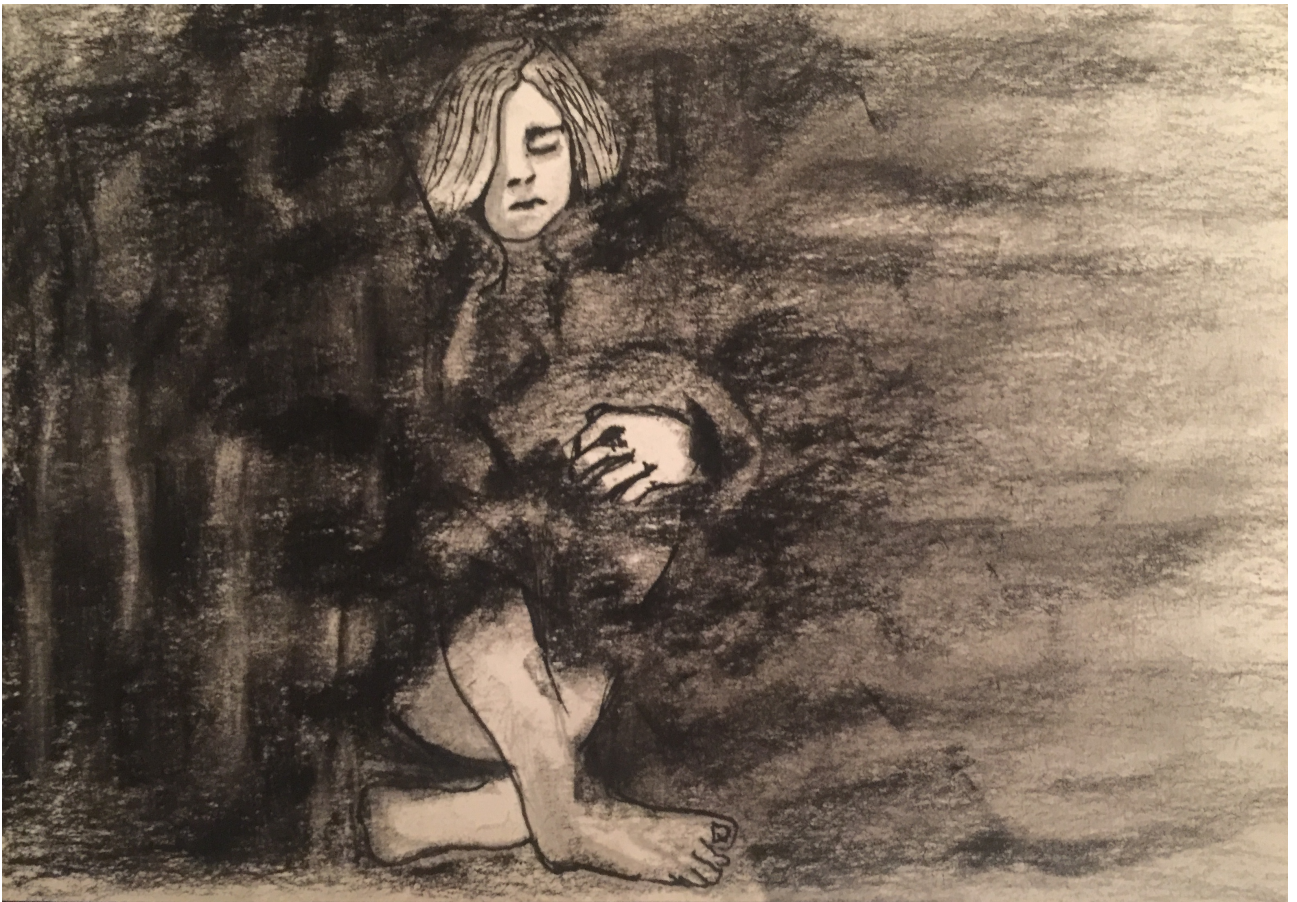
## **En el silencio hay ruido**

*Alejandra Castellanos Breton*

Mi voz hace eco,  
retumba en las paredes  
donde mis mensajes se desdibujan.

Mi voz es fuerte, y si es necesario grito, pero las palabras no alcanzan a llegar y, si  
llegaran,  
las llamarías ruido.





*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## **Berlín**

*Alejandra Castellanos Breton*

Ven conmigo a Berlín.

Hagamos una vida juntos en Berlín.

Dame la mano y caminemos por el barrio turco,  
por sus inmensos parques y visitemos cada museo de la ciudad.

Recorramos las calles por donde alguna vez pasó el muro,  
y conversemos sobre lo absurdo.

Ven conmigo a Berlín,  
disfrutemos de su imperfección,  
de su dolor y de su memoria.

Ven conmigo a Berlín,  
para que sanemos y seamos felices, tu y yo.

Ven conmigo a la ciudad más pobre de Alemania,  
sintamos su espíritu de libertad.



## Guess Who

*Isabella Coreri*

I am the granddaughter of a survivor.

I am a master of nothing.

I am halfway home at all times.

I aspire to be something spectacular that goes unnoticed by most in a world where attention is everything and authenticity is a word.

I am a decision wrapped in doubt but still hopeful.

I am in appreciation of background music.

I am a student.

I am annoyed by the ignorant.

I am stupid to think I can't be one of them.

I am trying.

I am here.

I plan on staying.

## Le parole

*Michele Rizzardi*

Le parole

Affogate nella luce

Svaniscono al vento

Le prenderai per i capelli

Le porterai dove vuoi

fino in fondo, fino in fondo

E staremo aggrappati

E scivoleremo sulle tue note

E la vita ti tende la mano

grande sarà il tuo sorriso

ci conterrà tutti

Stridono i denti

Mordono lo straccio di questo mondo

Lo strappano

all'entrata hai scritto

"I am building up my future but

first I am taking it back"

## Ani

*Beyhan Elvin Tunc*

Yılın o vakti Turunçlar vardı dallarda  
Şarap şişelerinde de kuruyan yaralar  
İki dudak arası o limon ağacı  
Bir kalem izi bense üzüm tanesi  
Yar gibi lal gibi  
Günlerden ay gibi  
Hüz gibi güz gibi  
Bir şarkıydı  
Dedim ya ağaçlar turuncu, yollar yağmurluydu  
Güneşimin önünde bulutu  
Dolabımın üstünde notu  
Yastığımdaki kokusu tenimde kaldı  
Gittiğim her yerde artık o da vardı.  
Yılın o vakti.

## **Asterio**

*Michał Musiałowski*

Il tempo graffia i muri  
lasciando dei segni  
di un eterno ritorno  
di crocevia consumati da correnti,  
violati dai sogni in flebili germogli.

La debole vita che freme  
s'inchina e trema ai piedi dei possenti troni;  
nel secolare labirinto risplende e vibra di suoni,  
dove il futuro ha vomitato i suoi generosi doni.

Non permettere che ritorni:  
arrampicarsi sulle finestre senza vetri,  
cantare in una nera massa di toni,  
vedere i pavimenti contorcersi attorno  
alle mure che conducono al punto di ritorno.

Il labirinto, un luogo di fluttuanti sogni,  
dove i minuti diventano giorni e anni secondi;  
dove il futuro da incerti contorni ansima dentro le mura che salgono deformi:  
Perdersi;  
calpestando gli anni, giacendo contorti in germogli; aspettando le ombre di secolari  
passi,  
(ombre in uniformi);

Strappando l'amore dallo spirito  
con spiriti ingordi.

D'amore (!)  
non respirano le mura,  
ma pulsano d'imbrogli.

Permetti che ritorni;  
che la luce penetri i volti gonfi  
e trasformi il vino in acqua  
Per dissetare i nostri sogni.

## Untitled

Kayla Goldstein

We met at a point in my life where you were expected. I was young and all I had were my ambitions and youthful confidence to guide me through life's decisions. You came to me then. Accompanying every roadblock as if you were its soulmate. You spread me thin, but I prevailed and persisted each time until I came out raw.

Yet now, I waver.

And here you are - again. Reaching out for me in another attempt at embrace like a long lost friend. You hollow me out until my lungs cannot take in air. You make me question even what I thought was certain. My face feels unencumbered heat, yet you don't stop there. My hands feel sweat as though I've been running all this time, yet you don't stop there. But you have also given me a gift; perspective. Priorities are shifting and never saw it before now.

I know who you are, *uncertainty*. I know how it feels when you wrap your arms around me. There are moments where you are the only thing I want to feel. Where there is comfort and safety in your arms because the choice is yours and not my own. But you have overstayed your welcome. You were a guest that took advantage. And for that, I need time before I can forgive you.

Control will not be taken from me in this moment. I have a force inside that has gotten me this far...I too can overcome this. I am stronger because I survived. I am braver because I rose above. I am smarter because I, unlike you, *last*. I am a whole entity, capable of so much, whereas you...you are a singular feeling, *uncertainty*. I will overcome this like the countless things before you. So hush now.

Without you, I have room to feel so much more. I feel the sun with a little more heat, I breathe a little easier, laugh a little lighter, I see a little clearer. Without you, I see how strong I am. I see how hard I can push and punch, how light I can feel.

So thank you for the clarity and goodbye.

## Together

*Beyhan Elvin Tunc*

Let me be your butterfly  
Turning on your head around  
With colours already dry  
My rain drops on the ground

Let me be your flower  
On your window through a summer  
With kids playing in the garden  
Your eyes in my mirror  
Let me be your flower  
While kids playing in the garden

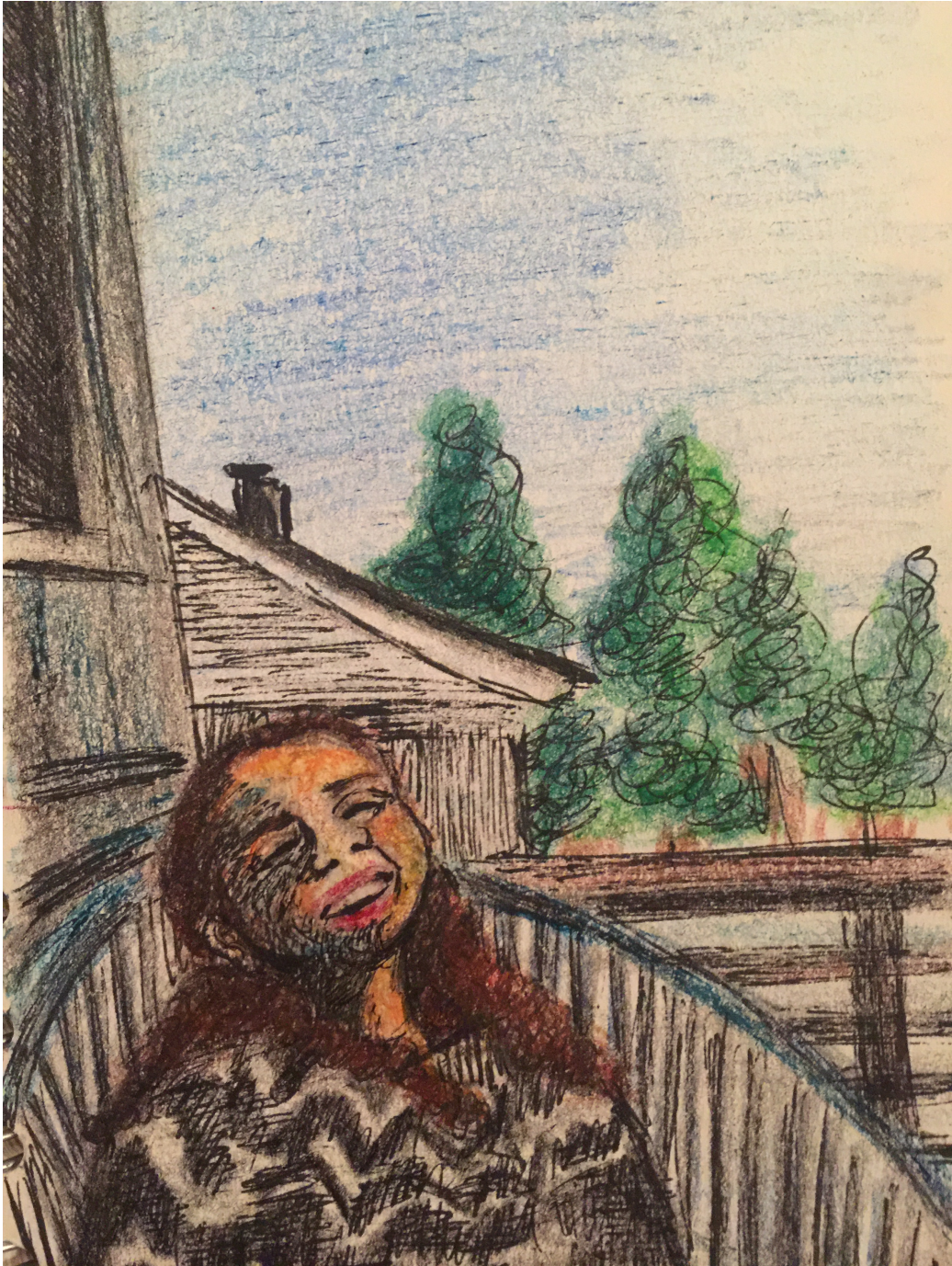
And you my shine my crime my fine  
My knight my fight my nights  
Be my destiny on my fate behind  
Kiss me when kids are not around  
With colours already dry  
Let the drops to rain on the ground  
With the birds already fly  
Kiss me while kids are proud

## Small Talk

*Baykan Elvin Tunc*

I grew up in the middle of nowhere but across the street from somewhere.  
I spent my days under a sun shared across the masses but somehow still just for me.  
I get it, it's easy.  
It's easy to think it is just you and everything else is just them.  
But there is fine line between ignorance and self-preservation and sometimes I can also miss the mark.  
I miss the point when apathy classes with avoidance and confrontation is now only severe.  
When did everything get so damn severe?  
When did it all become a clear split between sane and crazy?  
Now, suddenly, the middle of nowhere is an echo chamber about the somewhere; so close yet so far away.  
Well, I keep hearing about this small world.  
People say it to feel close, like the sun.  
But yet, the distance increases and this small world remains the same.  
Maybe it was always like this or maybe it is still fresh.  
A breath of the new normal that never seems organic.  
I too crave authenticity, so then why do I still fill the ear with what it wants to hear?  
I am tired of the lack of care in conscientious conversations  
So please stop asking where somewhere is, for me.  
Unless you really want to know about the roots my somewhere and the chemistry of my past opposed to a justification of the experiment that is my present.  
Now I am here and not there and you're somewhere and nowhere at the same time;  
Maybe I'll meet you there someday but only if this small world allows it.





*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## Australia

*Michele Rizzardi*

Dove?

Forse nel profondo delle lacrime  
[striving for life]

Fra le anime di quella terra  
[Dreamtime]

I sorrisi al sole  
[I was not alone]

Mi manchi, infinita  
[tempo e sogno]

culla di vita  
sorgente spasmodica di emozioni

Mentre nuoto tra le righe di questo romanzo  
Anestetizzato come la schiena di Leopardi

La mente prova a pescare annegando

I want to dance again with you  
Rainbow serpent

Australia

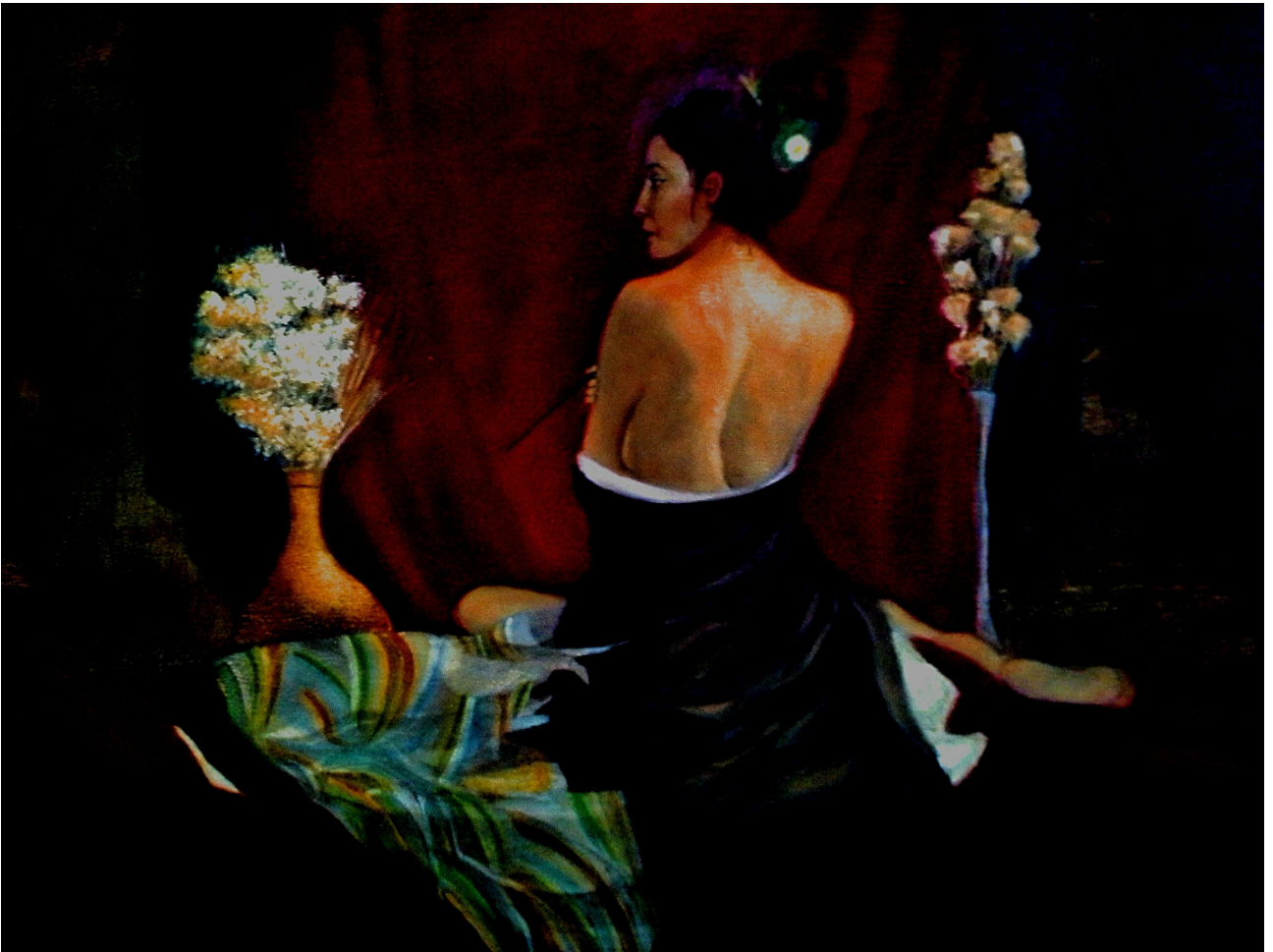
## Thoughts Are With You

*Isabella Coreri*

Comfort in morbidity and solace in silence.  
Say everything but make sure it's quiet.  
Trying, not trying, more like crawling.  
Gasping for air but the window is falling.

No right thing to say yet never a wrong?  
Still here for some but for others all gone.  
Memories are easy but they fill like cement,  
Knowing deep down that the memories will end.

We need to keep talking, actually laughing,  
Roaring so loud that we end up clapping.  
But if the eye starts to fall and glisten along,  
Just know we're together for this strange new song.



*Gabriela Yanez Atencia*

## Prometheus

*Michał Musiałowski*

It was a day in March fragmented in dust  
and forcefully swiped under the layers of memory;  
In one of those nights  
The wind began:  
the fear was devouring  
the seeds of a new beginning (.)

I was born (in) a cacophony like everything else  
like love, like space  
like you

Like March  
that spreads hunger  
in a famine of elevation and promises love scarce in fragments

But I love this entropy that keeps us afloat and never closes a door;  
that makes you stop in the middle of a walk to ask yourself:  
Where do I really belong?

And then flow away  
into a jungle of casual collisions and take a breath  
of the beauty of existence and drink (muddy water of remorse)  
and fall back again  
under the layers of memory

And then:  
What if everything was stable? no air  
echoes in empty corridors of dust  
castles made of cards;  
If the fire was  
nervously burning

to ignite forgiveness

And awake  
the greatest of sins: Rebellion (!)  
Hubris  
Power.

In the memory of Prometheus,  
a forgotten sailor of humanity;  
arrogantly reminding  
the rock  
the caucasian sky;  
open windows  
of a shadow-painted mountains

Like Prometheus,  
We all have a story, a sign, a chain, or a collar

It is time,  
to prepare for the night to digest the darkness  
with burning intestines  
broken spines  
of those whose voice  
is a voiceless choir

Now,  
seconds are a like beats of a perpetual drum that will stop to vibrate  
only when hope  
has rotten  
Not like your love  
like March  
like a smile on red lips, like a timeless cover;

I will be hanging upon the rock waiting for the morning  
to start all over.

## Requiem of (for) hope

*Michele Rizzardi*

Take me back

to the place where  
my heart breathes in peace  
and my  
hands sail into the sand

Lungo le strade discese dal buio  
scivoleremo giù nell'intermittenza degli anni



## Epilogue

*Final note*

This collection emerged during the period when almost the whole world was not free. Not free to move. Not free to choose. But free to create and share their art with us.

Therefore, all submitted works are published. As would not it be paradoxically to have the topic of freedom, and then suppress it by some “editorial” choices. To add another border to cross. We could not do that. Not when the whole humanity should pulse together, as one.

By publishing all works, I and We are giving ourselves freedom not to select. To translate, to explain. And, we are giving you - the reader, the ultimate freedom not to read, or look at this collection, but to feel it and make your own, personal mosaic out of these fragments in front of you.

*Nikola Lero*