



GAME ON: SPORT AT FLUL,
 ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIFFICULTIES

ACADEMIC
Agenda



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Celebrate the new library building with workshops, colloquiums and much more! 25 years and counting...

Fear and
 Trembling P-35

With this in mind, Abraham plays the role of the knight of faith. He also represents the paradox of faith: fulfilling such a request is contradictory to humanity and even God. His religion is the clearest and purest example of absolute belief without hesitation. The relationship between human ethics and Christian doctrine is what the author uses in this narrative: he argues that true faith requires a total surrender...

Stranger Things P-42

Although Stranger Things is set in the 80s, its origins go back to a much earlier context. The series is inspired by both true events and theories that emerged during the Cold War, a tense period of rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. At that time, both countries competed in virtually everything—technology, weaponry, espionage, and even experimental science. The fear of enemy supremacy led governments to fund secret programs that promised strategic advantages, even if it meant crossing ethical or human boundaries. This is where the CIA...

Opening Note

Hello, Good morning, Good afternoon, and Good evening, flulers and community!

It is with enormous enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility that we present ourselves as the new management of *O Cola*. We are Laura Prezzi and Margarida Henriques, both veterans of the Languages, Literatures and Cultures degree, and now we are taking on this project with a great desire to make it grow, evolve and reach even further.

O Cola is more than an academic journal: it is a space for sharing, critical thinking, creativity and an active voice of the Letters community. Our goal as management is clear: we want a more informative, more dynamic and closer to students journal, without ever losing the identity, rigor and critical spirit that have always characterized it. We want to change, innovate and experiment, while simultaneously honoring the work of previous managements, the team that accompanies us, the University and the entire academic community.

We enter this new chapter full of ideas and eager to show you what we have built. This edition is special and well represents this desire for change. We especially highlight our report on sports at our college, a topic so often forgotten, but which deserves visibility, reflection, and recognition.

We hope that you feel, in each text, the enthusiasm and dedication that we put into this project. We hope you enjoy this edition, that you continue reading us, supporting us, and above all, participating. *Cola* is made by those who write, but also, and above all, by those who read.

Let's change the world, through Letters and for Letters.

We also take this opportunity to wish the entire community Happy Holidays and an excellent New Year. May this new stage be full of ideas, projects, and good stories to tell.

The Directors of *O Cola*,
Laura Prezzi e Margarida Henriques

TOP WORKSHOP SPOTS IN *Lisbon*

Author: Carson

Edited by: Zahra Sacoor

1 Fica - Oficina Criativa

Born in Arroios, Fica is a space where anyone can try a wide variety of workshops — from ceramics and basketry to screen printing, carpentry, etc. What makes this specific spot unique is how the workshops are conducted. There, unusual contemporary techniques are favoured, making the experience truly unforgettable.

2 Retrosaria Rosa Pomar

This beautiful haberdashery not only sells high-quality knitting yarn, utensils, speciality books and Portuguese fabrics, but also hosts workshops of various related crafts, such as basketry, macramé and tricot — from 55€ to 125€. And you can learn all those techniques from professionals, while still having access to a lovely community where people help one another!

3 Cerâmica S. Vicente

This studio's mission is to preserve Portuguese culture by conserving Portuguese tiles and their symbolism. Therefore, it offers a select number of workshops — including, of course, tile making.

4 The Craft Company

Situated in the centre of Cascais, this lovely haberdashery provides high-quality craft products, as well as sewing, crochet and knitting workshops! If you get hungry, it also has a café full of home-baked goods, delicious hot chocolate and tea.

5 Ripas — Oficina Criativa

Located in Mercado da Ajuda and supported by both Lisbon's City Council and the Ajuda Parish Council, this studio offers free furniture recovery workshops for everyone over the age of 18.

BE A *FLULer*



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Narratives Reimagined

@narrativesreimagined

Sports CALENDAR




AEFLUL X **AEESCS**

18/12 Pav 2 - Campo 1 **19:15**




AAULL X **AEFLUL**

12/02 Estádio de Honra **21:00**



AEFLUL X **AAIPS**

18/02 Pavilhão AEIST **20:15**



AEFLUL X **AEFCSH**

25/02 Pav 2 - Campo 3 **19:15**



UCP-LISBOA X **AEFLUL**

03/03 Pavilhão 1 **18:45**



AEFLUL X **AEISA**

05/03 Estádio de Honra **21:00**



GAME ON: SPORT AT FLUL, ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIFFICULTIES

Interviews conducted by: Laura Prezzi

Report written by: Ana Júlia Reis, Joana Coelho, Maria Afonso, Rita Coelho and Laura Prezzi

Translation by: Laura Prezzi



The School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon (FLUL) is strongly associated with many academic fields such as Linguistics, History, Literature, among others. Unfortunately, there is one universe that often remains forgotten: university sports. The range of extracurricular activities at FLUL is not scarce, from various student groups and associations to art and theatre clubs, and even our own newspaper. However, our sports teams are frequently neglected or simply overlooked. In the interest of a more active faculty, the Sports Department of the FLUL Students' Association (AEFLUL) works daily to change this reality.

The Sports Department of AEFLUL is a fundamental pillar in the development of our university teams. As the main coordinating body, everything is built upon its constant effort: organising training schedules and venues, maintaining and managing teams, handling conditions and ensuring athletes' well-being. This department is responsible for organising training sessions, managing equipment, hiring coaches, registering athletes, ensuring medical examinations, and keeping teams running. It is extensive work and, most of the time, invisible.

Additionally, the AEFLUL Sports Department is responsible for supporting and empowering students who wish to experience sport within an academic environment. It is also thanks to this group of organisers that a new chapter has opened in FLUL's sports history: the introduction of a new men's university basketball team. This achievement comes after months of effort, financial planning, negotiations and, above all, student determination.

In this feature, we analyse logistical difficulties, the lack of institutional support, the emotional impact on teams, and the human strength that keeps sport alive at FLUL. We spoke with two delegates from the Sports Department, Henrique Cruz and Beatriz Inês, and also interviewed Leonor Pereira, captain of the women's volleyball team.

Following the interview with the two Sports Department delegates, Henrique Cruz was asked about the greatest difficulties in keeping the department organised. He explained that they are mainly related to infrastructure and the conditions surrounding the maintenance of sports teams. To keep a sports team running, he states, a wide range of elements is required (athletes, a coach, a training venue, and equipment). The Students' Association, responsible for maintaining these elements, operates with limited resources, which prevents teams from functioning in the most desirable way.

“To maintain a sports team we have to... have athletes, a coach, a place to train, equipment, training materials... and we have to have a fan base.”

Team funding is crucial for its operation. Henrique Cruz revealed that only this year was it possible to acquire a washing machine to clean the equipment. One which he believes is already damaged.

Financial difficulties do not end there. In addition to paying coaches' salaries, it is necessary to ensure there are spaces where athletes can train. Costs continue to accumulate, as the AEFLUL Sports Department ensures equipment, materials, medical exams and registration fees. Currently, the department manages three main sports: football (men's team), volleyball (women's team) and, now, basketball (men's team). Managing these teams with such limited resources is extremely challenging, almost impossible.

As the School of Arts and Humanities is not traditionally known for valuing sport, unlike other faculties, there tends to be less support. This lack of support from the faculty itself further aggravates the problems mentioned above. Although frustrating, the issues listed by Henrique Cruz are, in his words, “general-level difficulties [...] not exactly a problem.” That is, they are manageable, and Henrique assures that funding is well administered according to the department's needs.

Finally, the lack of enthusiasm from the faculty regarding sport affects team morale, contributing to difficulties in keeping the Sports Department organised. “One of the biggest difficulties is also getting students to experience and live FLUL sport,” adds Henrique Cruz.

When asked about training conditions, Beatriz Inês explains that the University has its own facilities, such as the University Stadium, but there are often issues that prevent students from using them. The University Stadium contains concession areas managed by ADESL (Lisbon Higher Education Sports Association), which are frequently used by external clubs, limiting student access. According to Beatriz, the association has little influence over decisions regarding the use of these spaces. In her words:

“It is an association that is easily pushed aside when concessions speak louder [...]”



This affects training schedules and even the continuation of university championships, as the rectorate has the power to interrupt tournaments, sometimes for months.

The student protests that access to sports facilities is conditioned by higher payments, benefiting large clubs but harming students. ADESL thus becomes subject to financial pressure, placing university teams that pay less in second place.

“[...] in the end, whoever pays is the one who rules the University Stadium.”



Another negative aspect mentioned is the lack of stands, particularly for volleyball matches. Without seating, the student community is excluded from this aspect of university life, and matches are held “behind closed doors.” Teams end up without the support of other students, which is essential for boosting morale. The only exceptions are football and basketball teams, which have better access to stands. Even so, there is still a lack of awareness about these teams within the student community. Henrique Cruz laments:

“[...] most students don't even notice when the football team wins or loses.”

The creation of the new basketball team was not impulsive, it was a long, debated and financially complex process. Beatriz explains:

“There was a lot of desire to open a new team, already since last year. There were interested students, but the financial burden was the element that had to be weighed for the longest time.”

Several factors facilitated the decision. AEFLUL already had old basketball equipment inherited from a team that existed years ago, reducing initial costs. There was also a large and motivated group of students interested in joining the sport, giving the department confidence that the team would have immediate participation.

Nevertheless, challenges remain significant. Contracts with coaches are not always financially accessible, especially for a students' association with limited resources. It should be noted that AEFLUL covers all official registrations, mandatory medical exams for athletes and even fines incurred during matches, increasing the financial burden.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle, however, is uncertainty regarding continuity. As this is the team's first season, there are no guarantees that students will stay or that enough new players will join next year. Additionally, the FLUL academic community is still not fully aware that active university teams exist, making it difficult to build a solid base of support, interest and recruitment. While a true sports culture is not established within the faculty, any new team risks lacking continuity. Henrique summarises this concern clearly:

“As it's the first year, we have to take great care of continuity. The end of the year will be very important for that. Any team, in its first year... it's an experimental year. Then we'll have to see whether there's continuity or not, but we hope there will be.”

Leonor Pereira, captain of the women's volleyball team, offers a valuable perspective on university sport, especially for those coming from federated sport. When asked about differences between federated and university sport, Leonor explained how each environment shapes athletes. In federated volleyball, there is constant pressure to achieve results, secure positions and meet rigid expectations from coaches and teammates. In university sport, however, she found a completely different space, competitive, but not suffocating, where the main focus is well-being, learning and genuine enjoyment of the game. According to the captain, this change was essential to rediscover her enthusiasm for sport:

“It's a healthy environment, where we can relax and play volleyball for enjoyment, not necessarily with the pressure of having to be the best on the team to be on the court.”

Leonor also explained that this lighter approach does not mean a lack of commitment. On the contrary, the team has clear objectives, works together and values every new player, aware of how positively the experience can impact academic life.

When asked about expectations for this season, Leonor said that the team atmosphere has never been better. This year, the arrival of several new players brought renewed energy and a real sense of growth, contrasting with previous seasons when maintaining enough athletes was difficult.

“We have more and more people interested, more people willing to participate, and that’s incredible to see and feel.”

Despite competitive ambitions, such as reaching the first division, Leonor emphasised that this is not the main goal. For her and the coach, priority lies in creating a healthy, united and welcoming environment where each athlete can develop at her own pace. She reinforces that university volleyball also serves as emotional balance for many students:

“Having a good team environment, having fun, maintaining an active and positive team spirit so that everyone feels comfortable, at home, and can use each training session to unwind and de-stress from academic and personal complications.”

Thus, more than results, expectations for this season focus on growing as a group and strengthening a team spirit that has become a hallmark of FLUL volleyball.

When asked about being captain of a university team, Leonor’s smile practically answered the question. For her, leading FLUL’s volleyball team is a great responsibility, but also one of the most rewarding experiences of her academic life.

“I couldn’t choose a better team or a better coach. And I feel very gratified seeing how my teammates have developed, and how I myself have developed within the team.”

Leonor describes the captain’s role as balancing organisation with emotional support. Beyond guiding players and ensuring everything is in order (from equipment to announcements), she focuses especially on integrating new athletes and supporting the group during training, matches and meetings. Ultimately, she sees her role as always being there for the team, both on and off the court. Although demanding, Leonor embraces it with pride, emphasising that she is never alone. Her teammates, especially Mafalda, help with everything, from reminders about training to supporting those who are nervous. In the end, being captain is more than a title: it is a way of giving back to volleyball and building an environment where all athletes feel confident, supported and part of something bigger.

This year, the AEFLUL Sports Department organised the University Sports Council, bringing together representatives from ADESL, FADU, athletes and student leaders to debate structural problems in university sport in Lisbon. Topics discussed included inequality in access to University Stadium facilities, the need to revise the Student-Athlete Statute, insufficient funding and the lack of adequate infrastructure for training, competition and spectators. From this discussion emerged a joint motion supported by several student associations, which will be presented at the ADESL General Assembly with the aim of creating a unified stance toward the rectorate and decision-making bodies. Henrique Cruz summarised:

“We believe it’s important for student associations to stand united against problems in university sport and in favour of an ideal of what university sport should be.”

The Council marked not just a debate, but the beginning of a collective movement demanding better conditions and greater respect for sport in academic life.

Despite the obstacles that still prevent athletes from maximising their potential, the AEFLUL Sports Department has worked tirelessly to mitigate the main difficulties faced and to offer the academic community greater dynamism and promotion of university sport, seeking to

make it more accessible and visible. Its main goal is to turn sport into a topic that generates greater interest and recognition within the academic community. Sport is not only a significant source of individual and interpersonal development, but also of leisure, and it should not be limited to football, but extended to a wider range of sports such as basketball and volleyball. The fight is against devaluation and lack of recognition, and for greater promotion, engagement and participation from the academic community.

If most of us come from an educational background where compulsory curricula value school sport alongside other subjects, the question remains: *why does sport lose that place or at least a place within our academic curricula?*

The academic community shows a desire to change the panorama that has persisted regarding sport in higher education. Thanks to the many students who wish for sport to be part of their university life, and to their hard work in improving and developing relevant structures, FLUL now offers the sports activities available today. Although limited, this work shows significant growth potential and is driven by innovative energy brought by new academic generations. It is up to us, current students and future generations, to create the change that sport in academia requires. Participating, whether in the stands or on the field, is a way of making the faculty more alive and more ours. Sport is open to everyone, regardless of experience or skill level. All it takes is the first step. Because, in the end, every student who shows up to a training session, a match or even just to support is part of this construction.

The future of sport at FLUL depends on all of us. And perhaps now is the perfect moment to discover what place you can have in it.



To conclude, it was truly inspiring to interview the Sports Department team and highlight the people who, with unwavering dedication, bring such remarkable and meaningful work to life. A moment of pride and admiration for those who make it all possible.



ACADEMIC *Agenda*

Would you like to get involved in the academic spirit?
In this Academic Agenda, we present some events that will take place at the University of Lisbon, in which you can participate free of charge.

**ENTRADA
GRATUITA 18.12**

22H-04H

ALCATROADO

**IT'S
TIME**
DE ACABAR COM A
PROPINA...

AEFLUL

AEFLUL is throwing the last party of the semester!

The semester is coming to an end, and there's no better way to celebrate than together. Come celebrate with us, bring your cup and your best energy to dance and enjoy on **December 18, from 10:00 PM to 4:00 AM, at Alcatroado.**



AQUI NÃO HÁ QUEM ESTUDE Podcast AEFLUL

Fresh episodes of the AEFLUL podcast are on the way!

In the meantime, the special episode celebrating

Inoportuna's 35th anniversary has already been released: a conversation that revisits its history and journey.

The episode is now available on Spotify and is definitely worth a listen while you wait for the upcoming releases!

**AQUI
NÃO HÁ
QUEM
ESTUDE**

Podcast d. AEFLUL

**BREAKING
NEWS**

Last November and December, elections were held for the governing bodies of FLUL (Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon) for the 2025/2027 term, with List S - Somos Letras emerging victorious. Elections were also held for the governing bodies of AEFLUL (Association of Students of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon) for the 2025/2026 term, with List U – Unidos Somos Mais (United We Are More) winning. Many congratulations to both new mandates and best wishes for an excellent year of work.

Here you can find events such as conferences and exhibitions, aimed at nurturing your academic spirit, as well as events of an intellectual nature with social impact. You can find more information about them in the “Agenda” section of the websites of the University of Lisbon and the School of Arts and Humanities.



King Lear
de William Shakespeare
com a Professora Maria Sequeira Mendes!

Este mês o clube de leitura está a ler o clássico *O Rei Lear* de William Shakespeare.

Uma coroa partida.
Uma família dividida.
E a loucura que reina.

Junta-te a nós para desvendar uma tragédia em que o orgulho divide famílias, a lealdade é punida e cada escolha leva um reino à ruína.

17 DE DEZEMBRO
ÀS 17H SALA B112.B

Narratives Reimagined, "King Lear by William Shakespeare"

On December 17th, join the book club for another literary discussion! This time, the meeting will be dedicated to the great playwright Shakespeare and his acclaimed work *King Lear*, with the presence of Professor Maria Sequeira Mendes.

2nd International Conference Women and Slavery: Violence, Resistance and Diasporas

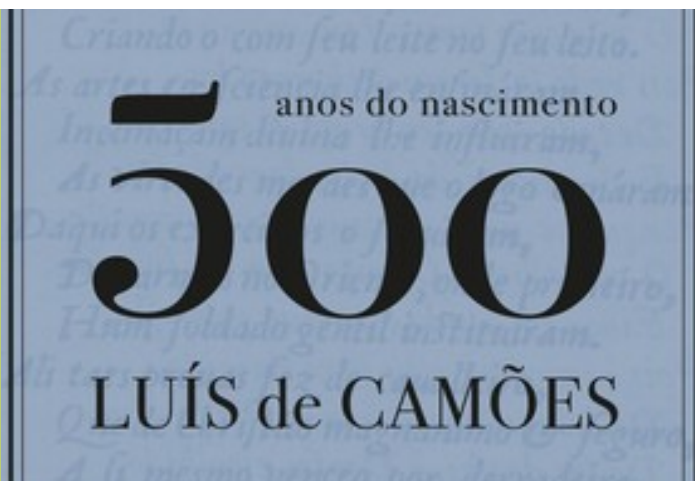
The School of Arts and Humanities, of the University of Lisbon will host, on June 2 and 3, 2026, an international meeting bringing together researchers from various fields to discuss the experiences of violence, resistance, and diasporas endured by enslaved women in different historical and geographical contexts. The call for papers is open until January 31, 2026.



2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**WOMEN AND SLAVERY:
VIOLENCE, RESISTANCE AND DIASPORAS**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
VANICLÉIA DA SILVA SANTOS
PENN MUSEUM OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

JUNE 2-3, 2026
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF LISBON
ROOMS B112.B AND B112.C (LIBRARY)



500 anos do nascimento
500
LUÍS de CAMÕES

Exhibition: "Luís de Camões: 500 Years Since His Birth"

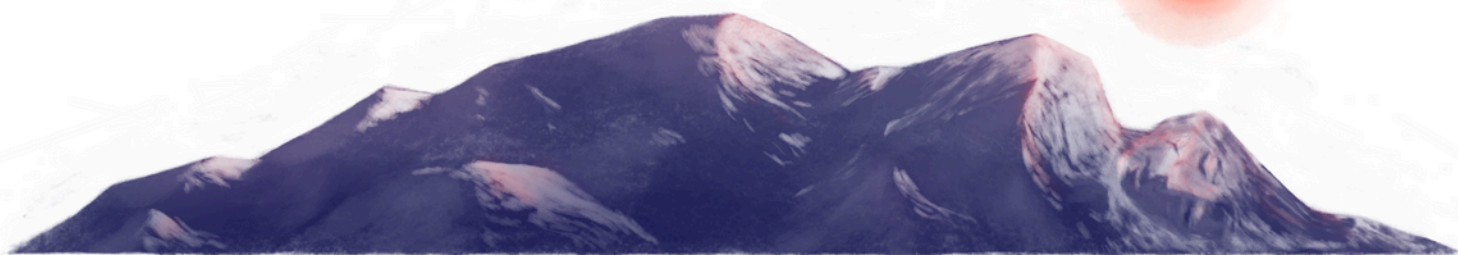
Visit the Exhibition Center at the Portugal Pavilion until January 15, 2026, with free admission. "Among the valuable collection assembled by D. Manuel II in the last decade of his life, a remarkable collection of printed and manuscript books dedicated to the life and work of Luís Vaz de Camões stands out."

Liberty

Author: Natacha Vieira
Translation: Lourenço Ramos
Illustration: Yuna Le Quéré

How can I be free? How do I free myself from this bodily prison that I am? Anyone can see that my body is trapped and heavy while my soul asks for what is most sincere inside of me. My soul begs for more water and green. Whenever I feel like crying, I cry out for life's potential, I collaborate with the downpour to build my freedom. I feel an almost mystical urge to free myself, I believe my heart is capable of filling any pit and healing the dried-up river. Today, our chest is one and beats strongly, a heart turned megaphone that comes to shout joy through the streets. I do not know how to explain myself and you can not understand, I find myself trapped in a crack in time, and because of that I do not exist. I am made of heat and need to go home, to find you in the middle of a crowd and make ourselves at home, together. I imagine what it would be like to be alive, to enter a state of drunkenness and coma brought by jazz and samba. I want you to write about me. I want to be salty air - and I am! I feel again, I am again. It is an immense desire to live that turns into sadness, because I am not able to find that peace. I need to get outside of myself and just be, to dissolve into smiles

and steep hills without having to worry about my body. Maybe then I would be able to hear you and to be free. I know I could die at any moment without an epiphany, without love, without warmth. And that's alright! Because at the end of the day, bus drivers still pass by each other and exchange smiles, and everything is alright, it has to be. Other days I think about how you know nothing about me, you don't know that I write to you, and this will just be another letter without an address that will never leave the bottom of my drawer, building a home next to yours, gathering dust and darkening over time. It does not even feel like love was ever our salvation. Thinking about you in my city fills me with rage. Why haven't you called? Mourning someone who is still alive is stupid and I hate myself for that. Poets would tell me to run after you, to kneel and to confess, but God knows that would be the sin that would keep me from getting into heaven. If I feel a desire, it is because you exist. A sad genius, trapped by destiny, grants me three wishes: look at me again, touch me again, kiss me again. I am trapped. You, you, you. Teach me how to live. I want you, I want you, I want you.



Poppies

Author: Rita Ribeiro
Translation: Maria Alves

When I die, bring me poppies; plant them beside me.

Don't forget about me when they come for me, when an irrevocable farewell comes without goodbye.

Think of me once my eyes are nothing but two dull stones, covered by curtains that will never open again.

Both my hands already tremble and the touch of my fingers is no longer so firm, forgive me. Yours are not like this. The years have laid a veil over the lines of your body, but your hands remain with the same soft and youthful touch that made me shiver the first time.

I ask you not to forget my voice and how it wavers when I release a less planned laugh. May you feel the ghost of my hands and how you once longed for them so fervently upon your skin. I still desire you in that way, I still desire all your sighs and breaths, until mine fail.

Engrave my words in you. All those I have dedicated to you, by choice and because I couldn't help but think of all that we were and still are.

I already anticipate your sentences, I already know your answers, I have long memorized the lines of that mouth, but still, I never tire of hearing you, of waiting anxiously for each firm yet gentle expression you insist on offering me, and which I never hesitate to accept.

Soon, I will lose you, you know it. So far away is our beginning yet even farther is our end. I am an incurable romantic, I cannot deviate from this nature, even when I stand at the door of humanity's darkest destiny.

My tongue still twists when I speak to you, to speak your name. That name of yours will be the last word I speak before fading from this earthly existence — it is another promise I make, like those I've gathered over the years, promises I never failed to fulfill. I know your fingers will tremble, but guide them through your birthmarks, for all the times I did so, that I felt you more than I ever felt myself.

Don't forget me, don't let my name drag between your lips. Don't cry, I can't kiss your tears.

And I beg you, please; once I leave, bring me poppies. I only want poppies beside me.

Illustration: Yuna Le Quéré

Desconstruída

Author: Ana Rita Franco
Not translated as per the author's request
Edited by: Dinis Matias

Sou feita de pedaços
Alguns afiados e pontiagudos
Outros suaves e redondos
Pedaços de tudo e de nada
Pedaços do mundo.

Sou feita de memórias
Minhas, tuas e nossas
De uma nostalgia herdada
Que eu sinto como minha
E que carrego com orgulho.

Sou feita de sonhos que me foram passados
Sou feita de sonhos que nem ousou sonhar
Sou feita de pesadelos que recalco
E daqueles que criei por mim mesma.

Sou feita de chuvas de estrelas
De trovoadas no verão
Sou feita de sol de inverno
De um tornado furioso
De ondas que me puxam para dentro.

Sou feita de noites quentes e eternas
De conversas sussurradas
De pores do sol rosados e violetas
De madrugadas no carro a cantar
Do cheiro da minha casa
De uma lareira em brasa.

Sou feita de todas as certezas do mundo
Sou tudo e sou nada
Uma amálgama perfeita
De tudo o que é imperfeito e real
De todos os que existem
De todas as que já fui
E de todas as que nunca serei.

Sou tudo.



Limerence

Author: Louisa Sousa
Translation: Catarina Pereira

You never spoke to me,
but I swear that I heard you.
A look, a gesture, a nothing,
and there I was, believing in you.

I don't know if it was an illusion
or a look of yours.
It was really just a sign,
but it was enough to trap me to you.

Everyone says I deserve better,
that you are just a broken mirror
where I search the shine
that one day I saw on you.

But on those days that you come back
my chest forgets everything,
as if the universe itself
conspired you again to me.

And I try.
Even though I know, I'm the only one trying.
I make lists with your flaws
trying to rip out a dream from my heart .
But in the end, all I want is for you to look at
me
like I've looked at you a thousand times
before.

And when I realise that nothing will happen,
I ask myself:
was it a hope or just a yearning?
It's hard to know.
Even emptiness itself has your name on it
and my heart continues to write it,
waiting to see you show up like all those
times before.

Monólogo

Author: Rita Coelho
Edited by: Maria Rodrigues
Not translated as per the author's requests

Tenho sido vítima dos meus próprios limites.
Ansiosa, acelerada, nervosa, desmesurada.
Tenho sofrido por escolhas das quais não me
arrependo,
mas ressinto-me, se nelas penso.

Talvez seja só ansiedade, só medo,
só impassibilidade, só nervos...
É só a idade, a faculdade;
é o trabalho, o horário.

O que é na realidade? É de mim, é dos tempos
em que vivo?
Quantos motivos serão precisos para
encontrar sossego?

A felicidade é breve, é leve.
Quando chega, parece partir
e deixar saudade promete.
Sinto-a em mim sem sentir.

Sinto tudo sem sentir.
Ouço, vejo e esqueço.
Faço, falo, acabo a rir e,
em silêncio, estremeço.

Winter Comes once a year

Author: Sara Coelho
Translation: Sara Coelho
Illustration: Yuna Le Quéré

Winter comes once a year
Teaching us a lesson we so often forget

White covers the streets
Immortalising wheels and footprints

White crystallises flowers and grass
Hiding the nakedness of trees

White cloaks the sky
Making forgotten wood the new home for the stars

White clouds buildings with quiet dullness
Binding hearts to pour out their dreams inside their homes

White demolishes heat
Forcing lonely souls to search for solace in another's embrace

White erases colours
Reminding us that beauty exists even in dreariness

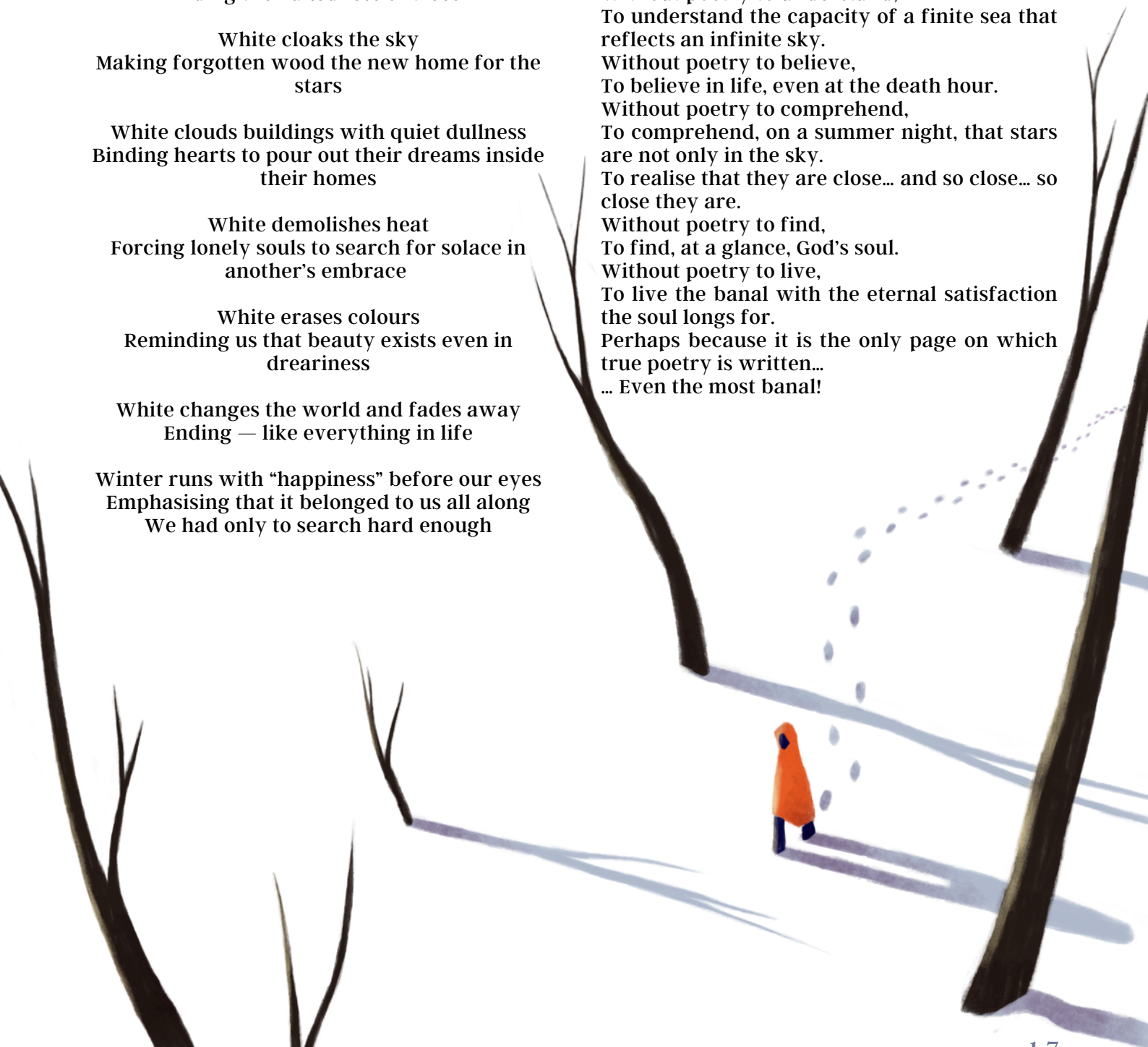
White changes the world and fades away
Ending — like everything in life

Winter runs with "happiness" before our eyes
Emphasising that it belonged to us all along
We had only to search hard enough

Que será de nós sem a Poesia?

Author: Débora Pacheco
Translation: Helena Nascimento

What will become of us without poetry?
Without poetry to dream,
To dream of an angel who comes down to earth to weep.
Without poetry to be born,
To be born and, for the first time, discover love through a mother.
Without poetry to understand,
To understand the capacity of a finite sea that reflects an infinite sky.
Without poetry to believe,
To believe in life, even at the death hour.
Without poetry to comprehend,
To comprehend, on a summer night, that stars are not only in the sky.
To realise that they are close... and so close... so close they are.
Without poetry to find,
To find, at a glance, God's soul.
Without poetry to live,
To live the banal with the eternal satisfaction the soul longs for.
Perhaps because it is the only page on which true poetry is written...
... Even the most banal!



This is not about earthworms

Author: Diana Ildefonso
Translation: Catarina Pereira
Cartoon: A.MARGOSA

I put one foot in front of the other and, arbitrarily, exercised a named action of walking. While I was thinking about the null effort that this action exposed me to, I actually started to find motor difficulties in continuing my path. It was blocked – mind and body.

I decided to project myself to the floor and, consequently, try another way of moving. The truth that was hiding is that I needed to hurry up; I had a schedule to meet. Disoriented, my attention was attached to a worm that shared the same floor as me and, because it is a natural human condition, repeated the crawling movements of that being. The only thing that mattered to me was that I had found a way to hurry up – whatever speed it was.

With my pseudo-metamorphosis, I understood the vulnerability that worms and insects faced in general. They give their best every day for their corporation, living to work and inevitably dying by a stronger force. I find this cruelty extremely unfair. While worming, I thought of ringworm problems—birds.

Circumstantially, I thought of those who, because they do not eat worms and because they share the same geographic context as me, are condemned to eat leftovers—the poor saps are the hard evidence of human selfishness. I remembered all the pigeons I had seen last week and how different they were from each other. Even these have ways to organize themselves; codes of conduct of living in communion—or not—with their creators.

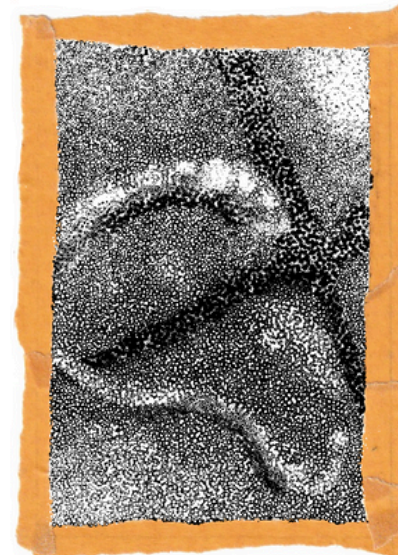
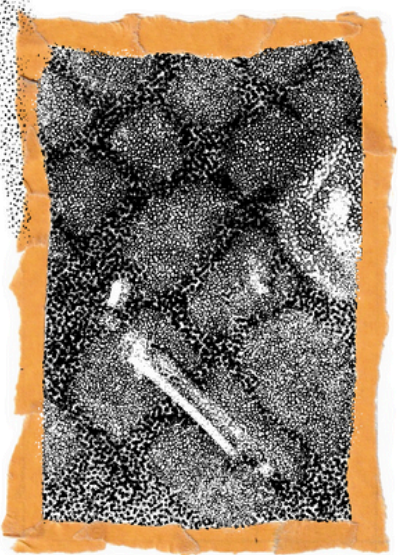
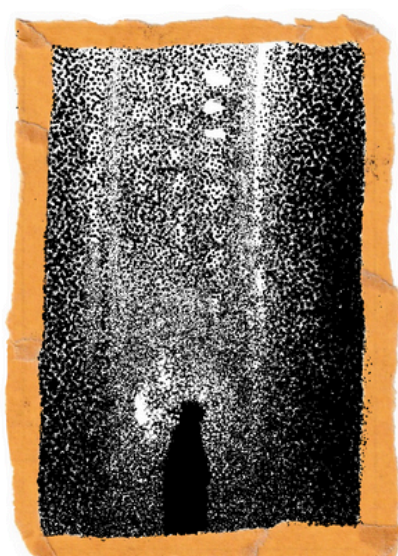
Ringggg

Suddenly, my phone rang. He was the emperor of the corporate system. I had already, with a lot of difficulty, reached a good distance, but certainly my morning adventure would not be justified; so I decided not to answer. Due to my hunger, I decided to smoke a cigarette—the doctor told me I needed to lose weight. Still on the floor, I contemplated the formation of ashes and the proportional time they needed to deconstruct the industrialization of that cigarette. Since I felt the wind manipulating the natural prescription of that object, I smoked another. Even though my position was that of an observer, I did not tolerate social injustices. Certainly, my cigarette could compare to my worm friend, because she also had her own pace to perform tasks.

When I looked up, I saw monstrous buildings surrounding me. In everyday life, I was also a monster, but at this time I felt like a worm—a dissenting being outside the somatic norm.

If I am asked what happened next, I will say that I can't logically define each moment, just from emotions. I remember feeling an emptiness that gradually increased, and a growing emptiness for not being able to save the worm that accompanied me.

A. MARGOSA



Uma volta por Lisboa

Author: Porfírio Horta Peralta
Translation: Margarida Ferreira

Wilhelm van der Grün is a Flemish merchant who, in the early hours of this morning, is sailing past the mouth of Tejo river on a ship as he prepares to dock here in Lisbon, the most cosmopolitan city in the world. He can already see the hills rising from the sea, all covered in houses, a castle there, several churches scattered among the homes, and a few small palaces as well. There lies the famous Paço da Ribeira, where the young king lives and dreams of marching against the moors. Lisbon is a world in the shape of a city, unique in Europe. Across the continent, in its many shades, people are fair—but Lisbon is a black city. Dark-skinned figures are already visible walking through the streets. In Lisbon it is frowned upon to do manual labor, and so even the poorest have at least one enslaved servant, most of them from Guinea.

Maria Matilde is one of them. Enslaved since childhood, she remembers being sold in the market to old Teixeira, who baptized her, named her, and bequeathed her to his son, João Eanes Teixeira, only a few years older than she. He treated her as a close friend and let her eat at their table, when João, was still alive, he fell deeply in love with the Castro family's daughter, little Joana or Joaninha. It was Maria Matilde who carried messages between them, and so Joana grew fond of her. Maria was like a sister, though one who was also a servant of the household, yet well treated. She is now preparing the meal for her masters: nothing special, just an oat-based breakfast. And here we are; let us ask the master of the house for permission to dine with him, thank him for his hospitality and the blessings of each day, and eat a little to quiet our hunger from the night.

It is now time to leave and buy provisions for the household. Maria Matilde is about to plunge into the depths of Lisbon. Let us go with her, it will surely be worth it.

Walking through the streets, we soon come upon a tavern. There sits a poor man... He drinks to forget: were they his own mistakes, ill fortune, or burning love? What has brought this poet to misery? He who spent years striving to write and sing

of the greatness of his King; he who fought for the kingdom in Morocco and in India; he who now lives on a soldier's pension, just enough for the epic poet not to go a week without a meal. And yet he is as he has always been. To his left, a Lianor; to his right, a Natércia, and let us not forget Bárbara. Were these mad loves that ruined him? In the end, it was this: he sang to the great ones, and the King who would not listen; he now sings of the Portuguese, whom he exalted in his epic. There he sits, drinking, he who managed to persuade the stern Freio Bartolomeu Ferreira, and he is no ordinary censor, known for letting not a hint of heresy slip through — unlike Friar Barnabé Parreira, who lets everything pass — to approve his work. Some say that perhaps Cardinal Dom Henrique lent a helping hand here, supporting the criticism that the author — let us say his name, Camões — levels at the Câmara brothers, jesuits who influence the King in their favor. One day, this order shall be driven from the city by plot and treachery, just as these two priests now rule from behind the throne.

Maria Matilde is now reaching to Rossio, where the market stands. She is choosing products from familiar stalls when something draws everyone's attention. A well-dressed man — therefore rich — is standing in the middle of the square and begins to undress. Two friars run to stop him. He must have lost his wits to strip in the street like this.

—No, brothers, I am not mad! — he says. — In fact, God knows I have never been more sane in my life. To all who can hear me, I want you to know: I am Antão Teles de Meneses. I am the third of my family to lead the business that has enriched us for so long; I am very rich, but I have realized that this is not what I ought to be. My grandfather had two children, my father and my aunt; my father had only one son, and my aunt only one daughter. For twenty years my cousin and I were married, and no child was born. When the plague came, I became the last of my family. As I meditated on all this, I understood that Saint Francis was right!

We must be like the apostles: poor and wholly devoted to others, especially the most needy. And because what we do to the least of these we do to Christ Our Lord, I make them my heirs! I sold my business and all my possessions; all I have left is this doublet and all this gold. All this is for my heirs. Therefore I remove this doublet and humbly ask you, my brothers, to accept me into your order of friars under the rule of Saint Francis of Assisi and to distribute these goods to those who need them most. Everyone begins to applaud and give thanks to God. No one saw a madman anymore, but a saint; for he does not cast his possessions away, but gives them to those who need them. The friars lead him to the convent where they take him in as a novice. He will receive trousers, a habit, and I believe nothing else. He will remain a novice until he is deemed fit to take vows and become a Franciscan friar.

Maria finishes her shopping; there is an execution. A controversial case: a man caught forging documents so convincingly that, had their falsity not been known beforehand, no one would suspect them. During the trial he claimed that he had taken vows in a monastery in Beira. If true (and he produced some documents saying so), he cannot be tried in these courts. The case reached the archbishop, who wants an investigation, wants him transferred to ecclesiastical custody, and tried in an ecclesiastical court. However, the sheriff refuses and asked the King to give his ruling, for only the King can condemn a man to death, the King ordered the execution. And so the gallows await the monk. The people protest: a cleric should not be treated like a common criminal.

— Free him! — they shout as he climbs the scaffold.

— Last words? — says the executioner, Joaquim Antunes Carrasco.

— People of Lisbon, you have defended my honor tirelessly. I thank you, but I do not want lies in my death. I have spent a life lying, and today I will die like a thrush in the snare. So the truth is: I was never a monk nor a priest. I lied. I lied thinking it would save my skin, but lying has brought me nothing. Farewell.

Needless to say what follows that farewell.

Maria Matilde walks on through the babel that is Lisbon.

“One could believe that all the languages of the world are heard here,” she thinks when she bumps into a man.

— Mijn excuses, mevrouw — he says.

— Peço desculpa, meu senhor — she replies.

Neither knows the other’s language, but both understand, or hope they do.

The path continues through this city of a thousand winding streets. Perhaps one day these streets will disappear. Perhaps by fire, by the sea, or by some builder, but surely someone or something (or both) will turn this area near the Terreiro do Paço into a more rationally designed district, with uniform buildings and wide avenues instead of a labyrinth.

By day’s end, Wilhelm is in an inn and Maria Matilde tending to her masters’ household. One more day lived, one more day gone.

This is Lisbon. Much has happened, much will happen, much may be said, much may be silenced. Further uphill lies the Chiado, a friar from Évora who cast off his vows and is now a poet. A meteor will tear across the sky and all will say it is a sign that King Sebastian must not wage war against the Moors — except him, who will see in it a sign that he must go, with all his men, to fight the Moors of Morocco. News will come: “the King is dead,” “the Queen is dead,” “the Spaniards are coming, the French, the English, the Portuguese...”

Such is Lisbon.

July 7, 2024

Mon Âme

Author: Ana Marta Cabrita
Translation: Marco Casimiro

'Alex is looking at you again,' the voice of my best friend pulled me from the boredom that the professor was putting me through.

I rolled my eyes before resting my head on my arms, tired of the whole situation. Lately, that sentence had become a habit. I could never manage to understand what was going on in that boy's head, but, from that day on, everything I thought I knew fell apart. Alexandre Viorica was supposed to just be my childhood enemy... How have we come to this?

'He looks sad,' Sara tried once again to draw my attention.

'Ignore him.'

'Aren't you going to sort things out?'

'What is there to sort?'

I took a deep breath. I knew exactly the answer to that question, but the fear of what would come out of a conversation outweighed everything else.

Alex and I first met when we were four, in a small park close to where we lived. It wasn't a nice story about two children who met and became friends for the decades to come, but an ugly one, a *pretty ugly* one.

Simply put, while I was playing on the swing, I was pushed into the ground and ended up breaking my front teeth. And guess who pushed me? Alex 'idiot' Viorica. From that day onward, our lives intertwined in several ways — deskmates, top students in class, cheerleader and best football player —, but always opponents, rivals for eternity. Even so, for some odd reason, it always seemed like there was something — like an invisible thread — that, no matter how hard we tried, pulled us together in the moments we needed the most. Like when my crush rejected me and he simply decided to annoy me until I went with him to the beach to watch the fireworks, or when he got a beating from his parents and I felt that I should be the one to take care of him, in spite of still not knowing why I felt like that to this day.

It had been fourteen years of meetings and partings. Of days in which we picked on each other like enemies, others which we talked as confidants and others when

we pretended the other didn't even exist. It was always a bit confusing, but, deep down, I think that neither of us really wanted to drift apart. But now everything changed, thanks to that *damn* sentence.

I heard the school bell's ring and grumbled, wishing not to go home. Sara hit me in the back of my head, telling me she was leaving, so I grabbed my backpack and followed her, head down. Thank God, she knows me well enough to understand that I wasn't up for chitchat, so she didn't try to strike up a conversation on our way to the school's gate, where we each went our own way.

I said goodbye to her and looked at the horizon, observing how the sky changed from yellow and orange to purple and deep blue. In no hurry at all for the weekend to start, I walked at a slow pace through the street, still dreaming about his platinum-blond dyed hair and blue eyes as clear as water, always so full of amusement — but which I had seen filling with despair. I know I should stop thinking about him, that nothing is the way it used to be before, because that moment had changed it all. Though it proved to be harder than I'd hoped. I heard some footsteps behind me and tried to ignore the fact they sounded too familiar. It couldn't be him, his pride wouldn't allow him to...

'Vi.' I froze, my heart beating faster than a racing car.

The footsteps intensified as he drew closer and closer to me. I turned around the moment Alexandre Viorica stopped mere centimetres away from me. His adamantine eyes poured out the same feelings he had been trying to safeguard for the past couple of months — sadness, longing, fear...

'What do you want, Viorica?' *you need to get out of here before we sink even lower*, I thought to myself.

'An answer.' There wasn't the slightest trace of amusement in his voice; a shiver ran down my spine — one I'm certain didn't go unnoticed.

'You didn't ask me anything.'

'But I made a declaration, *Mon Âme*,' that

nickname hit me straight in the chest. 'And I need an answer...'

Alex moved two more steps closer to me. His arm stretched until it reached me and his hand touched my face, its warmth inviting me to close my eyes. His hands were always warm. Little did it matter if it was scorching hot and we were fighting over the last ice cream at the school bar or freezing cold and we were wrapped in an embrace no one could understand — not even us. I felt the touch of his forehead over mine and I deeply inhaled his perfume that, no matter how much I didn't want to admit it, chased me in my dreams.

'I'll repeat what I said that day.'

'Will you scream it out loud?' I teased him and he laughed.

'No, this time I'll say it slowly. So that even a complete idiot who has yet again lost the title of best in class understands,' I wanted to beat him up, but I held myself when I heard his voice growing deeper. 'Vitória Albuquerque, you have always been incredibly intelligent, but, when it comes to us, you have never noticed what I feel for you. Which I've been trying to show you in fourteen years of rivalry.'

I opened my eyes as I felt him pulling back.

'I know you believe you can't be loved, but I beg you — give me an opportunity to show you how it is to love and be loved the right way. Let me... Let me love you the way I've been loving you for all these years. I... love you, *Mon Âme*.'

The famous butterflies in the stomach had already taken off long ago. Since the day Alex yelled those words at me all I felt was concern. How have we come to this? When had our rivalry transformed into feelings so profound and wonderful? And how will it be from now on? What if things turned sour?

However, all those worries blazing in my chest vanished the instant I decided to say to hell with it all and pressed my lips to his. The worries about it all could be postponed for later. The only thing that mattered was that moment, that touch and the boy I don't know when I began to love.

'I believe that is a great answer,' he let out a grin from ear to ear.

'I think I'll need some more kisses just to be sure.' I pulled his cheeks.

'That hurts, Vi!' he whined.

'Alex...' I let go of his cheeks. 'I love you.'

The idiot smiled once again and hugged me before kissing me one more time, as if that gesture confirmed the fresh start of our lives.

The Wood Gatherer

Author: Caim

Translation: Elen Ribeiro

Chapter I

The apple skins that had already been peeled fell onto my chest, over my shirt that was already in shreds. I had been meaning to wash the bedding for weeks, and my father made sure to remind me of that every day. At that moment, I was unable to focus on anything other than the trotting of the horses that could be heard outside of our small house, allowed in through the wide-open windows. The high temperatures of the sunny day softened me, leaving me almost catatonic. Therefore, I remained apathetic, as I stared at the peeled fruit.

As soon as I bit into the apple, I heard my father shout:

— Apolónia! — He opened the door to my room, standing there imposing and authoritative, as he always was. — Mr. Álvaro offered five coins per day. Come with me.

I stared at him, curious:

— The squire? — I bit into the apple again.

Rather than answering me, he fixed his coat and forcefully closed my door. I sighed, now rushing to finish eating. I'll never get any peace, I thought with discontent as I got up. I stretched my body as soon as I finished the apple, throwing the core out the window.

— Bucket! — A shrill scream echoed through the streets. The sound of water mixed with multiple excrements hit, not the floor, but another person.

— Goddamn you! Look carefully where you throw that filth! — A man who sounded much older grumbled back. Personally, I preferred to take the filth to the river and dump it where no one could see. I felt a certain modesty that no one else seemed to share.

Nevertheless, I went to the kitchen to clean my face and hands, and then looked at myself in the reflection of the drinking water. I stretched my undereye dark circles with my fingers. They seemed even worse than last week, but I wasn't sure. I couldn't see them that well. I only knew that I had long black hair, thin bangs, and an irregularly slender face. The amount of

drunk and sober men I've had to scare away with an axe is outrageous.

My father always made sure to point out that I resembled my mother when we sat down at the table together and prayed before eating. Sometimes when he would drink too much cheap wine, he would look at me solemnly and tears appeared in his eyes. Even so, I have never seen him cry.

The front door was open when he came back home.

— There is bread at the table — he said, then pointed to the bucket he was holding —and the milk is fresh. Sit down so we can hurry up and go—we both ate in silence, chewing the hard bread, which was almost moldy.

I still had not gotten used to the smell of mold ingrained in the aged walls that surrounded us. The paint was beginning to peel due to the humidity accumulated on the cracked ceiling, falling onto the dry and faded floor. Of the few possessions we had, only a few remained intact. With the help of the rays of light that penetrated through the windows, I contemplated the dust particles dancing freely inside the kitchen. They landed everywhere, which worsened my father's allergies. So I accompanied him, distracting myself with whatever appeared in front of me.

We got up right away, each going to our own room. Stubbornly, a piece of bread was imprisoned between my yellowed teeth as I looked around chaotically.

— Where did I put them... — I muttered. After seconds that felt like centuries, my trained eye focused on its target. I had left the equipment under the bed. I crouched slightly to grab the bow and my arrows, buckling the worn axe to my leather belt.

— We don't have all day, Fox! — he scolded at the door.

— I'm coming... — I replied, hesitantly.

As soon as we got out of the house, a repulsive smell filled my nostrils.

— Why this face? — my father asked.

— Don't you smell it? — I placed the back of my hand against my nose.

— You are so dramatic, Fox... — he shook

his head, disappointed. — We still have a long way to go, so get ready — he gave me a hard blow on the back and laughed heartily, clearing his throat loudly.

The sky began to fill with heavy gray clouds, threatening to destroy the farmers' crops, while loud voices echoed through the streets, each trying to sell something different. My boots kicked up dust, blurring my vision. Suddenly, the sound of my ammunition hanging on my back reminded me of something.

— I need to buy more arrows. — I mentioned it to my father. Instead of following me, he leaned against a wall.

— Be quick. — warned the grumpy man. Meanwhile, rain began to fall little by little, dampening his bald head. I nodded and headed for the small red tent, where the mesmerizing jingle of amulets lulled me momentarily and I closed my eyes.

— Look who's here! — José, a friendly old man with a sweet smile, sat in his handmade chair, rocking slowly. He kept up the pace of his sparkling objects, without rushing. — I haven't seen you in ages, Panties.

I noticed, as if for the first time, my worn-out pants. My knees peeked through the torn and faded fabric.

— Mr. Zé, how are you doing? — I asked with a certain affection in my voice.

— As always, living and lucid. — he got up from his chair, stretching his tense body.

— And you? Has Arthur still not found you a decent skirt? Oh dear! Those rags are rough! — he picked up his belt, his chest puffed out.

— Skirts make hunting difficult. — I explained patiently.

He sighed and reached his hand over his sales.

— You're right about that — he didn't say anything else. — Tell me, what do you need, Panties?

I looked with attention to the bows, arrows, and daggers. An irrational fascination filled my soul, as if it was the first time I had ever encountered these seductive instruments. The axes and razors gleamed from being so well sharpened. I took a moment to reply, but soon made up my mind.

— I need new arrows. Mine are already worn out.

— How many? — he turned to the most carefully crafted arrows.

I took the quiver off my shoulder and checked the condition of all of them.

— Six. — I finally decided. — I don't have enough money to pay them all right now but I promise that I will come back to pay off the debt at the end of the day.

— No worries, Panties. Get moving! — pointed at my father with a mischievous smile.

The journey wasn't as hard as I imagined. In fact, a stream of divagations distracted us from the melancholy of the aggressive Portuguese wind. A boy, around ten years old, was running after a thin, haughty woman, probably his mother. Both were impeccably well dressed. Her dress looked expensive, sewn from purple fabric and carefully adorned with silver threads, just like the little boy's colorful clothes.

— Wait for me! — he shouted desperately. My face hardened, my gaze so devoid of warmth that even death would freeze when looking at it. The boy's mother didn't care about me or my father.

Suddenly, he falls. His cries echo through the merciless wind, whistling in my ears. I approached the poor boy, little by little, as soon as I realized she wasn't going to stop to help him. I knelt down and stared at him, waiting for him to stop sobbing. Soon, he looks up, his irises shining with childlike surprise.

My brain commanded my hand to comfort him, to stroke his hair, already messy by the storm. A smile appeared on his chubby little face, warming my frozen heart.

— Get away from my son! — the slender woman stood with her chin raised, leaving no room for argument, and then grabbed his hand, guiding him away from me.

I sighed, following the boy with my eyes.

— Come on, Apolónia. We've wasted too much precious time with this whole circus — my father intervened.

— I nodded my head, cleaning the dirt out of my clothes. I got up and we continued our journey.

·*☆

The wood was dry and easy to cut. The squire was useful. Instead of leaving us to fend for ourselves with the materials we were supposed to collect, he took us

straight to it. This squire lived far from the center of the small village, next to a large house, probably inhabited by the noble family on whom we depended for our feudal obligations. Sometimes, while chopping wood, I would stare at the vastness of that property. I had never seen them in person, but I had heard about them.

The Braganças lived in seclusion, far from everyone else, or rather, far from the hoi polloi. The grass was well tended, and the neighing of horses in the stables could be heard from where I was working, as could the sounds of animals on the farm, a little further away. I rolled up my sleeves, wiping the sweat from my forehead with my arm. I raised the axe, striking the splintered wood. I exchanged glances with my father, receiving a smile of approval. Arrogantly, I smiled back.

The sound of wheels could be heard a little later, catching my attention. When that impressive carriage passed by, something inside me changed, something I still can't quite explain. It was dark brown, as dark as the wet wood my father used to show me when I was just a little girl. "You can't use this type of wood to light a fire. The water will weaken the flammability of the material," he taught me. The patterns were strange, golden, and detailed like nothing I had ever seen before. Cherubs similar to those flying across the ceiling of the local chapel decorated the doors, trumpets firmly clutched in their chubby little hands. I knew immediately that whoever was inside that jeweled cage belonged to the noble family of Bragança.

The window was open, offering me a truly unique opportunity to peek inside. Blonde hair fluttered in the air, her head resting on the windowsill. It was pure luck; I could barely process what had happened. The girl was so beautiful that, at one point, I stopped breathing. She was pale, as if she had never been touched by the sun's kiss. Her cheekbones were prominent, giving her an aristocratic air, and to make matters worse, she flashed a mischievous smile as if she had guessed what I was thinking. Her figure was so perfect that it left me stunned.

I pulled the axe out of the last piece of wood, letting it fall to the ground because my arms had become so weak. However, my admiration quickly turned to cold skepticism.

Her eyes fixed on mine, sending strange chills down my spine. They were green like emeralds polished by the finest lapidaries. However, they expressed nothing but divine arrogance. I frowned and picked up my axe again. She continued to stare at me, cruel and calculating... I then decided to start loading the wood onto the cart.

At Your Door

Author: Matilde Mala

Translation: Maria Moiteira

Here I stand, waiting at your door.

The same door you opened when I came to pick you up for our first date. We had planned to go to the cinema, and I was desperately yearning to see you. I remember thinking that your house's door was the most beautiful one on the street. To anyone else, it might not have been anything special. The wood was already kind of worn, probably from all the afternoons the sun touched it but could never quite enter. But even so, it managed to make me fall for it.

You confessed that you've always been very reluctant to have home visits.

'I'm afraid they'll judge my decor. Half of this was inherited from my grandmother,' you said, laughing, though I sensed a hint of embarrassment in your voice.

This was all after *Dune*, a movie that never sparked my interest, but I gave it a chance because you loved science fiction.

'Don't think of it that way. Think of it as having vintage artefacts,' I said, smiling, hoping it would make you feel better. To this day, I'm not sure if it worked, but at least you started opening the curtains (which were also inherited) more often.

I appreciated the door's details even more when we painted it, the week after you invited me to live with you, almost a year after our first date.

'What do you think of blue?' you asked me.

'It's a bit of a dull colour.'

'Dull? How so, 'dull'?'

'It's kind of a sad colour, I guess. I never liked it much.'

'Yeah, I get that,' though you didn't seem entirely convinced. 'So, what would you suggest instead?'

'Something in shades of green would look really nice.'

And it turned out perfect. Not long after that conversation, we found a beautiful emerald green. That colour was in perfect harmony with the gold that adorned the doorknob and the peephole.

It was that emerald green that started welcoming us after all our walks down Avenida da Liberdade, after the dinners (that were sometimes a bit too expensive

but that we loved because they never left us dishes to wash), after our frequent cinema outings that became a tradition, and all those boring family lunches. That same emerald green that greeted us also marked the start of our exchange of smiles, leading you to steal a kiss or two from me as I slipped off the painful heels you adored. I sacrificed my toes many times just to hear you say 'I've never seen you look so beautiful.' But it was worth it! I looked at my blisters with fondness because each one of them reminded me of you.

This is the door I opened with the key you gave me, every day after work. As soon as I climbed the three steps and faced the green, I always felt a little happier: it felt like the colour of our home and our love. They say it's the colour of hope. To me, it was the hope of seeing you after a day of tedious meetings; the hope of being comforted when I felt unsure about my future; the hope that your kiss would heal all my troubles, and the hope that our love would last forever.

'Do you like emeralds?'

'Do you?'

'I love them. It has always been my favourite stone.'

'Then they're my favourite too,' you said as you stroked my hair.

I can't recall if I told you, but the emerald is still one of the rarest jewels in the world. I connected that rarity to our love. To the intimate romance you created. To the kind of relationship I had dreamed of since I was sixteen, undoubtedly influenced by the romcoms I binged after school. You made it happen with the simple gesture of opening the door for me.

Here I stand, waiting at your door.

The same door I stared at when you closed it during a silly argument. To this day, I don't understand what sparked that coldness in you. I don't know. I remember nothing except the fear of losing you as you ignored me in the hallway between the living room and the kitchen. How could something so intimate disappear like that? All I remember are the whispered 'This will pass' that I told myself as tears rolled

down my face. I don't know. Maybe you lost interest or fell out of love and simply didn't know how to deal with it. Did you think it would blow over? Did I do something wrong? I really don't know.

Here I stand, waiting at your door

Two months after that fallout, we had our worst argument, sparked by an episode of jealousy. For weeks, I'd felt you were distant, and I had my suspicions. When I told you about them, you got angry and left the house. Never in my life had I felt worse for sharing my fears. 'Should I have kept it to myself?' I wondered, standing by the door, my gaze resting on you. 'Will this pass?' I thought as I noticed a crack just above the doorknob.

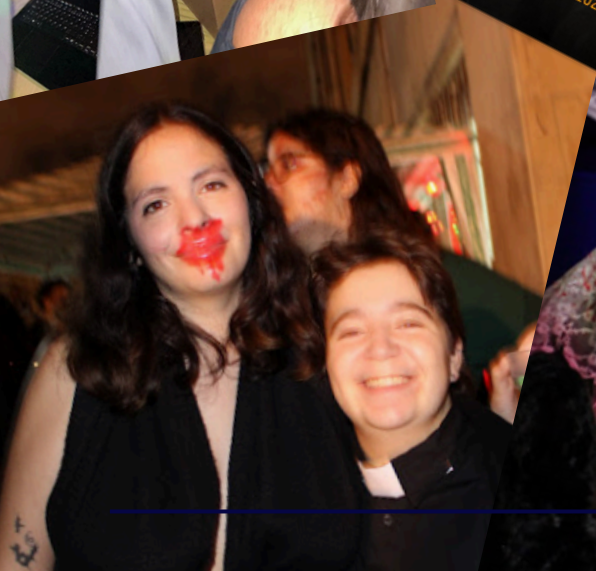
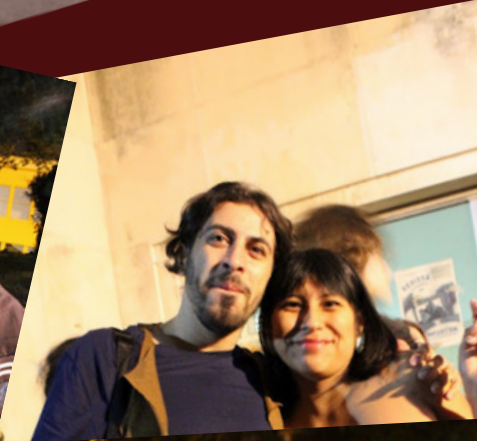
Here I stand, waiting at your door.

Before my eyes, I no longer see any emerald green, only an indigo blue so dark it barely reflects the light from the street lamps. In one hand, I hold a box with my last belongings, while the other hand touches the crack you never managed to cover. Even after all my efforts, my love was not enough for you. I still have a few scars on my heels, and every time I pass by the cinema, I think of you. I will never get used to the warmth of your space. You left me with wounds that will accompany me throughout my life and that will hardly ever heal.

Here I stand, waiting at your door. I wonder if it was ever really mine.



CHACINA DA PROPIN



Two-Faced Face

Author: Beatriz Brito
Translation: Beatriz Santos

Janus, in Roman mythology, was the god of doorways, gates, passages, transitions, and of ends and beginnings. He represented the middle ground between dualities — both concrete and abstract — such as life and death, war and peace, youth and elderliness. He was known as the initiator of transformations, the mediator between each of life's phases and historical changes. According to tradition, Janus ruled and watched over all moments of transition, both personal and seasonal: weddings, harvests (due to the desire for success in renewing a new planting cycle), births and the beginning of the year. Besides that, Janus was considered the main regent of Latium. There, the money generated by God-driven agriculture was very important, reinforcing its association with agricultural activity in the Golden Age.

That is why it is believed that the first month of the Julian and Gregorian calendars — eleventh month of Numa Pompilius' calendar —, named January (*Ianuarius*), is dedicated to him. His festival occurred on the ninth of January and was called *Dia Agonium*. The name comes from the Latin *Ianus* and its symbolism expresses beginnings, fresh starts, and a gaze turned towards the future — a direct tribute to the God that opens paths and cycles. Janus was invoked as the first of all Gods in regular liturgies (pre-defined public celebrations of a religion), and both the beginning of the day and the beginning of the month or year were dedicated to him. In Ancient Rome it was also believed that Janus participated in the rites of passage from youth to adulthood, being invoked at crucial moments of transformation and maturation.

As the god of gates, Janus watched over the gates of the heavens and granted the other gods access to the divine passage, which is why he was invoked in virtually all Roman rituals and ceremonies.

His cult dates back to the time of Romulus, the founder of Rome, when Janus was considered the protector of the city gates and sacred boundaries, *pomerium*, the symbolic border of Rome. In Rome there were many *janis*, which were ceremonial gates and were usually independent structures used for advantageous or (symbolically) promising entrances and exits. They were associated with Janus because they were physical passages, and Janus was the guardian of symbolic passages. Furthermore, the word *ianua* (gate) comes from the same root as *ianus*, creating an etymological relationship.

There were several temples dedicated to Janus, whose importance was significant to the ancient society. It is presumed that in the Janiculum remained the core of the cult of the god, since in Roman mythology this was the name of the city founded by Janus. Since the city was already on top of a hill, with an elevated position, this was the ideal place for the *augurs* (priests of Ancient Rome who interpreted the movements of birds and drew omens from this action) to observe the *auspices* (a sign from the gods). Jupiter had the role of sending signals to the augurs, but Janus was directly linked to the beginning of the ritual, because no Roman religious ritual could take place without first invoking Janus. Thus, Janus opened the rite, and only then did the other gods act within it.

The most famous of its temples was the Gate of Janus (*Ianus Geminus*), on the north side of the Roman Forum. This symbolic sanctuary had two doors, one at each end, that remained open during times of war and closed during times of peace. In its interior there was a statue of the god. Opening and closing the temple was a gesture with political and religious significance, representing the state of the city and the very threshold between chaos and order. During the empire, the closing of its doors was a symbol of the *Pax Romana*, especially under the rule of

Augustus, who used the temple in arguments in his favour. The historian 'Titus Livius says that during the period between Numa Pompilius (7th century BC) and Augustus (1st century BC) the gates were closed only twice.

Over the centuries, Janus transcended religious worship and became a symbolic and philosophical figure. In Antiquity, we can see the Arch of Janus, which was built in the early 4th century. The monument has four facades and refers to the iconography of Janus *Quadrifons*, symbolizing vigilance over all directions, as well as the royal structures and temples related to Janus in historical descriptions of Ancient Rome.

In the Middle Ages, he was reinterpreted as an allegory of time and conversion. We can associate, for example, his two faces with the Old and New Testaments or with the sinner and the convert. The representation of Janus is one of the most complex aspects of his symbolism. He generally appears with two faces, each facing opposite directions — one looks at the past and the other at the future. This duplicity translates his capacity of contemplating two times simultaneously, which makes him a metaphor of the human temporal consciousness. Some older versions showed the two faces as masculine and feminine, suggesting the balance between opposites (such as Sun and Moon or reason and intuition). Over time, however, the representations became more similar, indicating the unity between youth and elderliness, experience and renovation.

Besides his two-faced form, four-faced Janus (*Janus Quadrifons*) also existed, with four faces turned to the four cardinal points — symbol of total dominance over space and time. Among his attributes there are the keys, which express the power to open and close cycles, and the sceptre, which indicates his authority over all beginnings. Each feature of his appearance is a symbol of lived time: the portal, the threshold, the instant when the old transforms into the new.

During the Renaissance, humanists rediscovered him as a symbol of wisdom and historical awareness: the man who looks to the past to understand the future. This may indicate some influence of Janus on the mentality of the time, since some Renaissance artists explored this notion of perspective and time inspired by this double gaze. Of course, this could be seen as a modern take on Renaissance work, because there is no concrete evidence or reliable study that proves any kind of inspiration from Janus in the work of, for example, Piero della Francesca, with *The Double Portrait of the Dukes of Urbino*. In this work, the painter explores perspective and double gaze, as well as the duality of extremes. This painting is reminiscent of ancient versions of Janus, in which one of his faces was male and the other female. Although in Janus the faces look in opposite directions, in Piero the faces face each other.

Nowadays, it has become an image of divided identity, of the dual nature of humanity and self-awareness, something that inspires philosophers, artists, and poets. In creative psychology, there is a concept called "Janusian thinking," which refers to the ability to simultaneously conceive opposing or contradictory ideas. This concept was developed by Albert Rothenberg. In 2021, Loizos Heracleous, a professor of strategy at Warwick Business School, published a book discussing a strategy driven by this Janusian thinking. He considers it applicable to various companies, such as Apple. The professor calls it Janus in homage to the Roman god.

In art and literature, Janus inspires reflections on identity, time, and self-discovery, and there have been painters, such as Salvador Dalí and René Magritte, who revisited the theme of double and temporal reflection, echoing the same symbolism, although not referring to Janus directly. Poets and philosophers also evoke him as a metaphor for historical consciousness, nostalgia, and personal rebirth, as Bernardim Ribeiro does in the *Écloga de Jano e Franco* [Eclogue of Janus

and Franco]. The work tells the love story of Janus, a shepherd from Alentejo, and Franco, who came from Coimbra. These verses present us with ideas about the meaning of life and a way to value companionship, showing two extremes within a single context (duality). Some scholars say that Janus would be a variation of Bernardim, while Franco would represent Sá Miranda, who, outside of poetry, were great friends.

Janus survives as a symbol of passage and transformation. He lives in every moment of change — at the beginning of a year, at the start of a new cycle, in the maturing of a life. He represents the tension between memory and expectation, tradition and renewal, end and beginning.

More than an ancient god, Janus is the image of human time itself — the double face of consciousness that remembers what was and senses what will be. He shows the duality surrounding issues that are relevant to us today and remains embedded in our daily lives, be it in the name of the month that still persists or in the human experience of embracing each new cycle and the eternal change.

¹ LIVIUS, Titus. *History of Rome / Books I–II (Ab Urbe Condita, Vol. I)*. Translated by B. O. Foster. Cambridge, MA ; London: Harvard University Press ; William Heinemann, 1919. Loeb Classical Library, vol. 114.

An intellectual blockbuster — *One Battle After Another*

Author: João Amaral

Translation: Bárbara Ferreira

Still pondering if it deserves the following half star.

It is a big movie. In duration as well as ambition. There is a lot of material, enough for repeated visualizations and study. Therefore, although faced with the difficult task of sharing my ideas and thoughts, I feel- because they are so important, valuable and relevant!- determined to do it.

Due to that, I will evoke the best method to justify *whatever* opinion about *anything*: answer the simplest of questions, made by my brother, while getting out of the movie theatre- “What did you like in the movie?”

Well, Manuel, here it goes.

Let's start with the greatest point of consensus: it is undeniably stunning. The narrative action- which, in itself, searches for either a picture of reality, or this one turned upside down- is elevated to a higher level of (sur-)realism through the lens. Filmed on VistaVision (film format of 35mm from the 50's, gifted with an analogical quality, now lost), it is beautiful for watching and being delighted. From the police raids in Bakton Cross to the frenetic car chase- one of the best sequences I remember seeing on the big screen. No one knows how to work with a camera as well as Paul Thomas Anderson.

The representation of Janus is one of the most complex aspects of his symbolism. He generally appears with two faces, each facing opposite directions — one looks at the past and the other at the future. This duplicity translates his capacity of contemplating two times simultaneously, which makes him a metaphor of the human temporal consciousness. Some older versions showed the two faces as masculine and feminine, suggesting the balance between opposites (such as Sun and Moon or reason and intuition).

I like the characters. I like (moderately, I'll get to that) the ridiculous Lockjaw (Sean Penn), as well as Willa (Chase Ininiti). I like Bob very much (Leonardo DiCaprio)- or Ghetto Pat? Rocket Man? No. Would it be Jim Parker? Batman??? Anyway, the contagious absurdity of these almost three hours is already conditioning my reasoning- as the ex-revolutionary dad, now paranoid and impotent, limited to spending afternoons smoking "canons" while he watches a movie about the Argel Battle on the sofa.

I enjoy his antithesis just as much or even more, represented in the Sensei: a Benicio del Toro unmissable. Memorable for his sobriety and coolness, in order to desnauseate from the rest. I choose to believe that it is purposely ironic the fact that he is the one- while being an immigrant, one of the many who suffer from the causes the French 75 fight against- the one who is the most peaceful and sharpest in an environment that leads to anxiety, whim and violence so much. Plus, how can you not adore Perfidia Beverly Hills (Teyana Taylor, I strongly advise the videoclip of the song "We Cry Together", with Kendrick Lamar) that embodies so well the revolutionary spirit in person. I also appreciate the soundtrack. Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead's guitar) is, for the sixth consecutive time, the one responsible for the musical composition of an Anderson movie.

It is more the rule than the exception for me not to love when music is constantly present in a movie. I present the case of Oppenheimer as a sample, which, even though it has undeniably gigantic and out of the ordinary music, has resulted as an injury to the film's dialogue and contributed to the rush I felt while accompanying the narrative. However, Paul Thomas Anderson, as he has done before in "Magnolia" (1999) and "Punch-Drunk Love" (2002), distances himself from that rule and personifies that exception- he reveals himself once more as a master of the audiovisual by beautifully complementing the sound and the image (watch the videoclips he has made). The long and fantastic scene between DiCaprio and del Toro (my favourite from the entire film, along with the chase)

comes to my mind as an example of this complementarity. The dreadful piano not only fits as well as belongs to that claustrophobic environment and of an incessant disquiet, like when Bob can- finally!- charge his phone. In reality, from then on, the disquiet seems to rise: the marvelously frustrating call between Bob and the correspondent member of the radical group. Just like the fingerprints on the keyboard grow in intensity. All of this to say that the background noise doesn't limit itself to the term background music. It does the opposite and, in my vision, its ideal function: it submits us even more to the tone and the action of the movie.

But what I consider to be the strong point of the film is the story itself.

In the weeks prior to watching the movie, my biggest source of preoccupation ended up manifesting itself as the greatest compliment that I can give it and that makes me consider, past the redundancy, reconsider it after visiting it a second time. I had gained a fear while reading the confident headers of newspapers or the presumptuous commentaries in the "networks", knowing it was a "profoundly current" film or by reading another terribly vague banality, used to call attention to the opinion critics. I don't believe I'm the only one who is automatically invaded by a state of immense scepticism when I hear/read that something "distinctly depicts reality". Why? Because it is rarely true. Therefore, my surprise- and disappointment for my unsatisfied ego for not being right- by watching the movie and agreeing with such and, by me, so criticized commentary. It is that the "key-themes" themselves, such as "popularization", "fascism", "immigration", etc., which predominate the public opinion of the so-called "present", have already become so intolerable and insufferable as the reality itself that they propose to describe.

So, what does *One Battle After Another* have that is so special? It is not the dystopian reality we live in, but the way in which it works with it. Beyond, of course, the natural talent of its interpreters. It is also the script and the characters that are born from the author's head. The movie mocks the advantages (and disadvantages which, once more, I will get to that) of

being a Paul Thomas Anderson. Knows how to dance with the real and the absurd (almost always).

The first two-thirds of the movie are the superiority of a Paul Thomas Anderson in all its strength. It manifests itself in all its confidence and idiosyncrasies, becoming gigantic from the beginning. The first 40 minutes are a machine at full speed, an untamable animal. Halfway through, calms down before returning to action and imposes on us the context where most of the movie takes place, equating it to our reality. And can do it well. Doesn't seem forced or hyperbolising, which would be my biggest fear. The humour is there, the main dramatic focus too. As soon as it returns to the agitation with federal raids and Willa's kidnapping, there is a slow process of transition to the absurd. It seems that Paul Thomas Anderson remembers that, in the end, this is a blockbuster and stops taking it so seriously. And, during a grand part of the time, it is just that: a blockbuster with true interest, exciting and extremely well done (with action scenes infinitely superior to an "action movie").

In spite of that, already towards the final moments, a slow mission begins, although it certainly breaks from the established link with reality and enters the field of caricature. In theory, I don't think it is bad. It's an interesting premise in such confusing times- "post modern", if we will- to participate in that nonsense. And sometimes it is successful. Still, it is between the clandestine reunions of the white supremacists and the progressively more ridiculous Lockjaw that the film reveals its fragilities.

The scene surrounding the paternity test turns extremely tedious due to the primacy given to the colonel, already tired, in a moment that could (and should) have had an important emotional impact. I felt a similar lack of interest later on with the apparition of the hitman, sent to the service of the "Christmas Adventurers" when they discover that Sean Penn's character has had sexual relations with an afro-descendent woman (hilarious scene, by the way)- an attack on his loyalty to the mission of signaling the superiority of the caucasian race. And, although it has

resulted in the incredible car chase so magnificently filmed, it is a certain detour from the main narrative and a submission to the absurdity and lack of notion of the action for the sake of action, without a huge pertinent motive. In these times (in which Lockjaw appears, in the final stretch of the movie), the charm and grace of the film slightly disappear.

Unfortunately, it loses itself near the end with caricatures and some dreadful dialogue. But, in its totality, it doesn't stop being a success in what it searches for: a portrait of the USA, winking at the surrealism of reality. Serious- without being pretentious- when it needs to be. It is not preachy, nor another boring and obvious "warning about the dangers of current democracy". Or, if it is, it's done in the best way possible. Fun during the whole time. Ambitious in its reflection of the confused signs of the times, mostly well reached. It is not *the* best movie of the last 10 years, as it has been passed around. But it is worth it for its ambition and practically on-point execution. Let's praise the work of possibly the greatest and most original American cineast of the century while we have him in activity.

And well, if you've had patience and reached the end (I'm not exactly a Blaise Pascal...), it ended up being more than an answer to your question, Manel. It was more of an exercise of the said interior reflection that I promised to do at the beginning of the text. And a way of understanding that, apparently, I enjoyed the movie more than I remember. Still, I don't want to precipitate myself. I am going to wait and watch it a second time in order to give it 4 and a half stars.

Fear and Trembling

Short essay-rant about *Fear and Trembling* and empathy

Author: Mar

Translation: Maria Pires

How is it possible to be fair and ethical while obeying a command that seems morally wrong?

In this literary work, the central theme is the anguish of faith. Abraham must sacrifice his son, Isaac, upon God's request. This puts Abraham in a conflict between his humanity and his blind faith in God. Fulfilling such a request, even if coming from God, is inconceivable, irrational, and incomprehensible. Yet here we are presented with the concept of "leap of faith". It consists of the decision to radically trust in God, regardless of everything. Kierkegaard divides human life into three distinct stages:

- Aesthetic: Pleasure and satisfaction;
- Ethic: Morality, responsibility, commitment to norms;
- Religion: Unconditional faith (the leap of faith).

With this in mind, Abraham plays the role of the knight of faith. He also represents the paradox of faith: fulfilling such a request is contradictory to humanity and even God. His religion is the clearest and purest example of absolute belief without hesitation.

The relationship between human ethics and Christian doctrine is what the author uses in this narrative: he argues that true faith requires a total surrender and lowering of one's defences, in other words, the willingness to submit to the divine will that should not be conditioned by human ethics. The focus of this relationship is demonstrated by Abraham's tension and suffering when faced with the cruel request of sacrificing his son without understanding the reason (blindly). *Fear and Trembling* is a profoundly philosophical work that explores the complexity of faith, human anguish, and the paradox of religious obedience. Kierkegaard challenges the reader to reflect on the meaning of unconditional belief and the capacity to trust in something beyond reason and human morality. By using the figure of Abraham,

he highlights the existential dilemma of living a true life of faith – one that transcends the limits of human understanding.

Fear is the anguish of taking the leap of faith, and *Trembling* is the submission to God.

C. Reis Pereira's (2016) article revolves around the existential reflection, focusing on Abraham's own experience. In Abraham's silence and solitude – evident in his decision not to tell his son's mother – Reis Pereira explores the existential anguish of being confronted with an unreasonable request that challenges him to the highest levels. The author states that Abraham's anguish goes beyond emotion: it is a profound experience, an existential crisis.

Renouncing the rational in order to blindly trust God. The dilemma of the literary work, as discussed in Reis Pereira's article, thus brings us further reflections on the limits of human reason, the necessity of an unconditional faith, and the transcendence between logical and moral understanding. The relationship between Man and God, between faith and reason, between absolutism and balance, is what gives all of this the philosophical implications to ultimately understand the Christian faith and the human condition.

The consciousness of killing a son or the consciousness of disobeying the divine.

The new Portuguese realism: the transformation from lyricism to rawness

Author: Mariana Ribeiro
Translation: Barbara Emidio

From precariousness to loneliness, a new generation of Portuguese authors write with brutal honesty about the real country. Less metaphors, more scars.

Many writers have come to the conclusion that telling a good, relevant story that leads to reflection, analysis, while entertaining the reader is one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish. After decades of a lyrical heritage (Sophia de Mello Breyner, Eugénio de Andrade, Mário de Sá Carneiro...), the new Portuguese authors are transforming the tone and register of literature.

In this post-crisis and post-pandemic era, it is noted that readers seek, more than ever, a raw realism, for a kind of emotional, non-ideological neorealism. After so many events, the writers seem to have given up metaphors and transcendences, following the route of a critical and raw literature.

Contemporary authors such as Afonso Reis Cabral (author of *The Last Grandfather*), Bruno Vieira Cabral (author of *The First Things*) and José Luís Peixoto (author of *The Piano Cemetery*) adopt the aesthetics of honesty, in which prose approaches the journalistic or diaristic tone, almost like a chronicle. The Portuguese lyrical tradition (of Saramago, Lobo Antunes, Agustina and many other Portuguese authors) gained a new urban and disenchanted tone.

There is a fatigue of the beautiful in which, after so many years of metaphorical and poetic writing, now reigns the rawness and the feeling of not being alone. And publishers such as Relógio d'Água, Companhia das Ilhas and Ponto de Fuga have reflected this turning point, increasingly betting on realistic authors, both because it is a market trend and because it is the new current aesthetic.

Because in a world full of filters and saturated with images, what readers are looking for is authenticity.

This change is clear in authors such as Hugo Gonçalves, who has made urban restlessness and contemporary loneliness its literary territory, exposing the precariousness and disenchantment of a generation in works such as *Revolution*; Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida, which makes the reader feel a sense of belonging and identity through a bare, almost clinical prose in books such as *The Vision of Plants*; and João Tordo, who writes urgently to expose reality rather than beautify it.

This new style has similarities to dirty realism. Although the current Portuguese literature has not yet fully embraced this current, both focus a lot on rawness and suffering. While the Portuguese authors seek an emotional truth, trying to balance the poetic and raw, the dirty realism assumes itself unpoetic and documentary, refusing any embellishment (as Bukowski does).

In the face of this change, readers' response has been positive. The growth of reading clubs, sales clubs, and literary discussion forums reflect this. Despite sometimes being devalued by more traditional and conservative voices, the diversity of literary styles only contributes to the well-being of the publishing market. Whether the audience is looking to feel identified or just looking for an escape, there are books for both.

Literature, over the decades, has been and will always have to be changed. Otherwise, it will not monitor the evolution of society and the social context in which we are inserted. If the neorealism of the 1940s denounced poverty, today's realism denounces fatigue and other types of crises.

Mais do que um quarto só seu: Literatura e Resistência Feminina

Author: Nicole Barros

Edited by: Sara Coelho

Not translated as per the author's request

Antes de serem histórias, as palavras foram gritos pela mudança e pela resistência. Para além de um espaço seguro, a literatura tornou-se uma bandeira, uma das mais importantes fontes de propagação das ideias feministas. Tal como outras formas de arte, a escrita possui o poder de transmitir sentimentos, vontades e de servir como pólvora para movimentos sociais e revolucionários. Seja ao ler Virginia Woolf, com a sua escrita densa e introspetiva, típica do século XIX, que nos leva a reler o mesmo parágrafo várias vezes para captar todas as suas mensagens, ou através dos poemas de Amanda Lovelace, com uma leitura e linguagem mais acessíveis.

Foi no século XX, com as primeiras ondas do feminismo, que as mulheres empunharam a caneta como arma para lutar contra a repressão patriarcal e reivindicar direitos iguais. Nesse momento, a figura feminina deixou de ser apenas frágil, obediente e passiva. As mulheres começaram a usar a voz que acabavam de descobrir — e finalmente podiam fazê-la ecoar. As escritoras, muitas vezes silenciadas, usaram as palavras como forma de existir, de gritar e de reescrever o que a história tentou silenciar.

Assim, permito-me destacar algumas escritoras — e as suas obras — que, através das palavras, mostraram como é possível defender aquilo em que acreditamos. Começando por **Maria Teresa Horta**, que, para além de demonstrar que a eroticidade não deve ser um tabu para ninguém no seu livro *Palavras do Corpo*, expõe as violências cometidas durante o Estado Novo contra as mulheres e denuncia os horrores do colonialismo em *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*.

Das autoras referidas no primeiro parágrafo, destaco *Um Quarto Só Seu*, de **Virginia Woolf** e *A Bruxa Não Vai Para a Fogueira Neste Livro*, de **Amanda Lovelace** — duas obras que realçam a liberdade e a autonomia da mulher como fatores essenciais e inegociáveis. Importa ainda salientar **Judith Butler** e a sua contribuição para um feminismo mais inclusivo, lutando pelos direitos das mulheres transgénero e por uma compreensão mais ampla das identidades de género.

Por fim, não posso deixar de mencionar **Angela Davis**, **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** e **bell hooks** — nomes que representam apenas uma pequena parte da lista infinita de mulheres que, através da escrita e da arte, lutam, questionam e transformam o mundo.

Faltam palavras para traduzir a força e a diversidade das suas vozes.

A literatura não é apenas um reflexo da luta travada pelas mulheres — é também um instrumento para a reconstrução da sociedade através de palavras de resistência e empoderamento. Cada texto escrito por estas autoras ecoa como um ato político, uma reivindicação de mudança e uma forma intemporal de alcançar um mundo mais igualitário.

Mais do que “um quarto só seu”, a mulher precisa da literatura para lutar pela sua liberdade e igualdade — e, assim, ser capaz de inspirar outras pessoas. Só assim poderemos reescrever a história, mostrando que, por mais que tentem, nunca conseguirão apagar o nosso nome. Pois, como escreveu um dia **Virginia Woolf**, “fechem as bibliotecas, se quiserem; mas não há barreira, fechadura ou ferrolho que possam impor à liberdade da minha mente”.

Technology and The Test of Time

Author: Lara Carrinho
Translation: Lourenço Ramos

In this post-modern system we have created, technology has become a part of culture and the human experience. Much like culture, technology can help shape the identity of individuals and help us find the communities to which we belong. It can help us understand ourselves better, but it can also further isolate us from the rest of the world. It's important to know the differences between the real-world *versus* the digital galaxy that we currently inhabit.

Technology, like culture, can be used to oppress or to liberate; to influence or degrade. I don't believe we can afford to separate the two concepts considering the times we live in, unless we are Buddhist monks or reclusive nomads. We are all extremely attached to our technological devices. It's an undeniable consequence of the progress we have achieved as a species. But how do you reconcile humanity with technology? And how can we use it to enrich the human experience, instead of allowing it to strip us of our creative expression?

Before the age of phones and computers and the internet, we used to communicate in the good old-fashioned way: in person or through letters. We domesticated pigeons, highly intelligent and docile creatures, by taking advantage of their natural ability to fly — an ability much coveted by our species. We taught them how to carry our messages back and forth, reaching people and places that we can now reach within a single click. Then, we found better and faster means of telecommunication and we abandoned them. Left them to live on the streets, now forever incapable of building nests like all the other birds, forced to sleep in trash because we robbed them of their freedom and then discarded them when it was no longer beneficial to us, as humankind is so prone to do. So, why do we use our phones? Simply to communicate more easily and efficiently with others? At the beginning of

the digital era, we could perhaps have said that was the only reason, but our daily use of technology has grown far beyond mere convenience. Can we pin it on societal pressure? Why do we create profiles? Almost everyone has one, so you might as well have one too. Is it a way to share the things that we like with our friends?

I believe we have them for all the reasons raised above. And, more importantly, we have them for a secret third reason that we are so keen to ignore. If profile creation and the general use of technology served only as "ways of communicating", then we wouldn't spend so much time carefully choosing what to post, or making extremely detailed mood boards and playlists, nor would we choose only the very best pictures for our trendy monthly dump posts. In that sense, we are not so different from our prehistoric ancestors, just a bunch of Neanderthals writing on the walls of our metaphorical digital caves, screaming *I'm here. I existed. I lived.*

We do it, of course, with the added level of complexity that an internet persona carries, something that our ancestors didn't really have to worry about, too preoccupied with far more important things like hunting and surviving. But are we not, in our own silly way, also trying to survive in the vast and difficult landscape that is our post-modern environment? At the risk of upsetting Plato (*forgive me, sir*), I will try to use his cave allegory to better express my thoughts on the subject.

The digital world is our cave, our lived experiences are the blinding light of the fire, and we are the puppeteers casting the shadows. The shadows, then, are not the truth (the real world), but they aren't a lie either — something substantial must exist first for a shadow to be cast anywhere. So, in that line of thinking, it becomes a reflection of reality. We can also become our own prisoners, mixing up the shadows with their true source. Our digital spaces, then, act as a mirror, reflecting who we are *versus* who we want to be, the real *versus* the imaginary. They're practical means of shedding light onto something which would otherwise remain hidden.

It's our moral obligation to curate a space that brings the individual back to

themselves, so that technology can become a complementary tool to aid us in real life, rather than a weapon of separation, acting as a bridge between the truth and the shadow. It's also our moral obligation to leave the internet a little better than how we found it. We have a digital duty to, hopefully, help all the other ephemeral phantoms that come across our little corner of the web. Technology becomes our own time capsule, filled to the brim with all the things we care about the most, all our best memories and thoughts that are worth preserving.

Technology is a phenomenon of our era that stands to prevail the test of time. Technology is made of a billion twinkling stars, shining brightly in this infinite digital landscape, hoping to — *one day* — be found.

The Death of Ivan Ilitch: a guide to an “easy, pleasant and decent” life

*Minor spoilers for The Death of Ivan Ilyich, by
Leo Tolstoy*

Author: Aster

Translation: Bárbara Ferreira

What are the parameters that classify the quality of our time on Earth, time that is, undeniably, so short? We may have the fortune of achieving a comfortable state, marked by success, perhaps even by self-realization, and imagine that we can entirely enjoy the first gift given to us. What would we do, however, if, while believing to be living in the best way possible, we came to discover we have lost our scarce time with shallow relationships and moments of rehearsed joy? What would we do if it was too late to correct it?

Tolstoy explores these questions in his novel *The Death of Ivan Ilitch* (1886), in which we are able to find a sort of instruction manual for the certain waste of our lives. The author does not present a script with determined characteristics, capable of conducting the reader through his journey in an infallible way (actually doesn't even consider doing it, given the impossibility of this task). Instead of that, he presents us Ivan Ilitch, a man apparently successful in a professional, social and even matrimonial level, if we consider the patterns of the decade; but whose greatest accomplishment in life was to waste it.

Curiously, the beginning of the narrative doesn't introduce us immediately to Ivan Ilitch. The first chapter occurs after his death, exposing the reaction of his friends and family to his passing. We discover that the death of the protagonist hadn't been a sudden event, but the consequence of a disease that had been tormenting him for a few months. Even so, we realise that his colleagues hadn't visited him while he was sick and that, as soon as they know about his death, their first thought is focused on

the possible promotions that will come up due to the vacancy of his position. The friends of Ilitch that are presented to us do not reveal practically any empathy towards their late friend and, on top of that, the widow seems to be exclusively interested in guaranteeing that she can get all the financial benefits that her husband's death brings her.

The rest of the narrative explains to us, among other things, the reason for the emotional distance that the characters present towards the protagonist in this opening scene. While searching for a way to lead an "easy, pleasant and decent" life (as it is referred to many times throughout the novel) Ivan Ilitch adopts certain social masks keeping interpersonal and shallow relationships, founded entirely in matters of convenience. He is not the only one demonstrating this attitude. Everyone with whom he interacts throughout the novel are, like him, focused on the construction of a "persona" socially praisable. Therefore, we come to understand that the protagonist is just one of the many children of a society which puts maintaining appearances above the establishment of genuine connections and the discovery of one's self.

The novel is closed with the death of the protagonist, who leaves life with a bitter conscience of his failure. The psychological journey that torments Ivan Ilitch during his last days has the capacity of taking readers to imagine themselves in a similar situation. Could we be, unconsciously, repeating the mistakes that have destroyed Ilitch? When we finish *The Death of Ivan Ilitch*, we feel the necessity to ponder on the mistakes made by the character which fatally added up to the irreparable damage of his life. As I have mentioned, if you intend on building an "easy, pleasant and decent" existence, which is, as one might say, shallow and absent of truth or "meaning", you only need to carefully follow the instruction guide that is left by the protagonist. However, if you are interested in avoiding a similar end to Ivan Ilitch, I believe that knowing his route in life has its use. It is probable that some of the keys that allow us to enjoy to the maximum the limited number of breaths that has been given to us are the exact opposite of the steps of the

guide followed by the character that I have just presented.

I will, therefore, leave the guide used by Ilitch, in case it is to your interest to follow it (or in case you feel like violating these codes of conduct):

- *Step one*: Ignore the finality of your time on Earth.
- *Step two*: Trace a path uniquely based on what society considers "decent" or capable of getting you to reach happiness.
- *Step three*: Keep yourself in a state of alienation that makes it impossible to create genuine connections.

Finally, I say farewell with a last request. Let's not be arrogant to the point of thinking that we can break these rules with ease. Ivan Ilitch also felt satisfied with his life until the moment he stopped feeling so in a slow and painful way.

To everyone who desires to break this cycle which seems to be universally infused, even though it is criticised many times, I recommend the reading of *The Death of Ivan Ilitch* (I'm certain that a profound comprehension of this instruction guide is going to give you the tools you need to destroy it). Dare to exceed the limits imposed upon you. Dare to risk!

The Nutcracker: Christmas on Tiptoe

Author: Ana Reis
Translation: Beatriz Vitória

Ah, December! 'Tis the season for the cold (at least in the Northern Hemisphere) and for one of the year's most important celebrations — Christmas. Around this time, in 1892, Russia's Mariinsky Theatre housed the premiere of one of the most iconic dance pieces of all time: *The Nutcracker*. A classical 19th century *ballet*, authored by the illustrious Tchaikovsky, that would become intrinsically tied to the holiday cheer.

The Nutcracker is divided into two acts and three scenes. The *ballet* begins to the sound of the famous opening, with a typical Christmas scenario, representing the Stahlbaum family's living room. Amidst the characters flooding the scene, we find Clara, the *ballet's* main character. Among the arriving guests, we are introduced to the magical and mysterious Uncle Drosselmeyer, Clara's godfather — responsible for the following events, seeing as he gifts Clara the Nutcracker. As such, it is common for him to reappear in the second act.

The main and sole conflict of the *ballet* takes place right after the Christmas party. Clara is sound asleep, with the Nutcracker by her side, when they are attacked by the Mouse King and his goons. This moment stars ballerinos disguised as frightening rats — yet the only thing that frightens me is to imagine the heat inside those costumes. The Nutcracker, in turn, counts with the arrival of firearmed toy soldiers by his side. The fight only resolves when Clara lands a shoe blow to the Mouse King's head (Girl Power!).

Following their victory, Clara and the Nutcracker take on an enchanted journey, its first stop being the Land of Snow, where they're greeted by dancing snowflakes. The ballerinas, dressed in white, glide through the stage as the snow falls (and it truly does fall, as many productions use fake snow so as to give the audience a more immersive experience). Having the snowflakes danced, our travellers are introduced to the Snow Queen, who is usually accompanied by her King. Please, do not

mistake this character for its homonymous Hans Christian Andersen counterpart (there is no kidnapping in this story!).

As they pass through the Land of Snow, they are transported to the Land of Sweets, and thus the second act begins. In this kingdom, they meet the Sugar Plum Fairy and are greeted by some nations through their sweet treats. It is in this act that the famous Waltz of the Flowers is performed. In a nutshell, *The Nutcracker's* second act is: sweets, sweets, flowers and more sweets.

However, so the audience would not get sick from so much sugar, Tchaikovsky made a point of touching our hearts with the final *Pas de Deux*, performed by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her loyal Cavalier.

Over time, the ballet has received many adaptations, both of its choreography and its narrative, in companies from all over the world and even on the silver screen. Some of the most renowned adaptations would be George Balanchine's for the New York City Ballet, and Nureyev's for the Paris Opera. In the world of cinematography, we have the Barbie doll's first animated film (*Barbie in the Nutcracker*) and, more recently, Disney's *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*.

Regardless of which version we watch, the impact of the story, dances, characters, and songs in each one of us is unique and memorable. A simple story — in Tchaikovsky's words, 'about toys' —, yet to this day it has the power to bring out the child who lives inside us and marvels at the simplest things in life (like a doll that cracks nuts).

At the end of the *ballet*, we discover that it was all nothing but a dream of Clara's, but this is a dream that will never be forgotten, not by her, not by us.

Merry Christmas!

Stranger Things: One Last Adventure

Author: Diana Colaço
Translation: Leonor Rodrigues

Nine years ago — yes, nine! — The first season of *Stranger Things* premiered on Netflix. The phenomenon created by the Duffer brothers rapidly became one of the most remarkable series of the streaming platform, winning over fans of all ages and from all over the world with its unique blend of 80s nostalgia, mystery and science fiction. Now, at the doorstep of the fifth and final season, it's worth going back to where it all began. Because *Stranger Things* wasn't just born from 80s pop culture: it was born from the shadows of a true story, made up of secrets, paranoia, and experimental science.

The 80s, but with roots in the 50s

Although *Stranger Things* is set in the 80s, its origins go back to a much earlier context. The series is inspired by both true events and theories that emerged during the Cold War, a tense period of rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

At that time, both countries competed in virtually everything—technology, weaponry, espionage, and even experimental science. The fear of enemy supremacy led governments to fund secret programs that promised strategic advantages, even if it meant crossing ethical or human boundaries.

This is where the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) comes in, with a series of experiments that, decades later, would serve as the basis for the fictional world of brothers Matt and Ross Duffer.

The MKULTRA Project: the beginning of everything

In the 1950s, the U.S. government created a secret program, funded by the CIA, with the goal of exploring mind control and psychological manipulation. It was called MKULTRA — the same project coordinated by Dr. Brenner in *Stranger Things*.

MKULTRA sought to develop drugs and

methods capable of forcing confessions, erasing memories and even manipulating human behavior. LSD was one of the most commonly used substances, often administered to civilians and soldiers without their knowledge.

For years, the government denied the program's existence until, in 1995, then-President Bill Clinton issued a public apology for the illegal experiments conducted during that period. This was a belated confirmation that some of what seemed like fiction was, in fact, true.

Montauk: the original name of *Stranger Things*

The series' plot also draws inspiration from other government programs and conspiracy theories that emerged from MKULTRA. One of the most famous ones is *Project Montauk*, which was allegedly developed at a deactivated military base in New York called Camp Hero.

In a 2017 interview with *Wired* magazine, actor Gaten Matarazzo (Dustin Henderson in the series) confirmed that the production was directly inspired by this real location: "The story is based on that government laboratory — a real site in Montauk, New York, where secret experiments were allegedly conducted during the Cold War."

According to theories, experiments involving telepathy, time manipulation, and contact with other dimensions did take place in that location, all "in the name of science and national defense." The story is so close to the Duffer brothers' original idea that, before being called *Stranger Things*, the series was originally titled Montauk.

Nina Kulagina: the Eleven that existed

Another curious inspiration comes from the other side of the iron curtain. In the 70s, the Russian Nina Kulagina claimed to be able to move objects with her mind. Images of her demonstrations went around the world. Even though there was no scientific proof to them, they still caught the attention of the CIA.

The figure of Kulagina inspired the creation of Eleven, as well as "Project Nina," in the fourth season of the series. The boundary between myth and reality blurring once again, the series transforms

these stories into a reflection of “the fear of the different” and the price of scientific curiosity.

The melody of nostalgia: the 80s that never left us

If the hidden side of the series comes from History, its charm comes from collective memory. *Stranger Things* is, first and foremost, a love letter to 80s culture — a decade of neon lights, music, 8-bit video games, *Dungeons & Dragons*, and adventure films.

The references are numerous and carefully chosen: from *E.T.* to *The Goonies*, from *Ghostbusters* to *Poltergeist*, each frame seems to have come straight out of a movie poster from that era. The clothing, hairstyles, and even the dialogue recapture the hopeful and enthusiastic tone of a time that appeals both to those who lived it, and to new generations.

But nothing symbolizes this nostalgia better than music. When Kate Bush's song *Running Up That Hill* resurfaced in the fourth season, it became an intergenerational anthem—and took the British singer, almost forty years later, to the top of the world music charts. The power of the 1985 song proved that nostalgia can also be a form of resistance: a link between past and present, emotion and memory.

The series itself is, after all, a portal — not to the Upside Down, but to the importance of friendship, courage, and the strength of unity, showing how collaboration and mutual support are essential to facing the unknown and overcoming fear.

One last adventure: the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter

The fifth season of *Stranger Things* will mark the end of an era for fans. It will be the conclusion of the stories of Eleven, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, and Will (and many other characters within the series' universe), who have grown up with us and became part of contemporary culture.

But, as in Hawkins, *the end* is never truly the end. The Duffer brothers have already confirmed that the *Stranger Things* universe will continue to expand far beyond the main series. In addition to the official books and graphic novels, which

explore the characters' pasts and adventures between seasons, there's also a stage play: *Stranger Things: The First Shadow* (with a behind-the-scenes documentary on Netflix), currently in exhibition in London and New York. The play serves as a prequel and reveals secrets from the youth of Joyce and Hopper and the rest of the adult cast.

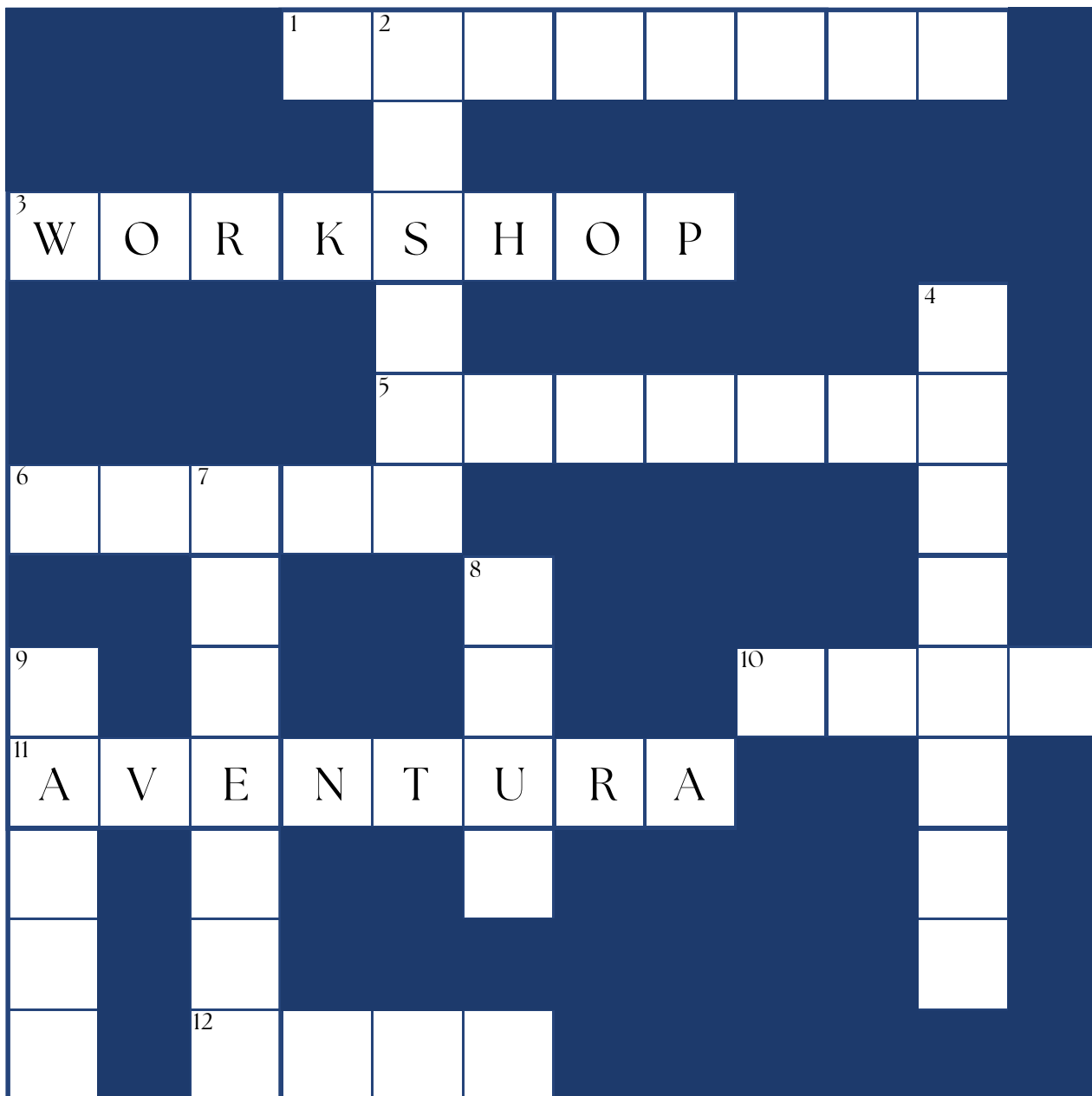
And the expansion doesn't stop there: Netflix recently announced the animated series *Stranger Things: Tales from '85*, scheduled for 2026, which promises to revisit the spirit of the decade that gave rise to it all — now through new stories and formats.

So, even if the lights of Hawkins go out on television, the universe created by the Duffer brothers will continue to shine on other screens, stages, and pages. Because, at its core, *Stranger Things* has always been that: a persistent echo of childhood, a collective memory that withstands the test of time, and a reminder that there are always more worlds to discover, even within our own.

The fifth season was divided into three parts. Volume 1 arrives in Portugal on November 27th and consists of the first four episodes (*The Crawl*, *The Vanishing of...*, *The Turnbow Trap*, and *Sorcerer*), with durations ranging from 54 minutes to 1 hour and 23 minutes. Volume 2 will be released on December 26th, with the following three episodes (*Shock Jock*, *Escape from Camazotz*, and *The Bridge*). Finally, the grand finale episode (*The Rightside Up*), lasting approximately two hours, will premiere on January 1st. So, don't waste any time! Grab your bikes and get ready for one last adventure with these characters who have grown up with us.

PS: At the time of publication of this article in our Newspaper *O Cola*, Volume one would already have premiered worldwide. This article was written before the new season had dropped on *Netflix*.

CROSSWORD



AMOR

DESPORTO

INVERNO

NATAL

~~AVENTURA~~

ENSAIO

MADEIRA

TEMPO

COLA

FLUL

MONÓLOGO

~~WORKSHOP~~

SUDOKU

Easy Level

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8			2	4	3			
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				6	1			8
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9			4					

Medium Level

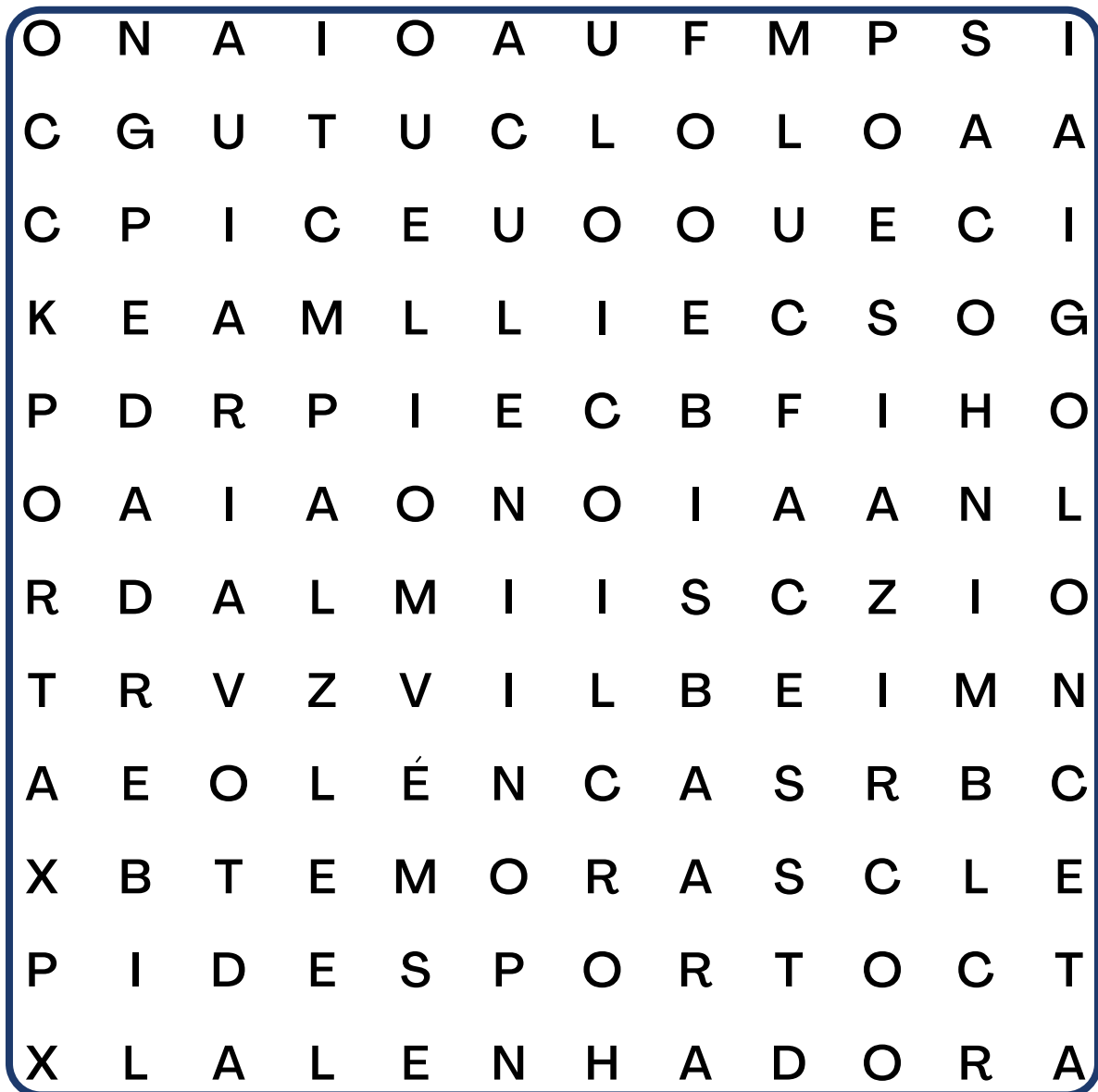
Solutions

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7	4	5	3	1	6	2	9	8
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ALPHABET SOUP



BICICLETA

FACE

LIBERDADE

POESIA

CERAMICA

FLUL

MINHOCAS

PORTA

COLA

INIMIGO

NÚCLEOS

TECNOLOGIA

DESPORTO

LENHADORA

PAPOILAS

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