

THE HERALD



SPRING ISSUE 2023

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing on a red notebook. The person is holding a red pen and writing on a white sheet of paper that is placed on top of the red notebook. The background is dark and out of focus.

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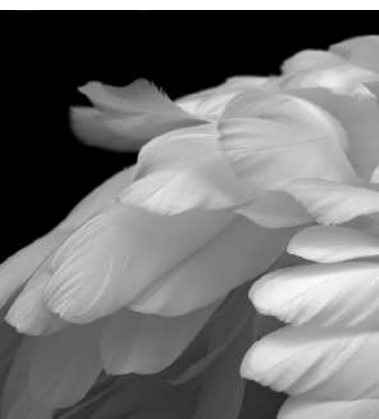
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THE CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

When I first joined the Herald, becoming the chairperson of the club was not something I had given much thought to. I admired the previous chairpersons, such as Timoteo Neves, Sarah Mshaymesh, Joyce Al Hayek, and Andrea Khatchadourian, who had run the position smoothly and raised the bar higher with each published issue. Their ability to manage editing the pieces, connecting with the writers, and following up with the student life office, all while balancing their studies, made them exceptional in their roles. As life made this new possibility bloom for me, I embraced the new position as it became a part of my reality.

As I adjusted to this role, I realized that life is full of possibilities and life-changing turns. While we spent the last two years navigating and adjusting to our changing realities and what we saw as the unknown, I think that now is the time to explore new horizons. If we "Do not lose hope or despair," we can start welcoming new paths and developing ourselves for the better. Even though some opportunities can take us on heart-wrenching journeys, they remain essential for us to grow stronger in faith and willpower. Therefore, let us receive the opportunities that come our way, as they are meant to reach, elevate, and strengthen us.

As the chairperson, I was delighted to work closely with unique and creative individuals whom I can only describe as my second family. I spent time with them beyond the formalities of meetings and events; I met them daily, and they almost always greeted me with warmth and hugs. When I was low on energy, they made sure to support and lift me up as best as they could. They shared pieces of their lives and went on deep conversations with me. For that, I see them not only as writers but as people of deep thought and emotions as well. As you flip through the pages of this issue, I hope you see these writers and the result of their creativity, love, and hard work as they share a piece from their heart to yours.

I would like to thank the first official editorial team of the Herald, including Fady Jawhar as the head editor and Helena Abou Sefian, Hasmig Aintablian, Rachelle Souki, and Ibrahim Al-Najjar as editors. They were selfless as they decided to focus on editing rather than sharing their own work on the pages of this issue. Their dedication and effort helped curate each piece to perfection.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Alyag Momjian, the club's director, as she was a fundamental element of this semester's board. Despite her hectic schedule and abundance of responsibilities, she made sure to provide continuous contributions to the club. Her tranquility and thoughtfulness helped me remain calm, and my duties became more manageable.

Finally, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Armen Simonian, our alumni contributor and club photographer, as he devoted his personal time to ensure that our club's archive was established by taking the team's pictures and facilitating our events to success. His meticulous and magical touch made each picture captivating, memorable, and an essential part of our Herald Archive.

With this being said, I conclude by leaving you with pages filled with love to enjoy and wishing you a delightful read.



Dania Al Boukhari
Chairperson and Editor

What Constitutes an Effective Therapist

The process of seeking out a therapist often seems confusing. While some people would choose a therapist based on variables such as age, sex, or race, researchers have found that these variables do not predict treatment outcome(1). Similarly, one study found that variables such as case load, years of experience, and the extent of theoretical integration in therapy were not associated with client-reported outcome(2). These findings are not to say that therapist effect – the variations in treatment outcome between therapists(1) – lacks importance. In fact, two studies state that around 5% of differences in treatment outcome is attributed to the therapist effect(3,4). Furthermore, a study examining the relation between therapist effect and dropout rates of clients uncovered that the least effective therapists had a client dropout rate of 49% while the most effective therapists had a client dropout rate of 12%(5).

So, the question one might ponder upon is the following: What constitutes an effective therapist? According to Wampold, Baldwin, Gross Holtforth and Imel (2002)(6), an effective therapist is characterized by following three attributes: Positive Therapeutic Alliances, Facilitative Interpersonal Skills, and Deliberate Practice.

Therapeutic Alliance

Therapeutic alliance is the cooperative and affective relationship between the therapist and client(7). Bordin (1979)(8) broke down this concept into the following three components: goal, task, and bond. To further explain, the therapist and the client would set mutual goals to be accomplished through therapy. Moreover, the therapist and client would go on to specify the tasks that will be implemented throughout therapy to allow the client to reach the set goals. This process of establishing collaborative agreements and dedication develops a bond of reciprocated respect, fondness, and trust between the therapist and the client. For a significant treatment outcome, one must not overlook the important role of therapeutic alliance in therapy. One study found that greater therapeutic alliance, both client-reported and therapist-reported, predicted better treatment outcomes for clients struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(7).

Moreover, a research study examining therapeutic alliance across different treatment methods found that therapeutic alliance is more responsible for the variance in treatment outcome, in comparison to treatment method(9).

Facilitative Interpersonal Skills

Facilitative Interpersonal skills (FIS) are a set of skills that are utilized by helpers to facilitate the enhancement of affective and psychological wellbeing among individuals that struggle with affective and psychological distress. Helpers that possess facilitative interpersonal skills are capable of encouraging distressed individuals to take action towards improving their mental wellbeing. It is important to clarify that the term helper is not limited to therapists. It also extends to any person that is providing aid in a helping relationship such as a doctor, a nurse, or a priest(10). One study revealed that facilitative interpersonal skills are significantly associated with treatment outcome. Furthermore, therapists with advanced facilitative interpersonal skills were more capable of effectively working with challenging cases(11).



What Constitutes An Effective Therapist

Deliberate Practice

Deliberate practice is defined as the personalized training created to enhance certain aspects of one's performance through repeated practice and continuous refinement(12). This practice focuses on attaining goals that serve to improve incompetencies in practice while tracking results and outcomes over a long period of time(13). Taking part in deliberate practice has consistently showcased superior performance among practitioners. One study uncovered that the duration of time therapists spent engaging in deliberate practice was strongly associated with treatment outcome and therapist effectiveness(2). In fact, deliberate practice was found to boost performance in several fields such as music(13), medicine and surgery(2), and business(2).

It might be tempting for the client to judge the therapist's effectiveness from static factors that are perceived at first sight, such as sex, age, or race. However, this approach is inconsistent with the research conducted on therapist effectiveness, deeming it fruitless. An easy way one might decide if the therapist is suitable for them is by pondering the following questions: Is my therapist trustworthy? Does my therapist create a safe space during therapy? Does my therapist actively strive to improve his/her skills? Do they utilize facilitative interpersonal skills? If the answers to these questions is yes, then this therapist is likely capable of producing positive outcomes.

May Charara



APA Link



References

Bits of You



Bits of you, bits of I, bits of us; “Leave pieces of you, wherever you go”; growing up, I have heard this saying innumerable times, without it having made sense in my head. I knew it was not literal, I knew it held an undertone, even so, I could not grasp the sharp end. How could I leave pieces of myself behind and walk onwards, pieces which belonged to me, pieces such as scars on my skin, scratches on a broken heart, or a teardrop from a sparkling eye, whether it was owing to merriment or despondency?

We are a mixture of pieces, most of which we were born with, and part of which was ours all along. We change, as life barter around us; some days adrenaline celebrates in our system, we jump, run and dance, we feel butterflies all the way, and some days, we burst out crying, we scream, we shout and things feel like a deadlock. As we decide to bridge over towards the unknown, to the alluring mystery, bits of us fall at some point, on the road. You leave behind a bit of you, in those petite motions, in those gigantic moves; when you turn on the flash while strolling around the dull streets of the city, and your shadow reflects on the ground strides as you move forward, as if you are giving a piece of yourself to keep you company and guide you home, and the shadow disappears once you switch your flash off, and you lose that piece of you, a piece of your own reflection, perhaps. The butterflies you see flying freely, fluttering over your head, reminding you of those whose presence cannot be felt palpably anymore, to make you feel their wraith in some sort of way, those who left a piece of them, perhaps to make the scratches fade away off of your shattered heart, perhaps to lead you to humans, to souls, who you connect with; you meet, you dive in deep conversations, and perhaps the soaring butterflies lose their way out while eavesdropping the talk between you and that soul, and perhaps that is why you sense them in your tummy.

You leave parts of yourself here and there, while leaving every now and then; continuously walking towards places to leave some other parts of yourself, here and there, now and then. You are indeed a mixture of pieces, not truly your own bits, rather a multitude of various pieces, collected throughout the steps while climbing the stairs of life, spotted them while holding the consequences of your own actions and conceivably the actions of those who left a mark on your existence.

The bits of you, the ones which are going missing, are genuinely becoming the new bits of some beings you are bumping into on this journey of yours. Those drops of shininess in your eyes, are now accompanying someone you have met on your path on a typical weekday, that smile which was given to you by someone who might have been experiencing the butterflies, which escorted along some shyness, that smile is now drawn on someone's face who caught you giggling with that laughter of yours. Bits of you are built by bits of other individuals, and bits of you are now bits of some strangers whom you did not even bother to smile at. Bits of you, bits of I, bits of us.



Alyag Momjian

Fall from Grace: A Book Lover's Guide to Healing



I was feeling pretty high and mighty after sharing some book recommendations with the Herald. I mean, who knew that people would actually listen to me? I had ended my semester with 90s and with what I thought was the relationship of my life. But let me tell you, it was like the universe heard my big head talking and decided to bring me back down to earth real quick. Life happened, and it hit me hard. I thought I was immune to failure and heartbreak. Straight A's? Check. Perfect relationship? Check. Basically, I was living my best life and nothing could bring me down. Or so I thought. It turns out, I was wrong. Dead wrong. I learned the hard way that even the most put-together, kick-butt humans are not immune to failure and heartbreak. And let me tell you, it was like getting hit by a truck.

I mean, who knew that one bad grade or one crappy relationship could send your world crashing down around you? Suddenly, everything that was once so perfect was falling apart at the seams. And let me tell you, it's a pretty dreadful feeling. The thing is, we all experience this phase in life when we're feeling down in the dumps, and even the most beautiful places can seem like a total snooze fest. I mean, who has time for sunshine and rainbows when you're feeling like crap?

But you know what? I learned it's all a part of being human. We're not robots programmed for perfection. We're messy, complicated, beautiful creatures who are bound to mess up from time to time. So, if you're feeling like everything is falling apart, just know that you're not alone. We've all been there, my friend. And hey, maybe one day we'll all look back on these moments and laugh. But for now, let's just embrace the pain of it as it is only temporary.

Now you are in your healing era. During this phase, you're going to be looking at some distractions when the thoughts in your head get too loud and you just want to turn them off. There are plenty of distractions out there to help you forget about your problems. But let's be real, not all of those distractions are healthy. Trust me, I know from experience (cough don't text your ex after a fourth drink, find a rebound relationship, spend all your savings, or isolate yourself cough). But fear not, because I have discovered the ultimate distraction that is both healthy and fulfilling: reading. That's right, when life gets tough, grab a book and dive headfirst into a different world.

And let me tell you, it works wonders. When you're knee-deep in a good book, you forget all about your problems and suddenly you're falling in love with a billionaire or accompanying a brave long-lost heiress on a quest to save her magical world, meeting a psychopath (other than your ex) or solving a murder mystery. It's like a mini vacation for your brain.

Now, I'm not saying that books are a cure-all for your problems. You still need to work through those feelings and face them head-on. But in the meantime, give those books (and the gym) as many chances as you gave *that* person. So, without further ado, here's a list of some books that have helped me get through tough times. If you're going through a rough patch, I hope they can bring you some comfort and distraction too. And even if you're not going through anything particularly tough right now, these books are still worth checking out. And yes, don't worry they're all fiction.



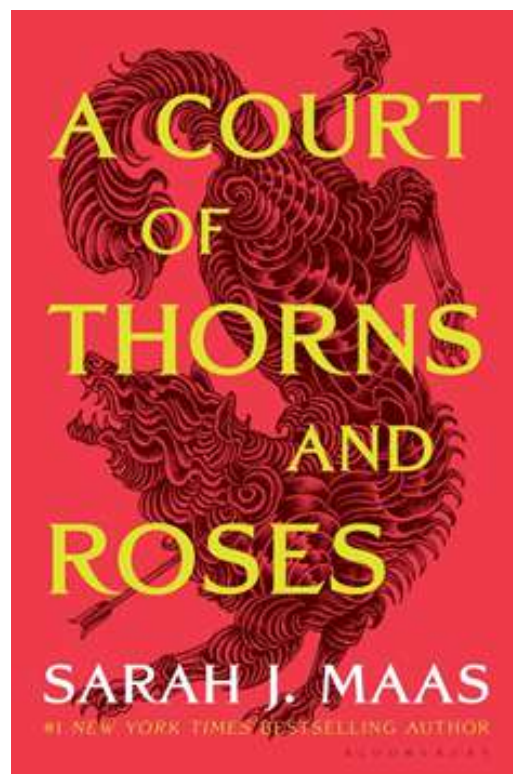
Fall from Grace: A Book Lover's Guide to Healing



A Court of Thorns and Roses by Sarah J. Maas (Young Adult Fantasy, Romance)

If you're looking for a thrilling and romantic read, then "A Court of Thorns and Roses" by Sarah J. Maas is the book for you. This adult fantasy novel follows Feyre, a young woman who finds herself drawn into the world of faeries after killing one of their kind. As she navigates this dangerous world, she finds herself falling in love with Tamlin, a powerful faerie prince. But as their love grows, so do the threats against them. With vividly described settings and complex characters, Maas weaves a story that will keep you in suspense from start to finish. The romance is steamy, the action is intense, and the twists and turns will leave you gasping for breath. Whether you're a fan of fantasy or romance, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" is a must-read that will have you eagerly reaching for the next book in the series. Trust me, you'll want to read all the other 4 books of the series after finishing the first.

Spoiler: it gets even better after the first book.



Daisy Jones and the Six by Taylor Reid Jenkins (Romance, Drama, Music)

"Daisy Jones and the Six" by Taylor Jenkins Reid is an unforgettable novel that will take you on a journey back to the 1970s rock 'n' roll era. Written in a unique interview format, the book tells the story of Daisy Jones, a talented but troubled singer, and the band she joins, The Six. From their humble beginnings to their meteoric rise to fame, the book gives you an insider's view of the music industry and behind-the-scenes drama that comes with it. Jenkins Reid masterfully creates a cast of flawed and fascinating characters who will stay with you long after you finish the book. The novel's portrayal of the complicated relationships between band members, the creative process, and the challenges of fame is both poignant and captivating. It has also been adapted into a TV show. Whether you're a fan of music, drama, or simply a compelling story, "Daisy Jones and the Six" is a must-read that will make you cheer, cry, and sing along to its original songs.



Fall from Grace: A Book Lover's Guide to Healing

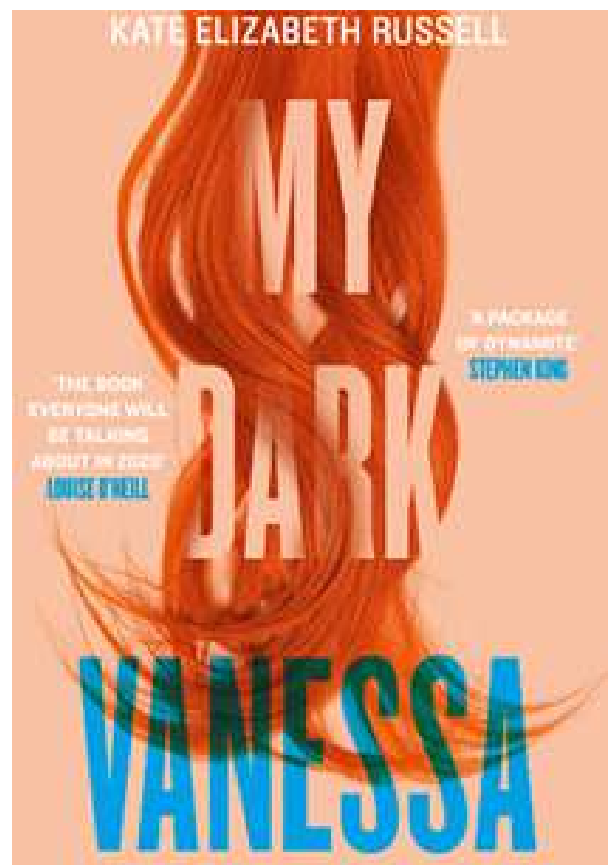


Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi (Drama)

If you're a fan of heartwarming and thought-provoking stories, then "Before the Coffee Gets Cold" by Toshikazu Kawaguchi is a book you do not want to miss. Set in a cozy café in Tokyo, the novel tells the story of four customers who are given the chance to travel back in time, but with one catch: they must return to the present before their coffee gets cold. Through their journeys, the customers discover the power of second chances and the importance of cherishing the present moment. Kawaguchi's writing is both gentle and poignant, capturing the emotions of the characters and the atmosphere of the café perfectly. The novel explores themes of love, loss, and regret, and will leave you with a newfound appreciation for the fleeting moments in life. "Before the Coffee Gets Cold" is a beautifully written and heartwarming novel that will make you want to savor every sip of your coffee and appreciate the precious moments in your own life.

"My Dark Vanessa" by Kate Elizabeth Russell (Thriller) (Check Trigger Warnings (TWs) first)

"My Dark Vanessa" by Kate Elizabeth Russell is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that will stay with you long after you turn the last page. The book tells the story of Vanessa Wye, a young woman who becomes involved in a relationship with her high school English teacher, Jacob Strane. As an adult, Vanessa is forced to confront the truth about their relationship and the impact it had on her life. Russell's writing is both raw and nuanced, exploring the complexities of trauma, memory, and power dynamics. The novel is a timely and important contribution to the conversation around consent and sexual abuse. While it can be a difficult read at times, "My Dark Vanessa" is ultimately a story of survival and the strength of the human spirit. If you're looking for a thought-provoking and emotionally challenging read, "My Dark Vanessa" is a book you won't want to miss.



Fall from Grace: A Book Lover's Guide to Healing



Haunting Adeline by H.D. Carlto (Dark Romance, Paranormal) (Definitely check TWs for this one)

"Haunting Adeline" by H.D. Carlton is a dark romance (by dark I mean it, dark) that is perfect for fans of supernatural romance novels. The book follows Adeline, a young woman who has always been drawn to the paranormal, as she begins a new job as a tour guide at a haunted mansion; she becomes more entwined with the ghostly presence of the mansion's former owner. Adeline must navigate the challenges of a complicated love triangle and uncover the secrets of the mansion's past. Carlton's writing is captivating, and she weaves together romance, mystery, and paranormal elements to create a truly haunting tale. If you're looking for a spine-tingling romance that will keep you on the edge of your seat, "Haunting Adeline" is the perfect book for you.



Fear Street: Super Thriller: Nightmares by R.L. Stine (Horror, Mystery)

The book features two terrifying stories in one that is filled with suspense, horror, and mystery. In the first story, "The Dead Boyfriend," Caitlin is haunted by nightmares about her deceased boyfriend, who seems to be trying to communicate with her from beyond the grave. In the second story, "Who Killed The Homecoming Queen?" Homecoming Queen Della is found murdered, and all fingers point to her best friend, Anna, who can't remember anything from the night of the murder. As Anna tries to uncover the truth, she becomes the killer's next target. Stine's writing is engaging and captivating, keeping readers hooked throughout the book. The twists and turns in each story will leave you guessing until the very end, and the horror elements will give you goosebumps. If you're a fan of young adult horror, "Nightmares" is a must-read that will take you on a chilling ride through Fear Street.

Fady Jawhar

Beirut, Bauhaus, and Brutalism



Beirut is a city of a thousand years; it has seen centuries of instability and prosperity, yet the history of its architecture is quite young and contemporary. It's a city with a modern face, albeit chaotic, with a dizzying array of different architectural eras and elements - a contradiction between modernity and tradition, of the orient and the west - these imprints on the identity of the city has given it its personality and its taste and styles, for better or for worse. To explain the demographics of the city, Charles Glass, a Lebanese American journalist, has said in his documentary *Pity the Nation* about Beirut, "No one is from Beirut, everyone comes to Beirut".

From the Christians and the Druze from the mountains, to the Muslims that fled oppression of different kinds, they were all seeking a safe haven within and at the peripheries of the city. These occurrences undoubtedly played a role in shaping the life of the city.

The city has a confluence of architectural styles that represent the many sides and identities of the city that represent altogether a melting pot of art, style, culture, and experimentation. This article will specifically shed light on the Bauhaus architectural school which I'm personally a big fan of, and it will also cover Brutalism, another school within the Bauhaus movement, through the lens of my camera.

The Bauhaus Movement is a school of design, art, and architecture founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar, Germany, 1919. He aimed to bring together different crafts and art forms to create functional, aesthetic designs that would benefit society as a whole.



The Bauhaus school emphasized the use of modern materials and technology and focused on the relationship between form and function. The principles of Bauhaus architecture included simplicity, clarity, and a reduction to essential forms and colors. The movement aimed to create designs that were not only beautiful, but also practical, affordable, and accessible to all.

The Bauhaus school was influential in shaping modern architecture and design, and its ideas and principles continue to be studied and applied today.

Beirut, Bauhaus, and Brutalism



Wandering around the streets of Beirut, it's easy to miss a lot of the buildings that have character – architecture wise. Bauhaus inspired buildings are ones similar to the one at the beginning of Hamra St. that houses the Antwork café. The way these buildings are designed convey chicness in the simplest way. No elaborate ornaments or classical influences, simple shapes, rounded balconies, blandness, and an interior that allows abundant natural light. Nothing special, nothing overly done, just simply modern.



Brutalism architecture originated in Europe in the mid-20th century, particularly in the years following World War II. The term "brutalism" comes from the French word "béton brut," which means "raw concrete," a material that was often used in these buildings. Brutalism was influenced by the modernist movement and the principles of the Bauhaus school, but it also incorporated a unique aesthetic characterized by using raw concrete, a bold and sculptural massing of forms, and a focus on function over ornamentation. Many Brutalist buildings also emphasized the use of large, heavy, and repetitive shapes, with an emphasis on expressing the structural elements of the building. The origins of Brutalism can be traced to architects such as Le Corbusier, who experimented with raw concrete in his designs.



Brutalism is more controversial than Bauhaus; you're bound to find stronger opinions towards it, and not the positive kind. Looking at Brutalist buildings gives you exactly that – 'Brutal' – feeling, almost oppressive, ugly, and isolated. Yet, they are continued to be used, especially when they are fused with postmodern elements and innovative & eye-catching designs; preserving the 'Brutal' feeling of the architecture and providing the softness that it needs to exist cohesively and beautifully. An example would be the USJ buildings near the National Museum; nothing elaborate, or nothing classical, just simple and modern.

We often look at 'historic buildings' as the ones that have the traditional Lebanese architecture, or the ones we see in the villages. Yet we also forget about other buildings that do not necessarily conform to the traditional architectural type. However, it is equally important to take note of and seek to preserve them physically, through the memories and elements that represent a time-period and an architectural philosophy in history. Beirut is diverse in many things; its architecture is one of them.

Armen Simonian
Alumni

An Unaddressed Lebanese Dilemma: A Culture of Self-Loathing



There is a belief I have always held and stated related to the populist uprising of October 17, 2019; if we were to ask any two random people from a crowd of protestors what the problems in the country were, what potential solutions might have been, or even what the demands and reasons for the uprising were, they would not have given the same answer. If we were to ask another 50 people from the same crowd, we still would not have gotten any two people who would agree upon their answers completely. This instance is, in a sense, a microcosm of the state of thought in Lebanon: not at all a negative thing. It simply shows that there are problems of differing kinds, many potential solutions, and different perceptions always being addressed by one interest group or the other, politicized or not. However, while all addressed problems are of concern to the common Lebanese folk, they are nonetheless lacking in their regard one particular tragedy that has gripped Lebanon like a plague for some time on the social front, and that is the absolutely toxic, and at times hypocritical, culture of self-loathing: the conditioned hatred towards Lebanon... by the Lebanese themselves.

Let us, for a moment, have keywords like “federalism”, “secularism”, and other supposed solutions to Lebanon’s woes take a backseat as we address this culture of pessimism and toxicity. First, we should identify this culture’s adherents, characteristics, and practices: Members of this culture include, but are not limited, to people who:

- a) have made it a habit to put an expletive before (or after) saying “Lebanon”,
- b) throw trash on the streets, inside structures, in both rural and urban areas alike, while hypocritically claiming the country is “drowning in litter”,
- c) take the time to write long, distasteful, and rhetorically repetitive [from the days of their elders] pieces against Lebanon,
- d) laugh at or make it known that they are disturbed by any ounce of patriotism or optimism conveyed towards Lebanon by making others sound like the weird or wrong ones,
- e) blame every single personal misfortune on Lebanon.



An Unaddressed Lebanese Dilemma: A Culture of Self-Loathing



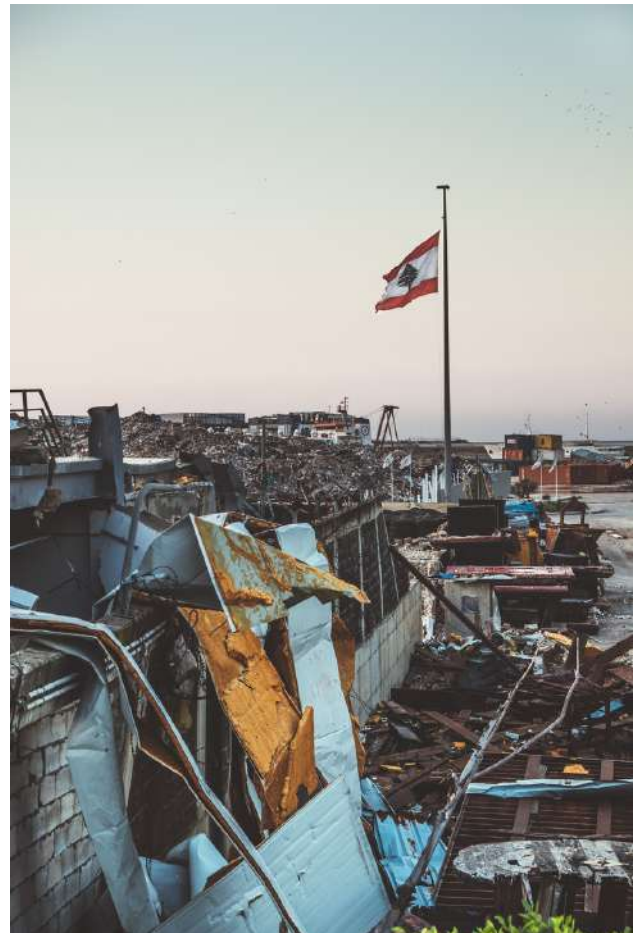
All the above, and more, culminate in the conditioning of a unified hatred for Lebanon across the whole country. This, in my opinion, cuts down the chances of any type of hope in the form of optimism from the simple love one would have for their country. How can we take care of Lebanon when we are being conditioned within ourselves to not even have love for it? While this is luckily not an absolute phenomenon and the whole country isn't engulfed by it, that's not enough to assume it is not a prevalent dilemma in need of immediate attention.

How can a country be expected to fix its way of thinking when its own society cannot address the problem of normalized self-loathing, toxic pessimism, and hypocrisy? How can we expect there to be laws safeguarding the environment if we do not even have regard for it? How can we expect there to be people to help rebuild Lebanon, whether through taking part in the political process or through private initiatives, when there is a whole culture which glorifies the evacuation of Lebanon because "life will automatically improve" the moment we leave Lebanese soil? How can we expect there to be love for the country when we romanticize leaving it? When teenagers repeatedly cuss the nation because they have overheard the general populace do so while growing up. When the young adults only count problems and complain while simultaneously packing their bags along with the elderly who encourage them to forfeit their homeland. How can we expect anything to get better? It is the people part of this culture, and the culture itself, that has also played a part in eroding Lebanese society.

The demands of many stem from a state-building basis. However, state-building cannot be achieved without the bare minimum in place of actual love, appreciation, and admiration for the country. If the culture that normalizes diminishing our value and self-worth because "we come from Lebanon" continues to overtake optimism and love for the nation, then we should not be surprised when we find ourselves incapable of solving the simplest of problems.

In conclusion, before we move on to pseudointellectual demands like dismantling religion and not being "progressive" enough as we compare ourselves to foreign states all with their own histories, cultures, peoples, and contexts, let us first be comfortable with our own identities, and have respect for ourselves as Lebanese citizens. Furthermore, let us know that state-building requires love and nurture to grow and that the situation in a country neither determines the value of one's citizenship nor defines the country as a whole. I have repeated throughout various occasions in the past that it helps to love what you are fighting for, as you fight for what you love, and it surely applies here in this instance.

Arman Karamian



Totipotent

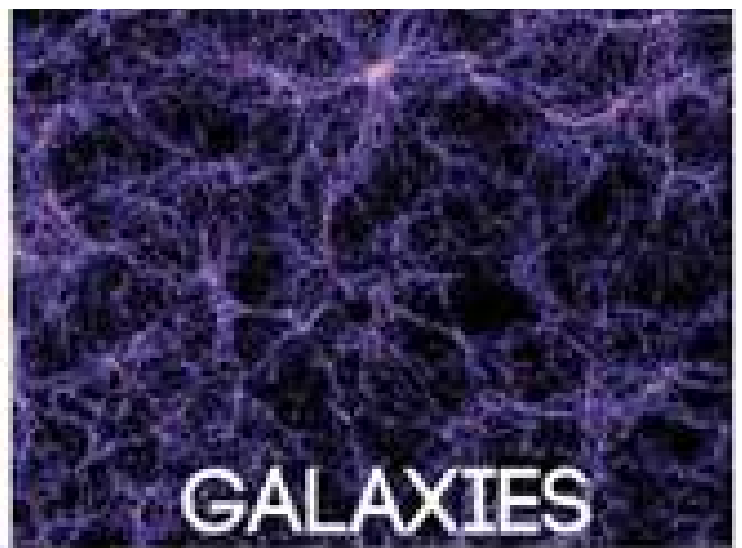
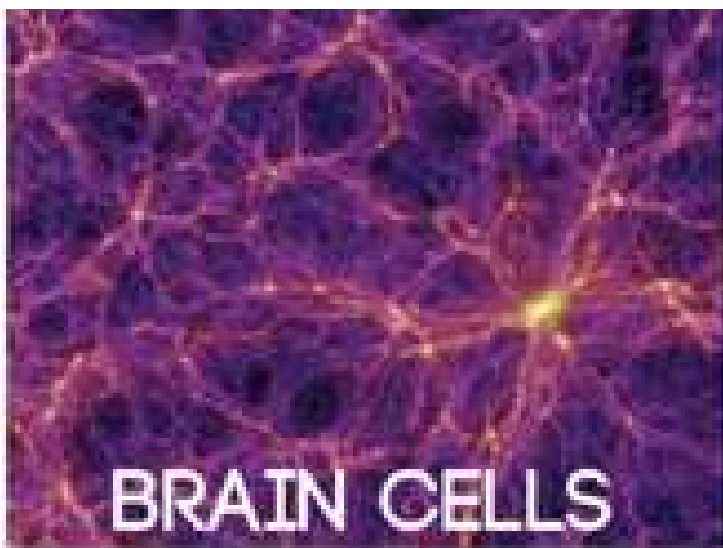


As the kaleidoscope of woven soft lights hit the palpitating pulse of the sea, life seemed tranquil. It was a quintessential time to wonder at the sky, pine about what can be, and what futures await this universe. It's mystifying how we all somehow have the same origin. We're all made of the same cells: totipotent, that have differentiated into different stories, with uncommon dreams. Yet somehow, we're all taught intrinsically to circle back to the same question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?". Mortality is a sinking ship that has most people in a constant debacle of feeling unworthy, yet still anticipating the dawn of day, daily. We're all trained to abide by the rules of life and to keep our expectations low, but if a single neuron inside our brains is made to resemble constellations of galaxies, how are we not to ought more from life? How do we all go from kids, to grown-ups, from dreaming about the impossible, to slowly fading into realism with sensibility as our companion? When exactly did we become cognizant of the darkness of the night, turning it into a welcome excuse not to stare into the eyes of our failures? We were once totipotent cells, undifferentiated, but we had a purpose. With our futures ahead of us, we were taught to dream, and so we did.

However, somewhere along the way, the translucent future we longed for, somehow turned blurry, and instead, our path was set for us: go to school, get a degree, go to university, get a higher degree, go to work, get a raise, raise a family, catch up to your age, worry about social media, deteriorate your mental health, become somber, eventually dissipate into the earth, and become nothing but a memory for the nourishment of your ancestral grounds. Nevertheless, the question will still haunt you, what do you want to be when you grow up? Because the thing is, you never stop growing, but have you ever stopped to wonder who you are to know who you'll become? Are we all just biding time to find ourselves? We are a mixture of matter and energy; we are still totipotent cells trying to find our way. And as the crimson hues of a fresh dawn arise to greet us every day, the oblivion unravels to show us the importance of inner peace. After all, Kung fu Panda's "Po" said it best:

"Everybody was kung fu fighting
Our chi is what we're finding
I know it's a little bit frightening
Oh but it's so enlightening"

Yasmina Nehme



Right Place, Right Time



I walk up the stairs that lead to the glass door of Haigazian University's admissions office. When I had come back from the Cashier's office, I had scoured around to find someone who could help me register. There was already a line in front of me, so I took a seat and waited for my turn. The idea that I was registering for college struck me as I wasn't even sure that I would pass high school in the first place. For that, questions circled through my mind: What if I didn't pass? What if I didn't like my major? What if I ended up failing my classes? What if I didn't make any new friends? Would I see my old friends? All I knew for sure was that I would walk up to that desk, fill the forms with my first and last name, apply for my major, and receive an ID number in return.

However, four years later, my questions were resolved. I passed the baccalaureate exams, completed all my courses, made new best friends, and I went on the stage shaking hands with the University's President to receive my college diploma. Those four years seemed to pass by faster than I thought they would.

My entire life, I have had a certain strategy: Expect every outcome. If you expect the outcomes, you accept the disappointments, so there's no way that it can hurt you, right? Sadly enough, I was proven wrong. I tended to overthink every possible situation and felt confused and lost in this despair. It felt like the plan that I was creating to gain control was slowly leading me to lose it. For that, I finally decided to stop thinking about what could happen, and that's where I encountered a new experience. One so big that it led me to live life day by day. With this new revelation, I got enlightened about a new theory called the "Butterfly Effect".

The Butterfly Effect is a theory that essentially says that one small action can cause a large change along the way. For example, when a butterfly flaps its wings, it moves a small amount of air. That small amount of movement gradually escalates into a larger movement that could cause a hurricane on the other side of the world. This applies to people, too. One small action can create a series of actions that can change the world (for good or bad)! This theory truly baffled me. I experienced it when I was sitting in the garden, reading a book that, ironically, I could never seem to focus on enough to continue. I looked at the time on my phone, and saw that it was almost 3:00 p.m., the timing when I should be at a recurring meeting for which I am always five minutes early. But, at that instant, I decided to be five minutes late to compensate for my previous early arrivals. Moments passed, and I was about to head to the meeting at 3:05 p.m. when a familiar face approached me from afar. This led to a conversation that led to minutes, then an hour, and to a few hours. Because of that one conversation, I now have this person in my everyday life as a stronghold. An almost stranger that I was confident I would never see after graduation became a person that I can't go a day without. All because of five minutes and a decision to be fashionably late to a meeting.

Life, in its entirety, is delicately simple. You can't expect every outcome, and you can't plan out everything. Sometimes, the blessings that you receive in life are from simply going with the flow, and cleverly embracing the situation that is given to you. It doesn't require any "what ifs". Timing is everything. If it's meant to happen, it will, at the right time for the right reasons.



Marian Wakimian
Alumni

Thoughts About Ruling



Some thoughts concerning the Lebanese socio-political crisis have been occupying my mind for a while. Hearing the younger generation such as mine accuse and complain about the previous generation for choosing, supporting, and electing those individuals and faces that have been in power today for decades. These choices have led to a political class that have been “elected” democratically utilizing their positions tyrannically along with severely mismanaging the country, putting the entire future of the nation and its citizens at risk.

One recurrent sentence that is both exclaimed as a desperate affirmation and as an existential question is, “are we living in democracy or in tyranny?”

For me, this question is senseless, and I respond that it doesn’t matter to know the answer, as democracy and tyranny are not that unlike.

Now, we all know what tyranny is. It is when a nation is being ruled by an authoritarian power, not chosen by the people, that has enforced its rule over them and left them powerless under those “oppressors”. Thus, it normalizes for the powerful to utilize whatever serves their personal agenda best, a sort of devilish, self-centered Machiavellianism. Nothing unknown or unheard of for the Lebanese people.



Democracy on the other hand is the freedom to choose, support and elect your “oppressor”, with the freewill to reelect them or another one, every 4 or 6 years, or whenever you wish. Yet again, not an unknown phenomenon.

And still, democratic leaders’ change of faces and names, give the illusion of change and “progress”, while tyrants under despotic rule, change barely their first name, making people feel that their situation is “stagnant”.

Considering this, we all know a tyranny that would have succeeded if it weren’t cut short by the intervention of foreign powers. And we all know democracies that have failed due to the indifference of foreign powers.

Finally, think of this, who is less human; the one choosing their oppressors or the one overtaken by one?

Garod Kambourian



On Womanhood



“Women are born with pain built in. It’s our biological destiny”, said Kristin Scott Thomas, in season 2 of the acclaimed ‘Fleabag’. This monologue was a revelation to me and all women. We cannot escape the suffering that is written into our lives; most of it is quite literally biology. What we can do, however, is not let it consume and define us; I am a woman not because I ‘bleed’ or have the ability to produce life. I am a human being, a friend, a sister, a daughter - and then a woman. A woman who turns her pain into art. A woman whose words are as sharp as a knife, ready to strike when needed, but also one who melodramatically weeps at the recalling of some memories.

Womanhood is a unique, arduous, and heart-wrenching experience. It’s the bliss and utter peace felt when sitting in a circle of women, braiding each other’s hair and trading stories.

Womanhood is being called ‘hysterical’ for living freely, without considering societal backlash. It’s being labeled as ‘mad’ when you dare mention you’re a feminist or your pain is inflicted by man. It’s being filled with rage when you hear the myths of Medusa, Iphigenia, and Cassandra for the first time, upon realizing that even in myths women must suffer.



The hardships and agony universally shared by all women shape who we are and creates this invisible bond lingering between us.

The fleeting compassion and relatability you see in the eyes of every woman you meet is a confirmation that womanhood is a blessing, an experience that transcends every mishap we have been put through.

To every woman reading this: don’t curse your womanhood, curse the system that sullied this magnificent experience. You have every right to be angry at the world, to want to burn it to the ground. You have the right to be wary of every man that crosses your path, to question his intentions and wonder about his past. Defy the norms and expectations that you deem unfit, transgress the shackles of soft and vulnerable woman put upon you and embrace your wild flesh.

Michaela Sabagh



The Tree of Life



Earth. Soil, in which new life blooms, is deeply rooted in place and stubborn to leave. Late night ponderings lead to wondering about the tree, the only tree meant to hold the secrets of life.

The tree: the tree of life is magnificently rooted in the depths of an unfamiliar forest at the end of the earth, with its enormous trunk and branches. It is very hard to reach it and only very few have succeeded in accomplishing this task, but the peculiar thing was that they never returned as they were before. Physically it is them, yet something about the way they act is just odd. Carriers of a sixth sense to such phenomena: witches, empaths, they all either fear it or are very uncomfortable around the aura it emits. The fear of a greater and unknown force that is working ahead of all of us. A power able to heal yet break, to fix yet somehow destroy. Such qualities truly remind us of life. Both life and death.

Life prepares us, just as death prepares us. A silent and comforting union of both; hand in hand where a precious soul is peacefully handed over. Life is nature and nature is life. When people die, they start decomposing and their desiccated bodies might vanish; they are no longer corpses as they become a part of nature as the soil absorbs them and gives them new life. That is the cycle and circle of life, we never truly disappear. We simply have a new, green purpose elsewhere.

The forest surrounding the tree listens mesmerized, to all the stories of humankind, just like little children who gather around their grandfathers all cozy and warm, listening to the incredible tales of the past. The stories of war, reconstruction, great discoveries, and great ruins. The wait for new tales each day, kills them with anticipation.

The tree has around eight billion leaves. Leaves of all shapes, sizes, and colors: from clover-like to heart shaped, from long to short, from yellow to brown. It is very simply the tree of life, of all eight billion of us. Some leaves fall as their carrier dies, while a new, green one blooms with the birth of its own new carrier. Let us not forget about the fallen leaves, the closure of past chapters and the beginning of new ones, will never fade away. Some beautiful souls grow to become incredibly colorful flowers and plants, while dark and evil souls grow into poisonous and vicious beings of nature, the yin to the yang.



The Tree of Life



The road leading to the enchanting tree is as dangerous as the hike to Mount Everest, and that is why they call it, “the traces of life”. It isn’t scary to die on your way, you are a fallen soldier now. Sacred, you will become a trace leading to the wonder, to life: the tree.

Many have claimed that it holds grave powers, some claim it as healing powers, while others only see the evilness of the force. Life, as we know and understand to our own capacities, is neither fair nor even remotely sympathetic. It shows the truth; the whole truth you need to know, and it is for you to decide if you are ready to face such revelations or simply live a life as far as possible from it.

All those survivors from their trip to the truth of life share one thing in common: the one and only truth - the tree holds no magic or power to it. It doesn’t truly heal you from past mistakes, injuries, illnesses, or disabilities. It doesn’t tell your one purpose, as it is only a tree and not a fortune teller. The only magical and unexplainable part of it all is the self-discovery that happens along the way, and most importantly the road that leads to inner peace, peace with oneself and one’s mind. When you have crossed that final barrier and have accepted it, that is when you have survived it all. Once you have had your closure, found your last piece of your never-ending puzzle, it is then that everything is clear, the image and the meaning, hit by overwhelming feelings.

The power of the tree is life. Life is like a shield we have and share, and that tree alone is standing proof of it all. Late night ponderings of a beautifully written story about a tree, the only tree of life. There might not be such a tree today, but it doesn’t mean there never will and for now, we just dream. It also might be that we never knew where to look.

Alik Djinbachian

Is There Such a Thing as One True Love?



The ancient Greeks believed that we were once physically ripped from each other, doomed to search for our other eternal half. The search for love is thus an attempt to heal the wound of human nature, but the prospect of eternal doom is far from appealing. What if instead, there are many mates for the many different versions of ourselves? And if one, two, or even more are lost to the wind, what if it only makes room for the next one who might be a better fit? And what if we keep experiencing suffering throughout this quest? Then what?

It can be scary to put ourselves out there again, to give our hearts to someone with no guarantee of it being handled with care. Of course, the hope is that taking another chance will lead to something extraordinary, but the doubt of it turning bad like in the past might stop us from fully opening again to someone. After suffering emotional trauma, we crave stability and security, so we take the choices that we believe will keep us safe. These choices are solutions, and they do work... for a while. But sometimes, our choices can have unexpected, even disastrous consequences, for us or others, and even for both, hindering our growth and preventing us from experiencing the fullness of love and connection.

The key is to address the root of the problem, the underlying assumptions and behavior patterns that led to all that trauma in the first place, and not let it stop us from believing in what we once believed in. The difference would be to believe in the right people for us, this time. So, don't stop getting attached. Catch all the feelings. In fact, having the capacity for attachment and intimacy is an essential strength.

You might hear from others or come across many posts titled "How to Avoid Catching Feelings" or saying, "Don't get too emotionally invested". The problem is that we cannot turn off love, and we shouldn't be encouraged to do so. We're not robots, and love is not an object to control. You might be asking yourself now, "What if I end up getting hurt again?" Well, hurting is part of being human, and it's these experiences that will make us learn how to better ourselves when we heal properly. As Taylor Swift said, "Crying in the bathroom for some dude whose name I cannot remember now [...] And just know that It's everything that made me [...] all of the girls you loved before made you the one I've fallen for."

Hold on ... What if, even after putting ourselves out there and allowing ourselves to be vulnerable, it still doesn't work out for us? What if we still end up in a bad place and feel stuck in an endless emotional labyrinth...



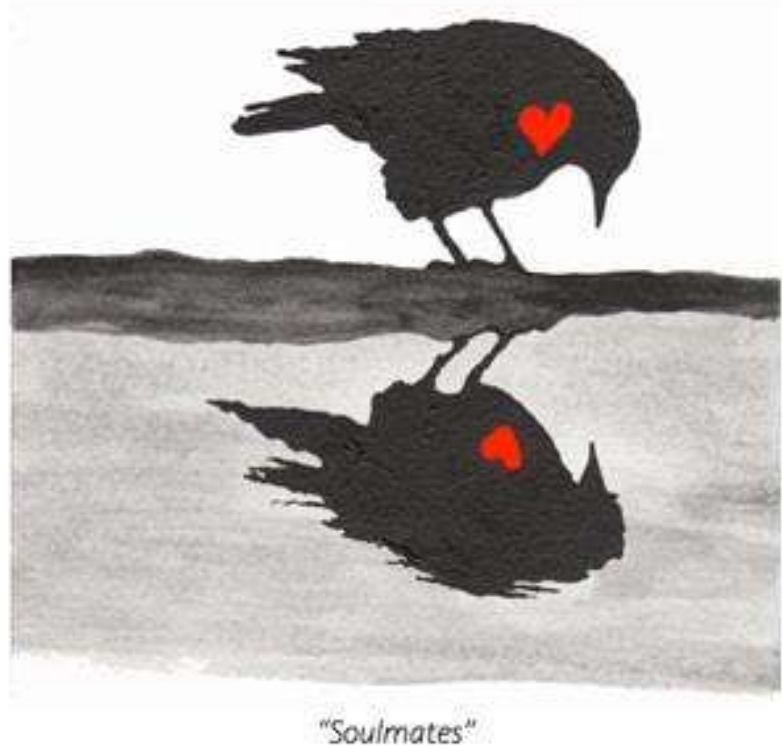
"I love how you love me"

Is There Such a Thing as One True Love?



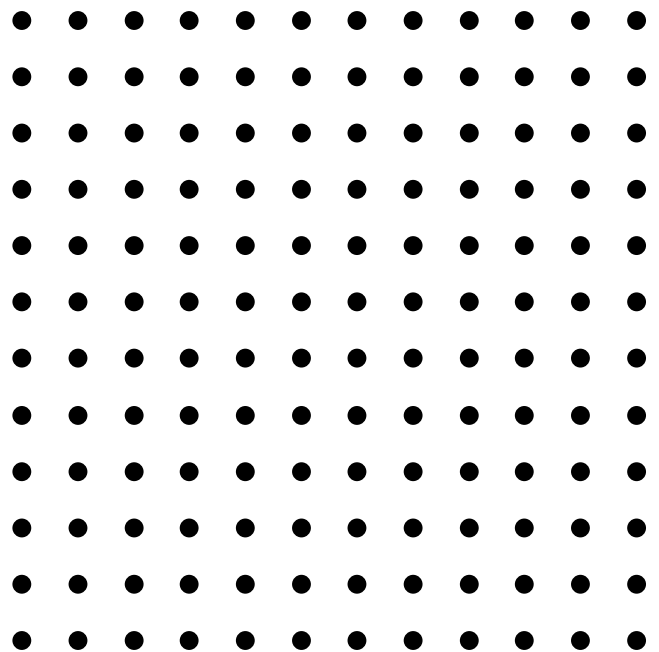
We are taught from childhood the importance of making others happy. We are told to be pretty, quiet, and fun – to be just the way they want us to be. So, we learn how to navigate and present only the parts of ourselves that are pleasing to whomever we're trying to please. But those other parts are still there, brewing, stewing in the displeasure of being ignored, denied, hidden away, and covered with a pretty smile.

Don't make the mistake of settling for someone, feeling deep inside "It's not enough", "Something is still missing", and ignoring parts of yourself just to not lose someone or to keep pleasing them. If there's anything that I've learned, it's that if I can't be in a relationship that allows me to be all of who I am and show not only the better part of me but also the broken parts, the hidden parts, and the parts that are still healing throughout my life journey, and be with someone who appreciates all the different parts within me, then I'd rather be alone. Ultimately, my own relationship with myself is the one that I shall never lose.



New beginnings may bring a sense of solitude and loneliness, yet, when you have yourself to hold on to, you can make it through the darkest midnights, even where peace eludes you and everything's a fight. Embrace the pain of multiple heartbreaks because they are the path to self-discovery. Find yourself, be one with your soul, and acknowledge your imperfections wholly. Once you've discovered, accepted, and delighted in your true self and all its glory, then, even the walls of your heart that were decorated with nightmares, will let the sunshine of fairy tales in again. And the possibility of a happy ending, whether it's with yourself or with someone who will preserve your happily discovered self, still exists.

Fady Jawhar



The Rebellion We Killed



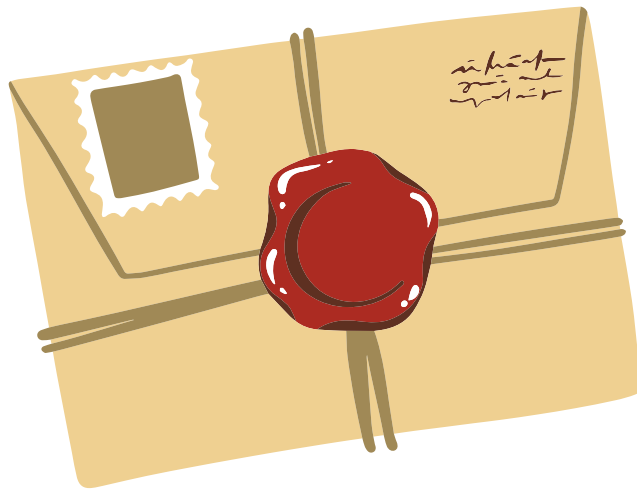
I remember watching old TV shows from the 80s and 90s. Seeing teenagers blasting loud music in their rooms, dressing in eccentric outfits, each of them with an artistic dream bigger than the world could ever hold. Yet nowadays, I find myself wondering: where did they go? Surely, an entire subculture of youth could not have been wiped off in a matter of a few years. And I was right: it has not vanished; you'd find it very much alive and thriving today. However, its exposure is what has changed.

Many may have forgotten, but these subcultures, the ones deemed “rebellious” by our parents and the generation before them, used to be safe spaces for those shunned by society: queer folk, artists, those opposing the ruling class and fighting for a better world, communists/socialists (as famously labelled by the West). One would think that with such inclusivity and open-mindedness in today's world, these communities would not be shunned by others. But there is this one soul-sucking machine we call capitalism. The commodification of these subcultures by diluting them in the mainstream and attempting to create a marketable aesthetic, killed the seed of a rebellion, turning the once passionate, loud, and raw act we call youth rebellion, into a superficial, hate-fueled platform.

Now, one might wonder “Why call the simple act of the youth finding their own sense of music, a revolt?” Surely teenagers gathering in groups, smoking, and listening to aggressive music could not bring any form of progress, right? Well, boy! Has society got this wrong. The mere fact that they share a common interest in a genre of art of any kind, allows them to form bonds, and exchange ideologies, and interact with like-minded peers. But now, it seems as though spaces like these no longer exist, or if they do, they have become highly inaccessible to the general public. Music is more than just the art of lyrics and melody. Music encompasses emotions, helps people express and form their identities, and provides a safe space when the world seems hostile. And with music comes the way people express themselves: their aesthetics, outfits, and personalities, all of which play a crucial role in defining who we are. But what once was a tool of rebellion has now become another commodity. The fiery aspect of adolescence, with all its graphic outfits, loud music, and angst-fueled activities that cause harmless mischief to upset the generations before them are now all lost. It is a sad sight to observe, but I remain hopeful. While what I previously mentioned has now become another commodity, it is safe to say that it has started to make a slight comeback to its original roots.

Garbis Der Ghazarian





Letters From The Writers

From Adversity to Strength



As I write this piece, there are only 74 days left until my graduation. How do I feel? I'm not sure, as I am filled with mixed emotions. It's hard to comprehend how fast these four years have gone by.

When my classmates and I were in our final year of high school, we were not only concerned about passing the government exam, but we were also consumed with choosing the right major and university. I applied to Haigazian University's undergraduate Computer Science program. I was afraid whether or not I would pass my courses and complete my major.

While most people around me were supportive of my decision, a few advised me that it was a difficult major, especially that it included Mathematics courses. At first, these comments intimidated me, yet I knew that I was more capable than they thought. Yes, the major was challenging, but here I am, four years later, with only two months shy of graduation, about to receive my B.S. in Computer Science.

Starting a new journey was indeed difficult, but entering Haigazian University was one of the best decisions I had ever made. It took less than a month to get used to the atmosphere. Since my first days, I have met amazing people, made wonderful friendships, and have grown a lot because of them. As I look back, I can confirm that university is not only a place to learn and attend lectures, but also a comfortable setting to meet people with different backgrounds and cultures.

Even though almost half of my university years were online due to COVID-19, I enjoyed the time I had on campus and made the best of the remaining years by spending time with colleagues, joining some of the university clubs, and discovering new experiences. Haigazian became my home, a place where I felt comfortable and safe, and some of my friends even became like family. I enjoyed having lunch breaks and sharing food with them. I also enjoyed playing "tawle", chess, and Jenga.

One of my essential activities was having coffee every day with friends at the cafeteria where we would chat or study, complain about exams, discuss various interesting ideas, listen to music, and most importantly, update each other daily on the dollar rate. Additionally, I appreciate and love the clubs that Haigazian University has. Each club has unique goals and plans, with hardworking, motivated members, dedicated and passionate leaders.

In communicating with my colleagues every day, I noticed how everyone had their own set of challenges and problems they were facing. Each one of them has and continues to have growing responsibilities, goals, and dreams that they want to achieve. It was comforting to know this because with the encouragement of one another, we kept moving forward, a step closer to our goals. Now that I am at the end of this chapter, I recognize how much I have changed throughout these years and how I have become a better version of myself while facing obstacles.

Just as the beginning of this journey, when I was scared and unsure of what to expect, I feel the same way about my future after university. Nevertheless, if you are like me, feeling uncertain about your future, try to remind yourself that the same way we passed our courses and figured out university life as we went through its uncertainties, we will also figure out what to do and how to continue the next chapter of our lives. Do not give up, trust yourself, stay motivated, "just keep swimming", "take one step at a time", and everything will fall into place.

As I conclude, I want to thank everyone who was there for me, motivated, and supported me. Especially those who have pushed me to become a better version of myself and showed me the way when I was in doubt. I appreciate and love each one of you! I will forever cherish the memories and the moments spent with each of you. Until we meet again!



Nare Gurunian

HUMUN, HUMAN

Lebanon is currently facing a variety of difficulties and hardships: a severe economic crisis, social security, ongoing political tensions, pervasive corruption, absence of effective governance, refugee issues, an acute shortage of basic needs such as water, electricity, and soon enough, medication and healthcare services...

All these problems, with the addition of the COVID-19 pandemic, have created a cloud of despair and pessimism, flying over our heads, and following us everywhere like a shadow. We are no longer able to find pleasure in our day-to-day connections as we used to, and even the trivial things we used to take for granted seem out of reach.

Smiles have disappeared from many faces, and the dollar rate has now dominated people's discourses everywhere at all the time, regardless of their age or gender. Many are repeating the same phrases: "the streets are no longer safe," "you should travel, you have no future here," "we did not suffer as much even during the past wars" ...

With that being said, for three whole days, I was able to forget about all of these problems. These worries have constantly and restlessly haunted me. This happened during the HUMUN (Haigazian University's Model United Nations) conference which took place on March 24, 25, and 26, where I laughed, made friends, met new people, and bonded with them. I learned and thought a lot, danced, sang, played, and had the best weekend I could ask for. HUMUN is what university life should embody. It is the window for the younger generations, who are experiencing many difficulties, enabling them to enjoy their lives to the fullest. Events like HUMUN are what we need most today in our country, instilling hope, passion, and energy.

I had enrolled at HU expecting the same drained and monotonous people, the ones who are not willing to converse or listen to a different perspective. So, I kept my opinions to myself, always avoiding public speaking, let alone taking initiative to start or plan anything. That was the case until I met a very hyperactive dude during break time at university one day, who kept pestering me to join the MUN club. So, I signed my name back then, just to make him stop talking. That turned out to be one of the best decisions I'd made. In our first HUMUN meeting, we were told to stand up, introduce ourselves, and say something interesting about us. That was the last thing I wanted, to get up and tell some strangers about myself. These strangers whom I now call family. But, without realizing it, throughout a year of random meetings, conversations, and connections, I became more comfortable with public speaking to the extent that I actually enjoy it now. In fact, at the conference, I delivered a speech to more than 380 people with no prior preparation, feeling entirely at ease. I went from being someone who blended in with the walls to someone who constantly puts himself out there, gets excited to create new events and possibilities, and readily shares his thoughts and ideas. Our director, Garen Kazazian, likes to say that MUN can cure anxiety, which is absurd, but to put it in better words: MUN helps you grow more confidently and offers you a judgment-free zone to mature, make mistakes, and have fun.

Najah Idriss & Karim Hariri



Faith, Hope & Love Intertwined



Dear reader,

I value and respect you for taking the time to read a piece of my mind and heart that has been hiding inside of me for too long. Scared of being judged, seen vulnerable, or exposed.

I would like to mention that this is the first time I write a piece that ends up being published, and thus being visible to a whole community. Since for most of my life, I have been the type of person who likes to imagine, visualize, perceive, and endure thoughts, feelings, and notions privately, concealing my inner world. Even though I have written some small pieces throughout my life, I never had the courage to publish any.

However, this year I felt I needed a change, a modification, an elevation; I had a feeling of wanting to break barriers, to fight limitations and to just let it be. Therefore, “I slept on it”. Fun fact: they say if you “sleep on something”, you end up processing the situation, and making a choice afterwards. I’m happy to announce that in my case, I decided to take this opportunity to express, share, and bring to light a piece of me to an inspiring growing community, such as our Haigazian University Community.

Today, I would like to share an incident that happened five years ago, however it wasn’t until this year, when I understood the meaning and significance behind that experience. Five years ago, I was gifted a golden bracelet from a person who holds a special place in my heart, my cousin. For me, that bracelet was one of the most meaningful and valuable gifts that I have received in my life. The adoration behind this bracelet is to its meaning: it has the logo of faith, hope, and love on it. One day, I lost it... I don’t know how that happened, but it was lost. I remember that day in detail as if it were yesterday.

I was sad and emotional but at the same time was filled with rage. The second day, I went to the same location with low expectations, hoping for the bracelet to be there somehow. I looked around taking into consideration it was a wide area, I proceeded to search for it in every corner until I finally came across a small waterhole. Within that mess, I spotted a slight shimmer and as I came closer, my eyes widened.

I found my bracelet! I was both shocked and relieved as that waterhole was the last place I had in mind. I couldn’t help but imagine the flow of the water inside that waterhole banging over my fragile bracelet, and despite this, it had remained intact. I was astonished and felt fortunate because I reclaimed what was mine and, on that day, I felt something that I had never felt before; I felt that this incident was a wakeup call for me to reassess my thoughts, feelings, and ideas. And so, based on this experience, I would like to share with you some insights.



Faith, Hope & Love Intertwined



The first thing that came to my mind the minute I found my bracelet was that what is meant to be mine, will end up being mine regardless of the challenges. And till this day, I stand firm on this concept and in fact it has become my maxim in life. So, I tell you, what's meant to be yours, will be yours. Just trust the process.

Second, life is a series of events. Some are logical, emotional, terrifying, exciting, tiring, and a big part of it is just bizarre. Who would have thought that I would find my bracelet inside a place with the lowest possibility out of all the possible areas? This experience made me realize that my thoughts needed to change such as not having preconceived thoughts about matters in life that seem far-fetched. Sometimes, those events that have the lowest possibilities of happening, end up being our breakthrough in life.

Finally, faith, hope & love are three different words with separate definitions that coexist together, nevertheless. Our work is produced by faith, our labor is prompted by love, and finally our endurance is inspired by hope. Let us have faith, hope & love in our relationships with family members, friends and loved ones, in our studies and future aims, in our occupations, and in the smallest of details in life. Let us have faith hope & love in matters and incidents that have low possibilities of happening, because it is better to envision and to take a leap rather than to spend the rest of our lives regretting why we didn't.

Serly Topeyan



Defeat or Motivation

Haigazian University. What goes on in your mind whenever you hear this name? For some people, it may only be a university, but for others, like me, it may be more than just a university. This university and my friends made an unforgettable impact on my life. That is why I decided to write this letter, as I looked back on my journey at university. I bet you have read many essays of this type - people introducing themselves and talking about their journey- however, this one will be unique...trust me!

When I was in high school, a Haigazian University recruiter visited our school and delivered an engaging presentation introducing the university to us. I became highly interested, with a new goal of being enrolled in a seemingly wonderful university. After graduating in 2018, I took a gap semester before applying to the university. I can still remember the happiness I felt when the Admissions Office informed me that I had been accepted to Haigazian.

So, I started preparing myself for the spring semester, excited like a 5-year-old girl getting ready for her birthday party. My first week went smoothly and amazingly. I was very proud of myself, and I made friends quickly thanks to the English 101 class with Miss Suha Naimy Haddad. Over time, I found myself becoming especially close to two individuals within the group of friends I had made. However, my enthusiasm for this journey ended. You may be wondering what went wrong. I remember the incident very concretely. On one rainy day, as I was sitting next to the Mugar Building, someone approached and we had a light-hearted conversation before this person called me “ugly” and even asked me how do beautiful people bear being friends with an ugly person like me. During that moment I was shocked and didn’t know how to respond. I recall telling that person, after gathering my thoughts, that everyone has their own unique preferences when it comes to their social circle, and I appreciated their opinion nonetheless.

It took me a long time to cope with that experience and accept what had happened. To clarify things, I experienced bullying during my school years which resulted in lower self-esteem. I didn’t imagine I would also face bullying in university; it was a difficult situation to cope with. After that incident, my enthusiasm decreased significantly and I was demotivated to attend university, especially that I had common courses with that person. I started either skipping classes or only attending classes and leaving immediately. I thought that meeting more people would put me in a similar situation, so I preferred to isolate myself.

Two difficult semesters passed and then the COVID-19 pandemic forced the majority of citizens to remain in quarantine. This made online classes work well for me. The classes helped me in conquering my fear of meeting people. I started chatting with students with whom I had common courses. We started sharing our thoughts with each other which made us become more connected and understand each other. This helped me realize that others were going through difficult situations as well.



Defeat or Motivation

After quarantine, I returned to university as a totally different person, yet I was still afraid of socializing and meeting new people. Fall semester passed by normally followed by the spring semester. I wanted to completely break my fear, so I decided to join some of the university's clubs. At first, I joined the Herald Club, and then I joined the Lebanese Red Cross Club. This is where everything changed. I write this sentence with tears in my eyes: the Lebanese Red Cross – Youth Sector and its members were one of the major reasons that helped me rebuild my self-esteem. This club changed my whole life for the better, and I'm more than grateful for that. It became my second home, and its members are now my second family. The Women's 2022 Race was one of the first Lebanese Red Cross events that I participated in, and it left a huge impact on me. I remember how I got over my fears and broke all the boundaries I had previously set and finally acted as my true self. I remember how all the members, including the committee members, were encouraging me to keep on cheering the runners and how the runners gave me supportive comments.

No words are enough to wrap this letter up. In 2021, I started a new phase of my life because of the Red Cross Club and its members and all of my friends in Haigazian. I would like to thank these friends for always cheering me up, especially after the period of quarantine. I would also like to thank the Lebanese Red Cross clubs, specifically the Haigazian Red Cross Club and its supporting and loving members, for making a huge difference in my life, which would not have been the same if I hadn't joined. Thank you for bringing the best out in me. Haigazian, it was an amazing journey and I'm thankful for your taking me through it.

Maryam Moaty



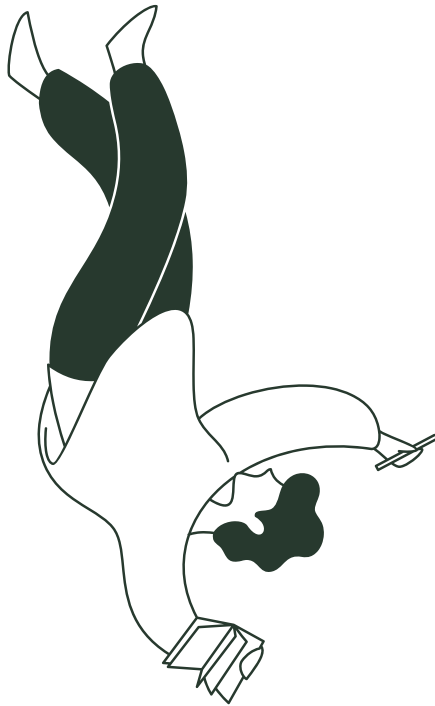


Spectra



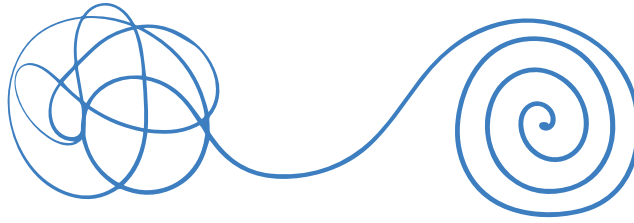
No light,
No sight,
No might,
No right.

All away with blight,
None left to fight,
None to read, nor write,
To no new height,
Hope is beyond slight.
A thought
Upon me is brought,
Ponder I ought,
More resources bought,
More time I sought
Before I'm caught.
Silence is gold,
Yet, words I'm sold,
Lies I'm told,
What is it you hold,
Against my mold?
In my head, you scold.
I never feel brave nor bold.
Stop acting cold,
For time will turn all old.
Stay in my head,
All night in bed,
The skin you shed,
The wounds that bled,
Dreams I'm fed,
Now in dread,
Wishing I'm dead,
No lies I'll spread,
Even if all is red,
Was I exposed to lead?
Are you even there?
Sensing a glare,
Seeing a flare.
Looking, I stare,
I breathe no air,
Fear and scare
Gasping, I dare
No beauty, not fair,
Am I aware?



WAKING UP I SHOUT,
Sore as drought
Yet, sweat spout.
My secret is out,
And I live in doubt,
Truth is brought about
I'm insane,
No brain,
My own bane,
Words like rain,
Screams as chain,
Hope down the drain.
Constant pain,
Griefs that stain,
Scars I gain,
A sight so plain,
All seems vain.
All that made it clear,
To rise and not fear,
All will settle near,
Then a drop of tear,
Seeing a sight so dear,
Pondering how you are here,
When once I couldn't steer,
Now my laughter I hear,
Smiles and cheers,
All for a light that did appear.
Without darkness I couldn't see,
A light in front of me
Subtle, yet vast as sea
Might we ever learn to be
Mighty spirits, free
To know of sadness and glee,
Balance as His decree,
The Greater Good for me.

Mohammad Chehab

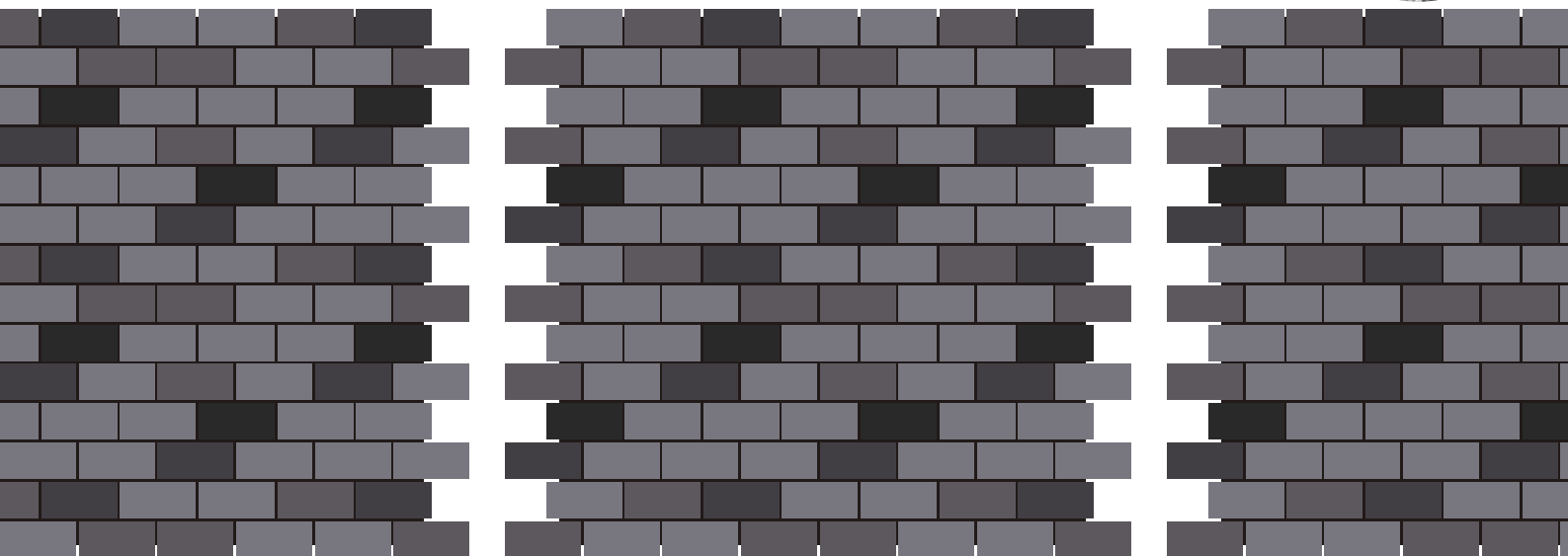


Don't start with your sermons about love and loyalty
Because I could embarrass you, it's very easy
You wanted me to change
Where's the love in that? It's just strange
You preach the golden rule, left and right
And expect nothing but perfection to make you feel alright
Well, that's because you're bitter and shallow
Life is a tough pill to swallow; there... now, you know
I'm kicking you out of my holy shadow
I'm taking back what's mine, out you go
Maybe you'll realize your wrongs one day
And, as loyal as I am, I'll leave you to decay
Call me insane, I have nobody else to portray
Be delusional, be my guest
And I'll keep listening to '@ my worst'



Armig Hakimian
Alumni

Surrender



Surrender to the present.

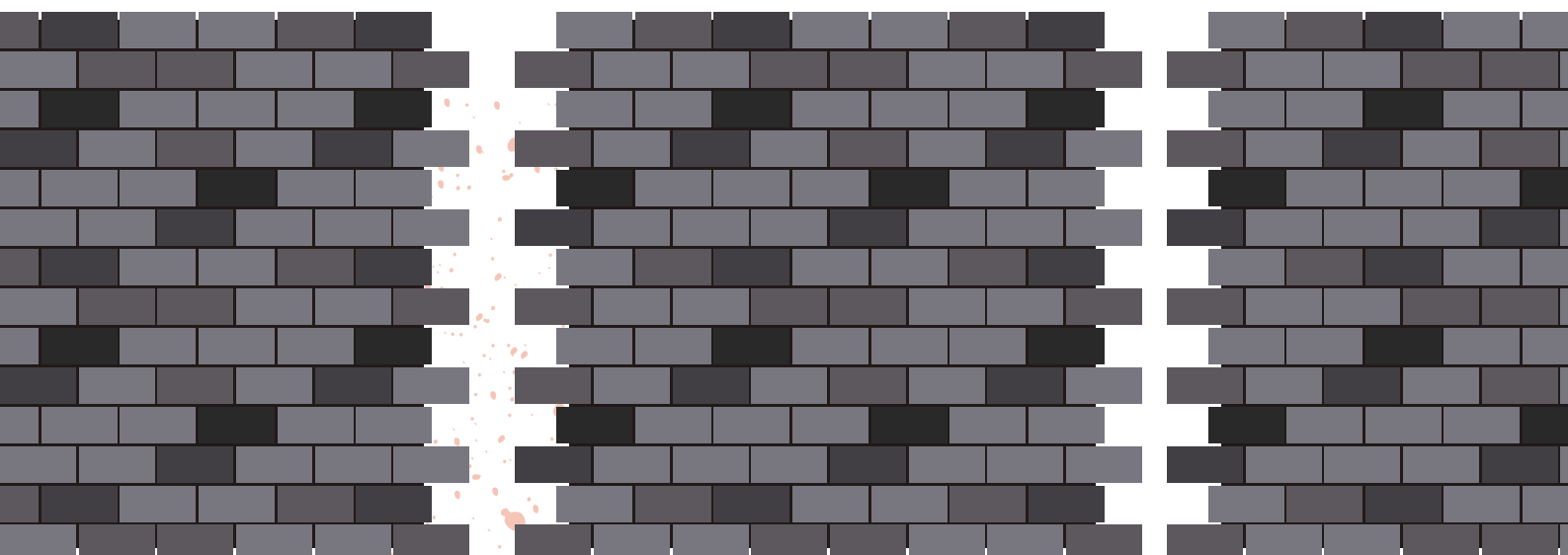
Allow yourself to become.

Welcome your tears.

Welcome your darkest fears.

For only that way can you regain the confidence of your
heart and keep your soul from turning into dust.

Jack Jizmejian
Alumni





I put my hands down to you,
and dive into your ashes,
reviving myself after a breath.

Releasing this tension
after feeding me salvation,
you take me upon my breath.

You embrace me with your celestial being
cloaked with grime that is breathing.

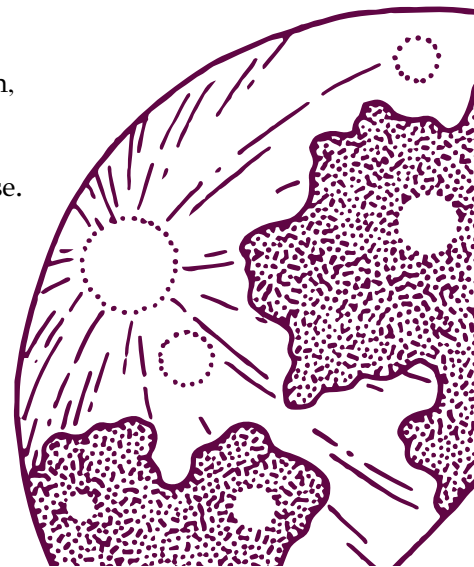
You hold me and whisper:
“Come closer, tell me what you know.”

I admire your disastrous self and claim:
“Are you ready? To let me in?”
You softly shift through it all and become part of me,
And I continue:

“Feel me glowing under your skin,
don’t try to hide from what’s within,
and let us breathe the same.”

We become the “always” that we ought to have been,
in one’s presence we arise from our ashes to see
that we are beautiful beings in pandemonium to cease.

Jeanne D’arc Davoulbeuyukian



The Cycle of Despair



Greetings, my friend,
I welcome thee to horrors with no end.
No sight of light,
For old friendships I couldn't mend.
The lines of truth we bend,
And lies will carry on to no end.
Look around, hear every sound,
Hear the echo, and voices with no bound,
Endless whispers, ravaging your mind like a hound,
Rumours, lies, and a world down to the ground,
Damned by words not sound,
Sickening, heart-breaking, with hatred they're bound.
No hope, no wisdom is found,
Words spoken, from round to round.
Words hold power, through words we devour.
They can spread from minutes to an hour.
With such words, malice grows and blooms like a flower.
Be wary of what words are spoken,
Take care to have no promises broken,

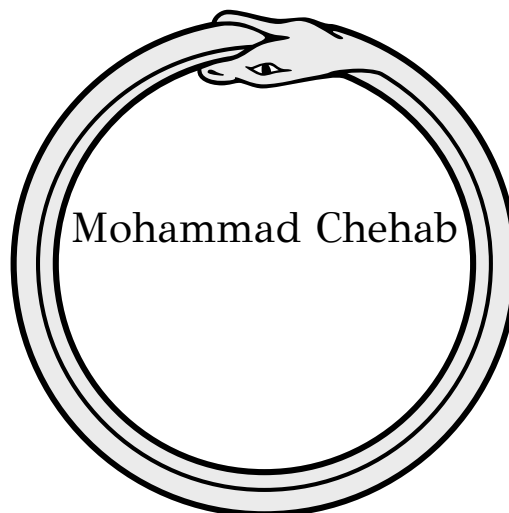
What have we done?
The world will fade.
We try to run,
We should have stayed.
No order, from peace we are shun,
The past is now and so is tomorrow.
Fires consume the sky as we try to find some shade,
Chaos ensues, what is there to be done?
Stay down, none will come to our aid,
This pain endures as all hope is gone.
As you see, people hanging from a tree,
Know they chose debris,
Thinking they'll be free
All they did was pass the cycle to thee,
In your eyes I see,
No will, no hope, no faith to be
All is robbed and thrown to sea,
Under waves of a raging sea
What stops the cycle's spree?
To die alive, is the will of ye?
None will stay, all will die or flee,
No sight of light,
No sight of glee,
All ends in a cage thinking you're free,
No end of despair in me.



Yet, I'm here,
As you can hear.
The world is still dear,
It holds wonders and delight,
Beyond all that you can sight,
Indeed, it holds much fear
And much for you to tear
Still, much more will become clear,
That even an insignificant flea
Has its place in a world as sea

So forward, do adhere,
To no end, with might that's sheer.
May we ever break this cycle,
Bringing about a new era,
Where all are free to be.
With gratitude, I thank you,
Helping me pull through,
And challenging me to be true.

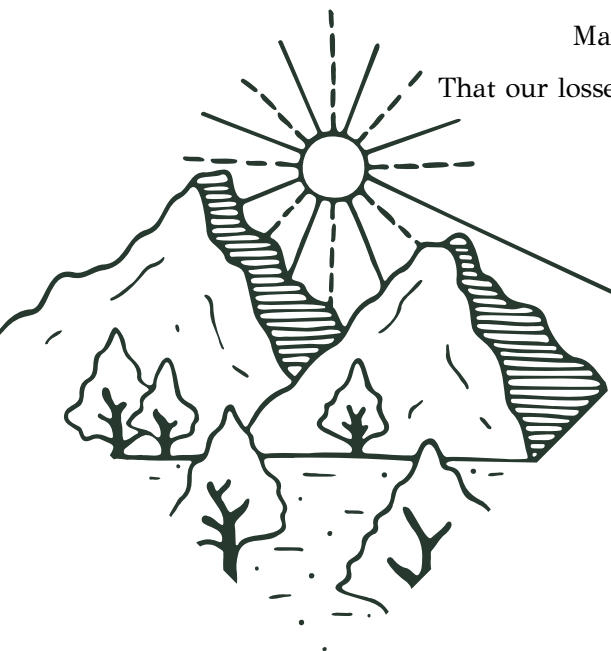
My friend, what can I say?
What deeds you've done, He will repay.
As He knows the acts you display,
May they be of goodness, not astray.
Days will pass and you won't stay,
Yet, deeds underneath do pay.
So, farewell my friend, may we meet one day.



I'd Move a Mountain For You

I'd move a mountain for you if I could
I'd befriend the impossible if I should
I don't understand it either
Why the wicked win, why they're the achiever?
While we count our losses
Like they're trophies for underachievers
I agree that the world is sometimes unfair
Especially towards you, you feel like there's no air
No air to breathe
No purpose to let you breathe
I've been through it before
I've made my peace even if when it was war
You always ask me why I keep helping you
Truth be told, I see myself in you
Although that's a joyful fact
It scares me to hell
Because when I fell
There was no one around to pick me back up
Other than my therapist, that's just my luck

I look at you and I see myself
I can pick you up from the floor, that's for sure
I can move mountains for you, call me demure
Maybe those mountains will prove
That our losses are our victories and maybe that's a clue
That the day we met
Loss met victory
And victory met loss
I'll take this loss any day
Like I'd take a rainy day



Armig Hakimian
Alumni



يَا مِنْ تَحْتِ أَقْدَامِهَا الْجَنَّةُ
وَفَوْقَ رَأْسِهَا الْعِزَّةُ
يَا مِنْ وَضَعْتَنِي عَلَى السَّكَّةِ
يَا سِنْدًا فِي كُلِّ مِحَنَةٍ
أَكْتُبْ لَكَ وَقَلَمِي يَشْهَدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
أَفْتَحْ لِأَجْلِ دَمْعَتِكَ جِبْهَةً

إِلَى سَيِّدَةِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ
حَفَظَكَ اللَّهُ وَأَدَامَ عَلَيْكَ الْهِمَّةَ
يَا مَعْنَى كَلِمَةِ مَحَبَّةٍ
قَدْ أَخْطَأَ الْمُعْجَمُ بِهَذِهِ اللَّفْظَةِ
وَتَغَاصَى عَنْ تَرْجَمَةِ مَعْنَى الْقُلُوبِ هَذِهِ الْمَرَّةَ

ابراهيم النجار



عَلَّمَنِي كَيْفَ أُهْدِي جَلْبَةَ قَلْبِي حِينَ أَرَاكَ
عَلَّمَنِي كَيْفَ أَخْفِي أُنَيْنَهُ فِي مَسْرَحِ الْوُجْدَانِ
كُنْتُ لَا أَبْغِي مِنَ الْحُبِّ إِلَّا حَيَاءَ الْبِدَايَةِ
تَحْطَمْتُ عِنْدَ عَيْوَنِكَ بَرَاءَتِي
زَرَعْتُ حُبِّي كُلَّهُ فِي عَيْنَيْ
وَسَقَيْتُهُ مِنْ جَمْرِ شَهْوَةِ الْوِصَالِ
... يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَخُنْ سِذَاجَتِي
أَقْبَلْتُ إِلَيْكَ
وَالْكَلَامُ كُلُّهُ فِي عُيُونِ
أَظُنُّكَ مَا فَهَمْتُ

الَّيْلِ...

الَّيْلُ مَتَحَفُ الْأَشْوَاقِ
وَأَنْتَ لَيْلِي
مِنْ حُسْنِ حَظِّي أَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تَزُولُ
وَمِنْ سُوءِ حَظِّي أَنَّ اللَّيْلَ يَطُولُ

أَنْتَ لَهْفَةُ الْقَلْبِ الْأُولَى
أَنْتَ أَوْجَاعُ الطُّفُولَةِ
أَنْتَ رِحْلَةُ الْبَحْثِ عَنِ الذَّاتِ
الْغَفْوَةِ وَأَنْتَ الْيَقِظَةُ
أَنْتَظِرُكَ أَيَّامَ
وَتَأْتِينِي غَفْلَةً
وَأَعْظَمُ مَا فِي الصُّدْفَةِ
أَنَّهَا خَالِيَةٌ مِنَ الْإِنْتَظَارِ

لين قليط



يا أرض المسيح و محمد الأمين
سنعود إليك يومًا، هذا وعدٌ قريبٌ
يا جارة الشام و لبنان الحبيب
أتمنى تحريرك و أمني لن يخبث
يا صاحبة القبة من حديد
قُدسنا شريف ولو دخله الغريب
فالأرض تعرف أصحابها و لن ننسى، هذا أكيد
القضية لن تموت طالما هناك شرفاء و شهيد
العرب و العالم بصمت رهيب
لكن أيها الطفل الفلسطيني لن تبقى وحيد
الشعوب العربية لك رفيق
عذرًا لحدوث النكبة من جديد
الإنسان في بلادنا أصبح هو الزهيد
أدعو لك في صلاتي و أقول يا رب استجب

ابراهيم النجار





و في شباكِ الحُبِّ وقعنا

أنظرُ إلى نفسي في المرأة و أنتقدُ الفتاة التي أراها
أنا لا أعرفُها

سمائها تغيّرت

عينها التي كانتا مليئتين بالحياة أصبحت تترجأهما للنوم

شعرُها بدأ يتساقط

و الابتسامة التي كانت محفورةً على وجهها، أصبحت نادرةً الوجود

و بعدَ ساعةٍ من الانتقادِ، يأتيني وحيٌّ صادمٌ

لا أريدُ أن أكونَ الفتاةَ التي كنتُ أعرفُها

الفتاة التي كانت تنهار في وقتِ الصَّعوبةِ

الفتاة التي كانت تهتمُّ برأي الآخر

الفتاة التي كانت تُقارن نفسها بغيرها في أكثر الأحيانِ

أريدُ أن أتذكرَ أيامي الجامعيّةِ و على وجهي ابتسامة

أريدُ أن أعيش دون اهتمامٍ لآراء الآخرين

أريدُ أن أكون فخورةً بكلِّ ما أنجزتهُ

و أخيراً،

أريدُ أن أقع في شباكِ حُبِّ نفسي

حُبِّ غامضٍ و أعمى

هيامٌ شديد، ضوءه يُعمي الغير

و حُبِّ متواضعٍ، يذكّرني بأصولي و يتلقّى الإنتقادُ بكلِّ حماسٍ



آية رمضان



عَلَى مَنْ تَشْرِيقِينَ يَا شَمْسُ ؟

نُورُكِ لَنْ يُشْرِقَ عَلَيْهِ أَبَدًا، وَعَيْنَاكُمَا لَنْ تَلْتَقِيَا ابْتِئًا.

مِنْ تَبَحُّثِينَ عَنْهُ هَجَرَكَ دُونَ عَوْدَةٍ.

مِنْ تَنْتَظِرِينَ قُدُومَهُ لَيْسَ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْأَرْضِ.

حَبِيبُكِ يَا شَمْسُ خَطَفَتْهُ الظَّلَالُ مِنْكَ انتِقَامًا.

وَمَرَّقَتْ ذَكَرَاهُ مِثْلَمَا مَرَّقَتْ الْيَقِظَةُ أَحْلَامًا.

فَعَلَى مَنْ تَشْرِيقِينَ يَا شَمْسُ؟

مَا زَالَ الْكُؤُنُ خَالٍ مِنَ الْحَبِيبِ.

وَكُونُ بِلَا حُبٍّ ، لَا صَوْتٌ فِيهِ وَلَا صُورَ.

لَا مَا يُسْمَعُ وَلَا مَا يُرَى.

فَغَيْبِي يَا شَمْسُ وَلِيَتَجَمَدَ هَذَا الْعَدَمُ.

فَالنُّورُ لَا يَنْفَعُ أَرْضًا لَا انْعِكَاسَ لَهُ فِيهَا .

وَالْحَرَارَةُ لَا تَنْبِجَةُ لَهَا فِي عَدَمٍ لَا انْفِعَالٌ فِيهِ وَلَا حَرَكَةٌ.

فَلْتَحَرَّرِي يَا شَمْسُ مِنْ آمَالِكَ وَأَحْلَامِكَ.

تَحَرَّرِي مِنْ كُلِّ وَعْدٍ كَاذِبٍ قِطْعَتِهِ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ .

لِتُحَرِّكِ الْحَقِيقَةَ

عَلَى مَنْ تَشْرِيقِينَ يَا شَمْسُ؟

وَأِلَى مَنْ تَذْهَبِينَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ بَعْدَ الْغُرُوبِ؟

مِنْ تَنْتَظِرِينَ يَا شَمْسُ؟

وَعَلَى مَنْ تَبَحُّثِينَ فِي الْبَحَارِ وَبَيْنَ الدُّرُوبِ؟

مَتَى سَتَرْحَلِينَ يَا شَمْسُ؟

مَتَى يَأْتِي الْيَوْمُ الْمَوْعُودُ؟

يَوْمَ تَفْقِدِينَ الْأَمَلَ ، يَوْمَ تَذْهَبِينَ فِيهِ وَلَا تَعُودِينَ.

أَتَسْأَلُ عَنْ السَّاعَةِ الَّتِي تَكْتَفِينَ فِيهَا وَتَقْنُطِينَ مِنَ الْبَحْثِ.

إِسْتَغْرَبَ كَيْفَ تَشْرِيقِينَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ.

مِنْ أَيْنَ يَأْتِي هَذَا الْإِصْرَارُ؟

كَمْ أَنْتَ عَنِيدَةٌ وَغَبِيَّةٌ!

أَلَمْ تَعْرِفِي بَعْدَ ؟ أَلَمْ تَفْهَمِي بَعْدَ؟

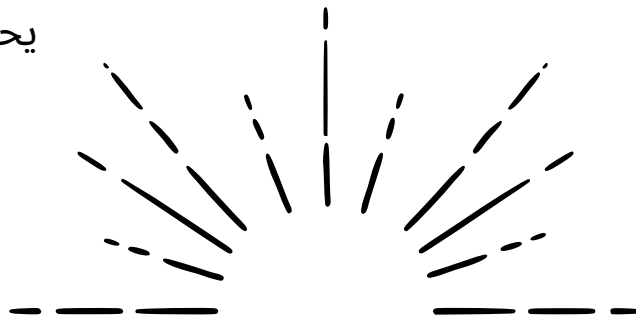
أَلَمْ تَمْلِي؟

أَحْيَانًا أَمَلْنَا هُوَ سَجَنَا الْوَجِيدِ، دُونَهُ نَحْنُ أَحْزَارُ.

أَذْهَبِي يَا شَمْسُ ، فَلْتَعْرُبِي.

فَحَبِيبُكِ لَنْ يَأْتِيَ.

يحيى حيدر



Death of a Crow



Sacred amongst its order,
A call of death set a nation in torpor.
A void up above, so ethereal,
Vile nature of man deemed him superior.

Dare to kill the messenger of death?
Dare to have the horrors of the world rip out your flesh?
A fuel for your nightmares, awake and asleep
A fuel for the bonfire, soul burning, yet you don't weep.

Curiosity killed a black cat,
Curiosity killed a crow.
Curiosity won't backtrack what your intentions bestow.
Pity to the world,
Pity to the scatterbrain, daydreamers, hexed with a vision so
blurred.

Blind to the bliss of ignorance,
Blind to pointless existence.
Matter is of nothing, pondering sighted a glimmer,
A silver lining where not every horizon has to glitter.

Take it as it is and take hold of this extant,
Petulance won't serve you right, every single day can be
effervescent.
What's the cost of killing a crow?
Reciprocation or reincarnation, who ought to know?

Voidless enthronement or cathartic bellow,
Live and do so onto others, for all that's planted will
ultimately grow.

Jad Othman



Chained to Chaos

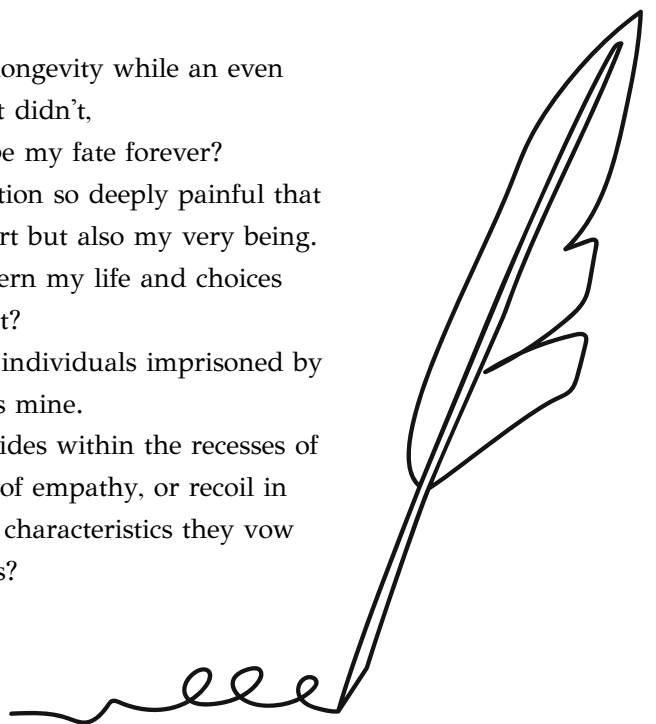
When thoughts of the world fill your mind, what do you envision?
Does your perception capture the ethereal blend of beauty and
darkness?
or does it lean towards dolorous affliction?
Do you feel satiated or does your mind become a labyrinthine
maze where life's offerings escape you?
Are you tranquil or do the shackles of pandemonium reign over
you?

Amidst the winding labyrinths of my mind, I find myself captive
to these relentless musings.
What is the purpose of this existence?
What unspoken truths are yet to be revealed?
Shall I forever be chained to chaos?

Throughout my existence, it seemed as though darkness was
perpetually entwined with my soul,
yearning to infiltrate my very core and disassemble me from
within.

In a curious dance, the shadows seemed captivated by my
presence, drawn ever closer until finally, I surrendered to their
embrace as I allowed the darkness to envelop me entirely.
It feared the enormity of my surrender, leaving behind an indelible
mark,
a permanent etching upon the canvas of my mind.

A significant part of me accepted its longevity while an even
stronger part wished it didn't,
for if I were certain, would this be my fate forever?
To be someone incapacitated by an emotion so deeply painful that
it consumed not only my mind and heart but also my very being.
Am I so feeble to let a sentiment govern my life and choices
without restraint?
Sometimes I ponder whether there exist individuals imprisoned by
analogous thoughts as mine.
And if they discerned what furtively resides within the recesses of
my mind, would they extend a hand of empathy, or recoil in
anguish, because I personify the exact characteristics they vow
never to possess?



Chained to Chaos

I wonder if I have dwelled in the shadows for too long, such that
now I have come to embrace its tranquillity.

Who would I be without it?

Would I truly desire a different life, or would I relive my past
without alteration?

So many questions left unanswered...

But the obscurity is what allowed me to apprehend the profundity
of the world.

It enabled me to be vulnerable and see the exquisiteness within my
own vulnerabilities.

The magnificence of existence devoured me as I vowed to see
everything in black and white.

I allowed life's cruelties to consume me and saw its beauty as if
the shadows of darkness were concealed in the corners of its
abyss.

But in the end, I came to the realization that you can't live the life
you desire unless you learn to appreciate both the beauty and
darkness of existence.

But isn't this what I wanted? To allow the darkness to consume
me?

Isn't this what I yearned for?

Didn't I desire to be consumed by it?

Didn't I choose to allow it in?

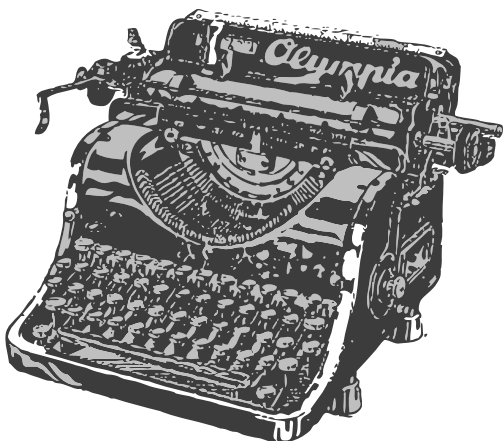
Didn't I crave this?

Didn't I desire this?

Didn't I??

Perhaps, existence is meant to asphyxiate us,

Sky Kumbarji





We were on the brink of death
Stranded on a mountain, freezing
There was no heat, no fire
It was just him and me
We discussed ways to survive
No words were spoken enough
Engulfing one another with warmth
We melt into each other
His cold hands slip beneath my shoulders, just above my waist
I hug his neck and hold tight
He hugs me tighter
And neither of us speak.
We breathe,
We feel each other's hearts beat
But the world stays still
Our world stops turning
And we stay there
Frozen in time.
At least that's what it felt like
Because we weren't on a mountain
We weren't alone either
We were two strangers
Saying goodbye to one another
In a restaurant, in a crowded choir.
It would be the last time we would see each other
We'd never spoken before
But we held each other with vigor
He breathed me in
I looked up to the skies and prayed for this moment to not end
Neither of us wanted to part,
Neither of us wanted to let go
After all, we would never meet in this life again
And I decided it to be that way
I want to keep this memory as it is
Because I know that
In another world
On the freezing mountain
We died together
In a tight embrace
Frozen in time.

Tvin Hergelian



Silence my child, your screams won't be heard.
Silence my child, your chopped up wings won't make you a bird.
Silence the roses growing in pain.
Silence those burns eaten by the flame.
The void swallows all memories, pictures, and sounds.
Everything that ever existed will never be found.
Even temperature, there's neither hot nor cold.
Just meaningless suffering and stories that will never be told.
Oh Holy darkness, shall we be one

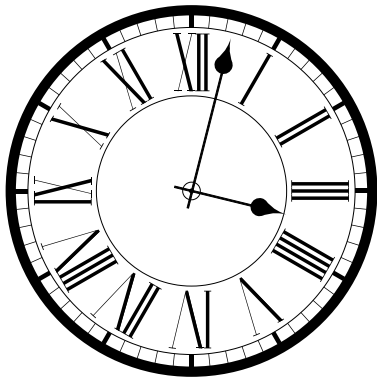
Devour all, light be gone
Oh Holy darkness bring us thy peace
Dance with my shadows unleash the beast.
Kill them so swiftly, just let them stop
Their lifeless stares, bodies dangling from ropes
I can still feel them inside me, their pain never left
I can hear their heart beats, begging for justice they can never get.
I'm never alone, their lives never ended.

My body shattered, my self expanded.
I became what my body couldn't contain.
Thousand suffering souls screaming my name.
Children, women, and men shrieking like injured cattle.
Voices lost all features of humanity, trembling eyes that never settle.

Asking for justice from a god that allowed it all.
Begging for mercy, as the void answered the call.
Silence my child all shall end soon.
Doomed to an infinite dark night with no moon.



Hivar



Crystal design
Down it comes
Onto my face
Dressing me with its shine...

'Tis the season where the bench awaits my arrival
To sit and reflect back on certain moments
To understand the mechanism of time
And to check if it has been dealt with properly and wisely

After my journey I have come to realize the following:
My dear, time is everything
It is your parent, who knows what is truly best for you
It is your sibling, who always finds the tiniest detail to battle you
It is your friend, who sometimes comforts you with a white lie
It is your enemy, who keeps on betraying and deceiving you
It is your potential lover, who always leaves you confused and unsure

In other words, time is like the gear of a vehicle
It can shift to any of the aforementioned forms
And alter the path you are walking on
Whether to the better or to the worse

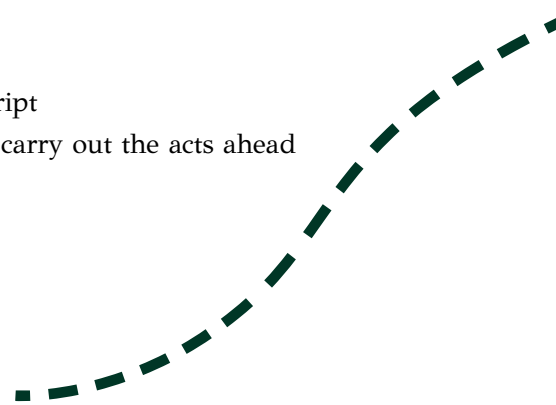
However it may be, rest assured it will not remain the same,
For time is the equivalent of a roller-coaster
It has its fluctuating moments

Where one day you find yourself on a sunny field, the next in an icy blizzard
And where you are exceptionally left with bittersweet memories

So whatever time lends you
Take it
Don't question the process it has in store
Let it pave what it thinks needs to be paved
And cherish it deeply

And remember even with everything that has been said
You still have a part to play
A role to fulfill,
For time only gives you the title of the script
And leaves you with the choice of how you want to write and carry out the acts ahead

Ralph Tannous





Brief be my anger.
Brief be my rage.
Brief be the slap
Of my words on the page.
To love what's good
Is wisdom and sage.
As a death rattle shakes
The bars of life's cage.
Bittersweet memories
Never will last.
Peep like white doves.
From the black hat of the past
Surrender to life.
Then do the last bow
And take what's rife
There's no time like now

Najah Idriss



A special thanks to the writers of the
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thank you for continuing to be our inspiration
and for trusting us with
The Herald.

The Team



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Photo Credit: Armen Simonian

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