



A Celebration of the Arts

**THE
WRITER'S
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Untitled - Chapter 1
by Melanie Konstantinou

My name is Tatiana of the Uttara family. I am the second-born child in my family. Soon after I was born, I was made my father's heir, because my older brother was misguided. The day I turned five, my brother killed both of my parents with my very own magic.

Throughout my life I have suffered through celebrations and betrayal; treaties and assassination attempts; funerals and natural disasters. I have list my best friend to my worst enemy, and I have made decisions no child ever had to make.

Today I turn fourteen... Today is the eighth anniversary of the day I became queen of my people.

"Your Majesty, I need your signature on this," my advisor Alvin said, dropping a stack of papers on my desk. "Oh, just perfect," I muttered darkly. "Excuse me?" My advisor knew me as well as he knew himself, for before he had been my advisor, he had been my caretaker while my parents were busy elsewhere. He knew that I despised paperwork, but it was his job to make sure I did it.

I grumbled and looked down at the first paper. "Must I do this *today*?" I asked. "Yes, you must do it today," Alvin replied. "Otherwise you will have to do it tomorrow along with the other paperwork you will have then."

"Of all days," I said, skimming over the words.

"You can celebrate later. Now you must do your job."

"You know, most kids my age don't even have jobs."

"Yes, but you are not most kids. You are the Queen of the —"

"I know, I know, I'm the queen of the driads, but sometimes I just wish I could be like any other normal kid. You know, like... her." I pointed at a picture titled "Like Mother, Like Daughter," in the Forn newspaper. "Like Ellette Chatzi, she's a normal girl..."

“You think so?” Alvin challenged. “I didn’t think that normal girls went out, stopped war, saved their parents—“

I frowned.

“Oh. I’m sorry, Ta.”

I looked down at the papers so that Alvin wouldn’t see the tears in my eyes. “Where do I have to sign?” I asked softly.

Alvin hesitated, but then moved the whole pile of papers, minus the bottom one, over and pointed at a line on the bottom of that page. “Just there.”

I scribbled my name onto the line and shooed Alvin and his papers out of the room.

In my opinion, Ellette and her mother were cool; they both stopped wars, and they were both normal girls. Ellette defeated the tyrant Donat Nufanr, and her mother Cassara defeated the evil Cassara the Witch. It intrigued me how ironic their rivalry relationships had been: Cassara had the same exact name as her enemy, and Ellette had gone against the Witch’s colleague.

I longed for that type of adventure, and their type of life. I was sick of being queen.

Later that day, I received a message that delighted e to no end:

You are formally invited to join Queen Ali Varrar in the city of Forn for the fifth annual Day of Thanks, where special guests Cassara and Ellete Chatzi will be honored for their service to all.

My excitement made the irony of this notice seem trivial.

I ran to the school where Alvin taught while he wasn’t advising me. Lunch had just ended and the children were slowly filing back inside. I followed them into Alvin’s classroom. By the time I was noticed, most of the children were already seated, and there was a screeching of chairs as they got out of them and knelt on the ground.

"When did they learn this?" I asked Alvin. Most of the time the kids just jumped up and swarmed all over me; I liked that better.

"We're working on a lesson in manners at the moment," Alvin explained, crossing the room to me. "They just really realized that they were being rude to their queen. Please don't spoil it."

"Kneeling isn't what I want. Though," I complained.

"But kneeling before royalty is proper manners, and they need to learn that."

"Well, then..." I said. "Guys! Here's a little lesson for you!" I bent down next to the young boy closest to me, gently pulling him up to a standing position. "It is proper manners to kneel before royalty, but all that bending will tire you out sooner or later! Once royalty says that you don't have to do that, you don't have to do it! Okay? And I say that, for me, you don't have to do it!"

"Tatiana..." Alvin said. "Must you?"

"Yes," I said, spinning around to look at him. "I come here because I'm not treated nearly so much as a queen among these kids. With all these manners, I don't want that to change. Though manners are important, they're a burden when you have to abide by them all the time."

There was a rustling as the students got up and rushed over to hug me. "Hi, Titiana!" most of them said. "Children!" Alvin yelled out to them. "You have to stop calling her by her name—!" "Oh, give it a rest, Alvin," I said. "You call me by my name all the time." I looked up over the heads of the children and saw one sitting by herself in the corner. "Hey, who's that? Why is she all by herself?"

The kids all tried to answer at once, which naturally turned into chaos.

"Guys!" Alvin said loudly. "Quiet down! There are other classes who need to concentrate on their studies!" He looked at me. "She's new, he said softly; "very shy."

"Kay, guys," I said, making up my mind in a flash (one of the advantages I have in my job), "Why don't you get back to work?"

The class moaned as one, but went back to their seats.

I went over to the new girl and knelt down next to her. “Hi, “I said. “What’s your name?”

The girl looked at me timidly. “Prudence Sermlen...”

“Do you like your new school?”

She looked down at her feet. “No...”

“Why not?” I asked, a bit offended.

“It – it’s big – and scary...”

“Titiana!” Alvin said to me. “Can I speak with you? Privately?”

I sighed, made a face, and followed Alvin out of the room.

“I think Prudence needs to make some friends,” I said immediately. “Some friends who can show her around, play with her...”

“Titiana,” Alvin said wearily. “Why are you here? I have a class to teach.”

“Well, I got this invitation,” I said. “And I was so excited, and I wanted to show you. I also decided that it would be nice to visit the class. Tell me, has Zoch recovered from his disease yet? I haven’t seen him in a while.”

“Titiana, what does the invitation say?”

“Fine.” I pulled it out of my pocket and handed it to him. “Seriously, though; how is Zoch?”

“His eyes scanned the paper. “I don’t know, Tatiana. I haven’t seen him or his family either.” He waved the invitation in front of my face. “Are you planning on going to this?”

“Well, yeah,” I said. “Why not? This is great!”

“Are you sure? What if something happens while you’re away?”

“Oh, please! I haven’t left here since I was born! Nothing has happened since my parents died, and just hanging about is boring! This is a chance in a lifetime!”

"I don't know... It just doesn't seem right..."

"Well, you should get back to your class." I went back into the classroom and Alvin had no choice but to follow.

"Happy birthday, Ta!!!" the kids shouted when I got in.

I felt tears springing to my eyes. These kids were so *great*. I began to seriously consider bringing them with me to Forn when I went.

"Mr. Alvin?" Tyler asked, his hand sticking up in the air.

"Yes?"

"What's Tatiana doing? He pointed outside.

"What's she doing" Mykenzi asked, climbing over chairs to look out the window. "Wow! Cool!"

Soon the whole class was at the window, staring at the Willow Tree right outside.

"What is she up to now?" Alvin muttered, pushing through the students.

Derrick was half-hanging out of the window. "She looks amazing when she does that..." he said admiringly.

"She too old for you," Alvin said bitterly, pulling Derrick inside before looking up at Tatiana.

She was cleaning up the fallen needles around the Willow Tree, using her magic. The needles were floating around her in patterns, and she was flowing through exercises that brought them up, down, around, like flying birds.

Alvin was lost in her dance, until Mykenzi said, "Don't we have a lesson?"

"Right!" Alvin said. "Just one second."

He ran outside to yell at Tatiana for distracting his class, desperately hoping that his face wasn't turning red.

Untitled

by Rosalie Graziano

Walking these dirt roads
fresh with the dust of broken dreams
a footprint in the mud is the only thing left
of tragedies that have been

in the midst of the night
an eclipse overhead
lights linger in the darkness
like the words left unsaid

the rain starts to fall
beating the highway like a drum
colors fade into darkness
afraid of what they've become

the sounds mix into one
as the memories begin
like a movie you've seen too many times
as reality sets in

In My Mind

by Tara Martin

Dreary and numbing,

It pursued my every motion.

My body pulsated as each foot slammed the pavement.

It was swift and consistent; mirroring my every motion.

As my lungs expanded rapidly,

No sounds lay present among us,

Except my flustered mind racing.

It sensed my abruptness and trailed me;

The effulgent light was approaching the horizon.

AHH!

It screeched as the light engulf it like a gigantic wave.

A large drop of sweat rolled off my nose.

My mind remained silent as a frigid winter's night.

A slight silhouette now traveled behind me.

It was gentle and feeble, like an eye waiting to shed a tear.

The presences was comforting; I wished it had been there my whole life,

But the billowing clouds in the half-lit sky could only bring doom.

I decided to scamper to the only place without horrid shadows

I climbed inside my mind,

The pleasant thoughts swarmed my mind like a bee's hive.

I fell into a deep sleep and the darkness vanished from my mind.

Untitled
by Rachel Golding

It pressed up against me
With a looming and imminent idiom
Enticing me, beckoning e, forcing me
Into the farthest depths of its hollow being

It hovers over me,
It's menacing eyes staring into mine
Daring me to finally give in
Daring me to finally let go

I restrain with all of my might
I don't intend to give into its compelling call
I resist with all of my might, with all of my heart,
Holding onto the remains of what is left from my potent energy

I knew what I have done
Yet I feel no panic
And this is why it calls for me
This is why it yearns to grab hold of me
Reprimand me, unbraid me, berate me

It is impending and ominous
Lingering over me
Seeping into the greatest depths of my mind
Penetrating into the core of my subconscious
Finding a way to entice me to relinquish

It troubles me,
It harasses me,
It perplexes me,
It irks me,

It succeeds...
I have finally given into
The shadow of doubt.

Where Am I?
by Stephanie Hie

Where am I?

The darkness has engulfed me
I now unite with all the others
Together we blanket every corner
Uninhabited by light

But illumination is not our foe
It is our ally
Combined we dance upon the walls
The others and I transform
As quickly as the speed of sound

CAW! CAW! A spread eagle appears
Flying through the never-ending sky
NEIGH! NEIGH! A stallion galloping
Through an open meadow
The evening journey does not end there
Our golden friend travels along with us
With our companion, we pursue the masses
Sometimes hauntingly, sometimes inviting

The others and I can alarm or refresh
We are unnerving as the dark
We are invigorating as a long catnap

As our complement comes into view
We ebb away united, again into the twilight

Yet come tomorrow
The others and I will go our separate ways
But for now, I will try to find myself
Amidst the others

Where am I?

Untitled

by Kyle Sheehan

Shadows are demons of light,
They are angles of darkness.
I espy them there, precariously perched
There atop the mightily colossal peak of my mind.
Skulking into the depths of my apprehension.

Though the maleficent carnage,
The light bludgeons the shadows like a malicious storm
Into the abyssal charm of sub-consciousness.
But naught shall I slacken for even an instant,
For rapidly the beast of the darkness shall rise one more.

The mustn't subjugate my actions, my life
And though the struggle is truly boundless,
Overwhelming my mind they shall not achieve
Clouding my consciousness with the turmoil of the past,
And thus, the temptations of my future.

For as long as time itself, we combat the shadows,
Not in an eternity will they cease.

But alas, deep within our minds and souls,
We have the masterdom to avert and deflect the shadows.
Prevail against the demons of light; the angels of darkness.

Drive-By

by Lucas Corrubia

I stood there cautiously as the bone-chilling air creped down my spine.

This wall in front of me, this vast, immaculate wall...

Was about to taste the spirit of the Bloods.

This was the night,

The night I mark the tribe, the gang, I live for, and die for.

My hands were shaking like the ground during a colossal stampede.

I firmly grasped y spray paint, for it would be the last thing I'd ever hold.

My ears, sensitive as a baby's hand, could capture the slightest pin drop.

This was to my disadvantage for I'd jump for
even the whisper of the wind.

I slowly started spray-painting a "B" on the solid, brick wall/

Seeing that "B" painted blood red made me feel like somebody.

The somebody I always thought I could be.

Because I'm representing something I love, a family, I've longed for.

As I sluggishly and vigilantly sprayed the letter "L", I heard something.

This was not just any something, something familiar, common.

It was the roar of a car vigorously scurrying down the very street

At which I stand.

My heart suddenly skipped a beat, my brain abundantly throbbing,

My legs too stiff to move.

It was if God was constraining me from fleeing my destiny.

As the crip pulled out his Uzi, I knelt down and prayed.

As I was praying, I was shot five times.

I felt bitter cold as my blood surged out of the holes coating my body.

I felt my heart rate fall, and my brain suddenly lose consciousness.

To my surprise, God had chosen me.

And I was lifted into heaven, allowing me to go home,

the home I never had.

Friend Dance

by Christine Kulak

Just as the good need evil,
Shadows yearn for and crave light.
Through the night they hide,
Cloudy days they wait.
Patiently, still they stay,
To plance with a friend.
Their hide and seek game ends,
When the sun starts to peek.
Just over the horizon,
To find its hidden friend.
The silent song begins,
And the friends start dancing.
Twirling around in circles,
Invisible to everyone.
Light compliments the shadows,
Shadows compliment the light.
Music comes to an end,
The dance starts to dissolve.
As the friends say fair well,
Luminous light lingers.
Darkness consumes the Earth,
But light will come again.
And with light comes shadows,
These friends will reunite.

Space

by Sara Perkins

Darkness

Swirls around you,

As you float through space.

Small glistening diamonds

In the distance

Clutched by night's Black Hand

Held in place-

Mystical beauty.

Stars of all

Colors swirl by you

Red, orange, blue-

Balls of rock and light.

You float down to earth

Clutching the beauty with you.

Light flashes through your mind,

Wrapped in intriguing darkness.

Then it bursts out in hues

For all the world to

See.

Invisible

by Alisha Mehndiratta

She's invisible,
at least to them.
She is not seen,
she is not heard.
They are full of scorn,
She is full of anger.

So full of anger,
but she's invisible,
and they laugh scornfully,
she doesn't matter to them,
They refuse to hear,
refuse to see.

They pretend she is not there—not seen,
So even when she tries to show her anger,
they act as if they cannot hear.
As if she's invisible.
She wonders about them,
Why are they so scornful?

Their hearts have so much scorn,
can they really not see,
how much she's had to go through, because of them?
they made her angry,
she did not like feeling invisible,
she missed being heard.

She knew they weren't deaf—they could hear,
but it was their scorn,

that made them treat her this way, invisible.
She knew they could see,
they purposely ignored her, to make her angry.
They felt as if she was inferior to them.

She was no more than a speck of dust, to them,
Her ideas were heard,
but they ignored them—they liked watching her anger,
She hated that, their grins creeping on to their faces so scorn-
fully.
Her actions were seen,
but they saw through her, as if she was invisible.

She wonders still, what caused them to hate her; what caused the
scorn?
Why was it so hard for them to hear her, and see?
She still gets angry, because she knows they were wrong—she
was not invisible.

Ode to a New York City
by Brian Burns

You go into the city and hear
Cars beeping
Cell phones ringing
People yelling
TAXI
Hot dog stands
Food chains
ESPN zone
Hardrock Café
Chevy's
All kinds of stores
Macys
F.A.O. Schwartz
Specialty Stores
NBA store
NFL store
All kinds of Yankees stores
Home to the most famous arena in the East
Madison Square Garden
Where you hear a basketball being dribbled
Or a puck blazing across the ice
During Christmas you see a tree in the middle
Of a skating rink
What goes to New York stays in New York

In a Greenwood

by Dave Brown

In the greenwood
A blossom stands in the cool moonlight
Waiting for a midsummer sun to rise
In the greenwood

Dew rolls down the closed blossom
Like thousands of tears
Ignited by the sun still ascending
In the greenwood

The light rises to shine upon
The flower, opening with a cascade of light and color,
Cool as if it were made of radiant, flowing glass
An orange and purple flame
In the greenwood

It sends up an aroma
Misting up like a wonderful sensation,
Like a thousand breathtaking thoughts.
In the greenwood

Animals congregate around it
Basking, in what they know not.

A single seed falls from the amethyst and sun-orange petals
Scattering blue and purple pollen like smoke as it descends
In the greenwood



catching snow flakes

by Mia Jaquiline

we lift our heads and open our mouths towards the paper sky
clumps of cold wet snow are falling: like cotton
catch one and make a wish
and we do
the cold trickles to the back of our throats
as we think of what to wish for

A Meeting with the Boss

by Jacob Ritts

I walked nervously through the sulfur smelling hallways to the boss's office. Magma boiled and leaped around me as I headed towards the bright red door marked with a golden S. Just then my cell phone rang causing me to jump. I grabbed it with my tail and held it to my ear.

"Hello," I said nervously.

"WHERE ARE YOU?" bellowed the voice on the other end of the phone.

"I'm right outside your office sir," I answered quickly.

"GET IN HERE NOW," screamed the boss

"Yes sir," I said as politely and quickly as I could.

"GOOD," he replied and hung up.

With a sigh of relief I closed my phone and stuck it back in my pocket. Unfortunately just as I put it in, it slipped out and landed in a pool of acid burning it up into what looked like a burnt bean. I opened up the door and stepped into the office. The boss was sitting on his big leather chair with his feet resting on the table. From his mouth, protruded a long cigar that occasionally emitted smoke. Fire circled his table moving as if doing some weird dance. As I walked up to his desk, he blew a ring of smoke at me, which drifted up above my horns making me look like some accursed angel. He gave a little smirk and took the cigar out of his mouth.

"CONGRATULATIONS MINISTER," he said, "YOU ARE ONLY ONE MINUTE LATE. IS THAT A NEW RECORD?"

"Ye-yes Your Foulness" I stuttered.

"WHY ARE YOU LATE? GIVE ME A GOOD REASON!!! AND BY THE WAY *KNEEL* SCUM. I LIKE MY MINISTERS TO KNOW THEIR PLACE."

I quickly dropped to my knees and started to explain.

“Well your evilness, most vile being in the universe, absolute...”

“JUST CUT TO THE CHASE AND CALL ME STAN.” He shouted.

Stan? What kind of a name is that? I nearly barfed on the floor but stopped myself.

“Well...Stan... it took longer than I thought because the angels have been quite obnoxious insisting that we took the soul of a righteous man.”

“IS THIS TRUE?”

“Yes, it is, but we need more computer programmers like him and the main database is about 5 years old.”

“GOOD I LIKE THE WAY YOU’RE THINKING” he rasped. “YOU GET A RAISE.”

“Thank you your imperial evilness, ultimate...”

“STAN,” he shouted.

“Stan” I weakly said.

“GOOD. NOW THE REASON I CALLED YOU HERE...”

“Yes.”

“TOMORROW SOME MOVIE IS GOING TO BE SHOT AT A CERTAIN CANYON. THE MAN WHO DOES THE SETS IS MOST LIKELY EVIL AND WE NEED SOME REDECORATING HERE. I WANT AN ACCIDENT TO HAPPEN AND FOR HIM TO BE HERE BY FRIDAY.”

“Ok.”

“GO NOW AND REMEMBER THAT IF IT WASN’T FOR ME YOU WOULD BE UP THERE,” he said pointing above him, “WEAR-

ING A TOGA AND PLAYING A *HARP*.”

He said the last word with a particular amount of disgust.

“Yes sir.”

“STAN,” he screamed, smoke billowing from his nostrils. His face turned red (or more red than it usually was). I nodded my head quickly.

“NOW GO!”

I turned and ran out of the room as fast as I could.

This anthology is the result of the hard work and dedication
of the following student writers:

Melanie Konstantinou, *Crockett Middle School*

Rosaline Graziano, *Reynolds Middle School*

Tara Martin, *Reynolds Middle School*

Rachel Golding, *Reynolds Middle School*

Stephanie Huie, *Reynolds Middle School*

Kyle Sheehan, *Reynolds Middle School*

Lucas Corrubia, *Reynolds Middle School*

Christine Kulak, *Reynolds Middle School*

Sara Perkins, *Princeton Friends School*

Alisha Mehndiratta, *Princeton Friends School*

Brian Burns, *Princeton Friends School*

Dave Brown, *Princeton Friends School*

Jacob Ritts, *Princeton Friends School*

Mia Jaquiline, *Princeton Friends School*



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Brian M. Hughes

Mercer County Executive

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