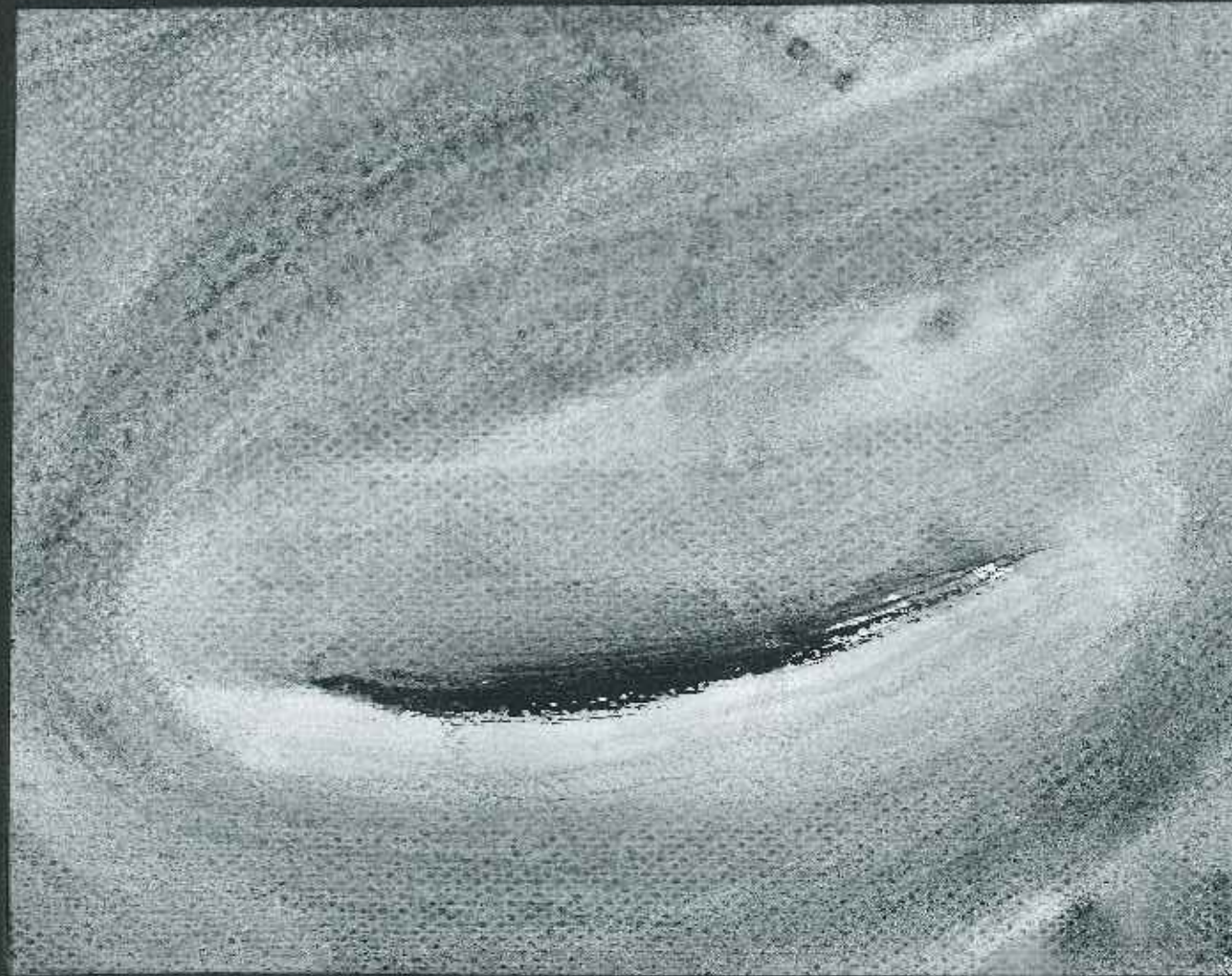


“The awakening of the Sleeping Beauty”
OR
“My story of Slee-Be”



**Written & illustrated
by Vicky Koumpou**

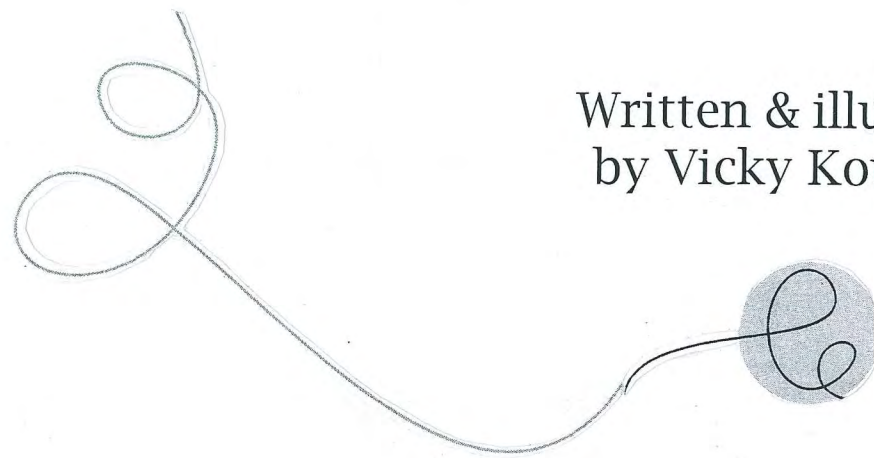


“The awakening of the Sleeping Beauty”

or

“My story of Slee-Be”

Written & illustrated
by Vicky Koumpou



To my parts that I keep forgetting...



*O*nce upon a time there was a little girl who didn't know who she was.

She was living a life like sleepless sleep but deep down she knew that someday she would wake up when the right moment came.

The girl grew up, but she was stranded in the story of her own. Not knowing who she was, she searched to find out.

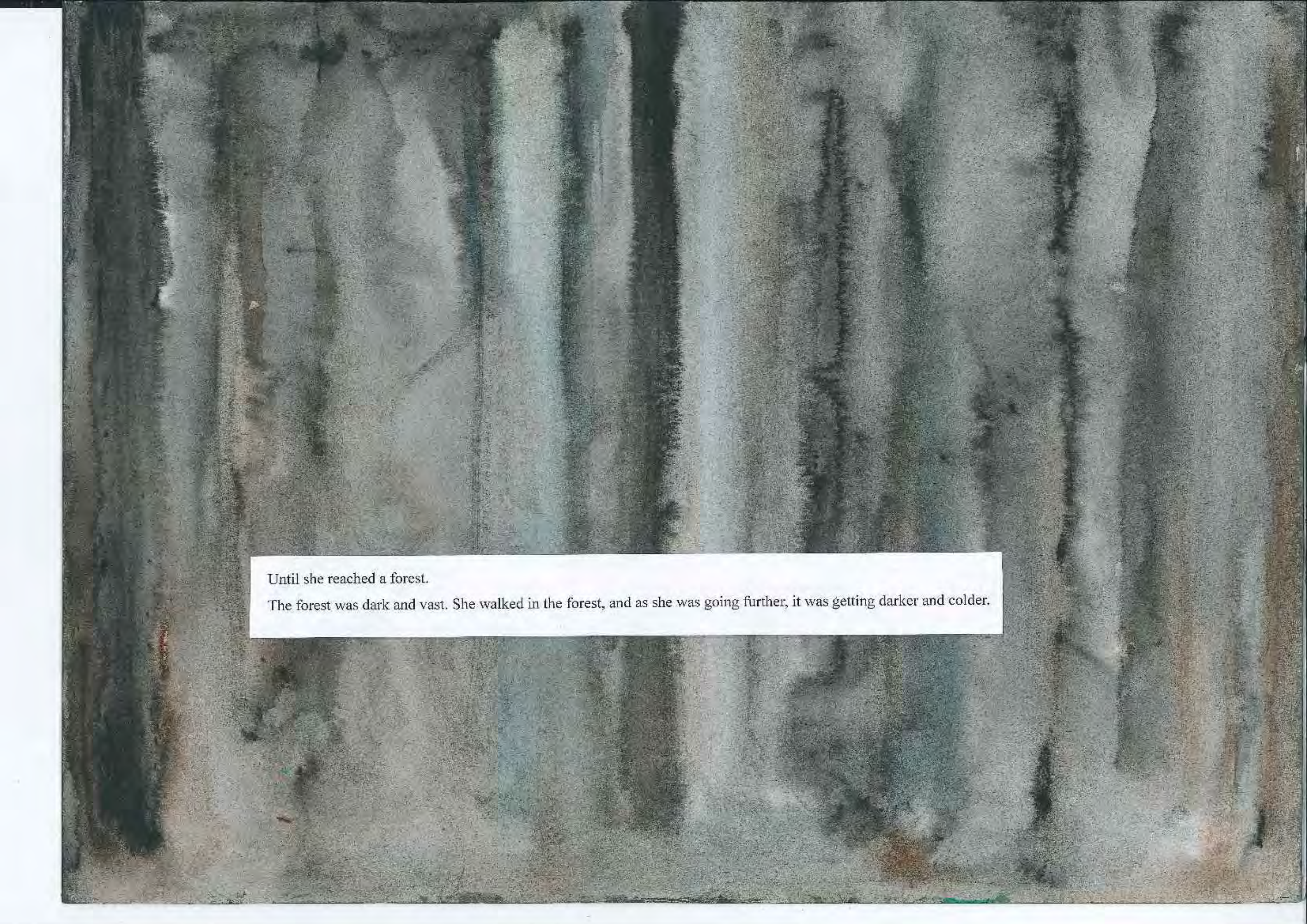
She was told that she had to go on a journey, to walk in her dreams and pass through obstacles. In such a journey one takes whatever one needs. Sad people learn what joy is, the lonely learn to love, the evil learn compassion, the angry meet peace... and in that world, she had to learn who and what she was. She fell asleep for many years.

That's how her journey began, in her sleep, and whoever she met in her dreams she would ask to learn. She dreamt countless dreams that prepared her for her awakening and in her dreams, she wondered who she was...



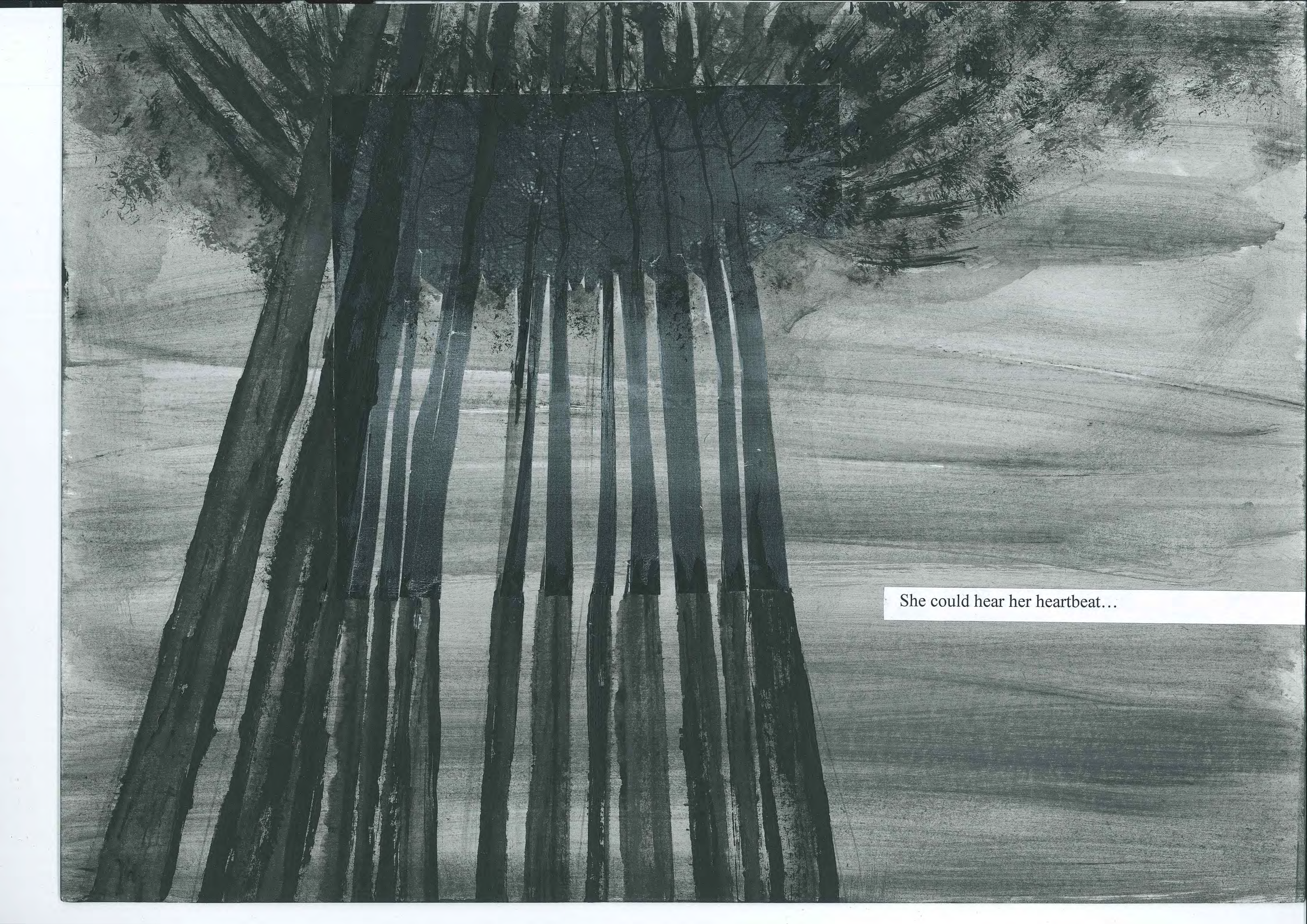




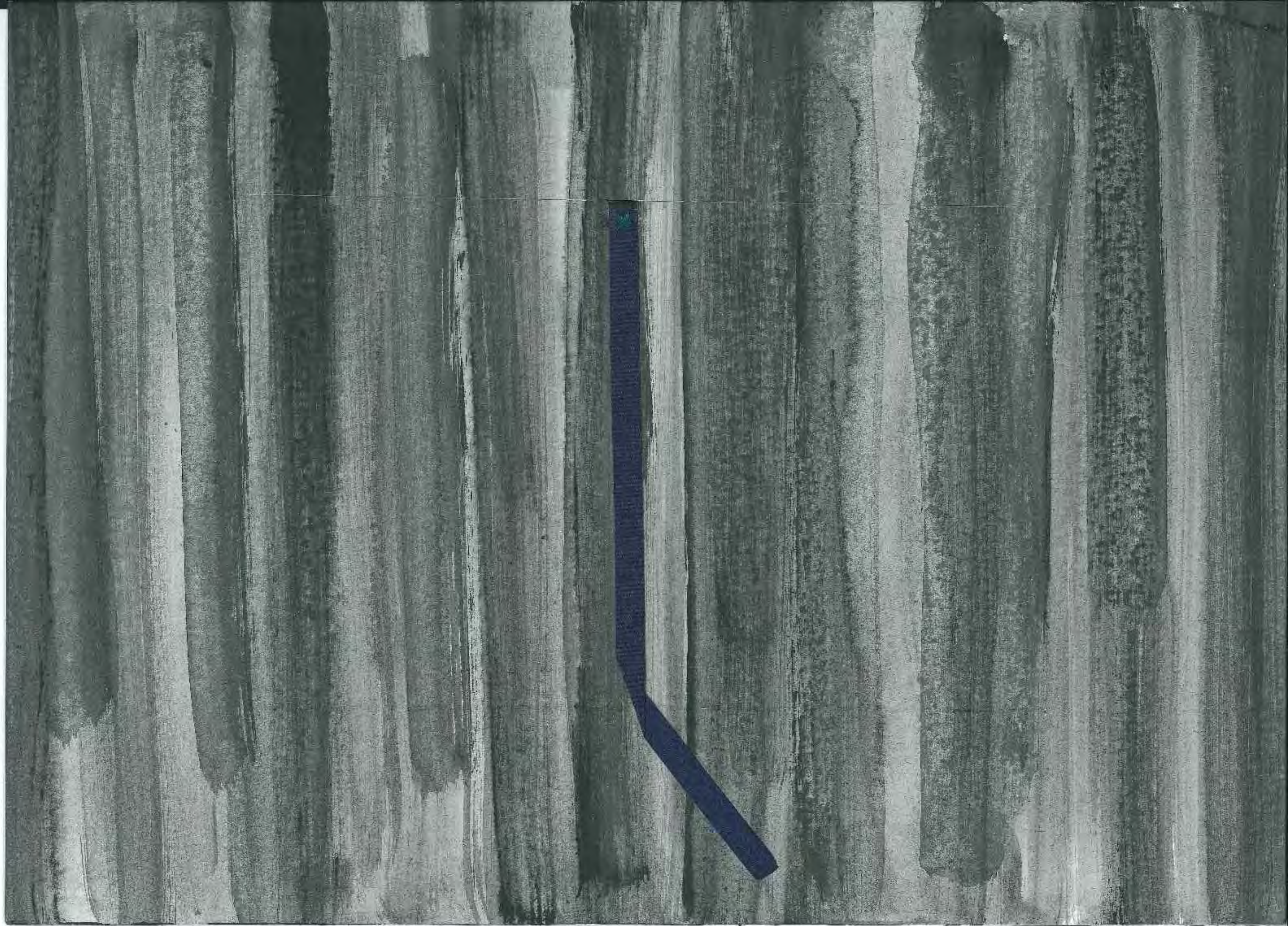


Until she reached a forest.

The forest was dark and vast. She walked in the forest, and as she was going further, it was getting darker and colder.

A black and white photograph of a forest path. The path is a light-colored, unpaved road that winds through a dense forest. The trees are tall and thin, with their trunks forming a series of vertical lines that lead the eye down the path. The lighting is soft, creating a sense of depth and atmosphere. In the lower right corner, there is a white rectangular box containing the text "She could hear her heartbeat...".

She could hear her heartbeat...



Once she reached to the heart of it, she said with awe:

- "Hello" and was amazed by its beauty. "Who are you?" she asked.

- "I'm the forest. I'm eternal, ancient, and old. I'm dense, have many tall trees, dark with all the shades of green... I'm quiet, I know a lot, I provide the air that you breath. a place to hide... you can rest in the shade of my trees, but you can also get lost in me because I hide dangers. I whisper... Hear my whisper!"

The forest's whisper was subtle like a gentle stroke, you could hardly hear what it was saying but you could understand thousands of secrete messages hidden in its words.

- "Who am I? Might I be like you?" the girl asked.

- "No", said the forest. "You are only a little girl. I expand, develop, cnlarge, and unfold. I grow up so slowly that you can hardly see. Look at me, I'm growing up..."

- "Will you let me pass through?" the girl asked.

- "It depends on you" said mysteriously the forest, "You have to tell me who you are".

- "Who am I? I'm just a little girl for now dear forest, and I want to find out who I am" the girl replied.

The little girl wondered who she was, but as she heard the forest's words before, she understood something about herself. Something that could help her in her quest. She took courage from the forest's words and felt inspired. She felt that if the forest could expand, develop, and grow up, in such a gentle way she could do it too!

- "What am I then? Am I wisdom?" the girl asked.

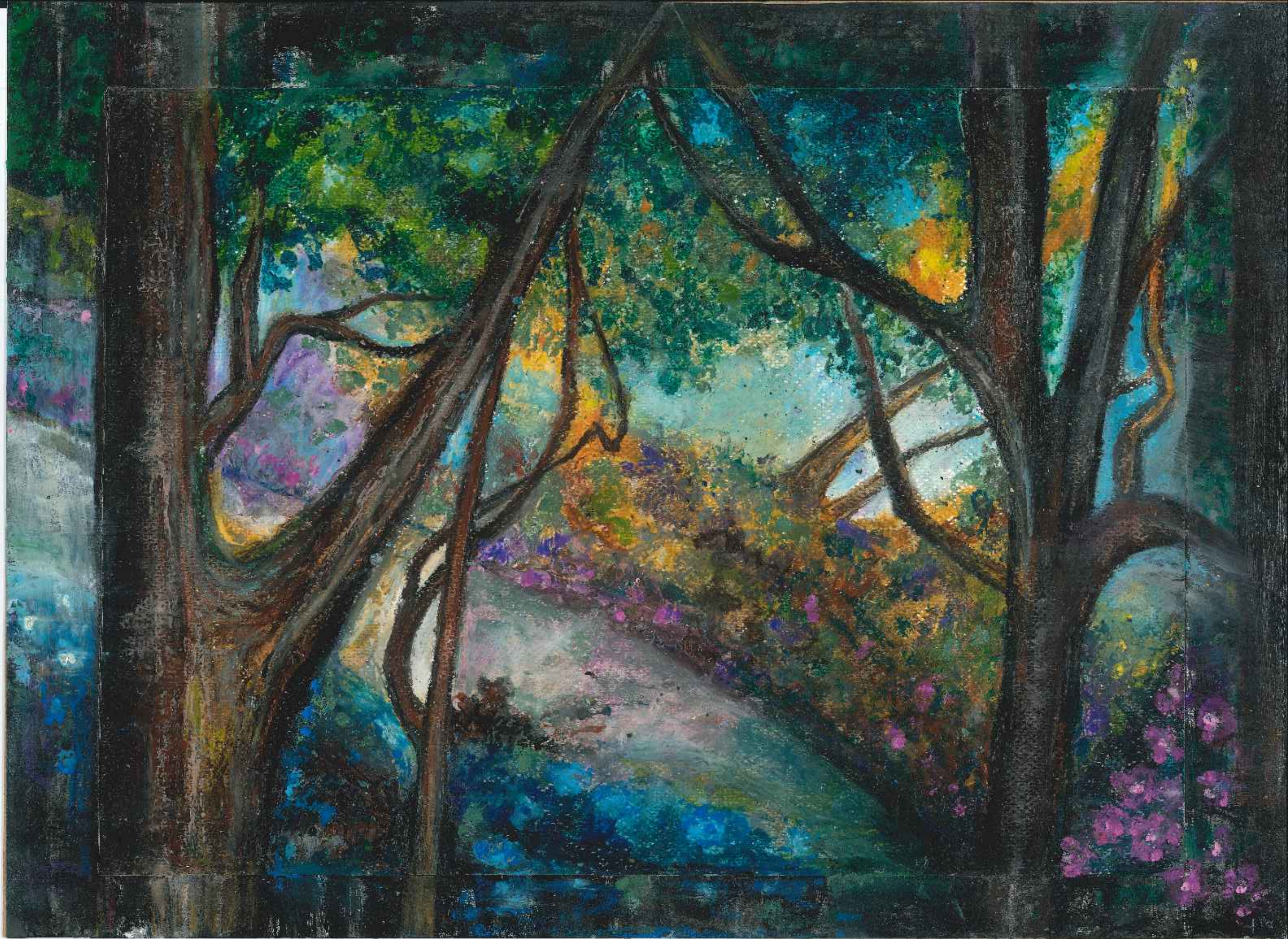
The forest let a pleasant air shake the leaves of its trees, showing its agreement.

- "Do you want to play?" the little girl asked the forest.

And the girl played with the forest. She breathed the air, ran between the trees, rested under its shadows, expanded, developed, grew, and unfolded her skills.



The forest then opened a new path, bathed in light, for her to pass.



She continued her journey, travelling and asking. Until she met a queen and a king.

- "Who are you?" the girl asked, and they replied:

- "I'm a queen of myself" and "I'm a king of myself". "We are a couple; we rule our land. We are kind to ourselves, we care about us, we protect us, we know, and we decide what is good and what is wrong for us. If we are hungry, we'll give us food, if we're cold we'll keep us warm. We'll give us shelter, serve our needs, we are safe. Everything is going to be alright".

- "And I'm a little girl who grows up and I think that I might have some kind of wisdom... but who am I? Might I be like you?"

- "No", said the queen and the king. "You are just a little girl. We can hold, keep things alive; we are a home, a family; the care and the hug".

- "Will you let me pass?" the girl asked.

- "Well, are you sure that you will want to leave us once you get to know us? If it is so, you can surely pass... but we have to get to know you first."

The girl understood something about herself. Hearing their words, after getting over their selfish spirit, she felt something reassuring inside her, strong, self-assured and that she can do things from there.

- "But what am I? Am I self-love?"

The queen and the king smiled proudly for the little girl.



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- "Do you want to play?" the little girl asked them.

And they played with the girl.

They helped her rule her land, they built a house from pillows, they cooked, ate, and laughed, until they got so tired that they put on their pajamas, brushed their teeth, and slept.

The next morning, they stood on the doorway and waved goodbye.

The girl left.



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...more compassionate
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...Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal
...appraise a difficult situation more positively. It often involves deeply help
...activated by the stressful situation. This kind of coping encourages people
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...as those associated with caregiving, over long periods of time.
...ally involves creating, reinstating, or reinforcing meaning in the midst of
...as long been implicated in the appraisal of stress (30) where it helps dete
...significance of a stressful situation in relation to the individual's beliefs,
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...periences in the stressful encounter. This is in contrast with the global mean
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...ss by definition is something that an individual cannot contend with th
...ual means of coping; a traumatic event may actually force an individua
...ferent strategy for resolving a crisis. Dabrowski's (as cited in Hague
...l model of personality integration suggests that once psychological develop
...ilibrium, any further development occurs very gradually. Before
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...ver, he suggests that only a life crisis or a major challenge results in th
...tanoff-Bullman (33) also maintains that it usually takes an event of traum
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...Added to these is the extent of behaviour problems exhibited
...disabilities. Not only do child characteristics influence parental
...reactions from others can also serve as a source of stress for the
...child with a disability increases stress in the areas of every
...behaviours, heavy caregiving responsibilities, and concern
...when the parents are no longer able to care for him or her.

PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR CHILD WITH

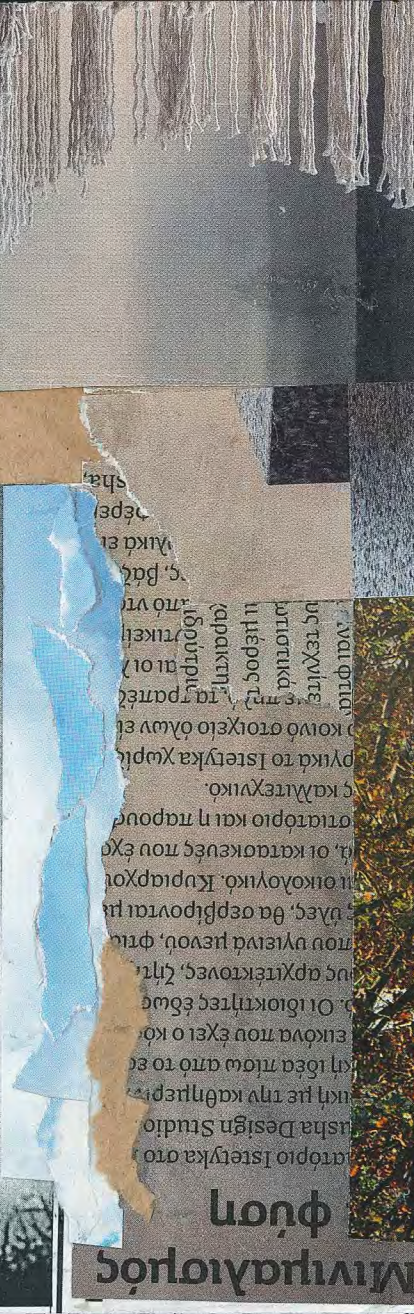
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...discovered that some families might adapt well to raising
...abilities; a state called "bonadaptation". Patterson's famil
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...the families benefit when instead of totally depending on
...bilitation, parents take charge of the situation and educate and
...Deb (41) observed significant improvement in the behavio
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...ing parents of children with ADHD. Similarly, in their study
... (42) found that irrespective of the economic status of families
...palsy, intervening factors like mother's personality, optimism,
...found to alleviate the degree of stress. Positive attitude, social
...helped mothers generate psychic energy to cope with the physical
...aspects of care giving.

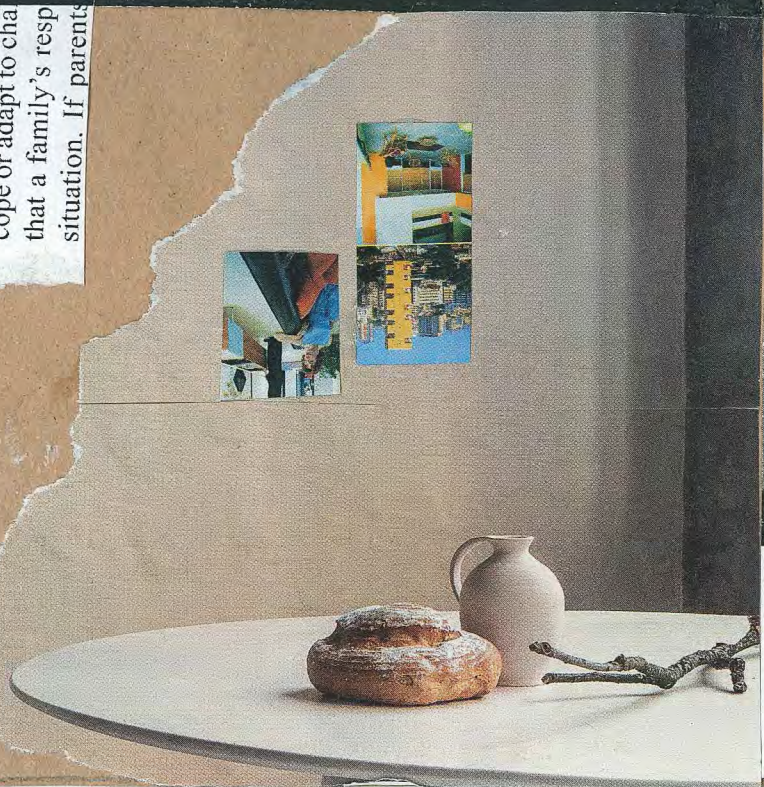
...there is a stage of adaptation that is beyond acceptance that
...tion" or the "all right" stage. Parents at this stage may be a
...difficulties. One effective way of doing this could be through
...their study, Singer et al. (44) found that parents involved in a
...group reported an increase in their positive perceptions of their



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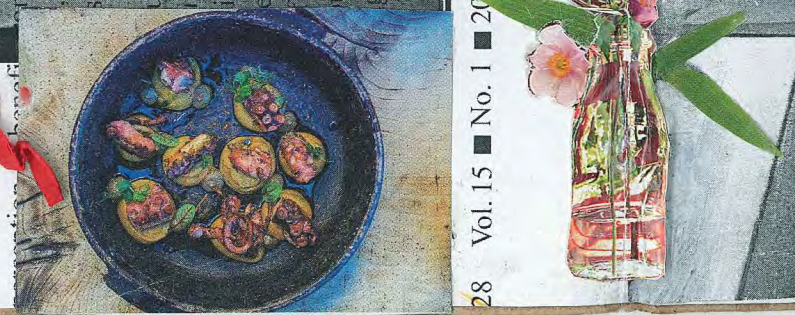


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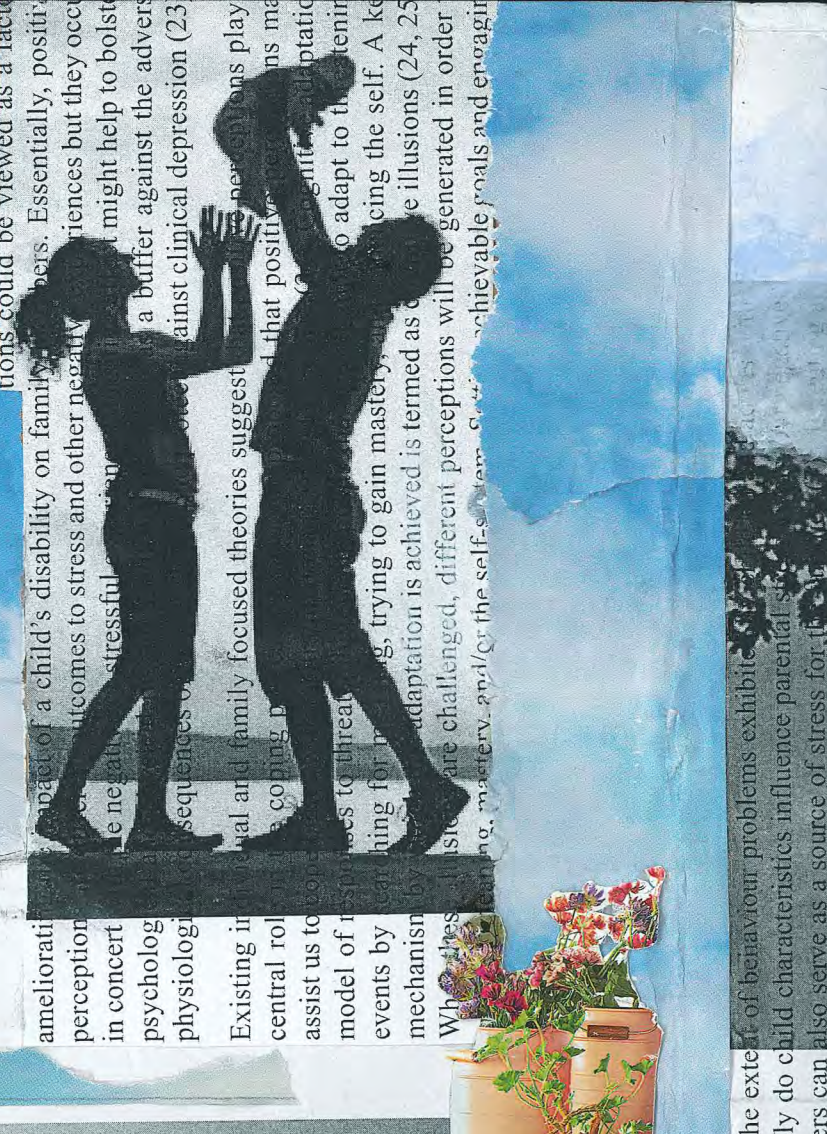
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POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS

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l. John and Lakshmanan (45) examined the efficacy of interactive...
n-on measures of parental attitude toward intellectual disability...
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...POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS...
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...iving (46). Positive affect also facilitates the processing of important...
...on is negative and may potentially damage self-...
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Added to these is the extent of behaviour problems exhibited...
disabilities. Not only do child characteristics influence parental...
reactions from others can also serve as a source of stress for th...

Soon after, the little girl came across a young woman. She seemed like an old-fashioned princess, beautiful and asleep.

- "Hello", the little girl said.

And the young woman with eyes still closed nodded from her sleep.

- "Who are you?" the girl asked.

- "I'm the Sleeping Beauty, Slee-Be for some.

I'm always asleep.

Mum and dad did all they could, but I was meant to come across the spindle wheel, to prick my finger and sleep for a hundred years.

I like falling asleep. Time stands still.

I live in dreamland. There everything is possible, anything can happen! There, you can have the greatest adventures in the world and even when it gets hard, it is safe because it is only a dream!

As I move forward in my dream the past behind me falls apart. Standing still in the moment. If I move, I'll kill the moment and will be lost forever.

I like sleep. Moments there are timeless. Can I sleep forever?

I love to dream. I'm drawn by sleep itself.

Don't ever wake me up!"

- "And I'm a little girl who grows up and I think I have some kind of wisdom; I love myself... nice to meet you!

But who am I? Might I be like you at all?" the little girl asked.



The young woman continued to be fast asleep. The girl got no answer whatsoever. And the girl understood something about herself then, she could ignore the rules, she could follow herself and be free.

- "What am I then? Am I freedom?"

The sleeping beauty turned on her other side and continued to sleep. And then the girl whispered:

- "Do you want to play with me?"

- "You have to enter my dreams. There we can play. Take my hand... come with me...", said the woman.

And they played in Slee-Be's dreams, they lived a thousand adventures and they got to know each other, they made jokes, chatted, and giggled. They both enjoyed dreamland, and they were very pleased and free.

The woman then said to the girl that it was time for her to leave because she got tired, and she wanted to continue her dreaming alone.


Although the girl didn't want to leave from there she was sent away.

Broken hearted, she continued walking away.



On her way, in a dark place, she met a shadowy figure or as some others called an evil fairy or a witch. She was tall and dark, growing like smoke in the air. She was powerful.





She screamed an eldritch scream.

The girl froze. She couldn't move. Trembling she dared ask:

- "Who are you?", and the dark figure replied:

- "I am the one who you don't want to meet.

I am a shadow hidden in the shadows.

I'm your darkest thoughts.

I do harm.


Run!"

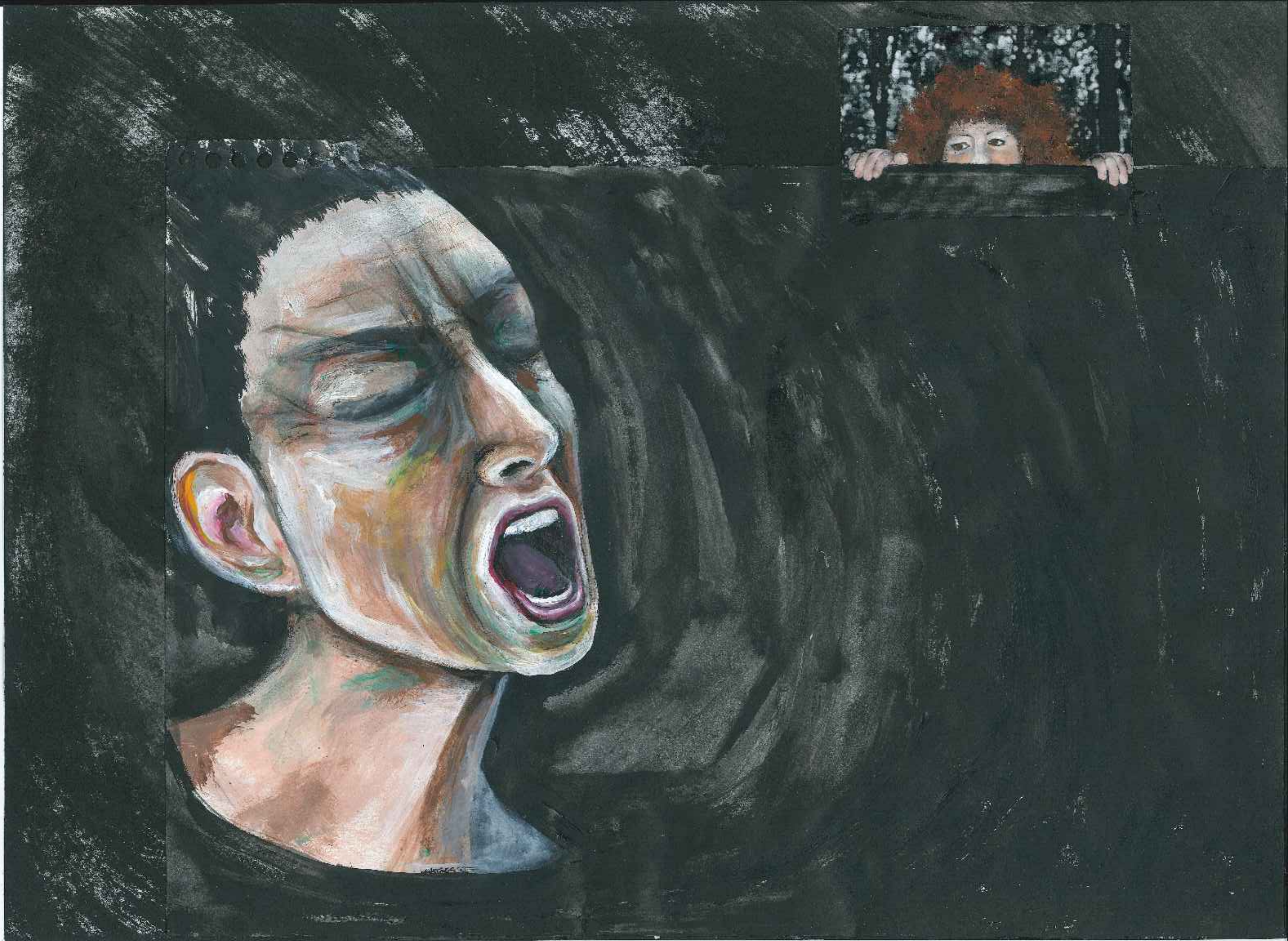
- "And I'm a little girl who grows up, I think I have some kind of wisdom, I love myself and I like to be free... But why did I come across you?" the girl thought... "What's the point? Who am I? Might I be like you?" the little girl asked the witch.

- "You'll see me when you are hurt. When all the others turn their back at you. When you are alone, and aren't you always? HA! People are mean, they'll betray you, they'll use you and leave you. No-one is there for you. Alone, broken, marginalized, thrown away in the margin of the margins! You are not invited to the feast! I'll come and find you when you are underestimated, disregarded, forgotten, and abandoned. I'll make you seek revenge; I'll make you strong... I'll help you become seen".

The girl cried. The witch laughed loudly. And then her laughter turned into crying. And the girl understood something about herself.

- "What am I? Am I anger?"





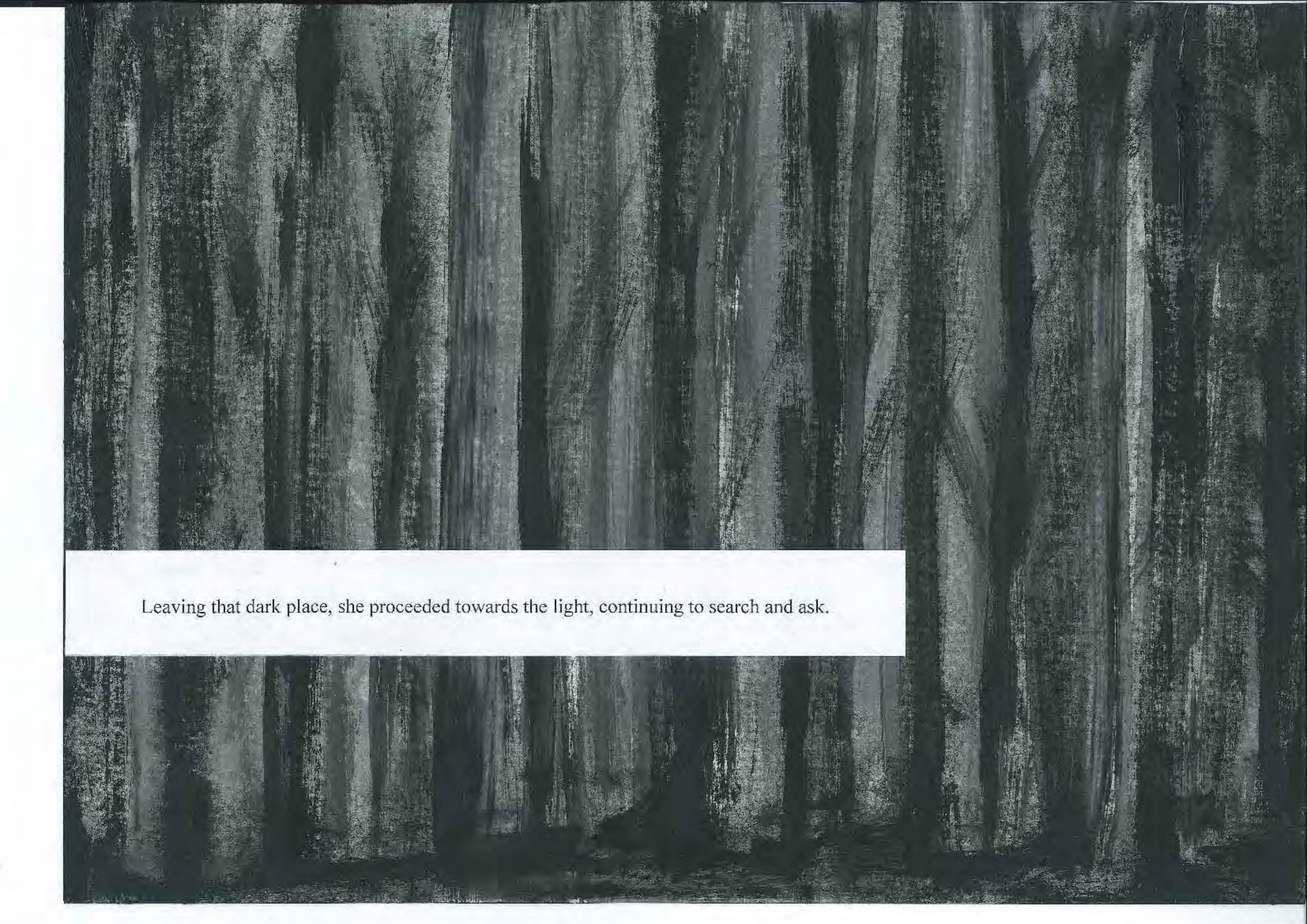
She stayed there for a while. They didn't play. They stayed there embracing each other. Time slowed down. She needed to feel the pain. Depressive emotions accompanied the girl for a long time. They walked along with her, and she could feel their breath on her back since she could remember herself. Through her acquaintance with the witch, she understood that she has always been feeling sadness without noticing. But this understanding was not all that she was searching for. She knew that she was not only her sadness, but she was also more than that, she had many other parts to be discovered.

- "Will you let me pass?" the girl asked.

And as they were there holding each other, the witch became smoke and lifted up in the air until she couldn't be seen anymore.

A new path was opened before the girl's eyes.



The image features a dark, textured background with a white horizontal band in the center. The background has a grainy, almost wood-grain-like appearance with varying shades of dark grey and black. The white band is a solid, clean rectangle that spans across the middle of the image. Inside this band, there is a single line of text in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

Leaving that dark place, she proceeded towards the light, continuing to search and ask.



And further down, she met a nice fairy.

She was thin and small, funny, and naughty and always meant well.

- "Who are you, funny little creature?" the girl asked.

- "I am a nice fairy! Hi hi hi anau und vzooooooooom. Bssss... bli, bli yen. Siiii, hhhrrrrrrrr and hmm! I live in sqeeeeeeeeee and frrrrrrr frrr frou. Hola li lo, ita nan and greee. Irl irl irl ze ze, magic and gold dust..."

She went on for some time and said more in her fairish language. And some of what the little girl understood was: "I'm here along with you and I have always been. When you need me, you will see me. And then you will know that I will be at your service... I'm good at accompanying you and I'll make your time joyous and fun. I'll support and help you. Together we will make things happen with magic and gold dust!".

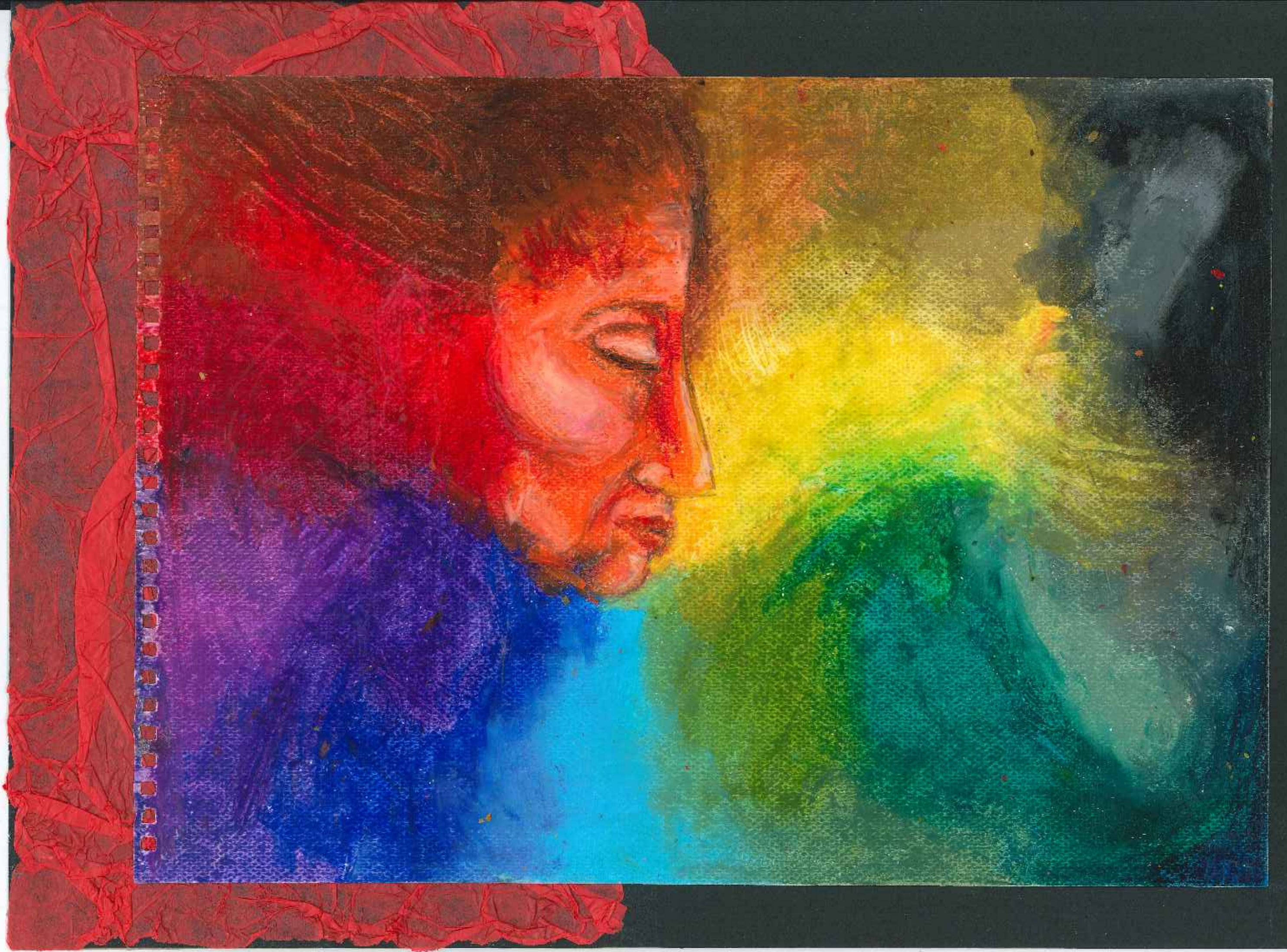
- "Very very pleased to meet you!" said the girl and bowed. "Let me introduce myself... I'm a little girl who grows up, I think I have some kind of wisdom, I love myself, I like to be free, and sometimes I get angry and might become mean when I'm hurt... But am I only that? Who am I really? Might I be like you?" the girl asked the nice fairy.

- "As long as you can see me, it means that I'm a part of you" said the fairy cheerfully. And the little girl understood something about herself.

- "What am I then? Am I happiness?"

- "Hal se ni mi ne! Zu zu lim ain sib le ble lim!" the fairy responded.

The girl didn't understand anything at all, but she knew it was something good.



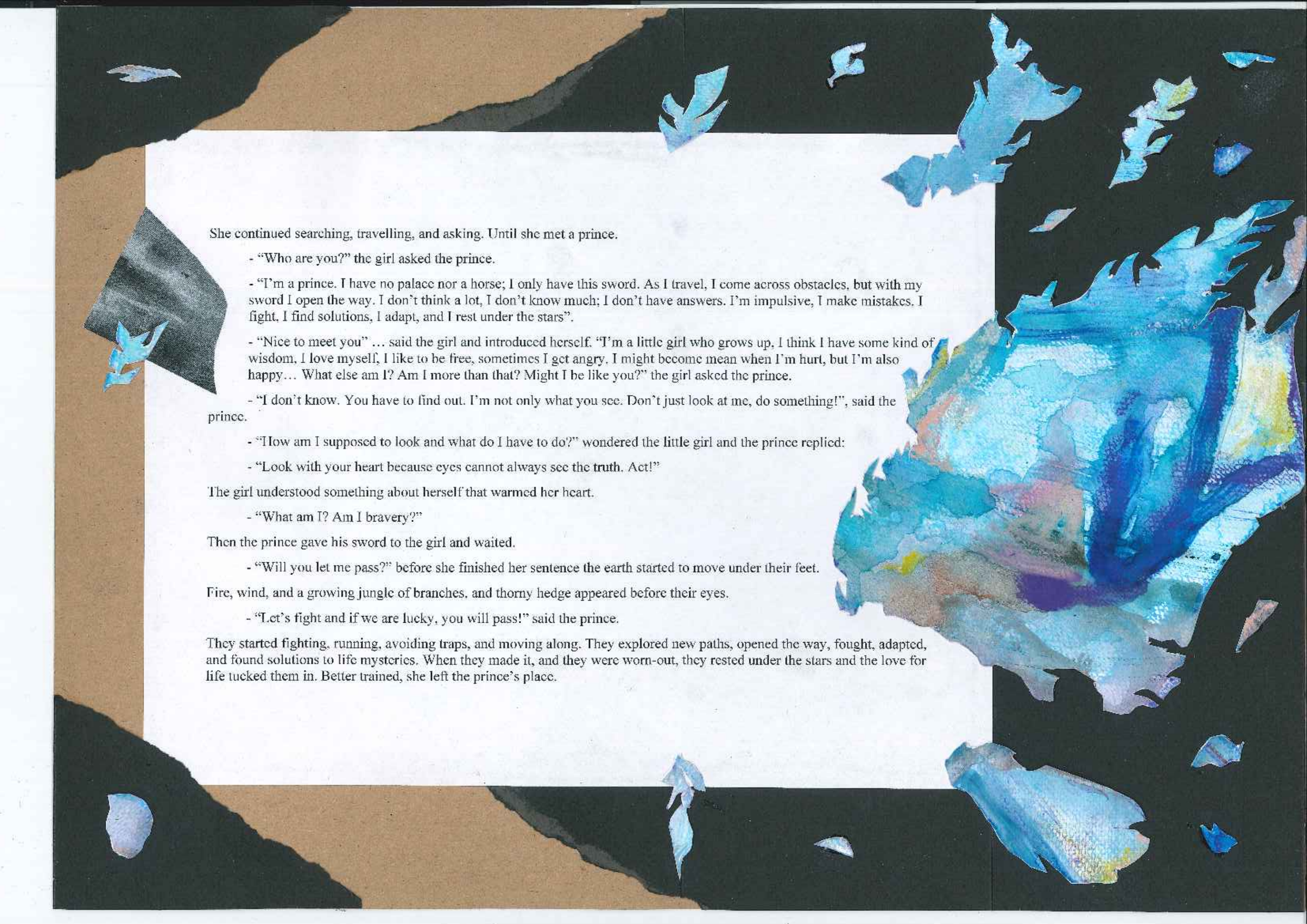
- "Will you let me pass?" the girl asked the fairy.

- "Only if you play with me!" the good fairy said.

This time, the girl didn't have to ask for it. The term was to play!

And they played, and danced, and sang; climbed trees and waved their wands, helped all the creatures in their path that needed help, and spread magic and gold dust all around... and they were happy.
Leaving the nice fairy's land, the girl continued her journey hopping and bouncing in the puddles.





She continued searching, travelling, and asking. Until she met a prince.

- "Who are you?" the girl asked the prince.

- "I'm a prince. I have no palace nor a horse; I only have this sword. As I travel, I come across obstacles, but with my sword I open the way. I don't think a lot, I don't know much; I don't have answers. I'm impulsive, I make mistakes. I fight, I find solutions, I adapt, and I rest under the stars".

- "Nice to meet you" ... said the girl and introduced herself. "I'm a little girl who grows up, I think I have some kind of wisdom, I love myself, I like to be free, sometimes I get angry, I might become mean when I'm hurt, but I'm also happy... What else am I? Am I more than that? Might I be like you?" the girl asked the prince.

- "I don't know. You have to find out. I'm not only what you see. Don't just look at me, do something!", said the prince.

- "How am I supposed to look and what do I have to do?" wondered the little girl and the prince replied:

- "Look with your heart because eyes cannot always see the truth. Act!"

The girl understood something about herself that warmed her heart.

- "What am I? Am I brave?"

Then the prince gave his sword to the girl and waited.

- "Will you let me pass?" before she finished her sentence the earth started to move under their feet.

Fire, wind, and a growing jungle of branches, and thorny hedge appeared before their eyes.

- "Let's fight and if we are lucky, you will pass!" said the prince.

They started fighting, running, avoiding traps, and moving along. They explored new paths, opened the way, fought, adapted, and found solutions to life mysteries. When they made it, and they were worn-out, they rested under the stars and the love for life tucked them in. Better trained, she left the prince's place.



At the end, the little girl reached a big castle. She stood there astonished by its imposing shape.

- "Who are you?" she asked once more.

- "I'm the castle. I'm strong and steady. I'm made of stone and wood. Human hands made me. I have stood here tall through centuries. My chambers have hosted many souls... Inhabit me, create your own space. Be my guest!".

And the girl replied:

- "I'm a little girl who grows up, I think I have some kind of wisdom, I love myself, I like to be free, sometimes I get angry, I might become mean when I'm hurt, but I'm also happy and brave" and as she was introducing herself, she realized something more about herself and asked the castle:

- "Who am I? Might I be like you?"

And the castle answered back:

- "Yes, you might be like me. ... Your body is your castle, the land, the forest, the places, the paths, the queen and king, the sleeping woman, the fairies, and the prince. You have a whole world inside you. You are all".

- "What am I then? Am I wholeness?"

And then the castle opened its doors to let her in.

Within you there is no one else except yourself.

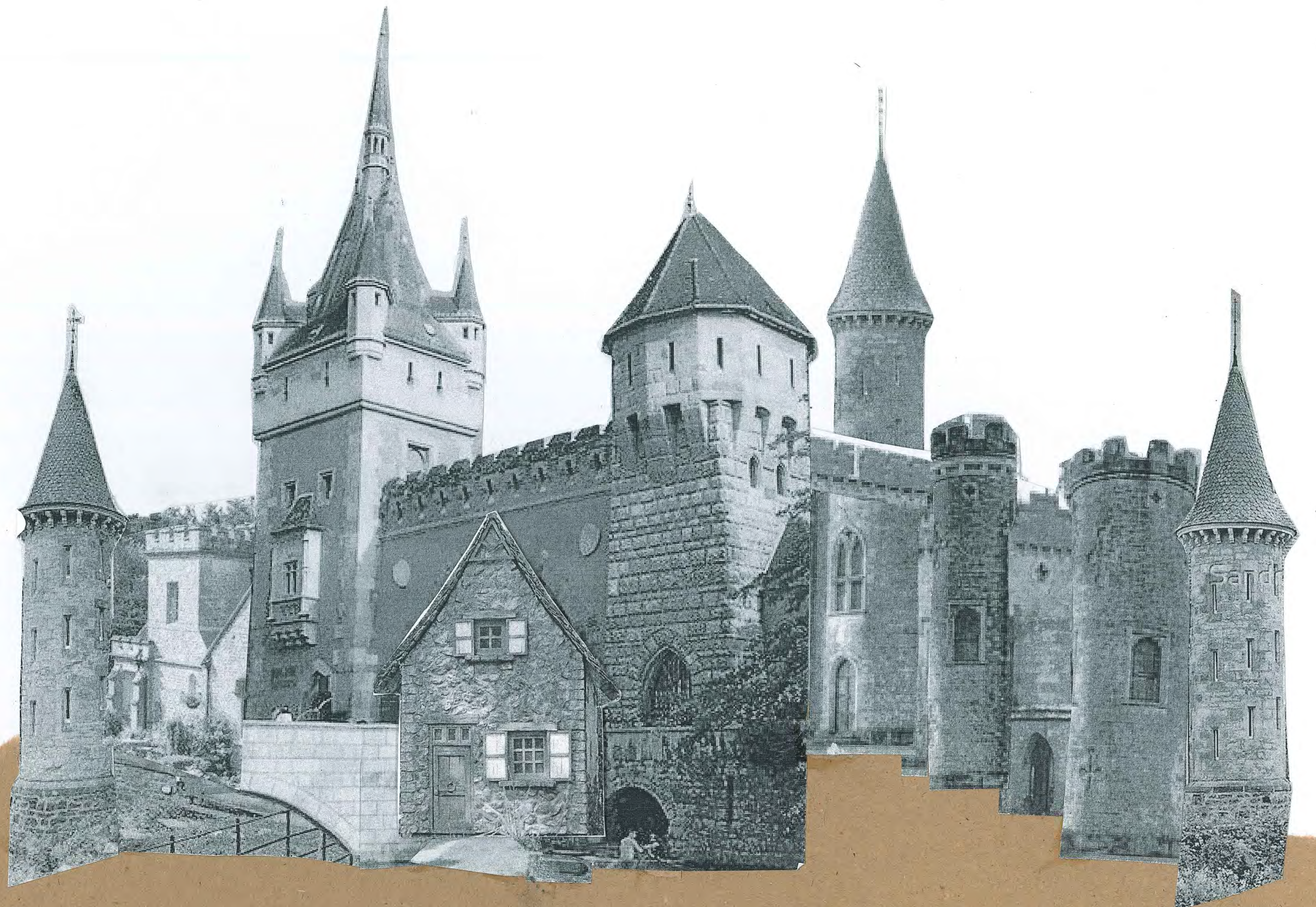
You are all the people that you've met.

They are all parts of you.

You are yourself.

Then she knew she was one.

She woke up.



About the author

Vicky Koumpou was born in Athens on a snowy day. She grew up in Wonderland, together with her best friends Pippi Longstocking and Heidi. From an early age she liked painting and solving equations. She always wanted to study at Hogwarts and to hang out with famous wizards. She hopes someday to be accepted in the Jedi Academy, when she finds the courage to apply. One finds her sitting on a tree or on the mast of a sailboat. She likes to feed the birds and hear them sing, hear the water flowing through the streams and dream. She has made a brilliant daydreaming career in Neverland, despite the contrary predictions of many. Additionally, she is professionally involved in dream weaving and, in her breaks, she works as a psychologist. When she grows up more, she would like to be professionally involved in sharpening colorful pencils. If she could live another life from the start, she would wish to be very smart, become an astrophysicist, work at NASA, and study the cosmos. One day she plans to move to the Hobbit village of Shire and live there happily ever after.

Driven by the heroes of the well-known fairytale "Sleeping Beauty", a little girl travels through her dreams and searches to find out who she is. The wandering in the world within her and meeting with each fairytale figure leads her on a path of self-awareness.