

# Abra-Zin!e!

**SPRING 2015  
DREAMS**

COVER ART BY LINDA LINDBERG

ISSUE No. 7

**Featuring  
Tanith Larking's  
"Sweet Dreamy  
Designs"**

**Mimi Adams  
Matthews  
ART CARDS  
FREE INSIDE!**

**IN FILM:  
Director/Writer  
Vincenzo Carubia  
of New Webseries  
THE SOURCE**

**Interview With Starz  
Network POWER Actor  
Vinicius Machado**

**IN TRAVEL:  
A BIG KID IN  
DISNEY WORLD  
BY AVINASH  
PATEL**

**AND:  
His Expert  
Guide to  
EPCOT'S  
Drinks Around  
the World**

**DEE CARUBIA ON  
THE LATEST CRAZE:  
PAINT & SIP  
PARTIES!**

**PLUS:  
TAROT &  
ASTROLOGY  
FORECASTS,  
FREE SPRING  
COLORING  
PAGES,  
RECIPES, &  
MORE!**

**Featuring  
Storybook Artist  
Polina Yakovleva  
and Deviant Poetry**



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# Credits



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"Abra-zine!"'s mission is to showcase and promote the amazing artistic talent and inspiration from all over the globe! We find all of our contributors through word of mouth, personal connections, or online artist communities such as Deviant Art or Facebook. At any time throughout the issue please click on the following icons to take you to the contributor's personal or social media pages. →

# On the Cover



## "Where Dreams Come From"

By Linda Linnzy Lindberg  
(Germany)

MORE ON PAGE 28!

[VIEW PORTFOLIO HERE](#)

## Find Your Easter Bunny Name



First Letter of your First Name		First Letter Of Your Last Name	
<b>A. Lily</b>	<b>N. Nibbles</b>	<b>A. Lemon Drop</b>	<b>N. Lollipop</b>
<b>B. Whisper</b>	<b>O. Goldie</b>	<b>B. Bunny Hop</b>	<b>O. Sprinkles</b>
<b>C. Candy</b>	<b>P. Pop</b>	<b>C. Doodles</b>	<b>P. Peep</b>
<b>D. Clumsy</b>	<b>Q. Pink</b>	<b>D., Marshmallow</b>	<b>Q. Candy Pop</b>
<b>E. Spanky</b>	<b>R. Loco</b>	<b>E. Bubbles</b>	<b>R. Snuggle Bunny</b>
<b>G. Flower</b>	<b>S. Smartie</b>	<b>F. Happy Feet</b>	<b>S. Sunshine</b>
<b>H. Thumper</b>	<b>T. Trixy</b>	<b>G. Baby</b>	<b>T. Sugar Drop</b>
<b>I. Purple</b>	<b>U. Carrot</b>	<b>H. Rain Drop</b>	<b>U. CupCake</b>
<b>J. Daffodil</b>	<b>W. Hoppy</b>	<b>I. Fluffy Tail</b>	<b>V. Sugar Kiss</b>
<b>K. Dizzy</b>	<b>X. Shimmer</b>	<b>J. Sugar Cakes</b>	<b>W. Sparkle Pop</b>
<b>L. Wild</b>	<b>Y. Sweet</b>	<b>K. Carrot Cake</b>	<b>X. Carrot Stick</b>
<b>M. Sparkle</b>	<b>Z. Lucky</b>	<b>L. Blow Pop</b>	<b>Y. Choco Latte</b>
		<b>M. Cotton Tail</b>	<b>Z. Kid Spanks</b>



SHARE YOUR EASTER BUNNY  
NAME WITH US ON TWITTER!  
CLICK TO TWEET @AbrazineMag!



# Editor's Note

*"All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream"*  
- Edgar Allen Poe



## HELLO loveies!

welcome to our DREAMS ISSUE! I was very excited to work on this one, because this topic is something that everybody can relate to whether it's those vivid motion pictures that play out through our subconscious while we're sleeping at night, or those day dreams we have about the lives we see for ourselves and our future. working on this issue actually got me to thinking back to when I was in high school. I had a little 5 star notebook (remember those things?) that I would carry around and interview my friends about certain topics. sometimes I would even let them write their own stories in it, so by the end, I would have a creative compilation of everyone's thoughts and streams of consciousness. It really ignited a flame inside of me, and I truly enjoyed bringing everyone together through the stories in the notebook. back then, the Internet wasn't really a thing yet, and I wasn't really aware of programs like Photoshop or Indesign to aid me in the production of finished issues. It wasn't until 2007 that I started to do the same thing I did in high school, but digitally. It had actually hit me during the production of this issue: "I am actually an editor of my own magazine!" the thought makes me laugh, after "playing editor" out of a high school notebook way back when. that's the thing about dreams. sometimes they come true, without you even really thinking about it. we carry around thoughts in our subconscious which may influence the choices we make and how we live our lives. they influence the stories, songs, poems, screenplays, paintings, and concepts that we produce physically in our waking lives. they give us silly ideas and urge us to try them and if we believe enough, we might just be able to make them a possibility. this issue is packed with an explosion of the subconscious! you will read things and see things that I feel so privileged to be able to put on display globally for the world to see. we're all artists, thinkers, creators, living our dreams of being able to inspire others through our mediums. we are a vessel in which these abstract bits of notion are able to manifest. so dream a little dream... It might just come true, do you dare to dream? I dare you!...

Justina  
xoxo

# "Ladder to the Moon"

These Musical Lyrics by Justina Carubia were inspired by the Georgia O'Keeffe painting by the same title.

In a place  
Far away  
I will dream of you to come and  
Take my hand  
Understand  
That I don't want anyone  
But you...

Ladder to the moon  
Ladder to the moon

I know one day  
I'll fly away  
And soar above the clouds  
And hold you  
In my arms  
Safe from harm  
And never let you go ever again...

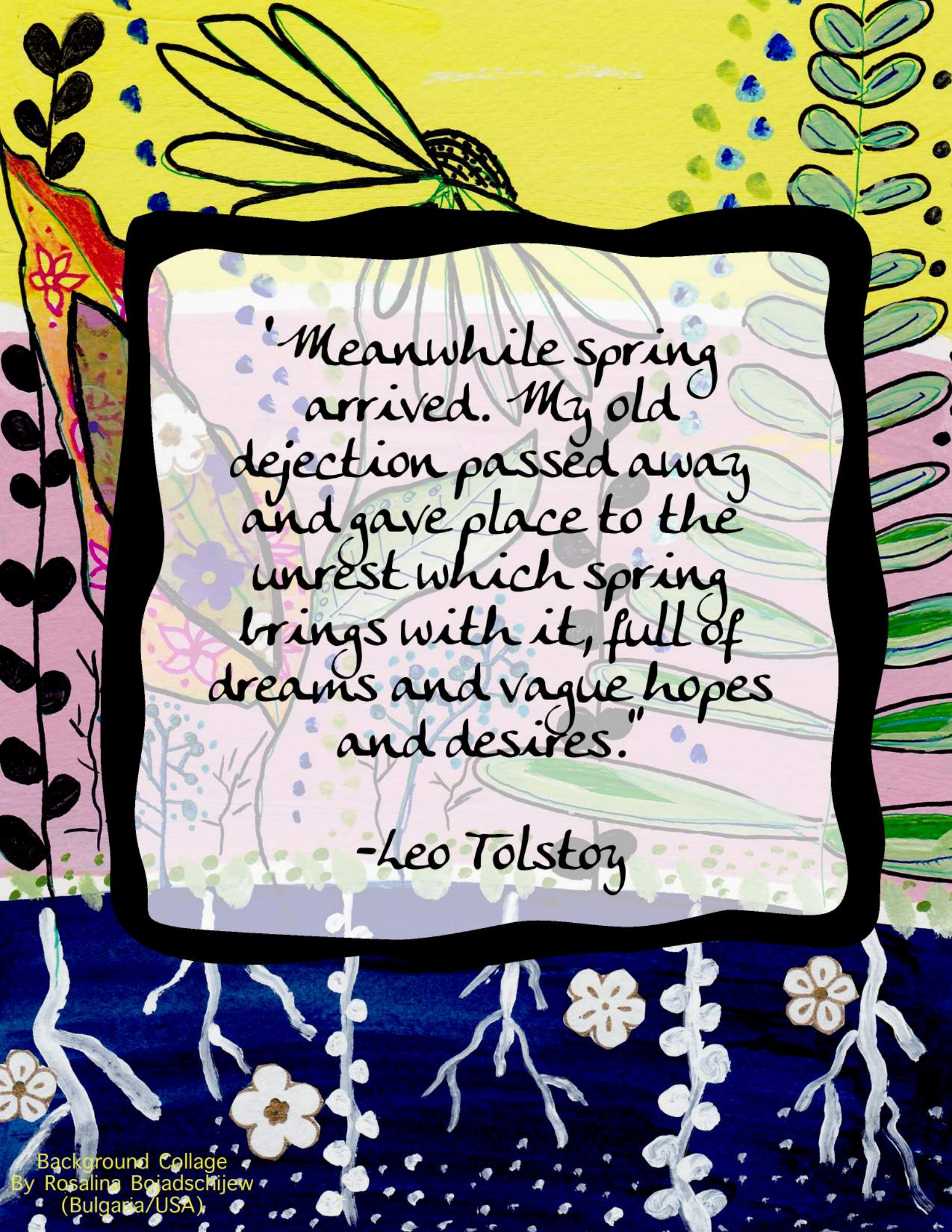
Ladder to the moon  
Ladder to the moon

I'll wish upon  
A star tonight  
And dream that  
You're holding me tight  
In my room  
Where we'll soon  
Find that ladder to the moon  
Ladder to the moon  
Ladder to the moon...



Art:  
"Dreams"  
By Adelina  
Pervanje

*Adelina*



'Meanwhile spring arrived. My old dejection passed away and gave place to the unrest which spring brings with it, full of dreams and vague hopes and desires.'

-Leo Tolstoy

## READER DREAMS FOR 2015

What are some of YOUR dreams and goals for 2015?  
Some of our "Abra-zine!" Readers and Contributors share with us:



"A goal I have in 2015, is to reframe my mind to stop complaining and think positively! I want to see the good in everything that I can."

- Michelle Ciccio (PA, USA)



"My dream is to have everything in my life feel like play.."

- Nicole Henninger (NH, USA)



"I'm hopin' to get a really awesome photographer's camera (Canon T5i Rebel) so that I can take more pictures of birds..."

- Renee Conway (OH, USA)



"I'd like to finish a children's book, research collage art and put together some sewing projects! My dream and goal is to get a studio space so I can create HUGE pieces of art on canvas!"

-Laura Flashberg (NJ, USA)



"You are never too old to set another goal  
or to dream a new dream..."

-C.S. Lewis



Art:

"Walking Man's Road"  
Lucie Ondruskova  
(Czech Republic)





Art:  
"Under the Stars"  
By Lucie Ondruskova  
(Czech Republic)

# A DREAM, A BOOK AND A BURDEN

BY RENEE CONWAY



*Renee Francis is a research Astrologer from Austintown, Ohio. With over 25 years experience, she humbly learns something new everyday just by looking at more and more natal charts of people making their dreams happen!*



*"Timing is everything. Dreams are desires. Books are written. Burdens are carried."*

On December 10th, 2014, our editor, Justina Carubia, suggested I listen to the audio book, "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho. Jeremy Irons is the narrator. If you know who Jeremy Irons is, it's needless to say that his intelligent sounding accent makes the material extremely easy listening, but gar-dang-it, for some reason, I can't seem to get to the end of the book and all I have to do is listen. I must have made at least a dozen or more attempts. I'm not sure if it's Irons' vocals that lead my thoughts astray, or if it is the content of the material that lifts me off to other realms. It doesn't matter which is correct, as long as it's understood right now that I haven't thus far finished the audio book, which has been in my possession since December 10th.

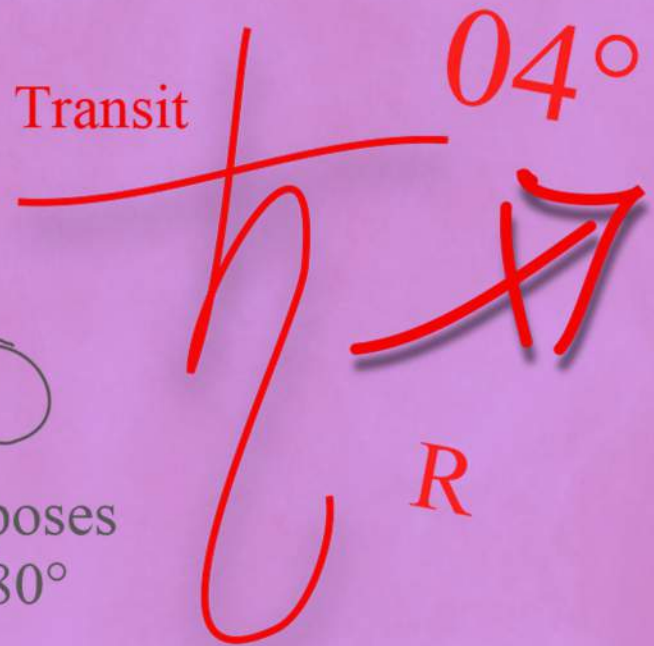
We are going to pay attention to the dates for this writing because they are important. As I already mentioned, 'Timing' is everything. Although I haven't yet finished the book, one of its lines has hauntingly seared itself into the repeat function of my brain, if there is such a thing, because I find myself speaking the lines out loud to myself daily since I heard them. I just can't seem to shake those words, "...The Universe Conspires...". I sit writing this, feeling certain that the universe has conspired in my favor while I was thinking I strayed from my 'personal legend'.

The line in the book which is spoken by the character Melchizedek, the King of Salem, is "Once you know what you want, The Universe conspires to get it for you". Maybe the line doesn't have that much of punch here, but just wait until you hear Jeremy Irons say it. And wait till you hear the other content leading up to and after it. All of it puts things into perspective. And the words 'Personal Legend' will come to haunt you too. Anyway...

For the last fourteen years I've always desired---remember, dreams are desires---of having a live/work type of arrangement. On December 13th, three days after getting the audio book, "The Alchemist", my husband and I put a bid in on a home that was once used by a Dentist as his office and his residence. We closed on the home this past February 12th. As of this writing I'm still in the process of painting. So my desire to have a live/work arrangement is coming true. The home is not exactly where I imagined it to be, but it sure is better than what I expected. But as an Astrologer, who knows the impeccable timing of the planets, I wanted to know, "Why now"? I left Elizabeth, New Jersey for Canon City, Colorado in 2001 when I was just ready to turn forty. I simply loved it. It was there I met my husband, who has a deep running restless streak, so off it was to Tucson, Arizona in 2009. Then life spun again, and before you know it, Tucson became Ohio, then Ohio became Pennsylvania, and now here we are back again in Ohio. It was a total of a 5,409 mile journey.



*"At this moment the planet Saturn in his orbit of the Sun is transiting the 4th degree of Sagittarius, which is holding an almost exact opposition to my natal Moon position at 3 degrees of Gemini. The Moon rules your home and property..."*



*"...Oh, I'll still feel Saturn's presence, at least until he gets to be about 5 degrees out of orb of my Moon. So I have from now until then to make my new office/studio/home a long awaited settlement..."*

So here we have a Dream, which is a Desire coming true at the same time a book tells me it will, and of course you can interpret that owning a home, although a blessing, is also a burden. Grass has to be cut, a mortgage will show up monthly along with bills for the electric, the gas and the Wi-Fi. According to star logic, burdens are under the rule of the planet Saturn. It takes Saturn some 32 years to orbit the Sun---so he isn't a fast mover, but he sure does make his presence known when he hits a natal planet in your birth chart.

At this moment the planet Saturn in his orbit of the Sun is transiting the 4th degree of Sagittarius, which is holding an almost exact opposition to my natal Moon position at 3 degrees of Gemini. The Moon rules your home and property. After Saturn's retrograde motion he will make one final contact with my Moon in October of 2015 and then be on his slow mosey way. Oh, I'll still feel Saturn's presence, at least until he gets to be about 5 degrees out of orb of my Moon. So I have from now until then to make my new office/studio/home a long awaited settlement: Bird feeders, tomato plants, an area in the basement to do big art projects and not have to put materials away. Now, I'll just get to walk away.

I have a 10th house Saturn at birth. People with their own businesses and those that teach have Saturn at birth in the sign of astrology, which is Aquarius. I teach Astrology. Pretty cool, right? I think so. I believe it is my 'personal legend' to show people that star logic is a beautiful symphony of cycles. Our universe is in a constant measureable cycle, and when we were born we came into a cycle that is all our own! What a neat little souvenir just for being native to this planet.

I often wish that we could all be taught the principals of star-logic in school along with our 123's and ABC's. Give youth the knowledge that everyone has their own cycle to progress through life. Everyone can benefit from a glimpse at their own natal birth chart and understand that the stars, in their measurement and their movements, do time both the blessings and the burdens of life. Perhaps this knowledge will also allow folks to see that blessings and burdens just might be the same thing. If you are feeling a bit lost on your path, perhaps "The Alchemist" will arrive at an auspicious time for you too. I'm eager to finish it---I'm certain there is another haunting tidbit of words waiting to be delivered by Jeremy Irons to my ears.



*Like my Facebook and get an opportunity to get a free full color copy of your Natal Birth Chart!*

[www.TheseStars.Weebly.com](http://www.TheseStars.Weebly.com)



# Mr. Brightside

## A Spiritual Forecast and Tarot Reading for Spring 2015 By Renee Avard-Furlow

Background Art:  
Abstract Piece by  
ROSALINA BOJADŠCHJEV  
(Bulgaria/USA)

With Spring around the corner, we are all clamoring for some sort of direction on where to head after the seclusion period of the winter. While being in your reflecting stage and going inside to find answers with an introspective gaze is pivotal to your growth, coming out of it is just as important. It is a time of putting what you have discovered into action and sharing it with others. You are needed in this world. There is so much negativity that any sort of positive we can offer in this life, will make a difference. Let's look into the Tarot cards for spring time guidance! When I read for a lengthy time period, I read from multiple decks. (Please see card photos on next page for visuals!)

### Card 1: Ace of Pentacles

As I shuffled the cards, the first one literally fell out of the deck and it was The Ace of Pentacles. The first instinctive feelings that came were trust and prosperity but with practicality. I feel that what you have worked so long on over the winter is paying off as you begin seeing results. And what is coming to you, what is being drawn to you, is a result of your manifestation efforts. While there is this great, almost high, of things coming to you and coming in your way, a reminder is tapping on your shoulder to stay grounded and remember the realistic side of things. And finally, I see there will be a sense of stability as your work, whatever you are guided to do, will occur from a place of stability. You will not have to question whether or not you are supported in what you do - because you are, and always have been. (Card: Steampunk Tarot)

### Card 2: Ten of Wands

The 10 of Wands came forward next. I am just going to say it. You are overburdened. You are taking on too much. I understand the excitement of all of the plans you made while you were in seclusion and now you want to implement them. But, you cannot do all of the projects at one time. Not only will you end up burnt out, but your work will suffer and not be the best it could have been. And, this card is tattle-telling on you. You do not know when to say 'no.' You are also experiencing resistance in projects and it seems you are working hard and seeing very little results. All of this is because you are over-extended, over-stressed and over-use the word "yes". It's okay to ask for help if you come across something that requires it. And if you are solo and it absolutely must be done by you and only you, walk away for a bit, watch your favorite show, eat a snack, listen to music. In both scenarios, the goal is to take those wands off of your back and rest them. Go and attack those projects one wand at a time. Or if you work with others, delegate. (Card: Tarot Illuminati)

### Card 3: The Empress

Ah, one of my most favorite cards, The Empress, came to the table next. Mothering, nurturing and being cared for and about are the first things that come to mind when most see this card. And you would be right on, with a few characteristics added on. This time around, I feel that she came up for you to show nurturing and care for yourself. After the heck of a time you gave yourself without resting and taking on too much, it is time for a little tenderness. Your health might have also recently been through the ringer. Time to start showing yourself a little love: "I love the way my hair looks today. Wow, I fit into my jeans really awesome. I look like I could conquer the world!" (And you can!) Ward off those negative voices trying to come by. You are worth more. You need to be the mother to yourself. You need to feel you are enough and you have enough. You will enjoy more when you care for you. (Card: The Tarot of the Spirit; 20th Edition)

### Card 4: Queen of Cups

And all of this leads to our final "nature nudge" as I like to call the cards, which is the Queen of Cups. Once again, we are here for a tenderness roller coaster. You not only are working to feel this for yourself, but you are showing extra care for those you love. I am feeling that gentleness is going to be a theme here. This card also shows that you have a sense that you are a part of some sort of collective secret - that you are part of something incredible. This is a time where you appreciate your surroundings - all of it, from the trees to your front door, from your friends and family to your pets. Even from your favorite place to sit on your couch to hulu. It's all a part of your world. As we have seen, you have so much going for you, why not express gratitude. And remember that secret I mentioned? It's different for each of us, sure, but the collective part of it is this: We are all seeking unconditional love & acceptance. (Card: Celestial Tarot)

In summary, I feel we are all going to come out of the gates of winter running. We have all of these ideas and plans we have set up in our cocoon of darkness, but now we are in the light and we just have to move forward with it all. It starts out just fine, as you take your time and good things happen but then things start becoming not quite what you expected. By the time we reach our next pinnacle, we are just done. We are tired, worn out and more, but we learn to accept and love ourselves and move forward in a new light. We will realize that the unconditional love and acceptance we are looking for was there all along. You have it. Right inside of you. After all, that is what Spring is all about - nature itself is beautifying. So it is time that you return to yourself and allow your loveliness to shine through.

Background Art:  
Abstract Piece by  
ROSALINA BOJADSHIJEV  
(Bulgaria/USA)

## Row 1 (Left to Right)

Card 1: Ace of Pentacles  
Steampunk Tarot

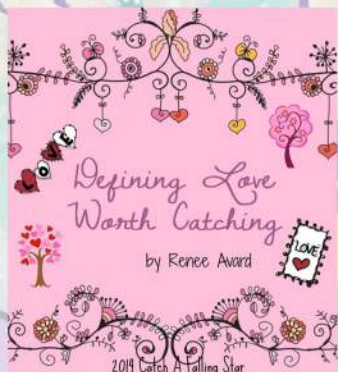
Card 2: Ten of Swords  
Tarot Illuminati

## Row 2 (Left to Right)

Card 3: The Empress  
The Tarot of the Spirit; 20th Edition

Card 4: Queen of Cups  
Celestial Tarot

DOWNLOAD RENEE AVARD'S  
E-BOOK "DEFINING LOVE WORTH  
CATCHING" ON AMAZON KINDLE NOW!



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Published writer and Texas native, Renee Avard-Furrow is an ordained minister and a Doctor of Metaphysics - here to offer you intuitive guidance. She is a certified oracle card and crystal specialist - here to show you a different way of seeing things. She is a proud mom to her son and cat, an author, an eclectic whimsical creator, a specialist in Earth-Based spirituality, a graphic designer, a Goddess lover, an eCourse & eBook addict, a believer in affirmations, a renegade mystic, a magic inspire-er, an essential oil collector, a quote connoisseur, a stay at home maven, a loving but tough soul, and a mixed-media art and picture aficionado! She can be found on her Facebook page, [Worth Catching www.Facebook.com/AuthorReneeAvard!](http://www.Facebook.com/AuthorReneeAvard!) She not only blogs, but offers guidance services and is the publisher of the Magic Musepirations which can be found here on her official site: [www.ReneeAvardFurrow.com/magic-musepirations!](http://www.ReneeAvardFurrow.com/magic-musepirations!)

[www.ReneeAvardFurrow.com](http://www.ReneeAvardFurrow.com)

# Ancient Amber & The Sunchildren



Juvenile Fiction / Nature & the Natural World  
AGE: 5+ A STORY FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Author Amber Smith, better known as Ancient Amber, is back with the long-awaited follow up and final book in her 4 part seasonal series "The Sunchildren"!

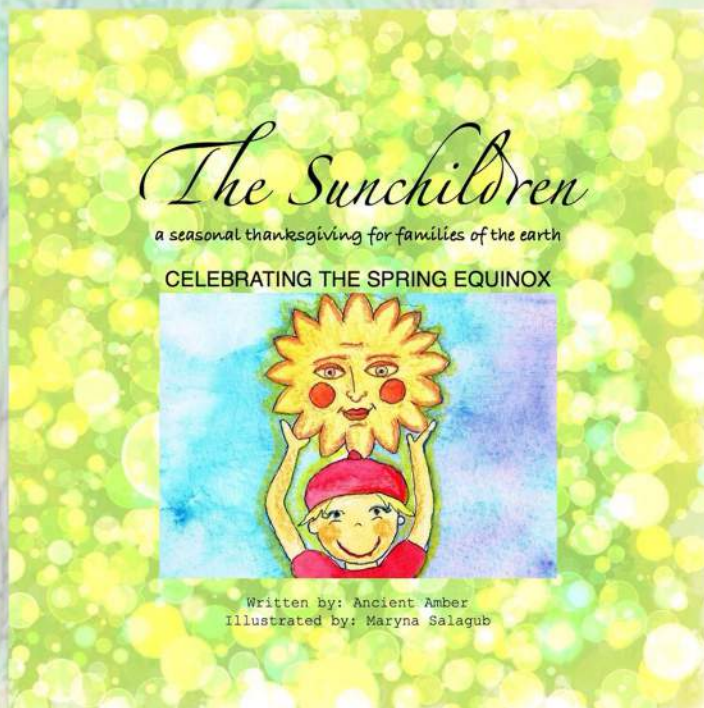
In the light of the forest live the sunchildren. These special children anticipate the change of each season. Join them as they celebrate the beginning of Spring. Watch as each of The Sunchildren show Thanksgiving in their own creative way! This story is a non-traditional tale of the spring equinox. It encourages creativity, self expression and respect for others while celebrating a moment in time!

"It is a delightful book with lovely, open ended questions to help you discuss the pictures and ideas with your child. It also gave me some great ideas for bringing the rituals and activities out of the book, into the home for fun, meaningful crafts. And the illustrations are beautiful."

- Amazon Review

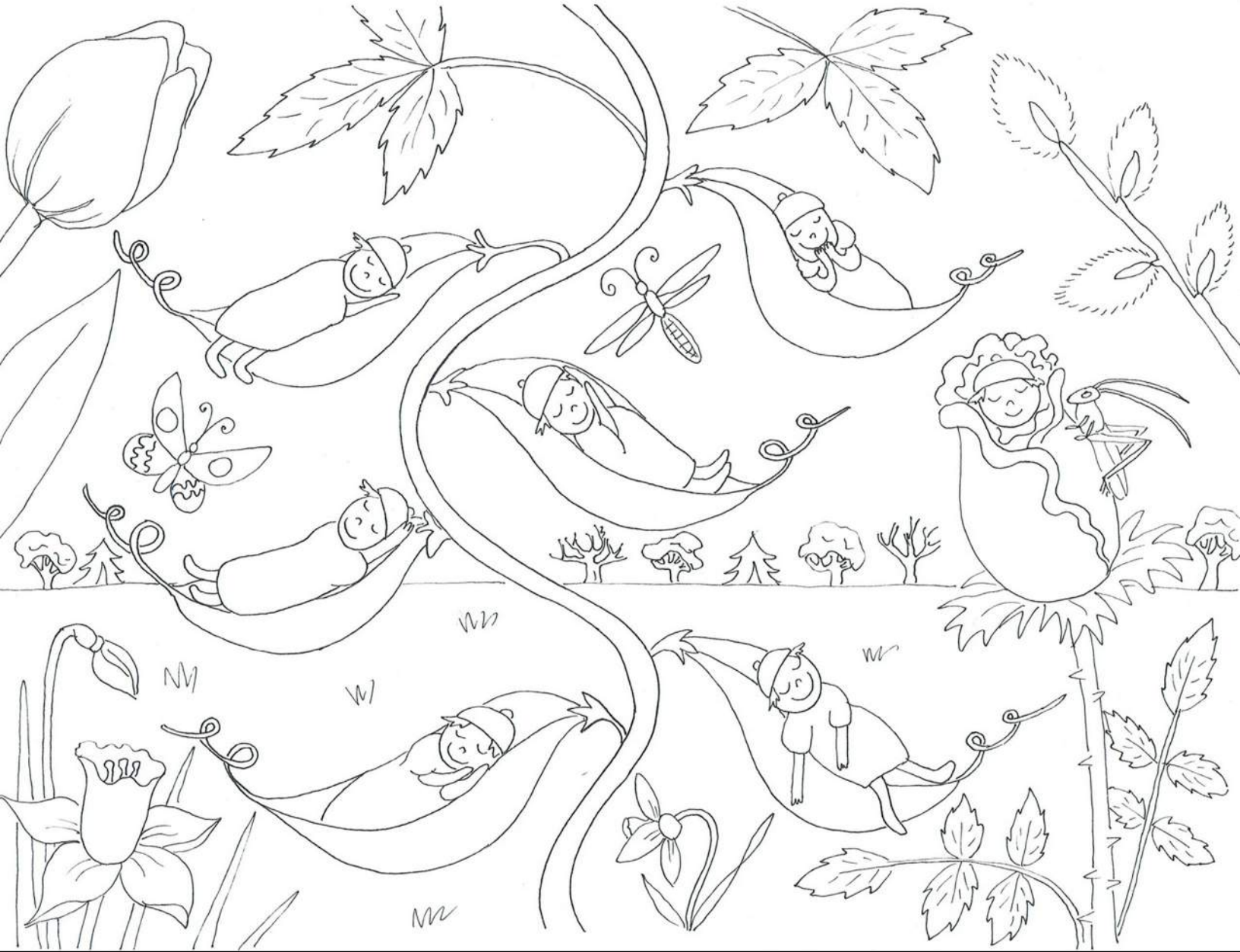


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The Sunchildren series is illustrated by Canadian artist, Maryna Salagub.

She was born in 1986 in Ukraine, Donetsk region. Since she was a child she loved to paint and studied art at Grafica in the city of Krasnoarmeysk for 8 years. In 2010, she immigrated to Canada and started to paint again. She is married and has two children. She likes to paint still life, flowers, birds, landscapes, cityscapes, aboriginal people, life and abstraction. She practices oil and watercolor painting and books illustrations. She is a self taught artist who makes her living doing oil paintings and book illustrations. Painting and drawing is something she enjoys more than anything in the life. She gets inspiration from Ukrainian folklore, nature and travelling. You can see her complete body of work on her website!

[www.ArtMaryna.com](http://www.ArtMaryna.com)

# The Creative Business Workbook

## By Rosalina Bojadschijew



My name is Rosalina Bojadschijew and I am an artist, writer, mother and creative spirit. I am a 30 something woman with loads of creativity and imagination. I am originally from the small country of Bulgaria (located in Eastern Europe). My family and I migrated to the USA in the 90's as refugees. Before being accepted as immigrants to the USA, I lived in Austria for 2 years. Years later, I met my first love and husband at the age of 19, had two amazing kids, joined the United States Navy as a hospital corpsman, and after my 5 year contract went back to college. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Geography and an unofficial minor in Studio Arts. I have always loved art and wanted to be An Artist all my life. So here I am now....being an artist and doing what I love. I believe that art heals and inspires.

A few months ago, I decided that I really needed to get serious about my creative business. I am an artist and I would love to make my art my full time business. I decided that I needed a place to write my business plan (small business plan). But not just any place. I needed a creative journal. A journal full of colors and patterns and creative doodles. I am not sure why, but writing my plan in a journal that was full of artistic expression allowed me to stay more motivated and more focused. So then I had the idea that I had to create one for others who are looking for the same thing!

I bring to you THE CREATIVE BUSINESS WORKBOOK! This ebook/workbook is designed for the creative individual seeking to start a creative business. This workbook has a total of 37 pages and is full of beautiful art, photography, and business prompts. If you are anything like me, then you understand the need for a creative workbook to plan your business. In this workbook I provide you with prompts that you will fill out and I also provide creative business advice such as marketing, e-commerce, building an online presence and ideas for getting your business noticed by your local community.

### WHAT YOU GET:

\* 2 PDF Files ( please note this is one workbook but due to the massive size I had to split it in half. So the first file is part 1 and the second file is part 2. They are numbered so when you open files you will see that file 1 is pages 1-18 and file 2 is 19-36.

### HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK:

\*Download PDF and print on your home computer or have it printed at a printing facility such as Staples.

\*This is a workbook and once printed you can write in it and fill in all the prompts. The idea is to get organized and focused in your creative business. (Total pages is 36.)

*Really fun and creative workbook to bring focus and organization to anyone looking to start a creative business or refocus an existing creative business!*

The Creative Business Workbook:

*An exploration of your creative business*



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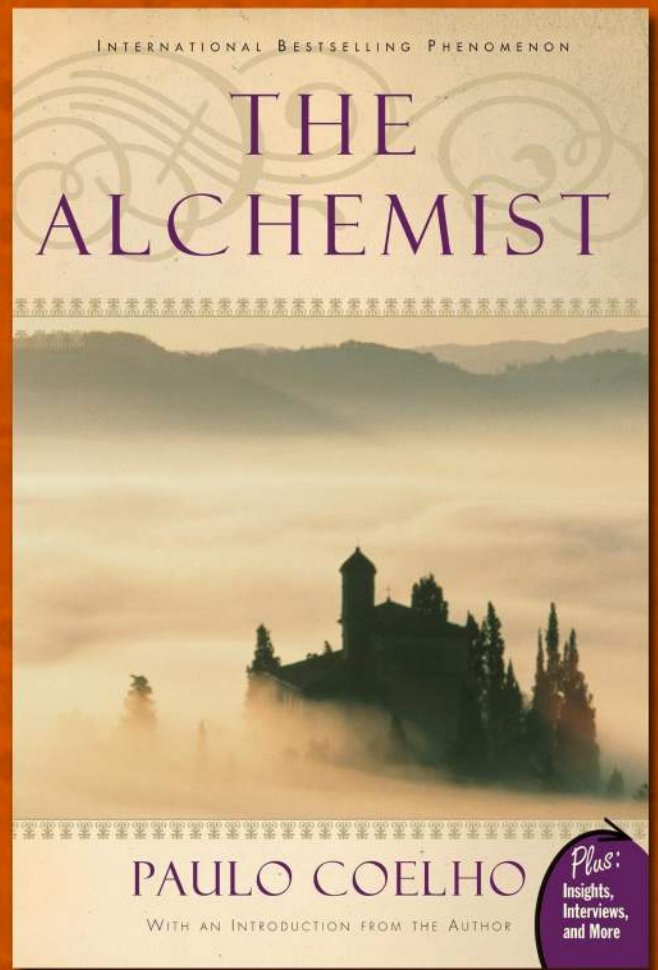
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# Book Review

## (Editor's Recommendation)



When I first signed up for an audition for The Voice, my confidence was at an all time low. Yes, even after performing for over a decade. You see, this was uncharted territory for me and would be the grandest thing I have ever set out to do and I wasn't quite sure if I was equipped for such a feat had I had made it that far. When I started prepping for my audition, I did a lot of research, including getting to know a little more about the one judge I was less familiar with on a personal level, Producer/Songwriter/Artist and multi-grammy award winner, Pharrell Williams. I decided to watch his interview with Oprah Winfrey and he talked about his life, his dreams and ambitions and how he owed all of his success to one book that changed his life and the way he viewed things. This book was *The Alchemist* by Brazilian novelist, Paulo Coelho. I have always heard this book title thrown around but I never knew what it was all about. Pharrell had spoken so highly of it in his interview that it had really piqued my interest. I had to read this book right away. I found it on audiobook and listened to it that very night. I listened to it as I tried to get to sleep and couldn't help but nod in agreement with the life advice scattered about the dialogue like hidden little gems just waiting to be discovered. This classic tale is centered around an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who is focused on finding his one true "Personal Legend" as Coelho calls it. He meets a string of unusual but helpful characters along the way who all contribute in one way or another to help him fulfill his destiny. Coelho's mantra is "When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it!" There are bits and pieces of religious references in the book, but only for the sake of teaching its readers the lessons it has set out to; it is by no means preaching any kind of religion or anything of that sort. There are affirmations spread throughout which have opened my eyes to new concepts I had never thought of before. I had become obsessed and soon started recommending this book to anyone I came across who I knew had the same ambitions as I. This is the kind of book you could read over and over again, and SHOULD read over and over again, because I guarantee you will find a new profound meaning in each different excerpt, over and over again. This book serves as a great tool for self motivation when you are feeling like you are incapable of a large feat you are setting out to accomplish. It is comforting to the mind, body, & soul and everybody should own a copy! I was fortunate enough to receive the Graphic Novel for Christmas this past year which is nice because it puts the visuals to the story and it's easier to identify my favorite parts so I can revert back to sections much quicker if I need to. I suggest if you read this, you have an inspiration journal handy, because there are quotes and bits of concept in here that you are going to WANT to write down for your own greater good. There will be things that give you the "AHA!" moment you need to reframe your mind when you need to get on track with your goals. I give this book a 5 out of 5 stars!



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"You may say I'm a dreamer...But I'm not the only one..." - John Lennon



FAIRY SKY STOCK  
by ArwenArts

# When Dreams Change

By Justina Carubia

I always had the idea in my head that I would become a famous singer, tour the world and sing in stadiums to sold out crowds, have my videos playing on MTV (as a young and impressionable child of the 90s... these days it's all about Vevo on Youtube), and have my music pumped all over the airwaves across the world. I always sang to myself in front of a mirror with my cliché hairbrush, or used my bed as a stage and put my stuffed animals or little cousins in the crowd on the floor. I mean what little girl hasn't? I'd like to think I took it a step further though, when my little brother and I used to empty out our closet and use it as a vocal booth, running the headphones and mic from the double tape deck boom box outside the door, each of us taking turns as the producer. We'd listen back to our takes and make mixed tapes of our karaoke'd versions. I even took it a whole step further when I asked my dad for a guitar on my 18th birthday. I locked myself in my room until I had my chord progressions down smooth enough to write my first song. This was it. This was the weapon I would use to create the life I've always dreamed of. I was in my freshman year of college and dropped out after the first semester. I switched to a non academic Art focused school (academics were never my strongest suit), and I spent my days in painting and illustration classes just day dreaming about being onstage and touring the world. Although I did graduate in 2005 with a certificate in Graphic Design and Illustration, I never did form any sort of backup plan. I always had it in my head that I would find a way to be able to do the music thing and have it become a career.

I kept penning songs one after another, about young love and all the bitterness and resentment that comes with it. I used songwriting as my therapy and relied on it to get me through my darkest times. I caught the ear of a lot of people and my eyes became wide and starry with high expectations of the career I have always sought out for myself. When you're 18, you're also very naive and not only do you not realize your competition, you also don't realize how many people are just out to prey on you. I've gone through all of these things. I've gone through legal disputes over my music, I've gone through rejection with my music, and after all was said and done, I was left feeling extremely jaded.

I tried different approaches like moving to another state for half a year, and when that didn't work out, I moved back home and started up a completely different project altogether, leaving my solo material in the dust. I formed a rock band, but again, I started it starry-eyed, and without realistic expectations, especially since now there were 5 other people or so in the mix, who all had obligations and their own life paths already set out for them. When people's visions don't align, things can get uninspiring or start feeling forced. This had me feeling STUCK. This is when I decided that 2015 for me, would be the year I broke out, pushing my way past fears I never thought I would have had the guts to tackle head on. I signed up to audition for NBC's THE VOICE. People had been telling me to audition for these singing TV shows for years. I would talk a lot of shit about them, but in reality I was scared shitless. People would also laugh when I would tell them this like, "Oh you gotta be kidding me, you would TOTALLY make it, shut up, you're SO GOOD!" But this was hardly encouragement, and more of a guilt trip as if I was somehow obligated to do this just because singing was in my repertoire of talents. But then I started to see, maybe they were right, maybe I was just chicken shit all these years, and maybe it was just time to man the fuck up!

So this was it, this was the year, and I was gonna do it, and no matter what I felt inside, I was just gonna face it head on. I practiced everyday from October up until January 25th, I hired a vocal coach which I couldn't even really afford, but I decided that I was gonna invest in myself and really give it my everything. He really gave me the encouragement and nourished my talent the way I needed in order for me to get up there and do this. I remember one day after my lesson, he had brought me upstairs to show me his studio while he waited for his next student to show up. We had got to talking and then the doorbell rang. He had left me waiting in the studio to go open the door and on the way back up the stairs I could hear this boisterous voice fill up the hallways. A heavy set black woman with a boisterous voice and an infectious laughter came bursting through the door with all of this energy and she was telling us about how she just sang at a church service for someone's funeral or wake. She went on to admit how absolutely nervous she was and how everyone tells her to shut up, how could an amazing singer with such a sassy personality like her, get so nervous? At this moment, I realized it was OKAY for me to be nervous. She had a message for me: It's HUMAN to be nervous. Don't ever let anyone make you feel less than human if you get nervous. Because being nervous is just that: HUMAN. And if you're not getting nervous, then what you're doing is not working. I felt much better about things after that day.

Another thing that really had me a lot calmer about things, than I would have normally been, was [THE DESIRE MAP by Danielle LaPorte](#). The days leading up to this "Audition of a Lifetime", I had really submerged myself in her book. The whole basis of her teachings is tuning into your CORE DESIRED FEELINGS. How do you want to FEEL? These dreams and goals that you're chasing, what is it that you want from them? Are you chasing them for the wrong reasons? Because if this goal does not LIGHT YOU UP, then it's time to stop. I started to think to myself, "I am doing this audition to prove that I can face my fears head on, but what am I chasing anymore?" I started to realize that maybe music didn't make me happy like it used to. I think I wanted this "last hurrah" to kind of trick myself into thinking it was what I still wanted. I mean, think about it, I had spent SO MUCH TIME, MONEY, ENERGY, on nothing other than my music "career" over the past 12 years. I owed myself this. But this audition actually clarified a lot of things for me. And I'll get to that after I tell you about that very day.

The day before, my mother and I had ran to practically every mall in New Jersey just to find me THE PERFECT OUTFIT. I spent \$40 on a haircut, which I NEVER do, but I just wanted to FEEL like a million bucks when I stood in front of that judge. How you FEEL is everything. If you feel unconfident, it's gonna come off. I invested in myself so much, and I was beaming with this newfound confidence between my new outfit, haircut, and vocal lessons. The night before the audition, I set out my outfits for the next day, I sang my audition song to my family a few times, and I headed to bed. Well, this was a SLEEPLESS night. I tossed and turned for a few hours, got up, paced around, took some herbal sleep aids, tried laying back down, tossed and turned another hour or so and then I felt my boyfriend's warm embrace. As he pulled me into his chest, I burst into tears, "I'm gonna have no voice in the morning, I'm not gonna be able to sing..." He comforted me and tried to keep me calm.



I tried falling back to sleep in his arms as he rubbed my back to try to lull me. Time kept ticking and still no luck. I got up again and went downstairs to make a cup of tea. I put the tea kettle on and tried to do some things to let out all of my pent up anxiety. I did jumping jacks, leg kicks, I ran laps around the whole downstairs, and I did some yoga stretches in front of the stove as the tea kettle screamed through the night. I stopped to pour myself a cup of Throat Coat, and as the bag was steeping, I glanced at the little tag at the end of the string attached to it. It said "BE HEARD". I took a deep breath and saw this as some encouragement from the Universe. I brought the cup up with me, finished it and tried to sleep again. Still no luck. I was just beyond frustrated at this point, and I just needed the comfort of my mother. I had woken her up and she tried her best to comfort me through the remainder of the night. We watched TV, had more tea, and finally dozed off as the sun peaked over the horizon. I had gotten maybe 2 hours of sleep that night, but I got up at the alarm, showered, put on my clothes, did my hair, makeup, vocal lessons, packed my bag and headed into the city with my family. I tried to get some shut eye on the train but that didn't really happen. Somewhere along our route, we passed quickly by a graffiti tagged wall that said "RELAX". I saw this as another sign, the angels were all around me right now. I was just going to do my best, and take good ole Miss LaPorte for her word. DETACH YOURSELF FROM ALL OUTCOMES. When we detach ourselves from the outcome of any one situation, we are less likely to feel like we have failed if things don't work in our favor. We shouldn't see these rejections as failure, but just another stepping stone in the direction of our ultimate destiny.

The audition was at the Javitz Center in NYC, and luckily it wasn't too cold of a day for late January. The sun was also out so it made standing outside a bit more bearable. I had a 2:00 PM audition slot, so most of the morning was just waiting around. I stood in line with my mom, dad, and my boyfriend Avi. The original line we were in had gotten split up, and we had moved up closer toward the door. As we were waiting, another mother and her two kids ended up behind us. She started talking with my mother, and before you knew it we were all friends. Her name was Giana, and her teenage daughter Amanda was the one auditioning. I don't remember the son's name. There was also another young guy, maybe early 20s, standing behind them. I don't remember his name either, but let's call him Steve. Our group stuck together the whole time, and it felt nice to feel like I had my family with me inside the actual audition, because they don't allow family members to go in with you unless you are under 18 years of age. When it was time for them to shuffle us in like cattle, I said bye to my parents and Avi as they wished me luck. There marched us down a long stretch of corridor before we finally came to an auditorium where they lined us up in cue so they could check our IDs. In this line, Steve began to tell us how he had auditioned for this show a couple times before, and the year before, they had actually made him sing 3 or 4 different songs completely all the way through. At this point, I was freaking out a bit. I ONLY HAD 2 PREPARED! He also said that he had a friend who made it onto the show and lasted the first battle round. That guy had managed to get onto the show via PRIVATE AUDITION. Who knew these existed, and I wondered what makes certain people so privileged. It all made sense now though. I had known two different people who actually made it onto the show, and thought to myself, how hard can it be?

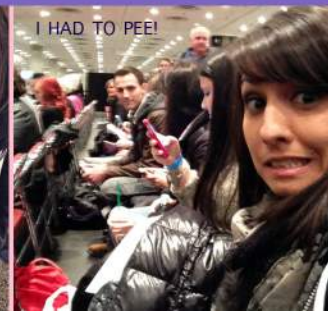
Anyway, after that we had to go through security and bag check. My hairspray was confiscated LOL. I'm such a rebel. After bag check I waited for my new friends so we could all proceed to the next checkpoint together. We had to stop at a table to hand them our paperwork and credentials, and then they slapped a wristband on us before we were motioned to a seating area. There were about 15-20 rows of chairs lined up in this auditorium and we were finally able to take a bathroom break as an event employee let one row go at a time. Gianna agreed to watch my bags while I went, and she asked me for my number incase our group got called and I wasn't there, so I could rush back. She then texted me so I had hers as well. As I was waiting in line for the bathroom, I overheard people talking about the experience. One black girl in front of me, with aqua green highlights in her hair, was ecstatic because she had made it through. She had tears in her eyes and reassured the rest of the line behind us to believe in themselves, not to be nervous and that praying helped her get through to the next round. She filled me with some hope. Other people in line were talking about how many rounds it actually takes to get to the television blind auditions. Apparently it's something like 5-8 rounds of singing in front of different people. I think the ultimate level right before TV was singing in front of an executive producer in their office. I then felt a little more doubtful. I made my way back to the auditorium and then shortly after we were broken up into even smaller groups, about 10 per group. We were lined up against a wall and held there for a bit before the seats in front of the auditioning room doors were empty. Amanda was so nervous. She kept asking her mom, "Should I sing this song, or this song?" Giana was like, "You should probably have this figured out by now Amanda..." LOL They were bickering back and forth the whole time and it reminded me of my mother's and my relationship. Amanda was singing a Carrie Underwood song and she was having some inner turmoil as to which key she should start the song in. She also wanted to start the song at the bridge, but was afraid that she would mess it up because it was a key change and might be too high for her. She kept saying, "I can't do this, I'm not gonna do it... I'm gonna mess it up, I'm so nervous..." Her mom insisted that that they didn't come all the way here for her not to do it and then regardless of the outcome, it is still a great learning experience for Amanda. I had to agree.

So finally we were motioned to the last chairs we would sit in before we made it into the big scary auditioning room. I sat down and started to perspire. I then remembered that I had some baby powder in my bag and dabbed a little under my arms to dry it up a bit. Gross, I know, nerves aren't pretty. To my left was another girl who was in her early 20s. She was laughing at my horrible attempt at powdering my pits since I managed to get most of it on my black shirt. We made small conversation and I asked if she had ever auditioned for the show before. She said no, but she did try out for X Factor or America's Got Talent and the wait outside was a lot longer and not as organized as this. I was grateful for the experience the Universe had rewarded me with. I really couldn't complain up to this point. Amanda is sitting to my right with her mother, brother, and Steve to her right. She is a bucket of nerves, I mean we all were, really.

Finally, we were escorted into "THE ROOM". It was a small square room, probably as big as a small storage unit, with one table stretched against the back wall where the judge sat, and 2 rows of chairs on both the right and left sides of the room. The center was left open for the auditioner to take their place. The parents of the underaged kids had their own row of chairs in the back of the room. We were instructed to find a seat and put our phones away. No cameras were allowed in this room. The judge was a girl probably in her late 20s to early 30s, and she sat at the table in front of us, sifting through papers and tapping away at her laptop keys. She ensured us that this should not be a scary experience, and not to be nervous because it would be a relatively quick process. She explained that she would call us up at random, one by one, we were to sing our song of choice until she quietly put up her hand to stop. She began the role call and if I remember correctly, I was the first one called. I took a deep breath and stepped up to the proverbial plate. She asked what I would be singing, and I exclaimed, "House of the Rising Sun" by The Animals. She smiled and motioned me to proceed. I started off in my lower register and climbed with each note until I exploded into full belt mode at the line "They Call the Rising Sun". The acoustics were amazing, my voice bounced around the room, and I was really puzzled at her lack of reaction. She barely looked at me the whole time and just kept sifting through her papers and typing on her laptop. As I finished the song through the first chorus, she put her hand up and thanked me for my time as she clapped along with the rest of the contestants in the room. I sat down as Amanda and the girl next to me both looked to me and exclaimed, "Oh my God, you were AMAZING!" I nervously thanked them through a tight grin as the judge continued with role call. Every performance went equally as fast. Amanda was great for her age! She had a very fresh voice and hit all the notes she needed to. Steve was equally as talented and had the suaveness of someone like Jason Mraz. I was impressed with them both and hope at least one of us would make it through. As the last auditioner wrapped up, the judge thanked us all for coming out to audition and went into her explanation about how their show sets the bar extremely high for the people they decide to let through. I am not gonna lie, I felt jipped. I did not get what I came here for, that tiny red slip of paper that takes me to the next round. I am human, of course I was disappointed regardless of all of the self encouragement books I had been reading to prepare me for this day. As we filed out of that room, all I could think of was what I could have possibly done wrong to not make it. Amanda, Gianna, and Steve were chit chatting on the way out and I heard them in the background but I couldn't really focus on any words because I had been mentally beating myself up over not being good enough for music once again. As we made our way out of the auditorium and down the hall of the main floor of the Javitz Center, I looked for my family. They excitedly ran up to me asking me how it went. They saw the lack of red slip in my hand and the disappointment in my face, and just slumped with disbelief.

Gianna, Amanda, Steve, and I all wished each other much luck on their future endeavors, and Gianna said she was so grateful for meeting all of us, and that we really made the experience an enjoyable one. We all agreed that these things are always so competitive, and more people need to be supportive of each other. We finally parted ways and I scurried off toward a large pillar by the wall so I could change my shoes back to my comfy boots. As I sat down, I just broke down and cried. Avi came over and comforted me. I was just so tired of the rejection of this business and all the years I've spent on attempting this career came flooding into my head. It was extremely overwhelming and at this point, I was just DONE. At this point, Danielle LaPorte's wise words came to mind. What is the end goal, and how do you want that end goal to make you feel? And are you chasing that dream for the wrong reason? What ARE the reasons? Does it make you feel GOOD? Because if it doesn't, just stop. It all got put into perspective for me at this point. Pursuing Music as a career doesn't make me FEEL good anymore. The fire is gone and all it does is make me feel somber and jaded. I don't want to feel this way anymore. At this point I was actually RELIEVED that I didn't make it through. Did I REALLY want to be on live television every week? NO. Did I REALLY want that pressure in my life? NO. Was this giving up? NO.

DREAMS CAN CHANGE. People change! We as humans are always growing and ever evolving! I am not the same girl I was at 18. Sometimes in order to feel alive and truly shine, we must switch directions. We must put aside things that no longer serve us in our quest for true happiness, and make room for newer things that can teach us a thing or two about the people we really are, under the core of it all. Music will always be a part of my life, regardless of it not being a career. Looking back I am not bitter about the outcome of that audition experience or any of the other experiences I have had in my music career over the past decade. Every experience helps shape us to be the people we are supposed to become. And every person that we meet along the way has a message for us. It is up to us to take these messages and apply them to our everyday lives and use them to learn the lessons of life. Every failure is a stepping stone toward something better, and ultimately our own "Personal Legend", and I feel like I am being called to do other things at this time. I'm not sure what that is just yet.. but I am going to let go, and ride this wave called life!





Art: "Cloud"  
By Adelina Pervanje  
(Slovenia)

# SOMETIMES... A DREAM FINDS US

By Mimi Adams Matthews

Sometimes, in the midst of being our best selves, while spreading our light and gifting the world with our purpose, a dream finds us. It happened that way for me. For several years I've been following my passion to encourage, educate, and empower women, accomplishing this mission through my written words, speaking engagements, my businesses, and through everyday connections.

I'd finally become comfortable with being "me", realizing my gifts and identifying my passions. People responded well to me and my spirit was happy. I was completely unaware that the seven-year roller-coaster-like adventure I'd been on was deceptively calm—like during one of those flat places just before the incline that sends you over the top! In the midst of that calm I came up with a really nifty idea. As a way to connect with people face to face and introduce my fairly new speaking business, Passionista At Large, I decided to participate in a vendor show. I know it's not the best way to advertise, but I was helping out a good cause too.

While pondering my booth layout I realized I didn't even have a booth. I mean really, what does a speaker, blogger, non-published writer, and shedder-of-sprinkles put on a table to attract people to her spot? My creative brain took over and decided that a few colorful positive and uplifting greeting cards might attract people. Once I snagged them and we spoke, they would get to know me, fall in love with me, and invite me to speak at their events. Right? Sounded like a plan. I had been designing memes for a while to use in my blog posts and anywhere else I wanted colorful expression, so I figured I would just tweak some of those to make into cards. Let me just say, it wasn't that easy. But persist I did and soon sent a couple of designs off to the printer to determine their quality, thinking I could sell some if people liked them.

And then, as my mind kept returning to the purpose behind the cards, something took root deep inside of me. I had battled low self-esteem for most of my life so it is now my passion to help others realize the amazing and wonderful treasure they are. In my own life, I was able to break free from the limiting lies I believed by repeating truth and encouraging myself on a daily basis. Thus, I have longed for my empowering words to reach into people's lives so they, too, could learn the process. I began to realize my cards could be the way and started to envision them on walls, bulletin boards, in lunch boxes and suitcases, on desks across the nation, and touching hearts through the mail. (We are talking old-fashioned snail mail, folks, because I'm on a campaign to bring back words and thoughts that can actually be held, saved, treasured, and read again and again.)

As this concept started to glow inside of me I sat at my trusty PC and began to design. And create. And envision how people would feel when they read my cards. Not just positivity but blatant, full-out, glorious approval and affirmation—

something sorely lacking in many lives—by telling people that they are fabulous, they matter, they are a gift, and the world needs them. It's something many of us spend our whole lives longing to hear. And I realized that if people had the tools to use, they could offer this encouragement to those they love.

I continued to create. It became almost an addiction—anticipating how my words might help people become encouraged, and thus empowered, to stop believing lies they held as truth. When doubt whispered that no one would see value in my cards, I was reminded through several sources that we are only to create our art, leaving peoples' responses up to them. Our part is to gift the world from our passionate, creative soul. The cards took on a life of their own. Having had no experience in digital design I now became a fledgling digital artist. Sitting at the computer using only a basic photo editing and design program, playing around with different effects, I'd watch each card evolve. I was in awe. I wonder. It must be how an artist feels as what they are creating comes to life. I've never painted or made "art" but I can imagine now what that creative process must feel like.

In the course of a week I had 18 designs, some of the designs taking three hours or more to create. I was driven. I had a deadline. Remember the vendor show? It was pretty much a bust but I soon realized that show was just the catalyst I'd needed to create and allow my heart and soul to reach more people. EmpOWordment Cards have become a way to meet and form relationships with people I never would have. They touch people's hearts. They bring a response. For example, one happy customer said, "Your cards make me feel so happy I just want to roll around in them!" Nope, never dreamed THAT one. Others have said, "I must have those cards! They are so ME!" My art has created an opportunity for custom work where I have gotten to "meet" other women who share my heart for empowering, strengthening, and encouraging others, united in our souls' purpose. This is a really wild ride and it's all so wonder-FULL.

So sometimes a dream finds us. I didn't know I had this dream. It is an extension of my heart and who I am, but I never, ever, thought I'd be designing cards and doing custom design for others. I love what the creative process has brought into my life...a new audience and relationships, a fresh way to encourage and empower others, and a resolve to continue creating in order to sow healing words into people's lives. Yes, I am truly enjoying this dream that found me.



*Mimi Matthews is a 62 year old retired school teacher from Flint, MI, whose life is now filled with caring for her two special-needs teens and creating an environment of encouragement and empowerment for the many women who are her customers and friends. She is the founder/owner of three businesses and in her rare free time she reads, gardens, camps, and jumps off the high dive into life.*

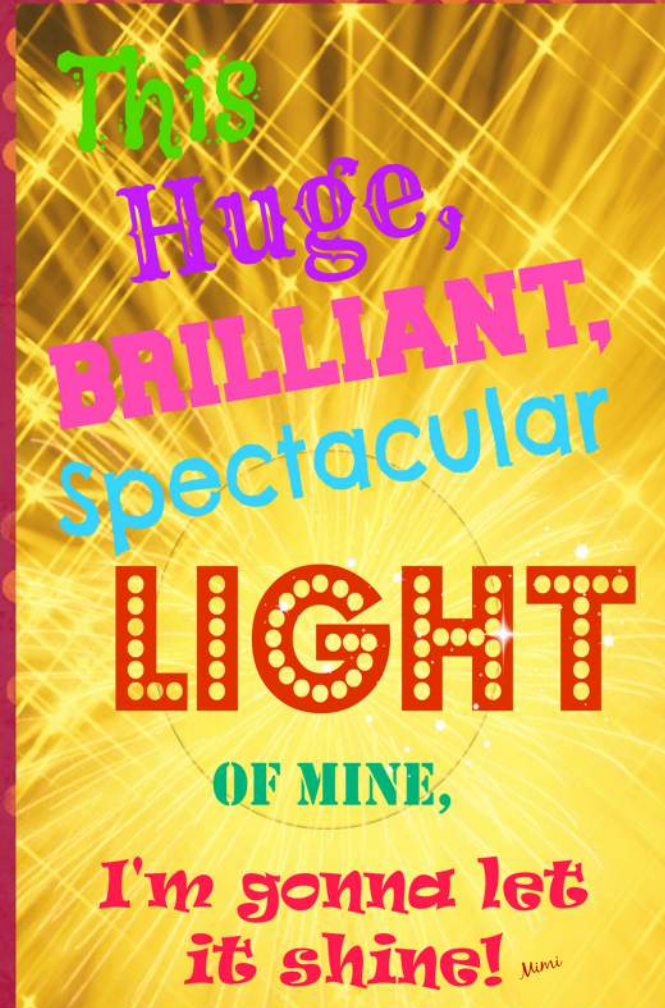
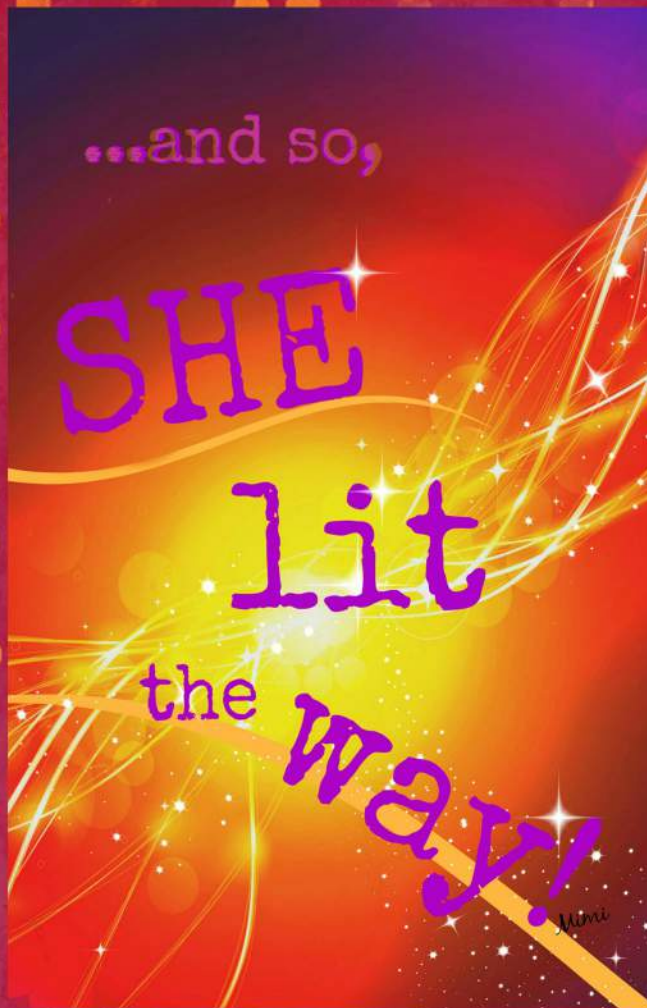
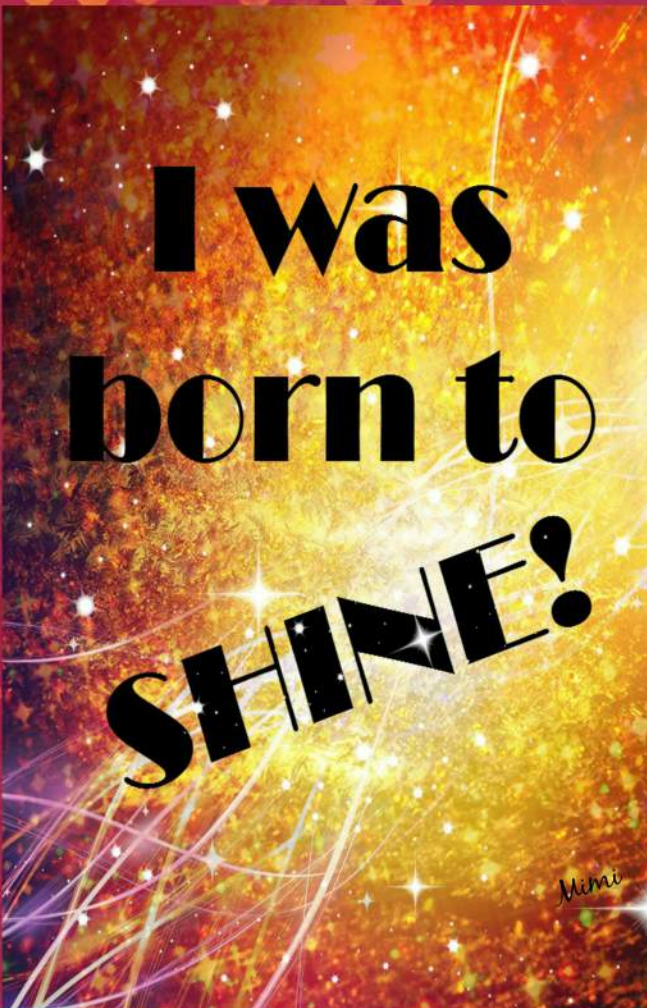
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# FREEBIES

# MIMI'S AFFIRMATIONAL PRINTABLE ART CARDS

Download, Print Out, Cut & Insert into your wallet, add to your Vision Boards, or on your Abundance Altars! Get creative with what you do with these! Use them for an extra boost of positivity on those tough days! We all go through them!





# Fanciful Happenings of Spring ♡♡♡

## Art Dolls & Whimsical Tales By Vanessa Valencia



Vanessa Valencia is an artist living in a magical part of Arizona. She spends most of her time in the country in her private gallery and studio. She is a painter, dollmaker, illustrator, jewelry maker, mess maker, and storyteller. Miss Valencia dwells mostly in her own imagination, where she conjures up little tales of whimsy and fantasy. For more whimsy, keep up with her on her blog [A FANCIFUL TWIST!](http://www.fancifultwist.com)

These are some of the characters that tip toe out from behind forest trees, during that time when we feel a spring breeze. Goodnight father winter, see you next year...

For now we have spring flowers, meadows to skip in and warm sun upon shoulders. Inspiration flutters about, until we meet the next wave of little faces, which almost always meet us in early spring dreams.

And so, we wait for the magic...



*"The earth awakens from its slumber, and with it creatures and stories come to life."*

Once a year there is a magical happening, so profound, it can change a person. It is a metamorphosis of nature, a time of inspiration and change...

It's that time when cold winter rains and snow begin to morph into tiny petals of blossoms. Winter slowly disappears, leaving fruit trees to come to life. Fragrant petal tufts twinkle on branches, and sprouts poke through cool earth. Daffodils, tulips, hyacinth and ranunculus turn up early to the extravaganza. The earth awakens from its slumber, and with it creatures and stories come to life.

Forest fairy tales and storybook happenings swirl about, bringing to life all sorts of characters. Buried somewhere in the mind of a grown girl, are the childhood tales of the imagination. Some call them dreams, inventions, pretend or even make believe.

With a block of clay, somehow, the creatures come to life. Faces and stories from deep in the heart of that little child, now a grown girl, find their way into reality. There are owls with ruffled collars, pink deer, fairy girls, elves and more. Slowly coming to life, one might say, in a fanciful twist of sorts. They are each hand sculpted from scratch using clay and hands. They are then fired and cooled. Later painted by hand and adorned with sparkles and millinery flowers. Each one loved and cared for down to the last detail.

# Dreams, Dreams, Dreams...

A Stream of Consciousness & Photograph

By Laura Flashberg



Dreams, Dreams, Dreams..... I have and had many. The earliest one I can remember, dreaming about writing children's books about cats and dogs. This came partially realized. My first children's story is completed but needs to be illustrated. The dog and cat stories will come later. Moving to California was a huge one. This came from watching TV, growing up in the 50s and 60s, due to the magic that I experienced watching the little box, knowing that this was mostly created in California. I am still in New Jersey but took many trips to that beautiful state on the opposite coast. I just fell in love, it truly is a magical place!

Working for the welfare of animals was another dream of mine. They have a special place in my heart. This dream was fulfilled, as I work for The Humane Society of the United States, a legislative organization that works for the good of all animals. Five years ago I helped a friend start-up a non-profit organization called, New Jersey Animeals, which supplies free pet food and cat litter to families and individuals that are in need. It is located in the county where I live. I also volunteered for a year with a cat rescue. It is the most rewarding dream I have fulfilled thus far.

Although I have many dreams, I feel that five lifetimes will be needed to fulfill all of them...

I have always wanted to be a professional dancer! I never realized, but I am a dancing fool! I took salsa lessons and now I'm onto the tango!!! I always wanted to play in a latin band but needed to learn the congas and timbales. I took conga lessons but it was extremely painful for my hands. Next I will try the timbales.\* I want to learn animation and create some short films, thank you Tim Burton! I also love Nick Park, the creator of Wallace and Gromit. These are my inspirations! I dream of painting. Oh how I want to paint on huge canvases! I need to learn the properties of oils, acrylics and watercolors. This is where a huge dream of mine comes into play and that is to have my own studio. I want the paintings to make people smile, laugh and contemplate. I dream of improving my photography with a camera that will open up more creative parts of my consciousness. I only use my iPhone which is a good tool, but I feel limited.

I dreamed about building a self-sufficient house in the woods with a life partner. I never realized, but I think I'm getting a bit too old to work on this one. Some more maybe will come true, but maybe not. I want to conduct an orchestra, create a children's clothing line, venture across country with an airstream in tow with a camera, writing tools and a bicycle. I want to foster cats and dogs for socialization so they will be easily adopted, and of course the obvious: peace and good health for everyone!

Right now, at this moment I'm dreaming of dancing the tango under the moonlight with the scent of freshness from the ocean..

Dream.....Dream.....Dream.....

"The very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream..." - William Shakespeare

# My Magical Tea Shoppe: A Dream Come True!

By Dena K. Miller



It has always been a dream of mine for a very long time to own a Tea Shoppe. As a child, I have always pretended to host Tea Parties and to this day, I do host them on occasion. Tea Pots, Teacups, Teas and tea related treasures are items that I have collected throughout the years and use on a regular basis. I have also been drawn to online Tea Parties and have over the past many years, participated in the Annual Mad Tea Party hosted by Vanessa Valencia from [A Fanciful Twist](#). I even have several Pinterest Boards that are tea related.

Yes, I am obsessed with all things "Tea"!

Now seriously, what girl does not dream of a Tea Shoppe or at least hosting some kind of Tea Party? This dream of owning a Tea Shoppe, has been presented to the Universe, by me, long ago. It has moved and shifted through time and space for many years. At first I thought it might be an upscale tea and luncheon type of place, where guests would select from a variety of tea sandwiches, scones and seasonal fruit. That dream never came to fruition, but moving forward, I have never given up on my dream of owning a Tea Shoppe.

This dream has recently surfaced and presented itself again to me! This time, this dream, is manifesting into a reality!!! The Tea Shoppe came about via a conversation that my husband Jimi had with a friend who rents a space for his business in the building. His friend was saying how nice it would be if there was some sort of place that offered Tea/Coffee and perhaps some sweet treats to eat in the building, since as it was, everyone had to travel a mile down the road in order to get food or drinks. Jimi replied that as a matter of fact, "Dena has wanted to open up a Tea Shoppe for a long time". It just seemed like the perfect opportunity to look into, about all of the details of opening at this location.

It is a fresh and open space, it has never been occupied for anything other than storage, and it is free for me to begin my vision from scratch and create a place where "Something Magical is Always Brewing!" It was always a dream brewing in my head, but with time and patience, all of the pieces that needed to fit together, fell into place in order to make this happen in the magical way that the Universe perfectly planned.

Beginning in the month of April, I will be signing a lease to this perfect place, where I will carry out my dream!!! I will need to do so many things to prepare for an opening such as paint, purchase furniture etc., but it is happening!!! "Oh my goodness," I say. "Can this really be happening?" The answer is YES!!!!!! My husband and I will be living that dream together and we could not be more excited to begin this adventure!

I will admit that my design and style vibe of what I envision is now completely different from the past shabby chic idea. My entire being and spirit has always been Gypsy and Bohemian so my dream for my Tea Shoppe as it has evolved, is now just that!!! I dream of a really rad, hippie-chic and zen filled space. "A space to serve and inspire positive thinking while providing a place to gather for tea."

We are hoping for a May 1st Grand Opening of THE TEACUP AND GROUNDS, which is also the Celebration of Beltane/May Day. How festive is that? I encourage all of you to continue to dream your dreams! Dream big, because the Universe hears YOU! Dreams can and do come true, but you must believe!!! It is with hard work, determination and perseverance that your dreams will manifest.

Keep on Dreaming my friends and with that, I wish you much love and many blessings,

Dena... xoxo

Dena K. Miller is an avid blogger, vlogger, crafter, and all around creative junkie from the Pittsburgh, PA area. You can check her out on all of her social media pages linked above and below. She is so excited for her Tea Shoppe's grand opening! Check out The Tea Cup and Grounds official website below, where she will be posting all sorts of magical goodness and the progression toward her grand opening!

[www.TheTeaCupAndGrounds.weebly.com](http://www.TheTeaCupAndGrounds.weebly.com)



# MY DREAM BODY JOURNEY

## BY NICOLE AGUILAR



Nicole Aguilar's philosophy is "Move more, eat better!" She has a Facebook Group titled PORTION 101, dedicated to helping other people make better decisions about what they put into their bodies, as well as exercising tips and helpful meal prep ideas. She is a Beach Body Coach, dedicated to helping her clients fulfill their dreams of achieving their dream bodies and maintaining their healthy lifestyles. She resides in San Francisco, California.

You're standing in front of a mirror thinking about all the yo-yo weight-loss and gain that you've experienced. You know what results you would like and keep, but how do you get there? What steps do you need to take to really change your lifestyle? How do you gain your dream body?

2 years ago, I was close. After a round of Insanity, I was finally starting to see what I wanted in the mirror. Then life hit me upside the head and all those results started to fade. I beat myself up for a while, but then I realized... I've done this once; I can do it again. So, it was back to the drawing board. Clean eating and working out. But it's more than that.

To achieve everything you want in life, you have to have a dream, set intention, and work toward it. The mind is a powerful thing. If you have any doubt, you'll attract doubt. So, while you may have the best of intentions in the gym, if you get frustrated and give up, you won't get results.

How can you start on a path of positivity and achieve your chiseled abs or slender thighs? I think the biggest thing that people overlook is their support system. Lifestyle changes aren't easy. Finding likeminded people to take the journey with you will help you stay on track. Secondly, always plan. A little forethought will keep you from straying. Meal prep, so you don't need to hit the drive-thru. Schedule your workouts. Your "me time" is VERY important.

At the end of the day, many people have completely transformed their bodies. They are no different than you. The only difference is that they set an intention and were relentless at achieving that goal. Take time to educate yourself, self-reflect, and work on YOU. Your dream body is achievable. It always has been.



BEFORE TEAM BEACHBODY



AFTER TEAM BEACHBODY

<-----**SAME CORSET,  
60 LBS DIFFERENCE!**



FOR ONE-ON-ONE COACHING, GO TO  
[WWW.TEAMBEACHBODY.COM/COACHNICOLELEE](http://WWW.TEAMBEACHBODY.COM/COACHNICOLELEE)  
 AND SIGN UP FOR A FREE ACCOUNT. I'LL  
 REACH OUT TO YOU AND WE'LL CHAT ABOUT  
 YOUR GOALS. LET ME HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR  
 DREAM BODY.

BELOW IS NICOLE'S TIMELINE OF HER JOURNEY STARTING ON THE FAR LEFT, BEFORE HER INVOLVMENT WITH THE TEAM BEACHBODY PROGRAM. MOVING TOWARD THE RIGHT WE SEE HER PROGRESSION OF HER RESULTS. NICOLE SAYS, "IT'S REALLY NOT ABOUT THE WEIGHTLOSS FOR ME, BUT MORE OF HOW I FEEL FROM DAY TO DAY".





# HEALTHY SPRINGTIME RECIPES WITH KENDALL GREEN



Kendall Green has loved cooking for the last 7 years, ever since she first moved out into the big world on her own! It took lots of patience and mishaps, but she has finally mastered the art! You will see that a lot of her recipes don't have perfect measurements, as she goes mostly by eye and tasting along the way- however, she IS trying to get better about that to make recipe sharing a little easier! Aside from cooking, Kendall is also very passionate about green living and health and fitness. You can check out her YouTube channel, which has videos on juicing, gardening, and several recipes for chemical free homemade cleaning products! In general, Kendall loves nothing more than helping others. Whether it's tips on cooking, sharing recipes, motivation, or health and fitness tips, feel free to shoot her an e-mail at any time! [Kendallgreenfitness@gmail.com](mailto:Kendallgreenfitness@gmail.com)

## ALMOND ENCRUSTED SALMON TOPPED WITH MAPLE HONEY YOGURT

### Ingredients for the Salmon:

- \*Wild caught salmon
- \*Almond Meal
- \*Cardamom

### Ingredients for the Sauce:

- \*Plain, full fat greek yogurt
- \*Raw honey
- \*Pure maple syrup (the real stuff, no Aunt Jamima!)

This delicious recipe was made with frozen, WILD CAUGHT (none of that farm raised business, I'd rather just have it less often and get the good stuff!) salmon that I thawed out. First, I rolled the pieces of fish around in a bowl of Almond Meal that I got from Trader Joe's. Ingredients? ALMONDS. That's it! They look kinda like bread crumbs. I also sprinkled just a very little bit of Ground Cardamom (which is a seasoning that I have used a few times for baking and is way too expensive to not use more often) on top of the fish that was already coated in the almond meal. I baked the salmon at 350 degrees and while that was cooking, I made the sauce.

The sauce was so EASY and yummy! I didn't measure, but I did 2 big heaping spoonfuls of yogurt, a little capful of maple syrup, and 1/2 teaspoon of raw honey. Mix it all together and let it sit until the fish is done. Seriously, it was perfect! The maple/honey was nice and sweet, but not over powering at all. You could still taste just a bit of the bitterness of the yogurt.

I also steamed some asparagus and broccoli and sprinkled them with a little garlic salt and pepper. I served the fish and veggies with a side of organic Basmati rice.



## SPRING FRESH TUNA SALAD

### Ingredients:

- Solid white Albacore tuna, in water (preferably with no added sodium!)
- Plain, full fat Greek yogurt
- Celery
- Bell pepper
- Raw sunflower seeds
- Black pepper

For this light and healthy version of tuna salad, I decided to take out the mayo! Instead, after I drained the can of tuna and put it into a bowl, I added a spoonful of plain Greek yogurt instead of mayonnaise! I did not measure- use more or less depending on the consistency you like. Then, I added chopped celery and bell pepper (again, use as much as you like! The beauty of making your own food is catering to your personal taste buds!), a tablespoon of sunflower seeds, and topped it with some fresh black pepper. Mix all of the ingredients together- I find using a fork is best!

This tuna salad is perfect to put over a bed of greens, in a sandwich, or in a wrap. Enjoy!

FIND MORE RECIPES ON INSTAGRAM @KENDALL\_IS\_GREEN





# SPRING SALADS WITH JONATHAN KERTIS



Spring has sprung. Winter on the east coast has been tough but it seems we finally made it through! Spring is the time for renewal and cleansing. Why not start with an all natural, clean, and satisfying salad to help you on your path of wellness? One of my favorite salad dressings is actually fruit and nut based. While experimenting with healthier fats and fruits I came up with this dressing and I find it quite delicious

## Tangerine Dream Salad Dressing

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup tangerine juice

1/2 cup soaked cashews

1 half of a lemon--juiced

Your Salad



### DIRECTIONS

This recipe is all at your own discretion. The tangerine juice will make your dressing lighter, the cashews will thicken it right up. The lemon is optional, but I like the extra little zing.

You can juice your tangerines at home or you can purchase the juice at a local market. I prefer to juice mine myself. If you have a high speed blender, peel the tangerines, throw them in the blender, and then run the juice through a fine mesh strainer to remove the pulp from the juice.

To soak cashews: let them sit in warm water for until they are soft, drain. Make sure the cashews are fully covered by the warm water so they are all soft and ready for a creamy blend.



# One Brush Stroke at a Time

a first time experience  
of the latest new painting party trend!

by Dee Carubia

My artistic daughter recently asked me if I'd like to go to a wine and painting class nearby at *Pinot's Palette*. I reminded her that she was the artistic one and my skills were solely in the office and organizing area. She didn't push it any further, but for the week leading up to her class, the invitation remained on my mind. I was sure I'd fail before I ever gave it a try. Sitting at my computer wondering if I should go or not I see the quote on the desktop staring at me, "Whatever's good for your soul, do that". Hmm...painting is supposed to be good for the soul, isn't it? Although, I was having an anxiety attack just picturing my attempt at this; I decided I'd never know unless I tried. If worse came to worse it would be a night out with my daughter and I could simply sip wine while she painted.

When we arrive at *Pinot's Palette* we were immediately greeted with the friendly and helpful staff. We were shown to our painting stations, where to get our aprons, the wine opening station and our wine glasses. We had some trouble opening the wine, but once again, the friendly staff members were there to help out! Now, with drink in hand and painters apron on, I was ready to conquer this white intimidating canvas blankly staring at me. I told myself, "Just act like you know what your doing and the rest will fall right into place." (Note: My daughter has no clue of this conversation I am having within my head, nor how nervous I truly was. This was a BIG moment for me!)

Our instructor first introduced us to our brushes, of which she referred to as the guys from the show *Full House*. She also informed us that whenever she was done giving instructions and the music went off, we were to sip our wine – that sounded good to me! Our first instruction was to take our large bristle brush, a.k.a., "John Stamos" and to make it a little wet by dabbing it in the water and then into the mustard color paint on our palette. Simple enough! We are to paint the entire canvas one color...here we go! Wow! I now have a completely mustard color canvas! That was easy and actually fun! Okay – next step is to paint the bottom section of the canvas with the terracotta color paint...I could do that too! Of course, having my daughter next to me for the moral support I needed was a great help too!

As we proceed, we are taught how you can mix colors or add more water to get a different effect, as well as how to fix mistakes (yes, I hit terracotta on the yellow canvas and later turned into one of my flowers). Now, we are going to paint our vase with the same color...it's getting harder now for me – the NON-Painter! You mean we can't actually sketch the vase first? (Not that I could draw, so why am I even thinking that?) So, here goes nothing! It turned out a lot wider than I wanted and slightly crooked, but whew! It's on the canvas! This is actually FUN!! Either that or I feel numb from the wine and simply don't care so much anymore.

Next, we are guided where to place five circles that will later be our sunflowers. Okay, so here is where it gets more difficult and I begin to sip, or drink more!! I hope we have enough wine! But, before I knew it, I had a bouquet of flowers in my wide and slightly crooked vase, but I DID IT!!! I am AMAZED! The next thing I know, we were being instructed to add in our leaves as we are going to take a group picture! Leaves??? Group picture??? Now?? How? Where? I quickly grabbed my Bob Sagett (thin brush) and dipped it into the water and green paint. Acting as if I was a Master Painter, I quickly added in some green flowing (in my eyes) strokes which I call "leaves" and then – DONE!! I DID IT!!! I created my very own Van Gogh's Sunflowers! I never realized painting could be so easy, or so fun, as long as you just take one stroke at a time...and a sip of wine at a time helps too!

[www.pinotspalette.com](http://www.pinotspalette.com)



Dee's Finished Painting  
of Van Gogh's Sunflowers

"I dream of painting and  
then I paint my dream...."  
- Vincent Van Gogh



"I never realized painting could be so  
easy, or so fun, as long as you just  
take one stroke at a time...and a sip  
of wine at a time helps too!"

Dee Carlin



# Cover Artist



# Linda Lindberg

30 yr Old Watercolor and Acrylic Cover Artist of "Where Dreams Come From". (Billesholm, Scania, Sweden)

"Every star represents a dream..."

My inspiration for this artwork came to me in a vivid dream I had, about a mighty spirit, a goddess if you will, that is sending people their dreams, be it a dream you have while sleeping or a dream of what you want to achieve in your waking life. Dreams are very important! They inspire us and enable our imagination to run wild! Dreams have been a very important part of my life. Without them, what is the meaning of life? Our dreams are constantly changing!

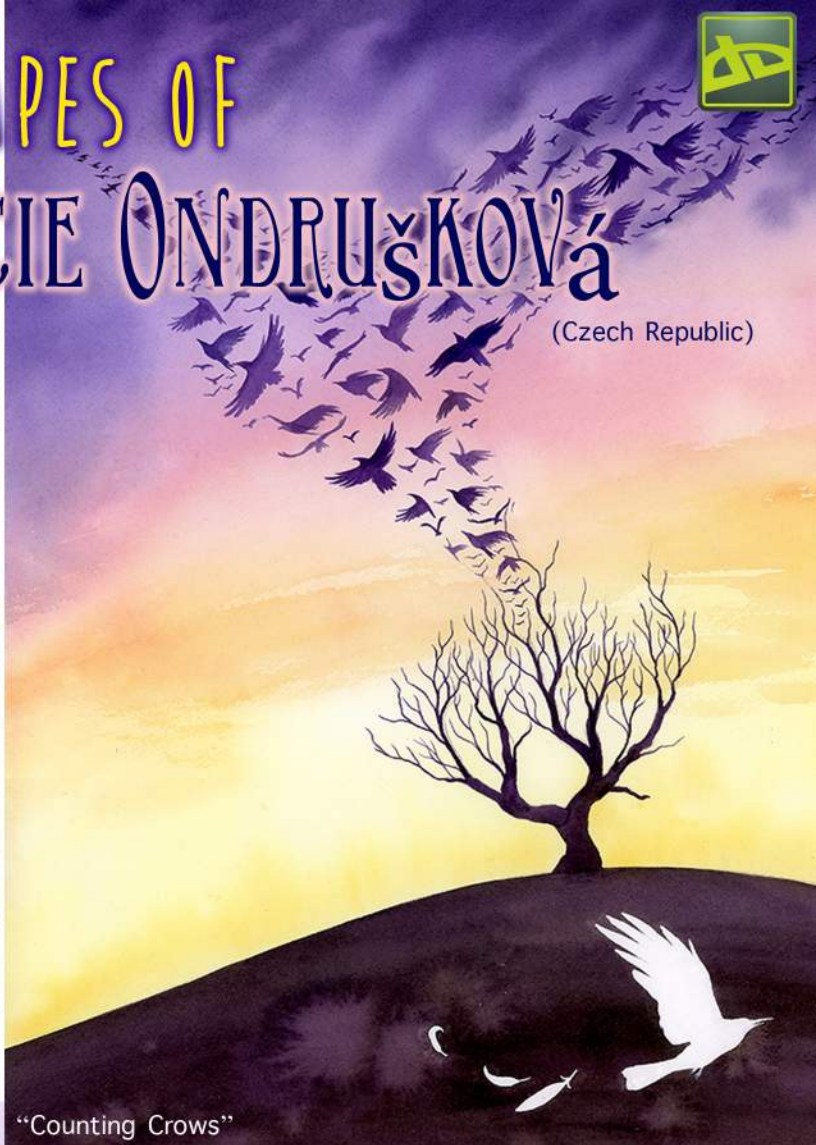


# THE LUCID LANDSCAPES OF LUCIE ONDRUŠKOVÁ

(Czech Republic)



"The First Tree"



"Counting Crows"



I know people often say their work is often inspired by books, movies, music, etc. - and while that happens to me sometimes, mostly I just see the picture before my eyes (often when I'm falling asleep and my subconscious is awakening, I suppose) and try to put it on the paper to the best of my ability. I feel like I fail more often than succeed.

"The First Tree" is an excellent example of what I described above. I just saw the picture, tried to paint it and because I didn't have much experience with watercolor back then, I didn't quite succeed, as I wanted the tree to be completely white. I experimented more with the negative effect on "Under the Stars" ([Pg.8](#)), but what I tried to capture here was the vast silence of stars in the summer sky, and how small and insignificant we really are in The Universe.

I am fascinated by dreams but I do not put them into my paintings, not consciously, anyway. What I do think, is that dreams are a manifestation of the subconscious, which is where inspiration comes from. My opinion is that artists tend to be more open to that part of their minds, which means having vivid dreams, and I believe that dreams, inspiration and art are inextricably connected.

My dreams are often very vivid and quite often very unpleasant - nightmares, basically. Pleasant dreams are rare for me, they always stick out, so I try to remember them. I like the dreams about flying the best, probably. Once I dreamt that I was a seagull floating above a river and felt the wind ruffling my feathers - these kinds of dream tend to be very realistic! Quite often I dream I'm lost somewhere and try to reach various destinations - home, school, work - and I'm not able to and I just keep getting lost. Another one of my recurring dreams are about the subway, because I really, really hate the subway and it's even scarier in my dreams; they're full of twisted tunnels leading to nowhere and exploding trains and such.

# Adelina Pervanje's Watercolor Whimsies



When I created most of these pieces, which was a while ago, I was in a very bad place, really depressed. My illustrations don't reflect my personality (or maybe they do), I'm not a happy-go-lucky person now and I definitely wasn't when I created them. Most of my illustrations represent a girl reaching for something in the clouds, but she never reaches it, at least not in my works. They illustrate a dream we all have within us, that one ultimate goal, be it success, love or something else. We're all reaching for those stars and we must try hard doing so - they are not impossible to reach.

One of the things that I connect most with dreams is a *deja-vu*. It has happened a lot through my lifetime; I would have a bizarre dream of being in some unknown place with unknown people or doing something I would never be doing at the time, and then find myself years later in those places, getting the weirdest and really vivid *deja-vus*. I don't believe in predestination or fate or anything like that so it really confuses me when that happens. Most of all, when I hear the word 'dreams' my first thought isn't the pictures I see in my sleep, it's the future I wish to live someday.



"Reach for the Love"



"Vanilla Sky"



Adelina Pervanje, 23  
Ljubljana, Slovenia



# MARNI WALKER'S DREAMY JOURNALS

20 Year old Australian native, Marni Walker's specialty is reconstructing old books into new, personalized journals, complete with custom illustrated covers. Her handmade journals are salvaged from books that have been thrown away or left to the dust, hence her Deviant Art username, Paper And Dust. She explains her process a little bit for us, "Using homemade glue I coat the inside pages and insert writing paper on top of the originals, leaving thick, coffee stained pages that reserve the old books touch, as well as rebind and recover the book itself. I use materials from fabric for traditional binding. I also re-cover already lined journals or sketchbooks, creating a new treasure to be loved." Most of her book covers are done in watercolors and inks creating beautiful and ornate whimsical swirly patterns and filligree.

Marni gives a lot of her journals away to friends and class mates. The above photo is titled in her Deviant Art gallery as "Journal Project" in which she spent a couple school terms creating about 23 personalized journals for her senior year private school home room class which she handed out at graduation. She explains that she had known most of these kids since she was very little and she wanted to give them all something that they could document the next chapter of their lives with.

Aside from designing used books as gifts for her friends, she also does commissioned pieces and sells her wares via her online galleries and shops. She takes most of her inspiration from books, movies and music. She loves Pan's Labyrinth, The Walking Dead, Game of Thrones, and Alice Cooper just to name a few things. She tells us a little bit more about herself, "I study Fine Arts and Illustration, enjoy marshmallows, dark chocolate and Karate, and have a tendency to think too much and not put it out in some form or another. I think I know more than I do. I also think that most of us are like that."



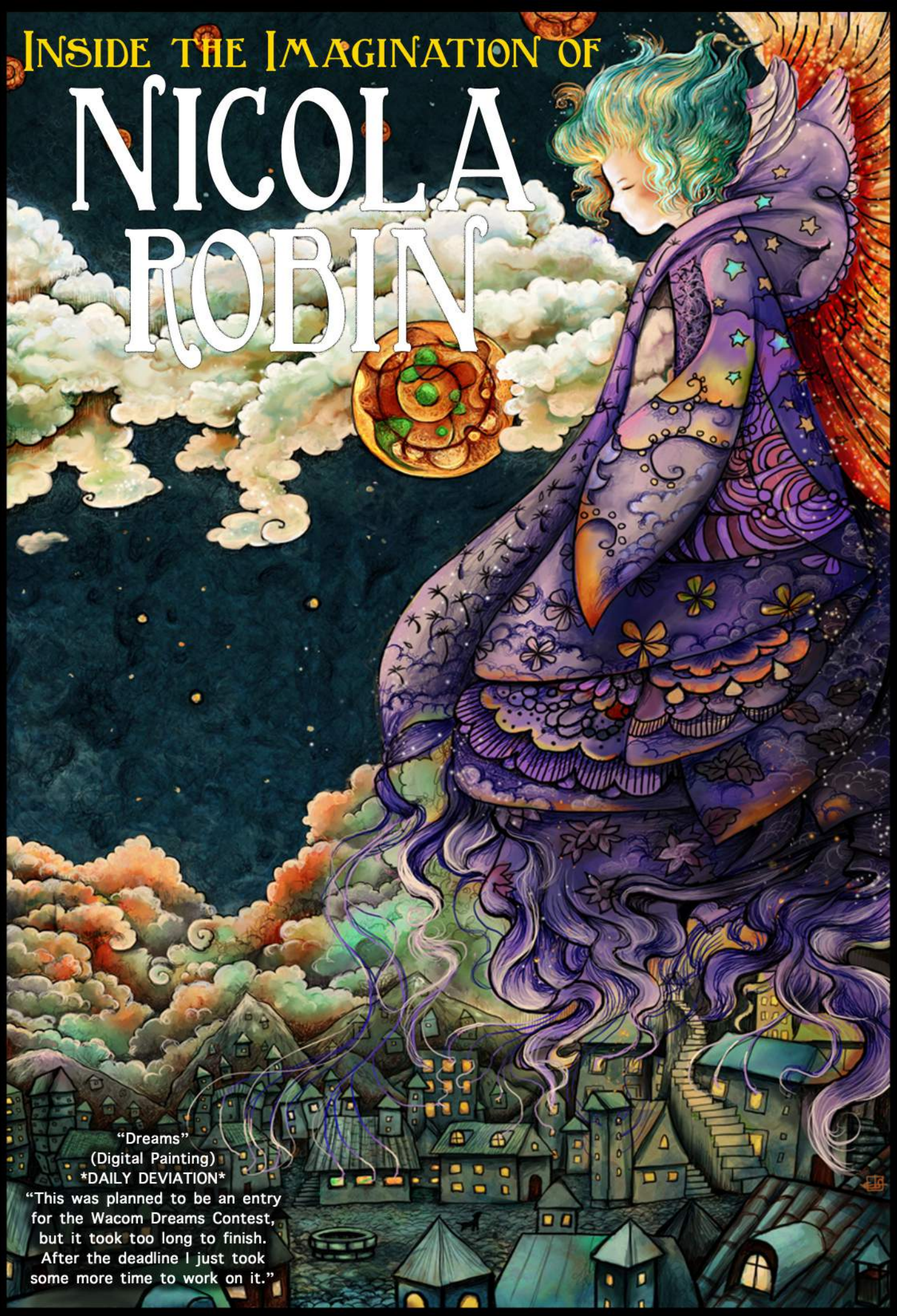
For more information on Marni's homemade salvaged journals, you can visit her website or social media pages below! Also feel free to contact her, should you be interested in having her create one just for you!

[www.MarniWalker.Wordpress.com](http://www.MarniWalker.Wordpress.com)



INSIDE THE IMAGINATION OF

# NICOLA ROBIN



"Dreams"

(Digital Painting)

\*DAILY DEVIATION\*

"This was planned to be an entry for the Wacom Dreams Contest, but it took too long to finish.

After the deadline I just took some more time to work on it."



German artist, Nicola Robert, also known in the art world as "Fiorina Artworks" has been creating her one of a kind pieces of art for as long as she can remember. She has created a style all her own, combining elements of the surreal with her signature googly eyed quirky looking anime cartoon styled characters, all through the modern medium of digital painting. Today we talk with her a bit more to get a better idea of her colorful thought process and how she comes to churn out such dreamy and imaginative masterpieces!

**AZ:** Hello Nicola! Thanks for taking time away from your magical little world to chat with us a bit about your art today! How long have you been making art? And what mediums are your favorite?

**NR:** I've been drawing for as long as I can remember, however the practicing intensified after I started posting my art online, which was around 2004. Besides lots of books and tutorials, I'm self-taught and actually avoided going to an art school, because I've never found the usual way of too many guidelines, restrictions and criticism helpful for me. Since almost all of my finished work is digital, my favorite medium for illustration is Photoshop by far. Pencils and watercolors are essential for sketching and concepts. I use other supporting traditional media like acrylic and pastels for structures and to try out new methods and combinations.

**AZ:** What inspires you to create art immersed in themes of dreamlike surrealism?

**NR:** I'm able to draw in a realistic way, but it feels more natural to me to picture my themes with a twist. The more realistic a drawing is, the less it speaks to me - it is at most the beginning of a work, not the result. I like to set my priorities on the themes, messages, humor and personal touch. Also I like being with people who do the same. Fantasy artists are generally very interesting people to spend time with.

**AZ:** Do you remember your dreams when you wake up? What is the most favorite dream that you've ever had?

**NR:** Yes, I remember most of my dreams, and I keep track with a diary of the best ones or the ones I simply need to write down. My favorite dreams are usually visually impressive, funny, or they have meetings with characters that communicate with me on a positive and personal level. I like dreams that seem to have a deeper meaning that I have to figure out, sometimes after years. I love revisiting places in dreams that I've seen in a movie or read about in a book.

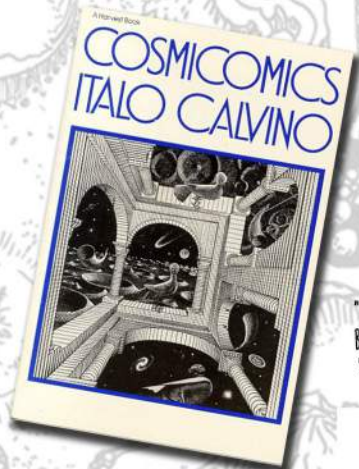
**AZ:** What/Who inspires you? Favorite books, movies, poems, artists?

**NR:** Tim Burton's movies have visibly influenced a part of my style in drawing characters in a surreal landscape. Italo Calvino's story collection "Cosmicomics" is a huge inspiration, as well as E.T.A. Hoffmann's "The Golden Pot", and I could draw a scene from these books every time I read them. I like science-fiction and post-apocalyptic visions, whether they're hilarious as in Douglas Adams' Hitchhiker series or dark and gloomy like in Tsutomu Nihei's "Blame!". I love it when another artist's work makes me think: I can't believe someone did this! When I watch other art or when I make my own, I'm not concerned at all with style or art categories, but rather more of the spirit and mood within the artwork.

## BACKGROUND ART: "BREAK OF DAY 2"



THERE ARE TWO ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS SHORT STORY. CALVINO'S "AT DAYBREAK" DESCRIBES THE EARTH BEFORE IT WAS SOLID MATTER AND HOW IT CHANGED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE SUN. WATCH THE MAKING OF DRAWING PHASE 1, ON NICOLA'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL NOW!



"BUY ITALO CALVINO'S 'COSMICOMICS' BOOK OF SHORT STORIES NOW!"

amazon



"Butterfly Tree"

Digital Painting

"The new tree spirit of the series, actually done as a commission, but I think it fits in the series pretty well." - Nicola



The previous page and above photos showcase a few of the pieces in Nicola Robert's TREE SERIES, which is a collection of digital paintings that depict human figures in very surreal environments where their hair is actually turning into trees. Their bodies act as the trunk, standing grounded and one with the earth, while they are surrounded in whimsical and dreamy, green, lush environments. She depicts different trees in each piece, one is a butterfly tree, one is an apple tree, and one seems more Mother Earth-esque and sits in the foreground, looking quite peaceful as her hair sprouts beautiful blossoms and tendrils of vibrant red foliage, as if she is relieved upon the final arrival of the Spring Season!

Each piece is filled with the most beautiful and thought out detail, and it is apparent that Nicola spends quite some time on each individual piece. This justifies the pricetag she places on her custom commissions, which range from \$800-\$1200 for which she labels "Very Elaborate Artwork", and elaborate it is indeed! She is one of those model artists that we should look up to when trying to price our own work! She proves to other aspiring artists that it is important to know your worth!

All prices for Nicola's listed works are working prices, calculated for private projects, like private OC commissions, gifts and pictures for personal or educational use and display. For book illustrations, game design, comic projects, logos etc. please email Nicola at [info@fiorina.de](mailto:info@fiorina.de) if you are interested to purchase the rights to the images for commercial use.

# Tanith Larking

## SWEET DREAMY DESIGNS



California-born artist Tanith Larking uses the lullabies and daydreams swirling around in her imagination as inspiration for her dreamy one of a kind paintings! She talks with *Abra-zine!* today about the challenges she faces in taking her artwork in a more commercial direction, as a result of her moving to the cinematic landscapes of New Zealand. Let's see what she has to say!



LARKING "The Dreaming Tree"  
Watercolor & Digital

**AZ:** Hi Tanith! Please tell our readers a little bit about yourself! Where are you from and what is it that you do in the art world?

**TL:** Hey Justina, thank you for having me take part! I grew up mostly in Southern California - 15 minutes from Disneyland, went to University in the Bay Area and spent some of my childhood in the Southwestern states. For several years I have lived in the North Island of New Zealand, with my husband. I actually started off as a game-level designer in California for a few years, before moving to New Zealand, so it is my time here that allowed me to really begin life as an independent artist. I started off in the vast art world as fresh and confused as anyone! There are so many routes you can take, you can spend ages trying to find your niche - from concept artist to fine artist to teacher and so on... but eventually I arrived at what I am currently doing, which is, establishing an artist brand of my own - Sweet Dreamy Designs.

**AZ:** Are you one of the lucky people in the world who is able to make a living off of creating beautiful works of art?

**TL:** This is a tricky question - and one reason we plan to move back to the U.S. at some point. Being able to attend conventions, shows, and get into opportunities back home in the U.S. is something I'm aiming for. Living in New Zealand, as lovely a place as it is, presents certain barriers to being in business, as compared with the U.S., so I opted not to become a fine artist, per se, but instead I create work aimed for products. I have had some successes, featured in a few shows, and sold a few items but no, I have yet to make a full-time income that way! That said (shameless self-plug!) I am in the market for an agent, so if you know of agents or manufacturers who would be interested in my work please shout me an [EMAIL!](#)

**AZ:** At what point in your life did you realize that art is something that you wanted to pursue as a career?

**TL:** I knew I wanted to create art as a child - but like many of us got side-tracked by life for a long time. I attended a DragonCon in Atlanta, GA in the early 2000s, it was seeing the work of fantasy artists there that really cemented in the desire.

**AZ:** Did you study art at a school? If so, what were your areas of study and what kind of credentials did you graduate with?

**TL:** My B.A. degree was in "Art & Multimedia", but ironically I only had the chance to take a couple of drawing classes and one painting class. At the time I was more focused on the games design route, so most of my growth and education as an artist has been on my own. Most of what I've learned has been on my own. I believe our education system in the U.S. needs to be more practically applicable to real life, if it's going to be worthwhile. Don't worry if you don't have a degree! What matters is that you always keep learning, keep going, and most of the time, the only way to really learn is by doing it!



"Dream Prayer"  
Painted version of  
the Portrait Sketch.  
Watercolour & Wax  
Colored Pencils  
over the Graphite  
Sketch, on Bristol

AZ: Your artwork is very dreamy! What is it about the world of dreams that inspires you to create pieces immersed in such imagery?

TL: When you say "World of Dreams", well, that could mean happy dreams or dark nightmarish visions, right? For me it's of course the positive, happy stuff. Not meaning to knock the work of any other artists out there! It's just that there is an abundance of dark, negative stuff out in the world these days. I would rather be a source of bright, shiny, happy, quirky, meditative, beautiful things.

It might be important here to differentiate between dreams and day dreaming? The dreamy art I make isn't really based off of night-time dreams, but it's more about daydreams - the stuff fairy tales and nursery rhymes are made of - and sometimes as simple as beautiful abstract colors, textures or patterns you just want to be mesmerized by.

It may seem like a simple notion but that's who I am, really. There isn't anything really magical, I don't have a muse, but I have things I love to look at or experience. I don't meditate, I pray. I have to actively daydream, then translate that to the work.

AZ: Do you remember your dreams when you wake up in the morning? What was the craziest dream you have ever had?

TL: Sometimes! If I told you about my night-time dreams you'd probably laugh. I can tell you though, once my husband woke me up out of a dream asking me what I was saying. He said I kept saying something about a walrus??? No idea.

AZ: HAHA! Have you ever thought of creating a piece of art surrounding themes of a dream you have actually woke up from? If you have already, please tell us about it!

TL: This makes me wonder if that's how Salvador Dali did it... Hmm... well, not really. Actually, maybe once. I have an abstract series I've done. A vision of a great, beautiful light coming from the sky inspired me to do a few acrylic paintings with really beautiful colours in them. It's a much more personal series though. I'll have to post photos sometime...

AZ: Oh we'd love to see those! What medium do you work in?

TL: It depends on what it's for. I love working in watercolour, but on paper sometimes I also use marker and coloured pencil. My acrylics are always mixed-media, at least with mica powders or interference paints, sometimes, bits and pieces of shiny things. These days most of my stuff has to go digital eventually, so it's often a combination of traditional media with digital tweaks.



Above Piece: Titled "The Fool". This piece was submitted by Tanith Larking as a "Daily Deviation" on her [Deviant Art](#) profile. She describes the piece as a possible prototype, for a tea card deck based on wisdom that would feature poetry, proverbs, and practical guidance; not to be confused with tarot.

*"There is an abundance of dark, negative stuff out in the world these days. I would rather be a source of bright, shiny, happy, quirky, meditative, beautiful things."*

# “The Town Clock”

“I took an old painting out, and improved upon it. If I had done it from scratch now, it would probably look different, but I find it a good exercise taking old paintings and focusing on them this way. It gives you insight as to how far you've come, what your 'flaws' were or areas you want to continue to work on. The old painting had little gnome-like figures, but they were way too small for the composition, but I left their little "town" in place, so you can "imagine" them in, instead.”



My "Turquoise - The Great Bear" piece reflects this [love for Southwest USA Styles] but I plan on doing Southwest Meditative-style collections of art soon!

AZ: I understand that your work is evolving and you are heading in a new direction with your art! Please tell our readers about your new licensing plans for your new collections!

TL: Yes! I am developing my new brand, "Sweet Dreamy Designs". In essence, I am taking my style and applying it to art meant for products. Instead of creating one-off pieces, I am on a mission to create large collections of work - it means I'm being more practical with my work, but adding some really fun stuff to the mix! You might think of some of the work you're posting in your magazine here as representative of "where I came from", while what I'm creating now is "where I'm going", but it's all evolving from the same source, a love of that dreamy stuff.

I think many artists go through transitions like this. That said, the route I'm taking isn't for everyone; some people might balk at the thought of being more 'commercial', but a starving artist isn't a happy artist - and I'd rather be happy!

AZ: Oh I definitely hear you on that! A lot of our readers are artists themselves! Is there any advice you might have on building yourself as a brand?

TL: Yes! Take courses on branding yourself as an artist, it really does help, especially if you take notes and take action! Develop your style - make it recognizable and appealing to your audience. Accept that it is the art world and highly competitive, and it will take time - a lot of time. If you love actually doing it, then you won't give up.

AZ: What artists do you admire or look to for inspiration? Also do you take any inspiration from books or movies? What were your favorites growing up?

TL: It's easy to get an overwhelming amount of inspiration from so many artists out there. Fantasy artists, Golden Age Illustrators, and other Imaginative artists - I love them all. At this point in my journey though, I realized that the real inspiration has to come from within and just doing your own thing. Lately, I haven't had much time for books or movies, but I grew up on J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Madeleine L'Engle, and things like Dragonlance or Forgotten Realms. Expanding my work into categories other than fantasy means I get to be inspired by many other things I love! For example, I've become a much better cook in the last few years and it's kindled a huge love of food - even drawing it - so that will no doubt be seen in some future work! I also love the Southwest USA (Raku pottery, turquoise jewelry). My "Turquoise - The Great Bear" piece reflects this but I plan on doing Southwest Meditative-style collections of art soon!



Turquoise - the December  
Birthstone: The Great Bear

Part of the Fantasy Gemstone Series

Process to make this series: "Tradigital" -  
Using Traditional Drawing & Watercolour  
in combination with Digital Collage, and  
lots of layers.

[View blog post here!](#)

*"Mad Tea Party  
in the Sky"  
Digital &  
Watercolor mix*



TANITH LARKING



*“What Happened Thereafter”  
A Poem by Tanith Larking  
Based on Original Painting  
on Previous Page, Titled  
“Mad Tea Party in the Sky”*

*After Alice was gone for a while,  
The Hatter, the March Hare, and the  
Dormouse became dissatisfied, or is it  
mis-satisfied, with their seemingly endless  
tea party at the table.*

*They began to wonder about Wonderland  
and whether or if it were all that  
wondrous after all...*

*So the Hatter pulled wandering necessities  
out of his hat: Three delicious-looking  
balloons, because balloons are shaped like  
teapots, and a bicycle just because he liked  
bicycles.*

*And they floated along merrily enjoying or  
enrapturing at their Mad Tea Party in the  
sky, noting how the clouds looked like  
cake, and the stars like sugar lumps, and  
there was no horrible Queen, no terrible  
Jabberwocky, and no smart-aleck cats to  
interrupt their very merry unbirthday  
party.*



Above: “By Moonlight”

“This is part of my foray into mixed media. Mixed media acrylic collage on wood; sealed with beeswax layers. It's quite difficult to capture by camera what the painting actually looks like. It's super dimensional, and has amazing colour shifts when you tilt the painting under light.”

*(Interview Continued)*

AZ: If you can give our readers any piece of advice about following their dreams, what would it be?

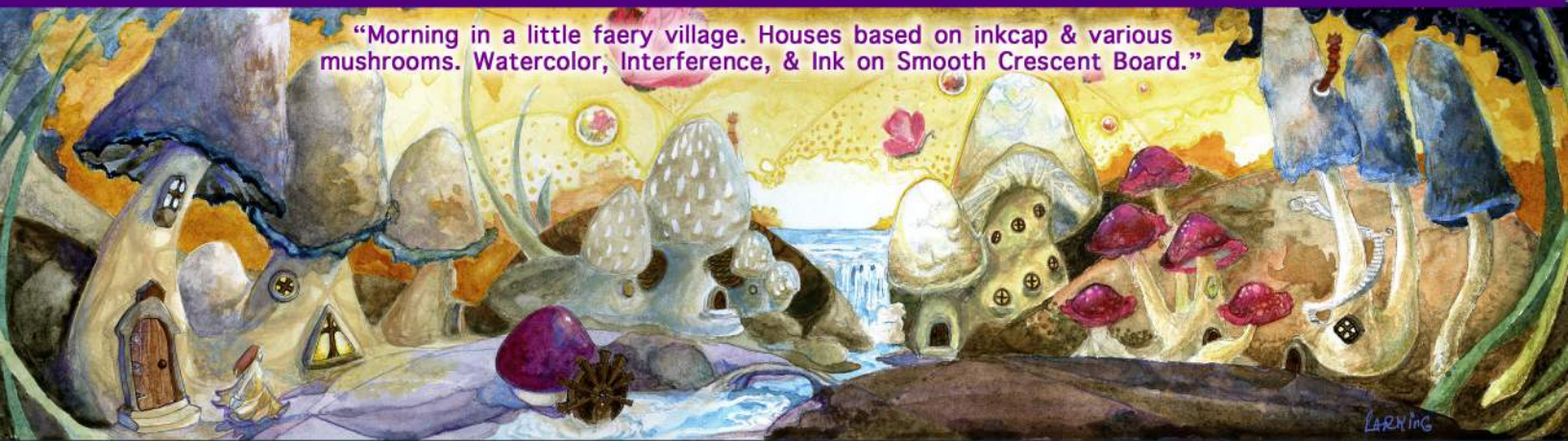
TL: Keep Daydreaming but see if you can focus it in a practical way toward what you want to do. You really have to just do what you love doing, and be able to divorce that notion from things you \*think\* you might love doing - but actually don't. (Does that make sense?) Don't get upset with yourself when your dreams change, it's all learning a experience. And a wise person told me, "You don't have to dream so big that anything less seems not good enough." Sometimes it's really the smaller, more humble dreams that are the most fulfilling.

AZ: That is GREAT ADVICE! Thank you so much for talking with us Tanith! Your work is MARVELOUS! On behalf of Abra-zine! and our readers, we wish you much luck on your future endeavors with your new direction!

TL: My pleasure - and thank you again, Justina! I wish everyone happy dreams and fruitful Daydreaming!



[WWW.TANITHLARKING.COM](http://WWW.TANITHLARKING.COM)



“Morning in a little faery village. Houses based on inkcap & various mushrooms. Watercolor, Interference, & Ink on Smooth Crescent Board.”

# Dreamy Poetry & Stories

Art By  
Polina Yakovleva  
(Russia)



"Liesl and Po"

## "Definition of Dreams"

Descend into a sleep ravine  
That little death  
Those haunting dreams  
Are scratching, gnawing at your feet  
Crawling up  
& soon to be  
At your chest, that pitter-pat  
Is pounding now,  
A constant tap.  
Grip your soul then let it go  
& fall into your sleeping woe.

( ~ )

-- They pass your lips, even breaths,  
Puffs of soul that won't come back  
Are silent little screams of sleep  
Like songs at night  
That seem to seep  
into  
the  
thoughts,  
Control your mind  
with  
Dancing picture &  
Haunting rhyme.  
In time the devil shows his face:  
You sold your soul, now  
Dreams aren't safe.

## "I Believe Myself"

I believe myself a mystic  
dream, vapor over  
pineland trees.  
to cut the skin, to  
kiss & sin, I  
meditate on the  
simpler things.

& o terrible is the brain that  
mocks songs of rampant  
abandon across the  
mind like vapid compulsion.  
(they are not the same.)

see, I believe myself a  
sheep to slaughter, a  
godfearing child, a  
cosmos of a daughter.  
...am I the messiah I've prayed for?  
(??)  
and please,  
— can I  
keep on like this  
Forever?  
No.  
I can do better.



POETRY  
BY  
AMBER  
JOHNSON

21, Pennsylvania

[www.YourDreams-TheirLair.tumblr.com](http://www.YourDreams-TheirLair.tumblr.com)



"Buuu"



"Snail"



## "DREAMS"

When the sun had set,  
and to bed you get.  
Reality crumbles,  
into a world of dreams.

Within this odd world.  
You are the overlord.  
You can make it beautifull,  
or a dark nightmare.

But beware!

Remember where the dreams begin  
and where do they end.  
Because, if you get lost,  
You'll pay the highest cost.

## "When Everything Changes"

When the Ice is burning,  
When the Fire is freezing,  
When Hearts stop beating,  
You know, that times are changing.

When the Moon is dark,  
And Stars are gone.  
When the Sun is black,  
And your Mind stripped to the bone.

It's time to RUN,  
Really, really Far.  
It's time to RUN,  
Really, really Fast.

## "Stars Make Me Think of You"

When the stars fall from the sky,  
And the moon is behind clouds.  
You know that it's here again,  
The time to say goodbye.

Then comes the lonely night,  
Full of thinking 'bout you.  
I can't stop looking at the sky,  
It's as beautifull as you.

Although we can't be together,  
Our hearts still want to.  
Maybe in another life,  
This dream will come true.

But when I'm with you,  
I don't really care.  
My heart is happy,  
When with you I can be.



POETRY  
BY  
DOMINIK  
DUBOVEC

16, Slovakia

## "Thought Walking"

I searched through soaked notebook papers  
Only to have them tear between my fingers  
I can't find the difference  
The difference between the lines of reason  
Perhaps there are no lines  
In these hidden pages  
Like the colors reflecting in a rainbow  
I looked deep into a puddle and  
Found an image of the sky  
I only wish to be up there  
And I found myself drowning  
In the shallow sorrow  
The shallow sorrow of the curb's  
Forgotten rainstorm  
A cigarette lies to me as  
It teaches me how to breathe  
And all my thoughts flow underneath  
Chasing the sun in hopes  
To steal more time  
It disappears and leaves me behind  
I'm now taking off in  
A thousand different directions  
You tell me to stop and smell the roses  
I took you far too seriously  
Ripping my skin across the thorns  
You tell me that this shall get me nowhere  
But i am everywhere short of nothing  
You drown yourself and i drown too  
I'd still do anything to be with you

## "Sleep is the Antidote"

Sleep is the antidote  
Hold it in and watch it float  
All your emotions and  
How you feel  
Save some words for what is real  
Look at life like it's your last day  
Don't worry about truth and  
Start to pray  
For what you hope for  
Is all you see  
Let your dreams set you free  
Reality can't bring me down  
I don't remember sleeping and  
I don't remember a frown  
i see this for what it is  
This is a tree fort and  
I'm just a kid  
I have no tomorrow,  
Give me one last day  
Keep pushing limitations  
Out of the way  
I found sleep to be a medicine  
And if you know the answers,  
Let us in

## "Seeing is Believing"

Another sleepless night  
Another reason to write

My thoughts, like butterfly wings  
Are fluttering  
Aimlessly  
Only sitting still for just a moment  
To recognize the sun  
The air  
To be aware

Who am I right now,  
If what I think I shall become?  
Am I hanging on,  
Or am I coming undone?

There's no point in questioning  
For I hold all the answers  
The trick is realizing them  
Exactly as they are

POETRY  
BY  
JAMIE  
KAY EARL



23, Michigan, USA



"Rain"

## "Dreams of Being a Raindrop Again"

Consider the life of a raindrop.

When it rains,  
The raindrop comes into existence.

It falls through the air  
And lands  
Becoming a part of its environment  
There, it lives  
As one with the puddle  
Rolling down the window  
As tiny gems on a vine

It is what it is

Then, it evaporates  
Floats back into the cloud  
Becomes a part of the start  
Dreams of being a raindrop again



Jamie  
Kay  
Earl



"Glowworm"



## "Dream Song"

I stood in an empty field,  
A silent wind rustled the tall grass,  
And in this silent, solemn world,  
A single note broke its silence,  
A flowing,  
Tuneless song that  
Resonated through my mind.

I drew in a shattering breath,  
Taking in the song,  
I let it flow through my veins,  
And become me

Its beat became my heartbeat,  
As it swelled and fell,  
Like music wave,  
I let it wash over me.

And now that song is my voice,  
And its beat my heart,  
And I can't stop humming the tune,  
To a song only I've heard.

## "Shades of Darkness"

Don't you wish the world is as it seemed?  
Don't you wish the world was black and white,  
Defined lines, between darkness and light  
Where Good is simply good, and bad simply bad?  
Angels and demons  
Heros and villains  
But everything in life is blurred  
Like figures viewed through water  
All shades, all greys,  
No good or bad but shades of darkness?

## "Stop Time"

I wish I could stop time, right now,  
And live this moment forever,  
Stay here for all times time,  
Gazing into your eyes.  
I want to keep this moment forever,  
And never let it end,  
I wish we could stay here together,  
In each others arms,  
Spend it here in eternity.  
This way I could hold you tight forever,  
And never let you go.  
I wish we could stay right here forever,  
Never be forced to walk away.  
There would be no one to tell us,  
That what we have was never real,  
I wish I could stop the clocks,  
And stay this way forever.  
I wish I could stop time to be here  
Forevermore.

## "Into Dreams"

Laying, on my bed,  
Surroundes by darkness and silence  
The moon beams shine through covered windows  
I feel my mind beginning to slip away  
As I feel the pull of sleep tugging at my eyes  
I feel weightless, laying there  
Slowly, my eyelids shut  
And I become still  
As I fall asleep  
My mind slips  
Away  
Into dreams

## "Upon the Moon"

Once I dreamed  
We walked upon the moon,  
Sat closer to the stars,  
We explored the surface,  
And saw the dark side of the moon,  
We walked, floating, almost weightless,  
Raced each other to see who was faster,  
With great bounding leaps.  
We left footprints in the dust,  
And watched our planet earth  
Rise like the sun at dawn.

POETRY  
BY  
BENJAMIN  
TEURMAN  
17, Minnesota



## "Graveyard of Forgotten Dreams"

When dreams are forgotten, do they die?  
Forgotten, alone, where do they fly?  
Do they wash up on some unknown land,  
The wishes, hopes, laying on the sand.  
Do they stay inside,  
The weight pulling me down,  
Piling above my head,  
They cause me to drown.  
Or do they all slink away,  
To some unknown place?  
The abandoned dreams  
Lying forgotten in the space.  
Like a graveyard  
Where the dreams lay in rest.  
The forgotten hopes stay suppressed.  
Now abandoned, now alone,  
This is where they are home.  
Too big, too large,  
Nothing more than hopeful thoughts,  
Products of what life has wrought.  
Do they lie six feet underground,  
Forever lost and never found?

## "Morning Fog"

The fog, it hangs lazily over the streets like a  
watery blanket pulled up to a child's chin.  
It swallows cars, buildings and people in its  
embrace, choking light and eating darkness.  
It drifts just over the streets, like a cloud  
pulled down that just can't reach the ground.  
Its thick tendrils snake into houses, cars and  
alleyways, like the searching roots of a plant.  
It envelops bridges in thick vapor, the cars in  
the distance no longer visible in the mist.  
It casts a spell of mystery and silence over the  
city. Slowly, it lifts, motes of sunlight shining  
through, shafts of yellow sunlight.  
It vanishes without a trace, and the city opens  
its sleepy eyes.

*After it rains overnight, in the city where I live, a thick fog engulfs everything, floating just over the roads. I like to walk down the street and feel the cool fog.*





## "Fairytale 6"

### "Waking Up"

*Have you ever woken up from a dream, only to go back to sleep and continue dreaming it? My dreams are weird. And concerning. And scary. Sometimes.*

I could still feel the nightmare  
Lingering on my bed  
The fear  
The confusion

I had to get up  
Get away from it

Even standing in the middle of my room  
I could still experience  
The evidence of my anxieties  
The twisted up sheets on my bed  
My neck, damp with sweat

I had to get out

I roamed the darkened halls  
I drank some water  
I hoped to wake no one  
Still I felt my bad dreams in hot pursuit

I had to leave them behind

Out the front door I roamed  
Gently I closed it behind me  
I walked down the sidewalk  
In my nightclothes

And just kept going...

### "Daydreaming"

Today I got a lot done

I worked hard in my classes

But couldn't stay focused

I drifted in and out of the worlds

And tales I'd created

I passed notes with

My imaginary friends

I stared dreamily out windows

At the dragons-

I mean, clouds in the sky

### "In Dreams"

Was it a dream?

I hoped so

I didn't pinch myself

I didn't check the clock

I couldn't bear the thought

That this was reality

But the mist started fading away

The beautifully scented vapors

Of unreality left me

And I knew it was

POETRY  
BY  
KACIE  
HOOPER  
16, Oklahoma, USA

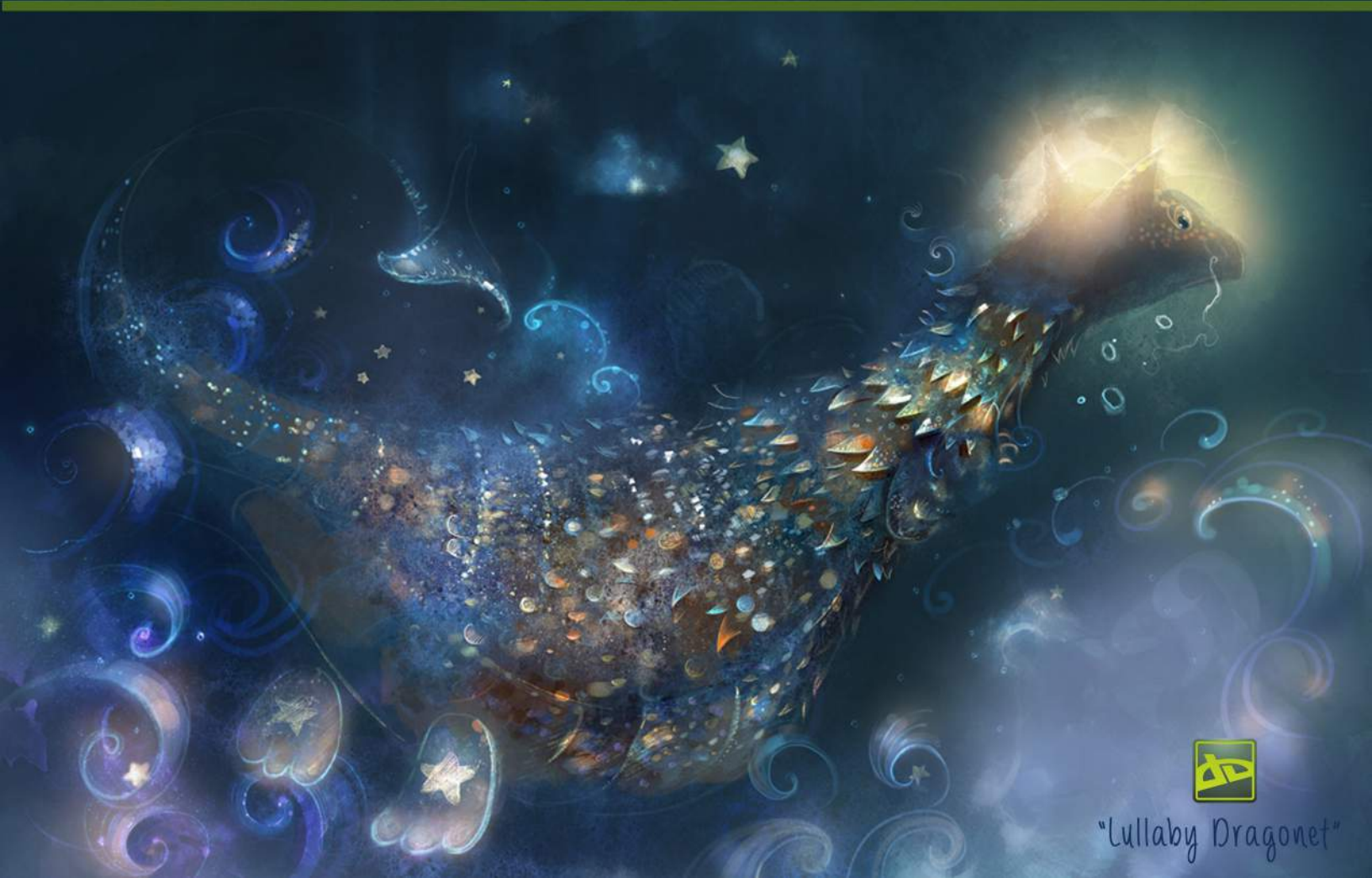


# The Knight, the Dragon, and the Child

*Kacie Hooper Continued*

*This was a creative writing assignment based on a picture I saw of a baby, an old knight, and a dragon all sitting in the forest drinking tea.*

He'd known the tea was bad! He'd known and what had he done? He accepted it! Hadn't his mother always warned him not to accept things from strange hooded men in the woods? Charlie should have been ashamed of his actions but at the moment he couldn't concentrate enough to feel much of anything except bubbly, blissful euphoria. The great dragon chuckled and sipped at his tea. "Do tell me," began the bumbling old knight. "How exactly did I acquire this suit of armor? For the life of me I can't remember!" He broke into rupturous laughter. Charlie grasped at his teacup with his small, chubby fingers, subsequently spilling it all over himself, all the while very vaguely regretting his decision to enter the woods in the first place. How would he ever get home? The knight buttered his toast while the dragon's scales began to change colors at random. He spread his massive, leathery wings and took off completely unprompted. "Ay! You bloke!" Charlie hiccuped. "Get back here so I can show you what for!" Suddenly, right before Charlie's eyes, the knight was enveloped slowly in a pink bubble and lifted off the ground and into the sky. That's when Charlie passed out.



"Lullaby Dragonet"



# "Fairytale 4"



## "Dream Town"

It is time  
Time to journey  
Time to travel  
To that mysterious place

I saw it in my dreams  
I found it was real  
I had to go  
And I'm taking you

We travel along a cliff  
The brown rock  
Shining bright  
In that sunlight

The road hugged the cliff  
Like it was scared to fall  
It was a dirt road  
To an unknown place

A look below  
Showed cactus  
Lining the valley  
Far below

We don't know exactly  
Where it leads  
All we know is  
I've been here before  
In my dreams

After many hours  
We saw it in the distance  
Small  
But somehow familiar

We entered the town  
To find three buildings  
Just sitting there  
In the middle of the southwest

One was a three story  
Municipal building  
With a restaurant, city hall  
And lodging

The second building  
Was a house of some sort  
Someone lives here  
Maybe they are inside

The last building  
Said railroad museum  
On a big sign  
In the front

We parked  
And walked in  
To find ourselves  
In a small museum

There was a big  
Model layout  
It covered  
A lot of space  
Little trains  
Were running  
Like they had  
Somewhere to be

We walked over  
To city hall  
As we opened  
The door  
We saw someone

He gave a grin  
And said  
With a happy voice  
"Welcome Dreamer!"

POETRY  
BY  
COLLEEN  
BRANSON  
18, California USA



"Fairytale 5"

# THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF MARIBELLE MCNAUGHTON

BASED ON A DREAM  
BY JUSTINA CARUBIA

*I have always been an extremely vivid sleeping dreamer, so when I came up with the theme for this issue, naturally I wanted to take a look back at old Facebook notes and entries to see if there was anything worth putting into this magazine. There is one dream in particular from 2010 that has always been my favorite, and it is titled "The Most Beautiful Dream I Have Ever Had". I decided to take this concept and flesh out some characters, and even add some new ones in efforts to create a world all my own. When I started writing the story upon starting the work on this issue, I was planning on submitting it as a complete short story. As I started writing more and more, I felt like it started to take on more of a novel form, but I am not sure if I can commit or if I am even equipped to write a novel at this time. I am still not sure which direction I want to take it, but I do know that to start off with, I would really love to release it in excerpts, solely online. If it ever becomes something on more of a grand scale, I am definitely open to the idea of self publishing. Until then, here it is. I bring you the first installment of The Curious Adventures of Maribelle McNaughton!*

Maribelle had just finished brushing her hair as she heard Miss Suzette, the housekeeper, chiming the dinner bell. Tonight was the first night her dear parents would meet her boyfriend of 3 years and fiancé of 3 months. She was exceedingly nervous, but excited, nevertheless, to break the news to them. Jeremy Hawksley was a handsome man, an inventor who had managed to charm Maribelle with his whimsical contraptions. He would send her mechanical flowers that would bloom and hearts that would chime little melodies after being wound up like a music box. It is no surprise that he had managed to capture her heart with his engineering efforts, as she had quite a thing for the smart and creative type. However, she knew that he was no match for the practical future husband that her parents had wished for her. If it were up to them, they would fix her up with the Sonderstein's eldest son, Emmet, who had just finished his Doctorate in Psychology. This idea was hardly romantic to Maribelle, who couldn't see herself smiling her way through a marriage filled with medical galas and charity balls. She opted for the spontaneous picnics and useless contraptions that Jeremy had to offer; she just hoped her mother and father would approve of such a quirky fellow as well.

Maribelle swooped down the staircase's swirly railing, and down to the parlor upon hearing the doorbell. She wanted to be the first one to greet Jeremy, just so she could make sure his hair was smoothed over and his bow tie was just as neatly in place. "Now remember Jeremy, no mention of your proposal until I give you the look." He took a large gulp, wiped the sweat off of his brow and nervously agreed as he caught sight of her bare hand. "Where is the ring?", he asked. "Oh don't you worry about that, it's upstairs in the jewelry box you gave me, safely tucked away in my powder room, I will wear it once we break the news..." He sighed a bit of relief, and she grabbed his arm and dragged him toward the dining quarters.

The dining quarters was a dimly lit grand room with mahogany walls and marble floors which clicked and clacked against Miss Suzette's lace up boots as she made her rounds, making sure the first course's soup bowls were filled to the brim. Mr. and Mrs. McNaughton were in the dining room, respectfully seated at opposite sides of the mile long table. The fireplace crackled in the background as Mr. Bram McNaughton's deep and booming voice bounced around the open room, "Come, and sit down my son!" Jeremy jumped and scurried over to shake Mr. McNaughton's hand. "Mr. Hawksley, we've heard quite a bit about you!" "Have you?", Jeremy curiously replied as he flinched at Mr. McNaughton's hearty grip. Jeremy then made his way over to Mrs. Maude McNaughton, took her frail hand in his own and kneeled to kiss it. She gracefully bowed her head to him. Bram then proceeded, "We shall be seated!" Jeremy and Maribelle sat on opposite sides along the horizontal stretch of the table. The whole party began to awkwardly slurp their soup, the sounds filling the empty room, as if to avoid any sort of actual conversation. "The soup is fantastic", Jeremy stated as if to kill his hosts with kindness. "Thank you dear, it's Miss Suzette's secret recipe!", said Maude. More slurping commenced as Jeremy looked to Maribelle, edging her on to start an actual conversation. Just then Bram broke the slurping again with his booming voice, "So what is it that you do, Mr. Hawksley?" Miss Suzette made her rounds clearing the soup bowls and setting the second course of Cornish Game Hen, herbed potatoes and greens.

"Oh, I am an engineer, and inventor." "And what is it that you invent Mr. Hawksley?" Jeremy couldn't tell if Bram was being sincere or if he was truly condescending. "Well, technically speaking, sir, I break things...Oh My! This chicken is to die for!" Bram examined him, "You break things...for a living?" Jeremy reassured him, "Well, yes, you see, some inventors send their contraptions to me, and I see how much pressure their parts can withstand."

I break them in order to see what they need to do in order to NOT break again.... then with the leftover broken parts from my experiments, I make my own contraptions, sort of like a hobby." Bram tilted his head in a confused manner, "This is a job?" "Well, yes sir", Jeremy reassured. "Listen sir... I love your daughter..." Maribelle gave him a stifling look as if he already said too much. Bram's voice boomed, "LOVE? WHAT IS THIS TALK ABOUT LOVE?" Maude chimed in, "Oh Bram, settle down now, you know they're just kids! They're in love today, and by next week it will just have been a meaningless fling to the both of them!" She then looked over to her daughter and directed, "You know we already have an agreement with the Sondersteins dear. Now, who wants some dessert?"

The table was awkwardly quiet as Miss Suzette cleared the dinner plates and placed dishes of Lemon Pound Cake in their place. Bram started up again, "Maribelle, what kind of life will it be to be married to an inventor? How many things will he have to break in order to provide for you and my grandchildren!?" Jeremy chimed in, "Well sir, I can give you my word that I would make it my utmost priority to care for your dearest Maribelle." "Well you are so good at breaking things, who's to say you wouldn't break your word?" Bram's piercing tone hit Jeremy where it hurt. He backfired like a loose cannon with, "I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER AND I WOULD LIKE YOUR PERMISSION TO MARRY HER!" Bram screamed, "NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!" Maribelle nervously spilled, "IT'S TOO LATE FATHER, WE'RE ENGAGED!" The room fell quiet. Mr. and Mrs. McNaughton were stunned and locked in each other's gaze; they were left speechless. Jeremy dropped his fork back onto his plate of pound cake and shockingly looked at Maribelle.

Jeremy squeezed in one last compliment in efforts to remedy the situation, "The pound cake is delightful..." Maude agreed, "It's Miss Suzette's secret recipe..." Bram huffed. Maribelle then excused herself from the dinner table in tears and left her mother, father, and future husband to be in awkward silence. She decided to go for a walk to clear her mind for a bit before she went back to make any attempt to remedy the situation. She wandered the grounds of her family's grand mansion on Hobbleshire Hill and before she even realized it, her wandering thoughts had carried her off the property and onto a dirt road. She soon came to a fork. She had never remembered this fork before. The road on the left, Locksley Avenue was a fine paved street that led straight into town, to all the conveniences life had to offer. This road had always been here and she knew this one well. But the one on the right, Belmont Road, she had never heard of or seen before. It's as if it appeared out of nowhere. It looked unpaved and barely travelled and the thought alone of the unknown sent a chill down her spine. Anything could happen down that road, but as fearful as she was, her curiosity had gotten the better of her. She started down the obscure country road as she started to recall the events that happened earlier in the day.

She knew the plans her parents had for her, but she never thought it would come to this! How could they be so unsupportive and judgmental! She walked for what had seemed to be miles and finally came to an old train station. It seemed to be deserted. She made her way up onto the platform and could see all the way down the corridor, with its polished wooden floors. There were no passengers in sight, but she then noticed a young man walking up to her. He was thin, and had on a uniform of a long sleeved blue button down cardigan, black pants, and short black hair adorned with a conductor's cap. She asked, "Do you work here?" Being the polite man that he was, he replied, "Yes, Ma'am" She looked around and noticed the lack of hustle and bustle for rush hour and replied, "All by yourself?" He once again politely replied with a, "Yes, Ma'am". He seemed to only speak when he was spoken to. Maribelle was always curious about working class folk, for she was a child who grew up fed by the proverbial silver spoon her whole life. "What time do you get up in the morning?" she asked. He was happy to inform her, "I usually wake up by 5 A.M. and I'm on the train by 7..." She was in awe and thought to her self how grateful she was that she was not he. She would never want to wake up that early to be at a train station that serviced no one! He noticed that she had not bought a ticket to go anywhere. "Have you ever ridden the rafts of the Jersey Banks?" he curiously inquired. "No, I have not...what are these banks which you speak of?" "Come on, I'll show you!" he offered. Just then, Maribelle remembered that she had left her estate on a whim, and did not have any money on her. "Oh, I can't, I am afraid I do not have any money for a ticket", she explained. "It's ok, it is my treat! You just really have to see this! You don't know what you are missing out on!" Maribelle blushed and remembered the way Jeremy would treat her to spontaneous adventures. She felt guilty for leaving him with the wrath of Mr. and Mrs. McNaughton, but she felt compelled to keep moving in this direction of uncertainty. "Ok, I'd love to!" she finally agreed. "Great! Then come with me, right this way!" the conductor replied. "By the way, "Maribelle asked, " What is your name?" "Alexander... Alexander Mapleton..." They smiled at each other and she followed as he led the way.

Alexander led Maribelle down the platform lined with wrought iron horse headed stanchions which signified that there must usually be enough of a crowd to form some sort of a cue, but today there was no such crowd. It actually appeared to be more of a ghost town. The couple stood around for a few minutes and Maribelle started getting a bit restless. "So what time does this train usually come?" she questioned. "Well, time doesn't exist past these tracks, so it just gets here when it gets here", explained Alexander. "So we could potentially be waiting a very long time?" Maribelle examined. "It's all up to you..." he grinned. Maribelle tilted her head quizzically. "What ever does that mean, Alexander?" she grimaced. He repeated, "It is really all up to YOU, Maribelle. You have the power to make anything happen. If you wish it, so shall it be..." Alexander declared.



## "Fairytale 1"



Maribelle had never thought of this concept before. She had always been used to people telling her what to expect from life. She had always thought she should try to live up to the expectations of the other people around her. The thought of this new concept had intrigued her dearly. She asked the conductor what she should do. He inquired, "Well you want the train to come now, don't you?" "Yes, yes... of course that is what I want!" she demanded. "Well, then simply just think about the train getting here now... it really isn't much more difficult than you're making it out to be, silly young girl!", he reprimanded." Maribelle huffed and puffed, but she soon let go of her frustration and closed her eyes. She cleared her mind and made room for her imagination. She pictured a large black steam-powered engine barreling down the wooden tracks toward their stop. She heard the whistle screeching clear as day as it drew closer and closer. She then heard one final scream of a whistle and smelled the scent of the burning coals and fiery steam in the air. Soon she heard the hustle and bustle of crowds piling out of the doors like cattle, surrounding her on the platform. All of the sudden she felt something bump into her. She opened her eyes and saw no one until she looked down. There stood a young boy selling newspapers, "Sorry Ma'am... would you like to buy a paper?" asked the boy desperately. "I'm sorry little one, I have no money", she motioned to her lack of pockets. He shrugged his shoulders and ran off. Her attention drew back to what had actually been happening right before her very eyes. The train was here and the once ghost station was now brought to life by passengers rushing around in every direction! Did she make this happen? She turned in disbelief toward Alexander to thank him for enlightening her, but he was nowhere to be found. She circled herself in disbelief..."Well that's strange?" she thought. She was captivated by the wonderment of all of this when all of the sudden a big booming voice broke through her concentration, "ALL ABOARD! LAST STOP TO THE JERSEY BANKS! ALL ABOARD, BOARDING FOR THE JERSEY BANKS NOW!" She shrugged her shoulders and decided to push through the crowd of new passengers boarding the train for the journey.

She made her way onto the luxurious train car dimly illuminated by intricate crystal chandeliers. She walked the car along the damask printed green aisle runner and down the rows of plush brown leather seats so worn and beaten as if this train had been transporting passengers for centuries. She wondered about all the places this train has been. She finally found an empty booth near a window and made her way in. Alexander was still nowhere to be found, and she wondered if he had also moonlighted as a magician because his disappearing act was quite top notch. She got comfortable and decided to take a bit of a nap before she arrived at her destination. As she closed her eyes, she wondered what the Jersey Banks would be like. She had lived on Hobbleshire her whole life, and had not heard of any such place. Just as she was about to doze off, she heard a tiny little voice, "Hello Ma'am, is this seat free?" She looked to her right, but saw no one. Just then, she felt a little tug at her petticoat and heard the voice again, "No Ma'am, DOWN HERE!" She looked down and to her surprise she saw a tiny little hamster in a little argyle sweater. "I'm sorry, did you just...talk to me? You're a..." "That's right Miss, I'm a hamster! We little ones never get any respect around here..."She just stared at the fellow with her jaw ajar as he continued, "... Right... Copernicus Hamsbottom, at your service!" He stretched out his tiny little furry hand to shake hers, and she extended her pinky finger as if she were afraid she'd hurt him had she had shaken his hand like she would a human. "So what brings you to the Jersey Banks?", Copernicus continued. "I'm really not sure, it was recommended to me by someone who I'm not even sure truly exists. I'm not even sure if what is happening right this very moment exists..." "And why would this moment not exist, Miss...uh", the hamster realized he did not know the young woman's name. Maribelle jumped as she realized she had been so impolite as to not introduce herself, "I'm so sorry... Maribelle, Miss Maribelle McNaughton. I am not exactly sure, but to my knowledge, hamsters are not supposed to wear sweaters, let alone have conversations with humans", she confusingly observed.

"You humans are always so bent on the concept of reality. Why can't you just accept the things you are seeing right before your very eyes? It would really be much easier and a less stressful life if you just stopped believing that certain things can't happen. Take this train for example. Somebody had the silly notion to transport hundreds of people at a time, from place to place in a lavishly decorated box on wheels, moving along a track. How many people do you think told them it was impossible? If they never thought it were capable to bend their own reality, then nobody would have ever invented it, and then wouldn't we all still be wondering how to get along on our journey?" "Well I guess I never thought of it that way...", she shifted her gaze toward her ringless finger and thought about Jeremy and all of his wonderful contraptions and experiments. She wondered how of all the things he could make possible in his lab, why couldn't he make things possible for them to have a life together. "Is something wrong, Miss Maribelle? Did I say something to upset you? I am truly sorry, that was not my intent-....", the hamster apologized dearly as she cut him off. "No! It's fine, it's just that...", she thought about telling the hamster about her situation, but she quickly decided that she didn't want to bore such a self-assertive creature with the meaningless details about her love life. "I see your point...", she ended the discussion and leaned her head against the window. The train was at capacity now and began to move. The sound of the wheels against the wooden tracks and the wavelike motion of the moving train cars began to lull Maribelle to sleep. To Be Continued...



"Wallpaper  
in the  
Nursery"





# About the Artist: Polina Yakovleva (Moscow, Russia)



"Summer Go to Bed"



Polina Yakovleva is the artist behind the glistening fairytale dreamscapes scattered throughout this issue, more specifically in our poetry featured pages. The talented Moscow, Russia native, illustrates books, poems, and stories for children.

She graduated from Art school, where she originally sought professional training as a designer. Upon graduating, she became more interested in computer graphics as a hobby, and then shortly after she started up her Deviant Art account where she posted her first digital painting. It was on this online artist's community where she observed other artists and gradually studied, honing her craft as an illustrator. She naturally gravitated toward creating pieces geared toward book design and slowly but surely in 2011, she started capturing the eye of book publishers who would place orders just to use her work on their products! These pictures are made to order for book publishers, as she does not generally work with the writers. She goes a little bit into her art making process with us, "When I start drawing, I see before me, the image of the picture. It is hidden in the dark

fuzzy and blurred, but gradually in the process of drawing, it becomes clearer and more real." Her main tool is Adobe Photoshop and her Wacom Intuos4 L, Wacom Cintiq 22 HD. The basis of her drawings are computer graphics, but she weaves in water colors, pencils, and other traditional mediums, as well as bits of classical literature. Often, she paints the individual objects in her pieces, by hand. For example, she paints her skies in watercolor, and does her grass textures in pencil or ink. She then scans the images she draws and adds her computer illustration over it to churn out her signature effect. She loves experimenting with watercolor textures.

A lot of Polina's work has been inspired by people, and the fantasy of being able to create her own fantasy world. She loves to watch the work of artists who paint backgrounds for animated films (the works of Kazuo Oga, Paul Felix). She also looks to her favorites, Hayao Miyazaki & Joanne Rowling, for a dose of inspiration when creating her own characters and nonexistent cities. Polina has always been fascinated by animation and has always loved to draw since childhood, where she was very fond of Russian folk tales involving Baba Yaga, an almost enigmatic character who embodies many different forms such as a cloud, the moon, death, winter, a snake, a bird, a pelican or Earth Goddess, a totemic matriarchal ancestress, a female initiator, a phallic mother, or archetypal image, etc. She also loved Norwegian fairy tales about trolls and dense enchanting forests cursed by "unclean spirits". In addition, her love of dream-like folk tales has shaped her number one passion into a full fledged dream career! She thinks it is extremely important to love and believe in what you do. She explains, "Dreams for me are a very important part of life. They are often very bright and have a strong emotional impact. I often find subjects for my pictures in the dreams that I have."

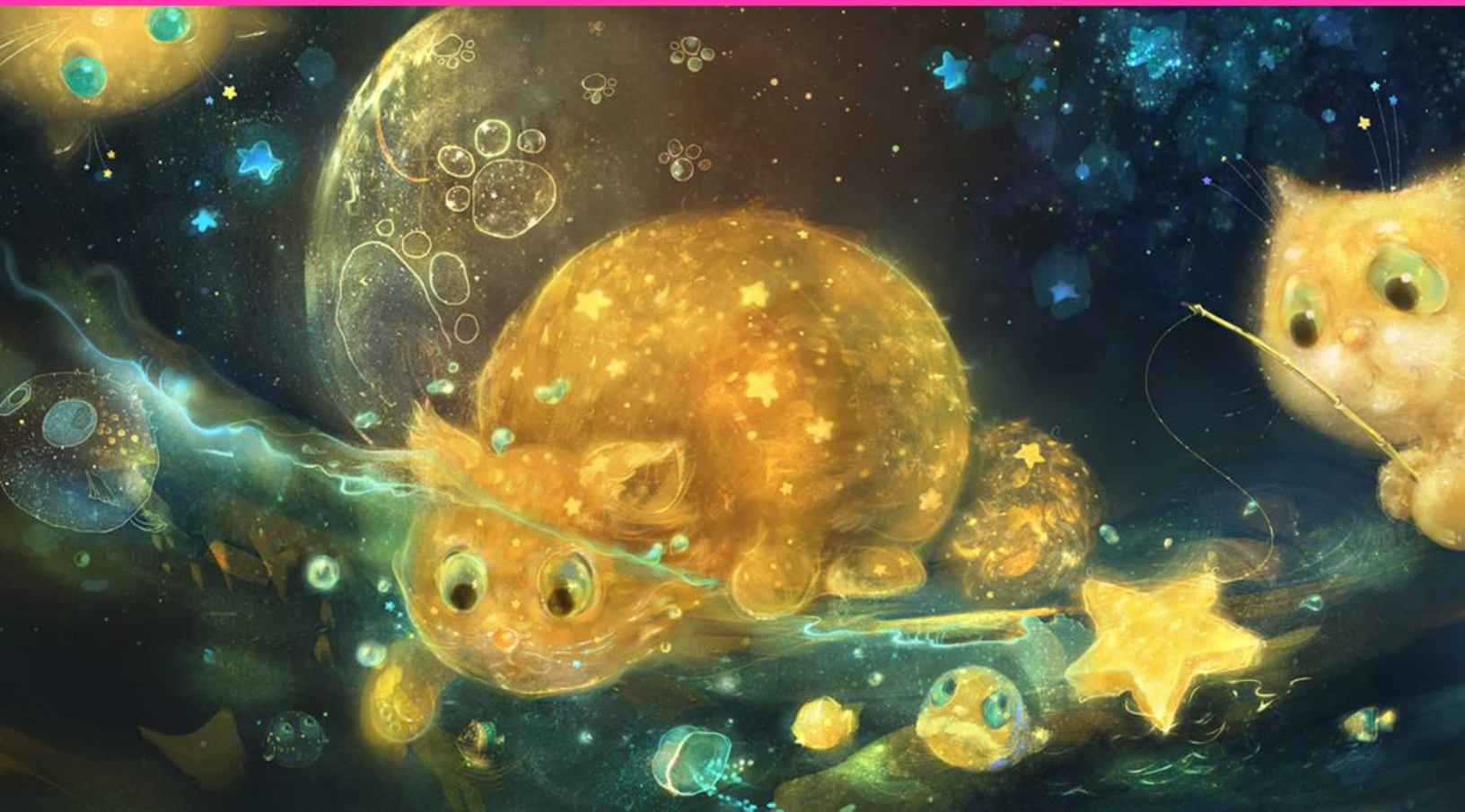
She goes into detail about her wonderfully soothing and eerie dreams, "The most beautiful dream I have ever had was long ago during childhood, I was surrounded by a vast ocean that seemed to go on forever, and in the middle of it was a whale. The feeling I got from it was so clear, overwhelming and calming all at the same time. I had a feeling of tranquility and peace." However, Polina has also had her share of much darker and twisted scenarios in the realm of dreams, "In my nightmares, I am drowning in black water, or I am haunted by witches." Despite from the very lighthearted and whimsical work that Polina churns out for her children's fairytales, she also has a collection of much darker pieces which have been inspired by her personal nightmares. When asked if she has ever kept a dream journal, she explains that although it is a good idea, she is more of an artist, and not so much a writer. She is constantly inspired by her dreams to depict visual representations of what she sees in her subconscious mind. Polina does explain to us that she no longer likes to paint gloomy pictures because she wants to focus on her career and her children's' book illustrations, and scaring kids is not such a good idea!



"Grandma Flew By"



Above is Polina's office! It is her creative space where she brings all of her magical pieces to life! Below is her piece titled "Moon Cat", another piece created for a children's book!





## BEHIND THE PHOTO

The above photo was taken by a New Jersey based photographer and a good friend of mine name Bobby Bates. He was creating a series of pieces for a concept exhibit titled "Flipside Fairytale" back in 2012 and he had asked if I would model for the Snow White scenario titled "Russian Roulette". I jumped at the chance to work with him not only because he is super talented, and I'd feel lucky to be a part of any project he had his lense in, but also because I am obsessed with all things fairytale with a dark twist. If I remember correctly, we had gone to Rutger's Gardens in New Brunswick, NJ which were really pretty. We had brought our own props (the mirror, blanket, apples, and costume). The above shot I remember he said he didn't put any sort of effect on. It was straight from his camera! How magical is that?! The colors are so beautiful, vibrant, and dreamy. He ended up exhibiting the piece at Villager's Theater in Somerset, NJ. The exhibit also featured pieces by local artist, Addison Vincent. The exhibit itself was awesome, taking place in a darkened theater backstage area. The pieces were hung on the wall along with creepy props staged throughout the displays. There was also a projector screen which they also showcased an art film set to the theme of the exhibit as well. Other pieces portrayed in this concept project were Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland, Rapunzel, and Goldilocks. The whole thing was so creative and I feel privileged to have been a part of it. I love the final piece that I had modeled for so much, that I had asked Bobby if I would be able to use it for my single album cover for my digital downloads for "Dreamworld" and he gladly gave me the ok!

## BEHIND THE SONG

I wrote this song in my early 20s and it was one of those songs that came to me relatively fast lyrically. I'm not even really sure what inspired the lyrics, it was one of those moments that I truly think my subconscious was getting this message from a higher power or source in the Universe. I personally feel that the best songs are written that way because it's just more organic and real. You can tell when things are forced, and this all came to me at once: lyrics, melody, chord progressions, handed to me on a silver platter. Those moments are rare, so I'll never take them for granted. The song was originally done as a scratch acoustic track and as fate would have it, a producer on the internet named Rohan Sukhdeo reached out to me about a completely different matter. He had a question about a manager I had previously worked with, but then we got to talking and thought it would be cool to work on a song together. I sent him my catalogue, and he picked this one. He put such a poppy feel to it which I would have never seen it go in that direction. I love how it came out, and apparently so did other people because it was used in a web series called "Hollywood Girl". To this day, it's one of my favorite songs I have ever written...

## 'DREAMWORLD'

Lyrics by Justina Carubia ©2012

I pay the time to pass me by  
 Ridding the nightmares of my mind  
 I'm half sick of shadows all the time  
 I wanna rise above the light  
 In your eyes you hold me...  
 I wanna go where wrongs are right  
 I wanna fix the story  
 Don't wanna wake during the night  
 To realize that you're not waking life  
 Cuz my dreams, they've sold me...  
 If I'm dreaming please don't wake me cuz  
 The only place I feel your love  
 Is in my dreamworld baby  
 My imagination's full of life  
 Savoring every moment  
 Don't wanna be plagued by denial  
 Reality is so unkind  
 When I'm awake and lonely  
 If I'm dreaming please don't wake me cuz  
 The only place I feel your love  
 Is in my dreamworld baby  
 If I'm falling please don't shake me cuz  
 The only place I feel your touch  
 Is in my dreamworld baby  
 And as I'm waking up  
 And I feel so empty inside  
 I just close my eyes  
 When you take me to that place  
 Where everything feels alive...



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"Dream Big"  
Marni Walker  
(20, Australia)



# LUCID DREAMS

"Dream Big. Don't ever try to limit yourself, or underestimate your potential... you could miss out on so many things. And especially, don't let others tell you what you can or can't do. "Embarrassment lasts a moment, regret lasts a lifetime." I did this with watercolor and Biro on an A4 water-canvas.

"A Lucid Dream is defined as any dream in which one is aware that one is dreaming. In relation to this phenomenon, Greek philosopher Aristotle observed: "often when one is asleep, there is something in consciousness which declares that what then presents itself is but a dream". The person most widely acknowledged as having coined the term is Dutch psychiatrist and writer Frederik (Willem) van Eeden (1860–1932). In a lucid dream, the dreamer has greater chances to exert some degree of control over their participation within the dream or be able to manipulate their imaginary experiences in the dream environment. Lucid dreams can be realistic and vivid." - [Read More on Wikipedia.](#)

## "LUCID DREAMS" LYRICS BY JUSTINA CARUBIA

WON'T YOU TUCK ME IN TONIGHT  
THE WIND IS BANGING ON MY DOOR AGAIN  
AND I CAN'T SLEEP A WINK  
MY HEAD IS SPINNING SLOWLY  
I CAN'T GO BACK INTO THAT WORLD  
SO STAY WITH ME WHILE I SLEEP...  
I CAN'T GO THERE ALL BY MYSELF  
I NEED YOU HERE WITH ME  
THE FEAR OF MY IMAGINATION  
WON'T LET ME BE...  
IF EVERYTHING I'M SEEING  
IS AS REAL AS IT SEEMS  
I'LL NEED YOU TO COME RESCUE ME  
OUT OF MY LUCID DREAM  
WHEN YOU ARE HERE IT'S SERENE  
LIKE A PIECE OF DRIFTWOOD  
FLOATING DOWN A PERIWINKLE STREAM...  
I'M DRIFTING TOWARD A DEEP BLUE SLEEP  
I CAN'T GO BACK INTO THAT WORLD  
SO STAY WITH ME WHILE I SLEEP...  
AND I'M WAITING FOR YOU  
TO SAVE ME...  
JUST DON'T CALL MY NAME,  
I MIGHT GET SCARED AND DRIFT AWAY...  
SO JUST LET ME SLEEP...

When I was around 18 or 19 years old, I had attended Art School and every Friday afternoon was our life drawing class. During these classes we would have 10 minute breaks halfway through class time, but the school was such a lax atmosphere that half the class would actually end up in the cafeteria for 30 minutes to hours at a time, relaxing on thrift store couches and having really in depth stoner type discussions about the meaning of life, and other abstract topics of the sort. One day we had gotten to chatting about the topic of DREAMS. One of my classmates started telling us about the movie WAKING LIFE. I made it a point to watch it, and I really enjoyed the animation on top of live motion film set to avant garde type of music to convey the dream-like feel throughout the film. The film is a series of vignettes which touch on theoretical topics based on dreams and the sort. I was really inspired by the picture that I had written a song based on the subject of lucid dreaming. It is titled "Lucid Dreams" and I only recorded it on guitars and vocal. I am not sure if I still have the track on hand, but I hope you can enjoy reading the lyrics as they can serve as a form of poetry as well...

# Interview With: VINICIUS MACHADO

## ACTOR, PRODUCER... PROFESSIONAL DAYDREAMER

Brazilian born actor, Vinicius Machado grew up in Orlando Florida where he took up an interest in the Brazilian Martial Arts, better known as Capoeira. His love of dancing led him to pursue other areas of performance as well, and it was his acting career that really catapulted him into more mainstream areas of the entertainment industry today. He has had many impressive roles in prime time television (CSI Miami, Flash Forward, General Hospital to name a few) and is most known recently for his controversial role as gangster Nomar Arciello in Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson's new hit TV Series "POWER", on Starz Network. Today, Abra-zine! sits down to chat a bit with the down to earth star, about his take on DREAMS, what inspires and motivates him, and keeps him ever so humbly grounded.

AZ: Hi Vinicius! Thank you so much for hanging out with us today!! Please tell our readers a little bit about yourself? Where are you from, How old are you and what is it that you do as a career?

VM: It is an absolute pleasure hanging with you guys. Thanks for having me. I'm originally from Brasil, Rio de Janeiro from a small inner city called Niteroi. I grew up one and a half blocks away from the beach. Imagine how rough it must have been being able to go for a swim any day or time we felt like. It was the best place in the world. I have the best family in the world as well, which only makes my background and upbringing more spectacular. I'm a father of three beautiful children, and a loving husband to my wife Luz Machado, also a filmmaker like myself. I'm a Brazilian born filmmaker today. My acting credits range from prime time television shows to studio feature films next to A-list Hollywood names. My resume is continuously being updated as my dedication to my craft is ongoing. I've established myself in Hollywood as a consistent working actor (which is hard to do) and have earned an astounding reputation with my past and present endeavors. I've produced now for the last two years, am an author and public speaker with the determination to reach upcoming generations and inspire them. I know how to successfully raise funds for a movie campaign by experience on Indiegogo, and love to share my knowledge and expertise on the structure of the industry with everyone who is interested. My motto is simple, "Stay ready, Be prepared for anything", fearlessness. I truly believe that if you can conceive it, then you can achieve it if you are willing to die for it. As to my age, I think we can leave out the fact that I'm twenty one. Just kidding, I'm thirty two. I love my life and everything and everyone in it. I'm a sucker for romance. I can watch a romantic movie and cry along with my wife. My tough guy stereotype (as usually characterized by the industry) is not at all who I am inside truthfully. I'm very sensitive actually. I love soccer, as all Brazilians do. And most of all I'm a sucker for food. I love to eat. It takes much work and sacrifice to keep my shape for my career. lol (laugh out loud).

AZ: At what age did you realize that acting was what you really wanted to pursue as a career?

VM: I grew up playing soccer. That was my childhood dream. I was going to play pro. Then, I began doing Capoeira (Brazilian Martial Arts) at the age of twelve. Through random circumstances, I became a spokesmodel, then a model. But I officially got my foot in the entertainment world professionally as a dancer. I started out dancing in many ways, using my capoeira skills and rhythm, then acting sort of fell in to my lap. I wasn't trying to pursue it at first. I had to audition for one of the school plays in high school as a requirement for the class I was coerced to be in (literally). I booked my audition and fell in love with the stage and acting altogether. I continued to book almost every other play in my high school for the remainder of my time there. I did join the drama magnet program at Dr. Phillips High, and got some basic knowledge, training, etc. I began doing films, commercials, industrials, etc. I did join different acting schools, like Zoe And Company, Inc. Acts III, Universal Studios (many different degrees), etc. I did go to acting schools, have taken workshops, joined different theaters and all. I've even had the privilege of studying with "Richard Brander" (Kevin Costners' acting coach and friend for decades) he is one of the biggest acting coaches in Hollywood. So, even though I've had much training that I could boast about, I feel that most of my craft was developed and refined during the actual work itself. I have always worked. There hasn't been a year where I haven't worked, even if it was only a few jobs that year. I don't dismiss classes in any regard. But there's nothing like being on the set. And for me, most of my actual craft came from the school of doing! So there was no time line for me. It's been a steady and very aggressive process since I was a child performing capoeira for the opening of Miss Brasil USA in Miami Florida that one summer night as a twelve year old boy, not knowing that his life would forever reflect that moment.

**AZ:** What was your first ever acting gig? Was it really embarrassing? Please tell us all about it!

**VM:** My first professional acting gig was at Universal Studios Orlando. Yes it was embarrassing, so much so that I think about it all the time still. I think about how in the world did I agree to do something like that! And you know what? The answer is, I'd do it again in a heart beat. Because as I look back now, I realize how much I miss it. How much I loved it. I loved every element, every second, every moment that those years benefited me. So, you want to know how I went from a seasonal performer at Universal Studios Orlando to a full time Entertainer with the blink of an eye? I was casted to play Olive Oil. YES. Pantyhose, dress, mannerisms, and a lot of guys grabbing me in private areas without realizing that they were touching a man. I was the animated Olive Oil, for obvious reasons. Due to the fact that I was so tall and slim, I was able to fit into that characters dress and height and come across as a female. Sorry to burst some bubbles out there. Most of the Popeyes are guys, but a lot of them are actually played by girls inside the costume. And likewise some of the Olive Oils are girls, but most of them are boys. So guys would come up to take pictures with us all the time and vice versa and they would just grab and touch and feel without any hesitation. I wonder how many, if they only knew, would ever regret not knowing. Yep, that was my first ever professional acting gig. I loved it. I learned so much from that experience, so much that I have with me today because of it. I'm so grateful for my woman days as Olive Oil. One last thing on that note that I must mention, dresses are so comfortable that I can see why it's such a successful and popular woman's clothing.

**AZ:** Recently you landed a role on 50 Cent's new breakout series *POWER* on Starz Network! Please tell us a little bit about how you landed such a gig? Would you say that it has catapulted your career in the film industry? And how do you stay so humble amidst all the new attention you have gained through your newfound exposure?

**VM:** It was a very interesting and unusual audition process getting the role of Nomar. I was actually at first denied the opportunity to audition for the show. They did not want to see me originally. I wasn't fitting for anything according to the headshot I submitted. It tells you how important it is to have a fitting and diverse set of head shots. My agent insisted that I had to be seen. It also tells you how important it is to have the right people behind you, who believe in you and don't treat you as a number. Hint. Well, long story short, I was allowed then to put myself on tape. From there, I went in to read in person. Then I went back for a callback, then went back for two different roles. I got Nomar. So in total they ended up auditioning me for 3 different roles, and it took almost a month altogether to get the role. Has this role catapulted my career? NO. I've garnered the current attention because my resume speaks for itself. My craft speaks for itself. My commitment to who I am and what I do speaks for itself. I'll tell you what the difference is between what you now see and what hasn't been previously done before. The difference is knowledge. A lot of actors think, like I did, that the industry is composed of talent alone. That's not true. There's a business side that I had no idea existed, and for as much as the media paints that to be such a negative thing at times, but it's not, it's more important than the talent side (for more on that subject and insight, look out for my book this year). That's the difference. I have no choice but to stay humble. Every now and then when I'm tempted to build an ego, my kids, or my wife, or my family remind me who I really am. So to them I say thank you for the humility and honesty they bring to my character. After all I'm a better person and human being because of them.

**AZ:** Can you please tell us a little bit about your character on the show?

**VM:** I played Nomar, a gang member of the Soldado Nation gang, who is a pedophile for dating his bosses fourteen old daughter secretly. He is blackmailed by the FBI who discover his little secret and coerce him to be counter intelligence in their pursuit of their most wanted Lobos. Nomar is stabbed and left for dead after his boss finds out he is dating his daughter and sends someone to kill him. The FBI finds him in time, but for what happens next, you'll have to tune into season two, premiering 2015.

**AZ:** Also, I know our readers are dying to know what it's like to work with someone so established as Curtis James Jackson aka 50 Cent. Can you tell us a little bit about what it's like to work with him and how he is more as a human being, and not the rapper persona that we see in the media?

**VM:** OMG. 50 Cent, or Fitty! Let me put it this way. The first time I met him.. first time... He comes up to me and gives me a hug. He tells me how good I'm doing and how talented I am and how much he appreciates having me on his show. I have countless amounts of story from the short time I had with him and getting to know him throughout my duration on the show, which was the entire first season.



50cent

26m

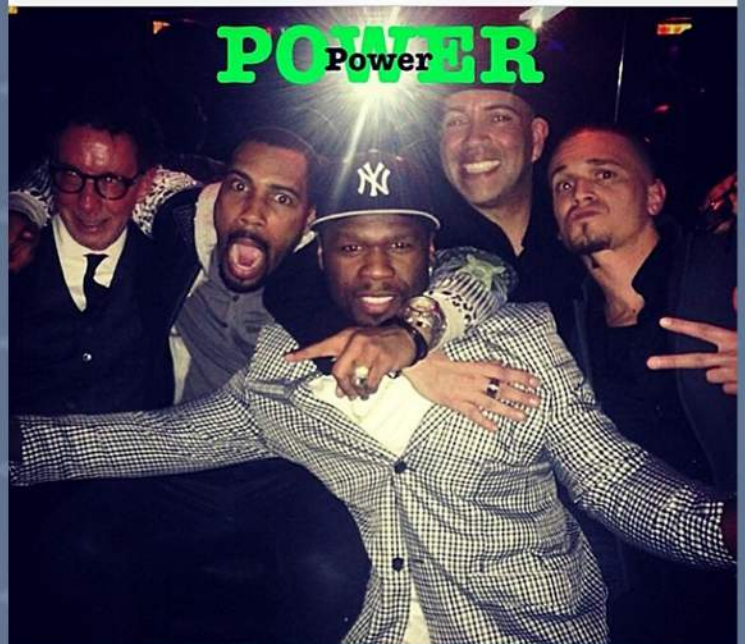


Photo Above: 50 Cent posted this picture to his Instagram of himself with Vinicius Machado (Far Right), and the cast and creative minds behind the hit series *POWER* on Starz Network.

*(Interview Continued)*

That is a summary of who this person is sincerely. I never saw him being anything like he is projected to be in the media. On the contrary, he walks into the room, to a table read, and has the same respect for everyone there, as he does for himself. He takes time to talk and get to know you. But above all, this is a man who is filled with wisdom and you know what he does with it? He shares. I learned so much from him in my 6 months filming process than I did from 4 years of schooling. Again, not knocking school off by any means. I believe in school, very much so. It's extremely important. But sometimes education comes in other forms and structures. I'll work with him any day, on anything.

**AZ:** How do you define success? What do you measure it by?

**VM:** Have I grown? As a husband, father, friend, human, artist, person? Has the experienced I just lived, made me better? If so, then the next question is, Am I in the position to share that knowledge now? Have I learned to the point of desiring to share? If that answer is yes, then the last question is, What am I doing about it? Everything contained in those three questions is how I measure success. A lot of people make money, lots of it. A lot of people lose money, lots of it. A lot of people have a lot of material goods, while others have barely anything. All of those things can fade, be stolen, surpassed, and more so, when you die you take none of it with you. However, your wisdom, love and experience if treated and cherished properly is a living legacy that will never die by itself. That to me is success. Aren't we more than what we possess? Or what people characterize us to be?

**AZ:** Our topic this issue is all about DREAMS! Please give our readers a little insight on how you went about chasing your dreams and ambitions as an actor in a very intimidating and hard industry to break into! Also can you please give them a piece of advice that you think would help them in their quest for their own personal dreams?

**VM:** Never give up! Never give in. You want something, go get it, period. Listen to me. I wasn't Union when I came out to Hollywood from Florida. I had so many people telling me I wasn't going to make it. My own agent in Florida told me that in order even to have a chance I had to be Union. My first two to three weeks of being out here, I got a manager, agent, a series regular role on a hit show and I became Union. Just like that. No lie. People will always doubt and say negative things, you have to learn to tune them out. Protect your dreams. I'll share this...Nelson Mandela once shared. Two boys were playing on the snow. One fell into the snow and got stuck underneath the ice. The friend tried to reach down to get him but couldn't reach deep enough. He yelled for help, but no one came. So he ran to the nearest tree and broke off a huge piece of branch from that tree and ran and beat that ice until it broke.

He saved his friend. When the paramedics got there, they were amazed. Officials sat around wondering how could a tiny, puny little boy climb such a tree and brake off such a branch as that and then beat and brake such ice, How could he have done that if he was so little? No one believed him, until an old man came and stood up for the kid and said I'll tell you how he did it. THERE WAS NO ONE AROUND TO TELL HIM HE COULDN'T DO IT. WOW. Think about that one. Impossible is nothing. If I can do it, so can you!

*AZ: As humans, we are conditioned to always want more. When we go the distance to reach one goal, and we finally reach it, we are able to see even further after that, enabling us to chase new goals and ambitions. Now that you have achieved all that you have in the past year, where do you plan to go from here? What are your latest goals for the new year?*

VM: I have so many. I'm not ready to mention some, but I'll say this: Now is the time to work harder than I ever have before. Now is the time to make this moment permanent. There are other areas of the industry that I haven't tapped into yet, but I will this year. Aside from that, I'm going to take where I'm at internationally. It's already lined up, it's all just a matter of timing. It's going to happen. Then from there, leaving a better beginning of life for my children's children. It's about securing a future for them. They will have a better beginning than I did to their lives. Till then, I will keep laboring to ensure that happens in all capacity and ability with the strength of my hands.

*AZ: As far as nighttime dreams go, are you a vivid dreamer? Do you remember your dreams when you wake up? Do you write them down?*

VM: I'm a day dreamer. Nighttime dreamers remain just that. Am I physically speaking? No. Perhaps it's because my mind is so tuned into my dreams daily as I hustle and labor to bring them to fruition during my awakened hours. Perhaps that's why I just literally crash at night and fade to black completely till next morning. I hardly ever remember my nighttime dreams. I do have a lot of visions. I write a lot down, but from daily dreams. Sometimes I'll be driving to an audition, or back from set, or grocery shopping, dating my wife, out with the kids, etc.

I'll have a vision, then I'll write it, sometimes even on my own skin so I don't forget it and I'll start to work on bringing that to life. That's how my life is. That's how I started producing and am doing some other things now. I just believe that anything, literally anything is possible.

*AZ: If so, can you tell us about the most vivid dream you have ever had?*

VM: Sometimes when I do dream and I remember, I'm always falling off something: cliffs, cars, buildings, etc. And it's painful to fall, and right when I'm about to hit the floor, I wake up. I fight myself to wake up before falling, it feels real. Then, I awake and it's very confusing. Are you an interpreter of dreams? Perhaps you could interpret those for me. I'd like to know if they actually mean anything. Those are seriously the only ones I remember.

[LEARN ABOUT INTERPRETATION OF FALLING IN YOUR DREAMS HERE!](#)

*AZ: Please tell us about any upcoming projects you are working on that you are really excited about!*

VM: I have a film out now called Beautiful and Twisted with SONY Pictures. That was a true honor to be involved in. I also have another feature film called Wild For The Night coming out this summer that I'm thrilled about because the story line was so engaging and entertaining. Such a great cast too. I'm filming two projects right now but cannot mention them unfortunately. All I can say is that you will see them this summer and fall of this year. I'm getting ready to begin production in the next month or so of my first self produced feature. That's all I'll say on that, and I'm getting ready for some endorsement deals and a special to be done internationally on my career and life, for Brasil. That's going to happen in April, so a lot of exciting things happening, among with some other stuff cooking.

*AZ: Thank you so much for hanging out with us today! We wish you the best with your future endeavors!*

VM: THANK YOU!



[www.MachadoVinicius.com](http://www.MachadoVinicius.com)

Photo by Efren Cordoba

# A GUY CAN DREAM, CAN'T HE!?!?

## QUICKIE Q&A WITH VINICIUS MACHADO

DREAM MEAL: Steak.  
DREAM DRINK: Pina Colada.  
DREAM VACATION: Paris.  
DREAM JOB: Dad.  
DREAM GIRL: Natalie Portman.  
DREAM ROLE: The next one.  
DREAM DIRECTOR TO WORK WITH: Tarantino.  
DREAM CAR: Lamborghini.  
DREAM TALENT: Cooking  
DREAM PLACE  
TO LIVE: Next to my mom again.  
DREAM LANGUAGE: Japanese.



Vinicius & his filmmaker wife Luz Machado



CHOOSE WISELY

WATCH SEASON ONE

**amazon**   
instant video

FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CURTIS '50 CENT' JACKSON

**POWER**

RETURNS THIS SUMMER **starz**  
SEASON 2

Art:  
"The Birth of Imagination"  
By Mark Will  
(New Jersey, USA)  
[WEBSITE](#)



# The Source

An Exclusive Look Behind Screenwriter Vincenzo Carubia's New Extraterrestrial Web Series...



*Director and Screenwriter, Vincenzo Carubia is living proof that we can all make our dreams a reality, quite literally! He is here with Abra-zine! today to tell us about the dream he woke up from one night, which triggered his subconscious mind to create his latest on screen venture: A Sci-Fi Comedy Love Story, mysteriously titled, THE SOURCE. He delves into his own mind and inner self to guide him on his creative journey and is here to show us that we have the power to do the same! Vincenzo resides in LA, California (USA) with his dog Alfredo, and the many characters in his imagination.*

AZ: Hello Vincenzo! Can you tell us a little bit about this new web series project you are working!?!? Word on the street is that this new project is inspired by or based off a dream that you actually had! Our issue this month is based around the topic of DREAMS! Can you tell us what happened in that dream from start to finish as much as you can without spoiling too much of the web series?

VC: Well I was at a party (This is real life). I remember there being a bowl of fortune cookies on the coffee table and out of curiosity I grabbed one. The fortune read "You will be visited by aliens". I thought that it was pretty funny yet definitely unsettling. I put it in my pocket and forgot all about it. That night after I got home I plopped myself into my bed without turning off any of the lights or getting changed. I remember waking up and seeing flashing lights outside of my bedroom window. My phone wouldn't work and my door was jammed shut. I approached the window slowly and when I pulled back the blinds I was engulfed by a bright white light. I then woke up in my bed and the lights were still on. I was still in the same spot and everything seemed very normal. I just remember for days after having a really weird feeling like I was being watched. It was kind of crazy but it definitely inspired me to write "The Source". I went on to have a couple other UFO dreams in that same month, one of which actually had a ship that crashed. I met this woman and her copilot. They took me in this ship and we flew up into the sky into this other planet. It was very mountainous and beautiful and the house was like a mansion built into the side of this cliff. I entered the house and there was a robot dog playing with a little girl. They had rooms and furniture just like us. There was even a photo of a girl in a jazz outfit on a mantel next to an old baby grand piano. I then met some other people in this house and it just seemed very real. This all triggered me to take pen to paper or hand to keyboard and make a different web series than what is out there today.

AZ: How many of the characters in your new web series are based on the characters that you actually met in your dream, and how many did you create specifically for the web series? Tell us a bit about the characters!

VC: In the first 3 episodes (which is all I had the budget to shoot), there are very few characters from my dreams besides myself. Roger works maintenance at a hospital in rural Shasta, CA. His love interest is Blanche Mayble, a sensitive nurse with her eye on the RN promotion. There were a few really awesome characters that we couldn't fit to be introduced just yet that will come up in episodes 4 and 5. The hypnotherapist in episode 3, Jezzabelle Whisler is inspired by a woman that came to me in real life in response to the dreams I had. I can say to keep your eye out for future episodes to see the dream inspired characters. They are coming. One is named Laura. She is a hybrid from another planet, who wears a cat suit and a cape flowing from her waist. She's pretty bad ass. Her side kick/co-pilot Phil is also inspired by my dreams. They originally made their entrance in episode one, but due to time and budget they will now appear in episode 4 (IF things stay in the order they are going). We'll see where the writing takes us.

AZ: I have read some of your rough scripts for the project and I was very impressed with your writing, which seems to be ever evolving! The series definitely falls into the sci-fi category, but would you say its subcategories are more sci-fi drama (X-files, Fringe, Independence Day) or more sci-fi comedy (Space Balls, Men in Black, Mars Attacks)... Your writing naturally has a comical twist when your characters are under dramatic circumstances, so I was wondering what your take on the direction was...

VC: Naturally, I always fall back on comedy. It's my way of saying there is humor in even the most ridiculous, scary, eerie, or sad situations. I would compare this mostly to that of Spielberg. Even looking at the shots and dailies it reminds me of Spielberg.

On set in the LA desert, filming with crew: Brian Sturges, Ryan Patrick O'Hara, David Solomon and Vincenzo Carubia.

Framing up the shot with Ryan Patrick O'Hara, Vincenzo Carubia and Alex Sherman.

On set day 1 with Alex Sherman, Ryan Patrick O'Hara, Vincenzo Carubia, Micah Fitzgerald and David Solomon.

I also see some elements of Mars Attacks coming up in future episodes. I don't want to give too much away but we have some fun ideas. My writing is ever evolving and sometimes I surprise myself. This project came out of left field and is now on its way into further development and 3 episodes are shot. The important thing for these first 3 episodes is to get the character development down and focus on the real core of the story, and that's the romance. It is sci-fi comedy, but it is also a love story. I definitely feel this is my most focused story I've ever written. Can't wait to see how it evolves.

**AZ: How do you think this web series is going to differentiate itself from other sci-fi show classics? What do you think is going to set you apart from the rest?**

VC: For one, sci-fi comedy they'd kinda turn their heads sideways like a confused puppy. "How are you going to do that?", they'd say. I was really blessed to have the vision and talent of my cinematographer Ryan Patrick O'Hara. He recommended shooting this in a wider aspect ratio which would really play on the sci-fi feel. Especially with our locations, having the farm with all of that vast road, open mountains and field, it was just beautiful to shoot. Every shot was like its own painting (from the mouth of my dear friend Debbie Vandermeulen) and I totally agree. I kept feeling like we were making a film and I had to remember that we are making a web series. This will definitely stand out. It's just so beautifully shot and has such a great storyline. There is no other web series out there like this one. Not saying it's the best ever, but it is definitely different than the rest (though I feel it's the best ever). :)

**AZ: What age group are you targeting?**

VC: I'd say the age group is definitely young adult. The main characters are all in their late 20s, trying to find their place in this ever evolving world we live in. Blanche is trying to get that job promotion, probably thinking about marriage, and Roger is just trying to live up to his father's reputation. I tried to make it hit as many ages as possible, but the age group that I think will respond to it the most is 16-35. It's young, it's fresh, and it's very artistic.

**AZ: Where are you planning on releasing the series (skip town website, a youtube page, a vimeo, hard copies etc?) And how will it be set up? (I.E. How long are the episodes, how many eps in a season, how many seasons are you aspiring to do, etc.)**

VC: I'm planning on releasing the series on the Skiptown website via Vimeo. The episodes are roughly 6-8 minutes each in length. The idea for season one is to have 12 episodes, but it really depends on the response the first 3 episodes get us. I would love to do at least 3 or 4 full seasons. It has the potential to go even further. The possibilities are endless. It really depends on the response. Who knew The Walking Dead would be where it is today. No one expected that to have more than one season and now it's the number one rated show on TV. The Source could take us there too. Who knows! :)

**AZ: What are your thoughts about existence of life on other planets? Have you ever had a close encounter? Do you think that dream that inspired this very web series was an actual close encounter!!!**

VC: I have no doubt that there is life elsewhere. It's extremely ignorant in my opinion to believe that we are all that exists anywhere. It's hard to say my dream was a close encounter. It could've been a dream. It could've been real. What I do know is, it inspired me, and now I'm taking my dream and bringing it to reality, onscreen. It was surreal shooting that scene. It was quite incredible actually.

**AZ: What do you think aliens really look like?**

VC: You'll have to watch the show to find out I guess :). I think a lot of them look like us. I actually have that in the show.

**AZ: Do you think alternate dimensions truly exist and do you think they're only in our subconscious or other actual existing galaxies (wow that was such a stoner question... you might have to eat a special brownie before answering that one)**

VC: Alternate dimensions, of course I think exist. In and out of our subconscious. I'll take one of those special brownies now.

**AZ: So earlier in the year, we interviewed you about a project called Swaggy, but you have had to put that dream of yours on hold for now. Sometimes things in life don't always go according to plan and we have to step a way from a project indefinitely because the Universe has other things in store for us. Can you please give our readers some advice on how you deal with obstacles when your dreams arrive at a road blockage?**

VC: Swaggy is still in development. It is not something that I will give up on. However the universe is constantly telling you what to do, what's the right move and where you should go. I wrote this script one evening when scratching my head writing music. I was just at a low point. I felt I really needed to have a breath of fresh air and expand my writing. Sometimes one story gets stronger when you step away and work on another. I already know what I need to do to perfect that other story just from working on this one. Life is something you have to cherish and seize. Our time here is limited. If something isn't working, isn't sticking, has you losing sleep, sometimes you need to change directions. I went into heavy meditation. I started reading "Autobiography of a Yogi" by Paramahansa Yogananda. I started meditating with Mala beads and reciting daily mantras. I became very spiritual and in tune with myself and figured out what I needed to do. This focus and clarity of my mind is definitely what made this script so strong so quickly. Meditation became my savior. It helped me deal with everything and realize that I am in control of my destiny. It is up to me to discover and attack my life purpose. Everyone has the potential to achieve that and many don't take the steps. I never did for a long time.

**AZ: What has been the biggest road blockage for you in pursuing your own personal dreams and how do you plan to get back on track?**

VC: The biggest road block has always been money. Creativity can take you very far but only so far before it still needs money. You can do things on a dime, but people will only work for apples for so long before they stop showing up. Another road block has been balancing my job and my career. It's not easy, but if you want it enough you don't let that be an excuse. You do what you're supposed to do to get your life fulfillment, but then you go to that job that pays your bills and just do the BEST job you can there with a smile on your face. The most important thing in life hands down is to live in absolute gratitude. Some people don't have jobs. Some people don't have food. Some people don't have roofs. Some people only hear about movies and have never seen one. The minute you become ignorant to this and stop living in gratitude, is the same minute the universe stops serving you to be the best you you can be. Appreciate the universe and express that gratitude daily and you will be rewarded.

**AZ: What are your hopes and dreams for this new web series and when can we expect to see at least a trailer or teaser of what's to come?**

VC: I want this universe to change lives, open eyes, make people see the world in a different light and possibly inspire people to reach their highest potential as a human in this evolving world. We are in a time of change. We are alive during the greatest time in history. Maybe not in the first three episodes, but throughout the show, I really want to implement this message and feeling. I want to make people question why we're here and what we're here for. We will hopefully have a trailer for May. I will also have a wrap party and then a release screening party somewhere in Hollywood, CA.

**AZ: Please tell us about any other projects you have been involved in recently that you would love to promote...**

VC: Keep your eye out for "Selfie Shootout". It is a great feature film comedy set for 2016 release. I just wrapped shooting that one. I'm in one scene. Also "Middle of The Night" is completed and I'm waiting on a release for that. That is a feature film horror that I starred in last year. That's due out this year. Lots coming up! I'm also auditioning like crazy. I'm always so excited to see what projects come my way.

**AZ: Thanks so much for hanging out with Abra-zine today!!**

VC: Thanks for having me!

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# A BIG KID IN



## A FIRST TIME EXPERIENCE BY AVINASH PATEL

Growing up, I definitely had a huge urge go to Disney World. However, growing up in a working class home, this wasn't exactly in the cards. My parents worked their butts off to try and provide me with everything I needed to grow up to be who I am today. Unfortunately, family vacations to Disney never worked out. Although I have no regrets, I often wonder what it would have been like to meet all the Disney characters while I was still little and thought they were all real.

I am currently a Designated Manufacturing Inspection Representative (DMIR) for the FAA. I do this as one of my roles as Lead Engineer at my current job. Basically, this allows me to inspect parts for the FAA in their absence. In doing this, I need to go through a re-certification process every 2 years. This year I had the option of going to Orlando to get it done. The seminar was only a one day thing on a Thursday. Rather than flying out, then returning the same night, I jumped at the chance to make a vacation out of it and finally get to experience Disney firsthand! I put in my time off, grabbed my girlfriend for the ride, and the rest is history!

When we first got into Orlando, it was actually kind of cold. Not the Florida weather I was expecting. Though, it was definitely better than the weather we were having back in NJ. We ended up staying at two hotels. The first was a Hilton Gardens hotel. I've always had a pleasant experience with them. We stayed here the first two nights because that's where my FAA seminar was. The next two nights we stayed at a Holiday Inn express that was within 5 minutes of the parks. Very convenient, but the hotel itself was eh.

(Above Photo: Avinash's genuine initial reaction to seeing the Magic Kingdom castle for the very first time! Photo taken by Justina Carubia)

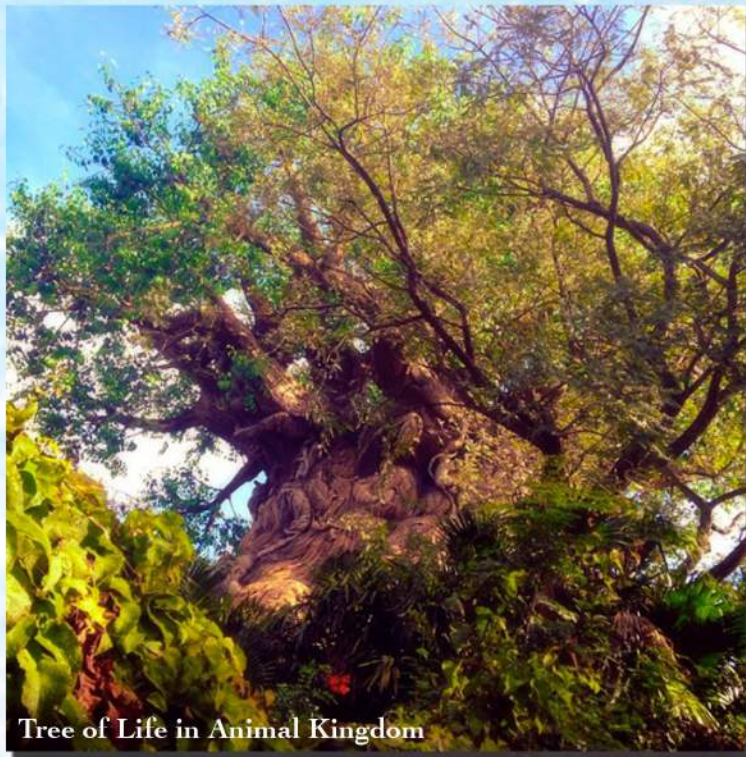
The first couple nights we mostly hung out at Downtown Disney, since our park hoppers didn't start till day 3. I thought the Downtown Disney area was great. Obviously a little pricey, but worth the trip to hang out between park visits. While there, there was a lot of construction going on so it will be interesting to see what changes happen in the next year or so. At Downtown Disney, BONGOS (Gloria Estefan's) Cuban restaurant was, no question, THE BEST food. They had these ham croquetas that were mind blowing, and the coconut mojitos were AMAZING!



(Above Photo: Avinash is enjoying a coconut mojito at Bongos Cafe in Downtown Disney! Photo taken by Justina Carubia)

Day 3 we finally started with the parks! We only had 2 days at the parks, so we decided on getting the Park Hopper option to our 2 day pass. GREAT INVESTMENT. We were able to spend 2 full days at the parks, and although it was tight with a lot of running around, we got to do all the major rides and shows we originally intended on.





Tree of Life in Animal Kingdom

The first park we went to was Animal Kingdom. I thought it was great. The park is REALLY great for kids. The main thing I wanted to do here was to see the Tree of Life; which was simply BREATHTAKING. It was so intricate, I easily could have spent a few hours just photographing it. We also went on the Expedition Everest ride there which was so much fun. Right away I could see the level of detail that Disney went through to make the parks look as authentic as possible. I was instantly in awe. Definitely take some time here. Hopefully the next time I go back, they'll have added the Avatar section. That should be amazing to see.

We were only at the Animal Kingdom for a couple hours tops, and then hopped over to Epcot. If I had to pick a favorite park, that I absolutely fell in love with, Hands down, EPCOT. At this point in life, I like to experience all this world has to offer. EPCOT was the perfect place for this with its mockup of 11 countries; 12 counting the African outpost. It is literally an adult playground. Everyone MUST visit Mexico. It's simply beautiful in there. Also take the boat ride past the temple inside. AMAZING! Mexico and Morocco had some amazing food as well. If you have the time, visit Italy and enjoy some great food and drinks. Hell, do all the countries, get a little something at each. IT'S WORTH IT! I'd recommend spending almost a whole day here, and if you're of-age, definitely try doing "Drinks Around the World". The goal, as the name implies, is to have a drink in every country at EPCOT. I am proud to say that we were able to accomplish this starting in Mexico and ending in Canada. Aside from the drinks, each country section felt like you were literally walking into the country.

It was really amazing to feel that way in such a small piece of land. Kudos to Disney for making such a wonderful place. (Btw, there are little outposts in each country to keep kids busy so the adults can have fun!)

At this point in my life (30 years old), I see the appeal of Disney from a more adult, technical aspect. I think it's a beautiful, fun, and yes, even magical place! However, as a kid, I probably would have been more consumed in how REAL everything felt to me. Rather than thinking, "Wow!! That character looks so real!", I would have thought, "WOW!! I can't believe I'm meeting [insert character here]". At this point, EPCOT was my favorite place to be, but as a kid, I can definitely see Magic Kingdom being life changing.

MAGIC KINGDOM is known as the epicenter of the whole Disney plot in Orlando. We see that castle everywhere, as children, growing up, before each Disney Movie, on TV... It's just EVERYWHERE! But, seeing it for the first time ever, up close and in person was just Breathtaking. It was such a weird feeling (in a good way). I can't really describe it and do it justice. I always heard about it growing up and all my life and thought, "ok. That's cool..." I thought I would have walked in there and thought, "Oh hey there's the castle" and went on about the day normally. That wasn't the case. I was in awe of the whole thing and the huge production that it goes through throughout the whole day. Actually standing in front of it, walking through it, and seeing the different light shows, I felt like a little kid in awe. I honestly didn't know what to expect, but it truly is magical.



(Above Photo: Avinash is having fun being a big (drunk) kid in Germany, Epcot! Photo taken by Justina Carubia)

Aside from the castle at Magic Kingdom, I think Space Mountain was amazing. It felt so vintage, yet was SO FUN! The Haunted Mansion was probably my favorite attraction though. The way everything was done, it felt real. To see the dancing ghouls and ghosts. It brought me back to being a child on Halloween. It was simply amazing. The "It's a Small World" ride was pretty fun too. I think more so because of the fact that at this age, the ride is actually pretty FRIGHTENING and CREEPY! HAHA!



(Above Photo: Avinash is creeped out by the jolliness of the "It's A Small World" ride in Magic Kingdom!  
Photo taken by Justina Carubia)

The last park we visited was Disney Hollywood Studio (The Old MGM). You absolutely HAVE to go on the Tower of Terror, a drop ride, and the Rockin Roller Coaster, a coaster based on Aerosmith's music. Hands down, BEST RIDES. MUST DO! This place also had some awesome Mac n Cheese n' Bacon and Pulled Pork n Cole Slaw Gourmet Hot Dogs! We also got to catch their night show, FANTASMIC! OMG! AMAZING!!!! I'm not even going to attempt to describe it here. I think my eyes were locked on the show the ENTIRE time. I felt like a kid. It was great. My favorite part about it? EVERYTHING!

I definitely wish we had more time overall. To do it right, I think I would have liked to do a park a day so it wasn't so rushed and pressured to be at a certain place at a certain time. In EPCOT, I definitely would have loved to do the Soarin' ride. In the Magic Kingdom, I would have definitely liked to spend more time to see EVERY little detail that the park had to offer.

I would have liked to see the character parade, maybe meet some of the characters. The inner child in me REALLY wanted to meet Mickey and the gang, but they were too busy doing other things. They also had a new(er) ride, The Seven Dwarfs Mine Train, which would have been cool to go on. Also I wish we had the time to do the safari in Animal Kingdom. I really want to try going during the fall when it's decorated for Halloween. I've seen a few pictures, but I know being there would be a whole other experience.

My least favorite things about the whole Disney Experience had to be... Hmm. Canada. I think Canada at EPCOT was.....meh. lol. I think they could have definitely done better, or picked a different country. (SORRY!) I do wish there was a monorail to EVERY park. The one that we took from EPCOT to Magic Kingdom was CLUTCH.

If I could give anybody planning to visit, one piece of advice, it would be this: If you're pressed for time, get the park hopper. It paid for itself considering we were able to park at one park, and then hop over to other parks using Disney's shuttle and monorail services. Another would be to WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES. I can't stress this enough. It's a lot of walking. Also, because of this, stay hydrated. Also, we didn't do it, but get the Magic Bands and link up your credit card to it. It'll save you the headache of, "crap... did I lose my credit card???" And lastly, download the My Disney Experience Phone App, which helped us check line wait times, places to eat, and also included a real time interactive GPS map that helped us navigate around the parks much more quickly without having to carry around the paper ones. Most importantly, remember, you're on vacation. HAVE FUN!

In closing, I don't know that I necessarily appreciate the whole Disney experience MORE now being that I HADN'T visited when I was younger, but I definitely can see how bringing your children to Disney is such an amazing experience. I hope to one day bring my own children there and experience it all through THEIR eyes. I honestly think that's an experience that you probably can't describe to anyone and I cannot wait to go back!





Avinash & Justina trying to stay warm in Epcot at night!



Mac n' Cheese Bacon Hot Dogs at Disney Hollywood Studios Before Riding Tower of Terror



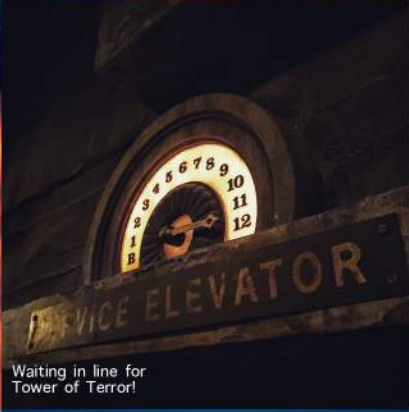
Just Got Off of Aerosmith's Rockin' Rollercoaster and it ROCKED!



A little tipsy in Morocco, Epcot



Climbing Swiss Family Robinson's Tree House in Magic Kingdom!



Waiting in line for Tower of Terror!



Avi found THE DOCTOR! (Doctor Who Fanatic in the House! England, Epcot)



Avi is EXHAUSTED after a night at Downtown Disney!



Avi is cheesing in China, Epcot



We've ARRIVED!



FANTASMIC FINALE! Disney Hollywood Studios



Avi is in AWE of Fantasmic!



Avi's sad he's leaving :-(



Ready to ride Test Track in Epcot!



Taking a break at the shuttle stop. Justina is not happy with all this walking



Our new little troll friends in Norway, Epcot



Mojitos at Gloria Estefan's Establishment in Downtown Disney!



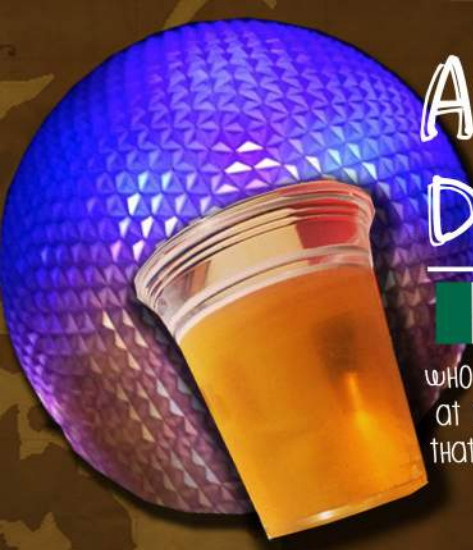
Justina found a viking friend in Norway, Epcot



Cinderella's Castle, Magic Kingdom!



Avi in front of his new favorite ride, The Haunted Mansion, in The Magic Kingdom



# Avinash's Guide to Epcot's DRINKS AROUND THE WORLD



WHO SAID YOU NEEDED STAMPS ON YOUR PASSPORT TO ENJOY THE CULTURES FROM 11 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES!? AT DISNEY'S EPCOT PARK, YOU CAN ENJOY A WALK AROUND THE WORLD IN JUST A DAY, AND EXPERIENCE ALL THAT EACH CULTURE HAS TO OFFER! HERE ARE SOME OF MY PERSONAL RECOMMENDATIONS AS FAR AS FOOD, WINE, BEER, & SPIRITS ARE CONCERNED. IN ORDER, STARTING WITH MEXICO!

## Mexico

**Hot Spot:** La Cava del Tequila. We kicked our journey off with an **Agave Flight** of the following: **Exotico Tequila Blanco** - This is 100% Blue Agave tequila at 40% ABV. A very smooth tequila with a robust oak flavor. Perfect with the classic salt and lime accompaniment. A very good sipping tequila. Not something I'd shoot on a night out on the town. • **Sangrita** - A tomato juice base mixed with lime, grapefruit, and orange juices, finely chopped red onion, mint leaves, and Serrano peppers, and finished with agave nectar and salt for some balance. La Cava del Tequila's sangrita serves as a wonderfully peppery palate cleanser between the shot of tequila blanco and the mezcal. • **Zignum Mezcal Blanco** - A 100% Blue Agave mezcal also at 40% ABV. This mezcal has a smoky and clean oak flavor with a smooth salty finish. Also a sipper that I'd love to have again one day on a brisk fall night.



## Norway

**Einstok Icelandic White Ale** - We got this from one of the vendor carts outside of the Norway country stop. A typical witbier from this European region with an alcohol content of 5.2% ABV. Brewed 60 miles south of the Arctic Circle in the fishing port of Akuryri, Iceland utilizing the flowing rain waters and prehistoric glacier runoff through the Hlíðarfjall Mountains and ancient lava fields. The best way I could potentially describe this beer to witbier fans would be a combination of Blue Moon's Belgian White and Hoegaarden's White. Einstok has a very clean and refreshing taste of citrus and coriander spices. Although this is a witbier, it has a lighter and more carbonated mouth feel. This beer is a definite hit for the warmer months along side some smoked or grilled meals. I want to get a sixer of this stuff.



## China

**Tsing Tao Beer** - A very light pilsner style lager coming in at 4.8% ABV. This beer is brewed with yeast from Germany, malted barley from Australia, Canada, and France, hops and rice from Western China and fresh spring water from China's Laoshan Mountain. This lager provides a crisp, nutty, flavor reminiscent of Heineken. A decent "everyday" beer suited well for slightly spicy foods and boldly flavored Asian cuisine. Not something I'd go out of my way to buy, but something I'd definitely indulge in if it were on the menu at a restaurant.



## Germany (Round 1)

**Wine Flight: Grafen Neipperg Lemberger** - This robust wine comes in at 13% ABV. Made from the Lemberger grapes found in the Württemberg area of Germany, this is a great wine for those that enjoy a slightly drier red. Aromas of cherry, plum, and faint spices on the nose with well-balanced tannins on the palate. A great wine to accompany sharp cheddars and sweet grapes. **Hex vom Dassenstein** - A 13% ABV Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) from Baden, Germany. This wine is not for the faint of heart or those that prefer the sweeter end of reds. With a very earthy and robust mineral quality, the wine is balanced with notes of plums and dark cherries on the nose, but hammers home the flavors of the barrel it was fermented in. This wine is paired well with sweet fruits and mild nuttier cheeses. Not a novice wine AT ALL, but a must have for sure. **Valckenberg Dornfelder** - The sweetest of the trio. Sweet flavors of blackberry, black currant, and vanilla. Black cherry makes an appearance on the nose and palate for this one too. Goes real well with strong flavors, like that of an aged cheese. Make sure that cheese is super stinky though for the right punch to those taste buds. I'm talking gym sock stinky!



## (Round 2)

**Bärenjäger Honey and Bourbon** - Time to step it up with another shot. I'm a big fan of Jagermeister, but to say this is similar would be completely false. This 35% ABV nectar of the gods is a brilliant blend of honey liqueur and Kentucky bourbon whiskey. Based on my recent infatuation with all things whiskey, this is a no brainer for me. SO tasty! MORE!!!! **Erdinger Beer** - A chaser to the tasty Bärenjäger shot. This is an equally tasty dark wheat beer with the taste of toffee, chocolate, bread, and great heaping serving of AWESOME! A bit on the heavier side for a dunkelweizen, but not heavy enough to slow me down in my quest to conquer the 11 countries of E.P.C.O.T. A beer to slam back, and press forward. ONWARD KIDS!



 Italy

**Beer Flight: Moretti** – An Italian staple. Love Moretti so much, I had to have it as part of this beer flight. 4.6% ABV, light, crisp, perfect carbonation, easy to drink, TASTY. Smells of caramel and malt with just enough hoppy bitterness to cleanse the palate between sips. Perfect meal beer, and at this point, food is definitely necessary. Better order the Italian cold cut and cheese platter to help us out here... bread, breadsticks, prosciutto, salami, and goatcheese... GET IN MY MOUTH!! **La Rossa** – A new Italian favorite for me, and a STRONG one too; 7.2% ABV. Made by Moretti, this beer is similar to standard Moretti, but with a sweeter taste and more intense smell of roasted malts. OH NICE!! The meat and cheese platter is here! Time to soak up some of this alcohol! This beer is PERFECT with the cured meats we got. I could drink 10 more of these... though I may not remember them... thank god for Instagram. **Anderson Valley Winter Solstice** – Not an Italian beer, but still a good one. Perfect for warming you up on those colder, winter nights at 6.9% ABV. Great beer. Spiced, hoppy, sweet, caramel, and a rich, creamy mouthfeel on the finish. Works real well with the goatcheese on our food platter. I want more! **Goose Island Endless IPA** – 5.0% ABV. Standard American IPA. Not too much to say about this one. Tasty, hoppy, clean, crisp. Could also drink a BUNCH of these. But I must press on to the glass of wine that was ordered, and finish the rest of this platter! **Cantadoro** – Great wine! Perfect balance of tart, bitter, sweet with a bold and robust mouthfeel. Not sure what ABV this one is but I'm pretty sure between all the beer and wine before this one... it's not going to matter anymore... SO MANY wines here, not enough time to try them all, unfortunately. ALL DONE! Time to head to... USA! USA! USA!

 America

Between Italy and America, there is a little cafe stand which we got some “Doppio” espressos to keep our momentum going. A little too much vino rossa after Italy had us feeling a bit sleepy. We threw our shots of espresso back as we made our way over to America. This stop was a bit of a bore honestly, and unless you want to see a show about the Presidents or something of the sort, there is really not much else to do here. As for the beer selection, **Bell's Oberon** – Standard American wheat ale; 5.8% ABV. Faint lemons, bread-like aroma and taste. Just one to add to the list. I feel like I need to chop down a tree and devour a burger with a side of steak. Why? Cuz “MURICA!”. That's why!

 Japan

**Sake** – Japanese rice wine. Not sure what kind of sake we got, but we got it cold and it was delicious. I didn't know warm sake was a thing, but the option is there if that's what you're into. The sun's going down at this point. Time is running out... need to move faster! Chugging sake like it's water isn't a bad thing....right? This should end well... I picked a fight with a duck here btw... pretty sure it was Donald's cousin. After our sake we headed into the shops here where there were a lot of tiny things and cats simulating their fists into a “knocking on the door” type motion. I think we had contemplated getting sushi here but then ultimately decided against it. I think we were still bloated from the whole farm of cured meats and creamy cheeses we devoured in Italy. It's pretty dark out now... Onto Morocco!

 Morocco

**Moroccan White Wine** - This was a cool stop as it truly captured the rustic feel of this country with its mosaic tiles and Souk markets selling trinkets and colorful gypsy wares. We were finally in dire need of more food in order to make it to the end of our 11 country marathon! We got more white wine, accompanied by lamb and chicken shawarma, cous cous and mint salad with pita and hummus. Perfection. This food stop should help us out on our journey...for me anyway... I think Juss just “Lost English”. The wine tastes a lot like champagne. Sweet, bubbly, little dry. I think I need a nap... forget it. I lost Justina... Oh wait, found her! WE MUST KEEP GOING!!!

 France

**Vouvray White Wine** – This wine is OK. I wish I had a meal with this. Chicken or fish for sure. Most of the restaurants here seemed to be more of the wine and dine, fancy shmancy, sit down type. Unfortunately we did not get to sample any of the food here. It's dark now. THE PARK IS GOING TO CLOSE SOON!!!! I think I scared the French girl behind the counter when I ordered my wine here... I thought I was speaking clearly... guess not. Juss was just laughing at me and apologizing to the girl on my behalf. I'm not sure the girl understood her either. We might need to be carried out of here... I might be a little drunker than I thought... Am I even drunk? ...Yah I'm drunk...This has been a long day... two more countries to go!!!

 England

**Boddington's Pub Ale** – A pub STANDARD! It was between this or Guinness. I love Boddington's but I definitely think the smoother Guinness would have been better at this point. There's a band playing here! So awesome! I want fish and chips. The streets of this country were cobblestoned and the buildings had that old world feel. Being the Dr. Who fan that I am, I was in my glory as I found little bits of the show memorabilia scattered about the gift shops here. If you're a Dr. Who fan like myself, then the gift shops here are a must! I also had way too much fun going into the red phone booths. NEED ONE.

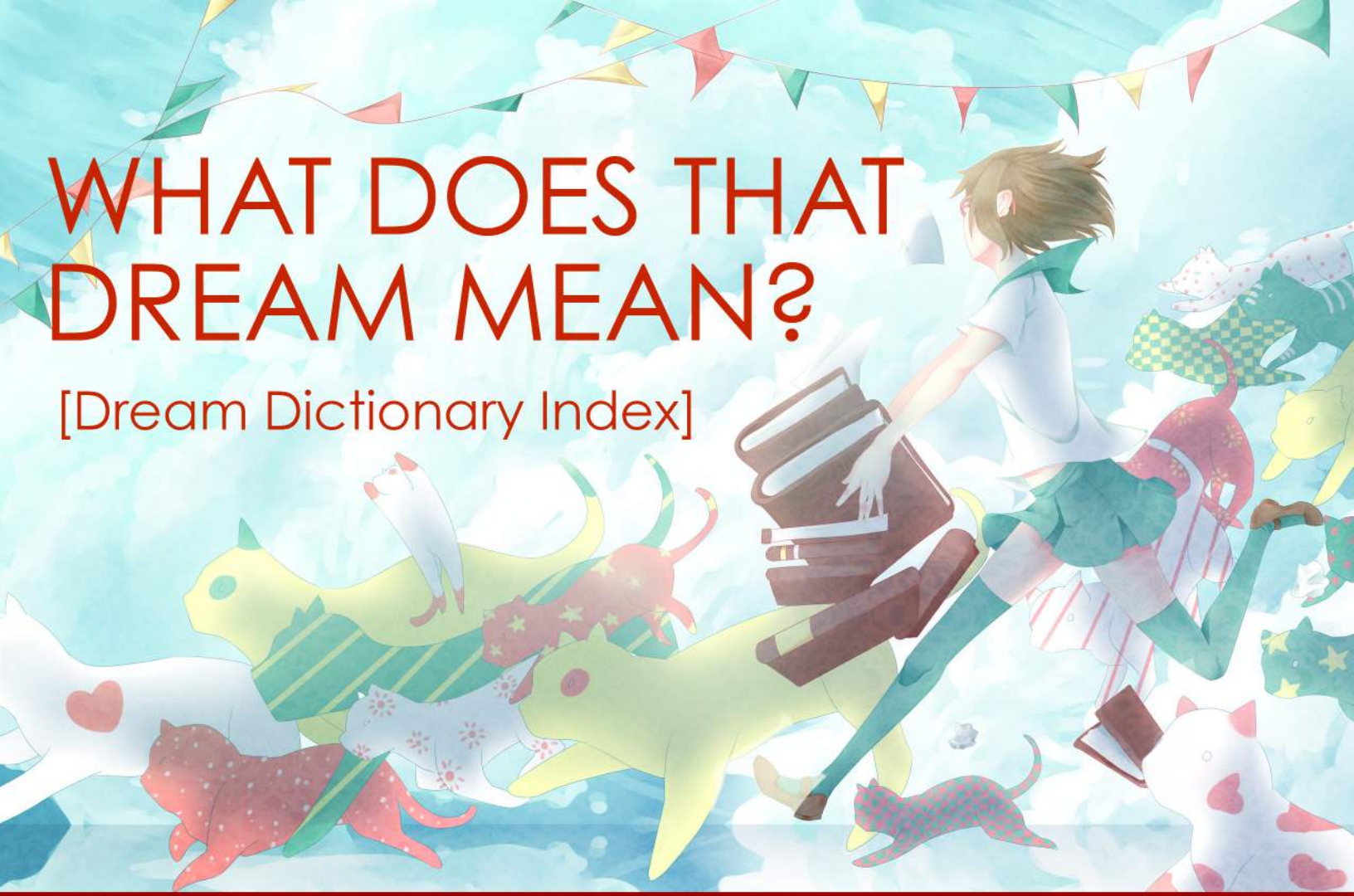
 Canada

**Unibroue Ephemere** - WOOHOOO!!!! DID IT!!!! MADE IT AROUND THE WORLD!!!!!! Now lets try this beer!! .....uh..... DON'T DO IT! Pick another one. Avoid it! GROSS! We threw this one back with a bucket of popcorn. As far as activities go at this stop, there was an educational film that we opted to skip. I heard the steakhouse here was amazing, but we got here so late that we didn't get to check it out.

Time to see the E.P.C.O.T. fireworks!! ... crap... that means we need to walk... they really need to invent that whole teleportation thing already.... Where's my wallet? Goodnight.

# WHAT DOES THAT DREAM MEAN?

[Dream Dictionary Index]



Have you ever had that extremely odd and cryptic dream that you're just dying to know what it all means? Sometimes, we pass these silly dreams off as simply meaningless, but have you ever thought that maybe they could mean something more profound? In some cases, dreams are a reflection of things that we are subconsciously dwelling on in our day to day waking lives. Below you will find an index of some of the most popular online dream dictionaries to help you decipher some of those weird ones that just don't seem to make any sense...

[DreamMoods.com](http://DreamMoods.com)

[DreamDictionary.org](http://DreamDictionary.org)

[MyDreamVisions.com](http://MyDreamVisions.com)

[HyperDictionary.com](http://HyperDictionary.com)

[Sleeps.com](http://Sleeps.com)

[World-of-Lucid-Dreaming.com](http://World-of-Lucid-Dreaming.com)

[MythsDreamsSymbols.com](http://MythsDreamsSymbols.com)

[Paranormality.com](http://Paranormality.com)

[DreamBible.com](http://DreamBible.com)

[Petrix.com](http://Petrix.com)

[Dreamhawk.com](http://Dreamhawk.com)

[DreamDoctor.com](http://DreamDoctor.com)

[UrbanDreamDictionary.com](http://UrbanDreamDictionary.com)

[Way-of-Tao.com](http://Way-of-Tao.com)

Art: "Dreaming With Cats" by Loh Wei Tong (17, Singapore)

My concept was to portray my inner world of slacking and basically not studying at all. I hated studying especially towards graduation year. I always daydream about going home and throwing my bag down just to sit next to my cat and talk to him. He's like family to me and other cats that hang around too.

[WWW.HAPHWEI.WEEBLY.COM](http://WWW.HAPHWEI.WEEBLY.COM)



Artwork:  
"Hand"  
By Mark Will  
Website



# NEED A HAND Getting to Sleep AT NIGHT?

## TIPS FOR THE FELLOW INSOMNIAC

By Justina Carubia

*It's no wonder that the creative type is often the worst sufferer of that horrible nightly disorder better known as "Insomnia". Our minds are always on brainstorm mode, often thinking of the next big project we want to take on. In my personal experience, I have always had a huge idea hit right before bedtime, and then I feel obligated to get as much of that idea down as I can before the witching hour. I have been a huge sufferer of Insomnia for years, so much so that I actually wrote a song about it during one of those sleepless nights! Sometimes it's worse than others, but throughout the years I have tried different things to aid in getting my beauty sleep! Here are my personal tips that I have found helped a bit. Some worked better than others...*

- 1. EXERCISE** - The first thing and probably THE most important is to **DESTRESS YOUR LIFE**, and I can't stress that enough! Things like exercising in the evening after a work day can aid in decompressing, and will wear you out enough so when it's time to hit the pillow a few hours later, drifting off to dreamland becomes effortless!
- 2. TIME MANAGEMENT** - We often procrastinate on large tasks and then try to cram things in the day before it's due, causing us to stay up past bedtime to get things done. Create a calendar if you have to, pencil in your time to work on projects gradually throughout the month so you can meet deadlines with ease, AND get your sleep!
- 3. DIET** - A year ago, I tried something called the "Paleo Diet". I am not suggesting this would work for everyone, but find a healthier way of eating that works for YOU! This diet had me cut out pasta, starches, and refined sugars! You really don't realize how much processed sugar is in prepackaged food we eat on a daily basis, things that you wouldn't even think of! I stuck to a diet of meats, fresh fruits and veggies and drank nothing but water. I was getting tired around 8 PM, and was passed out by 9. That diet was the best I've ever slept in my life. I must try it again! Also no eating within 2 hours of bedtime! Also stick to herbal decaf teas! Chamomile Lavendar or Sleepy Time are my faves!
- 4. TURN OFF** - This one is probably the most important, and one I still have trouble with. With the age of electronics and gadgets in our faces throughout the day, it's hard to know when to unplug and **GO THE EFF TO SLEEP!** If you can, set yourself a time to unplug and give yourself that hour to unwind from electronic-land. Read a book! That always makes me sleepy!
- 5. GUIDED MEDITATION** - Some people sleep better when there is noise in their ears or soft in the background. I know I do. Put on ocean waves, or a lulling voice gently guiding you to sleep. Sometimes this helps me, sometimes it doesn't.
- 6. MELATONIN** - I'm not really a believer in over the counter or prescribed sleeping aids. We often get dependant on things of the sort, and I don't want to have to rely on something to do what my body should be doing naturally. Melatonin is great because it is an all natural supplement containing a chemical hormone we already have in our brains, which tells us when it's getting dark out. It preps our bodies and minds for bedtime and most Insomniacs have a chemical imbalance in which we lack that hormone. You can find these in tablet form and they disintegrate under your tongue. You can find them at any healthfood store, but I would consult your doctor before taking anything. Also be careful with this because an **OVER** supply of melatonin to the brain can result in severe depression, so this tablet should only be taken when absolutely needed AND never during the day. Only at night before bed.

 **MY SELFISH INSOMNIA - POEM BY JACOB DANIEL CAMERON**

Every minute that I spend awake fills me with such regret. I want to sleep, I really do, I want to be the one who you think of in times of bliss. I don't like staying up when you think I'm asleep... I'm scared somehow I'll devour your dreams. It feels like I'm lying to you every second I remain conscious...

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Through my own journey in health and wellness, I discovered that my mission in life is to make others healthy and happy. It's how I give back. Whether people buy my products or not, I go above and beyond to help others achieve their wellness goals. I am looking to sponsor 5 new coaches. If you have a passion for fitness (mind and body), want to transform lives, and generate extra income, I want to hear from you. Beachbody is an amazing company and have transformed many lives. It's a great time to jump in and help us end the trend of obesity.

For more information, please email Nicole at [Nicoleleefitness@gmail.com](mailto:Nicoleleefitness@gmail.com)



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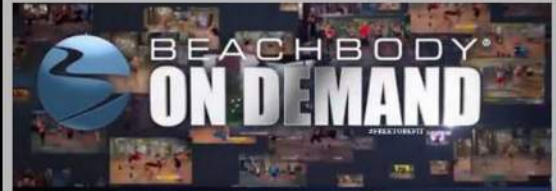
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"Each month, I would love to receive your thoughts and loves as to what you think is worth catching. Here is the deal: When you send me something, it can be anything you caught that month - whether it be your original thought or something else, I will always say that you contributed it."

CLICK FOR MORE INFO!

-Renee Avarad-Furlow

life's chaos causes us to go deeper into our heart's blind spots and our soul's silent needs. it becomes clear we are falling stars going through life the best way we know how, no matter what —



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## "Enlightening Ideas Worth Catching"

- \* Waking Up
- \* Personal Growth
- \* Self Awareness

by Renee Avarad-Furlow  
& Anne T. Partain

JOIN TWO WOMEN, RENEE AVARD FURLOW AND ANNE T. PARTAIN AS THEY SHARE REVELATION, INSPIRATION AND UNDERSTANDINGS THAT HAVE CHANGED THEIR LIVES. BE INITIATED OR TAKE NEXT STEPS INTO THE REALM OF PERSONAL GROWTH, SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-LOVE THROUGH THE IDEAS DISCUSSED IN THIS BOOK. COME CLOSE AND LISTEN AS THE CURTAIN IS DRAWN AND IMPORTANT UNDERSTANDINGS ARE LOVINGLY EXPLAINED. EXPECT TO BE POWERFULLY INFLUENCED TOWARD SELF CONFIDENCE, EMOTIONAL COMFORT AND INCREASED QUALITY OF LIFE.

COMING SPRING/SUMMER  
2015

CLICK TO SIGN UP TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATIONS ABOUT THE RELEASE OF THIS BOOK!

# EXPOSURE

RAW

APRIL 2015

ART FASHION MUSIC FILM PHOTOGRAPHY HAIR&MAKEUP PERFORMANCE ART

FEATURED ARTIST at RAW:Philadelphia presents EXPOSURE

## Amber Renee

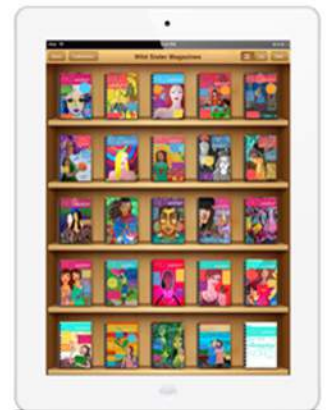


Wednesday, April 08, 2015 at 08:00PM

\$15 presale, \$20 at the door // Cocktail Attire // 21+  
The Trocadero Theatre | 1003 Arch Street | Philadelphia |  
19107

TICKETS: [www.rawartists.org/amberreeneepoetry](http://www.rawartists.org/amberreeneepoetry)

**THERE WILL BE REFRESHMENTS FOR SALE  
COME ENJOY MUSIC, MULTIMEDIA ART,  
HAIR ART, A FASHION SHOW AND MORE!**



The Wild Sisterhood is a social network and E-magazine for wild women + world-changers to connect, find infinite inspiration + design their lives.

**CLICK NOW TO START YOUR JOURNEY!**

**Submit to the Summer 2015 Issue!**

We Will Be Exploring the Theme of

**FREEDOM**

For some of us, we associate "Freedom" with thoughts of patriotism and the feeling that comes with breaking free from oppression.

Sometimes that can be in the form of a government or leader, on a much more grand political scale, or it can be something more minor in a daily sense. This can mean quitting that grueling corporate job that has been sucking your spirit dry, leaving an unhealthy relationship, or letting go a part of your life that no longer serves you. For our next issue, we want to know what kind of changes you have made in YOUR life that have made you feel like a weight has been lifted off of your shoulders! What makes YOU feel FREE or UNINHIBITED? This can mean body, mind, or soul! (We will also accept any submissions that are summer related or seasonally appropriate!)

We are looking for global submissions in the form of stories, articles, interviews, videos/vlogs, poetry, prose, lyrics, music, artwork, arts n crafts projects, how to guides, photography, recipes, meditations, affirmations, travel pieces, giveaways, etc.! These are just some things to jog your imagination! If you have an idea that can pertain to our theme that is not on this list, please send it to us at

**[AbrazineMag@gmail.com](mailto:AbrazineMag@gmail.com)**!

**Before Submitting, Please Read our**  
**[FULL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES HERE!](#)**



Background Art:  
Millenia Dzakiya Hana  
(15, Indonesia)



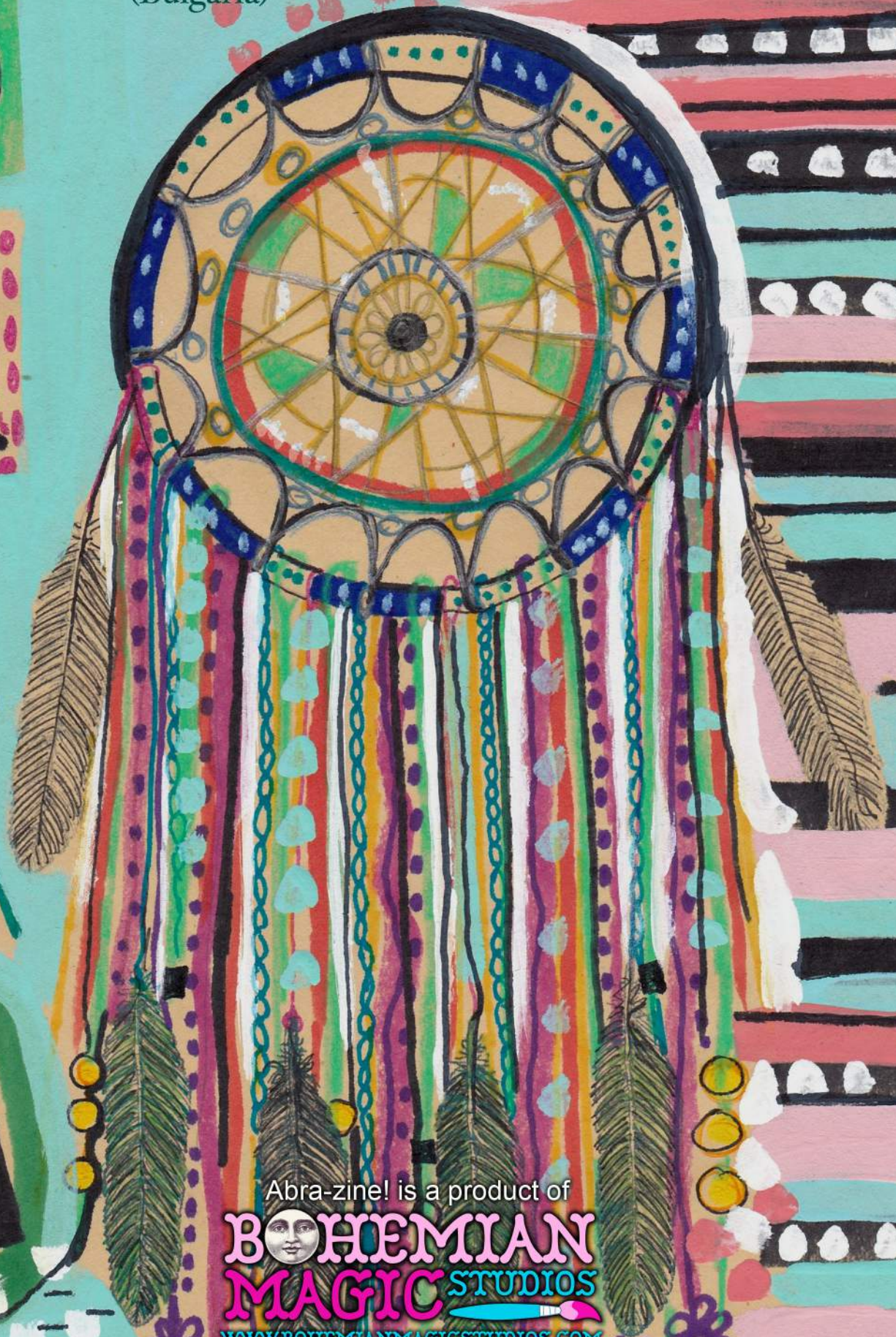
SIGNUP FOR  
OUR NEWSLETTER!

THANKS FOR READING!

SWEET DREAMS :-)

Rosalina Boyagiev  
(Bulgaria)

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