

Our English Club Magazine

2019





UN ESPACIO DONDE CONFLUYEN EL ARTE Y EL INGLES

Clases regulares
para chicos, adolescentes y adultos

Exámenes internacionales
TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS y CAMBRIDGE

Welcome to our English Club Magazine.
The December 2019 issue has tons of super interesting short stories
inspired by some of the world's greatest paintings.

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A Tale of an Immigrant

By Beatriz Gil @betty_place02



My dear land was far away, as the immorality of war and hunger was. My father had died during the war, and my uncle had convinced my mother to come to Argentina where he worked as a stevedore in the docks of Buenos Aires.

The trip had been an adventure for me but a nightmare for my mother. After what felt like an eternity we arrived in Argentina.

My uncle and aunt picked us up from the port and took us to their home. The town was strange but at the same time, it looked familiar to me. The houses with their coloured fronts, the peddlers, the women shouting, a “canzonetta” filtering through the windows, the kids playing football with a rag ball, all reminded me of my remote Genoa.

My mother seemed sad as her wet eyes were staring at the river. Now I think she was trying to revive her longed-for Mediterranean, but I know that this new river could never replace her sea, and her memories were never left behind. Nostalgia was her eternal companion.

She began to work immediately. She was a skilled seamstress and she always said that hard work would keep her from feeling homesick. Her plan was simple: she wanted to “do the America” as so many other “sons of distant lands” who shared the same struggles and ambitions.

We lived in a big house, which the locals called “a conventillo”. Its rooms, one behind the other in a row surrounded a central courtyard that functioned as a community room. The bathroom and the kitchen were shared.

I made a lot of new friends. That wasn’t a problem for me because my heart needed to anchor in a safe harbour. My roots had been ripped out early and they needed a land to hold on to. So I came here fearful but hopeful, like a lover at their first meeting, and these lands were waiting for me. I was determined to fall in love immediately with this country.

But the adult world was quite different from the one children lived in. Most of them were compelled to live far away from their homelands due to war or hunger. They had to leave their world behind when they realised that they had no chance to survive there. But leaving meant saying goodbye to their affections. They also left behind everything that they had known before like customs, foods, houses, language, homeland and they had to begin again in another place, gambling on hope while they dreamed of returning.

Almost every European country was represented in our tenement. There were Germans, Spaniards, Poles, French, Italians, also Arabs and Turks. I remember a lot of anecdotes about them, as the day that they all competed for the nationality of the sun.

It was a sunny summer morning, and the midday sun which was shining in a huge blue sky was already itching on our skin. What a beautiful sun there was that Sunday over the tenement!

We, the children were playing in a corner of the courtyard below a big fig tree where there was an improvised swing. While we waited for our turn to play on the swing we played hopscotch.

My uncle, who was lazily sitting on an old armchair, took his cap off his head and looking at the sky exclaimed, "What a beautiful sun! It is a proper Genovese sun. The best sun is Italian. That's why all Italians sing "Oh sole mio."

"No! This is a Spanish sun. Look at how it moves with Spanish grace above the clouds," exclaimed Doña Lola while she was scrubbing the clothes in the big washing sink and at the same time moving her hips as a flamenco dancer.

"The Sun, a proper sun is the Arabian sun," said in a low voice Don Abdul while he was arranging his merchandise in a wooden box. He used to walk across the streets every morning in order to sell sewing threads, needles, combs, hair-slides across the street every morning. "The sun is huge, bright and warm all day in Arabia," he repeated in his particular Spanish.

"You are all wrong! The true sun is the sun of my France," said Yvonne, the woman whose work and reputation were questioned by the gossip women.

"You say that because you don't know the Polish sun! You might say that there is not sun in Poland, but there is a friendly-warm sun there!" exclaimed Don Basilio, whose name was given by a port employee when he arrived in Argentina, although his real name was Basilek.

A simple and innocent comment about the sun led to an argument about its nationality and homeland.

Mrs. Zunilda, an old Paraguayan woman, extended the awnings while she protested, "Don't disturb me with comparisons! As all of you argue, I can confirm, and this is not an exaggeration, that the best sun is the Paraguayan one and shut up!"

We decided to continue our game after it had been interrupted by the adults' argument about who were the owners of the star king. The hopscotch awaited us on uneven tiles marked with chalk where the one who arrived at the top earned Heaven.

While jumping, I shouted at them, "Oh! Be that as it may, this sun is Argentine!" And at that moment, I reached heaven.

This simple observation was enough to end the heated gathering.

And I was right. All together, the Italian son, the French brother, the little Turkish brothers, the Galician nephew, the Spanish cousin and the children who had been born in Argentina knew that the sun was Argentine because we were there playing under its rays. Life is so simple when one is a child!

But on the other hand, the adults had their hearts broken in two parts. It's so difficult to find the meaning of homeland in far lands.

The residents of the tenement had a lot of things in common as to live in the same house, the trip, the distance, the hard work and the little money, the fatigue but also their dreams. They tried to build a new nation, mixing their languages and customs and making up new ones.

This is why that Sunday they decided to give up their arguments and their problems and shared the meal, the music and the sun and also the moon, all together as a great family.

And finally, there was laughter, bliss, songs and dances, and even a few teary eyes during that party and I can swear that night nobody was a foreigner.

Life Before The Scream

By Natalia Cabrera @natixcabrebra



Perhaps nobody would ever have imagined--Mathias least of all—that after so much suffering he would paint one of the most internationally-recognised and admired works of art in the world. This is the story of Mathias, a man who did not understand the meaning of life until he lost everything, when it was already too late. Born into a working-class family in Oslo, off the coast of Norway, he always knew that his dream was to become a famous painter. Finally, in his 30s and after much hard work, he and Liam, his best friend, succeeded in setting up their own studio and began working as painters. Actually, had it not been for Liam's support, Mathias could never have reached his much-aspired dream.

Apart from his love for painting, he was devoted to his wife Fridha, a well-known musician. Due to her job, Fridha had always spent most of her time travelling around the world, but that was not a problem because she loved her work more than anything and Mathias was very understanding.

Every trip was special to Fridha, but on her last one to Mexico, she met Ben, an important music producer from England. And because of her special talent, he offered her to sign a five-year contract with a famous record company. It was a great opportunity for her, but it meant moving to Mexico, and leaving her house, her friends and her family behind, including her husband. She would miss Mathias so much, because, even though she had to try to be happy for herself, she loved Mathias and her life was not going to be the same without him. Therefore, she decided to put the job offer on hold and talk with Mathias first. If he agreed, they might move to Mexico together and Mathias could open a new studio there, "in the country of art." She thought, "It will be a win-win situation for both of us."

Meanwhile, in Oslo, Liam and Mathias were designing a plan to open a new studio in Asheville, in The USA, because the business in Oslo was thriving. "The best way for the business to keep growing is that we manage both studios together," Liam told Mathias.

The new studio meant that Mathias would have to move to Asheville or stay in Oslo. He only had those two options. He wanted to share this good news with Fridha, so the night that she returned from Mexico, he invited her to dinner at an exclusive restaurant. When they arrived, Fridha realised that it was a restaurant with Mexican, live music. Over dinner, both were anxious as they wanted to share their new plans with each other, but they did not know how to begin. Fortunately, a Mariachi band appeared out of the blue, which gave Fridha the perfect excuse to talk about Mexico, its culture, art, music and eventually, her new job offer. She expected a good response, but it didn't happen. Mathias felt let down because moving to Mexico was not what he had in mind.

On the contrary, he was looking forward to opening his new studio in The United States. Unfortunately, neither was willing to accept the other's proposal, so they argued for a long time, but did not reach an agreement and the quiet dinner ended up in chaos. Finally, Mathias hurled the money for the bill on the table and stormed out of the restaurant in a rage.

His rage was not towards Fridha—it was towards himself, because at that moment he realized that he loved her so much more than he had ever imagined, and he was about to lose her, but he had been working very hard to reach his dreams, and the time to choose a path had come: his beloved wife or his career.

After debating with himself, he decided to leave Oslo and open the new studio in The United States. Sooner or later, he had to make sure that his business would take off, even if it meant leaving his current life and his wife behind. Meanwhile, Fridha decided to make the most of this situation to explore a new world.

Mathias moved to Asheville and lived there for two years. The studio grew quickly and he reached a solid reputation in the artistic world. Although he missed the life that he used to have with Fridha, he was so satisfied with his new life that nothing else seemed to matter. Everything was fine until an unexpected call shattered his happiness. His friend Liam was dead. He had been suffering from depression for a year until finally on October 5th, he decided to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge into the lake near the pier of Oslo, the place where they used to play when they were little children.

Desperately, Mathias tried to meet up with Fridha to go through this tragedy with her. "Hi Fridha, I would like to meet with you because I need someone to confide in," pleaded Mathias. But time and distance had them made them drift apart so much that they felt like strangers. "Hi Mathias, I am sorry for your loss, but I am not the right shoulder to cry on anymore. You left me, so own up to your decisions. Goodbye." All of a sudden, he realized that he had lost everything.

Mathias slipped into depression, he felt as if he was falling down a dark bottomless shaft, wondering if and when he would be rescued. He was living in hell and the only way he found to escape from this suffering was painting. He wanted to shake off all this sadness from his soul, so with his last ounce of strength, he started to express his dark feelings on the canvas which was as empty and blank as himself. Little did he know that he would come up with a master piece: The Scream. Three years later, after those miserable months in Mathias's life, The Scream was exhibited in some of the most famous museums in the world. Unfortunately, he was not there to enjoy his success as he had died soon after finishing his piece of art.

Memories of a Lost Autumn

By Bianca Venerus @venerus.bian28



The gentle autumn breeze whistled on the streets as the last rays of sun streamed through the bare branches of the trees, blinding the neighbourhood of Paris. Fallen leaves swirled and rustled round Alizee. Abruptly, she opened her eyes; the cold of the asphalt ran down her back. She could feel people staring at her lying on the sidewalk. And that's when Alizee, scarcely breathing, started to remember... the desolation and the rising darkness of the evening began to embrace her, trapping her again in the dark sense of despair...

An hour earlier...

It was another day in April. As a new art exhibition was being prepared at the Musée d'Orsay Art Gallery for the fall season, that day the museum closed its doors earlier in the afternoon. Besides the sharp whistle of the wind echoing through the empty rooms and the snap of soap and water from cleaning buckets, an absolute silence hung the gallery.

Alizee was in charge of cleaning the extensive halls of the museum and keeping the works of art in good condition. Therefore, she was always the last to leave the establishment.

Unfortunately, she didn't love her job or Paris, as they were a reminder of her distant and frustrated dream of becoming a famous artist. In addition, her past also had been tainted by the tragic death of her husband in a traffic accident while she was driving to Versailles to present one of her paintings. Whenever Alizee's memories of painting landscapes of her trips with her late husband Chandler invaded her thoughts, a deep pain grew in her chest, her eyes flooded with tears, and her guilt tied her like rusty chains back to that horrible day.

Her desire to leave the capital was so great that she had taken the first job she landed: as a cleaner in the museum. Every day, she had to walk around the art gallery looking for some dirty corner she could clean. Seeing paintings by well-known artists all the time was a nightmare for her. Alizee only looked at the random paint spots, without any intention.

Fortunately, that day in April, she left earlier. However, not until Alizee had cleaned every inch of the museum was she able to go out. But then, when she glanced around the establishment for the last time, she discovered a light at the end of the corridor. It came from the anonymous paintings room.

She dashed to the room to turn it off, but something caught her attention. One of the paintings looked familiar to her. It could have been part of one of the unimportant and meaningless artworks, but it wasn't. Its well-defined black strokes seemed to show the beginning of a conflict within an autumn panorama. In addition, the red, orange, and yellow spots in the background of the painting formed a figure that Alizee found it difficult to decipher.

Seeing a dirty stain on the glass that protected the work irritated her. So, without thinking twice, Alizee started to clean it delicately. But only a few minutes later, did she realise that the painting itself had erased too, as if the glass wasn't there anymore. The brushstrokes of autumn were fresh now. The paint had run down leaving the wall stained. "How is it possible?" she thought. "The glass was there but now it's not!"

She didn't know what to do. On the painting, there was a big white blotch now. There was no way to recover the art work. Alizee began to despair, afraid of losing her job. Anyway, she didn't find any logic to what had happened just a few minutes before. At first, she thought that she was dreaming. To her surprise, after coming back from washing her face in the toilet, she found out the blotch was still there.

Then she began to observe the painting in detail. Just out of curiosity, she decided to touch the white blotch. And then, from one moment to the next, everything began to crumble. The paintings crashed heavily against the floor while a thread of dust slid at each end of the room. The blinds shook sharply, rising and falling. Violently, some leaves flew in through the window and now revolved around Alizee rubbing her entire body. Everything was spinning in the room.

Suddenly, an abrupt silence...

Alizee was lying on the floor; she could feel the cold on the back of her neck. And in the middle of the darkness, she thought she was sinking into it. She couldn't get up, so she preferred to close her eyes and pretend that everything was only part of a dream.

If she had woken up in her bed and not in the middle of Les Champs-Élysées Avenue she would have kept calm. Her heart was beating faster and faster; there was no explanation of what had happened. She recovered quickly though, and fixed her smoky and dusty apron. She tried to relax and reflect calmly. At least, she was a few steps from the door of her workplace, near the room of anonymous pictures.

She knew she was the only one in the gallery that afternoon, so nobody could have taken her out into the street. Maybe checking the cameras was a good option, but first she needed to find her keys...

So caught up in her thoughts was Alizee that she didn't notice the people who were gathering around her. With a pen and paper, they tiptoed anxiously to meet her, trying to be the first to get her autograph. Alizee's eyes widened more and more as she slowly gazed around the faces of unknown people who approached her.

Among them, the gallery staff tried to advance, who after pushing a few got to Alizee. "Alizee, are you alright?" someone asked. "Come inside so people don't suffocate you," another voice rang out. "Your art exhibition will start in a few minutes, so you have little time to get ready. Let's go! We will accompany you to the bathroom."

The panic in Alizee's face was evident. She had started to babble, and without giving her time to respond and process the information, she was already walking through the crowd next to the museum's exhibition organizer and the gallery's main manager, who had never spoken to her before.

Getting to the restroom was difficult, as many people were waiting to enter; and when they saw her, they piled up like animals to reach her. While the people who had helped her before were waiting outside the bathroom, she was paralysed gazing at herself in the mirror. So exhausted did she look, that even she didn't recognize herself. Alizee was out of her mind... she started to pace in circles looking at the floor without stopping. Her furious walk and despair would have made anyone quickly dash in the opposite direction. Stopping in front of the mirror and once more contemplating her reflection in it made her feel empty. Tears slid one after another down her cheeks. She felt desperately lonely.

Suddenly, she discovered a blurred figure at one end of the mirror behind her. It seemed to be watching her and waiting for her reaction. The tears prevented her from seeing well. "What? Now you have also come here for an autograph? Because I am going to tell you something: I am not an artist and I will never be one! You confuse me with another person just like everyone else has," she yelled still with her back to the blurred figure.

However, no response came from it. So she turned round abruptly. What her eyes saw, left her mouth open. The blurred figure, turned out to be a well-groomed woman, dressed in an elegant suit, who looked just like her. "What on earth?" Both women were equally surprised. They looked exactly the same, unlike their clothes.

"Who are you? I don't remember having a twin sister," joked the woman.

"I'm Alizee Faure. I'm part of the museum cleaning staff," Alizee replied ignoring the abrupt change in the frown of the woman while she said these words. "Now I understand! Everybody thought I was you. We are very, and I would say too, similar. What is your name?"

"My... my name is also... Alizee Faure," Alizee two stuttered. A long silence flooded the room. To their surprise, someone walked into the restroom. It was a personal assistant, who failed to see both Alizees and said to Alizee two: "Excuse me, Alizee, but your exhibition starts in five minutes. You must leave now."

"Yes! I'm coming," Alizee two responded and turned again to Alizee one. "Listen to me, I don't know how this happened, but I would like to continue talking to you. Leaving the bathroom to the left, there is a hallway. At the far end, there is my office. You could wait for me there. In an hour we can talk quietly."

Alizee nodded slowly. It seemed very strange to her. "Too much of a coincidence to be real," she thought. And as she wanted to understand what had just happened, she went to the office following the signs. Alizee remembered that the room she was heading for, a few hours ago was just a warehouse of old paintings. Now even the door looked different.

She went inside and quickly observed what she would dare to call "the office of her life." Alizee felt she was in her own home; everything looked very familiar. The paintings on the old walls in the room showed different well-established art techniques. Most were very colorful and described what Alizee considered an exciting life. All were excellent, their lines well determined, a perfect combination of colours and a great variety of feelings that each one of them conveyed. Indeed, each message managed to stir the spectator's stomach and could make them dive into the depths and secrets of that alternate reality without any effort.

Her attention focused on one of them—a painting that contrasted with the others; a completely different one. In it, the trails of the wheels of a car blurred as they approached the horizon. Towards the end, a tragic sky painted with glowing lightning, illuminated the extensive terrain of the countryside. The winding patterns gave the sensation of a thundering storm. Bare trees, withered leaves huddled at their sides. She rushed around the room to immediately understand the story of that melancholic painting.

She followed with her gaze the groove of the old wood of her desk, until she ran into some sloppy notes and some photo frames. Her husband was in them, she could recognize the landscapes and magical moments of each of those photographs. Her lost and bewildered glance continued to travel the rest of the room.

And then, she saw herself. Although she was unable to hear her speak for the glass window that separated them, she could feel her emotion and firmness when exhibiting her works of art; she was decisive woman who was not afraid of falling when facing an audience. She really enjoyed her work. Alizee's head was just hanging around a question. If she hadn't given up on art, how different would everything have been?

She still didn't understand who that Alizee was and why they shared everything: her past, her tastes, her features, her family ... Anyway, she decided not to wait any longer and return home. To believe that her life would have been better was like sticking a stake. For her, there was no going back, the decisions had already been made. She waddled slowly and heavily towards the exit door of the gallery. Unsure, afraid to repent, with her right hand, trembling and pale, she took the door handle hard. But something stopped her. She felt a warm touch on her shoulder. "You don't have to run away Alizee," Alizee two pleaded softly with a familiar touch. "I would like to go for a walk together. There is something I think you need to see."

Ten minutes later, both were in Alizee two's car. Neither felt encouraged to say a word during the trip. Alizee was lost looking out the window into the road. She wasn't even able to recognize that this route was the same one she had driven along with her husband before the crash.

Gradually, the car began to reduce its speed to park in a viewpoint of the route. When getting out of the car, as Alizee started to recognize the place, a subtle chill engraved all over her body. She was shocked. Wordlessly, she followed Alizee two down a slope that culminated in a beautiful and well-known meadow full of autumnal trees. Memories of that tragic day came back before Alizee's eyes like flashes of light. She could see the car rolling down, she also saw it crash into that old tree full of dried leaves... she could remember herself disconsolate, alone, without strength... that sad autumn afternoon 20 years ago. "Why did you bring me here?" her fragile words, with a thread of voice interrupted the discomfort of that silence. "You also remember it, don't you?" Alizee two also had watery eyes.

"The minute I saw you through the window of my office, I understood that we had both gone through the same thing," Alizee two confessed. "When Chandler died, I also felt that I lost everything. After three months, when I took up painting, I knew that it would be difficult without him. That's when, totally lost, I decided to return here," now she contemplated the landscape, a tear rolling down her cheek. She closed her eyes for a moment and after taking a deep breath, she went on, "And it was in the middle of this melancholic and lonely meadow where—with just a piece of paper and a few paints—I manage to express myself freely. My new painting carried with it the message of pain; I had traced our tragic autumn. My intention had never been to exhibit the painting, but when Camille, my co-worker, saw it, she recommended me to do it. So I presented it at Musée d'Orsay and they showed it as an anonymous picture. A few weeks later, the audience claimed to know the author of that 'deep art painting'. From then on, I've never stopped painting. Every time new ideas roamed my mind, I didn't hesitate to express them on the canvas..."

"Why are you telling me all this?" Alizee interrupted abruptly.

"By all this I mean ...," Alizee two regained her posture. This time she stared into Alizee's eyes. "A painter may be someone who paints what they know will easily sell, but an artist is the one who sells what they paint. Don't leave your hobbies aside just to please your audience. If you feel sad, then let your heart amaze you and play with your paintings. And secondly, you don't need anyone to define you or 'complete' you. One comes factory ready—it is called essence. You loved Chandler like nobody else, but now that he is gone, it's time to move on. The painter who doesn't doubt, won't make much progress in art. We have falls and rises, but the important thing is never to give up. You have to be a strong woman. Never let anyone pass you by. I would have liked someone to tell me this a few years ago. And I think you need it now. If you want to be happy, don't wait any longer, the moment is now. Live as you have always dreamed and never give up."

"Thanks Alizee," she said pleasantly. She hugged Alizee two for a long time, as she had told her everything Alizee needed. She contemplated again that autumn afternoon to remember it forever, and with her heart ready to move on, she resumed the road and rambled slowly along it.

Gradually, raindrops started falling from the grey and fluffy sky. The lights of the car gleamed on the wet street while the first thunder rumbled across the field. The sky turned dark and it was hard to see. However, Alizee didn't stop; the strong wind forced her to move forward. It was increasingly difficult to distinguish where she stepped on.

Suddenly, her feet began to sink deeper into the mud. Like quicksand, it prevented her from advancing easily. She looked up quickly and discovered a flash of white light at the bottom of the road. It looked like an open door. Alizee strided as fast as she could.

When she reached the door, half of her body was stuck in the mud. She tried her best to leave, jumping slowly. There was no car on the road anymore, and the rain had slowed down. It was only her struggling to get out. When she took the door frame, she could give the last push. Alizee rolled into the room. Her feet were no longer muddy, and her hair wasn't wet anymore. The field was gone, and there was no door. But she could recognise the room. Alizee was again standing in front of that enigmatic painting, but this time she understood what it meant.

She had returned home, or perhaps she had never left. Only one thing was clear to her: it was time to give herself a second chance and start over.

The Colourful Umbrella that Stopped the Rain

By Lara Pollán @larapollan



The car was parked at the front of what it was becoming my old house. I shuffled over to the car door, which my mum opened for me with a big grin on her face. I hated when she acted as if she were happy all the time. The truth was we were all shattered about leaving our beautiful house in the suburbs and moving to a new city. Banging the door, I got into the car, put my earpods on and tried to sleep. When I woke up, we were in the middle of the new city. Everyone seemed stressed. I could see the pouring rain through the window which wasn't encouraging enough to get out the car.

When I was little, I used to have a really hard time getting to sleep. Something inside me made me feel so upset I could cry myself to sleep. Then I learnt how to fall asleep before starting to worry.

The night before my first day of school, I was so nervous I couldn't even cry. It was as if I had forgotten how to avoid those feelings. I spent more than an hour trying to find the right position in bed but when I did, I managed to sleep through the night.

So first day of school arrived. As always, I didn't know what to wear. I could hear the tiny drops against my window so I grabbed my dad's old black raincoat. I tiptoed down the stairs so as not to wake up my parents and made myself a cup of coffee. I was drinking when I heard the bus stop at the door. I could feel how my last swallow went down my throat. I was afraid I wouldn't be accepted. I banged the front door behind me and headed to the bus. The door was open and the driver with a big smile said to me, "Welcome young...," she paused. I noticed he didn't know what to say. I figured I had to tell him, but I didn't know either. How could he know if I didn't even know myself. Finally, he said, "Hope you have a good day!" Nervous, I sprinted to find a seat.

The road to school seemed nice. I was listening to my favourite album, overhearing my thoughts but trying not to pay attention to them. We arrived in no time because the man was driving like a bat out of hell and that gave me no time to realise I was going to meet this whole new group of people. When I got off the bus, I was suddenly gripped by fear. I noticed everyone was staring at me because I was new. I hated being stared at, but I realised I had to deal with it. I was going to be the centre of attention for a while, but only for a while, or that was what I thought.

My first class was literature, I've always loved literature. The bell rang. I started looking for the class when I bumped into a group of guys who would point at me while they giggled. I scowled at them, "What's your problem?" I hissed. "There's something we still don't understand about you," said one. "Yes weirdo, what the hell are you?" I felt my stomach rumbling, a wave of insecurity swept through my body. "That's because you're too stupid to understand!" I yelled and strode to my class. When I arrived, the class had already started. "Perfect," I said to myself, "As if I wasn't looked at enough, now I have to walk past the whole class."

"This year we are going to discuss a new genre called realism, so I want you to start reading a J.D. Salinger book called *The Catcher in the Rye*." The teacher was already talking while I passed through my classmates' desks. *The Catcher in the Rye*... Why did the title sound so familiar? I managed to sit at a desk which was in one far corner, too gloomy for people to notice. Luckily, it seemed as if the teacher hadn't noticed me either because she said nothing about my late arrival.

I couldn't stop looking at the window. Was the weather ever going to change? Was the rain ever going to stop? Was I ever going to feel chill enough to pay attention to my favourite class? It finished before I knew. I realised I had to go back home and I hadn't brought an umbrella with me. I was walking my wet way home when suddenly felt someone was chasing me. I turned around—some bullies were behind me. When they noticed I had seen them, I realised they were going to run after me, so I ran as fast as I could. And my gut feeling didn't fail me—they went after me. I was scarcely able to breathe, so I decided to turn left when I noticed I had come to a dead-end street. I could hear my heart bumping in my chest, my ears were beating, I could also hear the bullies running and shouting, "Weirdo! How can you sleep at night? Why don't you go back to your town?" They found me, and I gave up. I knew I was helpless; there was nobody but us there. One started pulling my hair down until he left me lying flat on the floor. Then, the other one started kicking my back. I really don't know how long it lasted. I heard a car passing by, but it drove away. I stayed there under the rain.

The next day, I struggled to get out of bed. My back still hurt even though my mum had prepared me an ice bath the night before. I looked through the window and saw it was still raining. There it was, a new thing I hated: rain. I put some clothes on and had a cup of coffee. My mum offered me a ride to school. I accepted, as I was in so much pain to walk and definitely wasn't going by bus.

I had started reading *The Catcher in the Rye* and decided to read it on the way to school. Mainly because it was so captivating I couldn't take my eyes off it, but also because I wanted to keep my mind off the bullies before I had to confront them again.

Luckily, I arrived early that morning, so I went straight to my literature class which hadn't started yet. The teacher was already there, correcting some essays. I found a seat in the first line and struggled to sit as I couldn't bend my back. When I did, I kept on reading my book. I could feel her staring at me. So I put the book down.

"Do you like it?" she asked me.

"I really do," I said.

"Why don't you prepare an oral lesson for next class? You could talk about anything you like about the book and share it with your classmates."

"Oh, I couldn't do that, I'm too shy," I rejected the offer.

She looked straight at me with her brown-knitted eyebrows and said, "You seem too smart to care about what other people think."

"No, I don't care about what they think, I'm afraid of what made them beat me up yesterday."

The teacher swallowed and stayed still. She looked deep into my eyes and said, "You're going to tell me who did that to you and we are going to solve it, you can't let anybody hurt you."

Students started entering the class while we kept in silence glaring at each other. The class was nice and calm. I managed to pay attention and connect with the discussions like a normal person and that really satisfied me. When it finished, the teacher asked me to come to her office. She was not only the teacher but the school headmistress. She asked me about what I had said before. I told her everything. Not only about the incident with the bullies, but also the one had I with myself. She taught me that it was normal that some people might find it more difficult to understand their identity.

When we finished our conversation, I looked at the park behind the office window. "Oh, I hate the rain," I said.

"Me too, but it gets nicer when you learn how to deal with it," she told me showing her umbrella.

"I don't have one of those, back in my old town it never rained."

"You can take that one!" she said pointing at the corner of the office. "It has been forgotten there for ages." It was a big, rainbow colored umbrella.

So I headed my way back home. I was listening to music when suddenly I realised someone was chasing me. This time, I didn't even bother to turn around; I just started running. I knew they were going to get me. I was running as fast as I could when I spotted a corner and dashed into it. I sat in the dark and covered myself with the umbrella waiting for them to come. But this time I didn't give up. I could hear they were confused when they saw me, "You can't do this to me!" I bellowed without going out of my protective umbrella. "I did nothing to you, why do you hate me?" I put the umbrella slightly down and scowled at them, "I'm not the one who should be embarrassed! YOU SHOULD!" The bullies started looking at each other. "You can't do this to me just because I'm different!" I yelled intently. I noticed I hadn't realised my shouts caught other people's attention. There were people recording. The bullies felt so ashamed they ran away. A woman came by and asked me if I was ok and helped me stand up.

"Yes, now I am."

"You are really brave," she told me.

I started my way back home, again. I couldn't believe I had done it. The sun started to appear behind the clouds and I could feel I was a new person. I believed in myself even though I still didn't have a clue of who I was.

The Death of the White Swan

Noelia Cabrera @noe.g20



The end

The white swan is dead. Right now he is trekking around the desert between heaven and hell.

Never have I imagined that today, I would be in the funeral of my only love; my forbidden love. For as long as I can remember, I've been in love with him—the famous and intellectual writer. I spent my adolescence reading his poems and wanted to be like him. When I grew up, I became a writer too, and finally I met him at a party. He was better than I could have ever imagined. From that day on, I spent all my time looking for different ways to be with him. I started to hang around with the same people as him, go to the same parties, and every time that I talked with him I would fall more deeply in love with him.

Unfortunately, he was married, he had a family. He always said that he loved his wife because she was different from us, she was a common person. Never did I lose the confidence that one day, he would love me just as I loved him, and the opportunity arrived with the dictatorship. For an unknown reason, suddenly, he had to exile to Europe, but his family didn't want to go with him.

At that moment, I knew that was my opportunity and I decided come with him. There and then, we started a relationship. But the dictatorship finished, and he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. The dream ended and we returned to Chile: he to his wife, and I, alone with the memory of his love. He threw me out of his life. I only had his poems, and news about him from a mutual friend, until yesterday that I heard the worst one, the news of his death.

Despite his wife's presence, I've decided to come to the funeral to accompany him in death as I accompanied him in life. The funeral is gorgeous, dramatic, intellectual, a poem. There are a lot of people living their own love poem and their own desperate song because of him, always because of him. He looks as always, as if he belonged to a different world and a different time. At last, he rests in peace indifferent to the crowd crying because of his death.

All of us are here after the same cause: justice. We know that you were killed by the military dictatorship. How could have they imagined that we would believe that you died because of the cancer? No, it's impossible. I know your soul even though they tried to hide it closing your eyes forever.

I start to talk with our friends while his wife glares silently at me. She knows the truth about us, always has always known.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded. "Please, let him rest in peace at last!"

"I'm just looking for the truth, he needs justice to rest in peace. He was killed and his work desecrated. How can you sleep at night when his life also has been defiled by a handful of criminals?" I asked.

"Please, go somewhere else with your detective novels. If you want inspiration for another one, go to find another lover, as you always do. He hasn't got anything else to offer. Go away if you have some decency!" she hissed at me furiously.

"Had I been there, this wouldn't have happened. You are too weak for a man like him. You have always been after his money and the superficial and empty life that he built for you and your children."

"If you don't leave now, I will call the police!" she barked.

"I will go, but I'll be proved right. You'll hear from me soon."

More than words

I arrive at my apartment—my mission exceeds my strength. How can I do that? She told the truth, I only know how to flee. For some people, I'm a lady with the nostalgic gaze of the romantic poets shouting for an adventure that might bring me back to life. But my reality is different. I have a world without rules, free of society's bonds.

It's inevitable that tears blur my eyes when I remember our time in exile. She didn't want to leave with him because of the children, and the house, and the money. There we met, afraid and alone in a strange world. We lived together out of necessity; we needed to care for each other.

I decide go to his apartment looking for some clues.

His apartment is only to 30 minutes from my home. When I arrive, I find the disaster, all his handwritten stuff crumpled and scattered on the floor in an effort to kill his bequest, as if art could die so easily!

I prowl around the apartment looking for the last notes that he never showed me. My heart is beating hard as tears stream down my cheeks. It is impossible that memories don't haunt me. All the memories return to me like a movie...the parties, our meetings with the group, the beginning of the dictatorship, the persecution, the exile, the diagnosis of prostate cancer, the return to Chile with his family and his change. Like a signal, the papers appear under my foot. Suddenly, fear invades me, so I run away.

Back in my apartment, I start to read his notes. They are about a person who knew a lot of secrets about politicians. Like my love, the protagonist was brave and incorruptible. Unfortunately, he was poisoned. She has to know the truth, so I run to her home.

“Please Amaya! Open the door!” I urged.

“Go away, Ariela! Leave me alone.”

“He knew that they would kill him! Somebody betrayed him; he was poisoned by the military.”

“How dare you be so brash? I’m his wife. I would have known had he been involved in a story like that!” she hissed.

“I read his notes. Look!” I whined.

While she reads, skepticism starts to paint her face. Never will she believe in my theory. Now, I know that I’m alone in this.

“This is only fiction, only words!” she snapped.

“This is more than words. Here is his confession about the conspiracy against him.”

“Go away and never come back. When he was sick with cancer, it was me who was by his side while you were partying with your lovers. You had fun with him in Europe and then, when he needed somebody who cared for him, you disappeared.” she barked.

“I will unearth the truth.”

I start to collect new evidence with my journalist friend. We look for new evidence among the secret government’s documents and news. We work for days, looking for a clue, something that may lead us to the truth. We find out the reason about his exile. Apparently, he knew about the abduction and murder of an important opponent, a friend of ours.

We collect all the documents and go to ask for the exhumation of my lover’s body. If we didn’t have a contact in court, we wouldn’t have achieved the body exhumation. Days pass by very slowly, but today I receive the call.

“Ariela in two hours they will exhume the body. Come quickly!” said a voice on the phone. Instantly, I put the phone down and changed my clothes. Today the truth will come to light. The entire world will know that the only thing able to kill him was human evil.

Taking my car keys, I’m sure that I can prove to the world that he was not the weak man who died of the prostate cancer. No, he was a gladiator that would never give up to the banal attacks of the body—he was much more than that.

Rest In Peace

I’m the wife, I’ve always been. Just as every day I wake up early to read the news and eat breakfast. I live in a great house, and have great children. I can’t say that I don’t miss him but now I don’t need him anymore. I’m the only person who knew and loved the human behind the artist, the god. He chose me as his wife because of that. I was the place where he could be authentic, the adolescent who wrote of love as the way to transform the pain and weakness of his soul into beauty. Ariela can’t understand that because she knew the artist, the mask.

The wife grabs the newspaper and the shock invades her.

Ariela, the famous writer died under mysterious circumstances. She was driving her car when she crashed into another vehicle that ran a red light. She died instantly and the other car fled the scene. Her friends suspect an attack and claim for justice.

She died without accepting the truth, because she had insisted on the conspiracy theory. The exhumation showed no traces of poison in his system. She never understood that he was a mortal man, he was not a god. He was only a brilliant mortal man who died of prostate cancer. His adventures and immortality only belong to his novels and poems. His life started and finished like the other mortals'. Maybe his soul looked as if it belonged to another world and another time, and for that reason, it was so difficult to let him go forever. But he doesn't exist anymore, he died. Maybe he lived two or three lives in one, but finally, his time came to an end . Maybe his legacy will always live on, but the artist is dead.

The Last Potato Dinner

By Lucía Alessandrelli @lulaalesandrelli



“So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.”

When the dictatorship began in Uruguay in 1973, Gabriel and his family went into exile in Holland. They chose this country because Gabriel's mother always had made stampot, a Dutch potatoes recipe that she loved to make.

Twenty years later in 1993, convinced, his parents went back to Uruguay, but Gabriel decided to stay in Holland, because he had his own family there—his wife, Paula and his son, Raul. Also he had a job, and he was militant like his parents.

On March 20th, when his parents arrived home, the problem in Uruguay was very complicated as the military had killed two teachers, so people took to the streets to fight for their rights. That same day, his mother called Gabriel and told him that she would join the demonstration. "Be careful, we are all being watched!" warned his mother.

Crying, Gabriel told his wife everything about Uruguay, and also that the military were spying on them. So, Paula cooked Gabriel's mother legendary recipe "stamppot" to make Gabriel feel at home, closer to his parents. And she decided to invite Rebecca and Ivan, their militant friends to dinner, in order to support the Uruguayan fight from Holland. While they were having dinner they watched on TV how the military dragged his mother by the hair. Suddenly, they heard truck engines so Gabriel looked out the window... it was them, scared, they tried to escape but... they couldn't.

The military failed to accomplish their task since they left the memory alive... They didn't see Raúl. A year later, Raul found his dead parents, and decided to scatter their ashes in Spiegelfracht canal, where they had first met. While doing this, he thought to himself that the potato dinner on March 20th had been last dinner where the whole the family was together.

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The World Within Us

By Denise Losa @denulud



I believe the world we live in is just a reflection of our own universe. We all have our own one. Every person is actually a new world. It's just that we aren't that smart to understand that we are the ones who build our surroundings, our relationships, every single decision we make, and that things aren't just caused a magical force from up there. That's a lame excuse; it is easier to blame others for our mistakes instead of taking responsibility. It's not that the cosmos is being unfair. Understanding that your misery isn't anyone's fault but yours is a hard task for most part of the population. Your subconscious is truly the guilty one, creating your reality that way, by your actions and words. It is more socially accepted to go with the flow and stop questioning these philosophical thoughts. At least that's what my mother believes.

I used to feel misunderstood by almost everyone. Now, that I reflect on my own thoughts, that's just impossible. About seven million people exist in this world; there must be someone who agrees with me. It's no use anyways; I won't meet that someone, not if I stay in this garden my whole life.

I have the misfortune to have been born in the smallest village of Asia. It's so little that if you try to spot it on the map of Japan you won't find it. I have already tried. In fact, I lost count of how many maps I used for my research. Nonetheless, we just don't appear anywhere.

But then I think of the other world, the one that involves every single one of us, and I just feel so useless. I feel so tiny, so minuscule. I can't do anything but see how everyone moves around and keeps pushing forward. I realise then, that I'm still here in the grass letting all the sensations run through my body, making my skin tingly, giving me goosebumps. I'm stuck. Literally, none of us appreciate the beauty of being alive, but somehow I consider myself ignorant in comparison to the rest of the people (at least the ones outside of this village, lucky ones.)

"¡Ginna, I'm home!"

That's it. It's over. My free time has come to an end. Mum 's back home, so must be Shiba. That means I need to hurry back in before my lovely mother starts nagging about that behaviour she hates. No. She absolutely despises the hours and hours I waste lying down in the garden because "Not only do you get dirty, but then you start moaning about insects bites," she says but the truth is I haven't done that since I was nine. I'm thirteen by the way. She loves using this excuse as an argument. I am highly aware she can't stand the fact that I spend such a long time all by myself. Over exaggerating is an art my mum mastered years ago, worrying is her favourite hobby and I would bet my life the reason is I can count my number of friends with one hand. It's kind of strange this situation occurs in a place where everyone knows each other; all the kids play together happily and united. Well, I don't belong in that lifestyle. And that's even stranger.

I am probably the biggest concern my mother has to deal with. In this village, your business is everyone's business. And if my mother has a problematic child then my whole family, our neighbours, the government, the woman who spends her afternoons selling fruits, my teacher and undoubtedly the whole village know. She really does believe people pay attention to me. As if this issue wasn't catastrophic enough, it also ruins the good reputation of the oldest granny in the town, also known as my grandmother. Yeah, she doesn't really care about that social status; the real problem is that my mum does.

And I'm not even problematic! I'm just a lonely person. If you have any doubt ask my wise and popular grandma, who everyone, at least once in their lifetime, has visited, either to give gratitude or ask for a piece of advice.

"Shiba!" I exclaim.

The adorable small furry dog runs at the speed of light, jumping over me. Of course, I fall. Actually, Shiba is not that little. He was once but now it's another story. I'm like one fifty feet tall so if he stands on two paws he can be taller than me, just a few centimeters but what can you expect from a husky?

I found him one rainy day at the sidewalk. I didn't notice it until I heard a loud wailing coming from a long distance. The howling led me to where Shiba was, lost and without his family. I thought how much of a horrible world he must be living in, so I brought him home. As soon as I touched him, I received a deep growl as an answer. I'm not going to lie—that scared the shit out of me. Even though Shiba kept glaring at me the whole journey back home, he didn't try to escape from my embrace. And that made me the happiest child ever.

I could perfectly visualise my destiny afterwards. I was going to be yelled at, but then again, it was totally worth it. Five years later, Shiba belongs to a new home and without him our family wouldn't be complete. I don't regret anything, also my grandma adores this dog so as a consequence the whole village does. I've already explained how things work in this town.

"So you've been outside?" my mum interrogates me.

I try. I swear to god I do. However, I can't help it but hate my mum sometimes. Don't misunderstand me; it's not that I want her to disappear, although sometimes I can imagine a peaceful world without her presence. This is one of those times.

“Did you buy bread?” I ask carefully, trying to change the subject.

“Don’t change the subject.”

I roll my eyes. “I was just asking if you’ve bought bread. It’s not that difficult to answer, you know?”

“The supermarket was closed.”

“That’s too bad.” I reply.

“Do you mind answering my question?”

That’s another thing I really dislike about her. She is so irritating. There is no other human being like my mum; she is serious, unhappy, cold and the worst of all—she truly believes she’s above everyone else. I mean having confidence it’s not a bad thing, but this is on another whole level. I call it narcissism. Also, she uses sarcasm. I hate sarcasm, if you have something to say, do it face to face. What’s the point of making jokes that aren’t really jokes? That’s stupid.

“I have, so what?”

“You know.” she scowls as she says this.

No, I don’t. If I did, I wouldn’t be asking. Yeah, I’m highly aware that I wear you out several times a day. Guess what? I don’t care. I know you hate that I don’t care. I know you hate that I disobey your rules. I know you hate that I try to avoid arguments. I know you hate my rebellious “stage”. I know you hate the way I think. I know you hate that I don’t understand you. I know you hate the way I behave. I know you hate that I hate you. I know you hate me, mum. I get it.

I’m so done with this woman.

“Where do you think you are going?” my mum shrieks while I’m on my way to the bedroom. “Will you keep avoiding me or are you finished, huh?”

But you know what she hates the most? Even more than her own daughter? That you ran away. She used to be that way when she was younger. I recall my father’s words. It’s one of the many secrets we shared. My dad was a good looking, young man, and always had his shiny blonde hair tied up in a ponytail which gave him those hippie vibes. A heartthrob. And my mum was the typical shy and smart girl, the pretty good daughter—basically the definition of innocence. It’s like a cliché story; the two opposites accidentally fell in love. As a matter of fact, they hated each other’s guts, they ended up married. My dad approached her first, he did once, twice and a third time until she agreed and stopped running away. Who would have imagined my mum being the sweet type?

Over the years the roles changed. And so my mother became the confident and hard working woman she is today and my dad a lazy, pain-in-the-ass husband. That’s when you realise not all good looking men are nice. Alan (that’s my father’s name) started to mess around frequently. It was nothing serious at first, but since my mum isn’t someone you can test their patience, it was only a matter of time until they broke up. My grandmother warned my mum from the beginning that he was not the man for her, but of course my mum wouldn’t listen because she is such a know-it-all. Life taught her the hard way, as one weekend Alan didn’t come back home, then the weekend became a week, and that week a month and the rest is history. He literally ran away. Alan never said goodbye to me. I would be lying if I said I wasn’t hurt. But that was a long time ago, when I still called him dad. Now I remember him as Alan, because I firmly believe “dad” is the definition of someone who cares for you, supports you, and listens to you, someone who understands how you feel and gives you love. Well, he didn’t comply with any of those things.

I think maybe I should start calling my mum by her name too.

Shiba opens the bedroom door with his nose. He jumps straight onto my bed and lies down beside my legs. I hold his head, one hand on each cheek. I look into his eyes. No matter how many times I do this, when I lock my eyes on his, I can see another world. His deep blue eyes are out of this world. It’s crazy how he tries to speak to me but he can’t find the way to do it. I don’t understand it.

“I wish you could talk,” I sigh, “so I could have a friend that actually listens to me.”

I have the feeling that he understands every single word I say.

The next morning I woke up with a good feeling. As if something unusual would happen. It indeed happened. You know that strange sense that goes straight to your stomach and you can't really explain how it feels like but you are aware that there is something going on. Well, that's exactly what I felt the moment I opened my eyes.

Maybe that's the reason why I decided to wear my favourite sweater. It's old and big but I love it. I made it three years ago with the help of my grandmother; it took me about four months to knit it. Undoubtedly, it was totally worth it. I felt incredibly proud when I finished it. It totally represents me because of the diverse figures; they seem to fit like a puzzle. I describe myself as a puzzle—a big, messy, puzzle.

On the one hand, my mum says intuition is just a coincidence. On the other hand, my granny strongly believes intuition is an ability we are born with, even though as we get older we tend to lose it until it completely fades away. We are taught to follow the brain, the rational. In other words, we are taught to be dumb. Intuition is more powerful than any other kind of intelligence. It's a superior level of consciousness we could reach if our beliefs weren't shut down by society. Wise words of my grandmother's!

I felt really proud when I heard the news of the arrival of a new family in the village. It was quite rare to see someone move to our neighbourhood. It happened this morning; a small car woke up the village with its engine while our parents were making breakfast. It's not that we didn't notice, no one goes out when the sun hasn't come up yet. At least not in our village, we are lazy people.

The most interesting thing happened in the afternoon. As my mum had informed us, the new neighbour came to pay us a visit. I don't know what I was expecting, but surely not a woman who looked as rich as her. Sandra—I remember she mentioned her name like six times since she had stepped on my house—was wearing a nice summer dress. The fabric was soft and a shadow of pink pastel colour covered the waves of the cloth. At her side, a man, who judging by his appearance (smart clothes, briefcase in hand), seemed to be a business man who had just come from work. Nonetheless, the one who attracted my attention was a blonde kid whose image wasn't anything spectacular but there was something else about him.

That's the moment I saw it. He raised his head and stared at me. Those eyes seemed way too familiar. They looked exactly like Shiba's. How foolish I was to think it was just a coincidence. I ignored to my intuition, which was giving me all the signs.

Dinner was boring as hell. I decided I had enough when my mother started talking politics with the newcomers, while my grandma prepared the dessert—strawberries. I excused myself saying I needed some fresh air. My mother almost killed me with her disapproving eyes but I couldn't care less honestly.

The night outside was beautiful. I closed my eyes in order to hear the rustling leaves. I was so immersed in the beauty of the darkness that I didn't notice there was someone standing next to me. The blonde kid locked his eyes on mine. When I opened them, he was smiling brightly.

I forgot everything else. I just couldn't take my eyes off him. Not only was I amazed by his beauty but also I was delighted by the way his hair started changing colour. From blonde almost white to shining grey hair.

It wasn't a dream. It was happening.

"I can talk," he mumbled.

That was the moment when it all started. My life was about to undergo a radical transformation, and I had no idea. It was just the beginning...

Who's Inside Me?

By Laura F. Argañarás @laufarg



Have you ever felt you weren't alone? Even when you are a lonely person?

I was born on June 26th. Ever since I was a child, I have been different from other kids because I have always felt there were multiple personalities inside me. In my family, there were only three of us, my mom and my grandma, who worked their fingers to the bone, and I, Sophia, the lonely girl--which was the way that I was known. But I never felt alone and I had never known how to explain that, until the day my grandma passed away. That was the end of my sanity.

I vividly remember how devastating my grandma's funeral was. My mom was so mournful that I became very worried. At some point in the afternoon, I heard people sobbing and mumbling things about my grandma, so my thoughts changed from sadness to fear, and the personalities inside me started shaking up, ready to take over my body. I wanted to control my mind and my thoughts but my anguish suffocated me, and the people chattering and the clattering of plates did not let me think straight.

As the days wore out, nothing got better, my mother still had the blues and couldn't stop crying. I didn't know what to do and that made me feel irritated, but I started to see what I hadn't been able to understand before: I wasn't the lonely girl I was thought to be. Every time fury and irritation got hold of me, Ariana would turn up. She was very self-confident and extroverted but she was always fighting with my mom. By the way, Ariana was one of the personalities that had always been inside me. Every time she took control of my body, everything would be a mess the following morning. I would find splintered furniture or shattered dishes all over the floor. Sometimes I would get up to see my mum was hurt. I never stopped worrying and knew that if I didn't do something soon to help my mum, her life would be at risk.

The whole situation got out of my control and became a vicious circle. I felt guilty when I saw that my mom had been injured or when I heard her sobbing in pain. As a consequence, the guilt caused Amelia to take over my body. She was a control freak, especially regarding food. She would control every consumed calorie and carbohydrate and spent many days drinking water and eating only healthy food. The starvation infuriated Ariana who, in revenge, would come back and would pig out every single food in an uncontrolled way. In order to put an end to the havoc and kick Ariana away, Amelia showed up again and purged all the food that had been eaten by Ariana. The constant changes in my eating habits and mood made me live with anxiety, fear, fatigue, guilt, and extreme sadness.

I would spend my weeks fighting against my opposite personalities who made me mad. I battled against the anger, the binges, the remorse and the starvation all at the same time. I was suffering and I felt caged inside my dissociative identity disorder. My personalities wanted to take care of me, but they disparaged me and took advantage of my constant changes of mood. I was weak in my own life, basically I didn't know what I was going to face next time I woke up.

Standing by the window room, where my mom was lying, I could see that snow had covered the entire park the night before. Suddenly, I started to hear me/Ariana, who seemed furious, yelling at my mom, who began to whimper. I/she rushed off down the corridor and left my mom alone and anxious in the room. So remorseful was I, that Amelia came to rescue me and tried to calm me down by vomiting. Minutes later, I realised that it was me, Sophia, who was purging. So I stopped throwing up, and dashed after my mum and apologised to her for having ill-treated her.

That was the key for me to learn how to manage my other personalities. Accepting Amelia and Ariana weren't real people but part of my imagination.

Although there were hurdles in the way, I've succeeded in having a peaceful life.

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