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ILLUSTRATED BY NINO KHUNDADZE



# THE POETRY NEST

A COLLECTION OF POEMS BORN OUT OF AUTHENTIC RELATING



Introduction	3
1. My First Poem (Age 45)	5
2. Sugar	7
3. Safe Space	9
4. the fear of ending	11
5. Flying	13
6. The paths not taken, now to be taken	15
7. Dad	15
8. Now I am Marine Splash	17
9. Honeymoon to anniversary	19
10. Blue Cavern	21



## INTRODUCTION

Poetry is a weird wild thing that connects us with ourselves and others across time and space.

And it has been my medicine, pointing, prodding, and gently drop-kicking attention to anger, sadness, desire, and shame I didn't realise was within me, or acknowledge. It helped move these feelings through my body, till they were no longer stuck in some wasteland limbo inside.

With this in mind, and prompted with the task of creating a six-week series as part of an authentic relating facilitator certification with ART International, I set about creating a space for me and others to practice nurturing and asserting our voices. I called it The Poetry Nest.

With this space, I intended to: demystify poetry into the accessible healing practice it is; move energy through bodies using words, writing, reading, and performance; meet hidden parts of myself and others; invite sharing of

creative work especially when it's at its messiest and most unformed; and create and co-create poetry.

This collection shares some of what came out of this experiment, held between July and August 2022. Contributors were given a grand total of 10 minutes to write their poems. I am grateful to Robert Abrams for the idea to create a booklet, as I am to Nino Khundadze, for offering to illustrate each of the poems and doing so so beautifully.

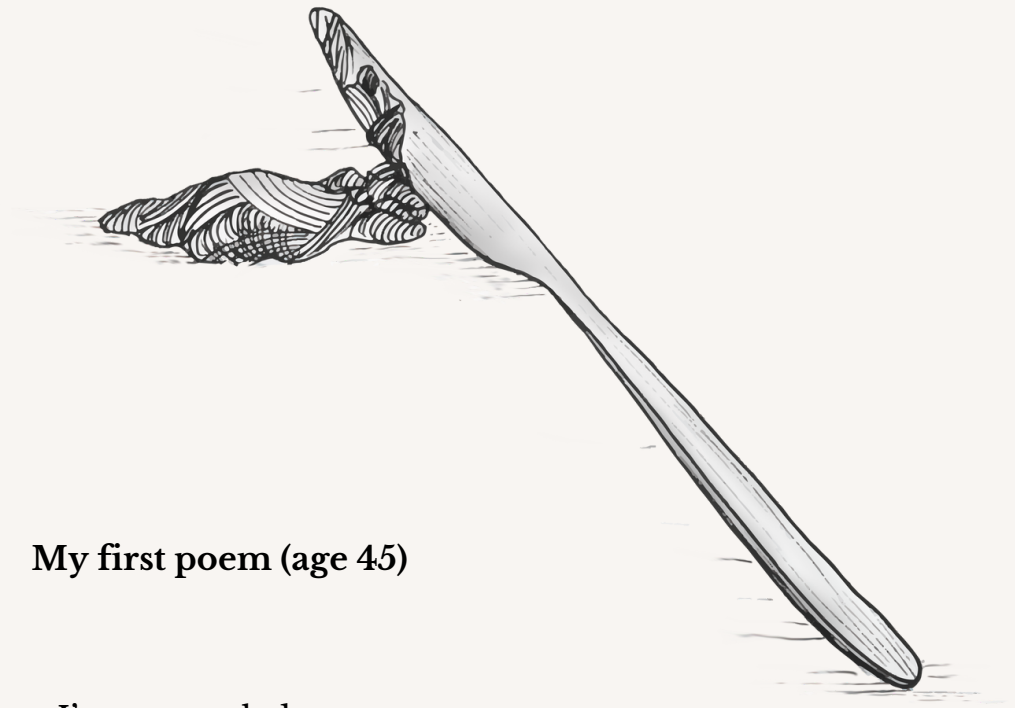
I am grateful to my mentor Natasha Figueroa for their support, and to grief coach and poet Joanie Terrizzi and poet and writer Dan Simpson for co-facilitating with me: Joanie in the week themed Poetry and Grief, and Dan for Poetry for Self-Discovery. Themes which inspired the poems are indicated in the top left-hand corner of each poem's page.

I'm so pleased you're here, and hope you enjoy this collection.

Sophie Yates

*Creator and Facilitator, The Poetry Nest*





**My first poem (age 45)**

Now I'm marmalade preserve,  
sweetly nestled on the breakfast table,  
I'm out of the dark fridge now,  
warming jelly,  
suspending in last year's fruit harvest.  
children stick their buttery knives in me,  
staining me with marj and bits of toast crumb,  
parts of me turn an unwelcome brown and black,  
and in one fowl swoop,  
i'm spilled down a child's chin,  
dripping onto the floor with disappointment  
at not making it on the intended journey...  
to be tasted in my full glory.

## Sugar

Sugar is everywhere outside.  
Every food bopping in the future of my mouth.  
Encrusting my hands, skin, mouth.

Sugar permeates my inside.  
Every food clinging to my waist from the past of my mouth.  
Weighing me down.

I need sugar when I am happy.  
I compulsive sugar when I am depressed.  
Better than alcohol, I suppose.

Accept the abundance.  
Address it indirectly through other means, for now.  
Replace it with a sugar push.



Find a way to be happy.

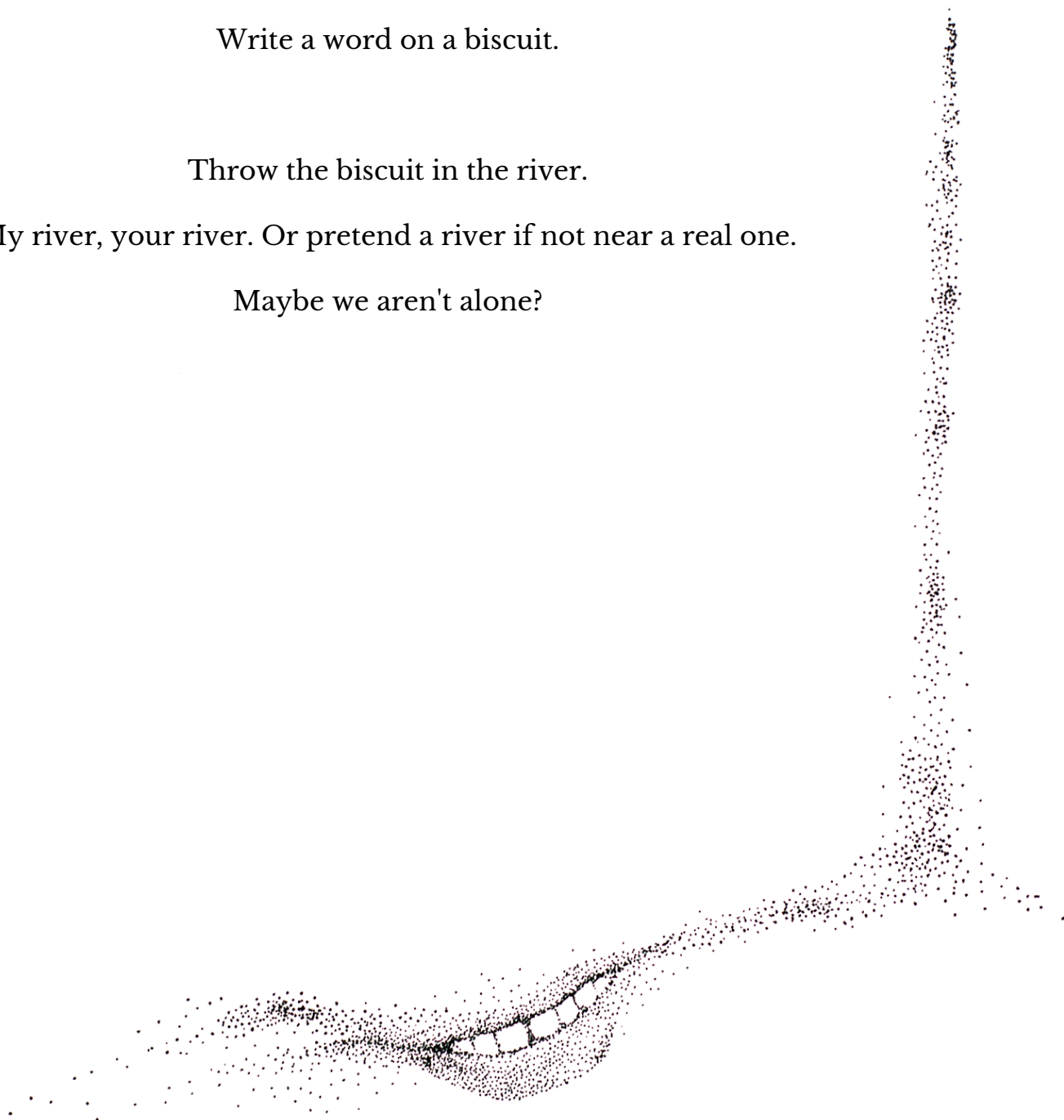
Not angry like the pigeons in Victoria's Embankment.

Write a word on a biscuit.

Throw the biscuit in the river.

My river, your river. Or pretend a river if not near a real one.

Maybe we aren't alone?





**Safe space**

Hello, delicious one—  
welcome into  
my poem.

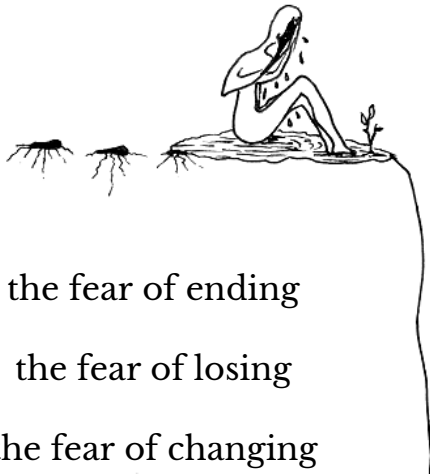
In-between these  
lines you will  
find a place to  
nestle, to rest—  
tuck yourself in  
with alliterative  
allusions to all  
that is edible—  
you, dear one,  
tender one, are  
safe to be soft  
here. Poems don't  
bite. Poems don't  
lash and claw and  
rip what's yours

into streams and  
garlands. Well,  
not this one. Let  
me lick the dirt  
of the day off your  
back, your paw, and  
rest on the floor.  
It is cushioned.  
Drop yourself—  
deeper, darling  
dish, and let  
me soothe you  
to sleep.

Welcome, safe one—  
sweet one,  
chewy one,  
into my poem.







the fear of ending  
the fear of losing  
the fear of changing

could I end this fear  
by grieving?

I ask myself

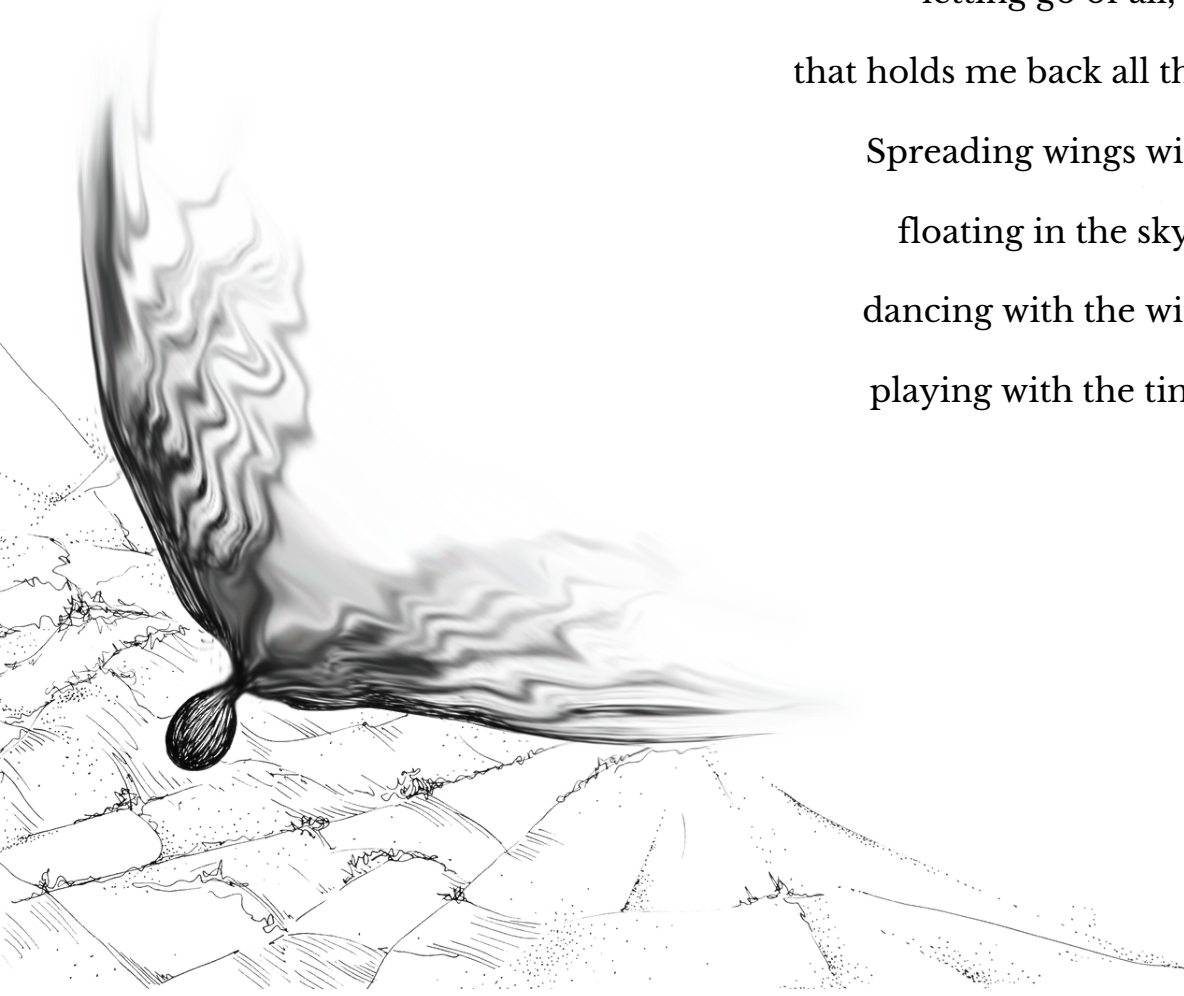
the fear of grieving

I ask myself

could I end this fear  
by living?



Flying,  
hunting me through the time,  
flying as a child,  
only just for a while.  
Remembering the view,  
from up above the sky,  
while dreaming to fly,  
diving into the sky.  
Slowly letting go,  
leaving gravity behind,  
letting go of all,  
that holds me back all the time.  
Spreading wings wide,  
floating in the sky,  
dancing with the wind,  
playing with the time.







**The paths not taken, now to be taken**

I grieve the paths not taken.

I think those would have been better.

More money, a boat, not that I need one, more of something.

Yet, any change would have

led to some other child, not my daughter.

Since my child is perfect, my imperfections were perfect.

Reflecting on the paths not taken is painful.

Necessary sometimes, a distraction sometimes.

Better to reflect on the paths now to be taken.

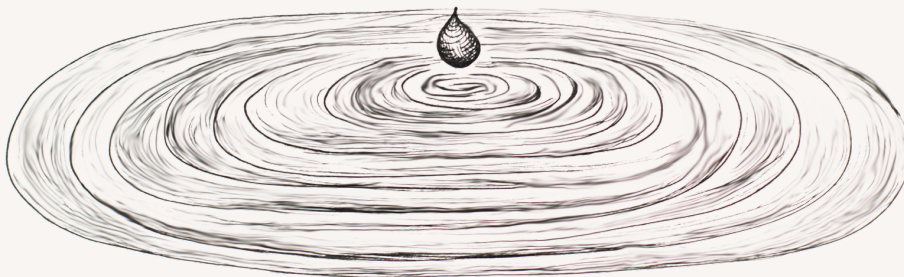
Take them. Or join me. Or help me pick just one.

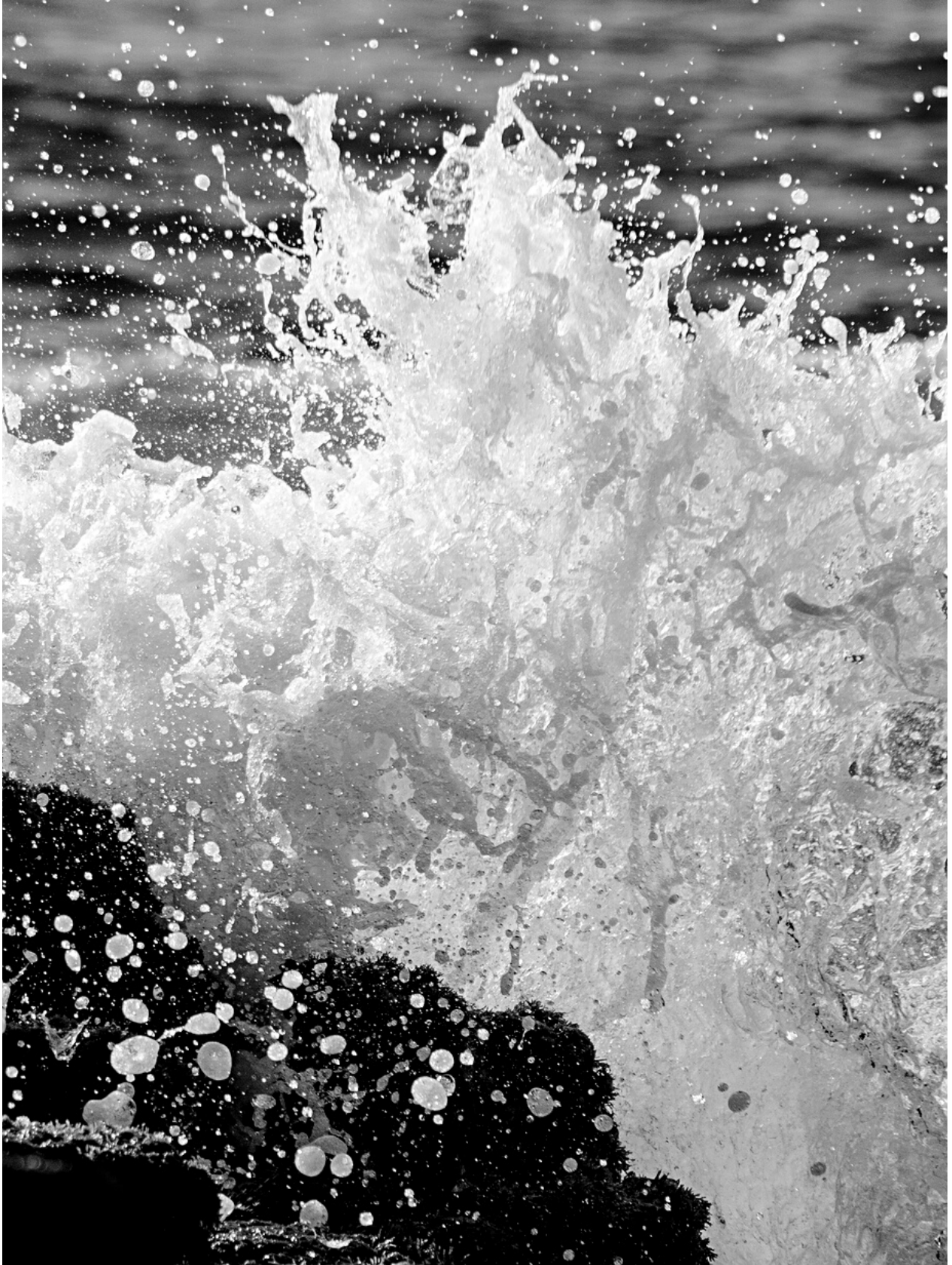


Dad...

A wish to be near  
to hear your voice  
through my ears,  
to don't fear,  
that I open my eyes  
and you disappear,  
leaving me with tears.

Dreaming about you being near,  
forgetting it was not real,  
knowing you would hate seeing me in tears,  
even after ten years.

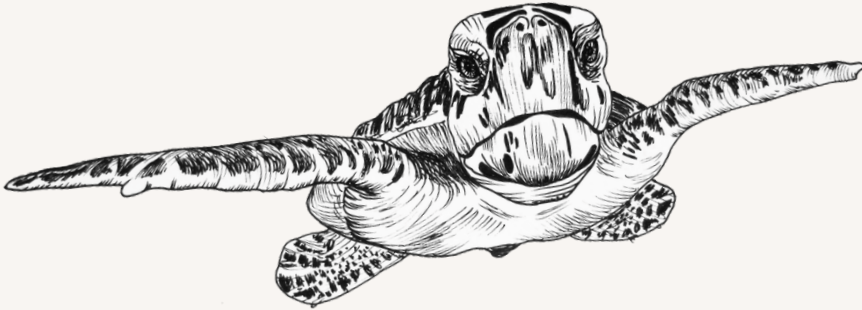




Now I am marine splash,  
sliding between the ships,  
looking for the shore to land,  
till the ocean takes me back.  
Tranquil, transparent and calm,  
moving softly under the moon,  
observing the spring rose sky,  
before the sun rise.  
Nature painting shades,  
colors that still have no names,  
marine splash transforms its face,  
to soul touching turquoise shade.



ROBERT ABRAMS  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2022



**Honeymoon to anniversary**

Macadamia,

Fifteen years of marriage now.

Your touch still moves me.

Rainbow sea turtles – dolphins!

Parenting teenager now.

Your touch still moves me.

Luau at sunset,

Always learning changing now.

Your touch moves me still.





POETRY, DESIRE  
AND REBELLION

ROBERT ABRAMS  
AUGUST 23, 2022

**Blue cavern**

Blue grey silver wet  
Enters canal inside stone  
Voyage to caring





### **Robert Abrams**

Robert is publisher and editor of ExploreDance.com, and has over ten years of dance training with champion Ballroom and Swing dancers. Robert lives in New York City, US.

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



### **Nino Khundadze**

A creative soul for whom art and creative expression is like fresh air that she can't live without. Born as an artist in Tbilisi, Georgia, and educated as an architect, Nino learned photography and writing herself, together with all the other things she is passionate about.

[@artfromnino](https://www.instagram.com/artfromnino)



### **Sophie Yates**

Sophie is passionate about supporting people to connect with themselves and each other. A certified authentic relating facilitator training in integrative psychotherapy and counselling, Sophie enjoys working with a variety of creative modes and media and is based in London, UK.

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