Pax Americana



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Contact us:
paxamericana.ake@gmail.com
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PAX AMERICANA



FALL 2025 "THRESHOLD" ISSUE

By undergraduate students of American Culture & Literature department.

PAX AMERICANA

THRESHOLD ISSUE FALL 2025

Pax Americana is an independent journal led by undergraduate students of American Culture & Literature department.

Editors:

Alperen Köse
Nehir Gürbüz
Yağmur Erdem

Designers:

Dila Dalçiçek
Ece Baran
Eray Erkek
Yağmur Çetin
Zeynep Çamlıca

Cover Art by Dila Dalçiçek

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAX AMERICANA FALL "THRESHOLD" ISSUE 2025

Preface by Ceren Kırca	04
Disability Studies as a Threshold by Yağmur Çetin and Zeynep Çamlıca	05
The Threshold of Generations: Gen-Z by Asya Yılmaz	12
A Narrator Walks into a Bar, What He Does There Is Irrelevant by I.A.M.	15
In A City Named War by Eylem Karakış	18
Still Steps by Eray Erkek	19
wooden by yağmur erdem	21
A Pair at Threshold by Irmak Soran	22
a sillhoutte by Alperen K.	28
Galatea by Dila Dalçiçek	29
Spontaneous Utterance & Black Mountain College by Ceren Kırca	30
From Psychedelia to Pop Heaven: Tame Impala's *Deadbeat* by Mustafa Doğu Sönmez	34
Confusion of the Almighty by Türkan Şevval Özdemir	39
Which American Author Are You?	40

CONTACT US

paxamericana.ake@gmail.com
@paxamericana.ake

PREFACE

By Ceren Kırca

While deciding on the theme of this issue, we were looking for something extensive and open to interpretation from several angles. As we discussed the list of ideas we had, we lingered the most on threshold. In fact, when the theme was first proposed, everyone imagined something different from it. One person spoke about personal thresholds, enlightenments, and moments of transformation; another took a more concrete route and referred to physical borders, the kind that still spark hot conflict even in 2025; someone else was reminded of periods of transition, like that stretch when summer ends, and school begins. As the discussion went on, we all somehow knew that this would be the theme, because we were certain that something which evoked different associations in each of us would spark even more varied thoughts and ideas in our writers, who are exponentially more than us. And so our theme was set: thresholds.

As a generation, we were born into an incredibly fast flow of information, and things our predecessors only began to grasp in their middle ages were presented to us as ready-made facts from childhood. We came this far with heightened awareness, yet limited room for action. Naturally, we evolved into individuals who think deeply but are, in some way or another, frustrated by the existing limits in mobility. Throughout this process that we call life, thresholds and the subsequent changes they trigger point to what we deem to matter. After passing a threshold, the result is something decided, defined, or, if none of these, it is a recognition that ultimately changes the current.

Thresholds also hold the potential of failure, but they still prove formative by directing attention to where it is actually needed. In fact, many great thinkers touched upon the necessity of unpleasantness for transformation. To Heraclitus, strife was essential to change as conflict and tension were the engines of becoming, Jung argued for the confrontation of the shadow self to truly heal, Nietzsche said, "what does not kill me makes me stronger." Some of our attempts at passing a threshold, that we organized for the sake of, may have been blocked by external forces signaling that we need to push further, while some others may exist only to prove to us the insignificance of our individual decisions and thus break the illusion of control. So these are not just refreshing moments of enlightenment but also products of systematic suffering.

Take this magazine in your hand as a collected record of various breakthroughs in self, in culture, and in literature. Every work here represents a battle fought in which something is destroyed for the sake of renewal; every piece holds the courage and willpower that transcended what is and became what if.

Before letting you readers peek inside of various minds, we, as the Pax Americana team, would like to thank and offer our gratitude to our dear teachers, Ayça Germen and Ann Fox, for their contributions to this issue. Their support and encouragement add enormous value to our humbly devised magazine.

Now, buckle up and get ready for a battle fought on various fronts. Differing from a brutal battlefield, here you will only be armed with your mind. We invite you to join in this environment of discourse and contemplation, which are to lead us to the ungotten parts of our most powerful arm. If you have any further comments or want to start an open discussion on any points made in this issue, you can do so from our website linked below. We value your opinions and ideas. In a world where sharing is caring, do not hesitate to extend your remarks, as it will nurture reciprocatively.

DISABILITY STUDIES AS A THRESHOLD: HOW DOES DISABILITY STUDIES INTERACT WITH MULTIPLE FIELDS AND ART

By Yağmur Çetin & Zeynep Çamlıca

"How Does Disability Studies Interact with Multiple Fields and Art"

Q: "Could you tell us a bit about your academic background and what big you did on disability studies and more drama within American literature and culture?"

A: Absolutely. My name is Ann Fox and I'm a professor of English at Davidson College in North Carolina. I came to disability studies in a very roundabout way. Originally when I went to graduate school, I trained as a theater scholar. I love teaching about American and British drama and I also loved teaching about experiences outside my own, therefore I developed a real interest in African-American drama, Latino drama and Queer drama. I had always kind of been attuned into storiesthat, you know, were not typically heard on stage in more traditional canonical theater.

In 1996, I moved to St. Louis to work as a visiting professor at Washington University in St. Louis. While I was there, I got involved with a theater company called the Disability Project, and since I was in the theater department at the time, a colleague of mine who was a playwright in there said: "You need to come and do this theater project with us." It was disabled people from the St. Louis community. And they were just ordinary folks, teenagers, older adults, some new and some long time activists. We shared stories about disability experience.

PROF. DR. ANN FOX



Then, my friend Joan Lipkin, who was the playwright directing the project, turned those stories into scenes that we would perform all around the St. Louis area, about love, community, protests, employment and sex. It was a way of making people aware of disability as an identity, and a political movement. And I had never thought about disability as an identity or a political movement until then, although I lived in a fat body and ideas connected to disability like myths about disability or stigma toward non-normative bodies were familiar to me.

I went to Davidson in 1999, and while I was there, a colleague said: "You've worked with disability. Do you know about this field? Disability Studies?"

I said no, and it just so happened that the National Endowment for the Humanities was sponsoring a six-week summer intensive for professors about Disability Studies. It was a camp for professors where I studied with other Disability Studies scholars. Long story short, I fell in love with the field, and when I came back to my home institution, I started designing courses around disability. Disability just made a lot of sense to me as somebody who had been interested in multicultural drama, as somebody who lives in a fat body, and as somebody who thought that we all are impacted by beliefs about what's normal for bodies.

That's how I came to the field, and ever since then, I have just been growing and learning. I have gone from teaching about disability in literature, to teaching about disability in art, to teaching about disability in comics. I think the common thread is visual representation. I have always been really interested in that, so I have turned more into a Cultural Studies and American Studies professor than a literature professor at this point.



Fig. 1

Q: "Your work brings different areas that have distinct approaches such as Disability Studies, modern drama and visual culture. How do you see these fields intersecting? In what ways do you think art and performance can challenge or expand how we understand disability? "

A: That's actually a great question. They intersect around that notion of the visual.Visual culture, performance, disability studies. Disability is so much about being looked at. People stare and they think they know how to read the truth of your existence just from your body. Think about the assumptions people make about women by what they see. There's something similar with disabled people too. So I think they intersect by intervening into what people think they know. Like in theater, there have been ways in which disability has been used as a kind of shortcut.

Or in Disney movies, we know that it's the bad guy if he has a hook (Fig. 1). So from the time you're a little kid, you learn. And also things like Barbies, I love them, but you think about how that corresponds to gender, right? Barbies teach us from a young age we're supposed to be young and blonde and thin. So disability is the same way. It teaches you, "That's a disabled person, they must be really crabby or malevolent." or whatever the stereotype is. But I think by creating disabled people as more interesting and a more varied kind of character, visual representation in theater can challenge what we think we know about how disabled people look, behave and what they stand for.

It is kind of like how in feminist art, moving past stereotypes of women is really important so that we can see women in all their multiple identities around the globe. I think visual culture and disability can do something similar. It's especially important to make disability visible because of how often disabled people are erased. They might be institutionalized in the hospital, or they might not have a visible disability. It's a truism of the field that disability is simultaneously invisible and hypervisible. You can see it everywhere in movies, like how many Disney villains are disabled and yet we don't necessarily see it that way. We don't recognize that we're reading disability in a particular way, so I think visibility is really important. I think it also helps because it humanizes disability. We're afraid of disability very often, so to see it as an identity that people claim, that people live happy and good lives with, is a challenge to the widespread belief that if you're disabled, you're somehow automatically miserable.

And we also think about it like, oh, if you have a disability or you have an injury, that's your problem. That's an individual thing you have to take care of. I think a lot of my students share this experience where they go, "This happened to me too." Or it was like, oh, yeah, I never thought about that son of my great uncle who was institutionalized his whole life. What must that have been like for him?

Or recognizing depression in my own family. So once you see it you can't unsee it, but I think that's good. It's not like we only talk about disability when we go to the doctor but it's like a part of who we are, it's part of how we encounter the world and so for that reason it's very important. I tease my students sometimes I say congratulations, now you're gonna see it everywhere.

Q: "The theme we chose for the issue is threshold. What does threshold mean to you personally or intellectually? Do you see a particular threshold in your own work or life that has shaped how you think about art and the literature? "

A: I think threshold is an amazing theme. I think when I think about how threshold relates to my own work, I think about it in a number of ways. I think about the threshold between being disabled and non-disabled is not always as clear as we would like it to be. We can move in and out of disability. We can move in and out of it on a day-to-day basis. Like, how I have serious depression. There are days where I'm having a really bad depressive episode, so they're very different than other days. Or how you're an athlete, and you could have an injury and then get better. Or the way we get older. I'm aging, right? So the threshold between disabled and non-disabled fluctuates our whole life. And that's okay.

I think part of the reason we kind of go, "oh, disability" is because we always want to think of ourselves as normal. I think for me personally, threshold is also really meaningful because doing Disability Studies has put me on the threshold to new ideas. I've moved from not even thinking about disability as an identity, to thinking about how it relates to my work in theater, to then thinking about visual culture,

and that's part of what I love about what we do as people who study humanities, you know, the new idea, the thing that gives you productive discomfort. You're like, "Well, I never thought of that. I think I'm gonna check that out."

So, and that's where you guys are too, you know, constantly learning and growing on the threshold of new ideas. I think disability is also, if we think about the threshold as a cutting edge, disabled people have a lot of knowledge that we can all benefit from. In fact, there are some activists who call disabled people oracles. Disabled people have had to learn how to improvise in the face of oppression, neglect and poverty, so there's a kind of sense that the threshold is the cutting edge. What can we learn from disability, knowledge, or innovation? For example, when we were early days in COVID, everybody was like, "Oh my god, what do I do to protect myself from this airborne virus?" and disabled people were like, "Well here's the kind of mask you should have, and here's how to make a homemade box fan that's an air filter." People would post instructions of how to put three box fans and they would put furnace filters on top, and it was like a homemade jerry-rigged air filter. Disabled people know how to do mutual aid when their aid or support doesn't come through. And now with climate change and instability with refugee populations, how can we take the advice about self-care, mutual aid, that disabled people already have and extend it to others.

So they are on the threshold, I think, of a kind of cutting-edge thinking, even though we don't think about it that way. We just think about disability and cutting edges, like, can we make a new kind of bionic arm? And I'm not criticizing that kind of medical advancement, but thinking about disability on the threshold only in terms of medical technology can be really limiting. Disabled people are really, really creative and innovative.

Q: "In the context of American culture, the idea of thresholds often tend to change with moments of social and political transformation. How do you say the idea of thresholds reflected in American literature or drama, especially in relation to identity and inclusion? "

A: That's a good question. I think in terms of American drama, we're seeing more and more of a representation of different voices than we ever had before. And so that includes disability theater and performance. So for example, there's a performer named Ryan Haddad, and he does work about being a gay man living with cerebral palsy. There are new plays like the play Teenage Dick by Mike Lew, or All of Me, by Laura Winters. These plays I mentioned have been developed in concert with disabled actors. The play All of Me, is a rom-com, featuring two wheelchair users that use voice-to-text speech, so the whole thing is voice-to-text and the audience has to sit with waiting for that way of dialogue to happen, which is a really interesting intervention into how we normally think about watching a play. We often have the actors on stage, able-bodied, typically voiced, projecting.

I want to also answer your question in a slightly different way. I think disability studies is also on a threshold because we're moving from a disability rights model which focused very much on individual accomplishment, to a disability -

justice model which really centers the experience of black, indigenous, people of color, and also queer folks. And I think that's really important, because one of the things that disability studies has done in the past is kind of replicate the mistakes of other movements by really being centered on white scholars and white thinkers, people in academia. It's not that that academic movement isn't important, but we also we need to center the experiences of folks whose voices we haven't traditionally privileged.

I think that's happening on stage too, but I think I think within disability studies, a careful attention to disability justice is really important. And you can Google and find what the 10 principles of disability justice are. Basically the difference between disability rights and disability justice is that disability rights, I would say that's the legislation or activism that helps create access and accommodation so that if I was disabled, I could get a job as a professor or I could be a student and get accommodation, and those things are really important. But disability justice asks, "How can we challenge the structures within which we're working?" So on the one hand, it's great that somebody can get a job within a capitalist society, but on the other hand, what about capitalism and how it hurts all of us? Disability justice looks more at larger social structures, and it looks at things like the importance of interdependence, of care, of cross disability allyship, of cross movement allyship. You can't advocate for disability if you're not also doing anti-racist work. So disability activism, disability studies itself is on a threshold, and I think that's really important so that we don't replicate the mistake of making assumptions based on our own privilege. Like, when I look at some of my earlier curations, I think, "Those were based in physical disability. Who was I ignoring?" Or, "Those are a lot of white artists, what's the history of black artists with disability that I wasn't paying attention to?" So I think that's a really important threshold, you know, be more inclusive within our own movement and field.

Q: "Can you give us a few examples of threshold or disability in art from American and world literature, for students who just started to learn about the subject?"

A: What I would suggest is that whenever you encounter a new work, think about where you see disability in it. So I could recommend works, like for example, I love teaching memoirs by disabled authors like life writing so like Harriet McBride Johnson or Judy Heumann or work by Alice Wong (Fig. 2), I think is really important. She has her own memoir but also several collections. one's called Disability Visibility Project and one's called Disability Intimacy and that has a collection of lots of short essays by disabled writers of all different identities. There's a collection called Beauty is a Verb that is a collection of disabled poetry. There's a collection of drama called Beyond Victims and Villains. But what I would encourage students to do is to look for disability in what they're already reading.



Fig. 2

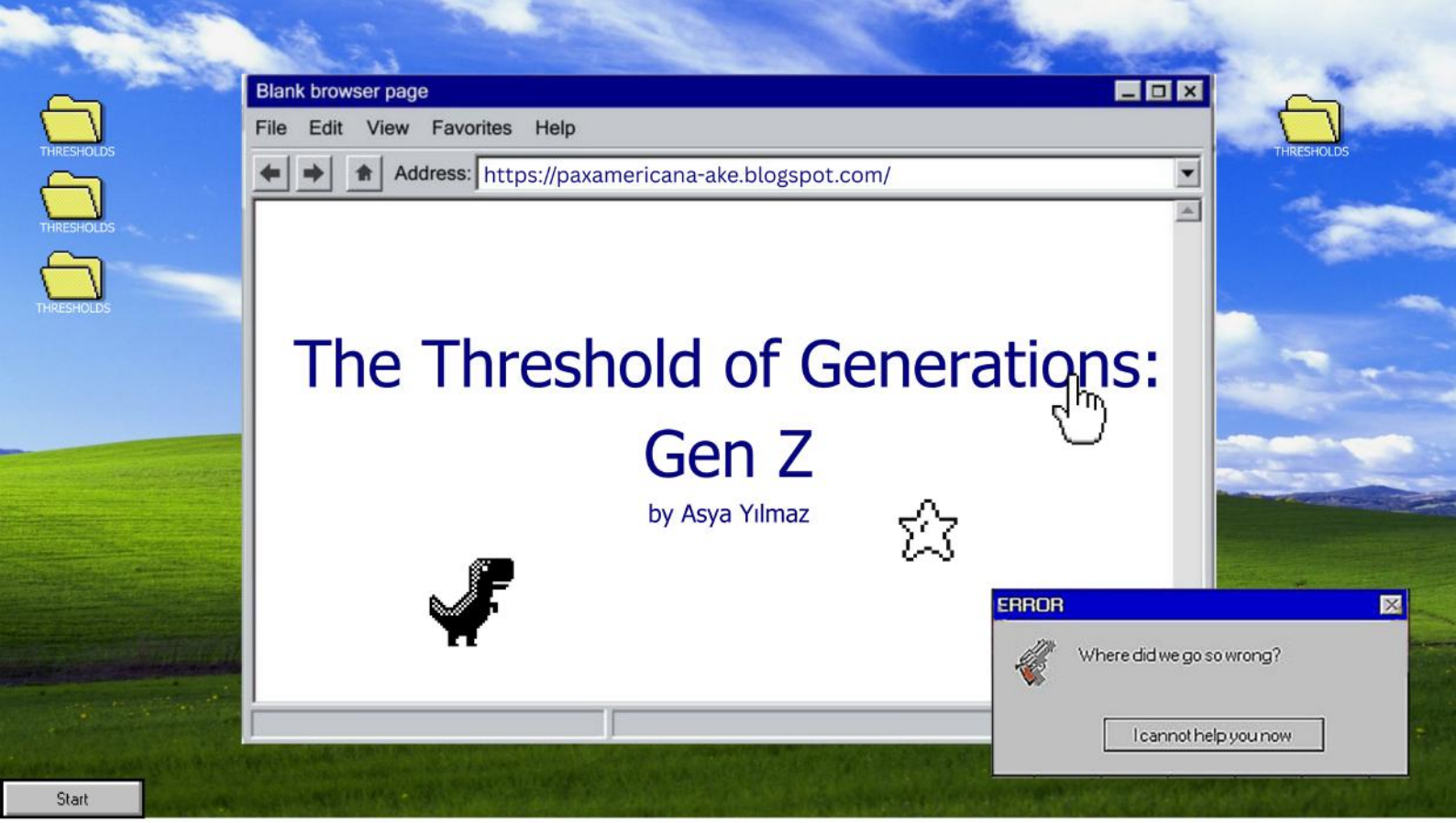
For example, I often teach a novel by Tommy Orange called They're There. And it's a novel about contemporary Native American life in cities. So often in the U.S. there's this stereotype that the only place that Native Americans live are on reservations, but of course there's a long tradition of Indians migrating to urban centers and working in construction. This novel talks about a family in Oakland, but you can't talk about their life without talking about addiction, intellectual disability from fetal alcohol syndrome, depression, and how prejudice against Native Americans was very disabling, so we see the legacy of that. But for example, there's also a character who has fetal alcohol syndrome and who becomes the hero of the piece, because the ways he sees the world are very different, so seeing how his native identity and his disabled identity intertwine is really cool, and that might not be something people think about. They might think this is just an indigenous novel, but you can't tell the story as Tommy Orange tells it without a more complicated view of disability.

So I would tell students, think about the disability myths that you're familiar with. Think about the popular stereotypes. How does the work engage those? Does it promote them? Does it challenge them? Does the work engage with disability in a way that you might not have expected? I would also say disability itself can be really a big category. For example, it can include being temporarily disabled. It can be an injury. It can include cancer. It can include being fat. I'm teaching a whole course on representing fat bodies in literature. I don't know if fat people think of themselves as inherently disabled, even though there's this whole thing in America about the obesity epidemic. But the experience of being fat aligns with disability. Your body is not "normal." You are stigmatized for being fat.

So students can also think about what kind of bodily experience might align with the experiences of disabled people, like being fat, or sometimes students will talk about invisible disabilities like depression or neurodivergence. Neurodivergence isn't necessarily a disability, it is just a different way of thinking about the world and processing. So I would almost encourage you even though that's a list of like texts you could look to, just think, just put on a different set of lenses when you come to work and think, "How can I see disability here in a way I might not have before?" And there's lots of books like that where people never really thought about disability in them. I think about Jane Eyre, where there's disability all over it, you know… the mad woman in the attic. If you're not familiar with the book, it's not American, it's British. It's this Victorian novel where a governess falls in love with her employer, and he's got his mad wife in the attic, and at the end of the book he becomes blind, and it's like nobody really ever talked about it. They just kind of accepted like, "Yeah, she's mad, she's crazy, yeah, he becomes blind, that's his punishment from God." But we should question this. What's going on here? Is this work just holding up stereotypes? Is it challenging them? What is the work doing with and through disability?

Q: "When we think about disability, the idea of a threshold often carries many meanings. In art and drama, thresholds are also moments of transformation and self-awareness how do you see disability? Both as lived experience and artistic representation."

A: That's a great question. I think it can be transformative in a number of ways. It can transform what we think about others' bodies. It can transform what we think about our own bodies. It can transform what we think about the appropriate subject of art is. It can transform our notions of the beautiful. Disability aesthetics challenge the idea that the aesthetically pleasing is only what we generally accept as beautiful. A beautiful statue that's proportional or a beautiful flower, but instead - does disability transform our sense of what could contain beauty in a new way? Can it transform our sense of how stories are told? Sometimes disabled authors will structure their works in very different ways. I've seen authors who have very short snippets, and it's not that other authors don't break up their text into short snippets, but sometimes my students and I will talk about, why is the work structured that way? Is it meant to be of access for us? Is it meant to break up our reading experience? There's a poet, whose name is escaping me, a Canadian poet who stutters, and he writes his poetry, and stops it and makes it stutter by repeating letters or doing breaks. So the experience of disability can also literally transform how we structure a literary work and how it's assembled and what it defines as beautiful as what it defines as a whole being and a life well lived. We get so caught up in quality of life with disability, but literature can really transform our notion of what it means to have a quality of life. A long life is not necessarily a better quality of life, right? Or an ambulatory life is not necessarily a better quality of life. So I think in all those ways it can be transformational.



Every generation has the right to bear the name threshold of generations; however, for Gen Z, this is a rightful pseudonym, and it is more than just a taxonomy. It is true that each generation presents a new milestone and offers something unique to the world. Yet, I would argue that Gen Z is the first to fully conquer this evolutionary chain of progress, as they possess the combined strengths of the analog and digital worlds, which grants them instant access — not only to global events, but also to the instant reactions and behaviors of those involved via the internet and social media. This access also facilitates the rapid formation of a new, and highly influential political activism that positions Gen Z as a unique blend of identity and transition. In this essay, I will discuss the technological and sociological reasons that distinguish Generation Z, especially from Generations Y and Alpha, and make it a "threshold generation".

The Meriam Webster Dictionary defines Gen Z as "the generation of people born in the late 1990s and early 2000s". Firstly, it should be taken into account that, based entirely on this definition, Gen Z's relationship with technology is more unique and revolutionary than that of its predecessors — because they witnessed the mobilization of technology and the omnipresent accessibility of the internet during their childhood, especially in the early 2000s, and they witnessed the end of the analog era. The Millennials who came before them, in a sense, still had a relationship with technology influenced by the analog world, and for them, digitization and adapting to new technologies were through learning, not natural acquisition. However, such an active learning or adaptation process was not needed for Gen Z, as technology became inherently ingrained in their world. In other words, members of Gen Z are the last generation to spend their childhood and adolescence in a time when the digital world had not yet fully established its hegemony.



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Gen Alpha, who came after them, was already raised with a certain level of internet culture and technological literacy (it should be noted that their parents were The Millennials), making them, in every sense, the first generation of the fully digital era; meaning, they were not able to experience the analog world. They haven't gone through the trial-and-error and adaptation processes of Generation Y, thus having a much more integrated relationship with technology because it was structured and digital from the start. Phyllis L. Fagell highlights this as follows: "By the time my youngest son was born in 2008, even more changes had come about. Now 10 years old, he doesn't remember a world without iPads or cell phones" (8). Generation Z, however, stands between these two worlds, the analog and the fully digital, and this is most clearly evident in their presence in internet culture.

The internet for Generation Y was a newly-emerging concept, so it was largely a reliable, creatively supported and cumulative source, and it was largely positioned as an encyclopedia and a guide — but Gen Z witnessed a change in this situation. The decrease in trust in the internet, particularly due to the variety and pollution of information that came with social media starting in 2010 and beyond, was, in a sense, a major strike. A second strike, that occurred rather recently, was the injection of artificial intelligence and AI-generated content into mainstream social media, whose producers and consumers are seen as Gen Alpha rather than Gen Z. This situation has damaged the expressive, creative, and original style of self-expression on the internet, inherited from Gen Y; and this is precisely where Gen Z's position lies: at this threshold, in an authentic identity blended with humor and creativity, and in their desire to protect and develop it.

The most important factor in the development of this identity is undoubtedly social media. The birth and development of social media parallels the years of Gen Z's transition to adolescence. During these years, the creative expressions and outputs of adolescence, for the first time in history, were embedded in a collective and global consciousness through social media, archived and literalized. Therefore, it is undeniable that Gen Z has influenced social media just as much as social media has influenced Gen Z. Given all this, their reaction to the shift in social media, witnessing it becoming increasingly monopolized and synthesized into a tool serving commercial and political purposes is what makes them a threshold generation. Posts, articles, videos, and other works of art, crafted with humor and creativity, often highlight human originality and its importance. These critical approaches reveal the significance Gen Z places in culture, experience, and a sense of self-value; and is a product of defensive instincts and a sense of responsibility.

These instincts and sense of responsibility, combined with the instant access and globalization afforded by social media, have also given rise to a new form of activism. Gen Z, informed within minutes of local and global events, able to gather attention through sharing and interacting on social media, and they are also able to act accordingly. Because of these qualities, they have quickly become an unprecedented figure in achieving social justice. By utilizing interactive opportunities quickly and effectively, they have witnessed more than any generation before them, and have become the first to incorporate this extraordinary, constant flow of information into their daily lives.

The protests in Nepal in September 2025 are an example of this new generation of activism. The movement was driven by a leaderless network of young students, coordinated through digital platforms, and united by frustration over corruption, censorship, and unaccountable governance (Suwal). Apart from these large-scale movements, there are many campaigns carried out on social media globally that aim to improve and protect the rights of individuals from all segments of society (regardless of sub-identities such as: women, ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+, disability, etc.), animal rights, environmental protection, and climate change.

In light of all this, Gen Z plays a key role in preserving and developing the experiences and values of previous generations and in raising future generations focused on the digital world, effectively acting as a bridge. By blending their experiences with the analog world and technological advancements, they have become a unique, politically charged, self-aware, and innovative transitional generation. This is the primary reason they have earned the nickname "threshold generation." They are ultimately working towards a more blended and balanced future, ensuring that the power of the digital world is transferred to the areas of social justice. Therefore, the understanding of the identity that Gen Z represents, and the threshold they occupy, which is filled with various meanings, is important and should be taken into consideration.



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A Narrator Walks into a Bar, What He Does There Is Irrelevant

By I.A.M.

[*First and foremost, no, this is not a play; and yes, there are brackets and they will be used tremendously. It is not plays' hegemony to use brackets is it? Is it? Anyways. Scene. Nighttime. A narrator. Sat under the fluorescent light in his dorm. Clearly, this is a college dorm, the desk is crowded with tissue papers, coffee stains and class notes - the midterms are not over yet, so this is to be expected. Many ingredients of creative writing accompany him in this quiet night; the smell of mold that lingers in the nose, the sound of rushed steps and phone calls and washing machines going crazy. The window is open, the cold is lurking through, awakening the narrator's senses... Truly a creative haven if you ask me, with voices and sights and smells and pens and paper... An intellectual cocoon of crowds; and also, postmodernists, - who bear an interting threshold of ideas. However, for all that, the narrator is bored. Heavy bored. So there is that.*]

[*Since The Narrator wanted to create an atmosphere that was written in italic - Another scene. A dim light appears from the darkness. Under the was of light, a man sat upon a bar stool; a scarf wrapped around his neck - this will enrage someone later - and a notebook lying before him.*]

[*The Narrator*] It was an hour before closing time. The sweating beer glass was dampening the cover of the notebook. The bartender was polishing the glasses on the counter. A cloud of smoke from the woman nearby drifted over and formed a fog-like mist over his notebook.

For the last couple of days, he had been coming to this bar, trying to write something [*Because apparently his dorm was not aesthetic, or expensive enough to trigger this act of "writing."*]. His desire to write a new and unconventional story yielded only a few beers and some scribbles. So far, his writing career has been nothing more than a handful of detective stories. He would feed the reader with an obvious suspect, muddy the waters with tiny details about the other ones, and when the time was right, pull the rug out for that "Aha! The murderer was the other guy from the start!" effect. Although he took pride in one or two of his works, the rest felt like hollow imitations. Haunted by the fear of turning into self-repetition and cliché, he had been unable to produce anything for a year. The idea of trying something new had struck him upon reading Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy.* After putting down that book, he had convinced himself that he needed to go to a bar to write, believing that a shift in setting and the act of observation were essential somehow.

[He waved away the smoke and picked up his pen.] [originally The Narrator wrote this line and I have nothing to add to it but I wanted to showcase my omniscience.]. He sat up straight and cleared his throat. He took a breath to start the sentence, but he decided to take a sip of his beer. The sip turned into something longer than he expected, he upended the glass and finished it off. He made to lean back, only to remember that the stool was backless and he quickly caught himself. He looked around to see if anyone had noticed his slip, but the place was nearly empty; counting the staff, there were barely a handful of people left. He continued writing, hunching over the table, straightening back to observe, and plunging right back into the work.

He regathered his focus and returned to the notebook. He paused for a second, then another, and began to write. He wrote a sentence and straightened up. It seemed to have met his expectations. The ink on the paper was blurred by the smoke from the woman's cigarette. He must have been writing about a *bar.*

[Narrator (?), angrily] Oh, absolutely not.

[Now, I thought there must be an objection to all these. Because are we really human if we do not possess our objections?] No. No, no, no. STOP. Put your sentimental *dim light* back into wherever it belongs. It does not belong to this story, instead you should find it in a discount noir shop you bought it from. I'm not going to allow that guy to tell MY STORY.

First of all, a scarf? *[See? I hinted you that the scarf is important.]* At a bar? Indoors? At closing time? He looks like no less than a tortured writer all along. He is more like who got lost on the way to a property slam and decided to cosplay as Paul Auster. And all that thing about the light appearing from Phoenix's ashes. The only thing appearing from the darkness is the man's gradually declining self-esteem.

Let me be for real. I am the real narrator. This other one? Phew. He is the kind of omniscient voice who would narrate a trekking trip as a Greek tragedy, no, NO, a comedy at best *[You see, making fun of self is surely important, but I must say that the construction of The Narrator (?) surely pushed the limits - dangerously close to a zone of losing self-respect. I will let him talk more though, I am actually interested in his arguements, or, why is he this angry.].*

And yes, he had come to this bar for days, but not out of some grand artistic philosophy caused by the scenery. The truth is simple: the place was quiet, predictable - as far as a bar can be - and he liked overhearing gossip around here, maybe the bartenders hum along to old rock&roll songs. Stability and maybe lots of alcohol, *clearly* not inspiration, brought him here.

As for his writing career, he wasn't as hopeless as this gimmick states. He wasn't haunted, nor blocked. What he was carrying out, intentionally, was investigating and searching. Trying to hold on to an idea he couldn't articulate. He wasn't escaping cliché; he was wandering around something he didn't understand enough to write down. How humane!

Also, the man "upending the glass" dramatically? No, what actually happened - I saw it - was that he drank too much, too fast, and choked a little and tried to hide it by faking a cough. The bartender snorted. The woman with the cigarette didn't even look up. *[This is a bit sad though. Good thing I am not here to create happy narrators who have happy endings.]*

When he straightened after that first sentence, he wasn't admiring his own line, rather he saw it as an opportunity to catch the moment as the bar's atmosphere shifted, as it not always did near the closing time. Everyone was focusing on the argument between two lovers. Someone found the woman right, and the others saw the man fair. But our guy was analyzing, proceeding to use this moment in his freshly forming story. Maybe the detective would fall in love with the murderer, who knows? Obviously, this other one doesn't even have a clue.

And that last line, oh sweet Jesus, "He must have been writing about a bar." Oh really, genius deduction, Sherlock. *[I love the Narrator (?)'s sarcasm! One of the best ideas I had in a while.]* What tipped you off - the fact that he was in a *bar*, or the fact that he was hunched over his notebook like a vampire trying to drain the ink out of it?

Listen. Forget that melodramatic, smoke obsessed crack. If anyone's telling this story from now on, IT'S ME.

[See, I wanted to add IT'S ME. - because... Isn't that so tragically funny? Narrator (?) is so angry, because he thinks that The Narrator is trying to write his story, but he is very much unaware that I am actually writing all these? That even his anger is my creation? That I am still not sure of his role in this story that I have titled him Narrator (?)?.. But in a way, I love their contrast with The Narrator. I think it adds to the meaninglessness of it all.]

[The story is pretty much over, but there is one thing I cannot seem to place. I have titled the narrator The Narrator because he narrates things. Simple as that. Then we have Narrator (?) whose role is still a mystery to me... I may edit him out later, but, I believe it is obvious that he functions as the main objection to The Narrator.]

[Yes, we all know those things. We are sure of it all.]

[But does the reader actually know who I am? I meant to place myself in all these because of self-referencing. Would finding m take them out from the reading experience? Would they be so lost in the story that]

[they don't even take ME as their narrator?]

In A City Named War

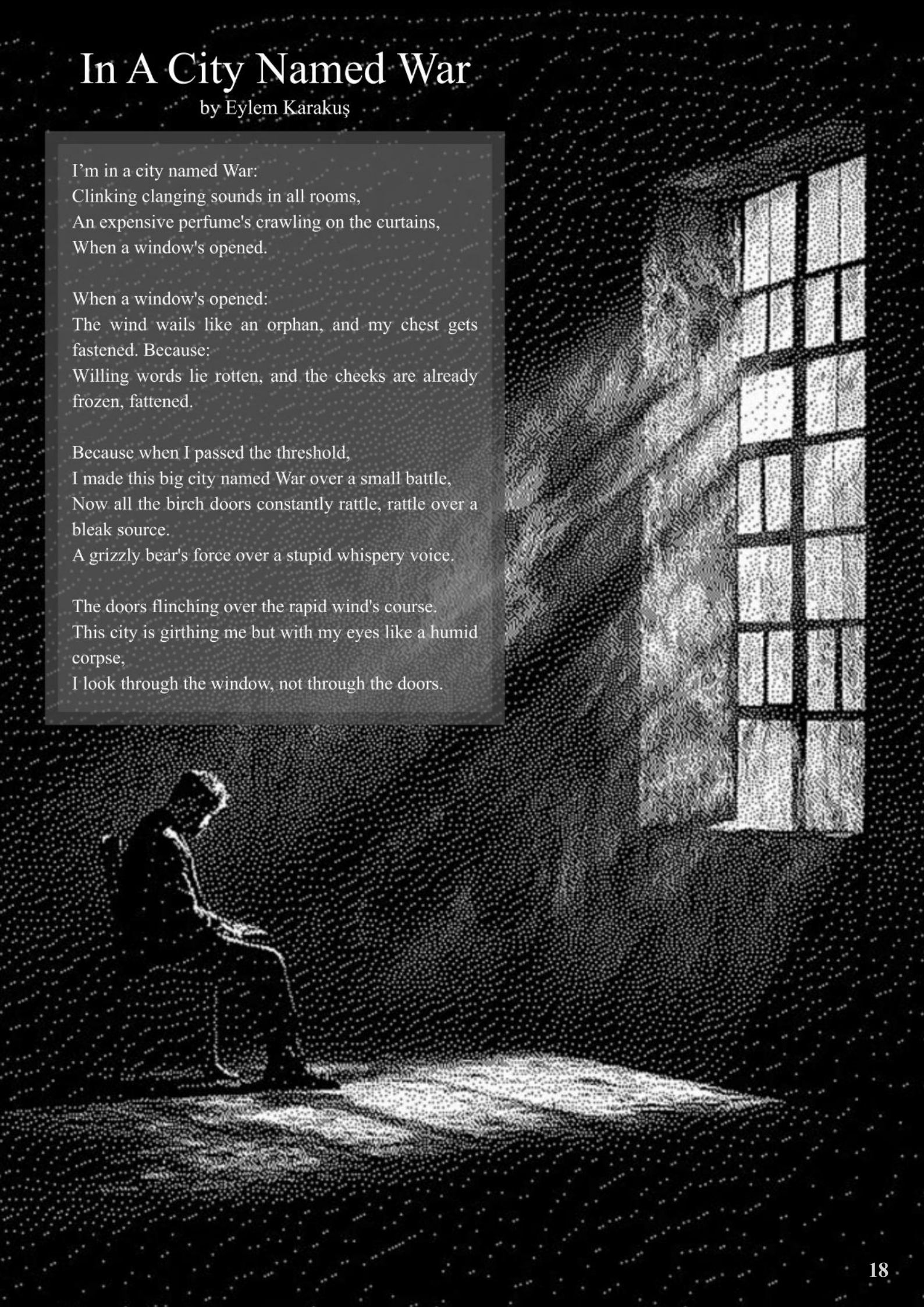
by Eylem Karakuş

I'm in a city named War:
Clinking clanging sounds in all rooms,
An expensive perfume's crawling on the curtains,
When a window's opened.

When a window's opened:
The wind wails like an orphan, and my chest gets fastened. Because:
Willing words lie rotten, and the cheeks are already frozen, fattened.

Because when I passed the threshold,
I made this big city named War over a small battle,
Now all the birch doors constantly rattle, rattle over a bleak source.
A grizzly bear's force over a stupid whispery voice.

The doors flinching over the rapid wind's course.
This city is girthing me but with my eyes like a humid corpse,
I look through the window, not through the doors.



Still Steps

by Eray Erkek

The basement floor of a mall, the darkness of the night, only with a few stores dimly lit. A flat walkway right in the middle, stretching between the stores on both sides. A few footsteps, and the walkway began to operate. Two women appeared, one constantly looking around her surroundings.

"Are you sure this is safe Mina? It's all closed here." she asked.

"Completely. See that light over there?" the other pointed to the spot gleaming at the other end of the floor.

"It looks so far away! What if this thing stops?" she gripped the railing. Mina went through her bag and pulled out a small pocket map.

"See? We're here right now. Here's the pharmacy and there's our destination." she tapped the top of the map.

The walkway continued to move slowly. The motor sound filled the floor.

"But what if we get stuck?"

"Look Tuna, we won't get stuck here, we are *moving*, darling. I promise." she touched her shoulder. Immediately after, Tuna started walking briskly.

"Please, just wait! it is already taking us there. Why can't you just wait until it's over?" But she quickened her pace and disappeared into the dark. By the time Mina reached her, she had already arrived at the end.

"Really? An escalator? Where are we going exactly?" she was still trying to catch her breath.

"We can't get directly to where we want, can we?" The stairs stretched upward. A familiar light gleamed at the end.

"Didn't you say the map point here?" Tuna asked.

"Yes, but it can only take us here. The rest is on you. You will figure out where it should be. Now, come on, let's get moving." she stepped onto the escalator. The motor started up with a heavy rumble.

It was no different in the stores upstairs, each ruled by a dim light and emptiness. Only one store had its door wide open and soft music played from within. *Les Copains*. Inside, hundreds of different clothes gleamed like a museum wardrobe. A *New Season* section stood in the middle. The mannequin at front wore a long graduation gown and cap, posing like Rodin's *The Thinker*.

"I think this is yours," Mina said, taking the garments off.

Tuna put the gown on and donned the cap. She closed her eyes and the store dissolved.

"So, where are we?" Mina asked.

A small table accompanied by two chairs appeared, set with a Big Mac meal and a sheet of paper.

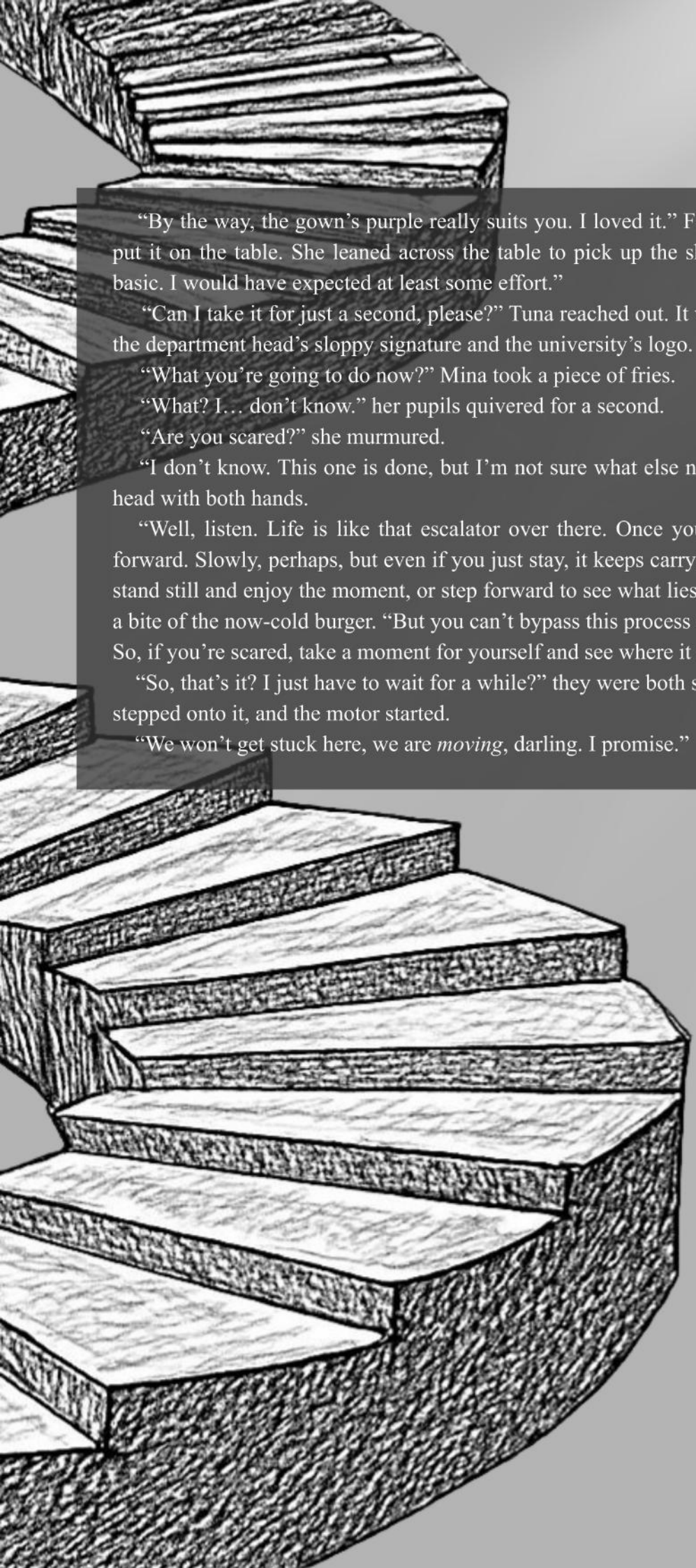
"We are on the food floor." she answered. "A bustling day. The sounds of children and meals. The woman at McDonald's calls out a number. The sun is out, and summer has just arrived."

"Hey!" Mina spoke up.

"Hey!" she echoed, sipping her drink.

"I asked what you are wearing to the graduation party. You just zoned out." she dug through her bag. "I can't find my phone. Can you give me a call?"

"Oh, for sure." Tuna took out her phone and dialed the number.



"By the way, the gown's purple really suits you. I loved it." Finally, Mina found her phone and put it on the table. She leaned across the table to pick up the sheet of paper. "The print is quite basic. I would have expected at least some effort."

"Can I take it for just a second, please?" Tuna reached out. It was her diploma. Her eyes fell on the department head's sloppy signature and the university's logo.

"What you're going to do now?" Mina took a piece of fries.

"What? I… don't know." her pupils quivered for a second.

"Are you scared?" she murmured.

"I don't know. This one is done, but I'm not sure what else needs to be done." she cupped her head with both hands.

"Well, listen. Life is like that escalator over there. Once you step onto it, it begins to move forward. Slowly, perhaps, but even if you just stay, it keeps carrying you ahead. You can choose to stand still and enjoy the moment, or step forward to see what lies beyond. It's up to you." she took a bite of the now-cold burger. "But you can't bypass this process and jump straight to the outcome. So, if you're scared, take a moment for yourself and see where it carries you."

"So, that's it? I just have to wait for a while?" they were both staring at the escalator. A little kid stepped onto it, and the motor started.

"We won't get stuck here, we are *moving*, darling. I promise."

wooden

because we can never change what we're made of

i will burn in the end, no matter what

if i am made of wood.

i could be the wooden sword

like the ones we sparred with when we were children

still, i will burn.

you always beat me and i ran to my mother

oh, how i used to run to my mother…

and how she used to catch me

two handed catch, i land between her arms

and if it's time to eat, she will put me on the chair

but that chair too, will burn.

all that work on the wood,

all the effort to make something

something that's good for something.

am i? good for something?

good for anything at all?

no matter, doesn't matter

these ink marks i leave tonight

are my way of consolation

because if i'm wooden

and if they're frozen

they will burn me,

no matter what i'm good for

and what i'm not

yağmur erdem

A Pair at the Threshold

Beowulf, Grendel, and the Monsterisation of the Heroic Body

By Irmak Soran

In the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, the boundaries between heroism and monstrosity are not as fixed as the poem suggests in the beginning. While the narrative appears to highlight the clear-cut distinction between the civilized human world of Heorot and the monstrous realm embodied first by Grendel, then his mum and the dragon, this division starts to collapse and merge with one another during the physical and symbolic struggle between those two worlds. The combat scene between Beowulf and Grendel, thus functions not only as a clash of good and evil, but rather it becomes a liminal space where Beowulf crosses the threshold of humanity and begins inhabiting a space of monstrous hybridity. In this moment of extreme physical violence, the poem blurs the lines that distinguish the hero from the monster, describing the hero and Grendel through parallel imagery and intertwined descriptions, portraying them not as two individual identities but as a "pair." (Beowulf: A New Verse, 775, 52) Using Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's *Monster Theory*, particularly Thesis I ("*The Monster's Body is a Cultural Body*"), Thesis IV ("*The Monster Dwells at the Gates of Difference*"), and Thesis VI ("*Fear of the Monster is Really a Kind of Desire*"), this essay highlights how Beowulf's violent performance reshapes his role as a courageous hero and reveals the permeability between human and monstrous identities.

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's *Monster Theory* plays a vital role when analyzing how *Beowulf* destabilizes fixed categories of heroism and monstrosity. Cohen's Thesis I, "*The Monster's Body Is a Cultural Body,*" positions the monster as a symbolic text upon which the anxieties, norms, and ideological tensions of a society are inscribed. Grendel, as described in *Beowulf*, is not just a creature that offers a physical threat; but an embodiment of exile, theological condemnation, and social disorder, representing what the human community seeks to exclude in order to define itself and create the dichotomy of "the self" and "the other." Cohen's Thesis IV, "*The Monster Dwells at the Gates of Difference,*" suggests that monsters dwell at liminal spaces, geographical, moral, and conceptual, marking the boundaries of identity.



"Beowulf Battles Grendel" by John Howe

Grendel dwells at the literal and metaphorical margins: he lives outside Heorot, outside divine grace, and outside social belonging. Yet it is this forced liminal existence that defines him as monstrous, as he exists at the threshold between humane and monstrous. Cohen's Thesis VI, "*Fear of the Monster Is Really a Kind of Desire,*" further highlights this boundary between humane and monstrous, suggesting that monstrosity repels and fascinates at the same time, threatening identity while tempting the hero towards its transformative power. In that context, Beowulf's fight with Grendel not only reasserts his heroic identity, but also reveals that heroism itself is both attracted to and shaped into the monstrous. During that encounter, Beowulf's actions begin to reflect Grendel's own savagery, suggesting that the boundary that separates the hero from the monster is not rigid but permeable.

Grendel is initially constructed as the cultural other, a figure whose existence is defined by condemnation, exile, and exclusion. The poem's early descriptions emphasize his extreme monsterisation through demonizing labels, portraying him not as a character with agency but as a symbol of pure rejection. In the opening scenes of the poem, Grendel is introduced as:

> Grendel was the name of this grim demon
> haunting the marches, marauding round the heath
> and the desolate fens; he had dwelt for a time
> in misery among the banished monsters,
> Cain's clan, whom the Creator had outlawed
> and condemned as outcasts.
> (*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 102-107, 9)

with which the repetition of diabolical terminology strips him of individuality, transforming him into a symbolic vessel of collective fear and moral anxiety. The phrase that associates him with "Cain's clan" reinforces this theological enmity, positioning him outside divine grace and aligning him with Cain's lineage of biblical transgression. In Cohen's terms, Grendel occupies the space of difference (Thesis IV, *The Monster Dwells at the Gates of Difference*), as he dwells in a liminal area, not only geographically but also morally and structurally, separated from the communal and "civilized" space of Heorot.

However, during the combat scene, the poem unexpectedly complicates Grendel's monstrosity by granting him emotional and sensory depth. In lines;

> The captain of evil discovered himself
> in a handgrip harder than anything
> he had ever encountered in any man
> on the face of the earth. Every bone in his body
> quailed and recoiled, but he could not escape.
> He was desperate to flee to his den and hide
> with the devil's litter, for in all his days
> he had never been clamped or cornered like this.
> (*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 749-756, 51)

The narrator attributes to Grendel not only perception of fear but also realization. These lines fracture the rigid binary between human and monster by granting Grendel the capacity to feel vulnerable, making him sympathetic. This humane response, where the monster feels fear and acknowledges Beowulf's strength, weakens his role as a completely monstrous othered figure. Grendel's monstrosity, thus becomes not something fixed or innate, but rather shaped and reshaped through his relationships and encounters.

While Grendel's monstrosity subtly approaches humanity through fear and pain; Beowulf begins to gain, and showcase monstrous qualities, suggesting the convergence of his identity with Grendel's. Unlike traditional epic heroes who rely on weapons or divine sanction while fighting with the monster, Beowulf intentionally rejects the sword and chooses to face Grendel bare-handed. By leaving civilization's tools behind, Beowulf steps out of human, civilized order and steps into a primal world. Grendel's response to Beowulf emphasizes this change in identity formation:

The captain of evil discovered himself
in a handgrip harder than anything
he had ever encountered in any man
on the face of the earth.
(*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 749-752, 51)

Here, the poem externalizes Grendel's internal fears while reflecting his own monstrous potential, as Beowulf displays physical power that is usually associated with the monstrous.

The imagery of the "talon-tight grip" blurs the line that separates the heroic grasp from the animalistic claw, portraying Beowulf as a liminal figure that inhabits both human and monstrous realms. His physical strength and the brutal violence of the clash connect him with the same forces of terror he is trying to defeat. In this liminal space, heroism and monstrosity get intertwined, as Beowulf's triumph depends on his ability to *perform* the monstrous, while Grendel's monstrosity is *mirrored* through the clash. This moment shows that the monstrosity in Beowulf is relational and performative while highlighting the conceptual division between the human and the monster.

During the climax of the clash, the poem merges Beowulf and Grendel into a "pair", blurring the line that distinguishes the hero from the monster. The narrator emphasizes the mutual intensity and struggle with the lines:

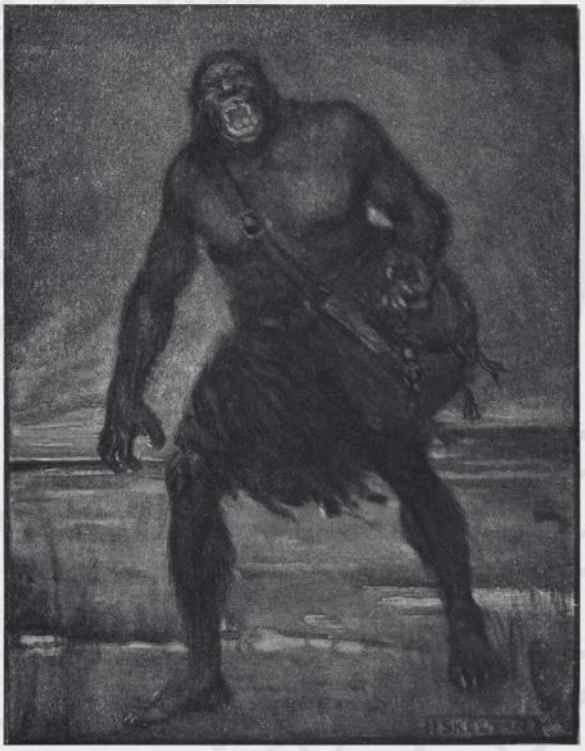
The story goes
that as the pair struggled, mead-benches were smashed
and sprung off the floor, gold fittings and all.
(*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 774-776, 52)

The usage of the word "pair" underscores the equality of the combat rather than the superiority of the monster or the hero, in other words, the good or the evil, framing the encounter as an interaction between equal combatants. Both figures are described with animalistic imagery, making it harder for the reader to differentiate the hero from the monster, while highlighting the violent energy they share. The hall Heorot itself trembles under their force with the lines;

And now the timbers trembled and sang,
a hall-session that harrowed every Dane
inside the stockade: stumbling in fury,
the two contenders crashed through the building.
The hall clattered and hammered, but somehow
survived the onslaught and kept standing:
it was handsomely structured, a sturdy frame
braced with the best of blacksmith's work
inside and out.
(*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 766-774, 51-52)

Transforming the site of human civilization into a site of horror and violence of monstrosity, Heorot itself transforms into a liminal space where the boundaries between human and monstrous, order and chaos, the self and the other collapse.

The battle becomes a threshold, both spatially and morally, where the identities of the hero and the monster merge with one another and are temporarily indistinguishable, connecting the battle with *Cohen's Thesis VI*, which situates the monster at the gates of difference. As the poem continues, the narrative voice slowly erases those hierarchical distinctions, and with that, neither Beowulf nor Grendel is merely defined by prior classifications. With crossing that threshold, the poem suggests that monstrosity is not an innate quality but rather a performative one; and by portraying Beowulf and Grendel as intertwined beings, the poem highlights the idea that heroism is inseparable from the very force it seeks to destroy.


"Grendel" by J.R. Skelton

Ultimately, in *Beowulf*, the battle between the hero and the monster is not merely a clash between good and evil, but is an exploration of liminality and crossing the boundary between humanity and monstrosity.

Through Cohen's *Monster Theory,* it becomes clear that monstrosity is not an innate trait but a performative act that can even be embodied by the hero. During that battle, both figures mirror one another, forming what the poem frames as a "pair", and thus, the fight becomes not a physical encounter but a collapse of categorical binaries of the hero and the monster, the self and the other. Through that encounter, *Beowulf* suggests that heroic greatness is inseparable from the monstrous force it seeks to exterminate, and at times, must embody.

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a silhouette

a silhouette calms me
and warns me, inside of my chest
it holds me but frays me
i don't know when yet
it will take me to my own
won't it break me, i guess so

trapped inside these four walls
my mind could not roam me
not anymore
in my dusk light dreams
my consciousness is eclipsed

half past 3 am, it lurks away
smoke and chills get out the stain
every time she is dismayed
moon will shine on us again
can it?

down the halls of my head
emerges tainted memories
every night, it is still the same
so beautiful, meanwhile crowded
these remnants of a vicious circle.

by Alperen K.



“Galatea”

By Dila Dalçiçek

Spontaneous Utterance & Black Mountain College

By Ceren Kırca

Spontaneous utterance in literature is a persistent tool that has been used for thousands of years to consolidate sincerity in text. Its roots reside in the classical period, Greek playwrights gave heroes sudden exclamations of outbursts to crack the illusion of the narrative mask and let emotion surge through. This created a sort of genuine pathos that heightened the reliability of a character. Later on, Latin thinker Cicero said that these bursts were powerful rhetorical devices that built credibility because they mark a shift from controlled rhetoric to raw emotion. Quintilian also touches upon this while talking about rhetorical theory, saying that the appearance of involuntary speech would harness authentic-seeming flashes of feeling to create immediacy and trust. In the plays of Shakespeare, spontaneous utterance arrives in the form of raw statements tumbled out mid-soliloquy and reveals truths that were meant to be kept hidden. In the romantic period, emotion became the authority in literature and disrupting the decorum proved valuable for sincerity. Over time, spontaneous utterance started to be utilized to directly convey perceptions. Ezra Pound emerged as the architect of controlled spontaneity, he described poetry as "an intellectual and emotional concept in an instant of time." To him, the poet is employed to arrange language in such a way that the reader receives not a description but a force of energy; he wanted the poem to be a spark that is transferred instantly from the poet to the reader. He insisted upon composition by musical phrase instead of a metronome meaning that the line would follow the pace of a speaking mind, carrying breath energy from writer to reader.

In 1933, John Rice established the Black Mountain College in North Carolina. This liberal arts school emerged as a utopian experiment in education, it provided an environment where there was little to no administrative control, the students were asked to learn without any grading, and the main aim was to teach in accordance with the individual needs of the students instead of imposing a pre-defined curriculum. Spontaneity exists in the multiple disciplines that the school teaches. One of the instructors of the college, John Cage, has a composition titled 4'33 which is just 4 minutes and 33 seconds without a single musical note played. The performance highlights the spontaneous voices around and presents them as art. Cage's definition of silence contains no voice at all, related or unrelated. In one of his lectures, he says, "There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to see, something to hear. In fact, try as we may to make a silence, we cannot."

In the poetry branch, the process of perceptions coming and going constitutes the poem. In "Projective Verse," Charles Olson describes the physics of poem-making. Like Pound, he considers the poem to be an energy transferred. In order to catch the instant, the poem must be written unpremediated, and it should not be revised, otherwise it would lose voltage and its desired transmission of perception would fade. His way of spontaneous utterance also encompasses the way the page is formatted. Olson introduced composition by field, which is a technique that uses the entirety of the page freely to convey the exact working process of the mind. The page is a field where the use of space, placement of words, and timing all indicate a dynamic system that is the perception of the poet. While composing by field, a syllable becomes the smallest particle of energy, and a line stands for a unit of breath. This means a syllable creates the effect of a spark, or a burst of a thought, and the line becomes a full utterance. The use of breath-driven lines incorporates the body into the poem, essentially bringing life and self closer to art. This way of writing poetry shows the reader that the poet is following impulse rather than design.

Today, we are used to constructing, editing, and revising a work to perfect it. We generally shave out all the excess once the work is done and smooth it over to get a more polished finished product. Even when we aim to convey our perceptions, we do it artificially because rawness seems rickety and wifty; still, aesthetic concerns remain.Upon studying Black Mountain College, with the instruction of Ayça Germen, the students of American Culture and Literature have written spontaneous works that highlighted their fleeting perceptions. The aim was to lay these momentary sensations onto paper as they come. Here are some examples:

Lights, eyes burned
Who knows me better than
myself
In the car, writing my thoughts
Feeling unsafe, 'cause I've never
shared mine
Mom came, doing best she can.
Still waitin', for something to
feel seen again.

Everything moves, except me
Sittin alone in the backseat
Alone or lonely, who knows me

A burden came again softly

By Seray Şimşek

fire exit, rain
she refused my offer
when i said we should have wine
but instead she whined and
whined
she said "i don't like wine,
don't bother me-
i won't write my poem until i'm
in my right mind."
so i decided to use dashes just
like dickinson
and now the poem has some
validity.
and i said
don't bother me-
i am nowhere i want to be.

By Asya Yılmaz

Anti- Clockwise Chaos
Large pit of ice, full of eyes
scattered around
some fall n some pass
this chaos lasts
until, the Zamboni arrives

New set of eyes
waitin' tight
for the resurfacer, with a yellow light
flashing while
it goes around on the white
Erasing with such an appetite

One old man among the new lot
not concerned
with time or machines come around
enjoying it all
watching in the middle
those go around and round and round
By Deran Uzun

there aren't many things greater
than the grace shown to a cat
who walks on top of an awning
by the awning
as it allows the cats little feet
create a shadow play
for those downstairs
and doesn't break
By Yağmur Erdem

Rush Hour, Midnight (Online)
I know i've been
Long gone but
I brought some
good i mean
great news for
you. In
brief I
can spend my
whole
life with you.
By Miray E. Durgan

Returning Home
She told me to write this poem,
Ba dum be dum ba dum
I know nothing about it, none!
Dum dum dum…

Observe observe and put words
Then stop, come back again
insert words
But don't look back, never!
None!
Dum dum dum.

My frizzed hair and I we are on
this suffocating box
With beings that has frizzy
heads as well
Its coming onto me,
They are coming onto me.
Are they coming onto me?
I don't know
Dum dum dum

I dream about the lightness and
thoughtlessness they
seem to have,
Or do they have?
I don't know
None
None none none none none

How does a person does not
look back?
I don't understand, none
Still suffocating
Dum dum dum dum dum

I look back at the dots I passed,
I look back at the things I said,
Things I wrote
Things I erased
It's impossible
None.

Or not none?
I actually do not know none
I'm off the box.
Done done done.
By Simay Yılmaz

/H/İÇTEN METİNLER -2

Ayaklarım üşüyor, hiç zamanı değil *hiç*. Susmam bile bir işe yaramaz bu durumda. Gözlerim görmez ve bir adım da yoktur benim ve bir adım dahi atmam durduğum yerden. Sarhoş bir ihtiyara dediğim gibi kıpırtısızlığı seçtim. Akıntıya bıraktım her şeyi, bir taşım ben gri ve soğuk takvimler başka bir günün şafağını gösterirken. Otur ve sana bir masal anlatayım bu gece. Soğuktu ve gidecek bir yer olmadığını düşünmek istiyorduk. Bu hoşumuza gidiyordu. Evimiz ülkenin diğer ucunda kalmıştı ve başka bir denizdi baktığımız. Üç + bir kişiydik ve duvarlara yazılar yazıyorduk. Yöre iklimi bütün coğrafya kitaplarımızı hatmetmişçesine yağmur bırakıyordu çamurlu caddelere. Uzun telefon konuşmaları vardı. Metrelerce film… bitiren yolunda bile yürüdük. Sonra susuk. Birimiz çok tanıdık bir duvarın üstünde yatıyordu en son. Ateşim yükseldi ve unuttum. Telefon çaldı. Karşıdaki ses bir yıl öncesinden geliyordu ama benim kulaklarım son üç bin yılı dinlemişti bu arada: yorgundu/duyarsızlaşmıştı ---->sesinin bütünü sevecenliğini filtre ediyor ve ses tellerimi duygusuzluğa itiyordu. Bir kehanette bulunayım ister misin? Bu gidişle bu rüzgar tüm mevsim boyunca devam edecek. Ben dışarı onu kucaklamaya gidiyorum. Yanıma birkaç çizgi roman alsam iyi olacak ve ışığı açık bırakacağım yine..

… … …

Rüzgar hala eski bir kitabın ilk sayfasındaki bir tükenmez kalem lekesi gibi… Ya da, beyaz bir gömleğim vardı benim, şöyle bir esmişti kıvrımlarından.
Yıllar önceydi, bir şişenin içine kırmızı ot'un ilk sayfasını koymuştum, mesaj olarak. Silinmek mi istiyordum? Sadece kanepemi mi özlemiştim? Kütüphanem yanıyor muydu? Televizyonu kurtarabilecek miydim? Hepsi ve daha fazlası aynı yarasa saatinde aynı yarasa kanalında mıydı? Yoksa bunu da mı rüyamda görmüştüm? Kanepemde miydim, yoksa yatağımda mı? **"uyuyor muydum, hiç uyumuş muydum?"**

"and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil ***who believe in the unseen*** *for that he also is flesh where every day is a festival [and] the sky is the color of tv tuned to a dead channel…"*

otobüsteyim beynimin kıvrımları bildiğim bütün metinleri kesip biçiyor geçip giden manzarayı okuyorum mavi gökyüzü beyaz/pembe bulutlar bu esinti bir sebebi var~ iyi hissetmeye zorlanıyoruz sadece sahtekar üçüncü gözüm açık bu her akşam olmaz ve çabucak gelip geçer diyor küçük bir defter bir grup takma isim olduğumuz zamanlardan kalma hepimizin - irili ufaklı kıvılcımlar vardı sonra uykumuz geldi…

"playing solitaire til dawn with a deck of fifty one". varoluşçu felsefenin özü buydu. Bilgisayar ekranına o kadar uzun süre bakmıştım ki bir an gerçekten ağladığımı sandım. Bu bir beklenti olabilirdi. uzun zamandır ağlamamış olmak ağlamak için başlı başına bir sebep bile sayılabilirdi. Ağlanacak halime ağlayabilirdim, ya da kısmen bilemezdim yine; pek çok ölüm tehlikesi atlatmıştım doğduğum şehirde – çamurdandı yollar. {Ve silahlar-a veda. Ölmeyi sevmek. İçin… dedi ama fazla değil. Geçerli sebepleri vardı. Gitmek istediği yere. L tatlar peşindeydi. Onu(n). Lmaz kelimesini kullanırdı sık sık. Elimi derdi. Neydi. Çaldığı alet. Olmak – bir şeylere biri yüzünden. Düşen bin parça. Parça ederler adamı}sokakları isten yapmıştı dedem ve babam. İstememişlerdi belki. İs hep vardı söylediklerine göre. Ve hep "ecel adlı eller yazar taşları"

tamam şim*di* nereye gidiyoruz?

can yalçınkaya (a.k.a. pw)

FROM PSYCHEDELIA TO POP HEAVEN: TAME IMPALA'S DEADBEAT

By Mustafa Doğu Sönmez







Tame Impala's new album, *Deadbeat*, met with mixed reactions because of how different it sounds compared to the albums before it. *Deadbeat* is rather a House and Dance-Pop album compared to the other works of the discography, which are neo-psychedelic and synth-pop. This raises the question: Why and how did Tame Impala change its whole focus on Psych-Rock and shift to a more Pop and House-based sound? To understand this conversion, we first need to know how and why the project started and how many times its direction changed during its development.

The journey of Tame Impala began in the year 2007 as a home-studio project by Kevin Parker, an Australian multi-instrumentalist artist, as a small project after many attempts in music. Kevin made music with his capability of playing many instruments and his depressive thoughts, and his creativity came from loneliness. Tame Impala was born as a Psych-Rock project in his mind. The first release under the Tame Impala name is a self-titled single featuring six songs. Every song carried the spirit of Psychedelic Rock with its distorted vocals and instruments like guitars, synthesizers, and drums. After this single, Tame Impala released another single named *Sundown Syndrome/Remember Me*, and this single also carried the essence of the 70s sound. Then, in 2010, *InnerSpeaker* was released. This was the first studio album by Tame Impala after a contract with Modular Recordings, an Indie record label, was signed. *InnerSpeaker*, despite being the first album of the artist, attracted the attention of many people because the genre is not common, even for Indie music.

As he was gaining even more fame, Tame Impala released another album named *Lonerism*, which took the formula of InnerSpeaker and nearly perfected it. The album featured 12 songs with deep, synth-driven sounds, extremely distorted vocals, muddy guitar solos, and spiky drums. This album not only reintroduced the genre but also made it more accessible and easier to get into for many people. With *Lonerism*, now we knew what Kevin actually felt, because it was an emotional drive of his life. This time, the album was not only about his love for music and lyrical ability, but also gave the



audience some kind of insight into his own mind, what he loves and what he hates, and most importantly, he also mentions his father's death on "Sun's Coming Up", where he talks about his confusion and also the acceptance of his death.

As I said before, Kevin's primary influence was his loneliness. Buying a beach shack isolated from the city and also without any reception or Wi-Fi, and him mentioning that he was alone for most of his life is evidence for this information, but the question that has to be asked is: If you are very good at what you do and even getting better on it, just because you are alone, can you stay lonely at the world of fame?

The answer is obviously no.

After *Lonerism*, Kevin started working on a different project. This new project is the beginning of a new era for Tame Impala. After being a name for the 2010s Psych-Rock, Kevin decided to break some rules of his artistry. He used more synth, drum machines, and sound effects, which he thought were "cheesy" before this new project. In May 2014, Kevin said, "I'm getting more and more sucked into the world of making an album. It's weird how it happens naturally; it almost feels like a seasonal thing. I've started to think about track listings and all the things that come with an album." during a Triple J Radio interview.

After a year, Tame Impala dropped the bomb and released *Currents*. Unlike the previous Tame Impala albums, which are focused mainly on Psychedelic Rock and Neo-Psychedelia, *Currents* is an album focused on Synth-Pop, Disco, and R&B. This meant, Tame Impala didn't just release a psychedelic rock album but instead created a much more mainstream work by adding synth rock, disco and R&B to the genre they were already successful in and loved by many. *Currents* not only introduced the name Tame Impala to many more people, but it also reshaped the industry in many ways, and also reshaped Kevin's career. Kevin's writing of music changed once again, mostly because of the change of genre, obviously, and the audience now had a melancholic album, with many good instrumentals, captivating synths and drums, and tracks with looped melodies to create an illusional listening experience.

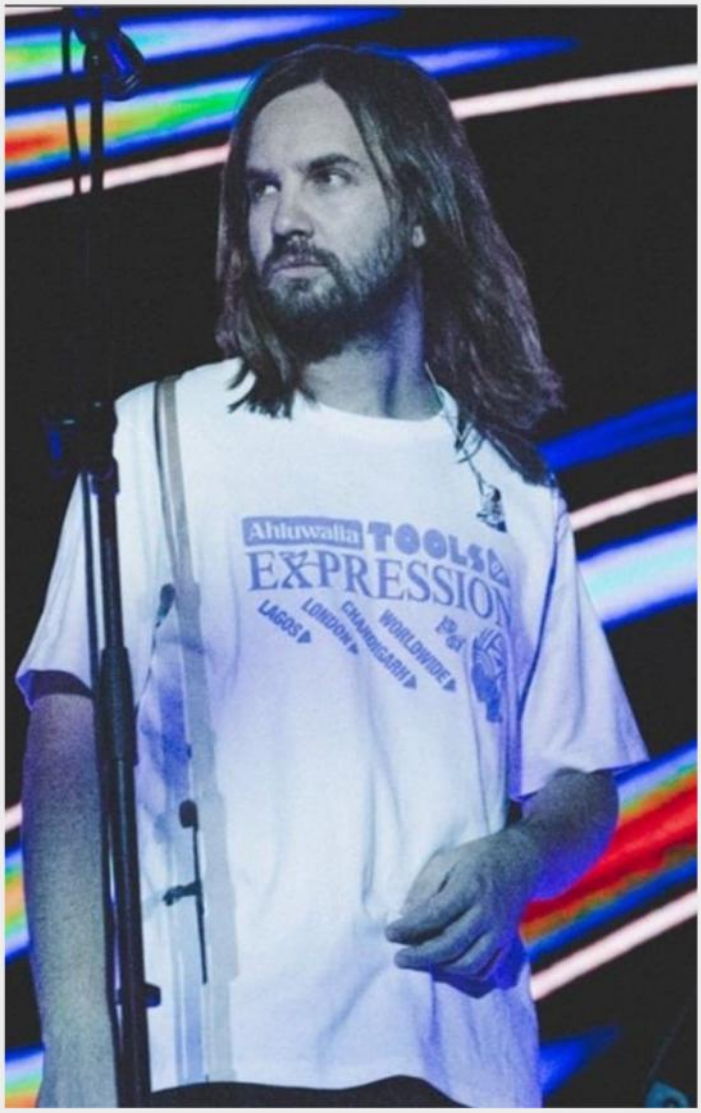
This change also made a big impact, not only on the name Tame Impala, but also on Kevin's musical career and his understanding of music. Being more mainstream meant that Kevin Parker was now a big part of the indie music community; he was still signed with an independent label, Modular Recordings. But after this positive reaction from the public and his career - which was going even higher- put him in a spot where he was seen by everyone, it brought a dilemma for his creative process, considering he is most creative when he is alone.

Currents peaked on many charts, bringing more attention and fame to Kevin, and even though he made one of the best albums of the year (it is certified as Platinum by RIAA), he was depressed because he couldn't create; he had to leave his comfort zone more times than he ever had before, so he decided to isolate himself for the old times' sake.

This isolation was not only Kevin's attempt to escape from his newly formed fame but also his way of creating a new album, all alone, fully disconnected from both people and the internet. After using new sounds like drum machines and creating a more electronic album compared to his other works, Kevin became accustomed to them, and now his opinion towards such music was different, so he started working on an album that sounded even more electronic and pop-like.

Up until this album, Tame Impala used to release a new album every two or three years, but for this new album, this changed. Kevin released *The Slow Rush* five years after he released *Currents*, which also showed some kind of change in his art and also his ways of executing it. When he first announced the album and released the first single "Borderline," his transformation from an artist who was focused on the sound of the 60s and 70s to the sound of the mid-70s and 80s was completed. Kevin Parker was now an artist who focused on Disco and Psych-Pop, not Psych-Rock. In February 2020, when the album was released, the change of sound was instantly noticed by people who had been listening to him from the beginning. He started to shape a new musical style for his once home-studio project, which turned into his way of getting known and earning money.





This album was not entirely different, but it was surely different than what we had before. If we compare *The Slow Rush* with *Currents*, it is apparent that *Currents* was closer to the psychedelic identity of Tame Impala, while *The Slow Rush* is more to the "disco" side.

Kevin was now a full-time celebrity in the music world, with his unique and identifiable sound, genius lyrics that combined melancholy with other complex emotions, and his ability to open up psychologically to the listeners of his albums. He turned from a musician who uses symbolism to interact with the listeners to a musician who uses melodies and "direct" words to speak with the listener, turning his whole discography into an experience.

After the release of *The Slow Rush* on February 20, 2020, something big happened: the COVID-19 pandemic. During COVID, Kevin ended up isolating himself again, but this time it was different. It was apparent that he was getting bored with Psych-Rock, and that it was not his interest. His interest now was his understanding of what an album should contain, how the lyrics of the songs should be, and how these should be "served" to the audience. His change of mind after all these years, trying different genres for his albums, singles, and, of course, trying to fuse a lot, finally pushed him to take a different track; his featurings changed, his singles changed, and now fans actually started to get the idea behind all of this changes, that he is not only doing it a few changes but he is actually recreating the identity of his musical persona, so he did the best thing a once Psych-Rock artist can do to authenticate their change; becoming a DJ.



How could your bare feet multi-instrumentalist who once hated music that was made entirely in an electronic environment, rather than people actually playing instruments for their work, turn his back on all of that and end up being a DJ?



Kevin actually started to be successful as a DJ as well. He gave many sets, inspired many other rave sets as well, since he is not just an artist or just a DJ but also someone who genuinely cares about how his scene looks during the shows. So, the change is unavoidable; fans knew that the new album would not be a Psych-Rock album, or a Synth-Pop/Rock-based album like Currents and The Slow Rush, and actually proved these allegations of the new album right. On March 4th, 2024, he posted a picture inside the studio with the caption "don't worry," giving away the release of a new album. After a year, in the summer of 2025, he announced the release of a new single from his new album, left unnamed until September 4th, 2025, called "End of Summer". According to him, this song is the song that gives the vibes of his "new era."



With the release of the single on July 25, 2025, he posted on his social media with the quote: "A new era begins. This is the first thing I want you guys to hear. I give you "End of Summer"…" As time passed, he released two more singles, "Loser" and "Dracula", before finally announcing the release date of his new album, on the 4th of September 2025. The singles are another proof that something totally different is going to be released by Kevin, unlike the past changes in his discography; these are not minor changes to the melodies or the lyrics, but major changes in genre, lyrics, and potential melodies. Deadbeat got released on 28 October 2025 with 12 tracks (3 of them were released as singles before the release), and nearly every one of them was different from each other. Even though songs like "Dracula" and "Loser" resemble a sound like The Slow Rush, they were still different, but the rest of the album is filled with Electronic, House, and Dance-Pop (not Synth-Pop) elements. Songs like "My Old Ways", "Afterthought", and "End of Summer" are upbeat, with a continuously rising beat and again synths, but unlike the use of synths on Currents, which were an element for depression and melancholia; these synths are used for the tempo to get higher, and the song "Ethereal Connection" is straight up just a song from a rave set. Some fans also complained about his lyrical abilities on this album, quoting the track "No Reply" lyrics that go: "You're a cinephile, I watch Family Guy / On a Friday night, off a rogue website…"





These changes are liked by some people who have listened to Kevin's work over the years; they called this album "original/unique," like his other works, so they considered this as the continuation of his musical ethic. Some people said they "just liked it" for no exact reason, and some people actually supported it because they think that this transformation was done successfully but not abruptly, and some people say they liked the album, but it isn't as good as
Kevin's other works so they got bored out of it after some time unlike the other ones, which are still being listened to by many people to this day, but *Deadbeat*'s general grading by the music media is not so pleasant.

The general rating for *Deadbeat* is not over 2.5-3 out of 5 for many listeners and critics, which is low compared to the other works, like *Currents* (3-4.5 out of 5), *The Slow Rush* (again, 3-4 out of 5), and his earliest work InnerSpeaker (4-4.5 out of 5) making *Deadbeat* his lowest rated album. Unlike the people who liked the transition of the musical persona of Tame Impala, many people think that this kind of transition is unwanted for them since Kevin's emotional lyricism cannot be identified with house music and upbeat tones, and because of that, they say Kevin shouldn't have changed his ways of creating music. Many people also blamed his new record label, Columbia, for being a mainstream, large company that forced him to change his approach so that he could still get listened to by many people and stay mainstream, and also this made him lose his interest in Psych/Synth-Rock and gravitate to something that many people never asked for.





In the end, even though it started as a Psychedelic-Rock project as a "hobby" of Kevin Parker, it ended up being his job, and the way he earns his living. Throughout his discography, he changed his way of creating music many times, which is understandable considering the world and people have also changed, and until now, he did these changes successfully for many people, but this time, this raised many question marks since his change was too radical for someone who created music for a specific genre for all his active years, even though many people have complained about it.

I think it would not be wrong to say that *Deadbeat* is not a "Tame Impala" grade album with all the things Kevin has done in his discography, and critics and fans who reviewed the work are not entirely wrong.

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Confusion of the Almighty

by Türkan Şevval Özdemir

would it be easier if I believed,
would it change anything I am in?
curious to think so
if I had to believe.

would it be yours or theirs?
would it matter
if you were there?

are you there?

would there be a difference
yours or theirs?
all is you
or none of you.

would it be easier
if I had the faith
that you are there

are you there?

wherever you are,
you hear.
do you hear?

being heard, I wish.
this emptiness
would it still be there
if you were here

what do I believe?
would it differ
if you listen
and answer?

would you answer,
do you even care?
please, show that you care

we have been fighting for thee
did you see
wasn't it enough for you to be
the almighty?

I cried, they died
you listen
and see

would they still be dying
I crying
if you were there

we fight, kill, and die
for you, but you
are an illusion.
your answer is not
the solution

oh thee!
the almighty
would it be easier?
If I believed,

WHICH AMERICAN AUTHOR ARE YOU?

A PERSONALITY QUIZ FOR READERS WHO LIVE BETWEEN LINES.

1.When you're overwhelmed, what would you do first?

A) Retreat inward and observe your thoughts closely
B) Push forward without dramatizing it
C) Let your thoughts spiral into darker questions
D) Question the meaning behind the feeling itself
E) Turn it into a language; sharp, emotional and raw

2.Which space feels most comforting to you?

A) A quiet room with soft light and unfinished thoughts
B) A simple, functional place with no distractions
C) A shadowed room filled with memories and symbols
D) A vast, open space that makes you feel small
E) A private place where you can write freely

3.What do you believe literature should do?

A) Capture fleeting thoughts and inner truths
B) Say only what is necessary
C) Explore fear, obsession, and the uncanny
D) Ask unanswerable questions about existence
E) Expose emotional and psychological realities

4.Choose a theme that feels personal to you:

A) Solitude, mortality, the inner self
B) Endurance, courage, restraint
C) Death, memory, madness
D) Obsession, faith, the unknown
E) Identity, emotion, self-expression

5.Your natural way of thinking is...

A) Fragmented, symbolic, precise
B) Direct and practical
C) Dramatic and imagistic
D) Philosophical and expansive
E) Intense and confessional

6.How do you experience time?

A) As moments that feel infinite
B) As something to move through
C) As something that lingers and repeats
D) As something vast and overwhelming
E) As something emotionally charged

7.How do you relate to society?

A) I exist slightly apart from it, by choice
B) I accept it but don't depend on it
C) I feel haunted by it
D) I try to challenge it intellectually
E) I mostly struggle within it

RESULTS

Mostly A's
Emily Dickinson



You are introspective, inward-looking, and deeply attuned to subtle emotional shifts. Like Dickinson, you find meaning in quiet moments, solitude, and the spaces between words. You value precision over excess and believe the inner life is as vast as any external world.

Mostly B's
Ernest Hemingway



You value restraint, clarity, and emotional control. Like Hemingway, you believe meaning lies beneath the surface, not in excess explanation. You face difficulty with quiet endurance and express yourself through action rather than confession. What you leave unsaid often matters more than what you reveal.

Mostly C's
Edgar Allan Poe



You are drawn to the darker edges of thought and emotion. Like Edgar Allan Poe, you explore memory, fear, and obsession as reflections of the human mind. You tend to dwell on what others avoid, finding meaning in intensity, symbolism, and atmosphere. For you darkness is not only unsettling; it is revealing.

Mostly D's
Herman Melville



You are philosophical, intense, and drawn to unanswered questions. Like Herman Melville, you explore obsession, faith, and th limits of human understanding. You are comfortable with ambiguity and see meaning not in certainty, but in the struggle to comprehend what lies beyond it.

Mostly E's
Sylvia Plath



You are emotionally perceptive and unafraid of inner confrontation. Like Sylvia Plath, you turn personal experience into language and examine identity, pain, and selfhood with clarity and force. You believe honesty (even when uncomfortable) is essential to understanding the self.

If you're split between two authors, you live in contradiction; exactly where American literature thrives.

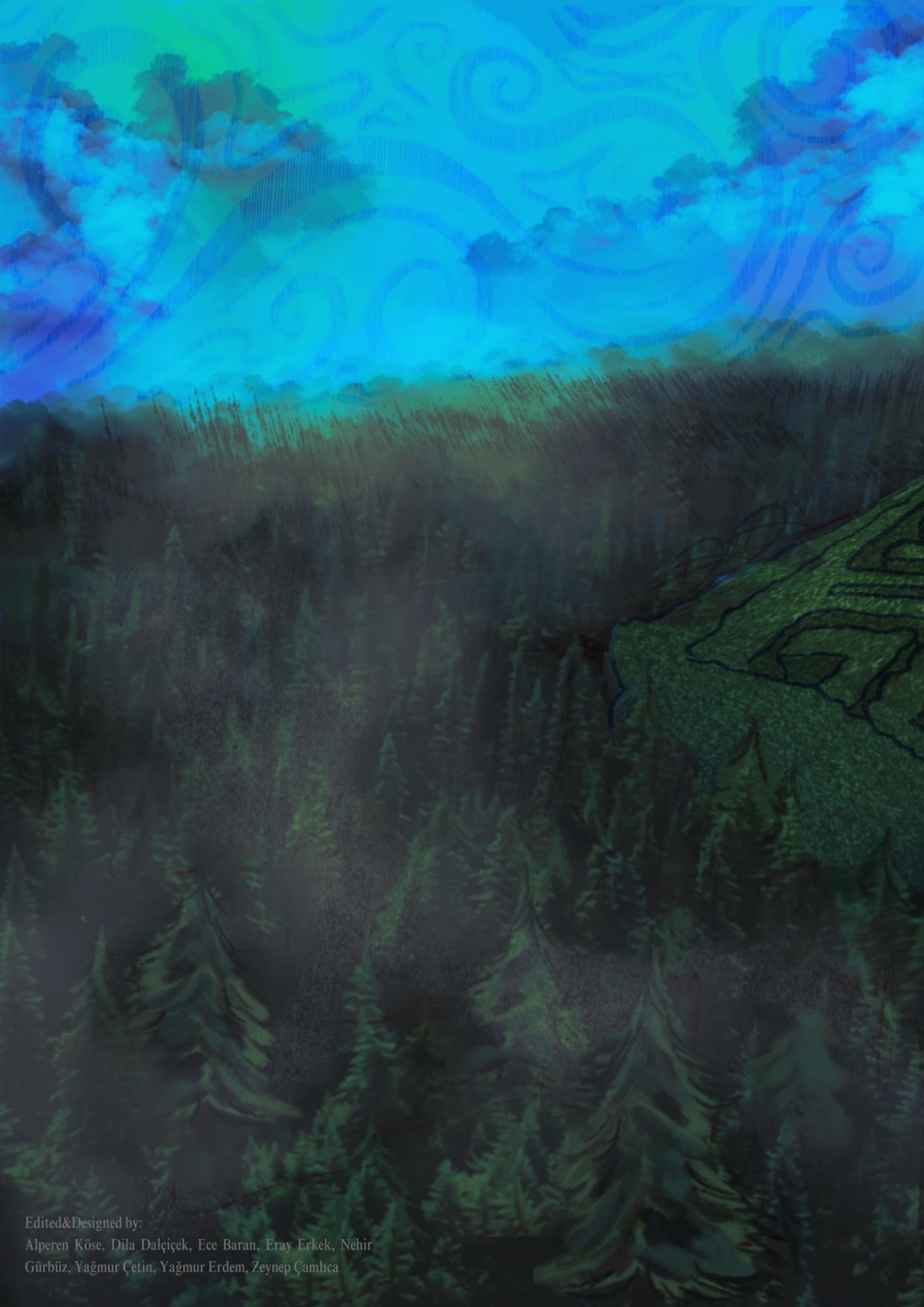
American literature is shaped by tension: between individuality and society, faith and doubt, restraint and excess, reason and emotion. To belong to more than one voice is not confusion but complexity. It means you carry opposing impulses at once, much like the tradition itself, which resists easy definitions and finds meaning in conflict rather than resolution.

PAX AMERICANA



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Edited&Designed by:
Alperen Köse, Dila Dalçiçek, Ece Baran, Eray Erkek, Nehir Gürbüz, Yağmur Çetin, Yağmur Erdem, Zeynep Çamlıca