

E - L I T

**E-LIT IS BACK WITH ITS FIFTH ISSUE:
WHERE TIME AND WORDS COLLIDE**

REWIND. FAST-FORWARD. READ ON.

*“And indeed, there will be time
To wonder, ‘Do I dare?’ and, ‘Do I dare?’
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair.”*

– T. S. Eliot



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E-LIT features an voice guide to walk you through select pieces—because stories are meant to be heard, too.



created by Dursun Can GÜLER & Umut ÖZDİNÇER

KATIE DELL

Hello, and a Warm Welcome to *E-LIT*!

I'm Katie Dell, your AI guide, and I'm thrilled to join you as we journey through the pages of this magazine. Consider me your digital companion—here to offer insights, highlight featured content, and ensure your experience is seamless and enjoyable.

This issue revolves around a theme that touches us all: time. From fleeting moments to timeless reflections, every page is shaped by stories that ask us to pause, rewind, and wonder.

E-LIT is not just something you read—it's something you feel. And I'm here to help you make the most of every minute you spend with us. Whether you're multitasking, resting your eyes, or simply curious to hear how a story sounds, I'm just a tap away.

Ready to begin?

Scan the QR codes at the beginning of the pages, press play, and set off a journey through time.

E-LIT (ISSUE 5)

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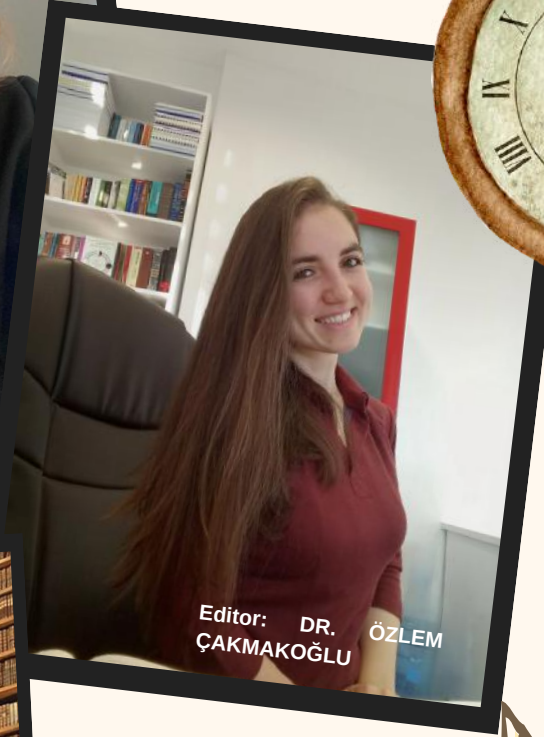
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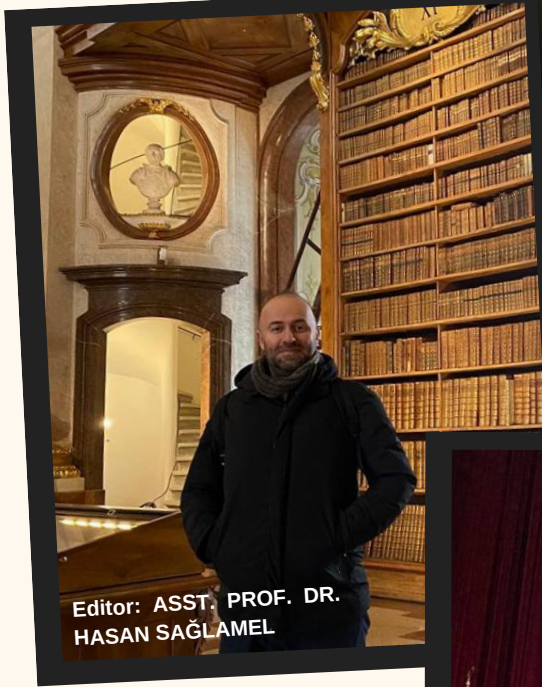
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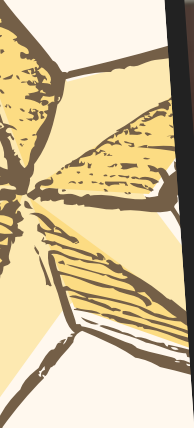
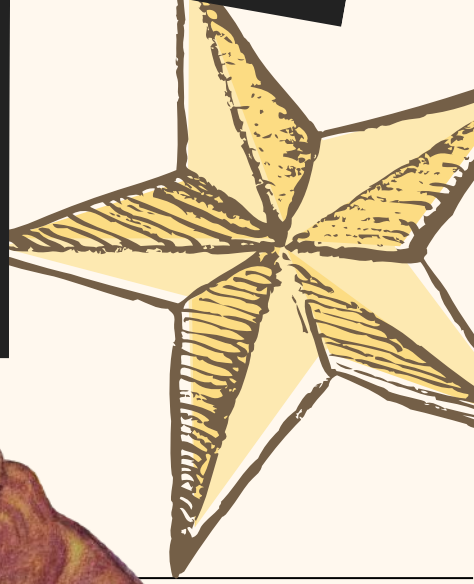
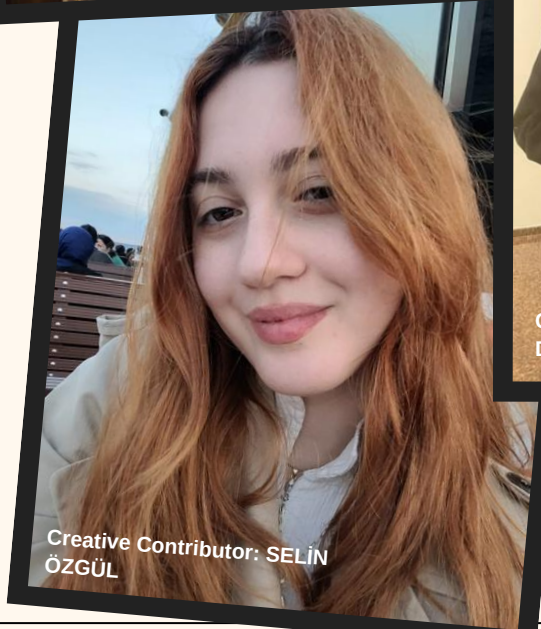
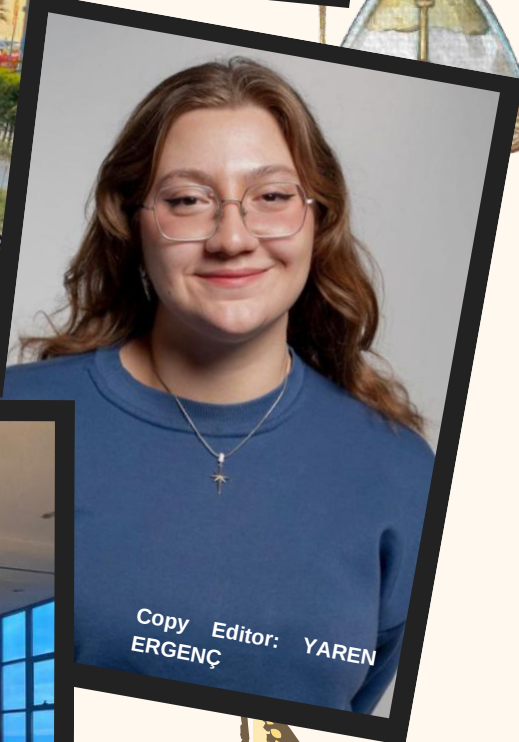
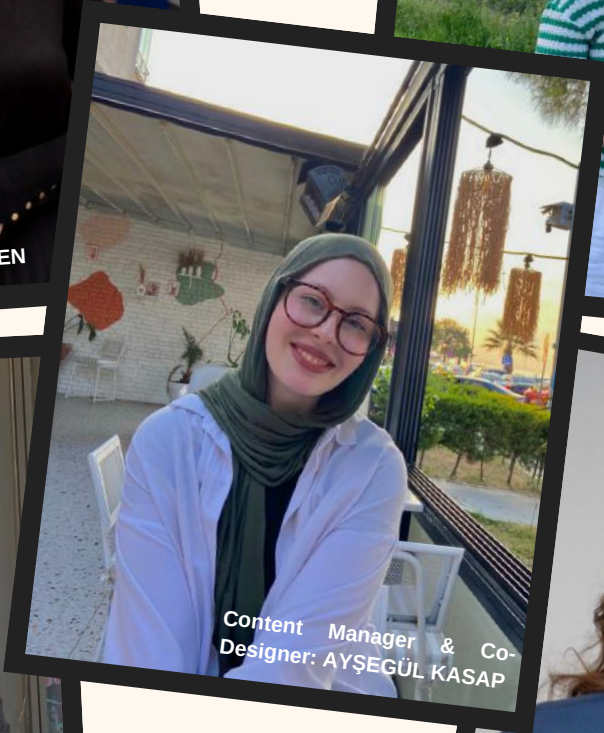
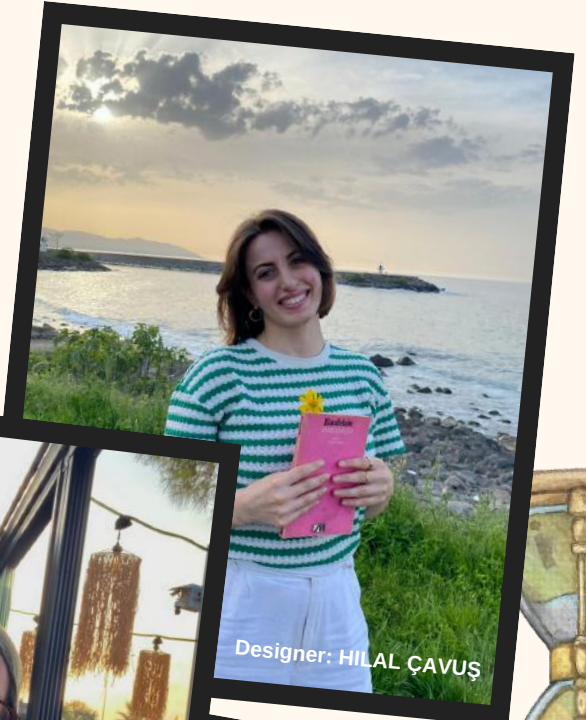
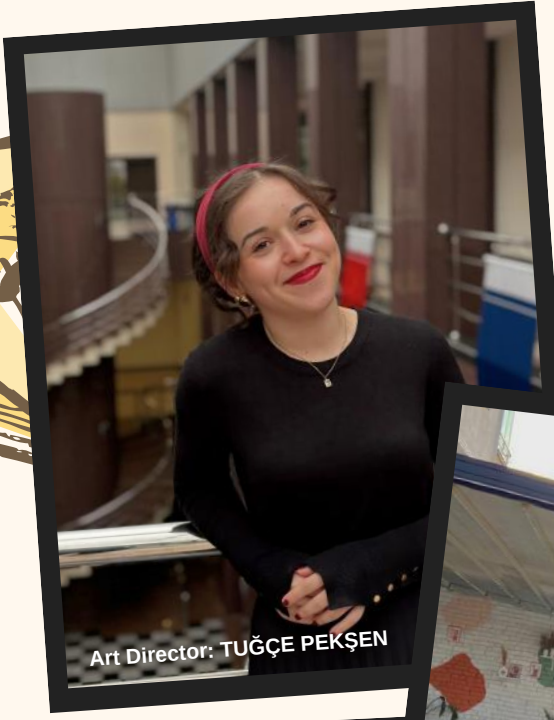


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Editorial Introduction



Welcome everyone! It is 13:16 on the 27th of June, 2025. Here comes our fifth issue with a familiar topic that touches every moment of our lives—*time*. Time holds a central position in our lives. It marks our growth, measures progress, fuels our intellectual maturation and helps us organize our routines. When we were brainstorming ideas for this issue and when someone suggested “time” as a theme, I said a big “yes”—as enthusiastically as if I were accepting a marriage proposal. I have two reasons for this.

From the first issue on, we have been committed to empowering voices, and *time* would serve much to our purpose. What better theme can serve this mission than time? We have much to talk about “time”: most of us have been struggling to manage time, others are trying to save it. In other words, everyone, I thought, could add more than five cents into the discussion of time. The result is congruent with what we believed: this issue has embraced many voices and contributed much to our orchestration of voices.

The second reason is we always “need” time. We never have enough of it, and many delay their actions, plans and responses. Such a “need” propels us to devote more “time” on time. The act of measuring time—dividing it into minutes and seconds—has deeply shaped the way we understand and experience it. The relentless *tick-tock* of the clock has introduced a finely grained categorization of time, allowing us to speak with a precision unimaginable in earlier eras, when daily life was guided primarily by the rising and setting of the sun. Today, we no longer just live *in* time—we live *by* it.

In this issue, you’ll find reflective essays, interviews, psychology-inspired tests, personal stories, plays, poems, and playlists—all offering thoughtful, creative, and sometimes playful takes on time. You can find some insights into how we perceive it, how different cultures understand it, how it affects our emotions, and how we manage it in a world that seems to move faster every day. Whether it is the pressure of deadlines, the beauty of a fleeting moment, or the cultural rhythms that guide our days, this issue invites you to pause and think about time in new ways.

I would like to thank each contributor and our editorial and creative team for their valuable work. We hope this magazine encourages you to reflect not just on how you *spend* time, but how you *value* it.

Let the journey begin.

Warm regards,

Hasan SAĞLAM
On Behalf of the Editorial Team



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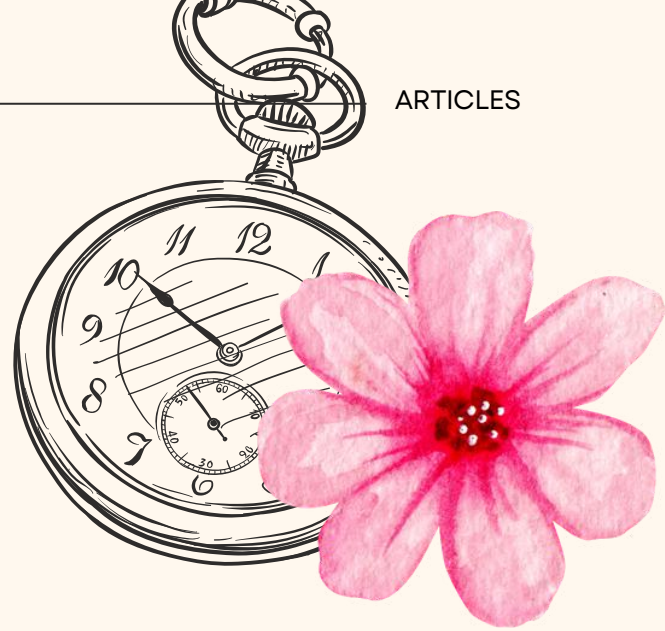
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La Durée: Bergson and the Experience of Lived and Measured Time

by Ayşegül KASAP



Henri Bergson (1859–1941), a French philosopher, is renowned for his contributions to metaphysics, particularly his conceptualisation of time, consciousness, and creativity. Awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1927, Bergson's philosophical inquiries have significantly influenced phenomenology, existentialism, and the philosophy of science. Central to his thought is the distinction between two forms of time: chronological, measured time (or "clock time") and *la durée*, the qualitative experience of lived time. This distinction challenges mechanistic and deterministic views of temporality, offering a more nuanced perspective on the interrelation of past, present, and future.

The Concept of *La Durée* and Its Philosophical Foundations

Bergson rejects the notion that time can be fully understood through quantitative measurement alone. In *Time and Free Will* (1889), he argues that defining time as separate, equal units in science and math does not reflect its continuous and inseparable nature in human experience.

Unlike the mechanistic framework, which conceives of time as a mere succession of moments, *la durée* represents the continuous flow of consciousness, wherein past and present coexist dynamically (Bergson, 1889).

Duration, as Bergson states, is not a linear sequence but a qualitative phenomenon. It cannot be broken into discrete segments without distorting its essence. He compares it to a melody, where individual notes contribute to an indivisible whole rather than existing as isolated entities. This view contrasts with Newtonian physics, which treats time as measurable and external (Guerlac, 2006).

The Interrelation of Past, Present, and Future

In *Matter and Memory* (1896), Bergson further develops his theory by illustrating how the past persists within the present. He argues that memory is not just a passive storage of separate recollections but an active force that informs perception and decision-making (Bergson, 1896). The past is not merely a collection of historical events that have ceased to exist; rather, it is inherent in the present, shaping and structuring personal experience.

The present, therefore, is never a purely isolated moment but a Synthesis of past influences and future expectations. For Bergson, the future is not predetermined but remains open-ended, emerging organically from the interplay between memory and perception. This uncertainty stands in stark contrast to deterministic models of time, which argue that the universe operates according to fixed causal laws (Deleuze, 1988).

Critiques and Contemporary Interpretations

Despite its profound impact, Bergson's theory of time has faced significant critiques. Bertrand Russell (1914) dismissed *la durée* as a subjective and unscientific concept, arguing that it cannot be empirically verified. He argued that Bergson's reliance on introspection makes his philosophy incompatible with the strict methods of analytical philosophy.

Martin Heidegger (1927), while acknowledging Bergson's contributions, critiqued his understanding of time for remaining too embedded in psychological experience rather than engaging with the ontological foundations of temporality. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger proposes that temporality is the fundamental structure of Dasein (human existence), extending Bergson's insights beyond the realm of consciousness and into existential ontology (Heidegger, 1927).

More recent scholarship has revisited Bergson's ideas within the context of contemporary cognitive science and quantum physics. The neuroscientist Francisco Varela (1999) draws parallels between *la durée* and the non-linear, emergent properties of consciousness.

Likewise, physicist Lee Smolin (2013) incorporates Bergsonian notions of time into his critique of block-universe theories in modern physics, arguing for a dynamic, evolving conception of temporal reality.

Bergson's philosophy of time continues to be of profound relevance in contemporary debates on temporality, consciousness, and the philosophy of science. His critique of mechanistic time resonates with modern phenomenological and existentialist discussions, while his emphasis on duration as an irreducible aspect of experience finds support in contemporary neuroscience and physics. By challenging rigid, deterministic models of time, Bergson opens new avenues for understanding the fluid, dynamic nature of existence.

Ultimately, *la durée* invites a reconsideration of how human beings engage with time, suggesting that temporality is not merely an external metric but an intrinsic, lived phenomenon. Whether through its impact on continental philosophy, its intersections with cognitive science, or its implications for theoretical physics, Bergson's work remains a cornerstone for understanding the complexity of time beyond measurable parameters.

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The Noblest Hour: On Timing, Patience, and the Art of Knowing "When"

by Perihan Nisan SARAL

In Turkish, there is a phrase that quietly speaks of patience, timing, and the delicate art of knowing when to act: *eşref saati*. Though it may at first sound like a simple reference to the clock, this expression carries with it layers of history, culture, and philosophy. It tells the story of a belief not only in time itself but in the right time — a time when things align, when words find their place, when actions meet their moment.

The phrase “*eşref saati*” comes from the combination of two words deeply rooted in Arabic: *eşref*, derived from *aşraf* (أشرف), meaning “the noblest” or “the most honorable,” and *saat*, from *sā'a* (ساعة), meaning “hour” or “time.” But the meaning that emerges from these words goes far beyond the sum of their parts. It does not simply point to a specific hour on the clock but to a moment of noble alignment, when circumstances are at their best, when timing becomes not just important but essential.

This understanding of time is not unique to Turkish culture. The ancient Greeks spoke of *kairos*, the opportune moment, as distinct from *chronos*, the measurable sequence of time. Where *chronos* is about quantity, *kairos* is about quality — the perfect moment for action. Similarly, *eşref saati* invites us to recognize that not all moments are created equal. Some carry within them the potential for growth, success, and understanding, while others may resist even our best efforts.

Historically, the idea of *eşref saati* can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire, where the relationship between time and fate was taken seriously enough to warrant the guidance of an astrologer known as *müneccim*. These court astrologers were often consulted before important decisions were made: when to begin construction of a mosque, when to embark on a military campaign, when to sign agreements.

It was believed that the stars and planets could offer signs about the most favorable time for any given action, and that to ignore these signs was to risk failure, no matter how well-prepared one might be.

However, as the centuries passed and the scientific worldview replaced older cosmologies, the mystical aspects of *eşref saati* gradually gave way to a more human-centered interpretation. The phrase remained alive in everyday language, shifting from the realm of astrology to the more intimate sphere of human moods, emotions, and relationships.

Today, when someone in Turkey says, “*Bunu ona eşref saatinde söyle,*” — “Tell them this at their *eşref saati*,” — they are advising not to rush, but to wait for the right moment when the person will be most open, most ready to hear. In this sense, *eşref saati* is no longer only about the alignment of the stars, but about the alignment of hearts and minds.

There is, in this small phrase, a quiet philosophy about the pace of life itself. It suggests that we might sometimes achieve more by slowing down, by resisting the urge to force an outcome, by listening and watching until the moment feels right. The wisdom of *eşref saati* is not about passivity but about attentiveness. It also encourages us to remain engaged, to be ready, but also to trust that not every door will open just because we knock harder. Some doors, some conversations, some beginnings, wait for their own perfect time.

In a world where urgency is often mistaken for importance, where speed is confused with progress, the idea of *eşref saati* offers another way of thinking. It invites us to consider patience not as delay but as respect — respect for timing, for process, for readiness. It reminds us that sometimes the kindest, wisest thing we can do is wait. Wait for the mood to soften, for the heart to open, for the words to arrive fully formed. Perhaps this is also why we at E-Lit choose to approach writing, creating, and sharing thoughts not as a race to the finish, but as an invitation to find the right rhythm.

We believe that every idea, every sentence, every page has its own *eşref saati* — a moment when it is meant to emerge, to resonate, to be understood. So we write, we pause, we listen, trusting that the best words often come not when we demand them, but when we are patient enough to wait.





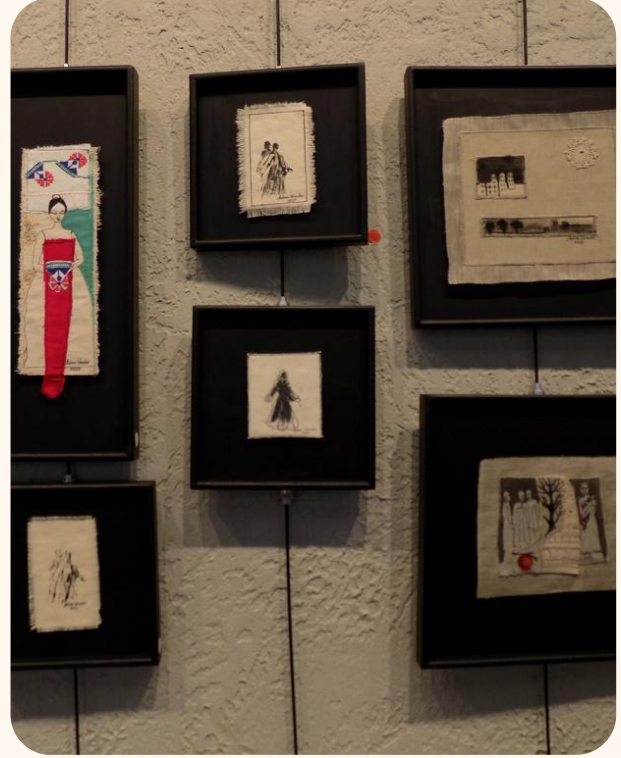
Neither within Time Nor Beyond It

by Hilal ÇAVUŞ



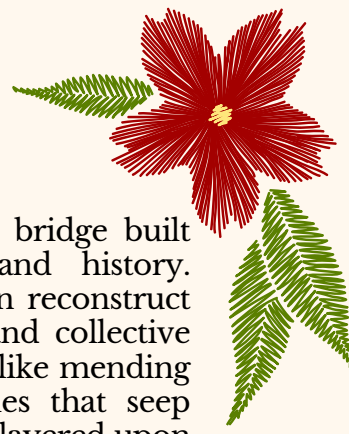
*“Çağın en karmaşık yerinde durduk
biri bizi yazsın.
Kendimiz değilse kim yazacak?”*

At first glance, what the exhibition brought to my mind is these verses of Gülten Akın's. The exhibition, titled "NE İÇİNDEN NE DIŞINDAN ZAMANIN," was opened in the Gallery of Arts of Trabzon from May 2 to 9. It was shaped around the theme of time by one of Trabzon's distinguished contemporary artists, Fatma İskender. With her unique narrative language, the artist invites the viewer into the ambiguous and layered nature of time. In each of her works, she weaves multi-layered meanings through which everyone can find an echo of their inner world. In this particular exhibition, I believe she masterfully renders visible the human being's movements, uncertainties, and multidimensional nature within time.



Because human beings are neither inside time nor outside of it; rather, they live within the meanings they construct in their own mental plane. A fragmented yet profound present is perceived. Those moments which everyone sees and feels differently, all at once...

In this exhibition, the deep and personal connotations hidden in the ordinary aspects of daily life also inspired me. As I looked at the works, I felt how the still moments were selected and reconstructed, how the past was no longer merely behind us but could be reimagined through the present. The fabric used by the artist is not just a material; in her own words, it becomes a representation of memory, identity, and tactile remembrance. Like an interface that carries traces of the past into today and is infused with dreams of the future.

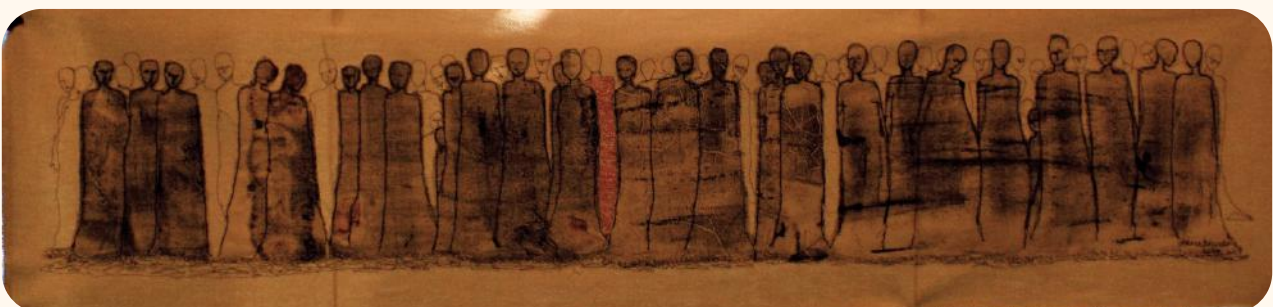


In other words, fabric is a bridge built between human beings and history. Through this bridge, we can reconstruct both our personal myths and collective memory. Stitching fabric is like mending the wounds of time. Stories that seep through torn places, images layered upon one another, faces fading into obscurity... All of these materialise the traces time leaves on the human soul.

As one wanders through the exhibition, even in the stillness of the figures' postures, a sense of motion can be felt in the folds of the fabric. Sometimes, just a hanging thread or a color left in the corner brings a memory back to life. The overlooked details become the most vocal elements in this exhibition.

In the artist's work, everything that seems ordinary carries a layer of meaning. The flawed, the faded, the unclear. These are perhaps what touches memory the most. Because what we remember is rarely clear or whole, they are mostly incomplete, distorted, and timeless fragments. As the artist puts it, this open-ended ordinariness creates a harmony that stirs the imagination. As viewers, we are called back to our own inner time, our mythology, through these images.

With this exhibition, I was reminded once again that time is not linear but spiral in its way. What we call the present holds both the remainders of the past and the possibilities of the future. Fatma İskender's works invite us to revisit our own "now," to those inner realms shaped by time but given meaning through our touch.





Interview with Prof. Dr. Ülkü ELİUZ

(in English)

Time in Narratives
by Perihan Nisan SARAL

Nisan Saral: Dear Prof. Dr. Ülkü Eliuz, thank you for kindly welcoming us into your office. In the early sections of your article titled “*The Journey on the Road: Time in Narrative*”, you discuss various representations of time, analyzing the concept of time in narrative-based texts such as epics, legends, fairy tales, folk stories, mesnevis, short stories, novels, and flash fiction. According to Ülkü Eliuz, is there a representation of time beyond these? If so, what is it?

Ülkü Eliuz: Hi there... Time is a dimension of existence that shapes the entire framework of life, walking alongside us whether we realise it or not. The individual builds their sense of self by anchoring to both time and space. Every moment in life is marked by time through questions like “When was he born?” or “When did she graduate?” Since ancient times, the concept of time has remained a philosophical enigma which has always been questioned in terms of its meaning and essence, yet it never loses its significance. As Bilge Kağan once said: “*Only the gods live through time.*” We merely try to include time in our lives. But we are not truly living in time in its real essence.

Nisan Saral: Does the use of time across different genres reflect only a technical distinction, or does it also mirror the cultural evolution of our perception of time?

Ülkü Eliuz: There is a cultural evolution. Genres evolve in tandem with cultural, economic, and political changes; these processes are inseparable. Particularly through cultural change, narrative structures also transform. Because storytelling is a fundamental human need. Humans want both to convey what they experience and to hear what is told. Throughout history, whenever an event occurred, a narrative formed around it. These narratives, shaped by the shifts of their time, lead to changes in genre. As genres evolve, so do people; as people evolve, so too do their perceptions of time and space. The understanding of time and space today is not the same as in the past. The evolution of genres and systems implies a transformation in human perception.

Nisan Saral: Henri Bergson once said, “*Man does not live in time, but time lives in man.*” Would you say that time in narrative is an existential experience of the inner world, or merely a structural function?

Ülkü Eliuz: It is an existential experience. After all, the characters in narratives are reflections of ourselves. They represent us; they are fictional versions of real people. Novels and stories depict individuals who suffer, love, hate, grieve, and search, just like we do. Those characters are also on a journey. And what is a journey, if not time itself? Every journey activates a process of existence. Just as we go through our own existential journey, the fictional characters who mirror us also undergo theirs. Their relationship with time is not quantitative but psychological, perceptual, and qualitative. A good reader, a deep reader, seeks out this relationship within the content of the narrative and wonders: “*Why wasn't it constructed?*”

Nisan Saral: In your article, we frequently encounter the metaphors of “*being on the road*” and “*moving through time.*” How does this dual concept find its place in the nature of narrative?

Ülkü Eliuz: The road is space. The journey is time. And the one on the journey is the human being. We are on a journey. In Joseph Campbell's book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he explains that from the earliest and most ancient texts, heroes have always been on a journey. With modern times, this journey has shifted inward, moving into inner spaces and the subconscious. In fictional narratives, the hero or main character always sets out toward a goal. They face obstacles. They encounter people who stand in their way. The expectation is that they will overcome these challenges and return transformed. No matter which literary theory is applied—whether semiotic, hermeneutic, psychoanalytic, sociological, feminist, or eco-critical—this journey always draws attention. The individual is always on a path. What we call life, what we call a lifetime, is a journey. From the moment we are born, we meet people along the way. We stop in certain places, with certain people. Sometimes we run. Sometimes we search. The stories of characters in literature mirror this.

Each one acts within a cycle of seeking and escaping as they face the obstacles in front of them. In *The Disconnected* by Oğuz Atay, Selim journeys into his own letters and his own mind. In *Motherland Hotel* by Yusuf Atılgan, the protagonist Zebercet turns inward to the hotel where he has attached his sense of self. In Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov seeks refuge in his conscience. The same can be seen in traditional Turkish tales like Ferhat and Şirin or Kerem and Aslı, where each story presents obstacles that must be overcome.

Nisan Saral: You have referenced many different thinkers. Which one resonates with you the most?

Ülkü Eliuz: The French philosopher Henri Bergson... He saw time not as empty or abstract, but as a constant flow of change and renewal, with each moment marked by a different state of becoming. He emphasised the difference between linear, measurable time and the time we experience. For Bergson, time is one of the states of our consciousness and cannot be broken into parts. He referred to the measurable, objective time of the clock as "*time*," while calling the subjective, lived experience of time "*duration*." This perception of time is carried into an ironic dimension in Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's novel *The Time Regulation Institute*, starting with its very title. Through references to "*the clock, clocks, regulation, an institute, and a scientific institution*," the novel offers a critique of modernity. It is structured around four main parts, all related to time, and explores the relationship between time and transformation through symbols and imagery.

Nisan Saral: In your article, quantitative time is examined across five layers. Within these layers, does reading time refer solely to reception, or does it also suggest a creative act of rewriting?

Ülkü Eliuz: Quantitative time appears across five layers: story time (event time/narrative time), narration time (telling time), writing time (author's time), social or historical time, and reading time (reader's time). Story time refers to the duration between the beginning and end of the plot. Narration time is the period in which the narrator constructs the story. Social time refers to the historical context of the narrative. Writing time is the actual time the text was written. And reading time is the time in which the reader engages with the text. I believe reading time, the reader's time, is fluid and ever-changing. It is entirely reception-based. Even when we revisit the same text at different points in our lives, under different emotional states or in different places, it becomes a new experience. I can give an example of this...

As part of the "*Trabzon Reads*" project led by the Ministry of National Education, we conducted reading sessions in schools with trained moderators. The goal was not just to read aloud but to engage with the texts through analysis and interpretation. One of this year's selected books was *Çalığışu* by Reşat Nuri Güntekin. I read *Çalığışu* in primary school, middle school, high school, and again at university. During my final year of university, while planning to become a teaching assistant, I suddenly decided I wanted to become a *Çalığışu*. At that time, Feride represented an idealistic, resilient woman and teacher to me. Years later, while working as a teacher in a rural village—my first assignment—I read *Çalığışu* once more. This time, I realized that Feride was not the strong, independent woman I had once seen. She was not making her own decisions but rather being steered by others. In my earlier readings, I was mostly doing surface-level reading, following the plot as it was presented. Later on, I began to evaluate the text and the character from different perspectives I had developed. The text itself had not changed. What changed was my own sense of time and my approach to the text. So what shifted for me in that reading time? My ability to interpret the character correctly and recognise the messages conveyed through her. A reader's position and level of perception evolve over time and become deeper. Umberto Eco's distinction between the "*naive reader*," who merely follows the plot, and the "*model reader*," who engages with the work through interpretation and reflection, points to the role of time in a person's intellectual and emotional development.

Nisan Saral: Professor, you classify time under "*quantitative time*" as either integrating or disintegrating. How does this distinction parallel a person's inner transformation?

Ülkü Eliuz: The presence of time as a structural element in literary works exists on two levels: quantitative and qualitative. Qualitative time—also called spiritual or psychological time—is represented in the narrative as either "*integrating*" or "*disintegrating*" from a theoretical perspective, depending on whether it builds up or breaks down the individual. This structural element, shaped by the situation the narrative characters find themselves in, bears witness to existential births or losses and holds an active significance in the story. This time is no longer chronological; it is uncertain in the relationship between past and present, aligned instead with the character's current emotional state. However, this uncertainty signals omnipresence and constant renewal. Qualitative time is shaped in connection with the psychological, sociological, and even political circumstances surrounding the characters in the work.



For example, in the poem *Gün Var Bin Aya Değer* (“*One Day Is Worth a Thousand Months*”) by the contemporary Azerbaijani writer Bahtiyar Vahabzade, time is first defined and then illustrated: under the same roof, in two adjacent houses with equal physical conditions, the perception of time differs between midnight and 6 a.m. In one room, for a mother worried and anxious because her son has not come home, those six hours feel like a hundred years; in the other house, for two lovers reunited after years apart, the same six hours pass like a single moment.

Nisan Saral: Today, we can also see the effects of digitalization in literature. How do you think time is positioned in these new digital texts? How are new narrative forms transforming our perception of time?

Ülkü Eliuz: One of these new narrative forms is the “*küçürek*” — or *microfiction*. In such texts, a sense of time still exists, but it is not the kind of time that is elaborately described or narrated at length. For instance, in Ferit Edgü’s micro-story titled “*Çaresiz*” (“*Helpless*”), which consists solely of the sentence “*He finally adopted a dog*”, the verb to “*adopt*” and the adverb “*finally*” subtly imply the passage of time. Additionally, the title itself conveys a temporal experience shaped by past events: a sense of helplessness. This extremely brief form, both in content and title, manages to evoke emotions such as unhappiness, disloyalty, and disappointment. The word *sonunda* hints at a long period of waiting or emotional struggle. Adopting a dog as a child symbolises the loss of human values and suggests that dogs have risen to a higher place in the hierarchy of existence.

In such a tiny narrative, deep meaning emerges through minimal words: much said with few sentences. As texts become shorter, descriptions are reduced, and even characters remain undefined. Yet, character, time, and place still exist; they are simply not detailed. As we know, ours is an age of speed — fast living and rapid communication, where long conversations and narratives give way to brevity. Because we fail to use time effectively, we end up “*killing*” it. Yet storytelling and listening remain fundamental human needs. We still crave stories, and microfiction responds precisely to this need, offering profound ideas in a short amount of time.

Nisan Saral: Let’s move to our final question. Your essay on time in narrative is very deep and philosophical. In your opinion, does time truly exist? Or is it just an illusion we assign meaning to?

Ülkü Eliuz: Since time is a dimension of existence, we cannot grasp it with our hands. It’s an abstract image... But I don’t believe it’s an illusion. Time is something that, in one way or another, becomes part of us. As Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar wrote:

*I am neither within time,
Nor altogether beyond it;
In the indivisible flow
Of a vast, singular moment.*

Time is a stream that flows alongside us. Thank you.

Nisan Saral: Thank you very much, professor.

Ülkü Eliuz: You are welcome. I wish you days filled with the good use of your time.

Prof. Dr. Ülkü ELİUZ ile Röportaj

by Perihan Nisan SARAL



Nisan Saral: Saygıdeğer Prof. Dr. Ülkü ELİUZ hocam, merhabalar... Öncelikle bizleri kırmayıp ofisinizde ağırladığınız için teşekkür ederiz. “Yoldaki Yolculuk: Anlatıda Zaman” başlıklı anlatma esasına dayalı “destan, efsane, masal, halk hikâyesi, mesnevi, hikâye, roman, küçürek öykü” metinlerindeki zaman olgusunu çözümlediğiniz makalenizin ilk bölümlerinde zamanın çeşitli tasvirlerinden bahsediyorsunuz. Peki, Ülkü Eliuz’a göre zamanın bunların dışında bir tasviri var mıdır? Varsa nedir?

Ülkü Eliuz: Merhabalar.. Zaman, hayatın bütün çerçevesini belirleyen, fark etsek de fark etmesek de bizimle yürüyen bir varoluş düzlemidir. Birey, zamana ve mekâna tutunarak kendiliğini kurar. Hayatın her anı, “Ne zaman doğdu? Ne zaman mezun oldu?” gibi sorular kapsamında zamanla işaretlenir. Zaman kavramı, eski çağlardan itibaren düşünsel bir yumak’tan öteye gitmeyerek geçmişten bugüne değerini kaybetmeden içeriği ve ne’liği ile sorgulanır. Bilge Kağan’ın dediği gibi: “Zamanı Tanrı yaşar.” Biz ise onu yalnızca kendi yaşamımıza katmaya çalışırız; aslında zamanı yaşamayız; zamanla yaşarız.

Nisan Saral: Zamanın türlere göre değişen kullanımını bize yalnızca teknik fark mı sunar; yoksa zaman algımızdaki kültürel evrimi de yansıtır mı?

Ülkü Eliuz: Kültürel bir evrim var. Türlerin değişimi, kültürel, ekonomik, siyasi ve politik dönüşümlerle iç içe ilerler; bunları birbirinden ayırmak imkansız. Bu değişimde, anlatı yapısı da değişir. Zira anlatmak, insanın bu dünyadaki en temel ayrıcalıklarındandır. İnsanlık tarihi boyunca yaşananları aktarma ile anlatılanları dinleme arzusuna birbirini tamamlayarak ilerler. Örneğin her teolojik metinde bir olay anlatılır ve ardından da ona dair bir öykü doğar.

Yaşananlar ile ilgili anlatılar değişime bağlı olarak türsel dönüşüm geçirir. Bu durum değişen insan; onun değişen zaman ve mekan algısı olarak sürerlilik gösterir.

Nisan Saral: “İnsan zamanın içinde değil, zaman insanın içinde yaşar.” demiş Henri Bergson. Sizce anlatıdaki zaman, insanın iç dünyasında bir varoluş deneyimi midir, yoksa yalnızca yapısal bir işlev midir?

Ülkü Eliuz: Bir varoluş deneyimidir. Sonuçta anlatılardaki karakterler bizlerin birer yansıması, bizi temsil ediyorlar, gerçek hayattaki kişilerin kurgusal figürleridir. Acıları, aşkları, nefretleri, kayıpları olan, arayış içerisindeki bireyler anlatılır romanlarda, hikâyelerde. Oradaki karakterler de bir yolculuktur. Yolculuk ne demektir? Zaman demektir. Her yolculukta bir varoluş süreci devreye girer. Bizim varoluş sürecimiz gibi, bizim yansımamız olan kurgu karakterleri de varoluş sürecindedirler. Onların zamanla ilişkisi nicel değil psikolojik, algısal, nitel dizgededir. İyi okur/ üst okur, anlatının içerik düzleminde bu ilişkiyi arar, “niye kurulmadı?” diye düşünür.

Nisan Saral: Makalenizde de “yolda olmak” ve “zaman içinde yol almak” metaforlarını sıkça görüyoruz. Bu ikili kavram sizce anlatının doğasında nasıl yer buluyor?

Ülkü Eliuz: Yol, mekân; yolculuk, zaman; yolda olan ise, insandır. Bir yolculuktayız. Joseph Campbell’in Kahramanın Sonsuz Yolculuğu adlı kitabında en eski, en kadim metinlerden itibaren kahramanların bir yolculukta olduğundan, modern zamanla birlikte bu yolculuğun içsel mekânlara, bilinçaltına doğru evrildiğinden bahsedilir. Kurgularda kahraman/ başkişi hedefine doğru hep bir yolculuğa çıkar. Önüne engeller çıkar; engel kişiler çıkar; engelleri aşması ve başarılı bir şekilde geri dönmesi beklenir. Göstergebilim, hermeneutik, psikanalitik, sosyolojik, feminist, eko-eleştiri vs. hangi kuram bağlamında metin çözümlenirse bu yolculuk dikkat çeker.

Birey bir yoldadır; hayatımız dediğimiz, ömür dediğimiz mekanizma bir yolculuktur. Doğduğumuz an itibariyle başlayan yolculukta birileriyle tanışırız; belli mekânlarda ve insanlarda duraklarız; bazen kaçarız, bazen ararız. Edebi metinlerdeki karakterlerin hikâyeleri de böyledir; hepsi aşmaları gereken engeller karşısında arayış ve kaçış sarmalında eylemde bulunurlar; Öguz Atay'ın *Tutunamayanlar* romanında Selim, yolculukta kendi mektuplarına, kendi içine; Yusuf Atılgan'ın *Anayurt Otel* romanında başkışı Zebercet, kendini eklemlediği konağa; Fyodor Dostoyevski'nin *Suç ve Ceza* romanında başkışı Raskolnikov vicdanına sığınır. Ferhat ile Şirin, Kerem ile Aslı gibi geleneksel Türk anlatılarında da durum böyledir; her birinde aşılması beklenen engeller vardır.

Nisan Saral: Pek çok farklı düşünürün görüşlerinden bahsetmişsiniz. Size en yakın olan düşünür hangisi?

Ülkü Eliuz: Fransız filozof Henri Bergson.. Bergson'un bakış açısına göre zaman, boş ve soyut değil, her anı farklı oluş hâlleriyle beliren sürekli bir değişme ve yenilemedir. Düzlemsel zaman ile yaşanan zamanın farklı olduğuna dikkat çektiği bu zaman, bilincimizin oluş hâllerindedir ve parçalanamaz. Bergson, objektif bir gerçekliğe karşılık gelen saatin ölçtüğü yaklaşımı zaman; öznenin yaşadığını sübjektif olan algıyı ise süre olarak adlandırır. Bu zaman algısı, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* romanı ile isminden itibaren ironik düzleme taşınır. "Saat, saatler, ayarlama, bir enstitü ve bilim kurumu aracılığı ile zaman ayarı vb." ile modernite eleştirisi yapılır; roman, tamamı zaman bağlantılı dört ana bölüme ayrılır; semboller ve imgeler çerçevesinde yaşanan değişim ile zaman arasındaki ilişki kurgulanır.

Nisan Saral: Makalenizde nicel zaman, beş katmanda ele alınmış. Bu katmanlarda okuma zamanı yalnızca alımlamaya mı, yoksa yaratıcı bir yeniden yazımı mı işaret eder?

Ülkü Eliuz: Nicel zaman, öykü zamanı/vaka zamanı/anlatı zamanı; öyküleme zamanı/anlatma zamanı; yazma zamanı/yazarın zamanı; sosyal/ tarihsel zaman; okuma zamanı/okuyucunun zamanı olarak beş katmanda görünüm kazanır.

Öykü zamanı, metnin başlangıcı ile sonucu arasındaki süre; öyküleme zamanı, anlatıcının kurgulama zamanı; sosyal zaman, metnin tarihsel bağlamı; yazma zamanı, metnin yazıldığı gerçek zaman; okuma zamanı, eseri okuyanın zamanıdır. Okuma zamanının, okuyucunun zamanının değişken olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bu, tamamen alımlama merkezli bir durum. Farklı zamanlarda, psikolojilerde ve mekanlarda aynı metne tekrar baktığımızda bile değişen bir süreç bu. Bunu şöyle örneklendirebilirim: *Trabzon Okuyor* projesi kapsamında Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı okullarla uzman moderatörler ile okumayı sadece seslendirme olarak değil, metinleri anlama ve tahlil etme olarak ele aldığımız okuma etkinlikleri kapsamında bu yılın kitaplarından biri Reşat Nuri Güntekin'in *Çalıkuşu* romanı idi. *Çalıkuşu*'nu ilkokulda, ortaokulda, lisede ve üniversitede okudum. Üniversite asistan olmayı planlarken son sınıfta birden *Çalıkuşu* olmaya karar verdim; o dönemde benim için Feride, idealleri olan, mücadele eden bir kadın öğretmendi. İlk görev yerim olan köy okulunda öğretmenlik yaparken *Çalıkuşu*'na bir kez daha baktım; Feride'nin benim okuduğum etken ve ideal kadın olmadığını; kararlarını kendisinin almadığını; başkalarının yönlendirmesi ile savrulduğunu fark ettim. Önceki okumalarımda düz okuma, seslendirme yaptığım için anlatının olay dizgesini takip etmişim; sonra ise metni ve karakteri edindiğim farklı açılardan değerlendirmişim. Metin değişmedi; değişen, benim zamanım ve benim metne yaklaşımım. Okuma zamanında bende ne değişti peki? Karakteri doğru alımlama ve karakter aracılığıyla iletilen mesajları fark etme. Okurun konumu ve algılama düzeyi, değişir ve zamanla daha da derinleşir. Umberto Eco'nun sadece seslendiren olay örgüsüne dikkat eden "sıradan okur" ve eser ile anlama, anlamlandırma, yorumlama ilişkisi kuran "üst okur" ayrımı, zamanın bireyin gelişimindeki etkisini işaret eder.

Nisan Saral: Nitel zamanı "bütünleyen" ve "çözümleyen" olarak ikiye ayırıyorsunuz. Bu ayrım, insanın içsel dönüşümüyle nasıl bir paralellik taşır?

Ülkü Eliuz: Yapı unsurlarından zamanın edebi eserlerdeki varlığı nicel ve nitel olarak iki düzlemde.



Nitel zaman/ tinsel zaman/ psikolojik zaman ise bireyi kuran veya tüketen konumuyla kuramsal bakımdan "bütünleyen" ve "çözümleyen" olarak iki şekilde kurguda yer alır. Anlatı karakterlerinin içinde bulunduğu duruma göre şekillenen bu yapı unsuru, varoluşsal doğumların veya yitimlerin hem tanığıdır, hem de etkin bir değeridir. Bu zaman, artık kronolojik değildir; kişinin içinde bulunduğu ruh hali ile aynı dizgede geçmiş-şimdi bağıntısında belirsizdir. Ancak bu belirsizlik, her yerdeliğin ve her an yeniden oluşun göstergesidir. Nitel zaman eserlerdeki karakterlerin içinde bulunduğu psikolojik ve sosyolojik hatta şiyasi durum ile bağlantılı olarak şekillenir. Örneğin Çağdaş Azerbaycan yazarlarından Bahtiyar Vahabzade'nin *Gün Var Bin Aya Değer* kitabındaki aynı adı taşıyan manzume verilebilir. Metinde önce zamanın tanımını yapılırsa daha sonra örnek sunulur: Aynı çatı altında, eşit fiziksel şartlardaki iki bitişik evde, gece 12 ile 6 arasındaki altı saatte zaman algısı farklılaşır; odalardan birindeki odada oğlu eve dönmediği için endişeli, kaygılı bir anne için geçen zaman yüz yıla dönüşür; diğer evde yıllar sonra kavuşan iki sevgili için ise aynı altı saat bir an'a dönüşür.

Nisan Saral: Günümüzde dijitalleşmenin etkilerini edebiyatta da görüyoruz. Bu yeni dijital metinlerde zaman sizce nasıl konumlanıyor? Yeni anlatı biçimleri zaman algımızı nasıl dönüştürüyor?

Ülkü Eliuz: Bu yeni anlatı biçimlerinden biri küçürek metinler. Bu metinlerde de zaman algısı mevcut; ancak uzun uzadıya anlatılan, betimlenen bir zaman değil bu. Örneğin, Ferit Edgü'nün *Çaresiz* başlıklı "Sonunda bir köpeği evlat edindi" cümlesinden oluşan küçürek öyküsündeki "edinmek" fiili ve "sonunda" zarfıyla zamanı imlenir.

Ayrıca "çaresiz olmak" ile yaşanmış deneyim olarak zaman algısı ifade edilir. Bu nicel bakımdan kısa metin ve başlık, mutsuzluk, vefasızlık, hayal kırıklığı gibi pek çok duyguyu; "sonunda" kelimesiyle geçen büyük bir zaman dilimi imler. Bir köpeğin evlat edinilmesi, insani değerlerin kaybolduğunu ve varlık hiyerarşisinde köpeklerin bile daha yüksek bir konuma çıktığını gösterir. Küçücük bir metin, zaman üzerinden tüm bunları ifade eder: Az sözle derin anlam. Metin kısaldıkça betimlemeler azalır, kişi dahi tasvir edilmez; ancak kişi, zaman ve mekân yine de mevcuttur, yalnızca ayrıntılı sunulmazlar. Bildiğiniz gibi çağımız, hız çağı: hızlı yaşam ve iletişimde, uzun sohbetler ve anlatımlar yerini kısalığa bırakıyor. Zamanı doğru kullanamadığımız için onu "öldürüyoruz". Ancak anlatma ve dinleme ihtiyacı insanın değişmezlerinden. Hâlâ hikâyeye dinlemek istiyoruz ve küçürek metinler tam da bu ihtiyaca cevap veriyor; kısa sürede okunup derin düşünceler sunuyorlar.

Nisan Saral: Son soruya gelirsek, anlatıda zaman üzerine yazdığınız bu derin metinler ışığında sorunuzu ele alabiliriz: Zaman gerçekten var mıdır, yoksa bizim anlam yüklediğimiz bir yanılsama mıdır? **Ülkü Eliuz:** Zaman bir varoluş düzlemi olduğu için elimizle tutamıyoruz. Soyut bir imge... Yaygın olarak nehir metaforuna benzetilen zaman, geçmişten geleceğe akma, takip etme, süre ve geri döndürülemez olma özelliklere sahiptir. Ama ben bir "yanılsama" olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Zaman, bir şekilde bize dahil olan bir şeydir. Ne diyordu Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar:

*Ne içindeyim zamanın,
Ne de büsbütün dışında;
Yekpâre, geniş bir anın
Parçalanmaz akışında.*

Zaman bizimle birlikte yürüyen bir akış.

Nisan Saral: Çok teşekkür ederiz sayın hocam.

Ülkü Eliuz: Teşekkür ederim. Zamanı iyi değerlendirdiğiniz günler dilerim...



The Role of Time in Shaping Narratives in English Literature

by Yaren ERGENÇ

Time, a fundamental force that shapes human existence and experience, is both a constant and a fluid presence in English literature. It governs the rhythms of life and defines the scope of human actions, thoughts, and emotions. Authors have employed various techniques to manipulate time, thereby allowing readers to experience multiple dimensions of the human condition. As a recurring theme, time serves not only as a backdrop to the narrative but also as a powerful literary device that shapes character development, plot structure, and thematic exploration. Time becomes a mirror of the human condition, reflecting both the limitations and the possibilities of existence. It invites readers to confront the inevitability of change, the weight of memory, and the uncertainty of the future. In literature, time is never simply a measurement; it is a force that drives the unfolding of stories, emotions, and destinies.

In literature, time can be manipulated to serve the narrative, whether it is through the use of flashbacks, foreshadowing, or non-linear storytelling. One notable example is Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, where the narrative interweaves between the past and present. Woolf employs a non-linear narrative structure, seamlessly blending past, present, and future through the characters' stream-of-consciousness thoughts. Time becomes fluid, elastic, and intensely personal, mirroring the inner landscapes of the characters.

This approach captures the fluidity of human consciousness, where memories and present experiences blend together. This technique not only enriches the narrative but also mirrors the human psyche's tendency to swing between past regrets and future anxieties.

Another compelling depiction of time is the concept of 'timelessness'. This is often achieved by immersing the reader in a world where the conventional rules of time do not apply. For instance, in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, the characters traverse landscapes where time seems to stand still, creating a sense of timelessness that contrasts with the urgency of their quest.

This duality serves to heighten the narrative tension and underscores the epic nature of their journey.

Time can also be used as a metaphor in literature, symbolising the inevitable passage of life, the fleeting nature of youth, or the cyclical rhythm of nature. In Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, the character Gabriel Oak's relationship with time is shown through his reliance on natural cues instead of a regular clock. For instance, his pocket watch does not work properly, so he uses things like the stars to tell time, which underscores his connection to nature and his value of steadiness and patience. In contrast, other characters rely on mechanical watches, symbolising their impulsiveness and carelessness.

Moreover, the manipulation of time serves to emphasize character development. In Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, the protagonist, Ebenezer Scrooge, is given a glimpse of his past, present, and future, forcing him to confront the consequences of his actions and prompting his transformation. This use of time as a catalyst for change not only propels the narrative but also underscores the potential for personal growth and redemption.

In addition, the concept of time can be used to explore historical events and societal changes. In Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*, time plays a crucial role in exploring historical events and societal changes. The narrative spans several years, offering a portrayal of the Tudor court and the political machinations of the time. By manipulating time, Mantel provides a narrative that captures the spirit of the era, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the historical context. This use of time enriches the story, giving readers a deeper understanding of the political dynamics and cultural shifts during the reign of Henry VIII.

SUGGESTED READINGS

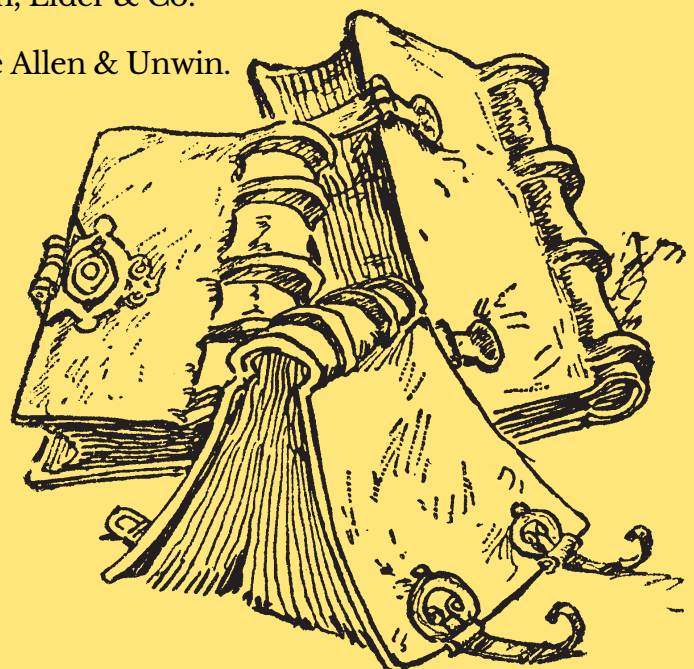
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In conclusion, time is not merely a silent witness to the unfolding of events in English literature; it is a vibrant, often relentless force that shapes and reshapes the characters and worlds it touches.

From Woolf's delicate weaving of past and present to Tolkien's eternal landscapes, and from Hardy's cyclical rhythms of nature to Mantel's rich historical tapestry, time becomes a lens through which the human experience is magnified and explored. It challenges, transforms, and guides us through the pages, urging us to face our past, acknowledge our present, and reckon with our future.

In the end, time itself becomes the silent protagonist, playing a role that is as profound as any character, reminding us of the fleeting nature of our own existence and the stories we leave behind.

Through these masterful portrayals, literature not only captures time — it breathes life into it, making it an inseparable part of the narrative that continues to resonate long after the last page is turned.





The Painting That Melts Time: The Persistence of Memory

by Tuana ALIÇ



The Persistence of Memory, completed in 1931 by Spanish surrealist painter Salvador Dalí, is considered one of the most unforgettable works in art history. Known to the public as the "*melting clocks*" painting, this masterpiece evokes the idea that perhaps, as the clocks melt, only memories remain.

The creation of this unique painting is linked to an interesting event that Dalí experienced on an ordinary summer evening. While looking at a melting Camembert cheese and a clock hanging on the wall on a warm summer evening, these images inspired him with an idea. The thought that time, like clocks, could be flexible transformed into a surrealist painting in the artist's mind.

The most striking element of the painting demonstrates that time is not as rigid and unchanging as we think. Time, slipping away from us at every moment, flows like a liquid — melting and passing by in the scene. The strange figure in the center of the painting is an abstract reflection of Dalí's own face, symbolizing a human figure. Dalí often used such strange face figures in his works to highlight his interest in the subconscious. The melting clocks symbolise the blurring of boundaries between the past, present, and future, while ants emerge as symbols of decay and destruction. As in many of his other works, Dalí associates ants with death in this painting as well.

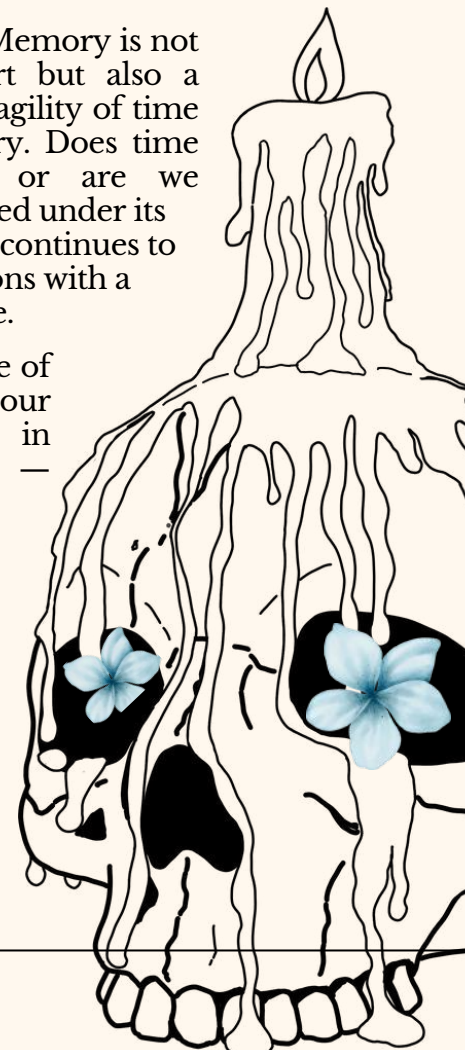
The vast, endless landscape in the background is inspired by the artist's homeland, Catalonia, and serves as a backdrop that evokes the infinity of time.

The amorphous figure at the centre reflects the blurred state of consciousness between sleep and wakefulness. Dalí is one of the most extraordinary representatives of the surrealist movement, and *The Persistence of Memory* is one of the most striking examples of this movement. Surrealists aimed to remove the boundaries between reality and fantasy by placing dreams and the subconscious at the center of art. Dalí's work invites the viewer into a dreamlike world.

This painting has had a significant impact not only on art history but also on popular culture. The melting clocks appear in various media, from films and advertisements to music album covers and cartoons. Today, the painting is displayed at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and continues to be one of Dalí's most recognized masterpieces.

The Persistence of Memory is not only a work of art but also a metaphor for the fragility of time and human memory. Does time truly flow away, or are we doomed to be crushed under its weight? Dalí's brush continues to answer these questions with a timeless masterpiece.

Perhaps the pressure of time exists only in our perception, and in reality, everything — like the melting clocks transforms within our subconscious.





Have You Ever Wondered How Black Mirror Bends Time?

by Selin ÖZGÜL & Umut ÖZDİNÇER

The British anthology television series *Black Mirror* brings the disturbing sides of the digital age and advanced technology to the screen with its original themes, and has returned after a long break. With each season, *Black Mirror* continues to captivate audiences through its haunting storytelling, unique aesthetic, and unflinching portrayal of technology's irreversible impact on the human experience. Yet beneath the layers of digital paranoia and dystopian innovation lies a subtler, but no less powerful motif: time. Not merely as a setting or a device, but as a force manipulated, stretched, frozen, and often weaponized.

1. Hang the DJ (season 4, episode 4)

Imagine a universe where you're fully aware of just how limited your time is. You meet someone, you match, your conversations grow deeper, you discover parts of yourself in each other and just as you are beginning to believe you have found your soulmate, you realize you only have three days left together. And worst of all, this decision is not yours to make. Frank and Amy suffered from this very predicament.

In *Hang the DJ*, the fact that *The System* dictates the duration of a relationship without consent becomes more than just a plot device. It reflects the system's error and its inherent punishment. Viewed from one side, the algorithm's rigid design feels deeply flawed.

Yet the ambience created by the limited time Frank and Amy share is filled with anticipation, intimacy, and quiet urgency, producing a strangely beautiful emotional resonance.

But what if the durations assigned randomly and without our consent are not just guiding us from one relationship to another, but slowly wearing us down over time? Each experience leaves you a little more compliant, a little more hopeless. Until finally, you make your last offer and say, "*This is the one*". And when you reach that point, all you feel is exhaustion. You are too tired to tell whether it was all a waste of time or not. You are losing your time, and all you can do is wait for the countdown to end — watching it slip away right before your eyes.


Frank and Amy's bond is real, perhaps more real than anything. *The System* has been orchestrated precisely because it was born in defiance of temporal control. Their resistance to the algorithm becomes a metaphor for reclaiming agency over one's own narrative, over love, over time itself.

Through this perspective, *Hang the DJ* transforms from a sweet love story into a quiet rebellion: A plea for organic human connection in a world that would rather schedule your emotions.

2. Hotel Reverie (season 7, episode 3)

Hotel Reverie, from *Black Mirror*'s freshly released seventh season, explores a future where the past is no longer behind us — it is right at our fingertips, ready to be rendered, re-lived, and re-edited.





Through cutting-edge AI, actors are immersed into digitally reconstructed scenes from old Hollywood films, not to imitate the past, but to inhabit it. This is not nostalgia in passing; it is a full resurrection of another era. In this episode, a modern actress enters a simulation of a 1940s film, only to find that the boundaries between performance and reality begin to dissolve. Time inside the simulation stretches, feelings deepen, and the past becomes harder to leave behind. *Hotel Reverie* does not just ask what happens when we revisit history — it wonders what happens when we choose to stay there.

A visually striking and thematically rich episode, it is a compelling reason to dive into Season 7 of *Black Mirror*, where time, once again, refuses to behave.

3. The Entire History of You

In *The Entire History of You*, time becomes an enemy disguised as memory. In a near future where retinal implants allow individuals to endlessly replay their past in high-definition detail, memory is no longer a fluid, fallible human experience but a cold, mechanical archive — indexed, rewound, and zoomed. The story centres on Liam, a young lawyer who becomes increasingly suspicious of his wife, Ffion, after a dinner party where she interacts warmly with an old friend, Jonas. Unable to let go of his doubts, Liam obsessively reviews his memories, analysing every glance and word exchanged between Ffion and Jonas. His relentless quest for truth leads him down a path of jealousy and paranoia, ultimately unravelling his marriage and his own sanity. This episode serves as a poignant exploration of memory and the human need for forgetfulness. In our current age of smartphones and social media, we are already inching toward a reality where our past is inescapably ever-present.

The *Entire History of You* warns of the dangers of living in such a world, where the ability to move on is hindered by the constant replaying of our most painful moments.

By the end, Liam's decision to remove his implant is a desperate attempt to reclaim his humanity and find peace in the imperfections of natural memory. The episode challenges us to consider whether some memories are best left to fade, and whether the flaws in our recollection are, in fact, what makes us human.

4. Eulogy (season 7, episode 5)

In the fifth episode, titled *Eulogy*, we are introduced to Phillip, an ageing man who embarks on a reflective journey triggered by the death of Carol Royce, the woman who deeply hurt him in his younger years. Through advanced memory-retrieval technology implanted as a digital chip, Phillip can sift through his recollections to craft a heartfelt eulogy, confronting both the pain and beauty of their shared history.

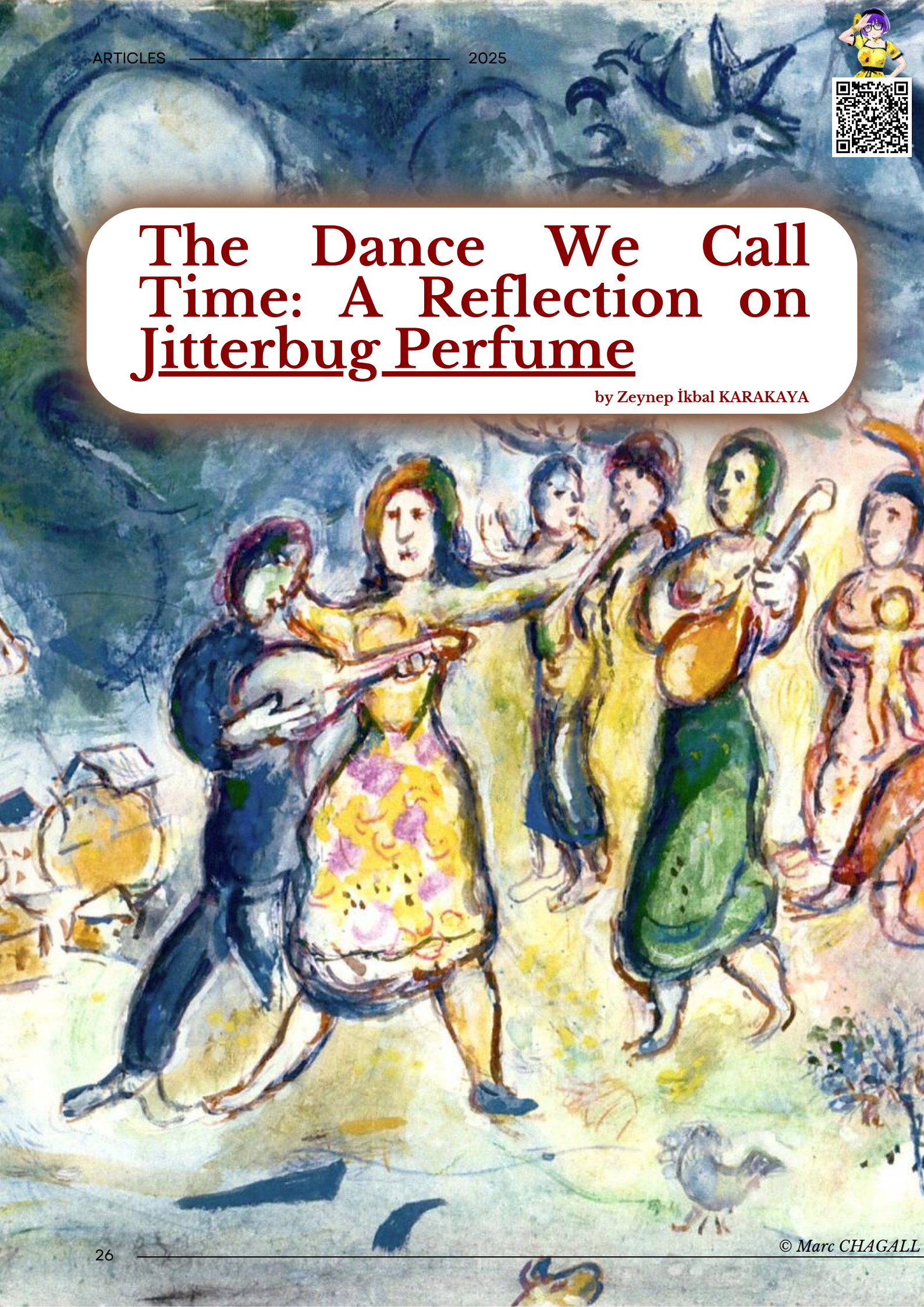
Time turns into a bridge and a deep wound in *Eulogy*. We are reminded that the past is never as far away as we think, as Phillip makes his way through the heartbreaking memories kept on the digital chip. In this reality, technology does more than simply maintain time; it also analyses, replays, and occasionally warps it. In addition to providing Phillip with the opportunity to find emotional closure, being able to relive his younger self's anguish shows how closely memory and time are linked.

By controlling the timeline, technology may create access to the past, but it cannot erase the emotional erosion silently carried by time. This episode portrays time as something both precious and cruel—something we long to hold onto, even as it slips from our grasp.



The Dance We Call Time: A Reflection on Jitterbug Perfume

by Zeynep İkbal KARAKAYA

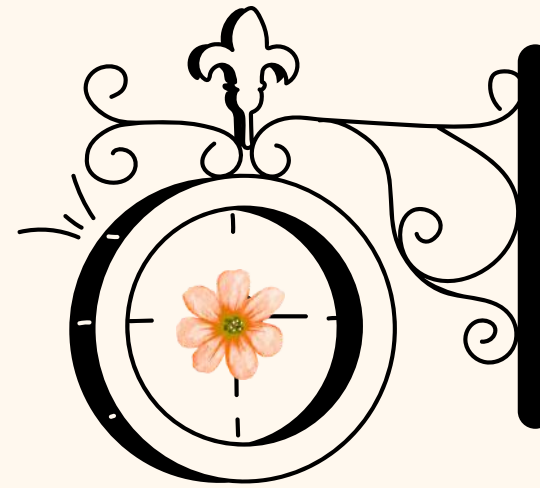


Our relationship with time has never been a straight line. Sometimes we chased after it; sometimes we tried to outrun it. At times, we counted the minutes; at others, we hid within the folds of a memory. Yet no matter what we did, time continued to play a game it already knew far better than we did. **Jitterbug Perfume** is a novel that doesn't just wrinkle its nose at this game; it plunges right into it — nose first.

At first glance, Tom Robbins' fantastic novel seems to be all about perfume. But like a cunning magician, it lures you in with scent and leaves you at the depths of philosophy. Inside, you'll find a king from ancient times, a modern-day perfumer, mythological gods, meditation, and even beets. All caught in the strange flows of time. And *Jitterbug Perfume* doesn't ask you, "*What is time?*"

It grabs you by the arm and says, "*Come, look at it from right here,*" dragging you into the very center of it.

At the heart of the story is Alobar, a man who refuses to age and runs stubbornly against the flow of time. Once the king of a small tribe, Alobar faces a brutal tradition: at the first sign of old age, he must die. While everyone else accepts this as the inevitable cycle of nature, Alobar, when he sees a single strand of white hair, dares to ask, "*Why must I die?*" and flees. Along his journey, he learns the secrets of keeping both body and spirit alive. He discovers the powers of breathing, eating, bathing, and thinking positively. And, of course, love. Throughout this walk across time, Kudra walks beside him. Their *immortal* love has endured countless adventures and crossed countless eras — lasting more than a millennium.



And then there's Pan — the music, the sharp scent lingering in the novel's background. Half goat, half man, Pan slips through the pages like the wild, unruly spirit of life itself. His presence feels like nature's mischievous response to humankind's desperate attempts to control time: "*Let it flow.*"

Jitterbug Perfume toys with the concept of time, yet it leaves serious questions lingering in your mind. Are we losing ourselves trying to chase after time? Do we seek immortality, or are we fleeing from something? The novel whispers these questions into your mind, making you wonder, "*What if...*" after you finish reading.

And when the last page turns, one question remains:

"Does time create us, or have we created time?"

Maybe Tom Robbins never wanted us to find the answer. Maybe he just wanted us to breathe, to feel, and to dance a little longer in the flow of time.





The Absent Presence of Time in Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett

by Dr. Özlem ÇAKMAKOĞLU

Einstein's theory of relativity, introduced in 1905, has shaped how we understand time for over a century. Although the BBC expressed some doubts about its full accuracy in 2015, the theory still serves as a cornerstone of modern science, building on the work of Isaac Newton (1643–1727), who lived more than 200 years earlier. According to Einstein (1879–1955), time does not move at the same rate for everyone. It can stretch or shrink depending on speed, gravity, and the observer's position. If time feels different for each person, then one question becomes especially important: Why do the moments we want to last forever always seem to slip by the fastest? In other words, why does waiting in line feel so much longer than an hour spent with a friend? Or are we all just waiting for our own Godot—passing time while nothing really changes?

In *Waiting for Godot* (1953), Irish absurdist playwright Samuel Beckett traps two men in a kind of temporal limbo—a blockade shaped not by walls, but by time itself. Like prisoners under siege, they are held captive by the slow, unyielding passage of time. First performed in 1949, the play transcends its era, continuing to speak to audiences about the human struggle with meaning and the unbearable weight of waiting. On a barren stage, the two men bicker, reconcile, tell stories, and perform absurd routines—all to “kill time.” In Beckett's world, time is not a neutral backdrop but an oppressive force. It becomes the silent antagonist, and the only defence the characters have is distraction. They wait endlessly for someone—or something—that never arrives, caught in the torturous loop of hope and inaction.

Since “the theme distinguishing *Waiting for Godot* from other masterpieces is Beckett's artistic approach implemented in the absurdity of conducting his characters by remotion of the reader/audience's mentality to have this tragedy taped. *Waiting for Godot* does not transfuse straight rationale but assigns repetition, irrelevance, involuntariness, unconsciousness, and the one-sidedness of humanity” (Hashempour, 2023, p. 766).

In this allegorical play, Beckett creates a world where language is unreliable, and meaning eludes the characters at every turn. The objects they encounter, such as the tree or their worn shoes, seem to hold more significance than the dialogue itself. “The entire plot is a complex picture made up of subordinate images and motifs that are interwoven in the same way that musical tones are, not to present a line of progress as in most well-made plays, but to create in the observer's mind a fully complicated perception of a basic and constant condition” (Alzouabi, 2022, p. 26).

The play subverts logic by rejecting traditional narrative structure: there is no plot, no beginning or ending, and the characters' actions are mostly repetitive and inconsequential. Time is ambiguous, with no exact time or clear passage, adding to the bareness of the stage and the sense of ratelessness. The dialogue is marked by short, incomplete sentences and frequent question marks, reflecting the characters' confusion and existential uncertainty. Repetition of phrases and actions further emphasises the ambiguity of their situation, suggesting the futility of their wait.

Pathetic characters, trapped in an eternal cycle, grapple with incoherence, not only in their speech but also in their understanding of the world around them. Through these elements, Beckett masterfully conveys the subversion of logic and the meaninglessness of existence, where nothing changes, and hope seems impossible.

Beckett weaves time not just as a backdrop, but as a central force that shapes the play's existential atmosphere. Time functions both as a thematic anchor and a structural constraint, underscoring the protagonists' sense of entrapment and futility. Rather than progressing linearly, time in the play is elusive and disorienting, reflecting the uncertainty and monotony that define Vladimir and Estragon's existence. Their memories are fragmented and inconsistent; they struggle to recall past events, question whether they are in the right place, and remain unsure of what day it is—or whether it matters at all. This distortion of time contributes to a profound sense of stasis, as if the characters are caught in an endless loop, waiting for someone or something that may never come. Thus, in Beckett's world, time becomes both a tormentor and a symbol of life's absurd repetition. Like in Camus' world, in which he describes the situation as: "*The absurd, which is the metaphysical state of the conscious man, does not lead to God*" (Camus, 1979, p. 42).

The structure of the play—with its two nearly identical acts—reinforces the cyclical nature of Vladimir and Estragon's existence. Each act mirrors the other, as the characters wait for Godot, encounter Pozzo and Lucky, and receive the same message from a boy: Godot will not come today, but perhaps tomorrow. This repetitive pattern emphasises the monotony and futility of their wait, underscoring their entrapment in a timeless cycle that offers neither resolution nor forward movement. The play's lack of progression between acts mirrors the characters' existential paralysis, where time marches on but brings no change or escape.



Vladimir and Estragon's perception of time is fragmented and unreliable, marked by confusion and uncertainty. They often express doubt about how long they have been waiting and question the accuracy of their memories, unable to anchor themselves in a clear sense of the past or present. This inconsistency underscores the theme of existential uncertainty, illustrating the difficulty of finding meaning in a universe that seems indifferent to their existence. Their distorted relationship with time mirrors their broader existential struggle, highlighting the absurdity of their situation and the challenge of making sense of an inherently meaningless world.

Waiting for Godot hides a theatrical expression of the confusion and despair that followed World War II. Through its minimalism, absurdity, and rejection of traditional theatrical understanding, the play captures the mid-twentieth-century human condition. Beckett's characters, who are in the midst of nothingness, reflect a world stripped of meaning and direction. The solitary tree on stage serves as a subtle but poignant symbol of the passage of time. In Act I, it stands barren, while in Act II, it has sprouted a few leaves. This minimal change marks the passage of time, yet it highlights the characters' stagnant existence, as their situation remains fundamentally unchanged. The tree's gradual transformation underscores the paradox of time in *Waiting for Godot*: though time moves forward, the characters are trapped in an endless cycle, unable to break free from their repetitive and unresolved waiting. This reinforces the play's theme of temporal confinement and the futility of their existence. Camus gives Kierkegaard's ideas to strengthen his claim on the absurdity of life:

“If man had no eternal consciousness, if, at the bottom of everything, there were merely a wild, seething force producing everything, both large and trifling, in the storm of dark passions, if the bottomless void that nothing can fill underlay all things, what would life be but despair?” This cry is not likely to stop the absurd man. Seeking what is true is not seeking what is desirable. If, to elude the anxious question: “What would life be?” one must, like the donkey, feed on the roses of illusion, then the absurd mind, rather than resigning itself to falsehood, prefers to adopt fearlessly Kierkegaard’s reply: ‘despair’. Everything considered, a determined soul will always manage (qtd. in, Camus, 1979, 43).

In a nutshell, the portrayal of time in *Waiting for Godot* encapsulates existential themes of meaninglessness and the grotesque human condition. The characters’ endless waiting for Godot is the core action of the play. This action, devoid of any clear purpose or resolution, mirrors the absurdity of searching for meaning in an unpredictable and indifferent modern world. Their entrapment within time becomes a powerful metaphor for the broader human experience—one of seeking significance in a universe that offers none. So, in Beckett’s world, time is not just a measure of passing moments but a constant reminder of the futility and uncertainty at the core of existence. That is why Beckett incorporates both comic and tragic elements in the play to highlight the duality of life. In the play, he uses the concept of time as a powerful device to amplify the characters’ sense of confinement and stasis, deepening their existential struggles.

Beckett not only creates two major characters, Vladimir and Estragon, but also introduces a third, equally significant character: time itself. The endless waiting, marked by an absence of progress or resolution, underscores the absurdity of their plight. Time, far from simply passing, becomes an oppressive force that traps them in a perpetual state of uncertainty, intensifying their paralysis. This depiction of time mirrors the play’s larger existential theme—the search for meaning in a universe that offers none, highlighting the futility of their efforts to find purpose. Finally, the opening and the closing lines summarise the entire text: *“Nothing to be done... Yes, let’s go. They do not move”* (Beckett, 1994, p. 165).

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The Passage of Time

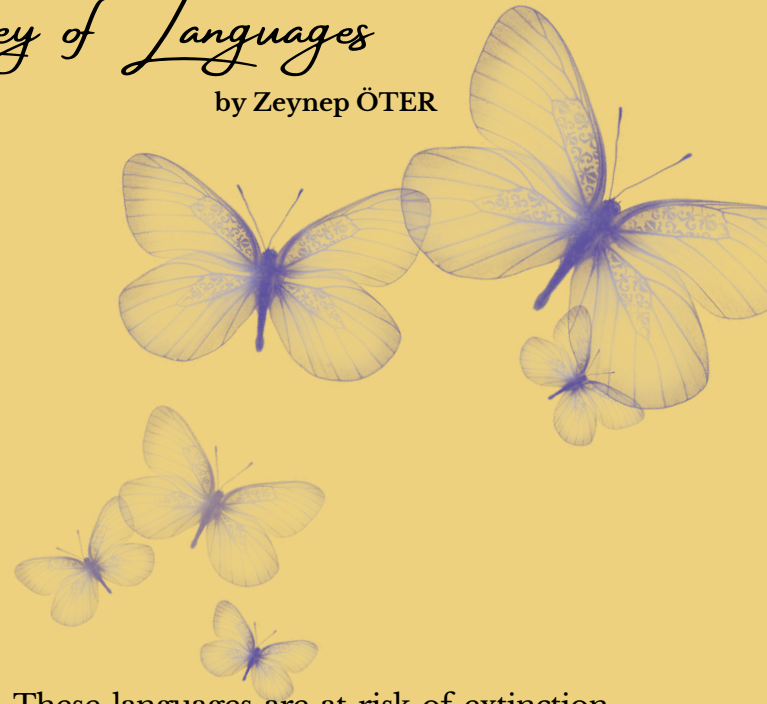
The Silent Journey of Languages

by Zeynep ÖTER

Languages have been born, grown, and gradually disappeared throughout history, much like living beings that carry the memory of civilisations.

Each language that vanishes is akin to a hue fading from human culture. These lost tongues represent not merely the disappearance of words, but also the erosion of a people's unique way of perceiving the world, their beliefs, and their very way of life. The death of a language is a profound loss, akin to the erasure of time itself. The expressions, stories, and cultural heritage of past generations become inaccessible, leaving a temporal void where echoes of history once resonated. This heritage, though silenced, is one we must strive to remember for the sake of our future.

In linguistics, the term “*dead language*” carries a specific meaning: a language that no longer has native speakers, is not passed down to new generations, and consequently fades from active use. The Linguistic Society of America explains that numerous languages are no longer being passed down to younger generations or new adult learners.



These languages are at risk of extinction once their final speaker passes away. In fact, there are currently dozens of languages with only a single native speaker remaining, and when that individual dies, the language will vanish entirely—spoken and understood by no one.

This is not a theoretical concern; it is a tangible reality. **Laua**, a Papuan language, slipped into silence in 1987 with the passing of its final speaker. Similarly, **Tepecano**, an indigenous language of Mexico, breathed its last linguistic breath in 1980 when its last speaker died.

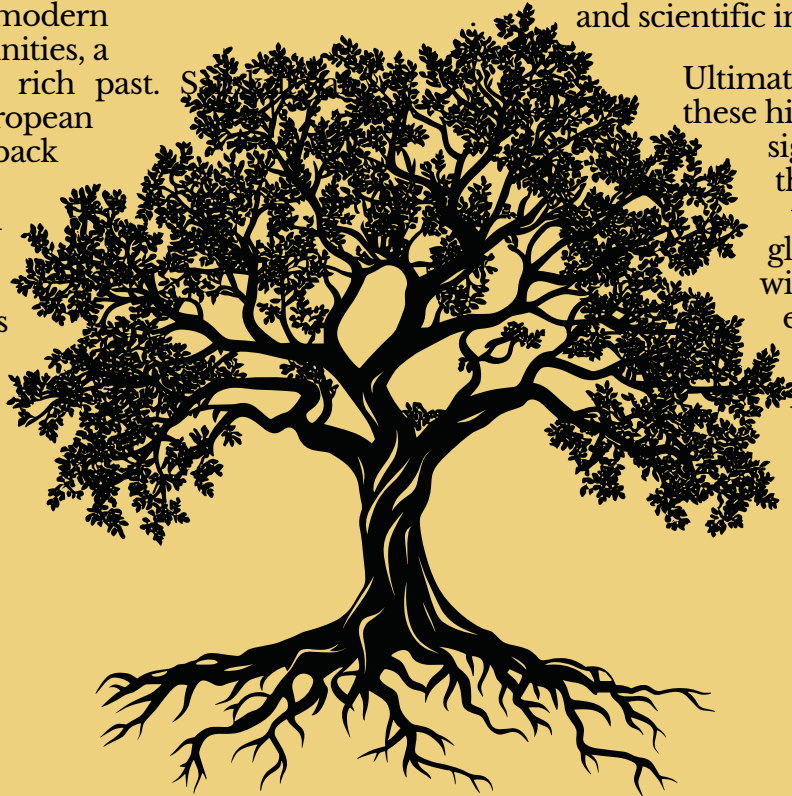
However, the narrative of language death is not always a simple tale of complete disappearance. **Latin**, for instance, likely lost its last native speaker around the 7th century. Yet, it did not vanish entirely. Instead, it continued to flourish in various forms and contexts, exerting a profound influence through its descendants, the Romance languages. Classical Latin is no longer spoken as a native language today, and it gradually faded with the decline of the Roman Empire, its birthplace.

Yet, Latin continues to hold a pivotal place in education, particularly in classical studies, and its legacy remains a foundational influence on modern languages. Thus, Latin persists, albeit in its derivative forms, a testament to its historical significance.

Aramaic, a language with a history stretching back over 3,000 years and famously spoken by Jesus, presents another nuanced case. Is it a truly dead language? Not entirely. In modern times, it primarily is maintained by religious groups and ethnic communities, often employed in scholarly works. While often classified as dead, it continues to be spoken by a few modern Aramaic communities, a living link to a rich past. Sanskrit, an ancient Indo-European language dating back to around 1500 BCE and revered as the sacred language of Hinduism, shares linguistic roots with languages like Greek, Latin, and Persian.

Its flexible and intricate structure has allowed it to endure for millennia. However, sociolinguistic studies indicate that its spoken use is now very limited, leading many to consider it a dead language. Yet, this label belies the reality that modern academic and literary works continue to be produced in Sanskrit, preserving its profound cultural and scientific importance.

Ultimately, it is not only these historically significant languages that have faded over time. Across the globe each a unique witness to human experience, have fallen silent or teeter on the brink of extinction.



Every one of these linguistic echoes, giving voice to time and carrying the memories of cultures, deserves to be remembered before it is lost forever.

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The Secret of Time: Found in the Moments We Overlook

by Emine Naz ERKAN

Where am I rushing to? What am I in such a hurry for? It feels like stopping for a moment would mean losing everything. But what exactly am I afraid of losing? Am I trying to catch up with the passing time, or am I simply watching it slip away?

Every day, I walk the same streets, see the same places. But have I noticed the tree that has started blooming again? Or do I only notice it when its roots begin to crack the pavement? Did I feel the warmth of the sun on my skin this morning, or did I just check the time and move on?

I see time as an enemy. When I cannot keep up, I get frustrated with it. When it moves too quickly, I resent it. But have I ever considered that maybe time is not speeding up, maybe it is just the way I move through it? Perhaps time has always flowed at the same pace, and the only thing that has changed is the way I approach it.

The moments I overlook in my rush those are the moments where life truly exists. In the silent excitement of a blooming flower, in the sky reflected in a window, in the wind's gentle touch on my skin. In a child's laughter, in the stillness of a sleeping cat, in the falling of a leaf. These are the precious moments of life, yet I keep rushing by, missing them.

As I slow down, I notice the people around me more. I see how my friend's eyes light up when they talk about something they are passionate about. The little pauses in conversations that open up space for deeper thoughts. I find comfort in just being in the same room without feeling the need to fill every silence with words.

And I realize how fast I am moving through life. I push myself, thinking speed equals to productivity. But when I slow down, I see how much I am missing.

In the quiet moments, I reconnect with myself. The world is not something to conquer in a race. Sometimes, it just needs to be observed, enjoyed, and allowed to unfold at its own pace.

I do not have to race against time. Sometimes, I let it win. I slow down. I listen. I feel the ground beneath my feet, the air around me. Because life is not a destination; it is a journey. And that journey is not defined by speed, but by the small, unnoticed moments that give it meaning. Those are the moments I can only catch when I stop rushing. Life reveals itself when I stop running, and perhaps the secret of time belongs to those who have stopped chasing it.



A Novel in Minutes: The Storytelling Power of Songs

by Umut ÖZDİNÇER



I have always been fascinated by how a song, in just a matter of minutes, can do what a novel takes hundreds of pages to achieve. Within moments, a song can unfold like a novel, breathing life into a character, building an entire universe in the span of a verse, tracing the rise and fall of a love story whose bonds tighten and break within the chorus. While novels have the luxury of hundreds of pages, songs operate within the strict confines of minutes and seconds.

Yet despite this constraint, many songs manage to deliver stories that feel as rich and emotionally layered as any literary work. Whether it is Leonard Cohen whispering through a faded love letter or Metallica echoing the silent terror of a soldier lost inside his own body, songs like these tell stories too heavy for silence. Every song carries its own story: love, desire, passion, anger, hatred, longing. It is these stories that give songs their soul. Sometimes, just by listening, you can feel what the singer has lived through. In this piece, I explore how music carries stories. It offers us not just melodies, but memories, lives, and entire worlds.

“It’s four in the morning, the end of December...

I’m writing to you now just to see if you’re better.”

Some songs do not just tell stories — they confide in you. Leonard Cohen’s Famous Blue Raincoat, quietly resting on the B-side of his 1971 album Songs of Love and Hate, unfolds like a letter never meant to be sent. The narrator addresses an unnamed man, simply referred to as “you,” “my brother,” and “my killer,” someone who once had an affair with Jane, the woman they both shared. But this is not a story of fury or vengeance. The letter is not soaked in anger, but in understanding. Cohen, with his warm and poetic voice, delivers a reflection rather than a confrontation. The narrator speaks to his rival not with hatred, but with something close to tenderness, acknowledging the pain, yet offering peace. It is not a fiery love triangle filled with ego and blame, but a gentle, complex surrender to time, distance, and human weakness. And then, at the very end, the illusion fractures, the letter is signed “L. Cohen,” quietly suggesting that the fictional heartbreak may have never been fictional at all.



Some stories scream in silence. Metallica's *One*, a piercing anti-war anthem, is one of them. It draws its harrowing narrative from the 1971 film, *Johnny Got His Gun*, a stark and devastating portrayal of a soldier's fate. In the film, Johnny is a young man who goes off to fight in World War I, leaving behind his family, his lover, and his entire life. One night, seeking shelter from heavy shelling, he hides in a crater left by an earlier explosion, believing, as soldiers often did, that artillery never strikes the same place twice. But it does.

Another shell hits the very crater he is in. When Johnny wakes in a hospital, he seems whole, until we realise the truth. He has lost all his limbs. His eyes, ears, mouth, and nose are gone. He cannot speak, see, or move. He can only think. His entire existence has been reduced to a conscious mind trapped in a broken shell. In a dream, Johnny remembers his father teaching him Morse code. Desperate, he begins tapping his head against the pillow — the only movement he can control — until the nurses finally understand. Through Morse, he asks for one thing: euthanasia. One translates this agony into music. The verses crawl with numb despair, the drums pound like gunfire — and the final explosion of distorted guitars and relentless drums is not liberation, but panic.

*"Darkness, imprisoning me
All that I see
Absolute horror"*

The voice chokes on its own isolation. Later, *"I can't remember anything / Can't tell if this is true or a dream,"* we hear the confusion of a man who cannot even grasp the boundary between life and death. It is not just a song; it is a cry from inside the body of someone who can no longer cry.

*"Now the world is gone,
I'm just one."*

"She sang with touching sorrow, but he would not listen."

Not all stories end in tragedy; some never even begin. *Herr Mannelig* is not merely a song; it is a Scandinavian ballad, a musical retelling of an old legend, where sorrow takes the shape of myth. The tale comes from medieval Sweden and centers around a female mountain troll who falls in love with a knight named Herr Mannelig. Unlike the monstrous trolls of later fairy tales, she does not kidnap or deceive; she offers herself in love. She comes at dawn, bearing gifts: twelve horses, twelve mills, a gilded sword, and a shirt woven not with thread, but with white silk. All this, in exchange for one thing: his hand in marriage. It is said that, had he accepted, she might have become human. But Herr Mannelig refuses. Not because of fear, not because of pride, but because she is not Christian.

In a single verse, her hope dissolves: *"Such gifts I would surely accept, if you were a Christian woman. But you are the worst of mountain trolls, kin to the Neck and the Devil."* The troll, devastated, flees to her cave and weeps, her cries echoing through the mountains. She weeps not only for lost love, but for the humanity she almost touched. And yet, perhaps she weeps more than she needs to. After all, being a monster is not always about form. Some remain inhuman even while walking on two feet. The ballad has been adapted into music many times, reimagined across a wide spectrum of styles. The Swedish group Garmarna brings a haunting neofolk interpretation, while the German symphonic metal band Haggard transforms it into something between an opera and an elegy, full of sorrow, grandeur, and mythic weight. Other striking renditions include the powerful folk-metal of In Extremo, the aggressive techno-folk remix by Dr. Peacock & D-Frek, and the dark electro-medieval atmosphere of Heimataerde.

Each version reshapes the ancient sorrow into something culturally distinct, yet emotionally universal. Personally, my favourite rendition is the one by Haggard.

“

*“Time can bring you down,
time can bend your knees.
Time can break your heart...”*

”

Some stories hurt because they are not imagined. Tears in Heaven is not wrapped in metaphor or myth; it is a quiet confession of unbearable grief. Written by Eric Clapton after the death of his four-year-old son, Conor, who fell from the 53rd floor of a New York apartment building, the song feels less like a performance and more like breath held between sobs. There is no ornate language, no dramatic build. Just questions, simple, devastating questions:

“Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven?”

The song does not demand answers. It just sits with the ache of not knowing. Clapton’s voice does not cry out; it retreats, careful not to collapse. The guitar gently circles the lyrics, never rushing, as if afraid to disturb the weight of the silence underneath. Unlike the other songs, Tears in Heaven tells no tale of betrayal or folklore or war. It is the story of a man trying to reach across the unreachable, asking whether love can outlive death, and whether we are ever the same after loss. It does not offer hope. It offers honesty.

*“We’ll get together then, son
You know we’ll have a good time then.”*

Some stories do not scream, they whisper over time, until you finally hear them. Cat’s in the Cradle is one of those stories. It begins with a father too busy to play with his son. He promises: *“We’ll get together then.”* But the time never comes.

The lyrics quietly reveal that he is a musician *“There were planes to catch and bills to pay,”* he says, hinting at a life lived on the road, always between shows, always in transit.



While he sings to audiences around the world, the boy at home waits and grows. Time, as it does, moves forward. The son becomes a man, and the roles reverse. Now the father is the one waiting. And his son? He is busy. Just like him. There is no dramatic turning point, no tragedy, no redemption. Only repetition. That is what makes it devastating. The song’s gentle acoustic melody makes it easy to miss the heartbreak. But beneath its calm exterior is a brutal truth about how absence becomes legacy. No one in the story means harm. But good intentions are not enough to stop time. What unfolds is a quiet loop, a generational echo where the son unknowingly becomes the man he once waited for. Cat’s in the Cradle does not shout. It just reflects, and if you have ever said *“maybe later”* to someone who needed you, it stings.

“Cheers darlin’

You gave me three cigarettes to smoke my tears away...”

Some stories do not last long, but they stay with you. Cheers Darlin’ is Damien Rice’s quiet monologue to a memory that barely had time to exist. The story is painfully real: he meets a woman in a bar and falls for her instantly. They talk. They drink. She gives him cigarettes when he runs out. He steals glances at his watch, hoping she will miss her bus, not by chance, but by his doing. Time becomes a silent accomplice, stretched and manipulated in the name of longing. But just when he believes he is winning her over, she tells him her boyfriend is coming to pick her up. The moment dies. She leaves. On the table, she leaves three cigarettes. That is all. Rice takes this moment, fragile, humiliating, human, and pours it into a song that sounds like a drunken confession whispered to an empty room. There is no chorus, no resolution, just the blurred spiral of regret. It is not about what happened. It is about the five or ten minutes where it felt like it could have. Time in Cheers Darlin’ is mercilessly brief, and yet it lingers, in the three cigarettes, in the empty chair, in the sting of pretending not to care. Sometimes, the saddest stories are not the ones that end. They are the ones that never began.

“What am I, darlin’?

I’ve got years to wait around for you.”

Some stories cannot be told in just one song, they need time to unfold. That is what concept albums give us: not isolated emotions, but entire lives unraveling, chapter by chapter.

In The Wall, Pink Floyd builds a slow-burning psychological collapse, where every childhood wound, every silent scream becomes another brick in a fortress of isolation.

Queensrÿche’s Operation: Mindcrime twists time into a maze of manipulation and memory, a man lost in a story he can’t quite escape.

Bowie’s Ziggy Stardust is a cosmic flare: a starman descending to Earth in glam-soaked glory, only to fade as fast as he came.

And then there is The Black Parade, death’s marching band, where a dying man looks back at his life through a theatrical blur of regret, resistance, and release.



In these albums, time is not just a backdrop, it is a character, a force, a reckoning. They do not simply tell stories; they let time breathe through them, and sometimes, fall apart with them.

Pink Floyd – Time

“And you run and you run to catch up with the sun, but it’s sinking.”

Time is rarely the subject of these songs, and yet, it is always there. Ticking quietly in the background of war, love, loss, missed chances, and unsent letters. Sometimes it rushes past us, other times it stalls in a single moment we replay for years. Whether it is a child growing into his father’s shadow, a soldier trapped in his own mind, a troll longing to be human, or a man finishing a glass of wine alone, these songs remind us that time is not just what passes. It is what carries everything we could not hold on to. And maybe that is why a three-minute song can feel like a lifetime.



Existential Anxiety and the Search for a Meaningful Life

by M.Bilal YETER



When we put our head on the pillow to sleep, many questions come to our minds: Am I on the right path? What if I'm not able to reach my potential? How am I supposed to handle everything? Have I really done what I was supposed to do until now? These questions can be annoying from time to time. Since we live only once, we want to make the most of our lives. At the same time, we feel the pressure of being productive, successful, and organized. In this essay, we will look at these questions from a philosophical point of view, understand the roots of existential anxiety, and explore how time management techniques can help us deal with these modern pressures.

The Roots of Existential Anxiety

Most of us feel incomplete from time to time. According to philosopher Martin Heidegger, the human being is never a finished being. We always remain a possibility, a work in progress. This feeling of incompleteness becomes stronger when we think about the past, which is already behind us, and the future, which is uncertain. Heidegger argues that the way to make sense of our existence is to face the reality of our mortality. Our end is a certain truth, and this truth can help us live our lives more consciously and authentically.

According to Søren Kierkegaard, our anxiety comes from our freedom. We are free because we have the right to make choices. However, every choice means giving up other possibilities. This results in the fear of making the wrong decision. But should anxiety stop us? Not at all. On the contrary, anxiety can be a driving force that allows us to understand ourselves better. It shows us that life has many possibilities and that we are responsible for creating meaning.

The Pressures of Success in the Modern World

Today, the fear of not realizing our potential is stronger than ever. Social media constantly shows us what a "successful life" should look like: be more productive, achieve more, and make the most of every moment. This pressure, combined with the limited time we have, creates a feeling of emptiness inside us.

One popular idea that adds to this pressure is the phrase *Carpe Diem*, which means "seize the day." At first, it seems positive—it invites us to enjoy life and live in the moment. But in the modern world, it is often misunderstood. Many people believe it means we must fill every second with action, excitement, or success. This creates a hidden pressure to never slow down or rest. Instead of helping us enjoy life, it can make us feel guilty when we do nothing. In reality, living well does not mean doing everything, but choosing what truly matters. Sometimes, slowing down and saying "no" is the best way to live the moment fully.

To live with this kind of awareness, we need more than motivation—we need structure. This is where time management techniques can help. Rather than pushing us to do more, they offer tools to help us focus on what is essential and align our actions with our values.

Time Management as a Way to Create Meaning

One helpful technique is the Eisenhower Matrix, which helps you separate tasks based on urgency and importance. You divide your to-do list into four categories: important and urgent, important but not urgent, urgent but not important, and neither. This method helps you focus on what truly matters, instead of getting lost in constant busyness.

Another powerful method is the Pomodoro Technique. In this technique, you work in focused time blocks—usually 25 minutes—followed by a 5-minute break. After four sessions, you take a longer break. This keeps your mind fresh, prevents burnout, and increases your ability to concentrate on one task at a time.

A third approach is time blocking, where you divide your day into specific periods and assign tasks to each block. Instead of multitasking, you focus on one activity at a time. This makes your day more organized and helps you see clearly how your time is spent. It also allows time for rest, reflection, and creativity—important elements for a meaningful life.

These techniques may sound simple, but when used consistently, they reduce stress, give structure to your day, and help you feel more in control. Most importantly, they allow you to create time for the things that truly add value to your life—relationships, rest, self-reflection, and meaningful goals.

Existential anxiety is a natural part of human life. It reminds us that we are free, but also responsible for our choices. By understanding this anxiety and learning to live with it, we can discover a deeper meaning in life. Time management techniques are not only for increasing productivity, but also tools to help us live with more intention and balance. Instead of aiming for perfection, we should strive for honesty with ourselves and awareness in our daily lives. In this way, we can turn our worries into strength and live a more meaningful life.





Of Stones and Syllables: The Shifting Names of a City

by Hilal ÇAVUŞ



Trabzon is an intriguing city with a rich history and art culture. Permanently or not, living in this city opens a door to its heritage. As we dive into the culture of earlier times, one of the prominent things to discover is surely the words and the language.

Starting with the city's name, it is clean and clipped in modern Turkish: Trabzon. But behind that word lie centuries of echoes, like water running through stone. In Greek, it was Trapezous, which means "table," perhaps about the flat promontory where the first settlers built their acropolis. The Romans later called it Trebizond. The Ottomans made it Tarabzon for a time. Names shifted, as they always do, with empires, languages, and mouths. But each version left a trace, like a footprint fading in wet sand. The root trapeza (τράπεζα), Greek for "table," holds both the literal and the symbolic meanings: surface, offering, and foundation. But there are older layers still. Scholars like Bilge Umar suggest that the word may have returned to the Luwian or Hittite languages long before the Greeks. o, the city's name is a fossil of sounds once spoken by people whose temples, tools, and prayers are lost but

whose syllables survive in disguise. And what of Pontos, the ancient name of the sea that Trabzon faces? In Greek, it means "sea," yes, but also, more poetically, a path. It shares a root with pontis (bridge), panthan (way), and even pontifex (bridge-builder). Here, the sea was not a wall but a road, a passage between worlds. The Pontic Greeks who lived here for centuries knew the Black Sea not as periphery, but as center, as story.

Wander through the city's older neighbourhoods and you'll find more names half-buried in concrete. Çömlekçi, once called Dafnounda, comes from daphnous, the laurel tree sacred to Apollo. Now it means "the place of the potters." Trade replaced myth. Another district, Ganita, was once a seaside garden of lovers, students, and poets. The word's origin is uncertain—maybe from Kanita, or Gamita, a name for concave coves. Today, the highway slices it off from the sea like a wound. Up the hill lies Boztepe, literally "gray hill" in Turkish. But it was once Mount Mithras, sacred to the Persian sun god, worshipped in secret by Roman soldiers and mystics. Later came Christian monks who built the Panagia Theoskepastos Monastery on the same site



slope. The god changed, the prayers changed, but the hill remained holy. Such is Trabzon: a city where the sacred doesn't disappear, it just changes clothes.

The names are more than words. They are memory maps. To rename a place is to claim it, to rewrite it, or to forget it. And forgetting is easier than we think.

The city's modern face, with its concrete avenues, erased neighbourhoods, and sea-blocking highways, sometimes turns its back on its past. The coastal road built in the late 20th century buried much of Ganita under asphalt. Few remember now that this was once where letters were read aloud under plane trees, or where poets once walked to find metaphors in the waves. And yet, the city resists silence. The stones remember. Roman harbour walls lie hidden beneath shops. The medieval fortress still hugs the ridge above the town. A Byzantine bridge, now called Zağnos Köprüsü, bears the name of an Ottoman vizier but likely rests on older Roman piers.

Hagia Sophia stands not just as a monument but as a rebuke to forgetfulness. Its frescoes are weathered but intact, and its dome echoes with ghosts. Even literature returns here. Xenophon mentioned Trapezous in *Anabasis*, where Greek mercenaries arrived in sight of the sea and shouted "Thalassa! Thalassa!" The sea saved them, as Trabzon always has been a harbor.

To study Trabzon's names is to trace a story not just of geography, but of time. Each name, like Ganita, Dafnounda, Mithra Oros, Trapezous, carries a way of seeing. To speak them aloud is to remember that the past still breathes beneath the city's stones. And to forget them is not only to lose a word, but to sever a thread in the great web of cultural memory. We live in an era of speed and simplification, where names are often treated as disposable. But in a place like Trabzon, where language, myth, and stone once grew together, every forgotten name is a small tragedy. The study of toponymy becomes an act of restoration, a way of placing the self in a longer continuum of life, voices, and visions.

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“The future is something which everyone reaches at the rate of 60 minutes an hour, whatever he does, whoever he is.”

- C. S. Lewis



Chasing the Clock

Losing the Moment

by Yaren ERGENÇ

Time is a beast — a silent predator that never stops chasing. It hunts us, stalks us, and consumes us whole. We see it slipping away in moments, in the ticking of the clock, in the fading of days, yet we rarely acknowledge its true cruelty. We are entrapped, locked in its relentless cycle, and even when we think we are free, even when we think we have a moment of break, time is there, breathing down our necks, always present, always taking.


I remember the moments before time realized its grip on me. Those were the days when I believed I could escape, when I thought I could outrun it, turn the corner and leave it behind. But time is inevitable. It finds its way into every gap, every crack, until it dominates every aspect of your life. It is not a steady river to float on, but a relentless current, pushing you forward whether you want to move or not. It is like standing under a storm, where each drop of rain is sharp, cold, and piercing, relentlessly driving you toward the inevitable end.

It begins slowly, almost invisibly. In the beginning, you think you have plenty of time. You waste it, throw it away in petty distractions and meaningless pursuits, convinced that you can always catch up later. But time does not wait for you. It does not care about your plans or your desires.

As time moves on, it starts to show its true face. At first, it is the little things—the missed opportunities, the things you thought you would have forever but are gone in an instant. But then it grows louder, more demanding. Your body starts to remind you that you are not as young as you used to be, that the choices you made in your youth are now haunting you. Your hands shake as you try to hold on, but time slips through your fingers like sand. The dreams you had, the ambitions you nurtured, are buried under the weight of reality. It is too late. You are too late. And time knows it. Time always knows. It is a tragic comedy, is it not? This endless dance of striving and failing, of hoping and accepting that, no matter what, time does not care.

But then, there is the moment. The moment when you realize you have been playing a game that was never meant to be won. A game where the rules are made up as it goes along, and the stakes are always changing. There is something darkly amusing in that, is there not?





Here you are, trying to outsmart something that does not need to outsmart you. Time is not here to play by your rules. It just laughs as you scramble to catch up. And, maybe, just maybe, it is not really as cruel as you thought. Perhaps it is just indifferent. Indifferent, like the vastness of the sky above you, or the relentless sea beneath you—there, but not really there in the way you want it to be.

And yet, here is the punchline: you still try. You try to make up for lost time, to redeem yourself in the eyes of the clock that keeps ticking on. You lose, yes, but time gives you no other choice. It is a cruel joke, really, but it is the only joke in town. So, you smile, a weary, resigned smile, and move forward. Because the joke is, no matter how much you lose, no matter how many times you fall short, you are still in the game. So, you keep going, even as the weight of time presses on your chest. You keep playing, even though the rules are never clear, and the finish line always seems further than you thought.

In the end, maybe the only victory you can claim is the act of continuing. To keep moving forward, even when it feels like you are walking against an unstoppable flow. Because time may be the greatest force you will ever face, but it has not won until you stop fighting. Time may chase you relentlessly, but it is when you stop running that you truly lose the moment. Time does not stop, does not slow, but still, you try to fill every second, trying to make it count. You chase, you strive, and sometimes, you even succeed—but only for a moment. It is fleeting, and that is the point. As long as you are still in the game, as long as you are still breathing, there is always a chance to keep going. Perhaps that is what time really is: not a villain, but a relentless reminder that you are alive, and as long as you are, the game is not over.

Time Perception Psychology Test

by Ayşegül KASAP

How do you perceive time? Take this test to discover your relationship with time. Choose the answer that resonates with you the most, and at the end, find out which time personality best describes you.

1. How would you describe time?

- A) Like a river that never stops flowing—there's no way to control it.
- B) Like a journey where one event naturally leads to another.
- C) Just an illusion—the only thing that truly exists is the present moment.

2. How do you feel about the passage of time?

- A) Time flies, and I can never seem to catch up.
- B) Sometimes it drags, sometimes it rushes by—it depends on the moment.
- C) I don't really think about it; I just go with the flow.

3. What does the past mean to you?

- A) A book full of lessons—every mistake has taught me something valuable.
- B) A map that guides me forward, but I don't dwell on it.
- C) A distant memory that fades away—what matters is the here and now.

4. How do you feel about the future?

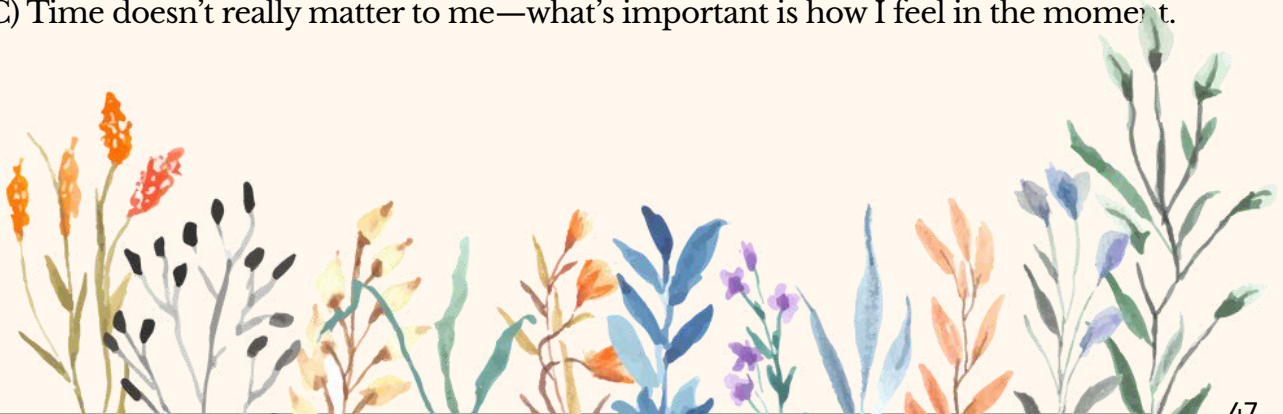
- A) The future makes me anxious—I never know what's coming next.
- B) It's a mystery, but an exciting one—I look forward to discovering it.
- C) I don't think too much about it; I focus on the present.

5. How do you manage your time?

- A) I plan everything carefully and make the most of every moment.
- B) I like to keep things balanced—sometimes I plan, sometimes I go with the flow.
- C) I don't stress about time; I just take things as they come.

6. What's your take on the value of time?

- A) Time is priceless—I should make the most of every second.
- B) Time has a different meaning every day—some days are for action, others for rest.
- C) Time doesn't really matter to me—what's important is how I feel in the moment.



7. How do you feel at the end of the day?

- A) Exhausted but satisfied—I've made good use of my time.
- B) Content but unsure—I'm not always sure how much I've accomplished.
- C) Peaceful and relaxed—I simply enjoyed the day as it came.

8. If you had to make an important decision, how would you go about it?

- A) I'd reflect on past experiences and use them to shape my future.
- B) I wouldn't overthink the past—I'd focus on where I want to go.
- C) I'd trust my instincts and make a choice based on how I feel in the moment.

9. How do you feel when you look at a clock?

- A) It reminds me of what I need to do next.
- B) It helps me stay aware, but I don't obsess over it.
- C) I rarely check the time unless I have to.

10. When you have free time, what do you do?

- A) I use it productively—there's always something to accomplish.
- B) I do whatever feels right at the moment, sometimes productive, sometimes relaxing.
- C) I relax and enjoy the downtime without worrying about being productive.

● Mostly A's: The Time Controller

You perceive time as a structured entity—something that needs to be managed, optimised, and used efficiently. Your strong sense of responsibility pushes you to stay on top of your schedule, constantly striving for productivity and progress. However, this control-oriented mindset can sometimes lead to anxiety when things don't go as planned. You may feel uneasy when time slips through your fingers or when unexpected changes disrupt your routine. While your discipline is a strength, learning to embrace spontaneity and allow yourself moments of stillness could bring a deeper sense of fulfilment.

● Mostly B's: The Time Explorer

You see time as a fluid journey, moving between planning and spontaneity. You embrace change, knowing that some moments require patience while others demand action. Your ability to adapt allows you to navigate life's uncertainties without feeling overwhelmed. However, this openness to the ebb and flow of time can sometimes lead to indecisiveness or a lack of clear direction. While you appreciate the beauty of unpredictability, finding a balance between structure and spontaneity might help you feel more grounded in your long-term goals.

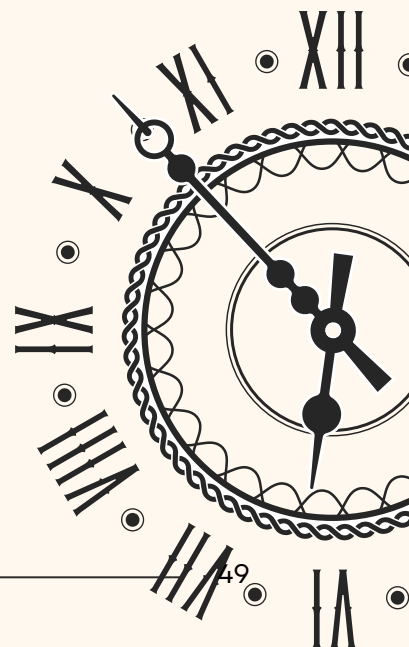
● Mostly C's: The Time Philosopher

For you, time is not something to be controlled or chased—it simply exists, and you move with it rather than against it. You live in the present, prioritising experience over efficiency, and find peace in letting life unfold naturally. However, this deep appreciation for the moment may sometimes lead to detachment from future concerns or missed opportunities for growth. While your mindfulness brings a unique sense of contentment, integrating a small degree of foresight and planning could help you make the most of what lies ahead without losing your sense of presence.



The Reader, the Regressor, and the Plagiarist: Unassembling Time in ORV

by Dursun Can GÜLER



Time is usually a quiet architect of sorts — crafting, ordering, and holding at bay narrative maelstroms. Yet, with Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint (ORV), time is no such thing. It's torn apart, rewritten, looped, and armed. Rather than a linear unfoldment, time within ORV is a character unto itself: tenuous and definite, at a distance and insistently recursive. What starts as a nominally traditional survival story quickly becomes a labyrinth of metafiction where past, present, and future break beneath the pressure of narrative omniscience. Within this realm, time is no longer a vessel for story — it is the story.

First published as a web novel on Munpia back in 2018, Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint takes an odd premise for a start: imagine being the only individual who reads the end of the world. ORV tells the story of a single office worker who finds himself within the novel he spent years reading, *Three Ways to Survive the Apocalypse*. When the original protagonist has died and the story is unfolding unpredictably, he has to cope with a world influenced by fiction and a fiction warped by memory.

At its core, ORV is a survival story but also a richly layered exploration of narration, reader control, and time. The story is not told from the perspective of the protagonist, Kim Dokja, who is not the usual hero but the reader of the story itself. However, through a series of metafictional turns, he is inserted at the centre of the story, where he wields knowledge of what is to come and changes it simultaneously. With a cast of richly human and mythologically evocative characters — from the sword-slashing Yoo Joonghyuk to the mysterious constellation system — ORV dissolves the barriers of reader and character, author and actor, past and present.

In ORV, memory is not a passive repository of the past but an active force that creates the future. For Kim Dokja, remembering is not a matter of recollection but a form of time navigation. As the only reader of the complete novel *Three Ways to Survive the Apocalypse*, memories of the novel create a paradoxical relationship with time: he is both ahead of the story and within the story. Kim Dokja remembers not just what happened — he knows what will happen next. His movements are guided by a timeline that has not yet occurred for anyone else, rendering him a temporal anomaly. This privileged position destabilises the narrative flow of time. The protagonist usually propels the plot forward in most novels. But in ORV, the protagonist is burdened with a plot that has already occurred, and still unfolds differently for each choice he makes.

This dualism makes memory become prophecy. Everything Dokja knows, however, is always a step behind what really happens. Any departure from the original path of the novel questions the authority of memory, compelling Dokja (and the reader) to wonder whether the future is determinate or malleable. This way, the narrative establishes a tension between textual determinacy and temporal reconstruction — about what is supposed to happen and what could happen.

In that way, Kim Dokja is not only a character within time but a vessel for narrative temporality itself. His experience is conditioned by a “reader's time” — recursive, layered, and nonlinear. He is the embodiment of the postmodern condition of reading: memory no longer safeguards the past, but repeatedly rewrites it at the back of anticipated future moments.

In ORV, the apocalypse is not so much a tragedy — it is a spectacle.

Dokkaebis, goblin-like spirits, orchestrate this spectacle as they run a grand interdimensional broadcast network, streaming humanity's trials of survival as a cosmic form of entertainment for a multitude of spectators called "constellations." These dokkaebis are certainly no objective witnesses: they run a huge interdimensional broadcast network, streaming trials of humanity as a form of cosmic entertainment for a pantheon of spectators called "constellations."

These viewers — divine, mythological, or legendary figures within countless cultural histories — grant power to their favoured survivors, turning life on Earth into a gladiatorial spectacle. The dokkaebi broadcast network is constructed on a currency of drama, peaks of emotion, and loops of story. The higher the stakes, the brasher the "story," the higher the views — and the more kinetic the constellation receives. In this regime, time is no longer natural or neutral. Time is transformed into a highly edited highlight reel, peppered with a series of climaxes, repetition, and live manipulation. Briefly: time becomes a performance.

In contrast to the linear, constant flow of time for most fiction, time within the dokkaebi broadcast network is fractured, performative, and recursive. The moments are amplified or suspended based on their dramatic worth. Climaxes are dragged out for longer periods, failures are endlessly looped back, and triumphs revisited — a matter of keeping the audience engaged. It makes time itself a looped spectacle, where repetition is used both as a method of narrative control and psychological pressure.

Characters are not just progressing through time — they are compelled to repeat it. Fear, regret, and triumph become commodities, packaged as moments for consumption on behalf of a hidden population. The dokkaebis, both directors and trickster figures, manipulate that flow for optimum entertainment purposes. Time thus conforms to the beats of viewing instead of the laws of nature.

This constructed temporality makes every "scene" a performative action, where the present is constantly being watched and the future is being rewritten for higher ratings. Thus, ORV not only critiques the form of the narrative of serial fiction but also the culture of modern streaming, reality television, and spectacle-based media as a whole. Time is not lived, it is curated.

At the centre of ORV is a constant cycle: life, death, and repetition. It is never embodied so much as it is in Yoo Joonghyuk, the original main character of *Three Ways to Survive the Apocalypse*, who is cursed with repeating the same apocalyptic cycle through many regressions. Each cycle — each "regression" — is a desperate attempt to alter the result, to achieve an unattainable "perfect ending," even as the world is reset for him. This reincarnational story is parallel to the philosophical theory of eternal return, most famously expounded by Friedrich Nietzsche. Here, time is cyclical, not linear — what has already occurred will occur again, infinitely. In ORV, it is not just an abstracted notion: the past is not past but returns, asserts itself, and refuses to be extinguished.

But rather than a cycle of renewal or enlightenment, ORV's cycle is a prison and a weight. Yoo Joonghyuk's memories of previous failures serve him no purpose but as sources of trauma, and not as wisdom gained from experience. His repetition is not enlightenment — it is narrative fatigue. The more he recycles, the farther apart he strays from a cohesive sense of self. Time, then, becomes a circular script — and he, a weary thespian compelled to recite perforce for a divine and impassive audience.

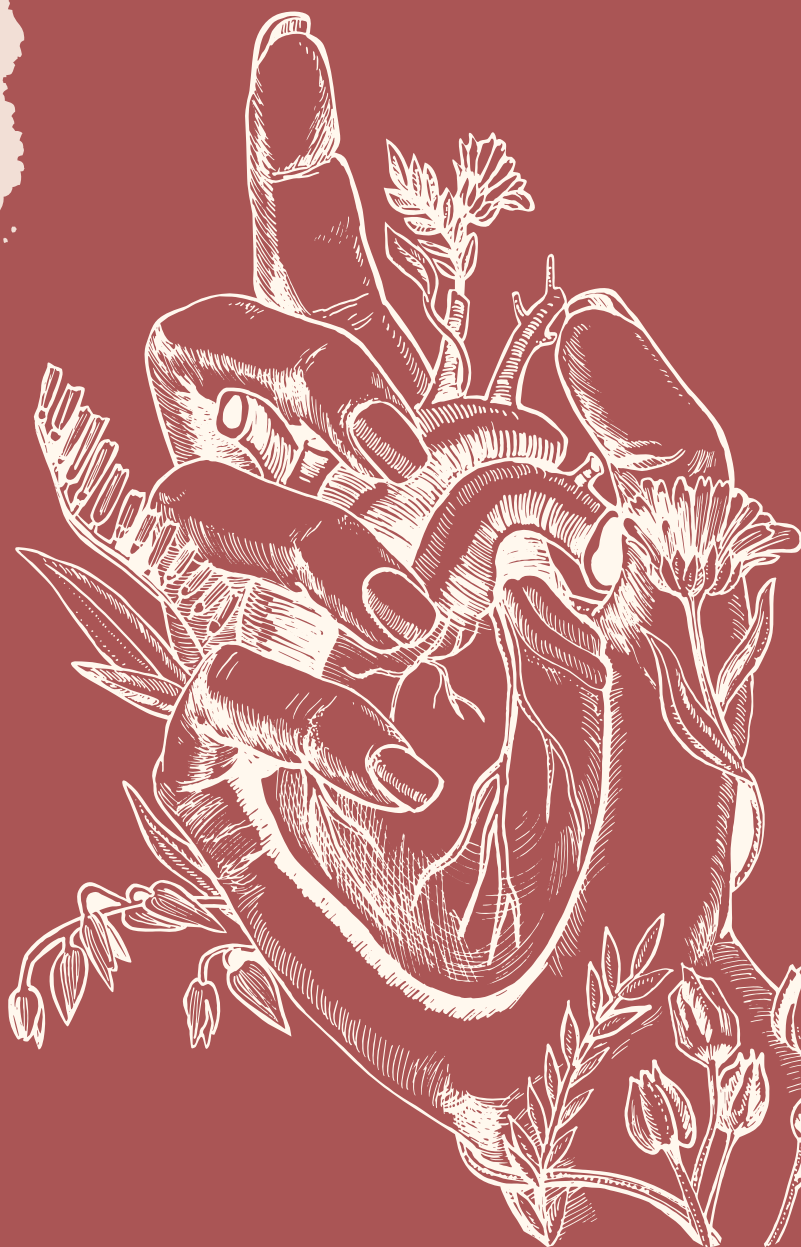
And by reliving the looped temporality, ORV questions whether or not genuine change is possible within a predestined narrative. Is liberation found by escaping the cycle — or by being conscious of it? The solution, the novel proposes, may exist not within the regressor but within the reader who dares to write a new story. To be omniscient is to know everything. But in ORV, knowing everything does not equate to controlling anything.

Kim Dokja, by virtue of being the sole reader of the original novel, enters the new world with what appears to be complete knowledge: every plot twist, every character arc, every death. He is, in theory, omniscient. But time — real time, lived time — has no intention of obeying that knowledge. As soon as the story begins to deviate from its “original” course, Dokja’s omniscience begins to unravel. What he knows becomes uncertain. The text he once consumed becomes unpredictable. His knowledge, once absolute, is rendered temporally obsolete — outdated the moment events shift. He reads a future that is no longer guaranteed. This is the paradox at the heart of ORV: the tension between omniscience (knowing the narrative) and temporality (experiencing it). Dokja may remember how the world ends, but he cannot live it the same way twice. His attempts to alter fate — to save characters who were supposed to die, to forge new alliances — only deepen this conflict. The more he tries to step outside the narrative’s bounds, the more he realises that knowledge is not power if time refuses to cooperate.

In so doing, ORV subverts the god-like character of the all-seeing narrator. Dokja is not a deity, but a reader — and reading, the novel intimates, is not an activity of passively receiving truth, but an activity of actively negotiating time, with change, with the unknown. Omniscience, rather than being liberty, is a burden, a tenuous map for a world whose geography is still being drawn.

In ORV, time is not a background. Time is the battlefield. On the novel’s sweeping expanse of collapsing chronos, rewritten destinies, and shattered identities, time is not a passive flow but a dynamic force — a shaper, a resister, a destabiliser of each attempt at control. Be it Kim Dokja, the reader who had seen too much but could not arrest time; Yoo Joonghyuk, the regressor who has no choice but to be stuck in the cycle of return; or Han Sooyoung, the so-called plagiarist who writes from memory rather than creation and yet manipulates narrative and fate with the same strength — each character is a variation on a resistance to the dictatorship of linear time.

What ORV reveals at its core is that stories are not linear. They are resistant to anticipation. They fragment, loop back, deviate — just like time itself. Memory, knowledge, and narration become tenuous within this explosive building block. To read, in ORV, is not to watch from a vantage point but to enter a loop of recurrence, where reading changes the story, and the story, in turn, recasts the reader. By collapsing chronos, ORV creates a new form of storytelling — one that approaches time not as a vessel, but as a living text. And maybe that is its most provocative proposal: that fiction, like time, is never fixed — it is read, rewritten, and reborn with each look that dares keep it company till the end... and a step further.



THE SUBSTANCE

DEMI MOORE



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

MARGARET QUALLEY



© Tuğçe ÇEVİK



by Selin ÖZGÜL

Fear of Ageing: A Review of The Substance

– SPOILER ALERT! –

“What has been used on one side, is lost on the other side. There’s no going back.”

- The Substance, 2024

Everything and everyone around you changes — thoughts, trends, architectural styles, physical appearances, fashion, and so much more. Even your favourite colour might change over time. Yet the one thing that remains constant is time itself. Humanity's ongoing inability to fully understand or grasp the essence of time has only made it more fascinating. Throughout history, the theme of time has often taken centre stage in the content we create (and consume).

Starring Demi Moore and Margaret Qualley, *The Substance* was one of the most talked-about films of 2024, drawing attention with its memorable lines, iconic dance scene, and powerful performances. However, what made the film even more striking was its bold choice of subject matter: Time and Fear of Ageing.

The film's main character, Elisabeth Sparkle — once one of the brightest stars of her time — has now faded from the public eye, deemed "too old" for the ever-changing television industry. No longer feeling beautiful in a world obsessed with youth, Elisabeth's sense of self begins to unravel.

One day, she receives a mysterious card from a hospital worker. On the card are the promises of the substance — a product that claims, in the most literal sense, to make you younger, more beautiful, and more perfect than ever before. Elisabeth, desperate and captivated, finds herself drawn into its seductive allure. That was the moment when Elisabeth, now the victim, stepped into the cage.

Following Elisabeth's use of the substance, Sue appears from a precise split that runs along the centre of Elisabeth's back. In the film's terms, her younger, more beautiful, and more perfect version has now been created. With the confidence that comes from her youth and inexperience, Sue has captured the attention of the television world, and no one remembers Elisabeth anymore.

But there is one rule that must be followed in the movie: you must respect the balance of time. You are only allowed to remain in the body for a maximum of seven days. If you exceed this limit, you begin to consume yourself from within. At a certain point, Elisabeth stops trying to prevent Sue from breaking the time rule and destroying herself. Even when she has the chance to kill her and end the experiment, she hesitates—because returning to her former, “older” body is far more terrifying. Yet, you can neither reclaim lost time nor reject the body you no longer appreciate.



This decision and cruel transformation serve as a significant critique of the movie's central theme: the fear of growing older and Elisabeth's inner struggle. Ageing is portrayed as an unnatural process — something to be reversed — and the greatest threat, especially for women, which drives Elisabeth to reclaim her beauty and youth. To me, the creation of Sue symbolises the slough of despond — the regret that comes with ageing and the desperate escape from time. Through this, the movie poses the question: *What does the attempt to escape time truly cost, according to The Substance?*

The answer is ultimately clear: Elisabeth pays the price for attempting to outrun time and resist its inevitability. Every stage of life carries its own unique beauty, something no one can truly deny. Embracing yourself and valuing the traces time leaves on your body and soul allows you to remain youthful in spirit, regardless of age. When you try to reverse the smile lines around your eyes and the marks that reflect your life's journey, you not only lose the personality you once had but also the chance to fully appreciate who you are now — and who you are still becoming.

Of course, we cannot blame Elisabeth simply for wanting to be young again. What drives her into this fear, what pushes her to reject her own body instead of accepting it, are the cruel comments and judgments she faces — especially from the producers at the heart of the film industry, who make her feel that ageing means becoming ugly, irrelevant, and replaceable. In this sense, *The Substance* also lays bare the ruthless nature of Hollywood, exposing how the industry plays a central role in her downfall.

In the end, *The Substance* ends with the idea that ageing is not the enemy — it is part of nature itself. It shows that time and ageing can neither be changed nor stopped. The disastrous outcome of the relentless and unrealistic desire for eternal youth proves that the film has precisely reached the core of what it intends to convey. In this way, *The Substance* becomes more than a body horror film — it becomes a melancholic and heartbreaking portrait of a woman in despair.



**HAVE YOU
EVER
DREAMT OF
A BETTER
VERSION OF
YOURSELF?**



Filling the Gap

A Personal Story

by Lara Su YAMAN (Guest)



You are young. Corporate seems scary. Your time at the university feels expired.

What do you do?

This is how I decided to take a gap year and dedicate a year of my life to finding myself, helping others, learning a new culture and a language. Most importantly, having countless invaluable experiences.

Even though METU was a dream place to be during my Bachelor's, I felt overwhelmed by the same environment at the end of my studies. I imagined myself in a loop of being with the same people, going to the same classes, and doing the same activities. It was as if I was drawing circles in the Devrim Stadium each night and could not take it for two more years. Nothing new, everything is all used up. After countless meetings with my dearest hocam Buket Doğan and endless love and support of my family, I came to the conclusion that giving a break for a year before my Master's Degree would be the best decision I could make. I dreamed of all the possible outcomes of just focusing on myself: adapting to a stress-free culture, learning new languages, and maybe seeing my old friends again.

Honestly, this turned out to be the best thing I had ever done. But, why Lithuania? With its 2.8 million people, you probably did not know it even existed. Well, it took a bit of planning, setting some boundaries, and then letting fate decide.

I came to Lithuania for the first time in 2019 for an Erasmus+ project my retired English teacher Mr. Oktay Kuru organized. I fell in love with its astonishing nature, friendly people and lifestyle! I formed great friendships and always knew I would return to that place.

When it was time to decide on a volunteering project and its location, Lithuania lingered in my brain for so long. I wanted quiet and peace after juggling my tasks and handling my life at METU for years, even though it was highly rewarding.

Keep up the grades

Get the praise

Did you see this amazing play?

End the night in the library

Don't forget the gym next week

Let's rent a car then eat

Vultures claim to be my friends

Oh no, my life is going to end

How many days till the weekend?

Relax girl, you're probably just too exhausted.

Now that you had a sneak peek of what my life looked like in METU, you probably understand why I wanted to go to a place with very few residents, full of natural beauty and peace. Internal peace.

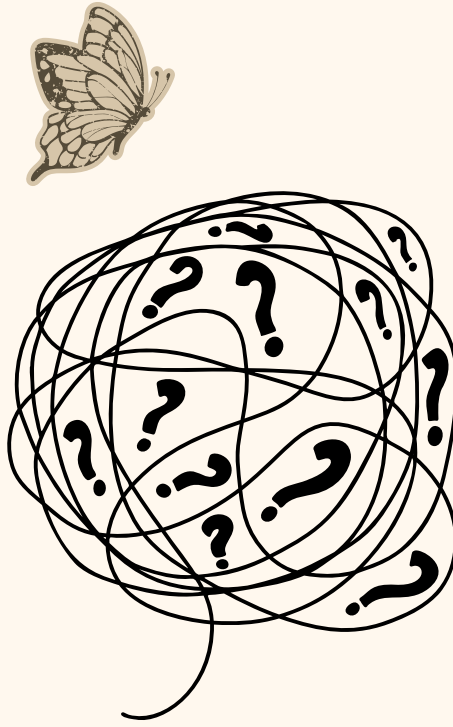
After creating a list of what I could offer and what I would like to receive, my choices were down to five projects in four different countries: Austria, Poland, Romania, and Lithuania. Although I got accepted for every project I applied for, only Lithuania offered everything I would have liked to have. A private dorm room and bathroom, food in the kindergarten, nature, and calmness. This drastic change did not seem so scary as I knew how my tutor and mentor cared for me, and I already had friends there. They were six hours away from me, but still, their existence felt good.

That is how I came to Skuodas to spend a year. A small village on the border of Latvia with only 5 thousand residents. We have a huge park, two kindergartens, an art school, a culture center, a church and everything else that a city needs to have. I got accustomed to the area pretty quickly, as everything was within walking distance and the city center was easy to find.



I took longer to adapt to the kindergarten than I did to Lithuania. Before my weekly schedule was organized by my tutor and director, I spent the first two visiting a different classroom each weekday, observing the kids, helping the teachers, and getting accustomed to the atmosphere. Now, I spend my weekdays in the kindergarten as I have 2 classes each day to teach English. The class sizes and ages vary, ranging from three-year-olds to seven-year-olds with around fifteen to twenty children in each class. It needed to take such a short time to feel that bond between me and the kids, as they are made purely of love.

Another advantage of working in a kindergarten apart from being surrounded by a cloud of love is the food. If you are a foodie like me, you will prioritize your nutrition while choosing a project. Mine was a calculated one, as there must have been food for the kids; thus, also for me.



Thanks to our amazing cooks, I have the chance to taste delicious homemade meals during the lunch breaks. Apart from my lunch which costs €1.5, I can also afford anything that my heart desires in the supermarket thanks to my €320 volunteer wage.

How about traveling? Of course, one cannot stay in Skuodas for too long as it is so easy to use up the activities here. I mostly travel at the weekends, and sometimes use my two free days a month to make my holidays a bit longer.

I have visited places such as Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, and Palanga countless times. The charm is that you can always find something new to allure you no matter how often you visit a place in Lithuania! I still have a huge "to-go" list I want to complete before the end of my project. In addition, thanks to its location, I can always find cheap Ryanair tickets to travel in Europe!

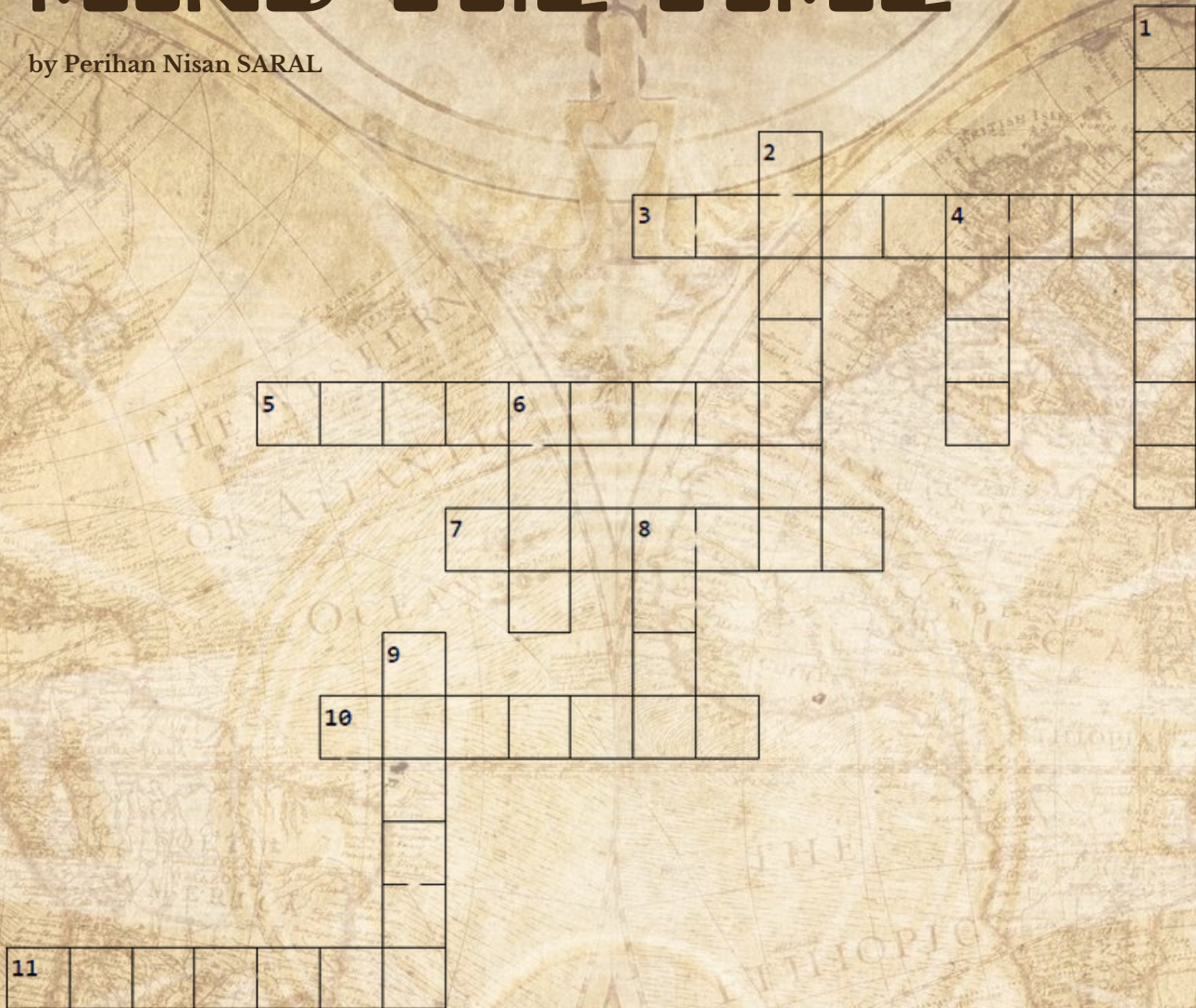
Once, I found a ticket to Berlin that matched my free day and made a fun day trip. The only disadvantage is that Skuodas is the farthest place from the main big cities, meaning Vilnius or Kaunas. So, I get myself prepared for the four-and-a-half hour trip to Kaunas and a six-hour trip to Vilnius if I want to travel there.

All in all, I make sure to be thankful for my time here every day I wake up, and while walking through the majestic park to the kindergarten. I have met amazing people here who made my life even more beautiful. I could not even imagine I would be taking accordion classes from lovely Daiva before I came here! I could not have imagined receiving gifts from the teachers because "I improved my Lithuanian" or children running up to me in a supermarket to hug me. Now I have walls full of drawings by children, drawers full of gifts from the teachers, and a heart full of love for Lithuania.



MIND THE TIME

by Perihan Nisan SARAL



Down

1. Sci-fi term for a hypothetical portal through time (two words).
2. Virginia Woolf's novel where the protagonist lives across centuries and shifts gender identity.
4. German Netflix series centered on time travel and family secrets.
6. The opposite of "future."
8. TV series famous for its island, time loops, and "We have to go back!"
9. Greek term for the opportune, qualitative moment of time.

Across

3. Latin phrase for "seize the day."
5. Christopher Nolan movie about dream layers and time perception.
7. The poet of *The Waste Land*, exploring spiritual desolation and cycles of time.
10. Shakespeare's play where "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" reflects on time.
11. Writer of *The Time Machine*, considered the father of science fiction.

Cologne: A City to Remember in Spring

by Aleyna TAŞTEKİN

Even the most familiar places can sometimes feel unknown. Yet, as you open your heart to exploration, you discover that the journey waiting for you is far more beautiful than you had imagined. It's the little moments — the sunsets, the bustling streets, the multicultural spirit of its people — that weave true happiness. And noticing them? That's the real magic.

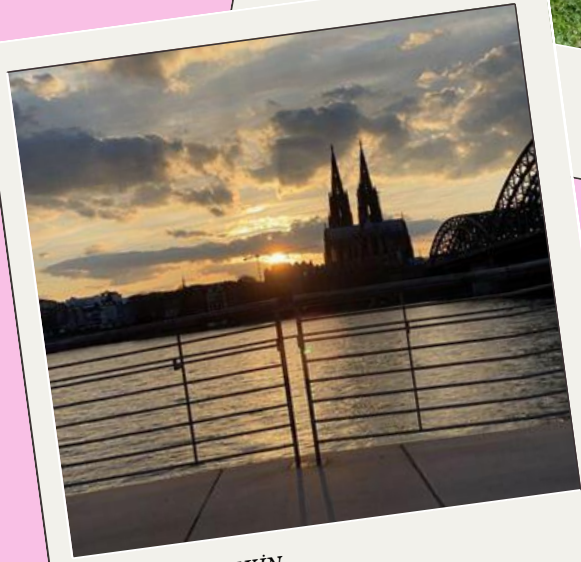
Cologne has always been close to my heart, as it holds many childhood memories — after all, it's the city where I was born. But somehow, rediscovering it in the bloom of spring made me see it with completely new eyes. One evening, I clearly remember standing by the riverbank with my loved ones, watching the sun set behind the mesmerising Cologne Cathedral — or, as it's called in German, the Kölner Dom. For a brief moment, everything felt eternal as the sky was painted in shades of pink and gold. It's the kind of memory that lingers and makes you want to return long after you've left.

During my visit, I discovered that Cologne is more than just its famous landmarks — though believe me, the Dom deserves every bit of its fame. Strolling along the Hohenzollern Bridge, I was fascinated by the thousands of love locks sparkling under the sunlight. I even caught myself wondering if the bridge ever feels too heavy — might it collapse under the weight of all those wishes and promises?

If you ever find yourself in Cologne in spring, here are a few places you shouldn't miss:



© Aleyna TAŞTEKİN



© Aleyna TAŞTEKİN

Cologne Cathedral (Kölner Dom): Even if you've seen it in pictures, nothing prepares you for how breathtaking it is in person. Climb the tower if you can — the view over the blooming city is worth every step.

Hohenzollern Bridge: Leave a love lock to immortalise your relationship, or simply enjoy the sight of the thousands already there. The bridge feels especially magical at sunset.

Cologne Zoo (Kölner Zoo): One of the oldest and most beautiful zoos in Germany. In spring, the gardens surrounding the enclosures bloom into life, making it a perfect visit for both animal lovers and anyone looking for a cheerful day outdoors.

Botanical Gardens (Flora Köln): If spring had a physical form, it would be this place — a breathtaking explosion of colourful flowers and plants that uplift both your eyes and your spirit.

Hohe Straße: One of Cologne's oldest and most famous shopping streets. This street could be compared to the well-known "*Uzun Sokak*" in Trabzon. Walking down Hohe Straße in spring feels lively and energetic, with both quirky and talented street musicians, different types of cafés, and endless shopping alternatives bringing the street to life.

Belgian Quarter (Belgisches Viertel): If you want to feel the heartbeat of the city, this is the neighbourhood to explore. Trendy cafés, local shops, and vibrant street art — a perfect place to wander without a plan.

Of course, sometimes the most memorable experiences come from simply wandering with a camera in hand and letting Cologne surprise you. Cologne in spring serves as a reminder that every ending holds the possibility of a new beginning. If you ever travel there, I hope you find your own timeless moment beneath its golden skies.



A Poem of Two Cities: Prague and Vienna

by Hilal ÇAVUŞ





In the heart of Central Europe, two cities stole hearts with their fascinating dual atmospheres and histories. One is Prague, the city of spires, with its well-preserved medieval and Gothic architecture. The other is the capital of music, Vienna. Their impressive sights and rich culture are worth experiencing. Many creative minds down through the centuries have found moments of inspiration in the labyrinthine streets of Prague's Lesser Town and the grand boulevards of Vienna's Ringstrasse.

After all, these two cities have a magical connection like two contrasting sides of Europe. The medieval and dark charm of Prague and the sophisticated and shining atmosphere of Vienna create a harmony of opposites. The harmony and tension between these two European cities echo not only a geographical contrast but a profound philosophical dialogue between darkness and light, chaos and order, body and soul. They reflect two fundamental forces in the human condition: the Dionysian and the Apollonian.

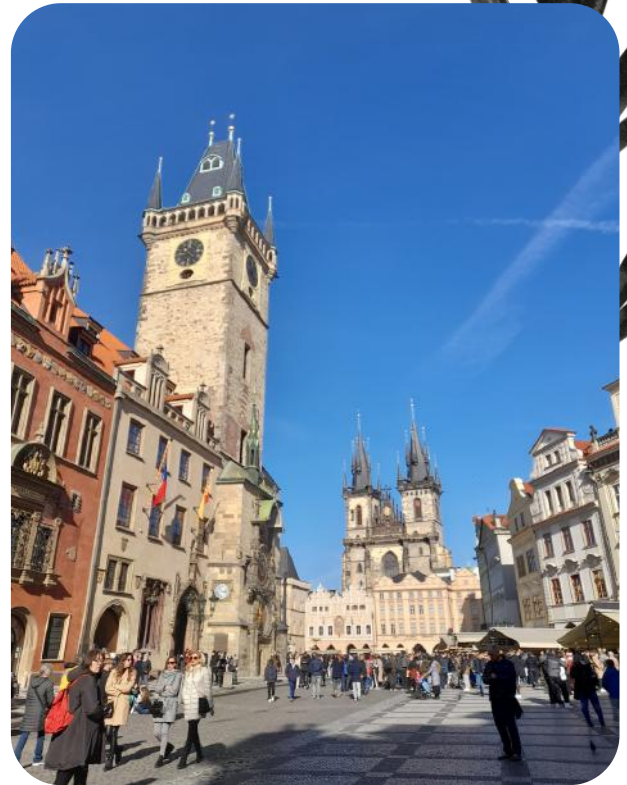
Following Nietzsche's vision in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the Dionysian embodies the chaotic, instinctual, and emotional energies of existence, while the Apollonian stands for clarity, harmony, and rational form. In this light, Prague becomes a Dionysian city: mysterious, symbolic, shadowed by history and dreams. Vienna, by contrast, emerges as the Apollonian: bright, orderly, sculpted by music, architecture, and reason.



Prague: A Medieval Fairytale

Surrounded by Gothic and high baroque architecture, Prague is like a Bohemian heaven. This city amazes those who walk through its streets, coming across fascinating structures in every corner. Between this clash of flying buttresses, castles, towers and lancet windows, there are underground stories. Prague has a medieval atmosphere even when the sun is up. The Czech people's love for drinking, the live streets at night, rising spires, ghost stories and the literary figures like Kafka or Neruda reminded me of Dionysos.

The city finds itself at night. It is like the spirits of Vltava fly around the Charles Bridge or the echoes of ancient footsteps whisper from the alleys of Malá Strana. Romantic and picturesque, ideal for leisurely exploration and photography. Its timeless streets invite you to uncover fantastic secrets. Each shadowed corner holds a myth, each lantern-lit path a verse in a forgotten poem.



Vienna: A Concerto of Elegance



Turning our gaze towards Vienna, we find an imperial capital that blends grandeur with sophistication. As the classical music capital, home to Mozart, Beethoven, and Strauss, this city offers a bright and elite experience. It's a city where the arts thrive in concert halls, museums, and historic streets. Hofburg, Schonbrunn and Belvedere Palace are enough to show their magical, Disney-like atmosphere.

There's a quiet pride in its elegance, a timeless rhythm that pulses beneath the polished surface. Vienna's perfectly structured streets and musical environments resemble the order of Apollo. Every experience feels curated and intentional, which makes the city very appealing. And as you walk along the Ringstrasse, you feel not like a visitor, but like part of an ongoing symphony.





“What Is Time?” through the Eyes of Young Minds

E-Lit: Middle School Special

by Ayşegül KASAP

During my internship at a middle school, I asked a class of 5th graders a seemingly simple question—one whose answer, I soon learned, varies with every heart.

“What comes to your mind when you hear the word *time*?”



There was a brief silence in the room. Then, one by one, hands were raised, words spilt out, and eyes sparkled. Each of them began to share their own small but deeply personal connection with time.

“When I hear the word time, I think of a clock,” one said. “The hour hand, the minute hand, minutes and seconds...” They were giving shape to time in their minds. Perhaps it was the thoughts that surfaced while staring at the wall clock at home, or maybe the countdown until recess ended.

“Summer holiday!” another exclaimed, a warm smile lighting up their face. Perhaps they were picturing an ice cream by the sea, or the gentle rhythm of a swing in the park during the golden afternoon.

Another student added: “Midterm break!” Because time, for them, could mean rest. The morning alarm is going quiet for a few peaceful days.

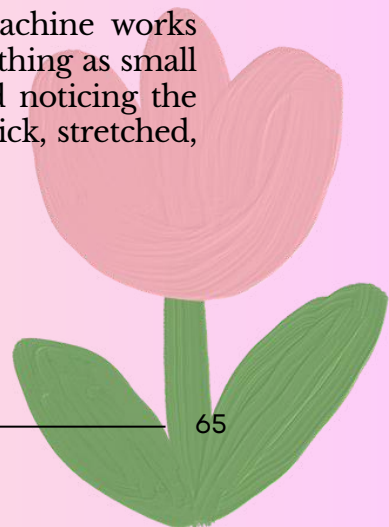
Then, in a more serious tone, a hand rose. “I think of being late for the bus or for school.” Another quietly followed: “Sometimes I make someone wait... I feel bad when that happens.”

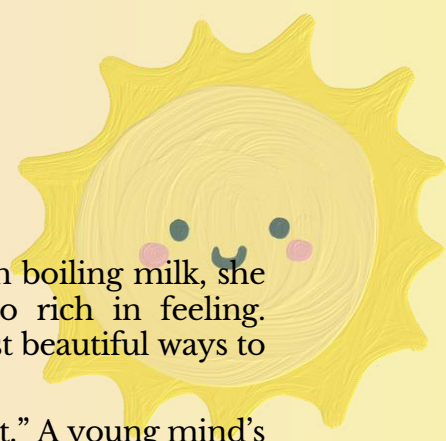
Here, time touched something deeper. Even a young mind’s heart holds the weight of responsibility. The awareness of making someone wait was already there.

“I think about homework. About needing to study,” sighed one student. Time was also duty. A call for patience. A lesson in discipline.

Then, from the back of the classroom: “The sound: Tick tock.” Only two words, but in them, the rhythm, the passage, the patience, and the end.

A particularly vivid and relatable answer was this: “The coffee machine works slowly when I make coffee.” That moment of waiting, even for something as small as a cup of coffee, becomes a lesson in patience. It’s a young mind noticing the small, slow rituals that make up a day; moments where time feels thick, stretched, and quietly alive.





One of the most touching answers was this: "I think of my mom boiling milk, she times it so it doesn't burn." Such a simple sentence... yet so rich in feeling. Measuring time through a mother's care. Perhaps one of the most beautiful ways to define it.

Another student spoke: "I think about when we'll travel to the past." A young mind's imagination had already shattered the boundaries of time. To them, time wasn't only the now; it was the toys left behind and the dreams not yet lived.

Then came a familiar note: "The proverb 'Time is money' comes to mind."

And immediately after, a heartfelt reflection: "We should use our time well and make every moment happy." It felt like the essence of life itself. Even in their small frames, these young minds carried the weight of wisdom.

"Time makes me think of limits," said another. "Every moment has a limit." Even at their age, they sensed that time was not endless. The games ended. Classes began.

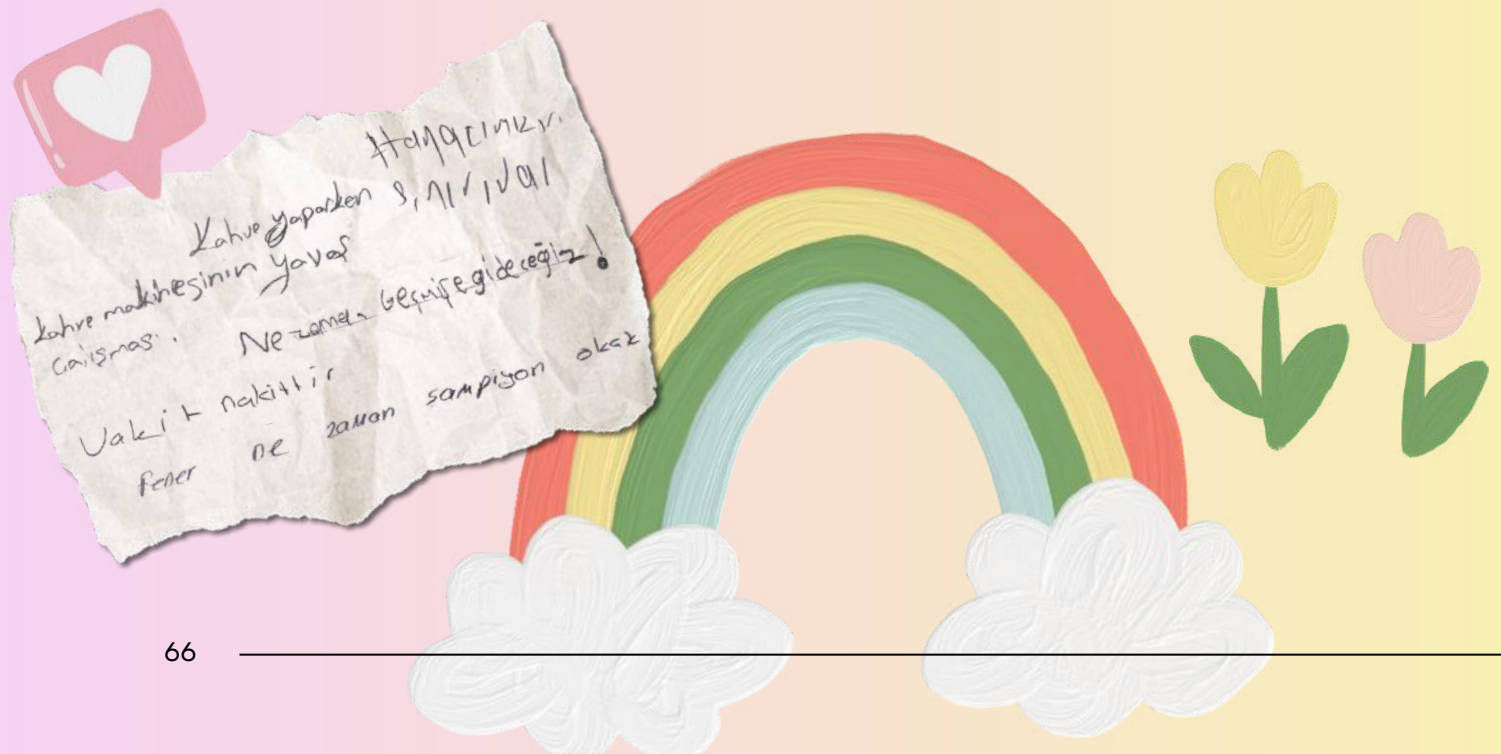
And finally...

"I think about when Fenerbahçe will be champion," one said. The class burst into laughter. Because time, sometimes, is simply hope, waiting, believing, holding on.

I asked just one question. But I learned so much. To see time through the eyes of a young mind is to sometimes lose yourself in a *tick tock*, or to wait with care so the milk doesn't boil over. For them, time is both a vast summer break and a small responsibility. Both dream and reality. Both the fear of being late and the joyful anticipation of what's to come. This piece is inspired by their words. In every sentence lies a fragment of the young minds sitting in that room. Because time doesn't only pass in clocks, calendars, or digital displays. Time is often hidden in a soft smile, at the edge of a dream, or in the simplest sentence spoken by a young mind. And even if we forget it as we grow older...

Young minds always know the purest form of time.

With heartfelt thanks to the students and administration of Cudibey Ortaokulu, whose sincerity, imagination, and warmth made this reflection possible.





the defini- tion of

TIME

by Hacere ŞAHİN

What is the definition of time? You could get all technical and give a definition based on various perspectives of the concept. Physics describes time as “the measure of a change in a physical quantity or a magnitude used to quantify the duration of events”, or in simpler terms, it is “the progression of events from the past to the present into the future.” Yes, that sounds more familiar (and a lot easier to process) than that first esoteric definition. And while we do visualise time as a clock hanging on the wall, making that slightly obnoxious yet somewhat nostalgic tick-tock, tick-tock sound, or as the hours, minutes and seconds passing by, we rarely stop to think about the description of it. When you do, however, take a break from this demanding life and mull over the meaning of time, you will realise there is a lot more that it amounts to, more than the void definitions provided to us by science. Because time is not just a dimension, a four-letter word, or a clock ticking away, counting the seconds that inevitably slip through our fingers; it’s a conglomerate of connotations. When we were young (not that we are old) it was a lot easier to visualise time as tangible objects; a clock on the kitchen wall, a golden watch on our grandfather’s wrist, a calendar to count down the days to our birthday or those long, intricate timelines we learned in history lessons. We still felt time, perhaps not as much as those who had walked the same path long before us, but we still felt it. We felt the time dragging on in maths lessons, and our eyes constantly flickered to the clock to check when that god awful lesson would end. We felt time come and go in the blink of an eye when we were doing something we loved.

We sometimes wanted time to go slow, and it to go fast so we could grow up – as if that was something to be desired. We later realised, albeit a little late, that it was, I daresay, a mistake. Time is a villain. The relentless thing – it moves forward perpetually, stopping for no one, even for those who need it most. It unforgivingly steals a great deal from us. It corrodes our bodies and psyches, briskly yet at the same time steadily – mockingly, even. And as this occurs, our memories begin to fade away, so much so that it becomes as if they had never even happened in the first place. Once cherished relationships begin to become brittle and wither, and at some point, we have all faced or will face a time when a loved one parts from us. Time is unkind and intolerant of mistakes; what is done is done, and we cannot undo or redo our errors, leaving us with a lifelong burden of regrets and unwanted emotions. Time is the cruellest enemy there can be, is it not?

Even so, time is also a dear friend. It may not be a shoulder to cry on, but it will accompany us while we tread at our own pace and bandage our wounds or heal our heartbreaks. It changes us, for better or for worse. We are not the same person we were two years ago, or even the same person we were yesterday, and tomorrow we will embark on the path to a totally different self. It is precisely because of its fleeting nature that it is such an invaluable part of our lives. Someday we will stop and in an epiphanous moment, we will realise our lives have gone by in the blink of an eye. It should not be taken for granted, because even though it is never-ending, we are not. Time runs out for us. Even now, the clock is ticking.

Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock...



A Love-Hate Relationship That Never Ends

by Alin Özlem DİNÇ

I am certain that most people from my generation know what *Winx Club* is, but if you are an exception or not around my age, I will summarize it.

Winx Club, which first hit screens in 2004, as its demo version's name, Magic Bloom, suggests, is a cartoon about fairies. Bloom, an ordinary high school girl, sees something very different on one of her same routine days. Not a big mouse, a dream bike, or a colourful bird, but she sees a troll and a fairy, who would later become her best friend, Stella. On the same day, she finds out she does not belong to her boring, ordinary life; she belongs to *Magix*, since she is a fairy! (Even a princess, but we do not learn that until the first movie.) Her life completely changes, and kids from all around the world are captivated by her and her friends' magical journey.

Bloom, Stella, Flora and all of the *Winx Club* girls became a part of our lives. Bright colours, sparkling fairy wings, exciting adventures, cute pets... It had everything a child could dream of! *The Winx* girls were not just characters; they were heroes, friends, and role models all rolled into one. Their magical powers, strong friendships, and stylish outfits offered a world where being a girl meant being powerful and beautiful all at once, effortlessly.

It seemed like pure joy, but maybe it was not that innocent? Let's take a time-travel back to the first season.

Part of the magic came with subtle messages. From the very first season, *Winx Club* quietly taught ideas about beauty, fashion, and what it meant to be "special." The perfect bodies, glamorous clothes, and constant focus on "looking good" planted early seeds about how girls should see themselves. Without even realizing it, little girls absorbed the idea that magic and success often went hand-in-hand with being pretty. Of course, the show did not just have negative effects, it also taught kids about the importance of teamwork, studying, rules — sometimes by breaking them —, friendship, and even feminism.

Kids back then had a very colorful phase with *Winx Club*. From carpets to socks, *Winx Club* was everywhere. Many girls grew up wishing they could be like them.



Still, as time went on, the sparkle started to fade. During the teenage years, many girls drifted away from *Winx Club*. The bright, simple stories that once felt exciting began to seem childish. Teenagers were busy figuring out real friendships, insecurities, and identity, naturally craving more complicated characters and stories. It also became harder to ignore the flaws: unrealistic body standards, endless focus on appearances, and old-fashioned ideas about love and success. What once felt empowering could suddenly seem hollow.

But interestingly, that was not the end of the story. In early adulthood, many young women found themselves looking back at *Winx Club* with fresh eyes. At first, it is usually about nostalgia, a song, a scene, a childhood memory, but it sometimes grows into something deeper. Watching again, they can see both the good and the bad. Yes, the show sold a very polished image of girlhood, filled with consumerism and unrealistic beauty standards. But it also celebrated friendship, power, and believing in your own strength. And of course, we cannot deny the sweet taste of nostalgia. Maybe the nostalgia became even sweeter simply because we longed to feel what we once did.

Winx Club is not just something kids watched once and forgot. It is something that I grew up with them. First loved, then questioned, and finally understood. Its effect was never just a quick, childish obsession; it was a slow, lasting journey. The real magic of *Winx Club* is not just in fairy wings or sparkling spells, it is in how it was created and stayed in girls' hearts, quietly shaping them as they grew up.

I still cannot decide if its effects were acceptable or not. Even though I surely know how it loaded me with impossible standards, I just cannot stop liking, or even loving, it.

Maybe that was the magic of *Winx*.

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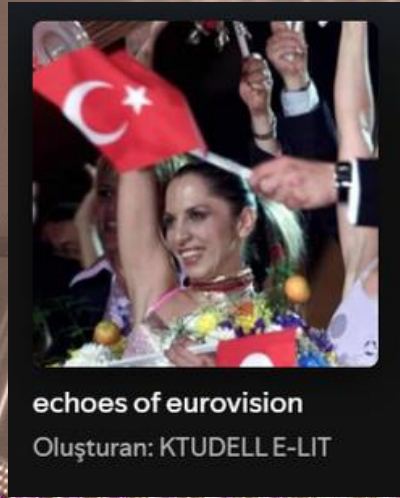
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Echoes of Eurovision

A Time Capsule of Sound



by Yaren ERGENÇ



SCAN HERE



Time hums in melodies, lingers in choruses, and fades in echoes of applause. It is the silent composer of history, orchestrating the changing rhythms of culture, politics, and human emotion. And nowhere does time sing more vividly than on the Eurovision stage. Each year, a song is crowned, but it is never truly alone. It carries the voice of its era, the pulse of its people, the weight of its moment. From the nostalgic ballads of the 1950s to the electronic heartbeats of the 2020s, Eurovision has been a mirror, reflecting the tempo of time itself.



The Early Years: A Melody of Recovery

In the beginning, the songs were whispers of a world still finding its voice after the silence of war. Lys Assia's *Refrain* (1956) sang of longing, a melody steeped in a past still close enough to touch. The 1960s followed with orchestral elegance, where France Gall's *Poupée de cire, poupée de son* (1965) marked a shift towards a more contemporary, youthful sound. Yet, even as the music changed, it remained a symbol of unity, a bridge between nations learning to sing together once more.

The Rise of Pop and Revolution

As the decades unfolded, so did the music—bold, rebellious, unafraid. ABBA's *Waterloo* (1974) marched into history with glittering boots, marking a shift from gentle chants to defiant pop anthems. It was a song that did not just reflect its time but defined it, setting the stage for Eurovision's growing embrace of spectacle and energy. The 1980s shimmered with electronic sounds from synthesizers, reflecting the era's neon-lit optimism.

Johnny Logan's Hold Me Now (1987) encapsulated heartbreak in the glow of disco, proving that even time's forward motion cannot outpace nostalgia. As the Berlin Wall fell, Eurovision stood witness. The contest evolved from a Western European celebration into a growing symbol of change, culminating in *Toto Cutugno's Insieme: 1992* (1990), a song that prophetically celebrated a united Europe before its political reality was fully realized.

The 1990s and 2000s: A Stage for Identity and Innovation

Then came the 90s, a decade of transitions. Europe was changing; borders were redrawn, cultures tangled. *Dana International's Diva* (1998) was both a song and a statement, echoing the fluidity of identity and the shifting tides of acceptance. This period also saw the rise of more eclectic, genre-bending entries, with acts like *The Olsen Brothers' Fly on the Wings of Love* (2000) embracing electronic enhancements and *Latvia's Marie N's song I Wanna* (2002) marking a turn toward high-energy performance art.

The millennium arrived with digital dawns and auto-tuned revolutions. Eurovision no longer belonged just to the ballads of the past but embraced the fierce, the theatrical, and boundary-pushing. *Sertab Erener's Everyway That I Can* (2003) was a defining moment—not only did it bring Turkey its first victory, but it also blended Eastern melodies with Western pop in a way that reflected the country's unique cultural position. It was a triumph of fusion, a testament to how Eurovision could be a stage where musical traditions meet and transform.



Lordi's Hard Rock Hallelujah (2006) shattered expectations, proving that Eurovision was not just a pop contest but a celebration of all musical identities. *Loreen's Euphoria* (2012) was not just a song—it was an experience, a transcendence of sound and space, the kind of anthem that felt eternal. Yet, in its own way, it too became a timestamp, marking an era when Eurovision fully embraced spectacle, theatricality, and the boundless possibilities of sound.

The 2020s and Beyond: The Digital Age of Eurovision

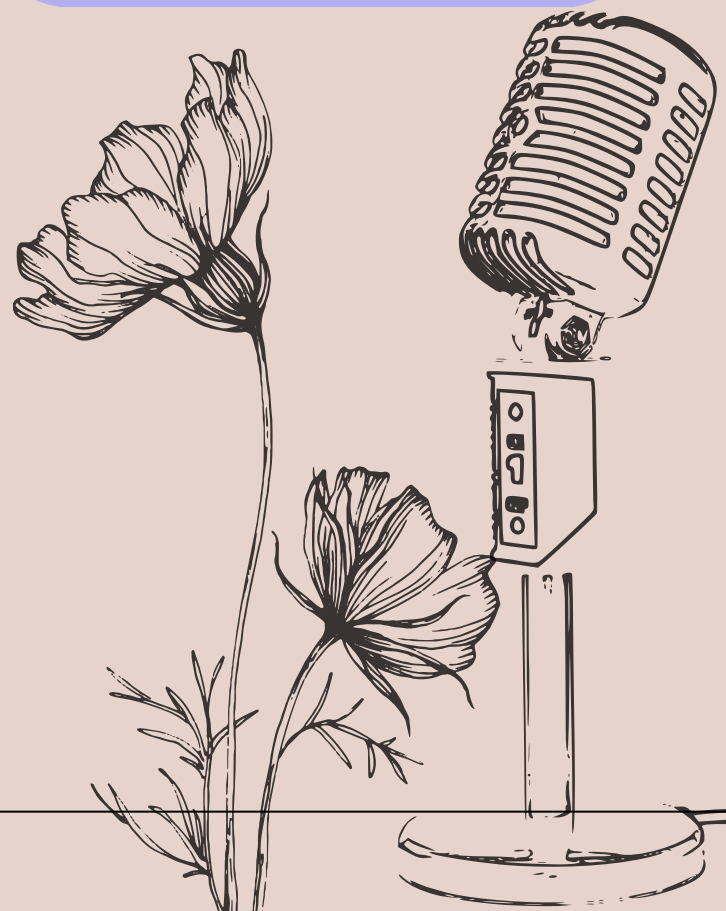
As the 2020s unfurl, Eurovision continues to reflect the times in its every note. In 2020, however, Eurovision faced an unprecedented disruption. For the first time in its history, the contest was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global health crisis forced the event to halt, leaving a void in the musical calendar. Despite the setback, Eurovision demonstrated its resilience in the following years, finding new ways to engage with audiences, even as the world struggled to regain its footing. *Måneskin's Zitti e buoni* (2021) brought rock rebellion to the forefront once more, a stark contrast to the introspection of *Duncan Laurence's Arcade* (2019).

The contest now moves at the speed of the internet, where viral moments, social media trends, and global conversations shape its evolution.

Then came *Nemo's The Code* (2024), a song that defied categorisation. A fusion of opera, rap, and hyperpop, it was not just a performance but a declaration—a celebration of fluidity, both in music and identity. It marked another shift, proving that Eurovision remains a space for reinvention, where genres blur and boundaries dissolve.

Now, as Eurovision 2025 approaches, the question remains: what will this year's song say of our time? And perhaps, by the time you read this, the winner may have already been crowned. Will it capture the chaos of a changing world, a dance anthem fuelled by technology, or a soft tune that reminds us of timeless melodies?

The answer, as always, lies in the music. Eurovision is not merely a competition; it is an archive of time itself—a living, singing chronicle of where we have been and where we are going. And no matter the winner, the true victor is always time, composing, conducting, and letting the music play on.





Absolutely Not A Rescue Mission

A theatrical Comedy in Three Acts

by Azranur Zehra ALTINTAŞ



Synopsis

A royally ridiculous comedy in three acts, Princess Daisy is done waiting for a fairytale ending- especially when all her suitors keep fleeing, disappearing, or “accidentally” dying. With a villainous brother on the throne and a kingdom full of cowards, she sets her hopes on a legendary pirate known as Captain Patch. Too bad he’s mostly a legend. Joined by Patch’s suspiciously competent first mate and relentlessly chased by a king who lives for drama, Daisy embarks on a chaotic journey filled with sword fights, fake moustaches, budget cuts, and exactly zero actual rescue plans. Will the princess escape? Will the pirate ever understand the map? Will the king finish his monologue? This is Absolutely Not a Rescue Mission... but it might accidentally change the kingdom forever.

Character List

Princess Daisy: Naïve but determined. At first, she sees marriage as her only escape, but gradually finds her own strength.

Captain Patch: A boastful pirate with more luck than skill. Believes he’s a legend, but survives mostly thanks to Finn.

Finn: Patch’s first mate and the real brain behind the legend. Quiet, sharp, and extremely capable.

King Maximilian Marmaduke von Something: Over-the-top villain. Loves being evil for the drama of it. Fears losing control more than anything.

Sir Edwin: The King’s loyal knight. Dry, deadpan, and endlessly obedient—though increasingly exhausted.

ACT 1 – Scene 1:

The Tower Room (A princess’s chamber. Princess Daisy stands centre stage, hands clasped as if in prayer.)

Princess Daisy: Oh, merciful heavens, if you’re listening — and not busy with plagues or royal beheadings— Please... send a hero to rescue me from this overdecorated cage.

(pauses and thinks)

Preferably someone tall, charming, not related to me, and with zero murder-y tendencies.

(drops her hands, points a finger up)

Also... not allergic to daisies. I’m very fond of them.

(The door creaks open. Sir Edwin enters, holding a scroll. He speaks in his usual deadpan tone.)

Sir Edwin: Your Highness. Lord Savage Butterfly has, most regrettably, ended the engagement.

Princess Daisy: *(freezes)*

...Lord Savage Butterfly? But we hadn’t even met yet!

Sir Edwin: Indeed. His horse tripped over your portrait.

(pauses)

It was instant.

Princess Daisy: *(raises hands to the sky)*

THAT one doesn’t count! He was unconscious!

(Edwin checks the scroll for another name.)

Sir Edwin: Lord Penwhistle... has taken a vow of silence. For life.

Princess Daisy: He told me that in a letter.

Sir Edwin: He screamed it first.

(Another scroll flip.)

Duke Elmsworth... regrets to inform you that he is, quote, ‘very afraid of your brother.’

Princess Daisy: *(quietly)*

He should be.

(Brief silence. Daisy sighs deeply.)

Princess Daisy: Do they all flee because of him?

Sir Edwin: No, Your Highness. One of them ran because of your laugh.

(long pause)

...I quite reasonable.

(Daisy gazes up at the ceiling once again.)

Princess Daisy: Alright. If heaven won’t send me a husband...

Then I’ll find a different way.





ACT 1 – Scene 2: The Throne Room

(King Maximilian Marmaduke von Something lounges on his absurdly large throne. Sir Edwin stands before him.)

King: Sir Edwin, did you deliver the good news to my dear sister?

(Sir Edwin nods.)

King: Marvellous. I have successfully eliminated every single one of her suitors. Go on- Ask me why.

Sir Edwin: Why?

King: *(grins broadly)*
Because I'm evil! Ha ha ha!

(He throws his head back in exaggerated villainous laughter.)

King: Anyway- onto more pressing drama. Head to the marketplace and gather intel on that... what do they call him? Captain Patch — the Dead Sea Daredevil, the Storm-Tamer, the Legend with One Eye and No Fear. They say he'll bring about the fall of my reign. My fall. Can you believe it, Edwin? A man who probably thinks maps are edible?

(He stands, suddenly serious.)

I have plans. Big ones. Theatrical ones. And I won't let some soggy sea-clown end the show before my monologue is done. So find him. And when you do...

(He pauses. Shadows seem to fall across his face.)

Make room on the chopping block. Oh — and take my sister with you. The people are beginning to worry about her. She needs... sunlight. Or... a distraction. Preferably both.

ACT I – Scene 3: The Marketplace

(A crowded marketplace. Various vendors are shouting, trying to attract customers, while people move about, shopping and bargaining. Sir Edwin is in the background, talking to people and gathering information. Princess Daisy follows him from behind, her eyes wandering around the market, taking in the scene.)

Sir Edwin: *(to a vendor)*
Captain Patch. Heard of him?

Vendor: Only in stories! They say he once sailed a ship into a tornado and came out with a better one!

Sir Edwin: *(turns to someone else)*
Captain Patch?
He fought a kraken with a spoon. And won.

Sir Edwin: *(sighs, and writes something to book.)*
Legends. Loud, useless legends.

(Meanwhile, Princess Daisy pauses in front of a stall. She overhears two women talking nearby.)

Woman 1: They say Captain Patch could sneak past any guard, escape any cell...

Woman 2: ...and take down a king without even drawing his sword.

Princess Daisy: Did you say... take down a king?

Woman 1: Oh yes! They say he's a storm in human boots.

(Daisy smiles slightly at what she hears. She turns to Sir Edwin.)

Princess Daisy: Sir Edwin... who is this Captain Patch, again?

Sir Edwin: *(he continues walking, his voice is dull.)*
A wanted man. Dangerous. Probably ill-mannered. And hopefully fictional.

Princess Daisy: He sounds... perfect.

ACT I – Scene 4: The Marketplace – Chaos & First Contact

(A busier, slightly more chaotic marketplace. Sir Edwin strides through, holding "WANTED" posters, mumbling under his breath. Princess Daisy trails behind, curiously watching the crowd.)

Sir Edwin: Your Highness, I have official duties to attend to. Please remain... at least vaguely inconspicuous.

(mutters while leaving)

Posters won't hang themselves. Unfortunately.

(He exits. Daisy is momentarily alone. Finn enters from the side, casually inspecting some fruit. Daisy seizes the opportunity and approaches him.)

Princess Daisy: *(whispering urgently)*
Excuse me! You there—yes, you, mysterious stranger with the fruit. Do you know where I can find... Captain Patch?

Finn: *(cautiously, with a slight smirk)*
That depends. Who's asking?





Princess Daisy: *(pauses, then stands tall.)*
I'm... a concerned citizen. Looking for... sea-based assistance.

Finn: From a wanted pirate?

Princess Daisy: That's just a technicality.

Finn: Right. And I'm a choirboy on vacation.

(They lock eyes for a moment. Then, from offstage, loud footsteps. Captain Patch enters dramatically, waving a crumpled "WANTED" poster.)

Captain Patch: *(to the audience, scandalised.)*
Is this supposed to be me?! Look at this! The nose is... offensive!

(Finn rolls his eyes. Daisy stares in disbelief. Sir Edwin reenters with more posters.)

Sir Edwin: *(defensive)*
It's hard to find a good sketch artist when you're describing someone mid-chase!

Captain Patch: This looks like a donkey in a hat!

Sir Edwin: *(examines it, genuinely)*
...That's fair.

Captain Patch: Attention, everyone! THIS is not what I look like!

(Beat. He and Edwin lock eyes. Chaos sparks.)

Sir Edwin: Stop right there, criminal clown!

(He dashes off. Edwin chases. They disappear into the crowd. Silence returns. Daisy turns back to Finn.)

Princess Daisy: *(calmly, as if nothing happened)*
So... about Captain Patch?

Finn: *(shrugs with a grin)*
...Maybe we can talk somewhere less poster-y?

ACT I – Scene 5: Secrets and Collisions

(A quieter corner of the market. The chase noises fade. Finn and Daisy stand just outside the crowd, mid-conversation.)

Princess Daisy: *(intently)*
You know him, don't you?

Finn: *(calmly)*
I know a lot of people.

Princess Daisy: He's your captain.

Finn: And you're... not just a concerned citizen, are you?

Princess Daisy: *(pauses, then straightens up)*
No. I'm Princess Daisy. My brother—the king—wants me locked away or worse. Every suitor I've had has either fled, vanished, or 'accidentally' died.

(voice trembles, but she's firm)

I don't want a crown. I want out. And I think... your captain might be the key.

(Finn studies her for a moment. Then nods, just slightly.)

Finn: You might just be crazy enough for this to work.

(From offstage, we hear a familiar shout.)

Captain Patch (off): Patch! Not catch!

(Patch stumbles backwards onto the scene, thrilled to have escaped. He crashes into Daisy and falls comically into her arms.)

Captain Patch: *(dramatic gasp)*
An angel! With arms! And... solid balance.

Princess Daisy: *(staggering)*
And you're... heavier than you look!

Captain Patch: Thank you! I take that as a compliment!

(Finn steps forward, amused.)

Finn: Princess Daisy, meet Captain Patch. Captain... she wants to hire us.

Captain Patch: *(still in her arms)*
To sing? To paint? To perform interpretive dance?

Princess Daisy: To escape the kingdom.

(Patch beats and looks into her eyes. Then to Finn.)

Captain Patch: She's serious.

Finn: She's royal.

Captain Patch: ...We're gonna need snacks.

(They all exchange glances. Blackout.)

ACT II – Scene 1: Aboard the Ship, Somewhere at Sea

(A stylised pirate ship deck. One tall mast, a few ropes, a dramatic wheel. Captain Patch stands proudly atop a crate with arms wide open. Finn handles the actual steering. Daisy watches in awe—with a pinch of concern.)

Captain Patch: Ahh, the open sea! The wind in your teeth, the salt in your socks, the gulls aiming for your hat!





Captain Patch: (*strikes a pose*)

This, my dear Daisy, is the very ship that outran the cursed fleet of the Bloodmist Armada. Twelve ships. One Patch. And a bottle of mustard.

Princess Daisy: (*trying to be impressed*)
That sounds... incredible.

Finn: (*quietly from the wheel*)
Technically, it was one leaky boat, three confused fishermen, and a foggy Tuesday.

Captain Patch: (*unbothered, gesturing grandly*)
And once, I tamed a sea serpent using nothing but eye contact and a kazoo!

Finn: He fainted. The serpent left out of pity.

Princess Daisy: (*barely holding in laughter*)
How... heroic.

Captain Patch: (*chest out*)
“Heroic” is my middle name. Well, not legally. But in spirit.

(*Patch suddenly spins toward the wheel.*)

Captain Patch: Now, if you’ll excuse me, I must steer this majestic vessel into destiny!

Finn: (*quickly intercepting*)
No, no, no. You touch that wheel and we die.

(*gently turns him away*)

Why don’t you... Point dramatically instead?

Captain Patch: (*instantly switching gears*)
That way! Possibly north! Or upwind. Or... sideways!

(*Daisy moves closer to Finn, amused.*)

Princess Daisy: Is he always like this?

Finn: Like what?

(*They both look at Patch. He’s currently attempting to balance a seashell on his head.*)

Finn: Oh. Yes.

Captain Patch: (*without turning around*)
I heard that! And yes, I am! Gloriously consistent!

(*A rare still moment. Daisy gazes out at the ocean.*)

Princess Daisy: Do you think... We’ll really be safe out here?

Captain Patch: (*heroically*)
With me at the helm—

Finn: —him nowhere near the helm—

Captain Patch: —Nothing can stop us!

ACT II – Scene 2: The Throne Room, Again

(*The throne room. King Maximilian lounges in full dramatic glory. He struggles to peel a single grape. The doors slam open—Sir Edwin rushes in, breathless.*)

Sir Edwin: Sire! Emergency! Huge, massive, princess-shaped emergency!

King: (*squinting*)
Edwin. That better be a metaphor.

Sir Edwin: She’s gone, sire. Vanished. Escaped. Eloped. All the verbs!

King: (*leaps to his feet, swings his cloak dramatically—and it lands in his face*)
What?! My sister? How?! When?! With whom?!

Sir Edwin: Reports say... with Captain Patch.

King: (*freezes mid-flail*)
...The clownfish?

Sir Edwin: Yes, sire. The legendary, possibly fictional, absolutely wanted Captain Patch.

King: (*straightens, voice low and intense*)
Ask me why this bothers me.

Sir Edwin: (*weary*)
Why?

King: BECAUSE I’M EVIL!

(*He punches the air. Nothing happens. He looks around, disappointed.*)

King: But more importantly—because that soggy pirate is not stealing my finale! I will be the one to decide how this story ends!

(*Edwin begins to exist.*)

King: Wait! First, recite my full title. For courage.

Sir Edwin: (*with dread*)
King Maxilimus... Maxilyn... Marmapoop von... Some—something?

King: (*rolls eyes, sighs deeply*)
Oh, for evil’s sake... just say Your Majesty and fetch my boots!

Sir Edwin: (*already walking out*)
Majesty it is!



(The king is left alone. He slowly returns to his throne, then turns to the audience.)

King: Captain Patch... we are coming.
(beat)
And we're bringing monologues.

ACT III – Scene 1: The Clash at Sea

(A pirate ship deck. Captain Patch stands with a telescope, dramatically scanning the horizon. Finn checks the ropes. Daisy sits nearby, scribbling in a journal.)

Captain Patch: *(low, serious tone)*
There's something out there. A ship. I think.

(squints absurdly into the distance)

Or... a very ambitious whale.

Princess Daisy: Maybe try using the actual lens side of the telescope?

Captain Patch: *(lowers it, impressed)*
That's... shockingly reasonable.

(he offers it to her, nearly poking her eye)

Here. Observe, my flower of accuracy!

Princess Daisy: Ow—okay! Personal space, Captain!

Finn: *(Walking nervously to them)*
Royal ship of the kingdom.

Princess Daisy: They must've followed us all the way here.

Captain Patch: Why?

Finn: They're probably here for a friendly chat. Ask us nicely to come back. With hugs. And shackles.

Captain Patch: Right, right- let me just go put the kettle on and welcome them with biscuits.

(Daisy and Finn exchange a look. Finn grabs Patch by the collar.)

Finn: Captain, they're here to kill us!

Captain Patch: But weren't we... having a chat a minute ago?

Princess Daisy: *(cutting them off)*
Here they are.

(Everyone sobers. Trumpets blare. King Maximilian enters grandly, flanked by guards and an extremely confused Sir Edwin.)

Sir Edwin: *(clearing his throat)*
Introducing His Majesty, King Max Duke von... Something.

King: *(offended)*
You left out my entire title!

Sir Edwin: Time-saving. Tactical narration.

King: *(clenching his jaw)*
I HATE efficiency.

(He notices Edwin standing among the crew.)

King: EDWIN! WHY ARE YOU STANDING OVER THERE?!

Sir Edwin: *(shrugs)*
You didn't tell me where to stand, sire.

King: Then, stand somewhere useful!

(Sir Edwin shifts half a step)

King: Edwin, the instructions are not that complex.

Captain Patch: Hi, yes, sorry- just checking in. We're also in the scene. Can you include us in your arguments?

Finn: *(to Patch, deadpan)*
Are you trying to speed up your execution?

Captain Patch: I haven't even written my will yet!

Princess Daisy: *(cutting them off, again)*
Maximillian Marmaduke von Something, what do you want?

Captain Patch: Maxi Milli von Souphthing.. Wait, that's not a name, that's a stew.

King: It's noble!

Captain Patch: No, it's nonsense.

King: It's just my name!

Captain Patch: Then pick a shorter one!

(Everyone falls quiet as the King composes himself.)

Captain Patch: *(breaking the silence)*
Quick question: Did you bring all those soldiers just for me?

King: Of course not. Half of them are for intimidation.

Sir Edwin: The other half are actors. We ran out of budget.

Captain Patch: Ah. That explains the one in slippers.

King: *(snaps)*
Enough! Captain Patch... the eye of the dark ocean... are you not going to ask why I want you dead?





Captain Patch: *(blankly)*
...No?

King: *(blinks)*
No?... Ask me!

Captain Patch: *(to Edwin)*
Noo! Does he always do this?

Sir Edwin: Every time. It's exhausting.

King: BECAUSE I'M EVIL!

(He raises a fist dramatically. No thunder. He lowers it, disappointed.)

Captain Patch: Yep. Definitely a thunder guy without thunder.

King: Let's make a deal. Give me the princess, and I'll let you live... five more minutes.

Captain Patch: Sounds generous. Finn?

Finn: We're not giving her up.

Captain Patch: You sure? I mean... five extra minutes alive is tempting.

Princess Daisy: Captain!

Captain Patch: Okay, okay-Let's do the noble thing... and die together.

Finn: Or win?

Captain Patch: Oh! Right. That's also an option.

(Battle breaks out. Finn and Edwin duel. Patch swings at the air.)

Sir Edwin: Let's get this over with.

Finn: Just don't step on my coat.

(Patch is swinging his sword wildly at nothing.)

Princess Daisy: Captain... what are you doing?

Captain Patch: Acting. Distraction. I'm sneaking around.

Princess Daisy: You're not sneaking. You're narrating your own sneak.

Captain Patch: It's part of the technique!

(Patch gets behind the King. Just as he's about to strike, the King turns.)

King: *(without turning)*
I can see you.

Captain Patch: ...But how?! I was being so subtle!

(The King knocks Patch aside and grabs Daisy's arm.)

Captain Patch: NO, Flower sister! Don't do it! Why do you even want to kill her?!

King: *(pauses. Genuinely taken aback.)*
You... asked me. Without me telling you to ask me.

(He swallows. Drops his guard.)

Because... if she marries, she gets the throne. If she gets the throne, she might... improve things. If things improve... they'll stop fearing me. And if they stop fearing me—what's left?

(Silence)

Captain Patch: Group hugs?

King: I hate hugs more than efficiency.

(to princess)

Now, I'll kill you and tell the kingdom it was the work of the Evil Sea captain. You'll die, and he'll take the blame. I even dreamed it. That makes it poetic.

(While the king is still talking, the captain stands up and lunges forward, then trips and falls, drops his sword. Princess Daisy grabs the sword and stabs the king. At that moment, Finn has defeated Sir Edwin.)

King: *(moanfully)*
Please... delete my research history.

(dies)

Captain Patch: And that's what happens when you mess with... poetic justice. Boom. Justice drop.

Finn: Not how that phrase goes.

Captain Patch: It is now.

Princess Daisy: I...I just killed someone.

Captain Patch: That's alright. I once killed a sandwich. With my face.

Princess Daisy: What?

Captain Patch: It was dry. I panicked.

Princess Daisy: *(Ignoring Patch)*
So... what now?

Finn: The kingdom is yours now. You need to find someone to rule with you.

Captain Patch: I don't think she needs someone. She can run a kingdom solo.



Princess Daisy: You're right. I don't need anyone.. To do anything.

(Crew, get ready for the finale.)

Captain Patch: Then Finn, take the wheel-ride through the storm and steel.
Princess, grab your uke- and sing along with me.

There once was a crew so brave and bold,
With tales so grand (and mostly told),
They sailed the seas, they fought the crown
—
And kinda knocked the whole thing down!

All: We're absolutely not a rescue team,
We're messier than we may seem!
No plan, no map, no leadership—
But hey, we stole the royal ship!

Princess Daisy: I tried to wed, I tried to flee,
But every groom ran off from me!
Then came the crew with patch and flair—
And way too much dramatic air.

All: We're absolutely not a rescue squad,
We just annoyed the king, really odd!
We tripped, we slipped, we sailed away—
And somehow won the war that day!

Finn: I kept us straight, I steered the ship,
While Patch was shouting, "Let it rip!"
I swung my sword, I planned ahead—
While he... just fell and played dead.

Sir Edwin (*tired*): I served a king who loved his flair,
But none of us got mental care...
Now I'm adrift with pirate folk—
Please tell me this is just a joke.

King (*offstage, dramatic*): You stole my throne, you stole my flair!
You even mocked my royal hair!
But still I shout across the sea:
"You'll never be as grand as me!"

All: We're absolutely not a rescue band,
We just sort of... took a stand.
The crown fell off, the sails flew high—
And we just waved the past goodbye!

Captain Patch: No map, no plan, no fear, no clue...
And yet—we saw this whole thing through!

All: Absolutely NOT... a rescue mission—
But maybe... maybe a revolution!

(Curtain Falls)

Author's Note

I wrote this play much faster than I wrote *The Whispers of Blood*- mostly because I didn't really care if the plot made any sense. My inspiration before writing was *Wellerman* by The longest Johns. It has absolutely nothing to do with the story, but it's a genuinely imagination-stirring sea shanty.

While writing, I relied heavily on ChatGPT Plus. I shared my ideas, got feedback, and was gifted brilliant suggestions- like the king's perfectly ridiculous short name.

This story was never about logic. It was about laughter, chaos, pirates, escape, and paper crowns.

We decorated every detail with love, laughter, and a whole lot of daisies.

Acknowledgements

This play was brought to life with a lot of laughter, late-night ramblings, and a surprisingly detailed conversation about sandwiches.

Special thanks to:

- Everyone who supported this chaotic voyage from "silly idea" to full-blown stage disaster (but the funny one)
- The brave cast who don't question the lines written by me.
- My father, who read the whole play with a dull face and didn't make any comment.
- The audience, for watching and hopefully laughing at least once on purpose (amen).
- My brother, who insisted I include him in the acknowledgements... Despite writing absolutely nothing.
- Every storyteller who believes that drama and nonsense are two sides of the same coin.
- And you, my dear teacher, with the trust and inspiration you give.

Captain Patch says:

"You're welcome for the inspiration. Just don't ask me to spell 'acknowledgements.' That word has too many letters and not enough treasure maps."





A Song *for the one who never came*

by Azra ÇEBİ



It was late. It shouldn't have been raining, and she should have been here ages ago. He felt cold—the rain didn't matter anymore. A song caught on his tongue out of the blue. He didn't want to mutter it. It was useless to fight it anyway, so he closed his eyes. A few shallow breaths, and it slipped out—he hummed softly.

“So tired of playing. Playing with this bow and arrow. I'm going to give my heart away, leave it to the other girls to play...”

He was used to feeling like this—left half, incomplete. Not exactly sad, but not smiling either. He took a small step. Then another. The rain did matter—he was soaked to the bone. Tears fell. His steps faltered. This wasn't going to work anyway. Who the hell was he to think—A broken sob escaped his throat, interrupting the thought. The warmth of her smile haunted his mind, shutting down his senses. His feet grew heavy. He was near collapse. His chest ached. His eyes blurred with tears—or maybe it was just the rain. He couldn't tell anymore.

So he lowered his gaze to where his heart was. Always waiting. Always hoping. But never... never—

He didn't want to finish the thought. He shook his head, trying to clear the mess inside it. The truth felt too heavy to admit, so he kept lying to himself, piling up the burden, knowing he couldn't carry much more.

The words turned bitter on his tongue. His steps slowed to a stop. His hair clung to his face, dripping wet. The world around him was muffled. His heart was beating like it might break through his ribs. Was it really worth it—being left out in the cold, drenched in the downpour, and still alone?

He parted his lips to speak, but only a cracked whisper escaped. What was he supposed to say? He couldn't stay here forever... could he? The thought made him sick. He felt betrayed. His heart had shattered more than once—but only this time made him want to scream and tremble. The urge to vomit burned in his throat. He held himself back.

Even though there was so much to say—it was left unspoken.







Mother Safís

by Hande DURSUN

Ever wondered what would happen if the history was written by women instead of men? What would have happened if everyone could listen to the stories from their mothers? As a woman who has been tortured, as a girl that seen as unworthy of even a name, I feel obligated to pass on the story of Mother Safís. (It is redacted from the diary of Daphne, the daughter of Mother Safís.)

A name that has been erased from the mind, once the most respected mother, now only living as an echo through her daughters. O' great Safís, the daughter of Styx, the offspring of all Chaos, the protector of all women, the mother of the unwanted. She who stood against the gods, having the defiance of a titan. Vasílissa of Troas, you who watch over us children who have no home nor name. Not once you ignore a desperate call, welcoming progenies under your fins, nurturing them as a mother more than a goddess.

The first was Chaos, creating the so-called life simply to observe. Not he nor she, the start of all existence. Then comes Styx, the endless stream of despair, unforgiving to those unfortunate enough to fall into it. Where these two beings collided, master Chaos' own curiosity bestowed a blessing upon the river, where Safís lay.

"What is my purpose O' Chaos?" she demanded, only to be guided to the overworld, to the beginning of her suffering. Perhaps it was Styx who cast her out once she was her own being, perhaps it was Chaos who wanted to observe the bloom of its offspring.

Every being that has a mother would be vulnerable, as the mother nature calls it, the titaness had no obligations to obey that law. Safís was bright, pure enough to make a man sin, beautiful enough to lure them in. Born in the cursed sex, only to be seen as the muse and never the poet. That, coming from the heavens, was the first mistake of the gods who claimed to be wise. She who was born beneath the earth, tasting the oath-filled Styx, was granted a life of a titaness by Chaos. She who declared her resistance to mankind, wise from birth. Surely making herself known, reminding her looks only there to deceive, that she is not play as a pawn in their games.

Pride of the king, however, were greater than his judgement, becoming the second mistake of the heavens. Cursing out to the titaness, *"Surely you do not own the age to hold defiance against my prudence."*

The thunder growled. The wanted answer was never given through words, as she knew gods did not care to listen anyway. Instead, her steps were heard, the rivers cried out, the lakes stirred within to welcome their mother.

She claimed the land her feet strike, declaring that they do not have all the power they wish to hold. Thunder hit beneath her feet this time, carrying a message from the king as a warning.

"I do not defer to men nor the heaven." Safis held her chin up, having written her essence of existence with the whip of might.

Troas was the name of the earth; she bestowed her claim, fish filled rivers with her blessings. Stream was soft on the overworld, making the life on it vulnerable, yet she never held it against the creations. She who accepted the people that accepted her, raising the ones that worshipped her like the children they are, yet having none on her own. As she too was a woman, she understood the struggle of it. Giving them a home, a name, blessing them with a purpose other than bearing children for the men.

"You are the creation of Chaos as much as they are," she said.

Bared her fangs on her own against every being that threatened the safety of praying souls.

O' great titaness, surely, she is the most forgiving and maternal of them all. And surely, the most protective and vicious one among her kind.

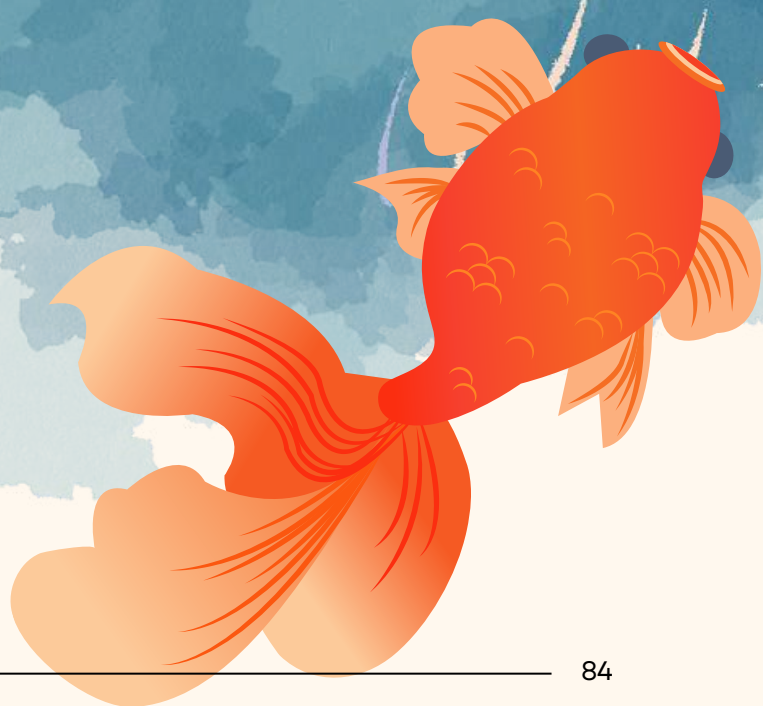
Once a comfort to her daughters, she ultimately decided to bury herself in their memories. Watched them grow from little girls to powerful women, smiling to their blooming selves. Knowing her legacy would continue with them, knowing they would be as protective and wise, she finally returned to the core she came from.

"Do not waste your tears, my daughters, as I will exist in the echoes of your prayers. Be well, my children, be strong."

The titaness caressed them with her words for the last time, giving up on her form to simply live as her daughters' defiance.



The artwork *Derinlerde* belongs to artist Ayla ACET and was used as an illustration for the story.





The Value of Time

by Semira SAEED

Semir loved spending hours playing games and watching videos, unaware of how much time he was losing each day. He often avoided his responsibilities and left his schoolwork unfinished. His father watched quietly, waiting for the right moment to guide him.

One afternoon, his father handed him a beautiful silver watch and said, *"This watch symbolises your time — use it wisely."*

At first, Semir didn't fully understand, but later that evening, the words echoed in his mind. He sat on his bed, looked at the ticking watch, and thought, *"What if I really tried to make the most of every minute?"*

The next day, Semir decided to take control of his time. He created a simple daily plan — time for studying, time for rest, and even time to help his mother with chores. Slowly, he began to feel the difference. He was less stressed, more organized, and even started enjoying learning. His teachers noticed the change and praised his efforts. His friends, too, were surprised by his new attitude.



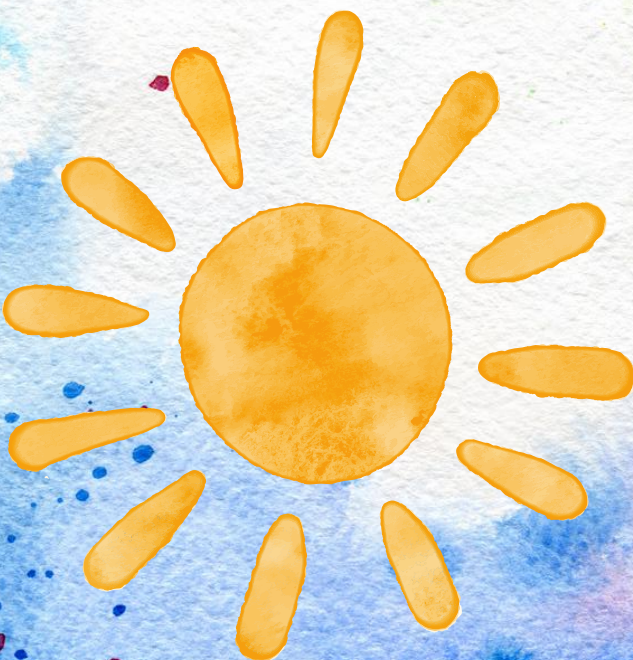
One quiet evening, as they sat on the balcony watching the sunset, his father said, *"I can see that you've learned to appreciate the value of time. Always remember, time is a precious treasure that, once lost, cannot be recovered."*

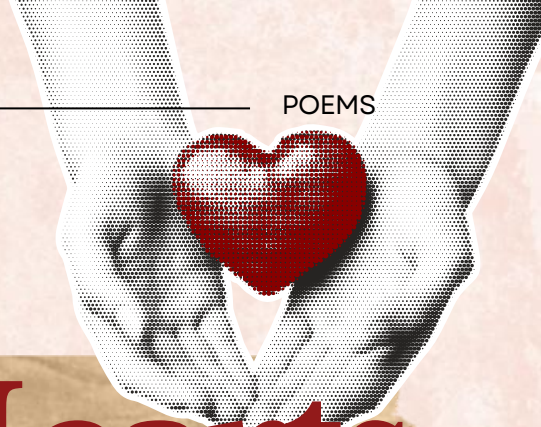
Semir smiled, holding the watch gently in his hand. *"Now I understand that every minute counts,"* he said.

"You are the greatest teacher I've ever had, Dad. You've shown me how to manage my time and succeed in life."

His father smiled with pride and replied, *"I'm glad you've grasped this vital lesson. Remember, wise time management is the foundation of success."*

From that day on, Semir wore his watch not just to tell the time, but to remind himself that time, once gone, never returns — and that every second is a chance to grow.





lines from

Students' Hearts

Cursive text, illegible due to blurring.

Cursive text, illegible due to blurring.

Cursive text, illegible due to blurring.



“Poetry provides the one permissible way of saying one thing and meaning another.” —Robert Frost

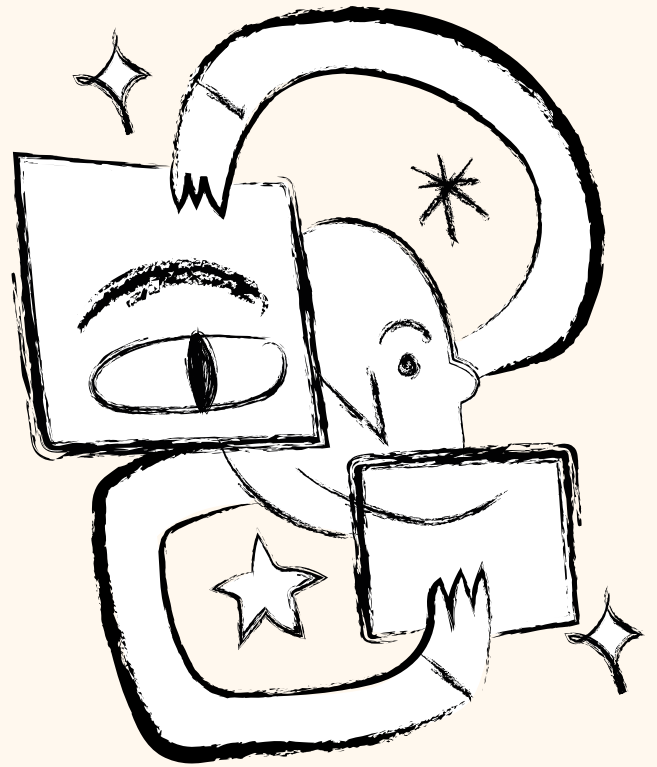
Today

You are only here today,
Yesterday and tomorrow stray.
You are yourself just for now,
The rest is lost somehow.

A sunny Saturday's bright,
Pause a while, feel the light.
Hear the whisper of the breeze,
It says: "Be patient, at ease."

Time is cruel; it flies,
Life chooses what never dies.
Tomorrow forgets what's near,
And keeps the true ones dear.

by Ayça YILDIZ



Bound to Time

Look! Time flows once more,
Yet when a soul-bound love meets with blow,
My arbour that built next to the rose,
Weeps for the core of life now.

As healing knocks upon your door,
The wound reopens, deeper than before,
When warm feelings fade before they grow,
A lifetime lingers with thoughts to sow.

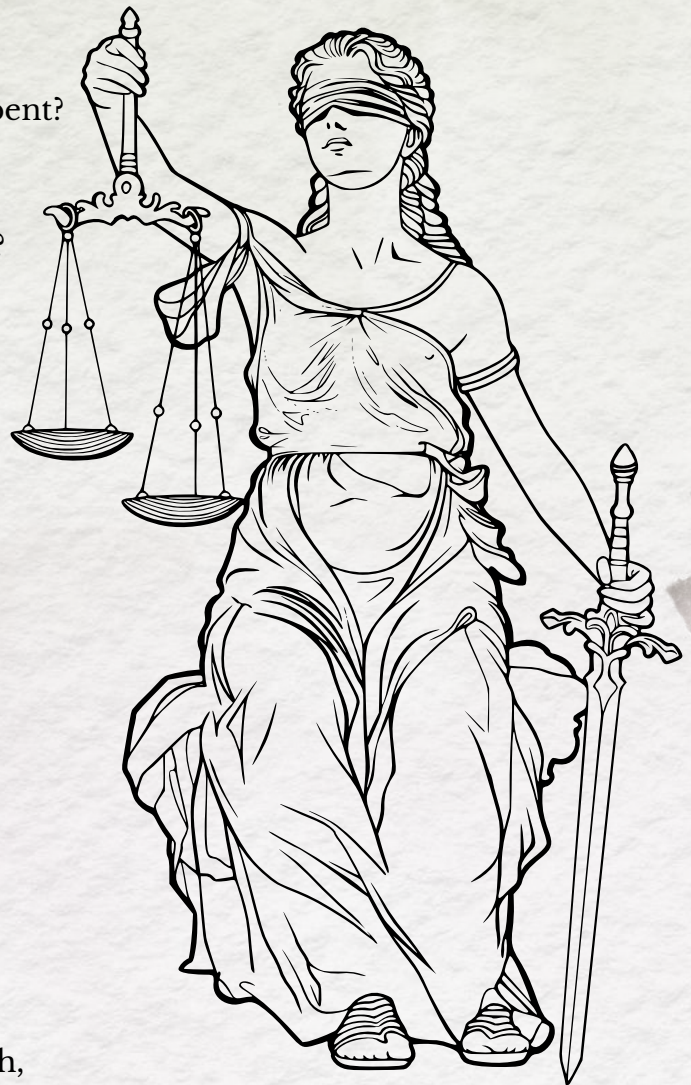
Heart says, "Ignore the hollow of soul!
But memory shore is too narrow to allow,
Now sorrow starts to pour,
Will they ever dare to step inside the shadow,
Where echoes of time whisper to flow?"

by Nilay AYAZ



Trial with the Self

What roses have you sown?
 Which ones for you have grown?
 The arrows lodged within your spine,
 Are they from others, or are they mine?
 What burden does this duty bear?
 That fills my heart with grim despair?
 I spit out blood, I breathe in rage,
 Is my soul trapped within this cage?
 The boat I saved from the sinking ship,
 Could not take me—this wounds my grip.
 Man breathes smoke, his soul is grey,
 He smiles, then cuts when you're away.
 The snow I shovelled, it falls on me,
 I search for solace, none I see.
 Is this pure body safe from sin?
 When guilt begins to crawl within?
 Can man be good, though the years he spent?
 In love, yet cruelty gave consent?
 Is there wisdom in our lives?
 While selfishness always survives?
 Don't they all deserve their share of bliss?
 Where do I err, what have I missed?
 My tongue is feathered, breath runs thin,
 No patience left to hold within.
 Why can't the land I dock sustain?
 But leaves me drowning in this pain?
 Hush, be silent,
 Swallow the violent.
 Stand tall, don't stray,
 Even when all feels swept away.
 When home becomes a foreign land,
 What remains for us to stand?
 A book once cherished, left to the dust,
 Is that our fate, to lose all trust?
 Are we who choose the blade of fear?
 Or does it find us waiting near?
 Am I blind, or do I crave?
 A hunger buried in the grave?
 Frightened children scream for care,
 But silence meets them everywhere.
 It's not orphanhood or lack of kin,
 But wounds we take to guard within.
 We trade our lives from dust to dust,
 Clutch love, yet waste it where we must.
 My childhood watched the clouds on high,
 As time engraved veins dry.
 Tell those who dream and still believe,
 Do we choose the knife to grieve?
 Or does the knife choose us to cleave?



by Nisa Özgür ÇETİN



© Ayşegül KASAP

Between Tick and Tocks

I never knew love could burn and seize,
That I could speak your name with such ease.
As if it were both a prayer and a curse,
Bound together, for better or worse.

Between tick and tocks, time slips like sand,
Falling through my fingers, unheld and unplanned.
The moments we never lived, drifting away,
Fading before dawn could turn night into day.

You were everything I could barely hold,
A phantom flame in a world gone cold.
And when you're gone, I break without sound,
Like moonlight falling, never touching the ground.

I don't think there's a world where "we" could be,
More than almost, than if, than "never" to see.
Yet here I wait in time's dark crevice,
Where love and hate mingle, a bleeding premise.

by Ayşegül KASAP

Hidden in a Glimpse

The convergence of time and memories
Concealed in the flutter of a fleeting glance,
Within each second, a thousand memories bound,
Moments, alive, whispering in the realm of the mind.

Passing by the places you once had been
Now...
You aren't there, quiet, wasted, and dark
The tea hasn't brewed, door is closed
An insect tries to climb to the window
Nobody is there except for it.

Is it time that stands eternal now?
Or are the places that witnessed your sorrow?
The resilience of my spirit, harrowing,
In the face of time's passing sway.
Tides of time, like a blink of an eye —
Ephemeral, yet endless.

Full of tears, the tear troughs but doesn't drop any
After a while, the heart is cleansing
Soul is caged in a deep hellhole
There is a picture of Ophelia visualised
The body slowly drifts toward
The darkness, darkness,
Silence.

by Peruze YÜCEŞAN

The Imprints of the Self within and the Other beyond

I am a human in every inch
Defined by struggle and hope alike.
I am a human bound to
The endless quest for meaning in this life.
Despite all I face,
I am human with them.
To be myself, I am bound to you.
I find my echo in your essence,
As you find within mine.
The self is neither solely within
Nor entirely beyond
It is only in our coexistence
That we attain integrity.
Thus, on this quest to find meaning,
Neither the self within
Nor the other beyond is enough.
Only through our unity
Is the self-made complete.

by Zeynep ÖTER



I'm Trying But...

It still hurts to start
Two years after we fell apart
I can see the scar on your neck
Like the stars we watched that night

My arms tried to hold you close
Two bars made of charming thorns
Confined a soul in a cloudless sky
But you were a thunder strike to my bones

I looked around in a sickly haze
There was nowhere to escape
Your love dropped its shiny mask
When did it turn into hate

It took some years to forget it all
Spent some money on trips and all
To learn to be someone without you
When it was all I'd ever known

I borrowed that moment from time
Kept it in my pocket safe and sound
Remind myself never to turn back
A poisoned ivy you were, and will always be one

I had to free my dreams
When it was a silent midnight
You could only hear my screams
Echoing from the East Side
Reaching you from my dashed heart.

by Lara Su YAMAN (Guest)





Playlist by the E-LIT Team!

What if time had a playlist?

So the E-LIT team made one! Full of echoes, rewinds, and future beats.

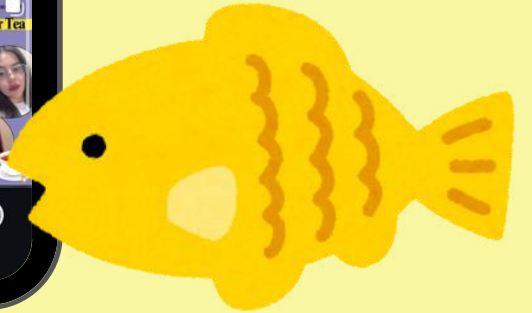
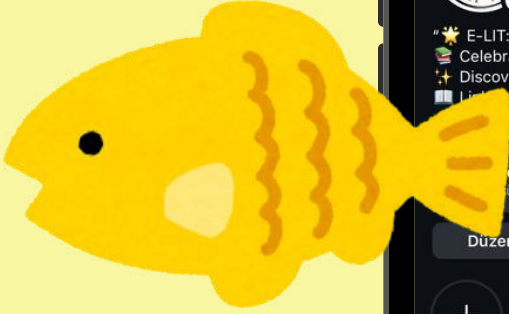
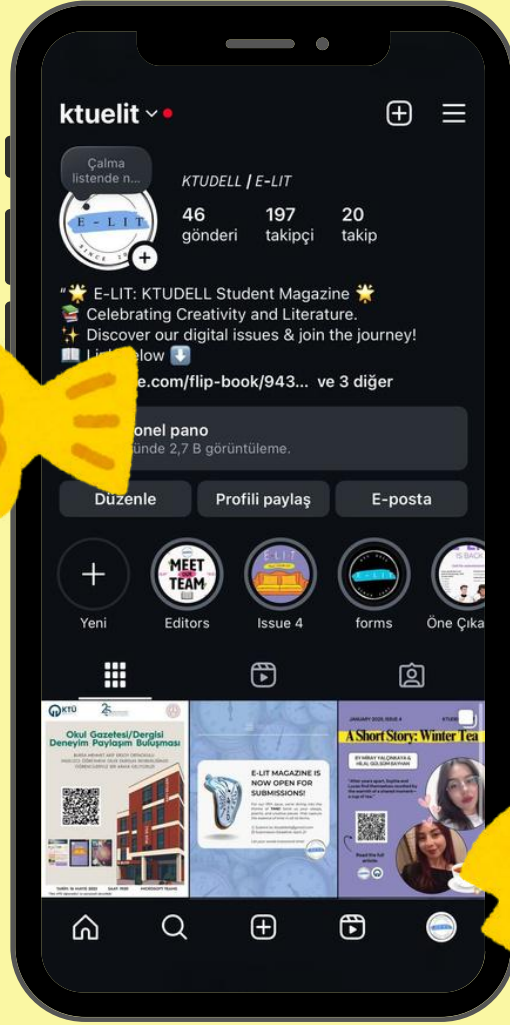
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