

EUROPA | MNEMONIC MUSE

Written by

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OVER BLACK

POET (V.O.)

(in Greek)

Sing to me of the man, Muse, the  
man of twists and turns... driven  
time and again off course, once he  
had plundered the hallowed heights  
of Troy.

Many cities of men he saw and  
learned their minds, many pains he  
suffered, heartsick on the open  
sea, fighting to save his life and  
bring his comrades home.

But he could not save them from  
disaster, hard as he strove – the  
recklessness of their own ways  
destroyed them all, the blind  
fools, they devoured the cattle of  
the Sun and the Sungod blotted out  
the day of their return.

Launch out on his story, Muse,  
daughter of Zeus, start from where  
you will – sing for our time too.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Dark clouds in the sky. The train is moving slowly, on a  
railway track above the ground. It passes through houses and  
small buildings, approaching the city ahead. Tall, modern  
buildings become increasingly bigger.

In the heart of the city now, squealing sounds are  
progressively louder. Huge office buildings covered by glass  
reflect the few sun-rays coming through the clouds.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A YOUNG WOMAN, early 30s, gets off. She has no luggage.  
Checking a note she is holding, then having a look around,  
making sure she is at the right place. She walks down wide  
steps. SOUNDS OF TRAINS arriving and departing are heard from  
the train station behind her. It is Musée d'Orsay.

She stops in the middle of the crowded stairs, facing the  
opposite way.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Is it worth a photograph?

A moment later, she picks an instant camera from her pocket  
and takes a picture of what is ahead.

She has a look around, and then at the printed picture she just took. It is a river, a high wall and a row of trees behind it.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Young Woman is strolling in the streets, observing her surroundings. People, cars, buildings, signs in French. Indistinct dialogue by people passing by, in French.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

She is having coffee alone, at a table outside, looking at the people passing by. European classical music is heard from inside the cafe.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

DANIEL, 30s, is still sleeping. His CAT MEOWS on the bed and wakes him up. He is struggling to fully wake up and get off the bed.

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Daniel lights up a cigarette. LOW ECUADORIAN MUSIC is playing. The room has several personal decorative items, including frames with pictures of people. As he is enjoying his cigarette with some coffee, the cat comes close to him, asking for attention, and possibly some petting.

He checks outside through the windows. It is cloudy. As the ECUADORIAN MUSIC keeps playing, he dresses up and gets ready to leave.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Daniel walks in the streets. Haussmann buildings all around him. Several people walk in all directions. Some tourists stop to take pictures of the buildings with their phones.

DANIEL (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

Music has always driven me forward.  
That is what I do here. Ecuador is  
far away, on the other side of the  
world. I came long time ago. God...  
was it 2005 or 2006? A lifetime  
ago. It's an interesting place to  
live in.

He gets on a bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

And sits by the window, looking outside at the streets and people.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Through music I don't forget who I  
am.

He notices a small music band performing in the street for gratuities.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Paris...I thought I could bring my  
own culture here. All Arts, music  
are popular. It is Paris after all,  
right? Even in the *banlieues*?  
Well...that's another story.

EXT. STREET/CLUB - DAY

Daniel walks and arrives at a club (cultural venue). It is closed, no people are around. He walks straight in.

INT. CLUB - DAY

There are a couple of Daniel's friends inside. He is greeting them in French.

All together, they prepare the space for what it seems to be a music performance. Setting up the stage, speakers, testing the sound, etc.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The music gig is on. A music band is performing on stage. The club is crowded and people are having a good time dancing.

Daniel is dancing alone in the corner. Music stops. Everybody keeps dancing. Young Woman is in the audience and slowly approaches Daniel.

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They are both in the living room. Low light, silence. Daniel's cat meows once or twice. Young Woman stands by the window, smoking, while Daniel is sitting, having a drink.

Soon she goes to him, touches his shoulder for a couple of seconds and passes her cigarette to him.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in English)  
Do you visit home?

DANIEL  
(in Spanish)  
Every year. As much as I can. I am lucky I can be there for one or two months every winter.

Beat.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
At the beginning it was difficult. Now I got used to it. I like what I do here. I love music. The city is nice. But of course I miss stuff from Ecuador. It is different.

Young Woman notices the decorative objects Daniel has in the house.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in English)  
The music, the many objects from Ecuador you keep in the house; they are not there to reconstruct the narrative of your roots, but rather tell the story of your displacement. They are not symbols but transitional objects that reflect multiple belonging. Ecuador turns into an exotic place represented through its arts and crafts, usually admired by foreigners...

INT. CAFE (WHERE YOUNG WOMAN AND NINA ARE LATER INTO THE FILM) - DAY

Young Woman sits at a table with NINA, a woman in her 40s who we haven't met yet. Looking outside the window, Young Woman continues what she was saying as if in one space and time:

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in English)  
...Your home, as most immigrants' homes, betray an obsession with making everyday existence beautiful and memorable.

(MORE)

## YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

There are many out there who think of your life here, a life filled with cultural souvenirs, as an altar to your unhappiness, but they are wrong...

## EXT. BANK OF THE SEINE - NIGHT

Young Woman and Daniel walk by the Seine. On the one side there is the river, while on the other there is a high wall.

## YOUNG WOMAN

...Oh, they are so wrong. They cannot see it is rather an eternal cry for communication and conversation, away from the homeland and not quite in the promised land.

They keep walking.

## DANIEL

(in Spanish)

Tell me more about the myth you are after. Europa?

## YOUNG WOMAN

(in English)

She is in my dreams, I only follow the signs. Europa was an Asian maiden abducted by Zeus, who was transformed into a beautiful white bull to seduce her. He held her captive in a new land that came, in time, to bear her name. The myth of an Asian immigrant who has embraced the humanistic values of Enlightenment. A story, her story, that begins with a bull and a rape, the beauty and the beast. While the god-bull may win the first skirmish, Europa, the maiden-Continent, has been avenged by history. Zeus is just a story now, He is powerless; but Europa is alive.

Beat.

## YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

What about you? Why Europe?

## INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The club is closed. Nobody is there, except for Daniel and Young Woman. He is on the stage, performing Ecuadorian music on his guitar. Young Woman is the only audience, quietly listening. She takes out her camera and takes a photograph of Daniel.

## INT. TRAIN - DAY

Young Woman sitting by the window, looking outside at the open fields. The TRAIN'S SOUND gradually gets distorted, turning into an eerie, alien sound.

Young Woman is falling asleep.

POET (V.O.)

(in Greek)

Of all that breathes and crawls  
across the earth, our mother earth  
breeds nothing feebler than a man.  
So long as the gods grant him  
power, spring in his knees, he  
thinks he will never suffer  
affliction down the years. But  
then, when the happy gods bring on  
the long hard times, bear them he  
must, against his will, and steel  
his heart. Our lives, our mood and  
mind as we pass across the earth,  
turn as the days turn...

## EXT. STREAM - DAY

A shallow stream, of clear water, with stones and submerged plants. A blank instant photograph is in the bottom of the stream, stuck between the rocks.

## EXT. STREETS - DAY

Busy streets of a city. High modern buildings along with some older ones. Vienna Secession, Plateresque, Neo-Mudéjar, Art Deco styles combined with glass constructions and huge screens for advertisement. Some statues on the top of some buildings. Young Woman is walking, observing the streets.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

(looking at different  
buildings)

Modern. Modern... once.

People, tourists and locals mixed, carry shopping bags. Shops are crowded. Mannequins stand at the shop fronts as silent observers. Young woman exchanges a look with one of them and takes a picture of it with her camera.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

GIOVANNI, late 30s, smartly dressed-up, is on a call.

AUTOMATED VOICE MACHINE (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

I am here to help you. Please state clearly the reason you are calling.

GIOVANNI

(in Spanish)

Personal issue.

Beat.

AUTOMATED VOICE MACHINE (V.O.)

I am sorry, I didn't catch this.  
Please repeat the reason you are calling.

GIOVANNI

Personal matter.

Beat.

AUTOMATED VOICE MACHINE (V.O.)

I am sorry, I didn't catch this.  
Please repeat the reason you are calling.

GIOVANNI

(in Italian)

Fuck!

Giovanni hangs up the phone in anger. Trying to pull himself together and get back to work on his computer. He starts typing an email but stops in the middle. He gets up and goes to the window. He is staring outside. His office is high up in a tall building. Other buildings across. People, as small figures, walk down in the streets.

INT. TUBE CARRIAGE - DAY

Giovanni in the tube. He sits, holding his backpack, staring ahead. It is crowded. The movement of the train makes LOUD DISTURBING SOUNDS.



The noise is gradually replaced by SOUNDS OF CICADAS. But they are soon abruptly interrupted by the announcement of the next stop.

AUTOMATED VOICE ANNOUNCEMENT (V.O.)  
(in Spanish)  
Next stop, Plaza de España.

The train stops and soon departs again. SOUNDS OF CICADAS are heard again.

GIOVANNI (V.O.)  
(in Italian)

It's scorching hot, midday in the middle of the summer. At my aunt's house, near my village in Sardinia. Me and Stefano - my cousin - are dying to go and play football. We don't care about the hot weather. The only thing we care about is when we can get that ball and leave the house. My aunt tells us we are allowed to go only after lunch. But we are not hungry at all. Soon she brings to the table hot freshly-made seafood pasta, cold salad and green olives from her own olive trees. I cannot remember eating that pasta. Probably because it was too fast. What I do remember is lying under an olive tree with Stefano afterwards, having a full belly, taking a nap as we are trying to recover. I think my aunt had a plan all along. It was a good day.

INT. TUBE PLATFORM - DAY

Giovanni is standing on the platform, next to the tracks. As the train soon arrives, Giovanni and all the others waiting board the train. In a few moments, the platform is empty.

INT. GIOVANNI'S KITCHEN - DAY

It is a modern kitchen. He prepares some pasta on the hob and eats it alone.

INT. GIOVANNI'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Giovanni is working on his laptop. The TV is playing in the background.

INT. GIOVANNI'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

He is relaxed on the couch. While the TV is still on, he is on his phone, scrolling and messaging.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

LOUD ELECTRONIC MUSIC in the crowded club. People are dancing. Giovanni is alone, dancing and drinking.

INT. GIOVANNI'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Giovanni is lying on the couch. He is still in the clothes he wore at the club. Falling asleep, while Fellini's La Strada is playing on the TV.

Young Woman is there and covers him with a blanket.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Giovanni and Young Woman are having coffee. The streets around are busy with shoppers, tourists and locals.

GIOVANNI

(in Italian)

I like this. I like it. Having coffee... I didn't do that in London. 7 years. Then Madrid. Valencia is different.

Beat.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

But even here. With work and everything... you know.

Giovanni gets disturbed by a notification on his phone.

YOUNG WOMAN

(in English)

Are you satisfied with your life here?

Giovanni is contemplating for a moment.

GIOVANNI

Yes, I guess. It's better than London for me here. Life is different, people are different; warmer. Work is everywhere the same. It's a good company, it's fine. It keeps me busy.

Beat.

YOUNG WOMAN

Are you yearning for anything?

Giovanni is thoughtful, looking around.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Life in the metropolis, always running out of time. Being busy, staying busy; as a badge of honour and trendy status symbol, to show our importance, value, or self-worth; busy as sign of productivity and company loyalty, a by-product of the digital age, our distinguished 24/7 connected world.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Giovanni walks in the busy streets aimlessly.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

A life with no time to reflect on the unfulfilled promises of modern happiness...

A group of tourists are taking pictures.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

...What started as to 'have it all' has now turned in to 'do it all'. The consumer becomes the merchandise. More spaces, more homes in the span of one's life, more borders to cross...

Giovanni reaches a...

EXT. SMALL PLAZA - DAY

Away from the crowds, in-between tall buildings.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ...but no time at all. A vanishing  
 present. The disease of this  
 millennium will be called  
 chronophobia, the fear of passing  
 time, and its treatment will be  
 embarrassingly old-fashioned.

He stands in the middle. A photograph of him is taken. He  
 screams loudly. The printing of the photo is complete. Young  
 Woman is silently present in the corner of the plaza. She is  
 holding Giovanni's instant photograph as it is being  
 developed.

EXT. GREENFIELD LAND - DAY

WHITE BULLS are walking aimlessly.

POET (V.O.)  
 (in Greek)  
 They called her and she came down,  
 unfastened the door, and bade them  
 enter. They, thinking no evil,  
 followed her, all except  
 Eurylochus, who suspected mischief  
 and staid outside.

INT. BAR - DAY

It is a POSH BAR; the decoration, the lighting, the way  
 people are dressed up. It is crowded. At a table, a group of  
 YOUNG PEOPLE, including JURGITA, a woman in her 20s, dressed  
 up in an evening dress, as others in the bar. They are  
 chatting, but no sound can be heard. As the WAITER is serving  
 them snacks and drinks:

POET (V.O.)  
 (in Greek)  
 When she had got them into her  
 house, she set them upon benches  
 and seats and mixed them a mess  
 with cheese, honey, meal, and  
 Pramnian wine, but she drugged it  
 with wicked poisons to make them  
 forget their homes, and when they  
 had drunk she turned them into pigs  
 by a stroke of her wand, and shut  
 them up in her pig-styes. They were  
 like pigs-head, hair, and all, and  
 they grunted just as pigs do;  
 (MORE)

POET (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 but their senses were the same as  
 before, and they remembered  
 everything.

Sounds from the bar can now be heard. It is noisy; people  
 chatting, the music.

JURGITA  
 (to the waiter, in  
 English)  
 Thank you. Can I have another Coke?

People are talking a lot, as Jurgita sits silently. The  
 dialogue is inaudible, covered by noise and music. It is not  
 clear what language they are speaking. Some words are  
 definitely in English, but most are in a foreign language.

After a while, Jurgita loses interest in the conversation and  
 looks around for the waiter to call.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Jurgita walks in the streets alone. Her elegant dress  
 contrasts with the surrounding gloomy atmosphere. The sky is  
 dark and cloudy, the streets are quiet, the terraced houses  
 are old and suburban.

As she keeps walking, she reaches an industrial part of the  
 town. The streets here are rundown, with buildings covered  
 with graffiti.

Jurgita pauses in the middle of the street.

Beat.

JURGITA (V.O.)  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 When I was 10, my parents broke up.  
 I was spending a lot of time with  
 my dad, where he was living, in  
 garages and poor neighbourhoods in  
 Vilnius. It was not the best time  
 for him but I remember those days  
 fondly.

As Jurgita's footsteps and other sounds of the town are  
 heard:

SERIES OF STILL IMAGES

- The Tay Rail Bridge, seen from a window of a train while on  
 the bridge.

- Dundee train station.
- A detached house.
- Terraced houses.
- V&A Dundee.
- The sign of a restaurant: THE WEST HOUSE.
- A close-up of the UNICORN on HMS Unicorn ship
- Jurgita walking in the street
- Jurgita opening a house's door.

END OF SERIES OF STILL IMAGES

INT. JURGITA'S FLAT - DAY

Jurgita goes to her room and changes to more comfortable clothes; a jeans and a hoodie.

On her phone, she plays a PODCAST IN LITHUANIAN.

Then, in the BATHROOM she removes the make-up from her face.

JURGITA (V.O.)

(in Lithuanian)

I moved to Scotland when I was 15.  
I didn't really want to. I followed  
my mum. The interesting thing is  
that after all these years, you  
realise that you still cannot speak  
English properly but cannot speak  
Lithuanian either. You speak that  
at the level you knew it when you  
left, as a young teenager. It is  
frightening sometimes.

Beat.

JURGITA (V.O.)

(in Lithuanian)

I enjoy listening to Lithuanian. It  
calms me down.

INT. JURGITA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The PODCAST is still playing in the background. Jurgita is looking around, amongst several random items and old magazines. She starts picking up some of those. There are numerous illustrations around.

Young Woman is sitting at the back of the room.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

(in English)

How do you express your feelings in a foreign language? How does one communicate their pain or happiness? Can one love and be intimate with somebody in a foreign language? Intimate means innermost, pertaining to a deep nature, very personal, sexual. But, to intimate also means to communicate with a hint or other indirect sign, to imply subtly.

Jurgita starts using the materials she has picked up and works on a COLLAGE.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

(in English)

Perhaps all one can do is improvise. Aesthetic therapy. Mastering the art of intimation, mimicking themes of displacement through a cryptic disguise.

The COLLAGE is complete. The PODCAST is over.

Silence.

Jurgita is contemplating, looking outside the window.

INT. STORE - DAY

Jurgita wears a headset and sets it up. Testing the microphone:

JURGITA

(in English)

Good morning everyone.

It is a clothes store. Jurgita works here.

She arranges clothes on shelves and helps customers find what they need.

LATER

Jurgita is having a break. She is quiet, checking her phone. She is on her PERSONAL WEBSITE which refers to her as ILLUSTRATOR.

The break quickly comes to an end. She has a sip of water, puts on her headset and goes back to work.

SERIES OF SHOTS (ARCHIVE FOOTAGE IN LOW RESOLUTION)

- WOMEN working in a textile factory, doing repetitive tasks
- Machines are working tirelessly in factories
- Trucks transfer finished products
- Cars and carriages in streets
- Crowded streets
- A group of KIDS playing in the street
- YOUNG WOMEN waving
- A crowd cheering
- People running cheerfully in the streets
- An ELDERLY MAN looking silently
- Train passing from the Tay Rail Bridge

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. PINE TREE FOREST - DAY

Tall pine trees all around, reaching the sky. Some light manages to come through to the ground. Jurgita walks slowly through the forest. Young Woman is right behind her, a few feet away. It is peaceful, quiet. Only sounds of birds can be heard.

After a while, Jurgita stops.

JURGITA

(in Lithuanian)

You know, all this used to be sand dunes. Not too long ago, in the 20s... 1920s. Until humans decided to turn it into a forest. The Tentsmuir Forest.



Beat.

JURGITA (CONT'D)  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 Isn't it beautiful?

Jurgita approaches one tree. She touches and feels the tree trunk for a few seconds. The sound of an INSTANT PHOTOGRAPH being taken and printed.

JURGITA (CONT'D)  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 Let's go.

Jurgita and Young Woman continue walking through the forest, reaching the end of the forest, where sand dunes begin. It is brighter here. The sound of the sea can be heard. Jurgita takes off her shoes and as they keep walking towards the sea:

JURGITA (V.O.)  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 There are many pine tree forests in Lithuania. We used to go there often. I was living in a small town so it was easy to visit them. Wouldn't need much time.

Jurgita picks up a wooden stick and uses it to write in the wet sand.

JURGITA (V.O.)  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 This is one reason I like living in Dundee. It is not the best place but I appreciate what it has to offer. I feel comfortable living here.

She finishes writing a word in big letters, smiles and cheerfully goes towards the sea. It is in Lithuanian. After a few seconds, a subtitle provides the translation: HELP

INT. SECOND-HAND STORE - DAY

STORE ASSISTANT (O.S.)  
 (in English)  
 How can I help you?

JURGITA  
 (in English)  
 Do you have any magazines from the 60s?

STORE ASSISTANT (O.S.)  
 Yes, we have a few left at the  
 back. Is there something specific  
 you are looking for?

JURGITA  
 Not actually. I will have a look  
 around.

Jurgita picks up a few magazines and checks around for other  
 materials she may be interested in.

A PODCAST IN LITHUANIAN starts playing in her mind.

INT. JURGITA'S FLAT - NIGHT

As the PODCAST goes on playing from her phone, Jurgita leaves  
 what she bought on the table.

JURGITA  
 (in Lithuanian)  
 Before you go, I have something to  
 give you.

Young Woman is sitting by the window. Jurgita searches  
 amongst her illustrations and collages and finds it: It is an  
 ILLUSTRATION OF THE MYTH OF THE ABDUCTION OF EUROPA.

Young Woman looks surprised and accepts it with a smile.

OVER BLACK

POET (V.O.)  
 (in Greek)  
 Calypso sat down face-to-face with  
 the king and the women served her  
 nectar and ambrosia. They reached  
 out for the good things that lay at  
 hand and when they'd had their fill  
 of food and drink the lustrous one  
 took up a new approach.  
 "So then, royal son of Laertes,  
 Odysseus, man of exploits, still  
 eager to leave at once and hurry  
 back to your own home, your beloved  
 native land? Good luck to you, even  
 so. Farewell!

EXT. GREENFIELD LAND - DAY

A white bull, breathing slowly. An imposing figure.

POET (V.O.)

But if you only knew, down deep,  
 what pains are fated to fill your  
 cup before you reach that shore,  
 you'd stay right here, preside in  
 our house with me and be immortal.  
 Much as you long to see your wife,  
 the one you pine for all your  
 days..."

SOUND OF TRAIN, which gradually gets distorted, turning into  
 an eerie, alien sound.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Young Woman sits by the window looking at the open fields  
 outside. It is cloudy. The train is moving fast.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Borders...crossed.  
 Visible...invisible. Visible...Am I  
 dreaming? Are they true?  
 (closing her eyes, falling  
 asleep)  
 Exclusionary practices...

INT. TRAIN - DAY - LATER

The train has reached the outskirts of a city. Slower now, it  
 passes houses, buildings. Young Woman is looking outside the  
 window.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

It is a big station, with many platforms but not too many  
 people around. The train arrives. Young Woman gets off and  
 looks around. She takes the instant camera out of her pocket  
 and takes a photograph of the station. Maintaining an  
 inexpressive face, and as the photo is being developed, she  
 walks out of the station.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Young Woman walks in the empty quiet streets, noticing  
 everything around her. Signs are in English. There is a big  
 SIGN: CITY OF MANCHESTER. Not many pedestrians or cars are  
 out there, only buildings; colossal constructions made of  
 glass, steel and concrete.

INT. CAFE - DAY

NINA, late 40s, is having coffee, sitting by the window. She is looking closely at an ad on a billboard on a wall across the street. It has the face of a young woman smiling, holding a shampoo product. The streets are busy, pedestrians and cars are swiftly passing by.

Young Woman is sitting at the same table. Quietly they are both watching outside the window, observing.

NINA

(in Greek)

22 years in Greece, moving from Georgia. 5 years in England now. It is hard... leaving behind your house, friends, family. As the place changes, everything changes.

YOUNG WOMAN

(in English)

Migration, diaspora, displacement, uprootedness, immigration, emigration, refugeeism, exile, resettlement, expatriation, deportation, relocation, crossing borders, voluntarily or involuntarily. All forces of loss and discovery. Human mobility towards and across the almost mythological Europe, with its history, culture, rules, bureaucracy, jobs and money. Multiple abstracting and uprooting effects on travelers, on people, who, like objects, are turned into commodities. As they move into the public arena, the market, complex processes of circulation weaken their sensual dimensions and destruct the links with the natural environment they once occupied. The fabric of modern, and now post-modern, urban life. Objects and people of certain value, in alien spaces, in a journey through a dark tunnel, barely remembering the beginning and compulsively looking for the light at its end. But the potentialities of this journey are not at the end but sideways, on little roads and alleys. Even on cracks and holes on the wall.

INT. CAR - DAY

Nina drives through the city; offices, stores, people carrying shopping bags, more stores. She reaches the outskirts of the city. Tight residential streets, with several dilapidated houses and fences shattered by time.

EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Nina is offloading the grocery shopping from the car. Her husband, BABIS (late 40s), comes out from the house to give her a hand.

INT. NINA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Nina is cutting and preparing vegetables on the kitchen counter. It is windy outside. There is a disturbing sound of a broken fence. Once Nina closes the small window, the sound becomes weaker.

Babis enters the kitchen. He leaves a toolbox on the table and looks for something in the cupboards.

BABIS  
(in Greek)  
Have you seen the rope?

NINA  
No. Will the string I use to tie  
the chicken do?

BABIS  
For now, yes.

NINA  
Bottom drawer.

Babis picks it up and leaves.

Nina continues with her cooking.

INT. NINA'S KITCHEN - LATER

Nina is serving the food. Babis is already sitting.

NINA  
(loudly)  
Anna, come! Food is ready.

Beat.

ANNA, early 20s, joins them at the table.

Babis gets up, opens slightly the small window and fetches three glasses of water to the table.

They continue enjoying their meal.

ANNA  
It's very nice, mum.

Nina nods positively while eating. She then stops, and concentrates for a moment, trying to hear more closely. The disturbing sound is not there anymore.

NINA  
You fixed the fence?

BABIS  
(while eating)  
Temporarily.

NINA  
That will do.

Babis serves tzatziki to his plate.

NINA (CONT'D)  
Can you pass the tzatziki?

Babis carefully passes it to her. Nina serves herself and passes it to Anna, who then passes it to another person at the table. It is the Young Woman. They are all quietly having their meal. In the meantime, the sound of the wind coming from the open window is progressively replaced by the sound of waves.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(while the others are  
eating, looking at Nina)  
You seem confused. Don't worry  
about your feelings. Some don't  
have a clear sign. Embrace them  
all. Just keep going.

I/E. BEDROOM - NIGHT/DAY

Nina and the Young Woman sit next to each other on the bed, by the window.

Old pictures in frames on the bedside table. A picture of an old woman on Nina's phone, as she is giving a call.

NINA  
 (in Georgian)  
 Mum?

Young Woman holds Nina's hand. While the conversation over the phone continues, there is a:

SERIES OF SHOTS (PROGRESIVELY FROM NIGHT TO DAY)

- in the empty kitchen
- the quiet garden (with the fixed fence)
- empty streets of the city in the night
- an English flag waving in the wind
- antennas on house roofs against a cloudy sky
- a flock of birds flying away.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS

NINA  
 How are you?

NINA'S MUM (V.O.)  
 (in Georgian)  
 I'm fine, my love... fine.

NINA  
 How is your leg doing?

NINA'S MUM (V.O.)  
 Better. It still hurts a little but the doctor said it will improve if I rest it.

NINA  
 Take good care of it.

Beat.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 I wanted to tell you about Irina's wedding. It is in August, you remember? There are some issues at work for Babis. Since he recovered after breaking his hand, he has to do more hours.

Beat.

NINA (CONT'D)

We might have to change our tickets. I am not sure if we can make it and we will lose the money for the tickets if we don't change them early. We are thinking of coming in November instead. Before Christmas is always quieter at work.

Beat.

NINA (CONT'D)

It is actually better this way. We will have more time together. Take care, mum. Kisses, also from Anna and Babis. I'll call you in the weekend.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Nina at work. She checks lists and numbers on the computer. There are many boxes around her. Posters of perfume brands on the walls.

She talks to workers, giving them instructions. Most of them looking East European. Babis is one of them. Everybody works hard, packing perfumes in boxes. There are too many perfume bottles around.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nina picks a bottle from the table and gently applies perfume on her wrists and neck. She is dressed up, fixing her hair in front of the mirror. Putting on a pair of earrings is the last touch.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nina and Babis are walking in the street in fast pace. It is cold and windy. While there are people around, drinking beer or so, it is relatively a quiet night. It is the sound of the wind that mostly can be heard.

Soon, they have reached. It is a crowded Greek tavern.



I/E. GREEK TAVERN - NIGHT

It is very busy. Loud traditional Greek music and people talking. Nina and Babis are sitting at a big table with several friends.

They all raise their glasses.

NINA  
(in Greek)  
Cheers!

There is a smile on everybody's face; chatting, drinking, dancing.

Young Woman is having a cigarette outside the tavern. She stubs out her cigarette on the pavement and takes an instant photograph of Nina.

Suddenly everything stops. No music, no chatter, no movement. Everybody in the tavern is standing still. Nina, gets up, trying to squeeze through to the exit.

NINA (CONT'D)  
(navigating through the  
crowd)  
Sorry... I'm sorry.

She is outside.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in English)  
Shall we go for a walk?

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Nina and Young Woman walk in slow pace, aimlessly. The streets are empty and quiet. Tall glass buildings around, mostly offices.

NINA  
(in Greek)  
So you never told me who you are.  
Do you live here?

Beat.

NINA (CONT'D)  
I'm here for work. To make a  
living. You?

YOUNG WOMAN  
 (in English)  
 Are you going back?

NINA  
 To Greece? Or to Georgia?

Nina laughs.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 We want to go back to Greece. But not any time soon. We have friends there. We have friends also here. We are having a good time. But unavoidably we miss those from before. We left big parts of our lives in Greece.

Beat.

YOUNG WOMAN  
 Diasporic intimacy; never opposed to displacement but constituted by it. Through personal stories and secrets, it promises only a precarious affection - deep, yet aware of its transience. When spoken in foreign languages, it reveals the inadequacies of translation. An intimacy not utopian but rather dystopic, rooted in the suspicion of a single home, in shared longing without belonging. It is belated and never final; objects, people and places were lost in the past and one knows that they can be lost again. The illusion of complete belonging has been shattered. Yet, one discovers that there is still a lot to share. The foreign backdrop, the memory of past losses, the recognition of impermanence. An intimacy that thrives on the hope of the possibilities of human understanding and survival, of unpredictable chance encounters. A diasporic intimacy haunted by the images of home and homeland, yet also disclosing some of the furtive pleasures of migration.

Beat.

NINA

Who knows where we will end up.

YOUNG WOMAN

New friends become old, the novel habit. It is the beauty and horror of time. Linear and cyclical at the same time. What you experience, what you feel, is complicated. In the old days, doctors would treat you with opium, leeches for purging the stomach or a trip to the Swiss Alps if you were lucky enough. These days it is left on time.

NINA

You are young.  
What are you doing here?

Young Woman smiles.

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm looking for something. As everybody, deceived by one myth and following another. The myth you are after is that of Europe. Mine is that of Europa. It will take time to reach there. But there is no rush.

Nina looks confused. They walk down a dark street, until they cannot be seen no more.

OVER BLACK

POET (V.O.)

(in Greek)

No winning words about death to me, shining Odysseus! By god, I'd rather slave on earth for another man - some dirt-poor tenant farmer who scrapes to keep alive - than rule down here over all the breathless dead. But come, tell me the news about my gallant son. Did he make his way to the wars, did the boy become a champion - yes or no? Tell me of noble Peleus, any word you've heard - still holding pride of place among his Myrmidon hordes, or do they despise the man in Hellas and in Phthia because old age has lamed his arms and legs?

(MORE)

POET (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 For I no longer stand in the light  
 of day - the man I was.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Sun rays are coming through the cloudy sky. The sun is low. It is still early morning. The noisy old train is going fast through fields. Mountains behind, in the horizon. Young Woman's eyes are locked on the landscapes. It seems as if her sight cannot catch up with the speed.

Soon, the train slows down and stops. It has reached its next stop.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Young Woman gets off. It is a small, remote, derelict train station. Nobody is around. The train departs. Quiet. Young Woman affectionately touches the wall. She notices a sound. It is not clear in her ears. Is it music? It is MUSIC, from afar, PLAYED ON HARMONICA.

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - DAY

Young Woman walks through the streets. Houses around, but no people; not in the streets, not in the yards, not on the balconies. Young Woman stops for a moment and observes the place around. MUSIC ON HARMONICA is slightly louder now. The source of the music is guiding her, as she continues walking.

EXT. POET'S HOUSE - DAY

She has reached the source. A house with an open window. Music is coming from inside. Young W stands outside. Music stops.

POET (O.S.)  
 (in Greek)  
 Come inside. Don't stand in the  
 cold.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

POET, an elderly man in his 70s. He is making greek coffee. He is alone, stirring coffee in the ibrik, waiting patiently for the foam to rise. Once it is done, he pours the coffee in a mug.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/HALL - DAY

Holding the mug, Poet walks slowly and in discomfort the wooden stairs to the second floor.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/ROOM - DAY

Poet is sitting at a desk, working on his laptop. There are several books on the table. On the cover of one of those, the Greek title reads: SENSITIVITY, SHORT STORIES by GIANNIS TZANIS.

POET (V.O.)  
(in Greek)  
To my daughter Panagiota.

A frame with a PICTURE OF A WOMAN (30S) HOLDING A BABY on the table, as Poet continues working on the computer.

POET (V.O.)  
(in Greek)  
I never lived in a foreign land.  
But now I've learned it hurts more  
those who are left at home.  
That's why, often at nights I open  
the trap hatch,  
I wake up the poet, and we change  
the map of the whole world,  
We move seas, cut distances,  
abolish doors, locks.  
That's how I reach - love rips even  
the mountains - to the closed,  
unknown room of yours,  
Only to tuck you in.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Young Woman is standing by the open window, looking outside. There is a tall tree. Soft wind is blowing its leaves.

POET (O.S.)  
(in Greek)  
You can stay as long as you want.

Young Woman turns swiftly behind her. The poet is in the room, browsing through his books.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in English)  
Where is everyone?

POET

Gone. All gone. Why, what did you expect? You know that already.

Young Woman looks down almost apologetically.

YOUNG WOMAN

How come you never left?

POET

I had my job, my wife here. My children, when they were young. Different times. Why would I leave?

YOUNG WOMAN

You are a creative person. Didn't you want to meet other cultures, other people?

POET

Through my writing, my imagination, I travel anywhere I want. We did visit Italy when my daughter moved there. But I never lived in another place, not even inside Greece. In my poems and short stories I visit and re-visit places. They are often instilled with my own experiences, my own memories, fictionalised to an extent. I have never stopped writing.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Poet and his granddaughter Maria, 8, are sitting at a table playing a card game.

POET

(in Greek, uncovering a card having the Greek flag on it)

Oh, Greece. A Greek flag.

As poet continues uncovering other cards:

POET (CONT'D)

Oh no. It was right next...

Poet is getting distracted by food on the table - some Greek traditional pies and other snacks - and starts having some bites.

MARIA  
 (in Greek)  
 Play.

POET  
 I'm playing. Let me check this  
 card.

He stops playing again, grabbing some more bites.

MARIA  
 Come on, play. Your mind is not on  
 the game.

POET  
 (while eating)  
 On what is it?

MARIA  
 On food.

POET  
 Am I a fool to have it on the game  
 and not on food? What is more  
 tasty? The game or food?

Poet is still eating.

MARIA  
 Grandpa...

Beat.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 Grandpa...

POET  
 Wait.

Maria sighs.

POET (CONT'D)  
 (starts playing again)  
 Everything is played patiently.

After a while, they finish uncovering the cards and start counting them to find out the winner. Maria finishes counting hers:

MARIA  
 22.

POET  
 Mine now.

Counting one card at a time:

POET (CONT'D)

5...10...

MARIA

(laughing)

Grandpa... wait, I'm counting.

POET

You did yours.

(continuing the counting)

15...20...

Maria and the Poet are laughing cheerfully.

EXT. HOUSE GARDEN - DAY

Poet picks up a couple of tools. He walks to a corner, where he grows some vegetables and starts working on the soil. Maria is sitting on the other side, being distracted on a mobile phone. Soon, he grabs the hose and starts watering the vegetables. The water sprinkles on the air are becoming more and more visibly distinct. The sound of calm sea, somehow heard from distance.

POET (V.O.)

(in Greek)

My grandmother was taken away from us by Constantinople. We moved there, her daughter, her younger son and at the village only the older son remained, with his children. She never felt comfortable at Constantinople. Always going back to the village. A farmer I was born, my child, a farmer I will die. She explained to me one day I was looking straight into her eyes with complaint, as she was leaving to the village.

OVER BLACK

POET (V.O.)

That's how it happened. Quietly and peacefully after a few days. Her candle went out and flew up to the sky - airy sweet soul - to daintily narrate her stories to the angels. Who knows? Such charismas, maybe, are more popular up there.

(MORE)



## POET (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Now that I look at her photograph.  
 Her patient smile, her big dreamy  
 eyes. My memory is filled up with  
 sad and happy angels. My soul is  
 deluged with the light and serenity  
 of the East. My beloved grandma...  
 Now that this unbearable, civilised  
 Western way of living relentlessly  
 is chasing us, as we are chasing it  
 all day. Now that tanks and canons  
 organise, every other night a  
 parade into the soul...

## EXT. STREET - DAY

Poet and Young Woman are walking slowly, next to each other.

## POET (V.O.)

... Come over into my sleep, a bit  
 more often to lull my dreams with  
 your fairytales and stories. Come  
 over and open your wings a little  
 to perch under the kid I carry  
 inside me for so many years, that  
 stubbornly refuses to become an  
 adult in a world like this. Where  
 everyone is born old.

They have reached the beach. Overlooking the calm sea, Young  
 Woman takes her instant camera off her coat and takes a  
 photograph of the scenery.

## EXT. BEACH - DAY

Poet and Young Woman are sitting on a couple of chairs at the  
 empty of people beach. It is quiet, peaceful. Only the calm  
 sea waves can be heard. As it is quite cold, Poet throws a  
 thin blanket over Young Woman, and then covers himself up.

## YOUNG WOMAN

(in English)

The other day you told me you never  
 visited the place where your  
 grandmother used to live in Turkey,  
 before being exiled to Greece. I  
 never understood why.

## POET

(in Greek)

I couldn't take it. It would be too  
 hard for me.

(MORE)

## POET (CONT'D)

I heard too many stories from my grandmother, about the place, the people. She had an amazing ability to narrate stories, even though she was illiterate. She wouldn't be able to even separate alpha from omega.

Beat.

## POET (CONT'D)

They were promised a different future. They were longing for that their whole lives. As they did to us later on. Greek people are not unique though. In Eastern Europe, in the Balkans...the same promise of European modernity. I'm still yearning for that.

Beat.

## POET (CONT'D)

All my life, I keep looking back at the past, my memories. I noticed you don't talk so much about your history. You only care about your quest, your dream.

## YOUNG WOMAN

I have been following the signs. They are not clear, not words that tell me accurately where I need to go next, but I trust those images. I will find her.

## POET

You are getting closer. You are at the right place. This is where everything started. But be prepared, soon you will have to start thinking of your next adventure. Like Odysseus, finally as soon as he returns to his beloved homeland and wife, he must leave again just as soon. And he knows that. That is the part of the story that people often ignore or forget. The poem is over, but not his Odyssey.

As Young Woman is reflecting on the Poet's last words, he gets ready to leave. Before he departs:

POET (CONT'D)  
 (in Greek)  
 Can you take a photograph of me  
 with your camera?

YOUNG WOMAN  
 (in English)  
 I got already a few.

POET  
 Really? I did not notice.

YOUNG WOMAN  
 But I can take one more.

As he poses in an inexpressive face, she takes the  
 photograph. As he is leaving:

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 I will let it develop and give it  
 to you later.

POET  
 (not looking at her)  
 It's for you sweetheart.

Young Woman looks at the printed photograph. It's still  
 blank, yet to be developed.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)  
 (in English)  
 Exhausted marginal Europeans. And  
 how can they not be by the  
 unfulfilled promises of the modern  
 and post-modern happiness.  
 He is left behind, exiled at his  
 home. The experience is not unique  
 to those who left their land.  
 People who lived through major  
 historical upheavals and  
 transitions can easily relate to  
 it. Exile means to leap outside.  
 But the leap is also a gap, often  
 an unbridgeable one.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - LATER

Young Woman is alone standing at the beach. She slowly walks  
 on the sand, reaching the sea. First wave comes to cover her  
 bare feet.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Even more exhausted the old, in the margins of life. Holding onto their memories, in an almost desperate attempt to exist. Living in a society that ensures there is no place for them to go but down.

First wave goes as she starts stepping forward into the sea.

The water is over her knees now. She does not care she is wet, neither that it's cold.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/ROOM - DAY

As a Super 8mm film, Poet on his laptop, having a video call with his daughter Panagiota. They are inaudibly chatting, smiling.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Communication is a fragile concept for the old, if not for everyone, these days. Technology offers itself as the solution to this. It has become the opiate of the people. Issues of time are almost irrelevant in the world of internet, in cyberspace. Computer memory is not affected or hurt by time, distance, politics and history. Everything has the same digital texture. What remains in common, is the fear of loss of memory. In cyberspace, amnesia could occur in a heartbeat with a sudden technical failure.

Harmonica music starts, at times dissonant, at times distorted by tape hiss.

SERIES OF STILL IMAGES

- Poet swimming, wearing his captain's hat.
- A closer look of him swimming.
- A few pebbles at the beach.
- A dead jellyfish lying on the sand.
- Poet's books on the table.

- A blank notepad with a pencil.
- His laptop.
- A mobile phone.
- A phone booth at a small square in the village.
- Empty small streets with old overhead power lines.
- A clock on the wall.

END OF SERIES OF STILL IMAGES

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Harmonica music goes on.

As a Super 8mm film, Poet is in the sea alone. Water is up to his knees. He dives in and starts swimming, wearing his captain's hat.

INT. POET'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Poet continues playing the harmonica music. Maria is in the room, watching him. She tries to control her laughter, putting her hands over her mouth. The image of her grandfather playing the harmonica is very funny to her.

Moments later he stops playing and starts singing. It is a Greek sorrowful folklore song, in which the same lyrics are repeated again and again.

POET  
(singing in Greek)  
In foreign land....  
Oblivion I'll find, mother...  
In foreign land....  
Oblivion I'll find, mother...

Soon he stops singing, staying awkwardly silent. Maria continues her failed attempt to control her laughter.

OVER BLACK

POET (V.O.)  
(in Greek)  
Then back through the royal house  
the old nurse went to tell the  
women the news and bring them in at  
once.

(MORE)

## POET (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They came crowding out of their quarters, torch in hand, flung their arms around Odysseus, hugged him, home at last, and kissed his head and shoulders, seized his hands, and he, overcome by a lovely longing, broke down and wept...deep in his heart he knew them one and all.

## EXT. WOODS - DAY

Tall cottonwood trees everywhere around. The sun is low. Light is barely coming through. Young Woman walks slowly amongst small bushes and the trees.

## YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

(in English)

I'm not sure where it was. In one of my stops. It was a lady, middle-aged, Eastern European I think. When I reluctantly told her about my dream, my quest to find Europa, she knew all about it and started laughing. She knew what I was after. "And what will you do when you find her?", she asked me. "Be reassured, young woman, she is alive. Europa is alive. And he is powerless, Zeus is just a story now", she said. "The prisoner of the deceiving oppressor's unending desire for mortal flesh, Europa, has been avenged by history. The god-bull won the first battle, but it is the maiden-Continent that triumphs, in time". The humanistic values". I wasn't sure what she meant back then. Now, having travelled across the continent, I am aware. I will be cautious of the bull.

She sees a bright opening ahead and goes that way. As she approaches, RUNNING WATER can be heard.

She gets out of the woods. Looking ahead she sees a slow-moving small

RIVER

Sand dunes and cottonwood trees at the river's banks. It is quiet. Only the sounds of the river flowing and birds disturb the silence. It is still dawn.

Young Woman suddenly hears girls giggling from afar. She cannot see them though. She starts walking on the dunes, looking for them. Finally she reaches them. Three WOMEN, early 20s, are happily collecting flowers by the river. As they notice Young Woman:

WOMAN #1  
(smiling in Greek)  
Come... you are late.

Young Woman is surprised. She does not recognise these women. Reluctantly she approaches them.

WOMAN #2  
(in Greek)  
What took you so long?

As Young Woman reaches them, she notices a tall WHITE HORSE standing at the opposite bank of the river. It is an imposing figure. She is staring at it. The SLOW BREATHING OF THE BULL is heard, increasingly louder. Women are not distracted, continuing collecting flowers.

White Horse starts walking away, down the river. Young Woman leaves Women behind, trying to follow the horse. She notices a small wooden raft tied by the river. She rushes to untie the raft and get on it. In her attempt, all her INSTANT PHOTOGRAPHS drop on the sandy shore. But she is not aware. The photos of Daniel, Giovanni, Nina and the others are all left behind, including a blank one. It is the one of the Poet, that never got developed.

Young Woman on the raft in the middle of the slow-moving river. Women are looking anxiously at her as she drifts away. Soon, the raft stops moving, against the flow of the water. It stands still in the middle of the river. Young Woman is calm, relaxed. She is looking at the white horse walking further away, until it cannot be seen no more.

Silence.

Young Woman lies down on the raft and closes her eyes.