



LUCENT DREAMING

Issue 0

WHERE DREAMS FOLLOW YOU

FEATURING
ORIGINAL
WORK FROM
Jonas David
Jannat Ahmed
Joachim Buur
Jess Beynon
AND MORE

PERUSE THE SAMPLE ISSUE
OF LUCENT DREAMING, A NEW
INDEPENDENT CREATIVE WRITING
MAGAZINE PUBLISHING BEAUTIFUL,
STRANGE AND SURREAL SHORT STORIES,
POETRY AND ARTWORK FROM EMERGING
AUTHORS AND ARTISTS WORLDWIDE .

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Expect nothing usual here. Issue 0 of Lucent Dreaming is our sample issue, a taster of the content you'll be seeing in Issue 1. For writers and artists, it's a glimpse into how we intend to use and publish your work. For advertisers, you'll see how and where ads are placed. And, for our supporters, future and present, you'll see where and how we recognise those people who have donated their time and money to bringing our magazine to print and screen.

You'll notice Issue 0 has content written and produced by ourselves, the editors. It's our interpretation of the strange, surreal and beautiful writing we hope to publish in the months to come. We hope some of it inspires you to create, write and produce your own work (and that we find it in our submission queue!)

If you like what you see and want to get involved, you can support us by sharing, donating, posting about and preordering our first issue. Proceeds will be used to cover the cost of our first print run. Enjoy!

Jannat Ahmed EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

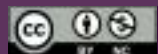
CONTENTS

NO WELCOME by Jannat Ahmed	2
MOON by Jonas David	5
PIPE DREAM by V Coffin-Price	10
CONTRIBUTORS	12
SUPPORTERS	13

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No Welcome

Leathery branches sway over her lonely doorway,
Fat and bloated with grey water,
Pulled from a week of black clouds,
Dusted with six nights' ashes,
Exhaled by six burning villages now quite lost.

The big tree beside, so dark and tall,
Once supple, now coarse,
Quietly feeds on Earthy-swirl,
Dense with once-blood and twice-tears
Shed by the wounded young soldier at her door,
Finding no one home, and a makeshift gravestone.

An hour passes at the graveside, twelve feet from home,
Never; she cries, *Never*; she cloys, *have I been so alone*.
Her bloodied face worn,
Her soft black hair shorn,
Her single photo torn.
And no welcome, no mother
Except to mourn.

She stumbles back, buries her face
In the matted soil by the porch, her soul quaking in the rubble,
For every room is bilge,
And every other burnt,
And every body gone.

(But they had won.)

by Jannat Ahmed

Her bloodied face worn,
Her soft black hair shorn,
Her single photo torn.
And no welcome, no mother
Except to mourn.

Jannat Ahmed No WELCOME



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Lucent Dreaming,
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and beautiful
writing and artwork
from emerging authors
and artists worldwide.

Moon

by Jonas David

Thom tapped a finger against one leg of the tripod that held his telescope—a gift from Andreus—and watched passing headlights on the road. Soon a pair of lights would stop, blink off, and he'd hear a car door slam then feet padding on the stone slab walkway through his neatly trimmed grass.

Vehicles groaned past like distant ghosts struggling for attention. Their light washed over the yard, then receded, a meaningless tide. Thom felt that somehow the light from the cars dirtied his lawn, yellowed it, drained it of the essence of its grass-ness. Only when the cars had moved on, and the grass was lit by the light of the moon, did he feel it was truly a lawn at all.

A pair of lights stopped in the dark street, a door slammed, shoes tapped on stone. Thom tilted his telescope and peered through its lens at the path. The car lights lit Andreus's legs as he climbed the steps. Andreus's brown calves flexed, and his thighs tightened the fabric of his pale, green shorts with each step. His long-fingered hands held a colourful box. His shoulders were rigid, elbows out, as if whatever was inside may explode at any second. Thom moved the telescope to keep him in view, then, the timer on the headlights turned them off, and Andreus was bathed in moonlight.

The moon seemed to cool Andreus's energetic steps. The flexing of his flesh appeared now robotic, the vitality and warmth removed. A dimension lost. Thom blinked, pursed his lips as if from some off-putting taste, and turned his telescope to the sky. He focused the lens with a deft twist, and the moon sharpened to crisp detail.

The pale orb hovering gently in the dark always generated a sense of calm in Thom. The idea of that empty world continuing on in unchanging silence and stillness—no matter what was happening to him—gave Thom a peace, and also a kind of thrill. A strange connection to something unhuman. He traced the familiar edges of the grey seas with his eye, and wandered along the curve that separated dust from void.

“Thom?”

Thom flinched and turned around. He hadn't heard the door open, or noticed the light turn on in the dining room. Andreus stood on the deck with him. His aquiline nose and pursed lips always presented a focused appearance, but Thom saw worry in his dark eyes.

“You didn't see me coming up?” Andreus asked.

Ah, that is the concern. Thom had not watched through the telescope long enough to see Andreus look up and smile shyly as if he hadn't expected he was being watched, even though they'd repeated the charade a dozen times by now.

"I was distracted. The moon is so beautiful tonight," said Thom with a smile. "You were carrying something?"

Andreas' worry shrunk like a shadow at noon, and he beamed. "Yes, come to the table."

In the dining room, a checker patterned box topped with a bow sat on the edge of Thom's mahogany table. He made a quick mental check of the calendar. Their anniversary was still days away. "For me? What for?" He touched the ribbon as if expecting it to twitch.

"Just because." Andreas bit his lip and wrung his hands like a child. "Open it."

Thom reached for the lid, hesitated at Andreas' cry of *Careful!*, then slowly lifted the decorative top.

An orb of black and white patches seemed to float inside the box. A moment passed before Thom could parse what he saw. The sphere was an amalgam of black and white limbs. Heads and hands and arms and legs and feet reached out in all directions--a katamari of flesh. The ball, about six inches in diameter, was held up by a spindly pole on a flat, plain base. Something about the thinness of the pole unsettled Thom, made him cringe when he thought about it bending under the weight of the ball.

"It's... It's..." Thom floundered.

"It represents us, like, our togetherness, you know?" Andreas could barely keep his words in order. "I was thinking of you the whole time I made it. Thinking of us, I mean. I think it's the best piece I've made, it really captured how I feel. Do you see, what I mean? What do you see, Thom?"

"It's..." *upsetting, confusing, disgusting* "striking," said Thom. "Very interesting. Unique."

"Take it out, get the full view."

Thom lifted the sculpture with fingertips on either side. The thing was surprisingly heavy and cool. It shined in such a way that he expected it to be slimy, but it was dry and rough. He set it on the table, and the view of the whole was even more unsettling. It seemed to be writhing, struggling to break free from itself, all while its wasp's waist of a podium threatened to collapse at any moment.

"Do you like it?"

Thom closed his eyes. An after-image of the moon glowed on the back of his eyelids. "Yes, it's great. Thank you."

Andreas threw his arms around Thom from behind and kissed his neck.

Thom kept his eyes closed. Within himself he bathed in pale, remembered light.



On clear nights the sky seems black behind the brightness of the moon. But there is always a tinge of color in the air that is vivid and bright compared to the void of space. If one were on the moon, the 'sky' would consist of a blackness so complete that it would twist the mind of the observer. Watching the moon from Earth, Thom felt as if he viewed it through water. The moon hung in nothingness, cold, silent, stoic, constant, solid. But a membrane of air kept

Thom from the barren regolith that would otherwise coat his throat like powder.

Ring-

That primeval dust was pounded out of the surface by eons of meteor strikes, some so small they may as well be motes of dust themselves. Walking on such dust would produce no sound. His ears would ring in the quiet.

Ring. *Ring. RING-*

Thom pulled his eye away from the telescope. For a moment the vision of the moon stayed with him, as if the telescope was screwed into his socket. He felt the pressure of it on his skin.

RING RING

He opened his left eye and the illusion faded. Thom plucked his cellphone from the wooden folding table on the deck beside him and answered, his throat dry. "Hey Andy, what's up?"

"My god, Thom, what's going on? Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I'm just out on the deck... what do you mean?"

"I've been calling you for hours! You haven't left home? I've been waiting at the restaurant, Thom! Where *were* you?" Andreus' voice cracked with the wet vibration of forming tears.

Restaurant. Restaurant. "I..." The anniversary dinner. The roses sitting on the dining table, wilting in slow motion. The suit he had not put on. The special cologne, unopened in the bathroom. "I'm sorry. I... got sick."

"Sick? Baby, what's going on?"

I don't know. "I'm not well. I'm sorry I didn't call." Each blink brought flashes of a pale orb.

"I'm coming over, you just stay right there and rest."



The constant barrage of the sun's ultraviolet radiation causes particles of Lunar soil--moon dust, regolith--to levitate up to four inches above the surface. In this way, the sun smoothes the surface of the moon. The dust leaps, and scars and scuffs and pocks and pits are erased over millions of years. Could the moon become pure dust? Thom wondered. A static, humming ball of formless grey. Like a pixelated criminal's face. An object not only empty of life, but of any characteristic, any form. Void incarnate. The thought filled his mouth with a dry, vibrating numbness.

A pressure from somewhere far away pulled him backward. The moon shrank.

"Thom, what happened?"

Andreas was on the deck, his hands on Thom's shoulders. Tears wet his cheeks, and the flower in his breast pocket was broken. Thom floated down from his silent, comforting void toward a thrashing, icy sea.

"Andy, I'm feeling off today. That's all."

"Off?" There was an unfamiliar edge to Andreas' tone, like a protrusion encountered on a memorized region of skin. For a moment Thom anticipated an interruption of the machine, a grinding and shuddering from this grit in the gears. But the moment receded. The hardness sank below the endless dark welcome in Andreas' eyes. He threw his arms around Thom and squeezed. "Oh, baby, they're too much stress aren't they? Anniversaries?" Andreas let out a breath as long as the one Thom held in. "We don't have to worry about it you know. We can just hang out here."

Thom shut his eyes. Pale light. "That's fine."

"Good, okay, let's sit down. Come on."

Thom opened his eyes, and the moon hovered as if in his living room while he followed Andreas to the sofa.

They passed the flowers on the dining table and Andreas picked them up in both hands. "Oh, Thom, they're lovely." His voice was a distant, whistling wind.

"I want to sit down," said Thom. He sank into the couch and lost perception of his lower body. A fraction of a sigh escaped him.

"Thom," said Andreas, hesitant. Thom expected there was a perturbed frown of familiar shape on Andreas' face, but the floating, silent orb crowded his vision. "Thom, I have something I wanted to ask you. Maybe now isn't the right time anymore but, but I just have to."

Andreas' voice faded, as if the air were dissipating from the room, from the house, the planet. Thom saw Andreas' hands moving around as he spoke. They moved toward and away from his jacket pocket like they were trapped in a time loop. Toward, away, toward, away. Folded in lap, back to the pocket. Clapsed as if in prayer, back toward the pocket. The scene dimmed under pale light. Andreas moved like a marionette on a dark and silent stage, his hands tugged this way and that by invisible wires while Thom watched in the only filled seat in an airy theater.

Andreas reached into his pocket, and took out a small, velvet box. The ringing in Thom's ears rose to a piercing crescendo and there were some faded words that he did not hear.

The moon closed in as Andreas leaned forward. Thom tensed, anticipating its dry touch on his face. His eyes slid over the sea of crises and on to the seas of tranquility and serenity. His breath was loud in his own ears. The chill of non-atmosphere grazed his nose.

A voice rose from the pale vista. *Thom. Don't you want to be with me?*

Yes, oh yes. "Yes."

The seas swelled to encompass Thom's whole vision. The landscape beared down on him as if to crush him under its silent weight. The surface met his skin, and his lips tasted the crumbled rock and dust of an ancient, unchanging world.

P i p e D r e a m

s'pose I awake in a tunnel of molted skin
a viper's cadaver, spine cracked open to the sky
wherein I may wander, wonder and treat my eye
crowned by a crevice, a funnel for molten spin
of moondust, glassy threads round spacebeams wound
which twine the four colours of the winds
I'd walk along a runnel with prismatic dye within
my soles stepping temporal tints on the ground
nowhere a point where I might begin

like the cloven snake I'd have four eyes
endowed that I might tetrachromatise
the view of my back, an ouroborous biting round
and of my face, now profound

by V Coffin-Price

I'd walk along a runnel
with prismatic dye within
my soles stepping temporal
tints on the ground
nowhere a point where I
might begin

V Coffin-Price PIPE DREAM

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Joachim 'Jo' Buur moved back to Dutch-speaking Holland after getting his MA in English Literature. As such, he is the only team member to have had an international break. He is Lucent Dreaming's graphic artist and is responsible for its logo, magazine covers and more.

Jess Beynon

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V Coffin-Price

POET

V. Coffin-Price is the pseudonym of W. Pine Box-Barter. His calling in life is to leave his calling card in places where he has no business being; this includes upstart literary magazines.

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13

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