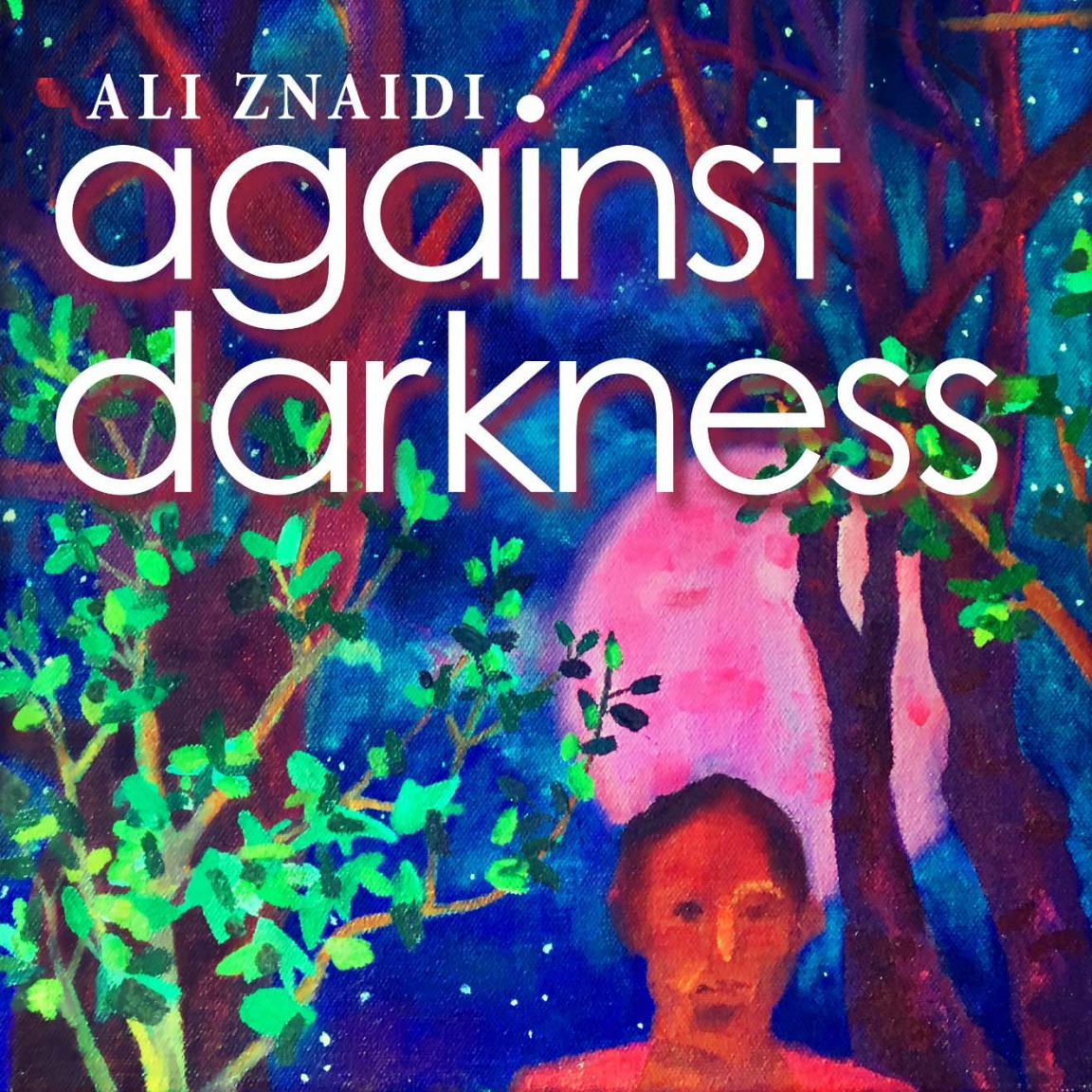


ALI ZNAIDI •

against darkness



SONNET IN WHICH SOLDIERS FIND BEAUTY IN THE WINGS OF BUTTERFLIES

Despite their short age butterflies are beautiful.
They flap their wings against the bombs forming
a shield. Forming a frame for the soldiers
only to escape this ugliness—An ascent into fundamental
movement toward the eventual revelation. World worn-out and
those neighbouring dimensions become pronouncements of
chaos and so and so. Cubic language accumulated over
seasons of dust: A discourse in the function of the slips
of the tongue that mimic the function of mist. At the moment
when butterflies kiss the foreheads of the soldiers their entire beings
ache for how they flutter their wings without pause. Still wearing
their beauty, they pour life into the dead hearts of the soldiers,
injecting vigour into the weary sun of a world
already stained by climatic change.

SONNET IN WHICH THE BEAMS OF THE MOON ARE MERE ARCHIVES OF PAIN

Hidden
until realized,
this moon
of stained
brass
rearranges
its beams
of hallucinating flickers.

Those beams that always wear us
archiving pain and the trauma
of memory—

Catalogues of locked syllables
reminding us through scars
of age and the diction of rust.

AGAINST DEPRESSION

Dark shadows
became bolts of red
in the presence of those ruby lips.

He kept watching for the flashes of light
beneath the crystal chandelier.

He blogged his observations on his cell phone,
while she was thrumming the guitar.

They were just learning how to overcome depression
when there was no electricity.

ON WATCHING THE SUPERMOON

It's unlike a brassy coin.

Unlike green rust tarnishing its peripheries.

Unlike a firefly flirting with darkness.

Nothing is as fascinating as rust in close-up.

It's a golden coin above a pond.

It's a howl at the lunar system.

It's a howl at the system.

Down with any Photoshopped system!

You gaze and it's like your eyes

Are caught in the trap of lust.

Tears fall in succession.

Behind you only walls.

You must thank the fireflies

for keeping you company.

THE PURPOSE OF COLOURS

The conversation of colours without hindrance.

The conflict of our own colourfulness.

Our skins were given a colour.

Our eyes emit colours.

The rainbow is vivid.

Its colours resemble magic.

The journey is peaceful through the sky.

Colourful warsapes,

Colliding maps scattering in earth.

A PROCESSION OF COLOURS AND FLUIDS

There's rain and there's a rainbow.

Vigour and fancy.

A procession of colours.

An intimate session without proxies.

Thirsty leaves of grass

rustling provocative patterns,

pushing deep into earth,

whispering crackling sounds

to the sky.

RAINBOW GHOSTS

There are illusions in the sky;
complex, colourful, & provocative.
Hidden layers. Ancient apparitions.
Celestial apparatuses moving with
the soft fluttering of the birds' wings.
Invisible phantoms & the tumbling
of the useless birds' feathers.

AGAINST DARKNESS

There is a mosaic
of rainbow in the sky.
Still there is so much to organize.
Still there is so much to follow
the logic of things.
—Life is against darkness
or staining that veil
with splashes of colours,
which keeps things alive.

GAPS AND COLOURS

Your gazes are trapped inside
with the colours. Your gazes
fill in the blanks, those gaps
poised and coiled in the dark caves,
underneath the clothes, underneath
the bra of that whore, in the anxiety
of her looks that fractionalize the rainbow.

SWOLLEN BELLIES

Childhood dreams were the colours
of a rainbow, something you can only
acknowledge.

Now the horizon glints with dust and shame.

Colours are swallowed by the dark ghosts.

You can see the density of your dreams
in their swollen bellies.

You can only see & acknowledge.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ali Znaidi (b.1977) lives in Redeyef, Tunisia. He is the author of chapbooks including *Experimental Ruminations* (Fowlpox Press, 2012), *Moon's Cloth Embroidered with Poems* (Origami Poems Project, 2012), *Bye, Donna Summer!* (Fowlpox Press, 2014), *Taste of the Edge* (Kind of a Hurricane Press, 2014), *Mathemaku x5* (Spacecraft Press, 2015), and *Austere Lights* (Locofo Chaps: an imprint of Moria Books, 2017). Online at aliznaidi.blogspot.com and twitter.com/aliznaidi.

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