CREATIVITY

IN THE TIME OF COVID

LETTER TO THE READER

If you are reading this zine then a good place to start is from the beginning. Maybe you are struggling with the same situation as us and maybe you came here to find hope, advice, feelings, innovation or laughter. If you did, then we hope you came to the right place and enjoy the ride. Read it with patience and care. Sometimes we don't understand when we read something for the first time but when we read it the second time we understand its proper purpose.

You are probably at this point wondering who we are. We are a small (beautiful!) group of friends from all over the world (no boundaries) who meet every week on a Wednesday to do creative writing and share thoughts which help us to make it through the lockdown. We are people of like mind, doing things together, sharing things together and working together to achieve our goals.

We started this journey at the time of the first nationwide lockdown back in March and we are working on this zine having just gone into a second one. We decided to put our feelings into a zine because it is better to share them with others than keep them to ourselves. Writing is a tool and it is the way we keep our minds together during this hard time.

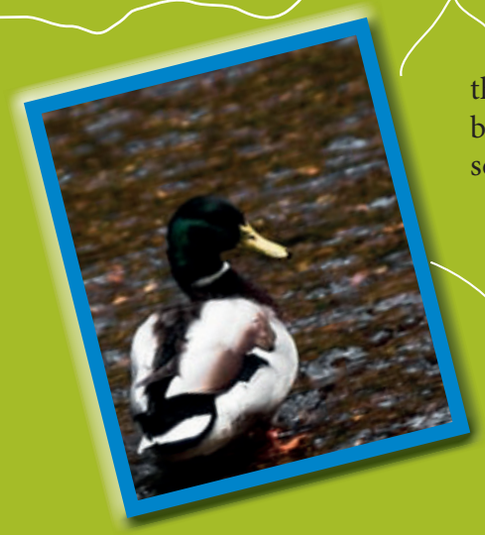
From all of us to you,

Migrants Organise Writer's Collective

... Poetry from the first lockdown ...

KOFFI'S MICRO POETRY

small stream flowing between buildings.
swans, ducks and dragonflies enjoy your low waves.
The sun connects with you, sharing his rays on you as a mirror.
Pedestrians, joggers, enjoy walking, running alongside your shore.
how beautiful you are,
small stream.



the lockdown makes down.
but together we remain strong.
soon, sun will shine again.

This hard time seems a fiction.
We will bounce,
jump again
and we will be together
in perfect harmony.

Hopeful Thoughts

Tossing and twisting
Sleep doesn't come
Life is stagnant and clueless
Things don't seem okay

But have faith
That one day
There will be a light at the end of the tunnel.

Stay strong
Don't look back
And don't give up.
It shall be well in the end.

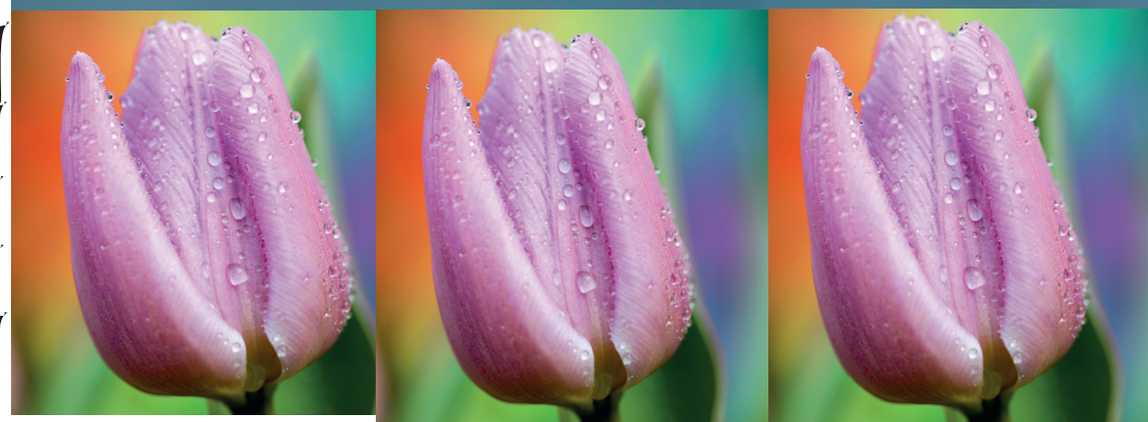
—Faosat

Clouds
by Aicha, Amon and Denise

Why me?
You've always been up there.
You bring the dark when we
need a sun.
I always see you coming and
going.
You go everywhere,
surrounding us.

You look like smoke.
I tried to touch you
were there but
I felt nothing in my hand:
speechlessness, loss, despair and
sorrow.
But I can see your face,
a face I can imagine.
a face covered with sadness.
upper eyelids drooped
eyes looking down.

I can't run from you.
Yet sometimes you bring the dew on
the flower
and up in the mountain I see you
closely.
It's magic how you are there already
up under the blue sky.



Letter to myself

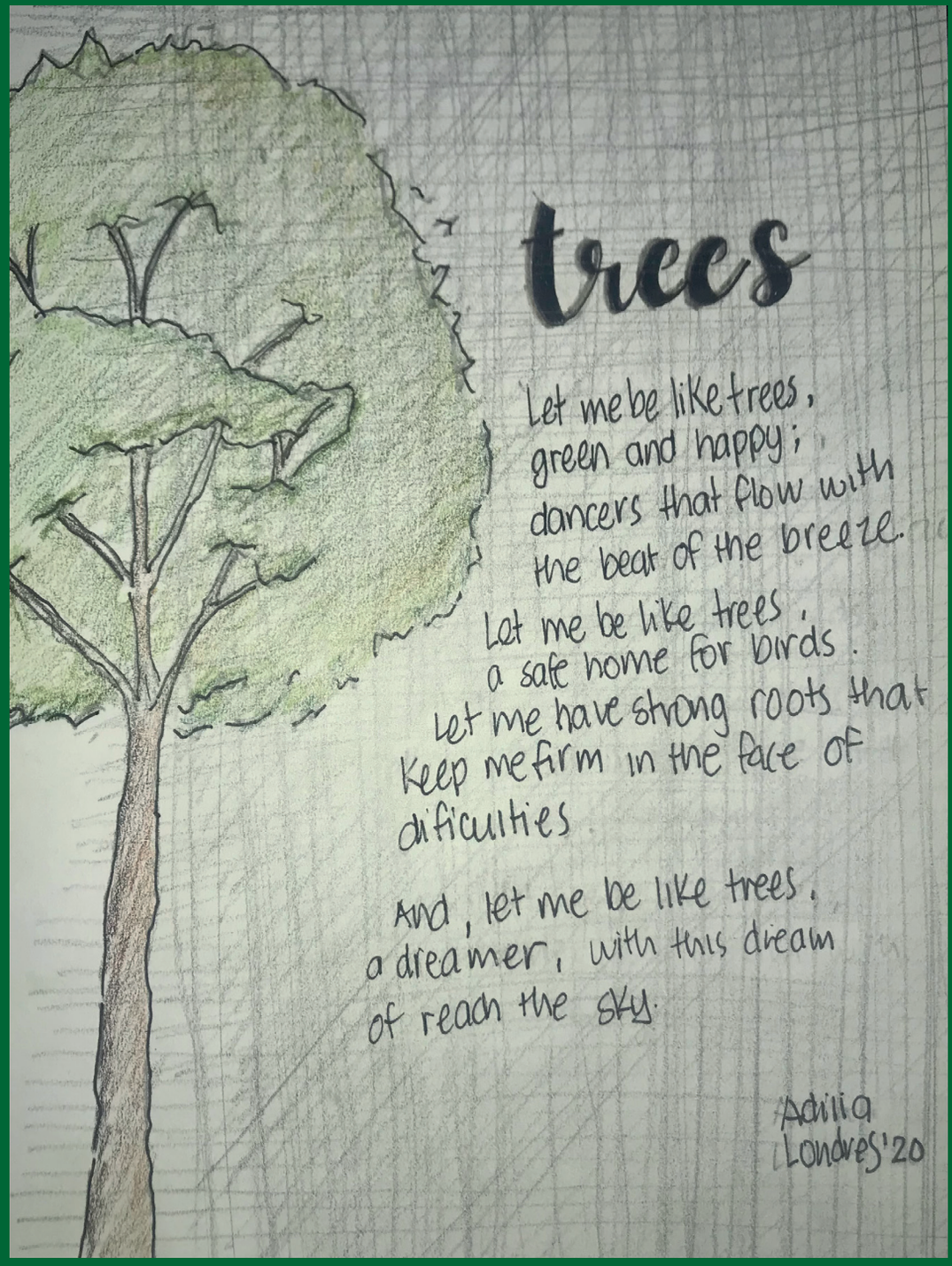
It is now a restriction time – it keeps changing all the time. Just when you think it's the final lot of rules, it changes again. Now you have to adapt your lifestyle to the new rules and when you start getting used to the new way it just changes all over again.
So what can you do now? You have to hold your horses and think: when it's over, what do you really want to do now?

You might really miss those days when you can meet your friends freely with no restrictions or worries. Or if you want to go on public transport with no concerns deep in your mind. What I can say to you is that this hard time you live in now will go and it will just be a bad memory. After that, better times will come again.

Those who were here before us also had the same problems. At those times they got together and passed them. You and I will do the same. All you need to do is to keep faith, hope and keep strong.

You can make it, I promise you.

Amon



daDUMdaDUMdaDUMdaDUMdaDUM

In Our Time: Present, future, past

This is the rhythm that my heartbeat makes
It's difficult to understand today
We need to continue to practice more
We will succeed however long it takes.

Each day I wake up with my noisy clock
I like my homework finished on the dot
While listening to the clock going ticktock
We are all happy with the music's beat.

But time is still going very slowly
And everybody is feeling poorly
I surely have no clue what we can do
We have no choice: we do what we can do.

We solely have to support ourselves
Until our memories are stored on shelves.

~ by Aicha, Amon, Faosat and Ruth

We focused on rhythm and rhyme in this poem. Some of our lines are iambic pentameter – da DUM da DUM da DUM da DUM da DUM – like the rhythm of a sonnet and our heartbeat. We played around with our rhyme schemes.
We found it difficult at first and that is what the first verse is about. We wanted to show the sounds and rhythms of our daily lives and our experience of time going slowly, waiting and listening to the clock during lockdown.

A Note on Patience

Abdel Rahman

Patience is faith,
the faith in a God you've never seen
but you know he's everywhere.
That is patience in something
when you don't know if it is true or
not.

Patience is the strong feeling you
have
when you lose things you love
and you still believe something
better will come
– that is patience.

Patience is the ability to endure
difficult circumstances.
It is perseverance in the face of
delay,
tolerance without responding in
annoyance or anger or forbearance
when under strain,
especially when faced with
longer term difficulties.

Patience is the level of endurance
one can have before negativity.

AICHA'S BEAUTY TIPS FOR LOCKDOWN

IN THIS TUTORIAL, I WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH MY FULL ROUTINE FOR AN EVENING SMOKY EYE LOOK.

Before anything else, start with a facial care treatment routine.

1. CLEANSE, TONE AND MOISTURISE

Start by using cleanser and a cotton pad to clean your face. This is treatment for your face to remove any impurities before you apply your makeup.
After this, massage some toner into your face. The toner will remove the cleanser from your face. You can also use eye makeup remover on your eyelids and eyelashes to make your face extra fresh.
Thirdly, apply your moisturiser to make your face soft and smooth.

2. APPLY YOUR BASE

If you are buying foundation, put a small amount on your hand to check that it matches your skin tone. Apply your foundation evenly to your face and blend it well with a brush. Apply concealer under your eyes and on your eyelids and blend with fingers. You can also put some concealer on your forehead, down the middle of your nose, in the space between your nose and lips and on your chin as it makes your face look brighter.

3. THE EYES

For the smoky eye, you can use any darker colour together with a lighter shade of the same colour. Apply the lighter shade in the middle of the lid with a small brush and towards the inner eye. Blend the darker shade outwards in the direction of the outer eye. This is what creates your 'smoky' eye.

I am training to be a beautician. My best advice is to ask a beautician about which products to use on your skin, as everybody's face and skin is different.

Try a nude face with nude lipstick for a fresh look

4. EYEBROWS

Take an eyebrow pencil and shape your eyebrows.

5. EYELASHES

If you are using mascara, apply eyeliner to your top and bottom eyeline. You can also blend it under your eyeline so it is a bit smudgy to add to the smoky effect.
If you are using fake lashes, carefully apply eyelash glue along the edge of the fake lashes. Then, line it up along your lash line and fix it there.

6. LIPS

Apply a classic red or wine coloured lipstick.

7. FINAL TOUCHES

Spray your face with finishing spray, so that your makeup stays on.
I use Conceal Define - it lasts for 16 hours, long enough for your evening party.
Make sure you take your powder and lipstick with you to freshen up your makeup throughout your event.

AMON'S HEALTHY EATING AND HERBAL REMEDIES TO GET YOU THROUGH THE WINTER

Here are some recipes I would like to share with you. They have health benefits and are so tasty. They will make you happy, even through these difficult times. I hope you enjoy them!

image credit:amiraspantry.com

Molokhia/Jute Leaf Soup

Molokhia is a common food in Asia and Africa as well as the Middle East. It is a food-mark of the Egyptian kitchen, rich in vitamins. It is high in protein, fibre, vitamin C and potassium as well as having anti-inflammatory effects. You can buy it frozen from international shops where it is usually in the freezer section.

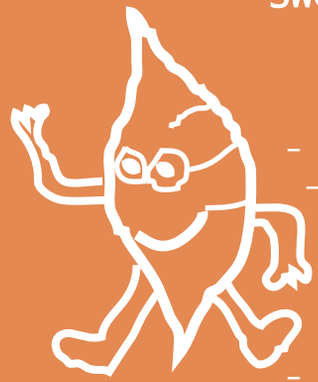
Ingredients

1kg molokhia
1 head of garlic
Olive or sunflower oil
2 tbsps coriander seeds
1/2 litre of water (vegan) or chicken/meat soup

Method

1. Boil the liquid in a deep pot.
2. In another pan, fry the chopped garlic and coriander seeds until golden.
3. Add the chopped molokhia to the boiled liquid and reduce the heat after it has started to boil.
4. Add the garlic with the oil (it's good for the taste) and quickly cover the pot. Increase the heat for 1 minute but don't overboil it.
5. Switch the heat off and serve with white rice and green wsalad with raw onion. Enjoy!

Sweet potato oven bake



Ingredients

- 2 kg sweet potato
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup ground coconut
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup sunflower oil
- 1 tbsp cinnamon powder

If you are vegan or dairy intolerant you can replace the milk with relevant substitutes or any ingredients you don't like – it will turn out the same.

Method

1. Boil the sweet potato until it is fully cooked, then peel its skin.
2. Put it in a deep bowl and crush it until it becomes a smooth paste.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients apart from 2 tbsps of the sesame seeds and 1 tbsp of sugar.
4. Mix everything together.
5. Put a little of oil or butter in the bottom of the tray then spread the mix evenly in the tray.
6. Spread what is left of the sesame seeds and sugar on the top.
7. Put it in the oven at 150 degrees, then cook until it is baked and looks good from the top.
8. Dust with cinnamon powder and serve as a dessert or morning cake.

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