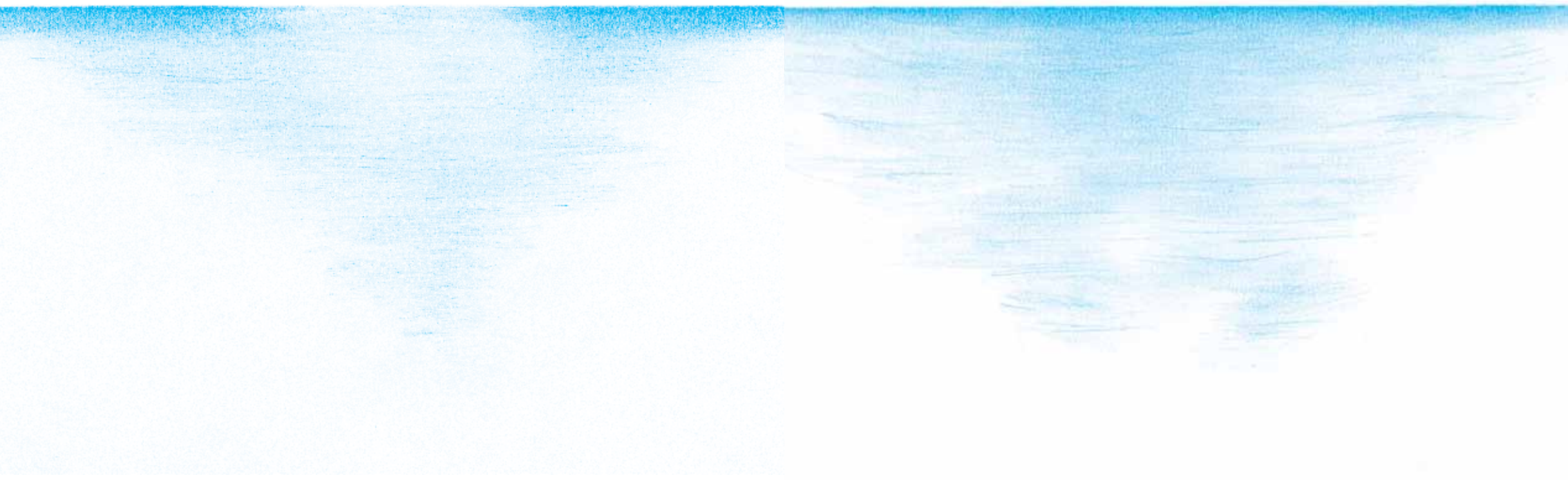
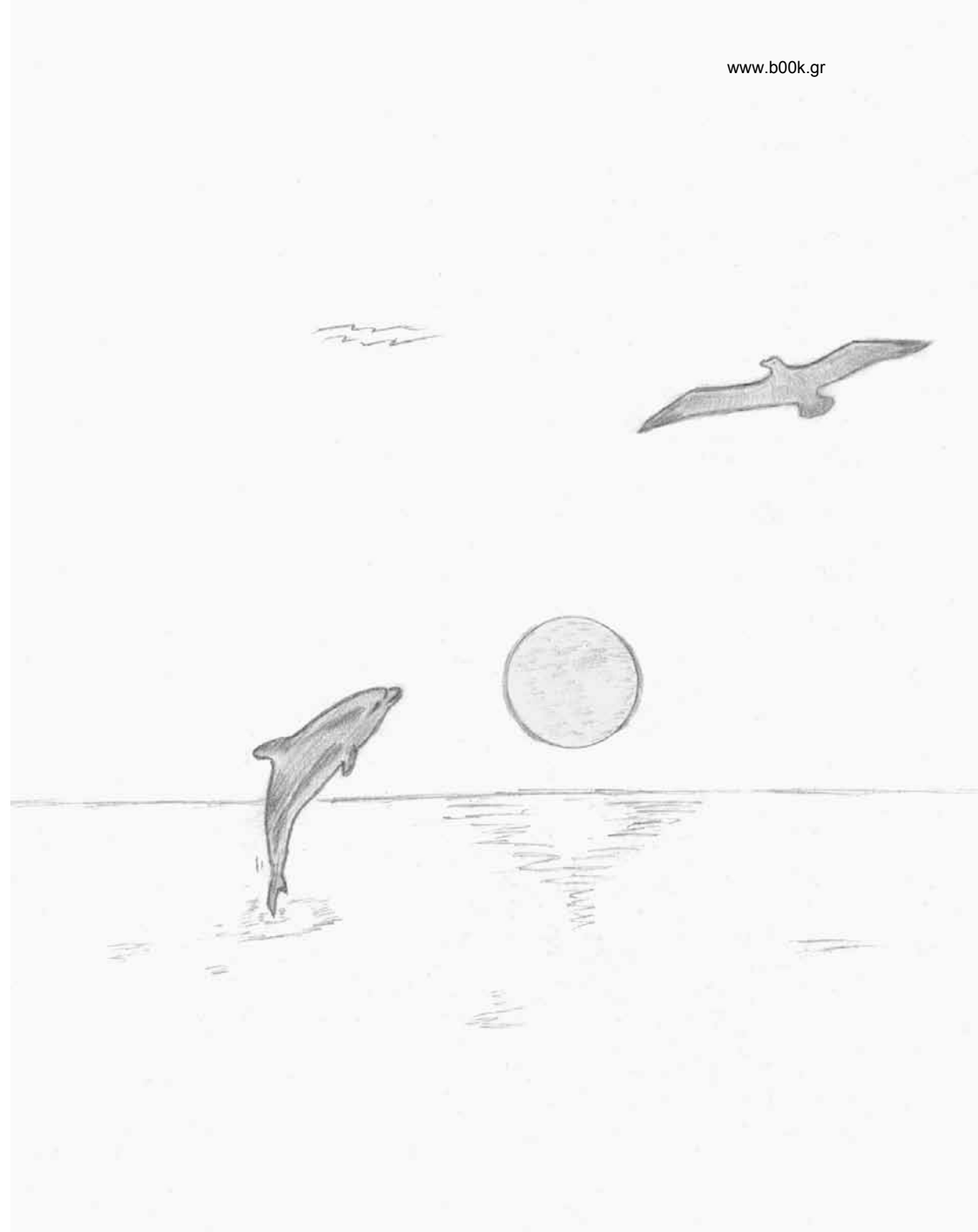




(Text not included in the book)

- Printed pages are not the size of the book.
- The numbering of pages was added only for the PDF file.
- The book's texts and drawings are provided only for its reading, and for no other use.

a simple story...



When two suns meet
then two worlds
unite for ever.

THE DOLPHIN AND THE GULL



To my uncle...

texts: March - June
drawings: July - October

* * *

He was flying alone when the sun had already set.

He was flying alone, with wings wide open, letting his body rise slowly, effortlessly in his sky world.

And he had his gaze long since forgotten in tonight's clouds' cluster that seemed to unfold towards him coloured deep red — borrowed from a sun that had disappeared.

Far below, below the clouds, the sea. Wavy, it was reflecting in its turn the sky's dark colours and was timidly transforming them, so that it wasn't possible any longer to distinguish whether it seemed more red or purple...

Suddenly, inexplicably, he turned his small body towards the water and almost closed his grey wings.

He could now see it whirling faster and faster, enlarging dangerously, before he closed his eyes, before he disappeared in its lightless embrace.

...

He was flying, still wet after his sudden dive.

He was flying alone, in a familiar world, above an unknown sea.

A sea that seemed to call for him...

* * *

— Alexander!

Turning his head he saw another gull approaching him. He hadn't realized how the time had passed.

— Birds don't fly in the dark, you know...

— Yes father. I got absorbed.

They started heading slowly back towards the island they had parted from.

— My son you're now grown up, I see it. In a while you are going to leave us to live your own life. But we do worry still.

— Did mother send you?

— Yes, and she told me if I find you to put some sense into you.

— It's the same old story...

They were closer now. Already the gull colony was vaguely discernible, spreading near the beach. In the semidarkness the rocks that rose in several spots of the island seemed even more harsh, more difficult to reach.

— She's right Alexander. It's like you care for nothing.

You fly all the time, but without purpose. You dive into the sea but you don't search for food. You don't think at all that the day is approaching for you to make your own family.

Be careful my child. Be careful where you will end up.

The night was falling quickly, while the moon was faintly rising.

...Is there something that you lack that I don't know? Tell me...

They landed almost blindly. However his mother recognized them without difficulty. She was *noiselessly* coming towards them, waking up half of the colony in her passing.

It would be, indeed, a hard night.

* * *

No matter how many times he did it he always felt the same enthusiasm.

The enthusiasm provided by the sensation of tearing the waters with continually increasing speed. And if he disappeared for a moment below the surface, he would soon reappear making an utterly controlled jump.

Behind him his companions were following.

He was perhaps the fastest and most supple dolphin of the group, the most capable of catching fish, as well as in original, impressive jumps.

Then they noticed the flock on their right.

One at first, and then all turned towards it.

Some were already spreading in an effort to encircle the fish.

They reacted more slowly. Having no other choice but to flee they turned towards the only open part of the circle, simply to surrender to the hungry, undoubtedly quicker dolphins.

For one more time, as ‘smaller fish’ were submitting to nature’s unfair laws, he wondered whether he was destroying creatures which were better than himself.

They continued their previous games, with few breaks of rest, the whole remaining day. Thus, when the evening came, they gathered to let themselves into the night’s calmness.

One, however, was absent from the group. Yet, no one worried.

They knew by now his strange habits.

* * *

He was observing the sunset again, hovering without strain high above the water surface.

Like a large red disc the sun was moving slowly towards the sea. The end of each day was perhaps its most beautiful moment.

Thus sorrow was lessening for the day that was passing by. And it was sometimes thanks to that very sunset that you could no longer forget.

...

A splash, as if something heavy had fallen into the water, suddenly drew his attention.

Quite further away on his left he discerned circles opening on the calm sea.

Almost immediately a dolphin jumped high, at about the same spot, and making an impressive turn fell on its back, letting the same sound travel far; very far; surely to his island, perhaps — who knows — as far as the land.

Suddenly, as he used to, unjustifiably perhaps, he started flying towards the solitary unexpected visitor.

All of his thoughts had instantly scattered.

— Hey! Dolphin!

He was waiting to call for it — almost sure that it would reappear— when it was making its next jump.

The dolphin, with the eyes turned to the fiery sphere, was startled. It turned quickly towards Alexander.

That dive mustn't have been the most indicative of its skills...

“Yes”, it simply said, as it was appearing shimmering on the surface.

Alexander smiled.

— I am sorry.

I didn't mean to frighten you. I saw your dives and wished to come near you, to talk to you...

— But I thought that gulls don't fly at this time, so far from their island!

He came softly down beside the dolphin.

It leaned slightly to the side, so that it would be able to hear more easily.

— I like flying alone, watching the sun setting.

— It must be so beautiful from high up there.

— Yes, indeed...

He looked at the water.

— ...What is going on, far beneath here? Is everywhere that dark?

What happens to the sun that sinks?

— I don't know. Everywhere however there is darkness. No light...

— Really?

Is there not even a moon in your world?

Stars at least?

It answered by shaking its head negatively.

The sun far in the west was about to touch the sea.

It turned to the gull.

— Fly... Please, fly and tell me how it looks now from up there.

He went up into the sky to reapproach in a while the impatient dolphin.

— From above it is like two suns meeting at the edge of the horizon. The one you see clearly and another one, alike, deep red, that floats for a while on the water.

That afterwards seems to almost dissolve into the colour of the sea.

The dolphin started jumping as high as possible, seeking the “other” sun.

— I don't see it... I don't see it at all...

He was observing a creature trying to see the world in the way he saw it.

A creature that saw a world he couldn't see.

"Don't worry", he said to it then.

"I will tell you what I see."

"I will fly for you..."

A moment of silence followed. Circles of water bloomed slowly in front of two suns uniting before they disappeared.

— And I will swim for you...

There, as the one sun was penetrating more and more into the other, the most beautiful, the most strange agreement in the history of the two worlds was being sealed.

A new sun was visible now, a creation of an unexpected meeting.

And the way its two pieces fitted together, you could no longer tell with certainty which part of it belonged to the sky, and which to the sea.

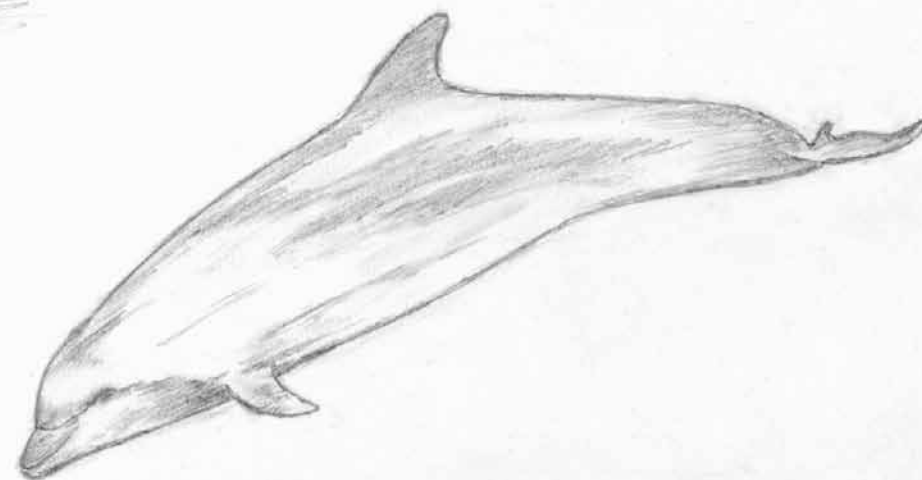
Which sun reflected which...

...

— I haven't asked your name yet...

— Alexander. Yours?

— Jason...





* * *

With the breaking of the new day he was flying towards the east cape.

At that side of the island Jason was already waiting. He was swimming slowly, almost touching the surface.

— Good morning.
— Good morning Alexander.
Did you arrive well last night?

— Yes, by now I've got used to nocturnal flying...
Moonlight is enough for me.

Silence spread.

— It seems to have so much to talk about and knowing not from where to begin...

But the beginning finally was found. Thus, started a conversation without end.

Jason listened, as Alexander was uniting his wings in novel shapes, about a world he had never imagined.

About dense forests, about windmills, houses and roads, about animals that live on the land, about big coloured fields...

And Alexander, in turn, had never imagined that the sea was hiding deep inside it a colourful world of sponges, corals

and seaweeds, an abundance of creatures, small and large ones, harmless and dangerous...

...

What, however, seemed to please them the most was when Alexander would fly for Jason. In places that he, if he were a gull, would want to fly.

Or when Jason was swimming for Alexander, in depths that he, if he were a dolphin, would want to dive.

When in the end they were sharing their experiences, their feelings.

...

He was now watching him fly above the small island for him. In his two slanty black eyes there wasn't but a sea-bird flying high, with its wings wide open.

A little while later he would listen to him with the same devotion, describing how he saw the island; entire with the rocks reaching the beach, there where the waters are initially green and then light and dark blue.

How he felt at the time the wind was blowing with force but wasn't drawing him away, at the time he remained still, effortlessly, in the sky.

He was asking again and again, without pause.

And Alexander would tell him again and again what the sea looked like — less infinite as he was flying far from it— circled by the land and the horizon.

How he saw it whirling as he was diving into the air, how he felt when he was gently slowing down, slightly opening his wings, how when he was almost touching the water before he rose a little to dive right afterwards.

He was speaking continuously, with an unusual enthusiasm, about the sensation of flying.

He was explaining to him that when you were up there, when you were taking distance from things, they looked smaller, weaker. And details seemed to have no importance.

That you felt bigger, superior from above.

As distance was vanishing you became again another sea-gull...

When you fly high, he repeated, details seem to have no importance.

And when you fly high everything seems a detail.

Jason there, by his side, was then closing his eyes and was trying to see his own self from above, the rocks from above, the island small, insignificant, with the sea wrapping it up — green initially, dark blue afterwards...

...

Then it would be him who would start talking ceaselessly, with an unusual enthusiasm, about the sensation of swimming.

He described how he felt when he moved deep into the sea,

how when he gradually started to increase his speed, how he suddenly turned his body towards the surface, to see the clouds obtaining ever so fast some shape before finally jumping into the air.

Alexander would ask him again and again.

Again and again Jason would tell him that when you are in the water, when you feel “suspended” somewhere inside it, your every move becomes slower. Every moment seems to last.

And time seems to have no importance any more.

Closing then his eyes, Alexander was trying to feel, even for a moment, lost somewhere in the depths of the sea, in a different world.

In a world unbounded by time and space...

He was now motionless on the unruffled surface.

He was watching Jason swim for him, drifting away slowly in depths forbidden to him, becoming one with the colour of the sea.

Distance, here also, was changing reality.

He was waiting, looking impatiently into the water.
Until he appeared to be coming.

Like a shadow passing into the light, he timidly obtained some shape. He saw then that he was holding something in his snout. It was the first time he saw anything like that.

He flew in a while towards the interior of the island.

Being a dolphin he never had seen a flower.

Thus, as Alexander kept observing a shell laid on one of the nearby rocks, he was pulling for the first time into the sea something so delicate, so fragile...

...

In the same way the rest of the day went by; peacefully, scattered among conversations and stories, among spectacular games of both, among efforts to share their sensations, their emotions.

Now that they could each see through the eyes of the other, they could also see their own world more beautiful.

Discover new aspects of it.

Observe what earlier passed unnoticed.

Now, that the one was seeing through the eyes of the other, with a spirit of exploration, of quest, they realized once more how little they knew their world.

How vainly tied up they were in an infinitesimal part of the whole. How attached to nothing.

The decision had already been taken.

Tomorrow they were leaving together.

They were leaving towards the big island at the edge of the sea. The island that was called land.

That very night the entire gull colony would remain sleepless because of a mother's *silent* whine...

* * *

He made a small turn in the sky. His father and his brothers were heading back to the island.

His mother had said goodbye to him earlier; she was so exhausted she wouldn't be able to fly.

He had chosen not to talk to anyone about Jason.

To his mother he didn't say it, perhaps because it simply wouldn't be of any consolation. It wouldn't be possible for a dolphin to stand by him in anything, to help him when someday he'd need help.

To his father only had he mentioned that a dolphin also going towards the land would travel along with him. Nothing more.

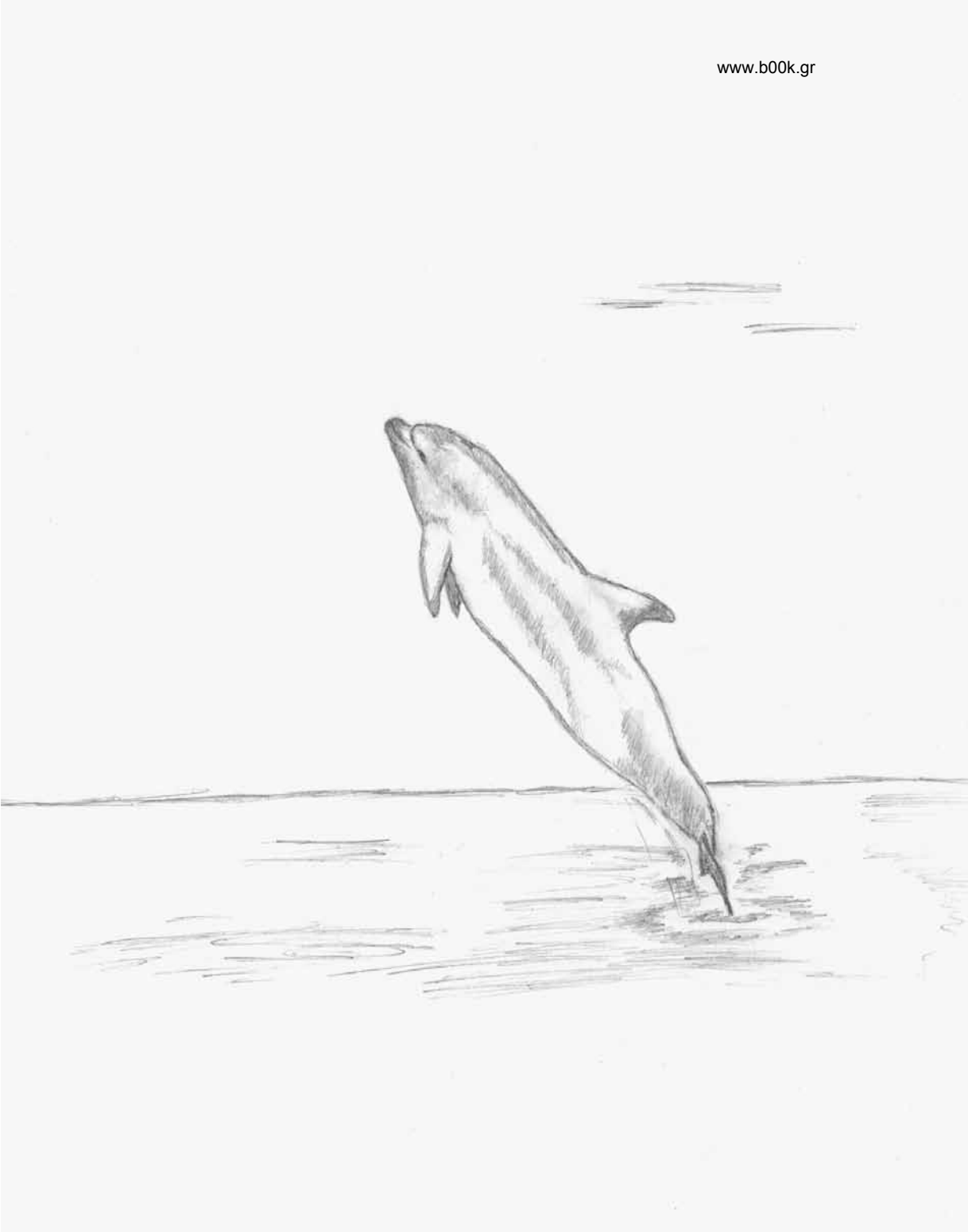
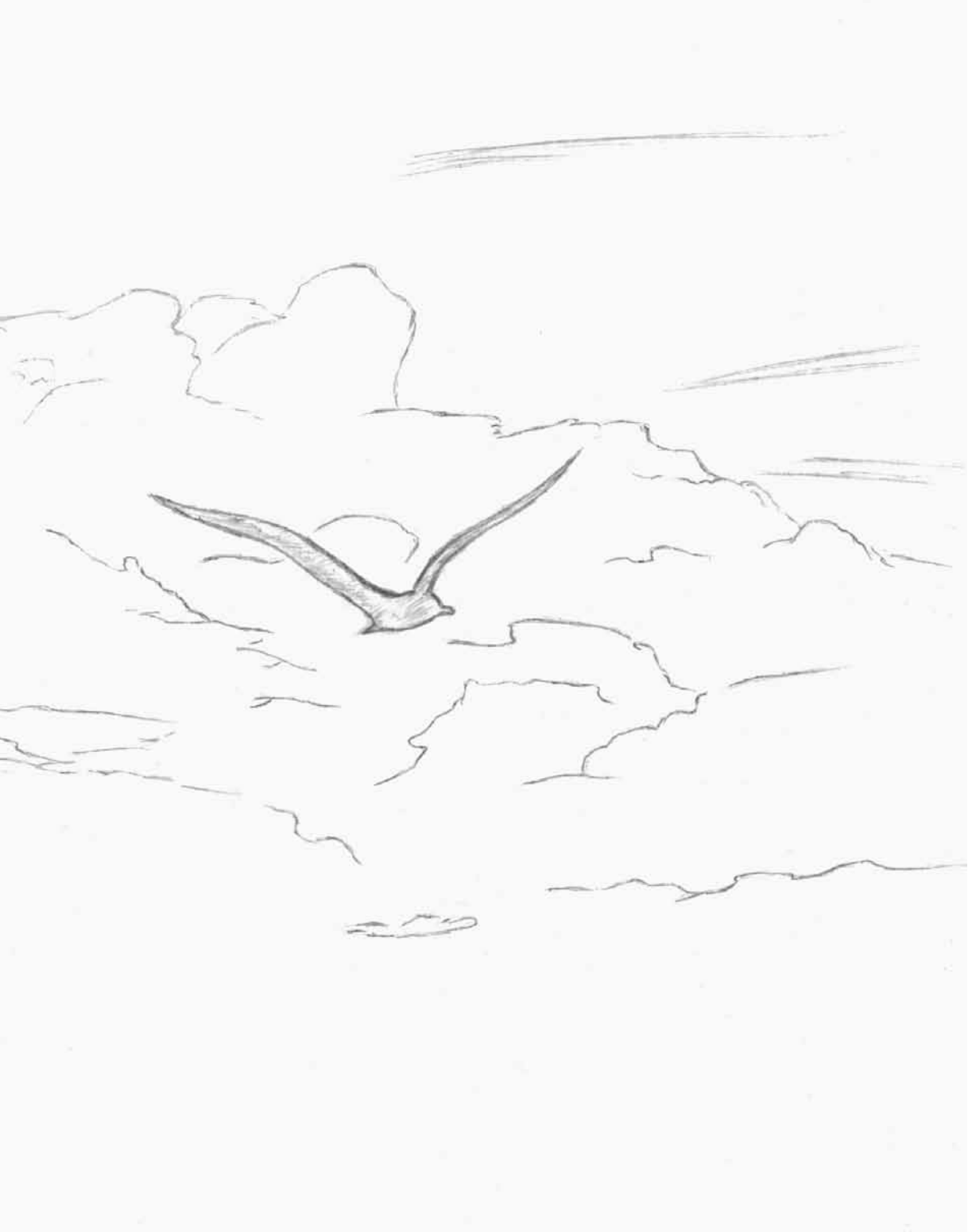
"It will hold you up, you should know that..."

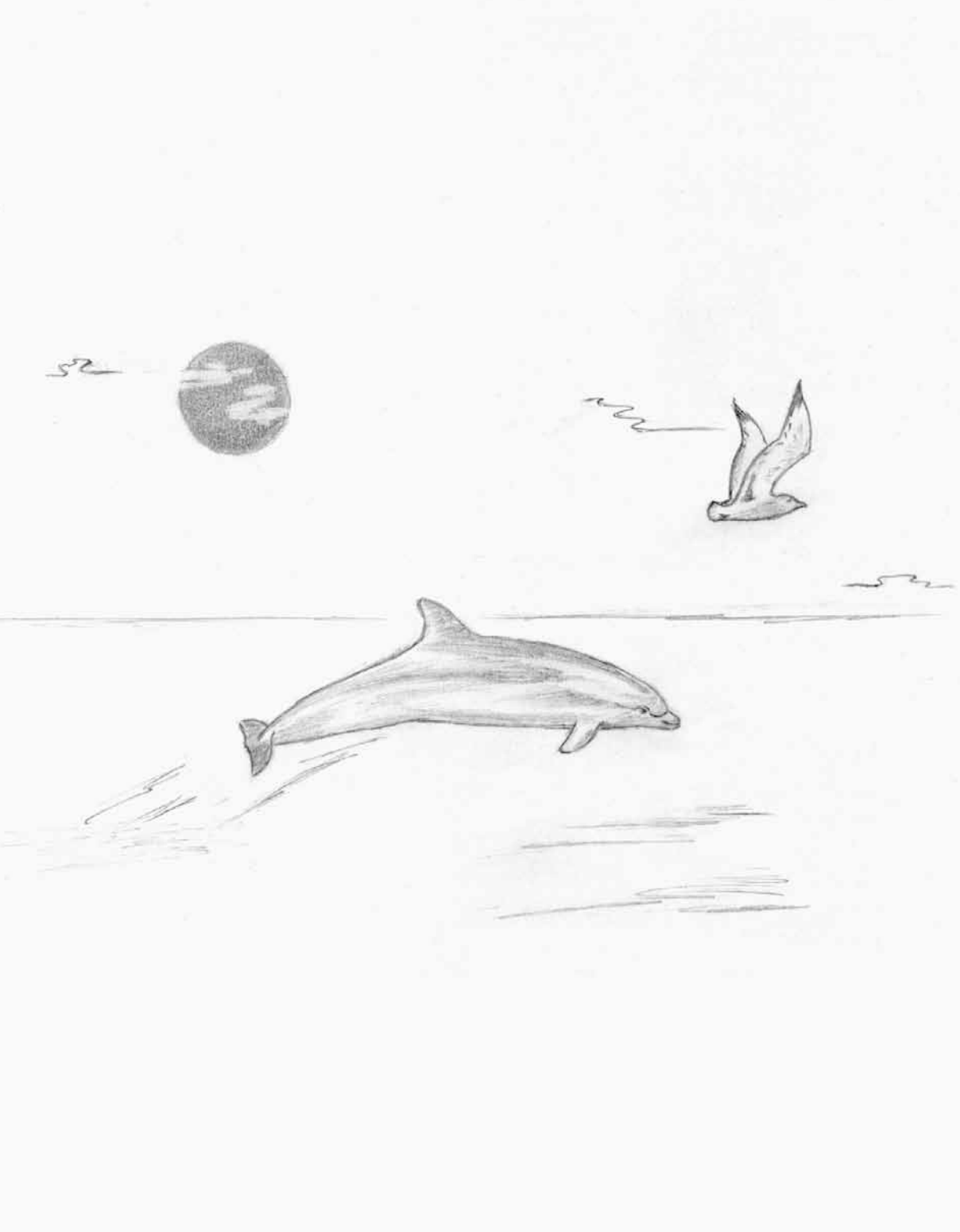
"It doesn't matter, father..." he said, "I will have someone to keep me company."

To all the others, those who happened to see him going, it was just a coincidence; that dolphin was swimming fast, making at times small jumps, in the same direction as Alexander.

They weren't but two adolescents wanting to find out something more. Two adolescents wanting to learn.

Wanting, thus, to live.





* * *

In such weather they would need at least two days to reach land. Almost one day more than if they could both fly.

They moved on continuously, stopping only at times, mostly when Jason was getting tired by the speed he was swimming.

As for a gull, it was more tiring perhaps to fly relatively slow. But he didn't want to fly ahead. He liked to observe his friend while he was swimming.

He liked the feeling that they were together.

...

Much younger, not remembering exactly when, Alexander had travelled once again to the land.

Then, with his father and brothers, when he had promised it to them in a moment of weakness.

The sole thing that remained now from those few enthusiastic days, were some faded images, not being able to distinguish which ones he had seen for himself and which were created in his memory by the older gulls' descriptions. From what as a tale told about the island at the edge of the sea.

The time had come to see for himself what existed and what didn't, to separate his own truth from the truth of the others...

Jason, on his side, used to swim until then in the open sea, away from the land and its inhabitants.

It was the first time that he would follow the sea so close to them.

...

They had stopped side by side below a cloudless sky.

Tired as they were they were touching the water surface, that dividing line that was blocking their journeys, that was defining the extent of their abilities.

The line that they couldn't cross but only for a while. For as long as it was needed, however, to taste the unknown.

To wish for exactly this that they didn't have.

If it spread hard and impenetrable as the rocks, intransparent as the soil and the sand, they might have never known what they were missing, never have asked to learn more.

Well, this common frontier, should somehow be named.

But every name they could think of seemed unfitting. What the one proposed the other rejected. And they resulted in nothing in the end.

"Why not simply line?" Jason asked some moment.

— It's over-simple...

— Dividing line?

— It's way too big...

— DeltaGamma? To remind the two of us?

— ...

Alexander, smiling, agreed. To simply remind of them both; Dolphin — Gull.

Thus they started again.

They were travelling parallel to the line, dividing them and their worlds.

Parallel to the DeltaGamma.

Perhaps now that they had named their limit, now that they knew which it was, perhaps now they would be able to defeat it.

* * *

They were lucky.

On about the route they had been following — barely, almost imperceptibly more to the right— an island could now be seen.

A safe shelter for the approaching night, as the sun was lowering feebly golden towards the sea.

Reaching near it they saw the huge rocks rising majestically.

Also golden, coloured in light.

The earth was emerging suddenly in the beginning, broken at the edges, to continue afterwards even, wavy, before rising unhindered again up to the flat summit of the island. Towards that Alexander was now heading.

He was watching him fly.

A white dot sliding in the wind, defying the stony bulges.

He was flying higher and higher, passing the wavy heights, the suddenly vertical rocks, the calm summit.

He had disappeared behind the mountains.

The setting sun was transforming the atmosphere between the slopes into a strange mist.

Inside it, colours and sounds were fading, movements were getting slower, everything became one more insignificant shadow.

Only his figure was standing out, flying over the small houses.

And his cry was amplified unexpectedly by the sound of the diffuse silence.

It spread everywhere, flooding the space, hitting like a wave the surrounding rocks, before returning to its source, before being imprisoned and perishing into that mist's calmness...

He flew afterwards back towards the flat summit.

...

They were heading to the other side of the island, when the sun had already set.

They reached the end of the small gulf moving on in darkness.

There, in front of the village, in front of the pale light of half-opened forgotten windows, tired they fell asleep.

* * *

They woke up from the sound of a fishing boat that was taking in nets. It was moving on wheezingly and its sound travelled intense into the sea and the sky.

Behind it came a cloud of gulls.

Amidst cries and beatings — determining their course from the other gulls' course— they were diving hungrily at the small fish that were rising to the surface or at those that were thrown away as useless by the people in the boat.

He went near Jason, as soon as he appeared at the Delta-Gamma.

The day had started already.

...

They saw the village spreading on the slope, white, filled with light.

They followed then the rocky gulf by its side, there where the rocks gave way to a sandy beach. Everything seemed quiet, as it was still morning.

Alexander flew again over the small houses, before heading towards the boat and the gulls.

Jason, on the contrary, remained a while longer on the surface near the village watching the houses with the flowerpots and the greenery, with the blue windows and the artful balco-

nies. Watching the little streets with the stone stairs, the white-washed churches with the high belfries...

Then he disappeared to explore his world. Though he didn't go close to the fishing boat.

...

He was flying a little further behind the swarm, not much higher from it.

It seemed strange to him, all these gulls fighting in such a way for food when the sea was around them. So he stood watching them with mixed emotions.

Then, without expecting it, one of them wandered away from the swarm and started flying towards him.

“Good morning”, said the unknown gull, politely, when he came near.

— Good morning to you!

“Are you from here?”, he asked afterwards. “I don't think I've seen you before on the island...”

— Just passing by. We're coming from an island fairly far. We're going towards the land.

— “We”? Are you with other gulls?

Alexander smiled unconsciously.

— Not exactly...

...

“I have never before seen such a strange twin!” Peter confessed joking, swimming amidst the two friends.

— Do you live here or do you also come from elsewhere?

— I was born here, and here I have lived almost all of my life.

It’s a very beautiful island. From time to time I’ve flown to the land, but I always return.

My friends, my relatives are here.

They avoided — not knowing perhaps the reason why— to ask anything about the land...

“What are they really these bigger white houses?” Jason said then, rather changing the subject.

They looked at the village.

Alexander thought it strange that his companion had observed what he himself hadn’t so far noticed from above.

“Don’t you know?”

“Each of these big houses, is the house of God”, answered Peter.

A moment of confusion followed.

— Of the god of gulls?

“Or maybe of the god of dolphins?” added the dolphin.

He seemed to have been awaiting this question.

“There is no god of gulls or god of dolphins” he said to them calmly.

“There isn’t even a god of people. There is only one God. No matter the name.

These big white houses are his houses.”

“And does he live in one of them?” Alexander insisted.

Peter smiled with understanding.

— He lives in everything. In those and inside us. He lives in the clouds. In the sea. In the smallest grain of sand.

He created everything, you see. All that there is around us.

He knows everything. The past, the present, the future...

For whatever bad we do in our life we will be punished. For whatever good we’ll be rewarded.

He will judge us when we’re gone...

Into his eyes widely spread was the same tranquility that was also lying in his speech.

...

— Why?

“What do you mean by ‘why’?” he answered, turning and looking at Jason.

— Why will he judge us?

— Because we’re his. We belong to him.
He created us...

— Why?

— ‘why?... why?...’

Don’t ask why. Whoever believes in Him doesn’t ask why.

— Why?

“But because He knows, not we!” he said, surprised that he had to explain to someone the simplest things in the world.

“Excuse me now”, he added, “but it is time for me to go.”

Flapping his wings he rose a little over the two travellers.
He looked at them with placidity once more.

“Believe in Him, my friends” he said to them.

“He always wants what’s best for you.”

The wooden boat, having taken in the nets, was approaching the pier at the edge of the village.

He flew again towards it.

“He always wants what’s best for us...”, Alexander repeated skeptically.

“My parents always wanted the same.”

“Yet, perhaps, they never knew what it was.”

...

They left to the open sea.

Behind them the boat was being secured at the pier.

* * *

The island they encountered had now disappeared and the land seemed less distant.

Above them the sky was covered everywhere by clouds in all shades of grey. The sea calm, also grey.

The two of them, two figures lost into a world of glass, on such a silent colourless day. A day in which the limits of sky and sea seemed to fade away...

They were travelling parallel. As if they were for each other its reflection in the infinite DeltaGamma's mirror.

They were together. And for as long as they were together they would exist parallel; they would move simultaneously in two worlds, in sea and sky, as one creature, as a whole.

They were archetypes and reflections at the same moment. They lived thus on both sides of the mirror.

...

He jumped high.

As high as he could.

He stopped in the air and started coming down, finally falling in the water tail-first.

Then Alexander went up into the sky.

Descending in reality much quicker that it might have seemed he slightly turned his half-opened wings.

Thus he started a prolonged turn that resulted in a complete circle, before continuing — normally again— his flight.

Jason tried something similar. He jumped in the air and making a full turn he dived again into the sea.

...

They were now floating side by side, alone on the DeltaGamma.

They were surely weary and their games, no matter how little they had lasted, had tired them more. They knew it before starting yet it didn't stop them. Besides in that way perhaps they would manage to relax by the uniformity of the movements of their trip.

They were floating side by side, alone on the DeltaGamma. Two grey strokes of a brush, left in the middle of nowhere.

...

"Did you hear anything?" Jason asked, breaking the silence.

— No. Hear what?

— It seemed like a sound from afar.

He had just finished speaking, when the same sound was heard again. This time Alexander also heard it.

He quickly went up into the sky. The clouds far away, near the land, had become thicker, had turned even darker.

“A storm is coming!”, he shouted to Jason as he was heading towards him. “I must move forward...”

He looked twice as upset.

“Fly quickly! Don’t wait... Go now! Go!”

...

He was flying a little over the surface, moving his wings deftly, continuously increasing speed. The sea was cracked little by little by newborn ripples.

He was flying incredibly fast. Going like the wind. The wind though seemed to think differently...

He was forced to move higher as the waves started to rise. The wind kept getting stronger, changing direction at intervals. The smell of rain was now wrapping him up.

The evening turned to night.

The night was turning into day by the blaze of lightning.

He would go on in spite of the rain that came down like a wave.

...

He was swimming on the surface. A dolphin against the foaming sea.

Jumping high, as high as he could, sliding on the very waves. Hoping for lightning to light again the sea.

...

The land was now very near. And the wind had at last turned in his favor.

But the rain was always growing stronger. And his wings had betrayed him...

He fell exhausted into the water.

* * *

The sun was now shining in a calm sky. The sea peaceful, suddenly serene as if it had never woken up.

But the rocks showed that something had happened the previous night.

The soil still smelled like rain...

All day long he was calling out his name. All day long.

He was watching the rocks carefully. He estimated that he shouldn't be too far from where he was searching. So he kept on searching.

He was asking the gulls he found if they had seen him. He pleaded them to search along with him, to look, to help him.

But they had other things to do. They soon gave up trying and were leaving into the open sea to find food.

The morning turned to evening. The evening also moved on. Then the night returned.

He remained alone watching the rocks as the moon was casting its shadow on the sea.

He heard — weak as if he had imagined it— a sound coming from very far. He almost stopped breathing and listened to the silence. He then heard the same sound.

Like a whisper in the night it could be heard far, travelling on the DeltaGamma. Someone was calling out his name.

He didn't know whether he had answered loudly or not. He only knew that he was swimming again. That the tearing of the waters had once again acquired a meaning.

That he was swimming again for him.

* * *

A new day was starting...

Swimming near the rock where he lay, he was watching him sleep.

The wave had rinsed his wings. And the salt had taken care of his wounds.

He opened his eyes. Only then did he go near him.

— Are you in pain?

— Not so much.

His body was abraded. The waves had hit him many times on the rocks before finally washing him up on one of them.

He was about to open his wings, but he stopped because of the intense pain on his right wing.

— Has it broken?

— I don't think so... I wouldn't be able to move it at all.

Maybe it has cracked. Or some bone has moved out of place. Or simply it hurts from being struck.

I don't know...

But I can't fly.

— Don't worry Alexander. Everything will be fine...

The following days passed by faster than expected.

He climbed up clumsily to the higher rocks the days when the sea was rough. He fell clumsily in the water and swam the days when the sea died down.

They moved on while talking.

They moved on slowly and when getting tired he would stop to rest on the nearer smooth rock.

Jason then brought him pieces of the sea bed.

He brought him the most beautiful of shells that he found, small and big ones, hard or fragile, holding them carefully in his snout. He brought him sponges of all forms, parts of corals of various colours and shapes.

They let them on the rocks by the edge of the water, there where the sea would easily draw inside it again what belonged to it.

Then they continued to move on, parallel to the shore.

...

He was swimming in front of him, turning continuously his body, as Alexander sometimes whirled when diving into the sea.

Other times again he stood spectacularly almost entirely out of the water, supported only by his tail.

Or, on the contrary, he hid entirely leaving only his tail to pass the DeltaGamma, greeting his friend.

And when he asked him to, he would jump high — as high as possible— before the sea drew him inside again.

He could now stretch his wing and move it up and down with no particular pain.

...

From rock to rock he would listen to Jason talk incessantly to him about the life in the sea, ask of him to tell him more about life on land.

From rock to rock he listened to Jason describing to him those parts of the depth that he wouldn't be able to see.

The sunken boat in the deeper waters, with the broken mast and the decayed keel. The interior of the small cave with the terrifying black opening. The chasm that opened straight into the sea — vast, full of darkness.

And in almost all of his wanderings Jason would find something different to bring back to his friend...

Never before had a gull learnt so much about the big blue part of the planet.

Never perhaps, had a dolphin known so much about the beauty of every sea detail.

...

For a little while longer Alexander would keep on feeding on fish Jason would throw on the land with a sudden movement of his head. Or with smaller fish he himself would take from his friend's mouth.

There was no shame. There was no commitment.

Besides, they were never two separate creatures. They were only two sides of the same willingness.

The willingness to explore a world beyond where the eyes can reach.

...

He was flying with his wings open again, indifferent of the rising wind...

* * *

They split up at the estuary of the big river.

From above you could believe, if you wanted to, that it wasn't the river which was pouring out into the sea; it was the sea that was penetrating into the land, cracking it.

Alexander would follow the river to its source. Jason would continue swimming about the borders of land and sea, up to the lighthouse that was shining in the evenings far from them.

At that lighthouse they would meet again.

...

Near that aged stone lighthouse Alexander would describe what he himself had just a while ago faced for the first time.

A blue river sliding into the green vegetation.

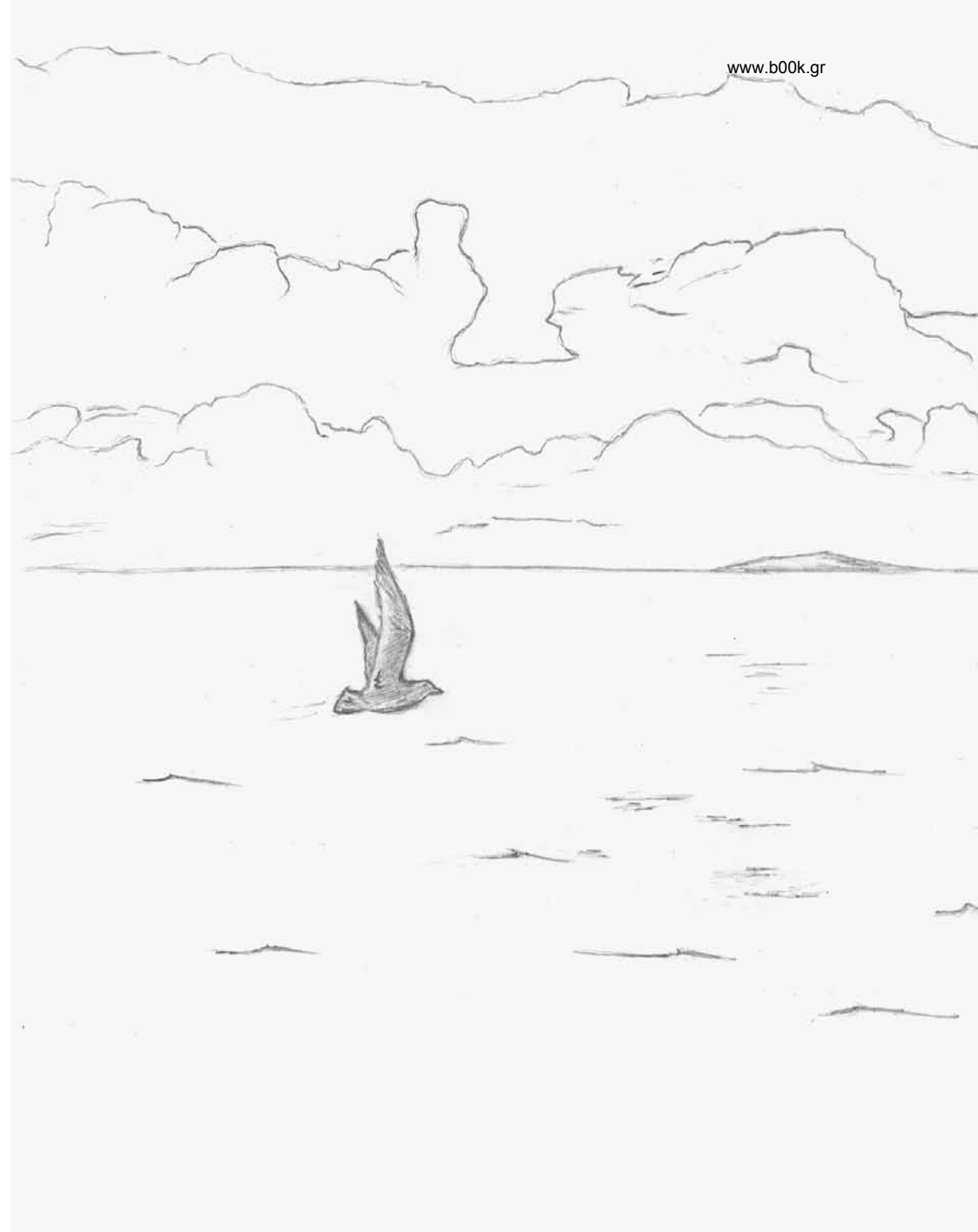
A white roaring waterfall hiding rainbows in its mist.

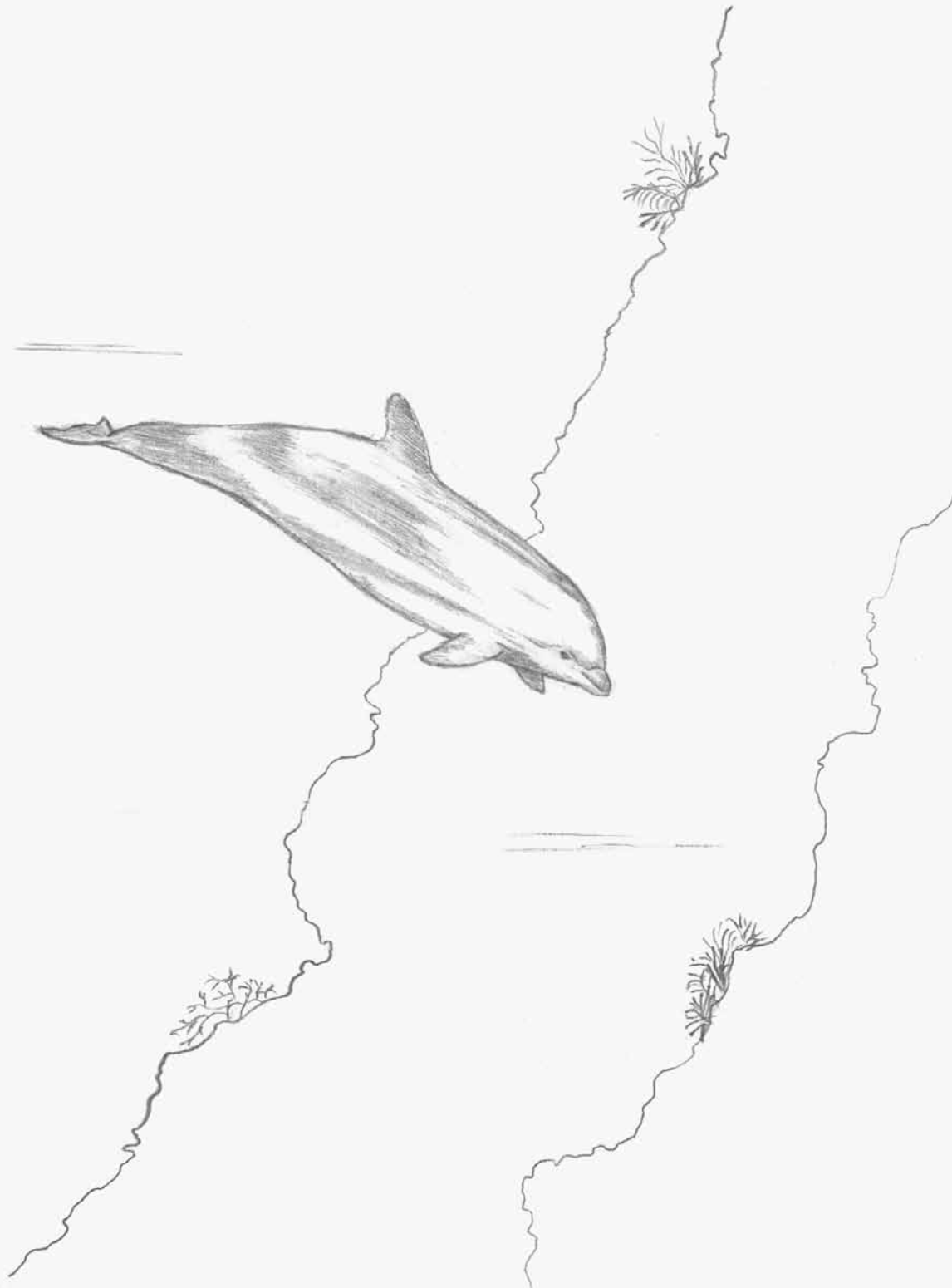
He would describe clouds fallen in lake mirrors.

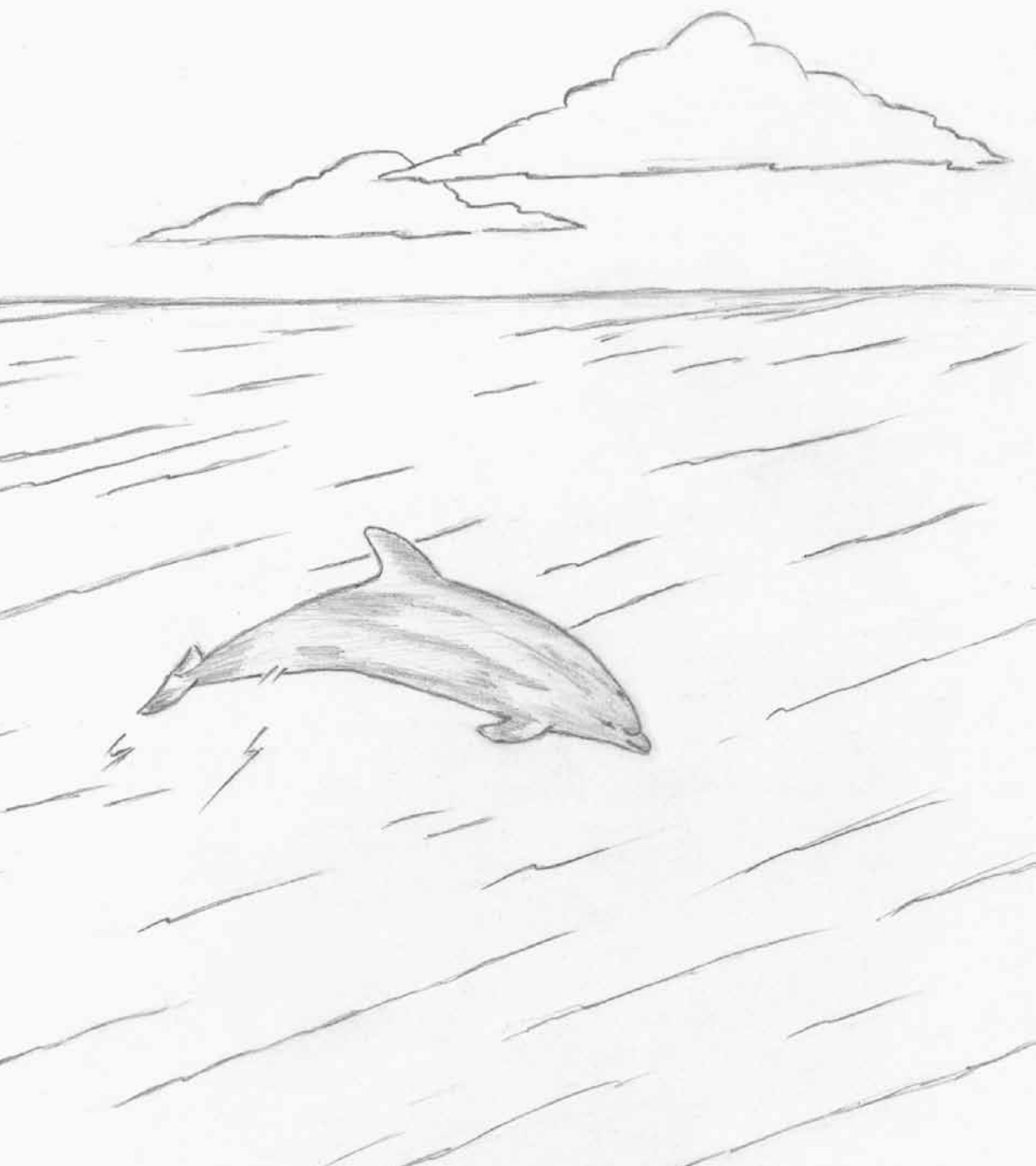
Snow left on frozen mountains.

Somewhere near the aged lighthouse the two travelers would pass on once more their knowledge to each other. They would impart their senses.

They would share, thus, the same memories.







* * *

He had seen them!

They were spreading their thin body in the sea.

But they were surely the most dangerous of all. For they were invisible to him. And he was heading, unwary, straight onto them.

His senses sharpened suddenly.

He let his body fall into the air. Having lowered enough the height in which he was, he scaled back his fall, skillfully turning his wings.

...

He was now flying a little behind Jason. He was now calling out his name. But the shadow swimming below the surface was moving on at the same speed.

He lowered his body even more, so that his wings were almost touching the DeltaGamma. He was still flying further behind Jason. Again and again he was calling his name.

Normally he would rise to breathe any moment now. But he could no longer wait; the nets seemed already very near.

He started flying faster, passing ahead of him.

Then, without setting back his speed, he rose a little higher, turned his body instantly and dived vertically into the water.

...

Closing the curve that he had started in order to avoid him, he approached his friend again.

It was something more than a startle. They had almost collided.

Having stopped only some meters away from it they were observing it silently.

Jason talked first.

— Thank you.

Alexander, still upset, smiled broadly.

“You see”, he said, “what it is to have a gull watching over you?”

“I see...”, he answered, smiling as well.

“...It’s a pity though that some others hadn’t...”

Taking his eyes off the nets, he turned and looked at him. He returned a guilty look.

“It is true”, he admitted, “that I’ve never spoken to you about my parents.”

Till that day Alexander thought that Jason’s parents were among the other dolphins of his group.

“I was too little then, I recall...”

“We were swimming together near the shores, but I stayed some moment a little further behind. I was playing with a big brownish jellyfish when I heard their voices...”

“They were both trapped... Not very far from each other. Not much lower than the surface.

They were trying to get away. To cut the net with their teeth.”

“When they saw me they started shouting again. They were shouting to me to stop.

And when at last I stopped they were shouting to me to go. To go far away. Not to turn back. Not to look back. To simply turn and go away, as fast as I could.”

“I stood there frozen.”

“Then I turned and went away.

Without looking back.”

...

“Since then I have never approached the shores again. I never approached people.

I left for the open sea. There I found the other dolphins. There I grew up...

Amidst the sea and the gull islands.”

“They used to tell me, I remember, that my parents didn’t die, that they still live somewhere in the sea.”

“I remember I believed them back then, Alexander.”

“Perhaps, they still believe it...”

“Anyway”, he said afterwards.

“No one lives for ever. And it is probably better I understood it soon enough.”

...

They continued in silence for some time. But the feelings often want to be expressed in words...

— Did you ever regret that you left? That we left?

Without waiting for an answer he asked again.

— Have you ever thought about why you left?

Jason unexpectedly reversed the question.

— What about you?

“I don’t know”, replied Alexander.

“I don’t know for sure.”

“I knew so little... There was so much to learn... But the other gulls didn’t understand me.

I think it would have happened some day... I would have left some day, even alone...”

“And you?”

— I don’t know, Alexander, if I have ever left. Perhaps I never belonged anywhere. I never felt I truly belonged to my group. That I belonged somewhere...

...

It wasn’t blowing that morning. Yet the water seemed to palpitate as if it was alive.

— ...Maybe the sea itself is to blame. That belongs to everyone and yet you can never have it for yourself.

— Who knows, Jason...

Maybe it’s better in this way...

They were free to be together. To continue together their eternal journey.

* * *

He waited at the sandy edge of the gulf for some time now. Until he finally saw him coming.

He descended to his side.

He looked upset. He seemed to be hiding something inside himself.

“It was the worst day of my life”, he said in a low voice and his eyes suddenly blurred.

“What happened? What happened Alexander?”

For a moment he seemed not to know how to start.

“Behind the mountains”, he finally said, “far behind those mountains, lost in the land and yet so close to the sea, lays a dump. A place full of rubbish. An awful place. Today I was there...”

“So?”

He stopped only to catch his breath before going on with the same agitation.

“The worst part of all, worst than all that rubbish, than the hot smell of the rotten meat, is that gulls lived there.”

“Do you understand Jason?
Gulls.”

“That fed on this rubbish. On pieces of meat and discarded bread. On humans’ leftovers...”

“Gulls that didn’t mind the smell. That didn’t mind any more the endless heaps. That have learned to live like that.

That have learned to fly low, away from the skies. Seabirds that fly away from the sea. That had forgotten it now.

It was just a source of food. And they could feed so much easier here...”

His eyes were in tears.

“For a moment I found myself flying among them; a multitude of gulls ready to dash on the coming heap.

At the moment when they were eagerly expecting the new heap, rushing all together to the new-brought rubbish, grabbing first some piece of food... At that moment I felt so small. Minimal. Inexistent.

Unable to talk. Unable to say a word.”

...

Suddenly his face calmed down. The emotional tension was gone. His eyes seemed to look at no place at all and his voice acquired an empty uniformity.

“I never would be able to convince them, Jason. I felt it. I knew it...”

I could see that my every try would be useless. Already condemned.

Even if I so wanted to help them see...

To see for themselves.

To remind them that to eat only, isn't enough. That it isn't enough just to live. And thus be able to live again. To restart living, Jason.

To start again thinking about the world around them... About themselves..."

"But I stood there in silence. There was nothing I could say. I could never convince them.

As back then...

On the island where I was born. With the gulls that I grew up with.

I couldn't, I tried not to convince them with words. It isn't something that can be proved, you see. That you can explain it, by moving your beak and wings."

He was talking, as if to himself...

"I was always for them a strange, lonely gull, Jason.

They never felt that I only wanted to learn how to think. They were after food. They were after today and were forgetting tomorrow.

But I just couldn't live like that. I had to know about me. About the sky and the sea.

So I was left alone to fly. Alone, even though I never wanted it...

Yet I loved flying high above that small island.

And when you fly high everything seems a detail.

What's important then seems to be only to fly high, my friend. To fly as high as possible."

"If there was something I could do for them and for me, if I finally chose to do something Jason, it was to simply be myself...

Not to pretend that I am someone else.

To dare to exist."

"But I could never convince them. Not them, nor the gulls in the dump.

They would ask me 'why' and I wouldn't know what to answer. How to describe the feeling of flying to gulls that seem to have forgotten they have wings. That search in vain to find wings of others.

They would ask me the reason to differ and I couldn't describe the moment you defy the wind, that it doesn't drift you away.

And when in the end they would ask me what is left, how could I tell them that nothing ever stays in the end, Jason?

How could I tell them that there are no payoffs?"

Jason stood in silence for some time. The phrases he heard reminded him perhaps of a dolphin that was looking at the sun while it was setting. A dolphin seeking the light when all around it there was darkness.

Thus when he spoke he had the same sad uniformity in his voice, the same empty images in his eyes.

“We could never convince anyone, Alexander.

If we had a thousand lives perhaps... If we had a thousand ways of thinking...

If there was a way to make a start inside everyone. The world would then become a better place. Gulls and dolphins, all creatures to come, would live from the very first day.

Life wouldn't be a waste of time.”

“But we can never convince anyone, Alexander.

You and I, could never tell beautiful lies. And the fear of truth lies within everyone. But the thought cannot be taught my friend, we know it. The thought can never be transferred.

It is simply born, as a spark probably, a moment inside us. We allow it to flare up, or we cover it with ashes...”

“Perhaps there is no need for anyone to convince anyone Alexander.

We alone convince ourselves.”

Alexander spread his wings.

He embraced tightly his companion, slightly sinking his body into the water.

“I am so lucky to have you”, he said quietly. “It's so rare to find someone who thinks. Who questions what the others once told him.”

Tears were rolling down from their eyes.

“Before I met you I thought I was alone in the world. I felt alone, but I had to exist...

We had to exist...

So that we would — who knows— some day meet.”

They were together, there exactly on the DeltaGamma, against the loneliness of two endless worlds.

They weren't crying for themselves. Not any more.

They were crying for those who couldn't perhaps cry. When you learn to think without boundaries, you can then love without limits.

You can cry for others. You can even fly, or swim for others. You can feel their feelings.

And you don't exist only for yourself any longer. You exist for everyone.

For those you don't know, for those who may never learn about you.

When you love.

Alexander looked at the surface of the sea.

“How could I speak to them, Jason? How could I tell them that this that lay around them was rubbish, since they themselves were calling it food?

Since the word ‘rubbish’ didn’t exist for them. Since, even if it existed, they had long since forgotten its meaning.

Since they had, as simple as that, replaced it. With the exact opposite...”

He smiled awkwardly at his reflection on the water.

“Maybe the island where I grew up, and the island with the white houses that we met, and the wooden fishing boat with the gulls chasing it...

Maybe they all were dumps.

But we didn’t see them.”

Jason continued a phrase that shouldn’t end there.

“Maybe even now we are in a similar dump Alexander, yet not wanting to open our eyes...”

Their sight blurred so much that the sea seemed to disappear.

“There isn’t one dividing line, Alexander. There isn’t one DeltaGamma.

There are many. And they keep us imprisoned. Yet, we cannot see them. We don’t want to face them...”

...

“We always see what we want to see, my friend. And we can see everything if we want to.

In a single moment...”

“Or we can always see nothing...”

Their eyes cleared as their tears fell into the sea.

* * *

The years went by peacefully.

Alexander and Jason weren't the ones that once left behind them a rocky island lost in the sea. They had changed.

They had changed as much, as an adolescent changes when it becomes a gull. An adolescent when it becomes a dolphin.

Yet you could discern in them some of those, their old characteristics. And they still had the same quest in their eyes.

There was, however, no other dolphin that knew as much as he did.

About fruits, trees and flowers. About lakes and rivers. About waterfalls, fires and volcanoes, cliffs and canyons. About the seasons, the rain and the snow. About the clouds. About the land, the islands and the sea when you are flying high. About the sensation of flying.

There was no other gull that knew as much as he did.

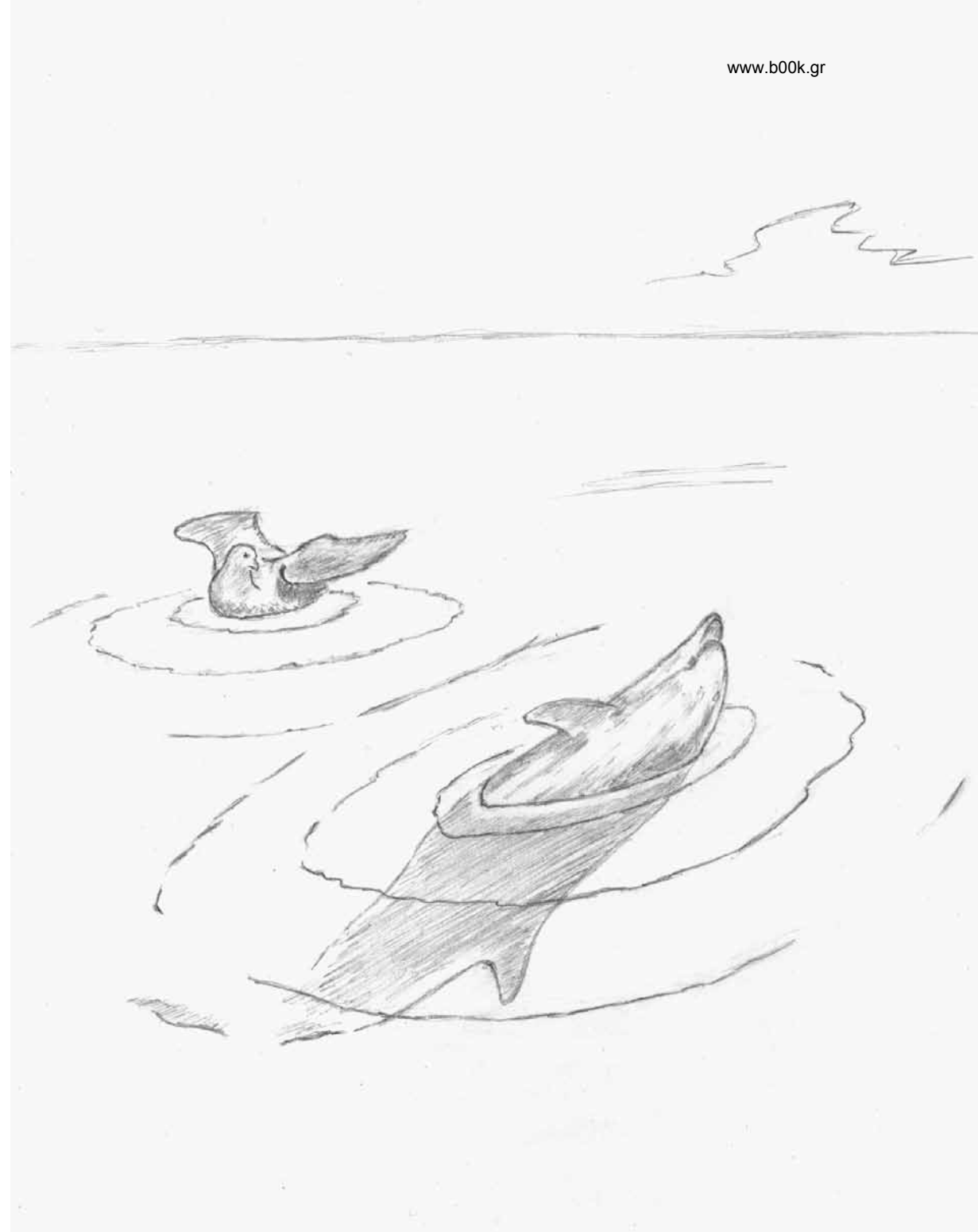
About sponges, corals and shells. About the depth. About whirlpools and sea currents. About fish and cetaceans. About ship wrecks. About caves and chasms. About the sensation of swimming. The feeling of jumping high in the air.

There was no other dolphin and no other gull that knew so much about their own world. They had learned about it in trying to learn about each other's world.

There was no other dolphin and no other gull that knew so much about themselves.

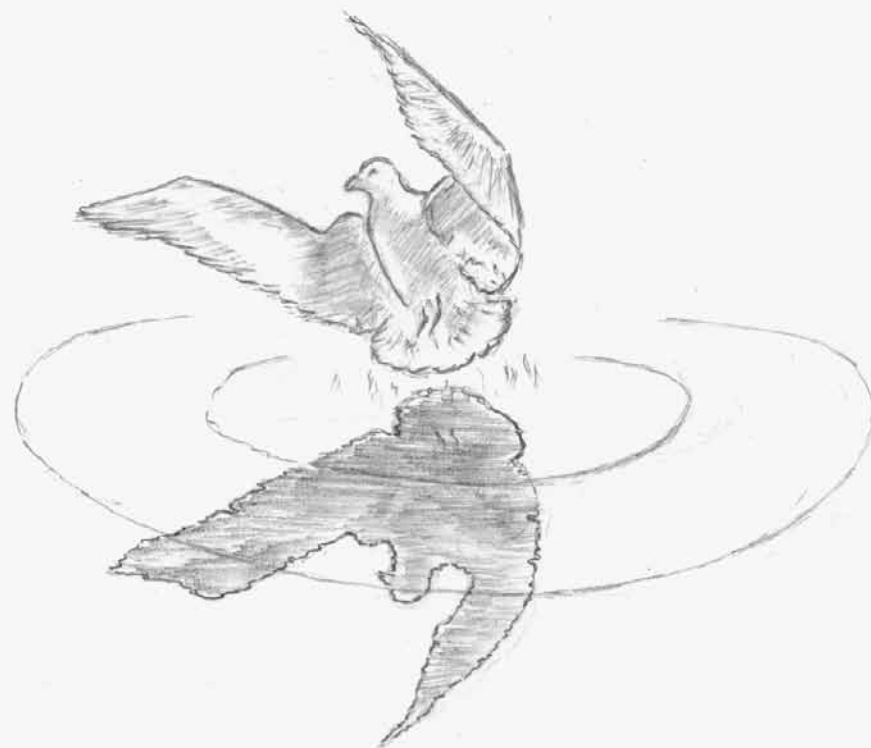
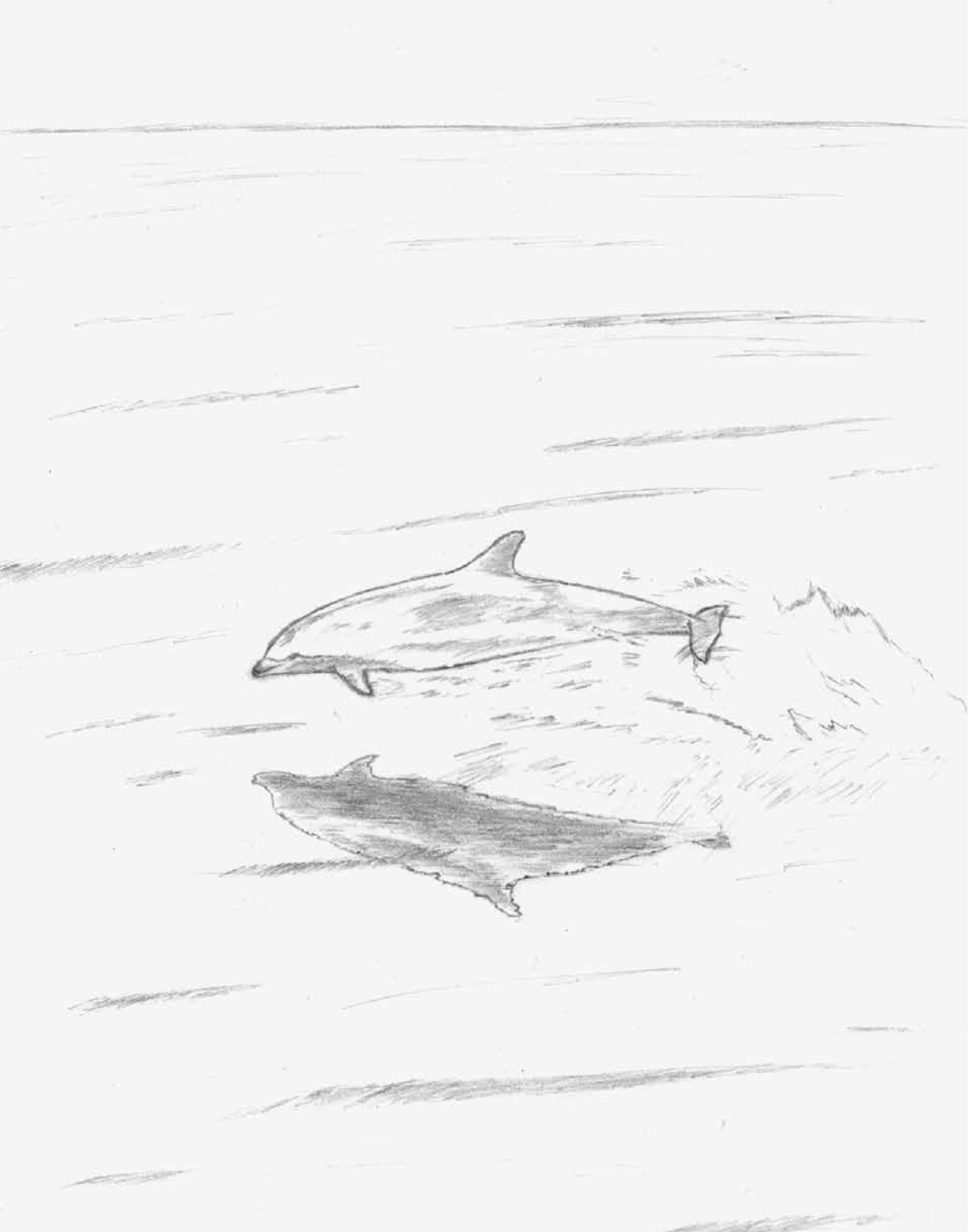
They knew their capabilities, who they were and where they were. How tied up they were in a minimal part of the whole. How attached to "something".

But they were now proud that they had lived. They knew that they endured to exist.













* * *

They didn't know exactly what, but something had drawn their attention to that small, void of gulls, island. So far away from the land.

For sure it didn't look like any they had met. All previous islands seemed to be floating on the sea, but this one...

Watching it from the side, its one part was sharply being cut, falling into the water. The rest of it lowered smoothly in all of its large length before it disappeared, finally, under the DeltaGamma.

This island didn't seem like any other; it was as if it was sinking into the sea.

Or as if it had once started sinking until it touched the seafloor and stayed there, between two worlds.

To unite them for ever. To belong to them both and no more belong to any of them.

...

He was standing on its only peak, on the crest of the dry island, somewhere amidst the sea, the earth, and the sky. He was looking at the open sea when Jason called him near.

“Have you ever thought that our worlds aren’t but two contiguous worlds?” he asked him.

“The one on top of the other?”

He had never thought of it. As so many things that you never think of. Perhaps because they do not matter.

“They seem so different, Alexander” he went on, “but they are two worlds almost identical.”

“They are simply two worlds the one on top of the other. With water instead of air. With fish instead of birds.

They are simply two faces of the same world.”

— ...

— Have you ever thought that there may be worlds above the sky? Worlds below the sea? That our sight ceases before meeting them?

...

Starting from somewhere amidst the sea the earth and the sky, he was opening his wings into the world he knew best; his own world.

He was flying almost vertically to the DeltaGamma. Flying higher than any other time.

Much higher than the clouds. He could see them far below casting their shadow on the sea. And the small island from where he started wasn’t visible, as if it had at last sunk into the water.

He felt cold. Yet he kept on rising. He was breathing with difficulty. His right wing was in pain from the weariness and the frost — some wounds, after all, cannot heal.

If he didn’t stop now, in a while it would become impossible to move his wings at all. And if so, perhaps he wouldn’t be able to control his fall.

...

Once more they were beside each other. The island by their side was there where it had always been.

He had dived almost vertically to the DeltaGamma, deeper than ever. If he didn’t stop descending, though, perhaps he wouldn’t be able to return. And the sea was falling, lightless, deeper and deeper...

They looked for one last time at the small solitary island. They didn’t know what, but something had drawn them there.

Perhaps it was simply an island that they hadn’t seen before.

* * *

It was a little while after they came across the strange island that Alexander was taken ill. Suddenly as always.

They were moving on far from the land when he approached Jason and asked him to stop. He felt tired.

So they rested and continued. Soon afterwards though Alexander got tired again. The next day they decided that they had to stop somewhere for as long as it would take.

...

They finally stood on a beach full of white and grey pebbles.

On the one edge, the sea.

On the other, the pebbles were giving way to rocks that kept getting bigger before ending on a steep height.

That height Alexander was looking at from below.

Just yesterday it would have seemed so small to him. He could have found himself on its very top right away.

But today, how could he rely on his weak wings?

And how could he fly again for Jason?

Each day that passed he felt more tired. Even swimming was now tiring for him. He would come out onto the shore and sit on the warm pebbles.

Jason was trying in vain to convince him to eat. In vain he was trying to console him.

Yet, when they were together, when talking about the sky and the sea, everything seemed to be as it was back then; in a moment he would open his wings and the journey would start from the very beginning.

A new journey. As if they hadn't seen anything so far...

...

He was searching again. Calling near him the gulls he found and asking them if they knew anything. If there was something he could do for Alexander. Yet no one knew.

Only one talked to him about the Old Gull.

He gathered at one edge of the beach some fish.

He had thrown them on land with a sudden movement of his head, even though he was afraid that perhaps his friend wouldn't eat anything.

Alexander asked him not to go.

But he couldn't stay. Watching him suffer without being able to help him.

After all there was no reason to worry. For a gull it would have been only half a day away. But he was swimming fast. He could be back by the next evening.

And he would be careful. Provided only that Alexander would also take care.

He said goodbye to him. Then he left.

* * *

As soon as he felt that he had gone far enough he increased his speed. He wanted to return as fast as he could. So he had to reach the Wise Gull as soon as possible.

The gull that spoke about him, had told him that he was the wisest of gulls. That he surely knew about all illnesses. But he didn't want to fly any more.

He would find him on his island.

...

He had already started to ascend... To climb on ever bigger rocks, jumping from the one to the other. Putting in all the strength he had left.

...

He was swimming without pause till the night fell. He decided to rest for a while. Then he continued to swim, into the dark.

If only the Old Gull could help him... If there was something that could be done...

The day had broken by the time he was approaching the all-green island. It was exactly as they had told him it would be. But white gulls were flying around it.

He hailed someone near him. He pleaded with him to call the Old Gull.

He was startled. The Wise Gull never went to anyone. They all went to him.

Of course, until then, only gulls had asked for him.

So, he started heading towards the small cave on the highest peak of the island.

He was flying slowly towards Jason. Behind him, on his left and right, two more gulls were following.

He descended to his side. The two gulls also descended afterwards.

His look was that of a gull that knew many indeed. That had seen many in his lifetime. That his words no one could doubt any more.

He was surprised when he heard that this dolphin had gone all the way to his island for a gull. When he heard that a gull could have a dolphin as a friend.

But he didn't ask more. He advised him what to do.

Then, telling the two white gulls to stay and take care of his food, he turned and started flying alone towards the cave at the highest point of the island.

...

There was nothing essential that he had learned. The gull simply told him that his friend should rest and eat well, pleading with the god of gulls to help him.

However he was happy. That he was leaving this island. That he was swimming towards Alexander.

...

He was ascending from its rear side. From where the rocks rose smoothly before they were cut, a little bit behind the beach with the pebbles of white and grey.

He had to reach it...

...

He was moving his tail rhythmically, advancing fast inside the water. He tore the surface only when he needed to breathe.

The sun was rising slowly in the sky. The clouds white, somewhere at the edge of the sea.

It was a beautiful day.

* * *

He looked for him on the pebbles. But he wasn't there. He took a better look.

A shiver passed through his body.

As if by intuition he raised his eyes towards the steep height.

He saw him slowly opening his big, white and grey wings. Wings that were trembling.

He shouted to him.

He shouted as loud as he could.

But he couldn't answer. He was using his last strength in holding his wings stretched out.

But he would understand. He always understood him...

So, he jumped off the cliff...

* * *

It was an ordinary day.

The sea seemed to call you. The sun was shining up high.

His wings lasted. He slipped into the wind before falling onto the rocks. He left behind him the beach with the pebbles of white and grey. He was flying again. He was flying again, a few meters over the blue waters...

And the sun was still shining when his wings seemed to break.

When the sea at last drew him near.

He was completely weak, unable to move even a little.
He put his snout under his head. He slightly raised it from the water, so that he could breathe.

“I’m dying Jason”, he mumbled.
“No... No...”

“Please, take me down...”
“Down where?”
“Down...”
Below the DeltaGamma...”

Tears were born in the eyes of the dolphin — drops of water fading into the sea.

“You will die, Alexander...”

“No one lives forever... remember?”

...

He only asked him to take a deep breath. Then he held him softly with his snout.

They disappeared together.

* * *

They were sinking slowly, following the slopes of the mountains low into the sea.

Schools of fish were moving aside. Ray-like flowers, as if they were alive, were pulling themselves back into their white shelters. Shells were closing up.

New schools would appear. They would move aside.

They were hiding amidst corals and seaweeds. Behind rocks full of life...

But the pressure kept getting more potent. And the sky was shouting to him that he belonged to it.

...

Turning his head towards the surface, he could see his last breath travelling back to its own world.

Emerging tremblingly, passing through swaying sunrays. Through fragile visible beams of light trapped, you’d think, in the liquid element, lines having escaped for awhile the whirlpool of time.

Jason opened his snout.

So much lower than the surface, a gull also started to rise, with wings wide open, while around him a dolphin was swimming in contiguous circles.

They were travelling side by side.

Through swaying sunrays, through fragile beams of light, they were emerging slowly, having escaped — you'd think — the whirlpool of time...

* * *

He took him along again, far into the infinite sea.

There, on the DeltaGamma, a gull would float with wings still open. A dolphin would lament with his snout still touching a white and grey lifeless body.

There, on the DeltaGamma, on the line where they had once met, the waves would start to rise...

A dolphin would sink into a world with flowers and trees, with gold-seeded fields and roads of soil, with rivers and lakes flooded with clouds.

And a gull would simply follow the sea...

...

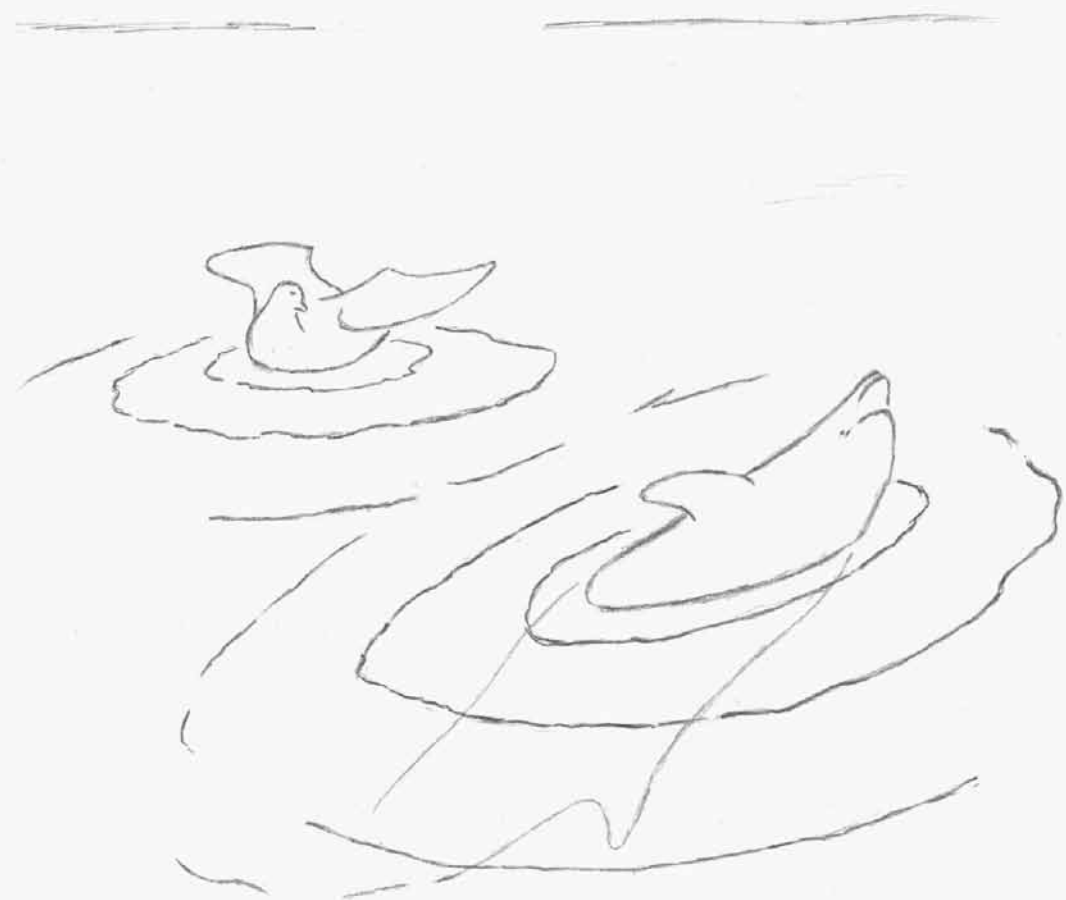
A gull that before closing his eyes for ever, had managed to face the world that lies beyond the horizon.

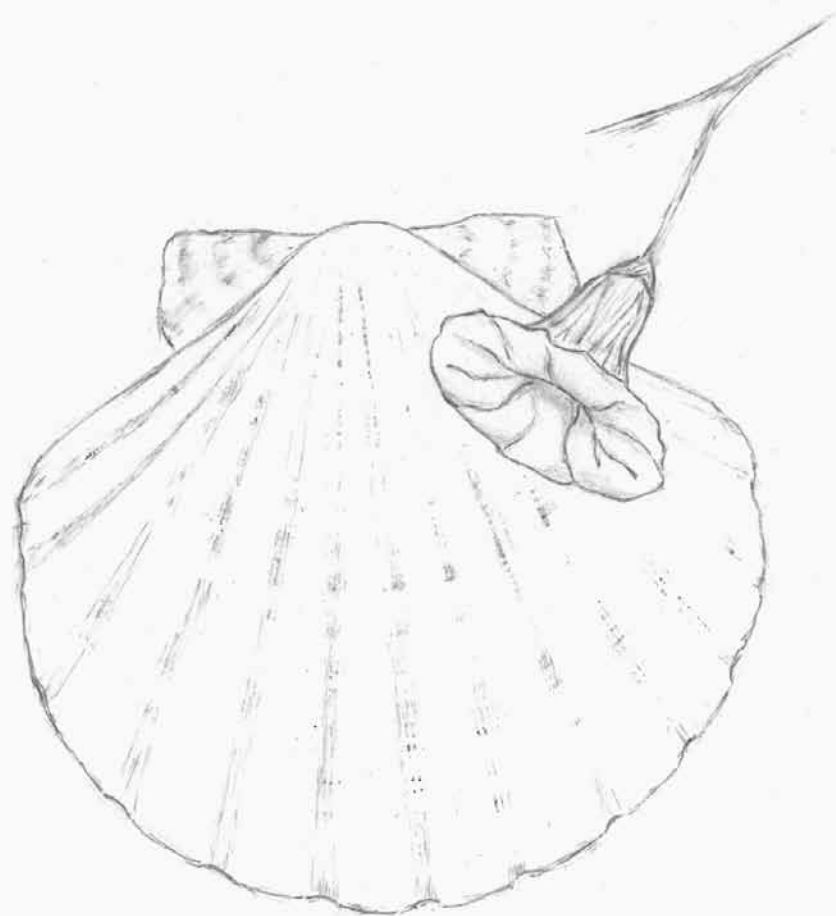
To shatter his transparent bonds.
To fly truly free.

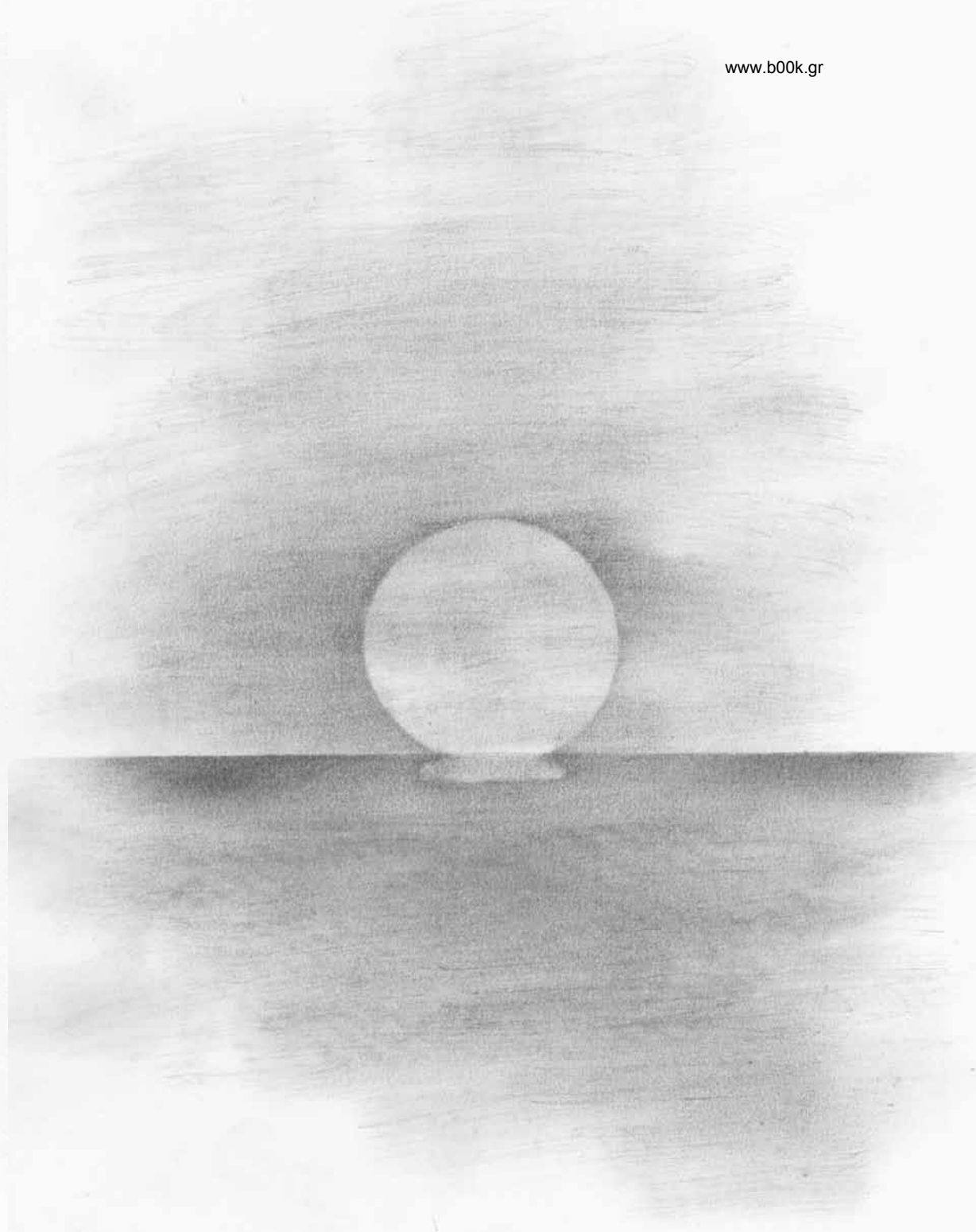
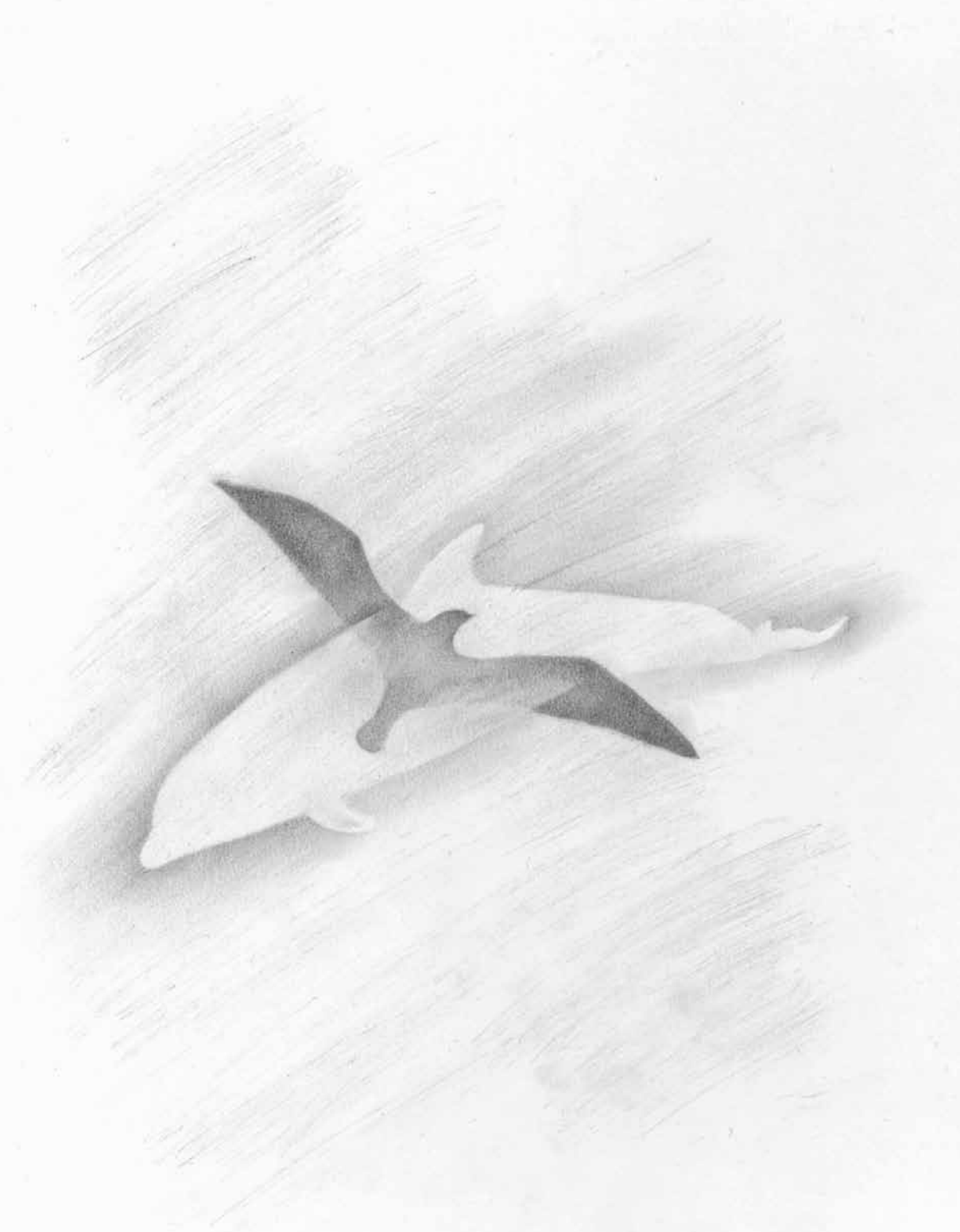
A gull that cannot and won't ever
fade...

That will forever live...

...At least for as long as some dolphin
will fly in the depths.







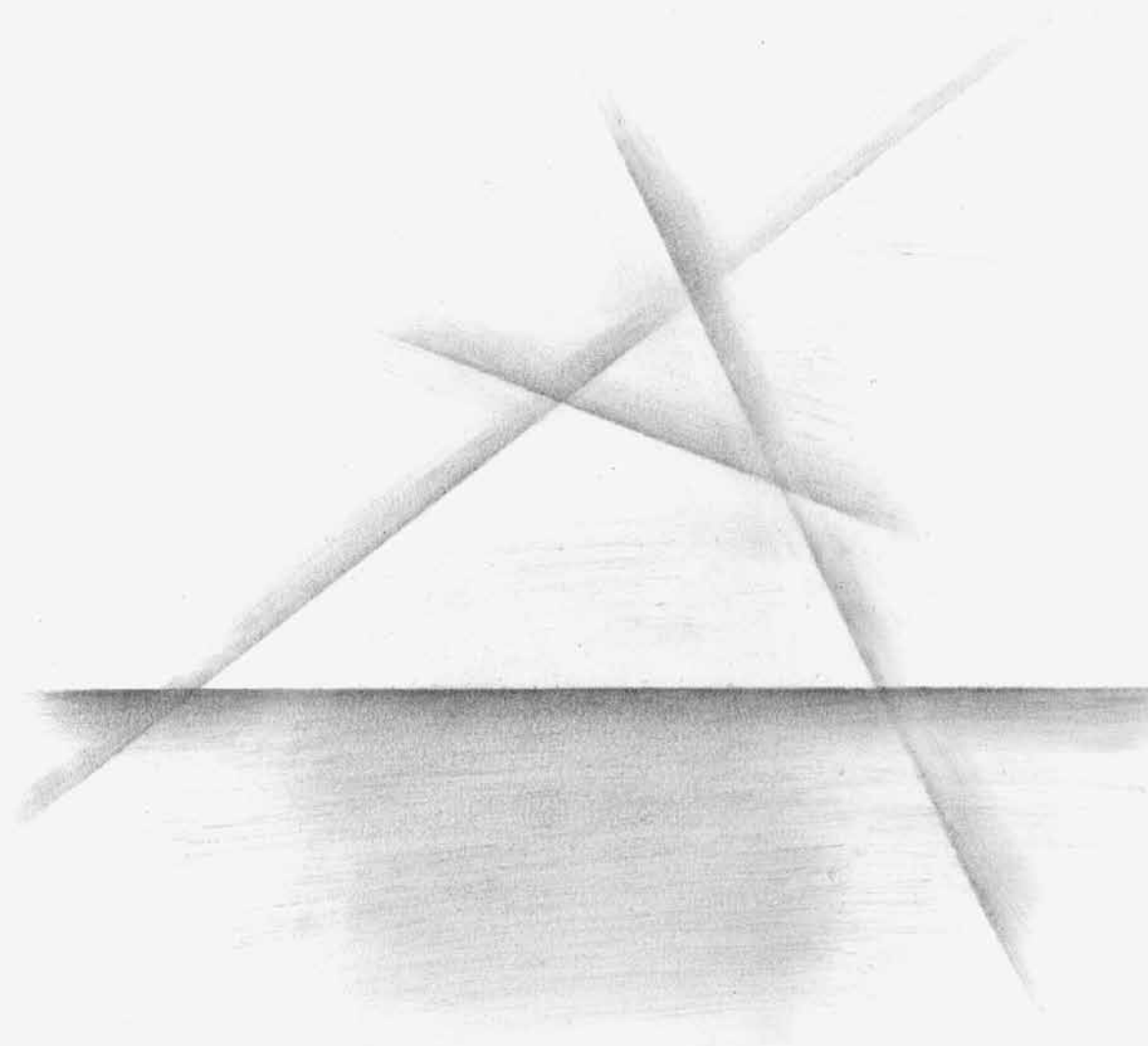
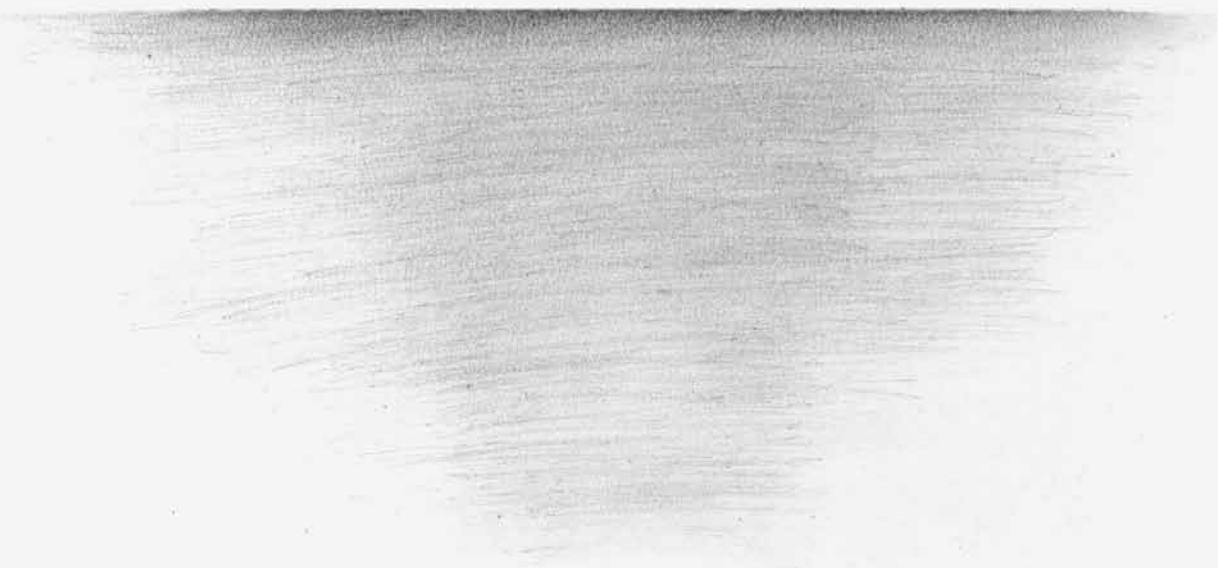


*There lying, lost inside a universe
imprisoned as they seem in different worlds,
suns many, divided by distances
suns divided by infinite lines...*

But, do you remember?

*There always is an unbelievably small part of our mind,
that never did obey the laws of nature.*

And the beginning has now been made...





...from the pages
of some non-existent book...