

THEOFANIS THEOFANOUS

Mati,



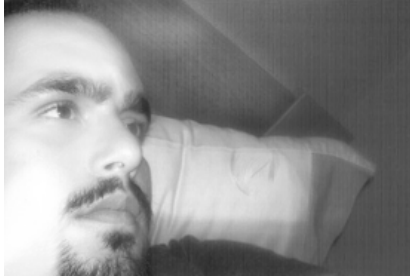
the magic whisper

illustrations by
Rafaela Fantasia



introduction by mum **Christina
Nikoloplaki**





Theofanis Theofanous was born in 1982. His parents came from Cyprus and he grew up in Chaidari Forest in Athens.

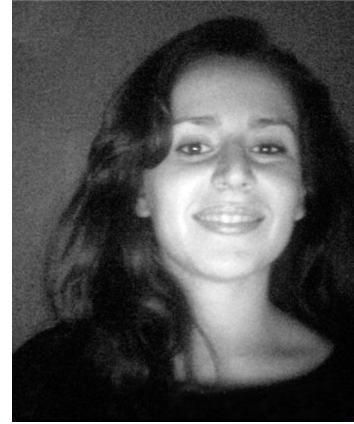
He has attended the Akmi, Domi, Florina ATEI and Athenian College educational institutions. He has also attended a number of literary art seminars at the Book National Centre.

He is married, he has two daughters, 'Princess Capritsiozza', 'Just a Teensy One', infinite fairytales and they live all together-just for spite-in the city of Florina.

His first book, titled '12 Versions of Her', was printed by the 'Peri Tehnon' Publications in 2009.

One of his most significant literary distinctions was the 'Homer Award', awarded by the 'Bavaria Speech, Art and Greek Culture Association'.

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Rafaela Fantasia was born in Italy and grew up in Cyprus. She is a student at the University of Thessaly, School of Medicine. She devotes most of her free time to drawing, music and literature.

THEOFANIS THEOFANOUS

Mati, the magic whisper

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Introduction

For every person there is a 'magic whisper'.

This could be a note on the piano for the beginning of a song, a word on a piece of paper for the beginning of a fairytale, a flap in a woman's stomach which presages the arrival of a new life.

Whatever this is though, it's always and only for the best.

My 'magic whisper' was, is and will be a challenge.

The challenge to raise two children that are so similar and at the same time so different. Similar because they are twins, different because one of them is disabled and the other isn't.

However, this disability is not my challenge, an obstacle my family has to overcome, it isn't the struggle of my life.

My challenge, the 'magic whisper' is to raise two children with love, with soul and patience expecting only one thing: to be able to see the 'rainbow' one day just like the one Mati saw.

Enjoy the reading.

*Mum Christina Nikoloplaki**

*Author's note: Our online acquaintance with Mum Christina started after a loving, spontaneous, sincerely disarming and in-depth post on the websites: www.eimaimama.gr & www.facebook.com/greekmothers owned by Olivia Gavriili who brought us together. I truly thank both of you for the immediate response and, in my turn, I would like to welcome you to the big family of Saita publications!



Make yourself comfortable in someone's arms,

it will feel like a dream,

a short prayer

before the night journey,

an angel will come

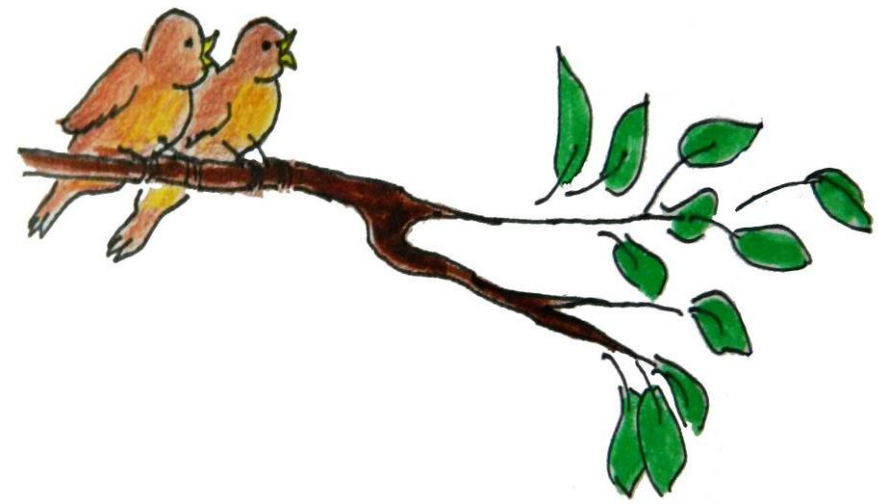
to whisper the secret in your ear

shush... you should only listen....

to your heart!

Open your hand,

Blow some stardust and... off we go!



Once upon a time, in the clearing, next to the old house with the happy people, the nightingales sang the story of a child with sparkling eyes. As soon as it got dark, Mati's tears flowed like a river. Not a single star could figure out the reason why a tiny girl with silk, neatly cut hair, freshly washed pyjamas, grandparents to pamper her in the princess room, always full of all kinds of goodies, giant round lollipops, colourful sweets, juicy candies, fresh marshmallows and pink cotton candy could become so grumpy every night before going to bed. Except....



Except for...a star which flew very low. Her personal little star. The sky sends to all babies, regardless how small or big they are born, a star the moment the first cry is heard. To lighten up their way through the absolute darkness and to remind them that they have been moulded in order to serve love with good deeds. The star, trembling with fear, found out the reason, put on its robe and hurried to inform the king of the night.

The little moon, startled by the news, and since it wasn't full moon, meaning that any explanation it would give would be incomplete, thought, before even the dawn broke, to whisper it to the sun. To an exceptional being with a golden heart. All day long it shines with all its power. It gives away sunrays to anyone who needs them. But how can someone mouth such a word? There is only one way: pure and simple or, even better, simply with a pure night sky.



'It is the first time I feel that you are sad. Why is that?' wondered the half moon. 'It is clearer than a crystal' said the sun. 'At the first opportunity, I will also reprimand the wind, in order to calm down. I am sure that he, having travelled a lot, must have dealt with similar cases and he will be able to comfort me. Cases of children who refuse to do anything. Because they believe that every day is the same as the previous one and the next one, boring and meaningless. How wrong they are. How little they do know.'

So, it's time to find out the truth!

It grows in my fairytales!

'Oops', said the wind, 'I hope that what I see coming straight towards me is not the cloudy little cloud. But if it is, I have to give it the news. Besides, I promised the sun that I would. I would tell the story of Mati's concern to the first creature I would meet. When you promise something, you must strictly keep the agreement'. A,B...,C... Cloudy Little Cloud. It is so sensitive that it changes thousands of looks depending on its mood. It cannot accept that some moments in a day can be hard, uploaded with setbacks, disease, and sadness. However, it's time it started to crave, to be stubborn and to learn that every problem has a solution.

The cloud heard the news. Its cheek-bones became red. Its irritation and whining grew bigger and bigger until it burst into tears. 'This little girl will drive us all crazy', it exclaimed. 'There is not a single day which starts without an impregnable castle, a forgotten melody, an unknown word, a smell expecting to be discovered, in order to raise your own flag. By winning time to time your spoils'.

Meanwhile, a pearl daisy was successfully completing the chapter 'give and take, comings and goings, I made the puddings', of the Housekeeping lesson. It raised its eyebrows as soon as it realized that tears would bring rain. This whole disruption urged it to occupy itself with its favourite out-of-school activity, meteorology. It took its binoculars and immediately started to observe, with undivided attention, the sky. Its curiosity was satisfied when a raindrop spread all the information.



After what had been said, the daisy started to wither. Its petals lost their freshness. The same thing happened to the passers-by who it met on its way. No one knew how to help Mati escape from the microcosm of her room. She persistently refused to come out. She wasn't going to move. She crossed her little hands. She bowed her head. She frowned. She joined her lips. Generally and specifically... she sulked! Until, one day an uninvited visitor talked to her.

An ant, often passed by the ledge of Mati's bedroom. It came to collect the leftover breadcrumbs from the morning sesame bagel. It felt badly because it never brought anything to offer to her while at the same time it left with a full basket. However, it always dedicated pretty much of its time to describe to her things it had heard, things that had drawn its attention. For the girl, that was more than enough.



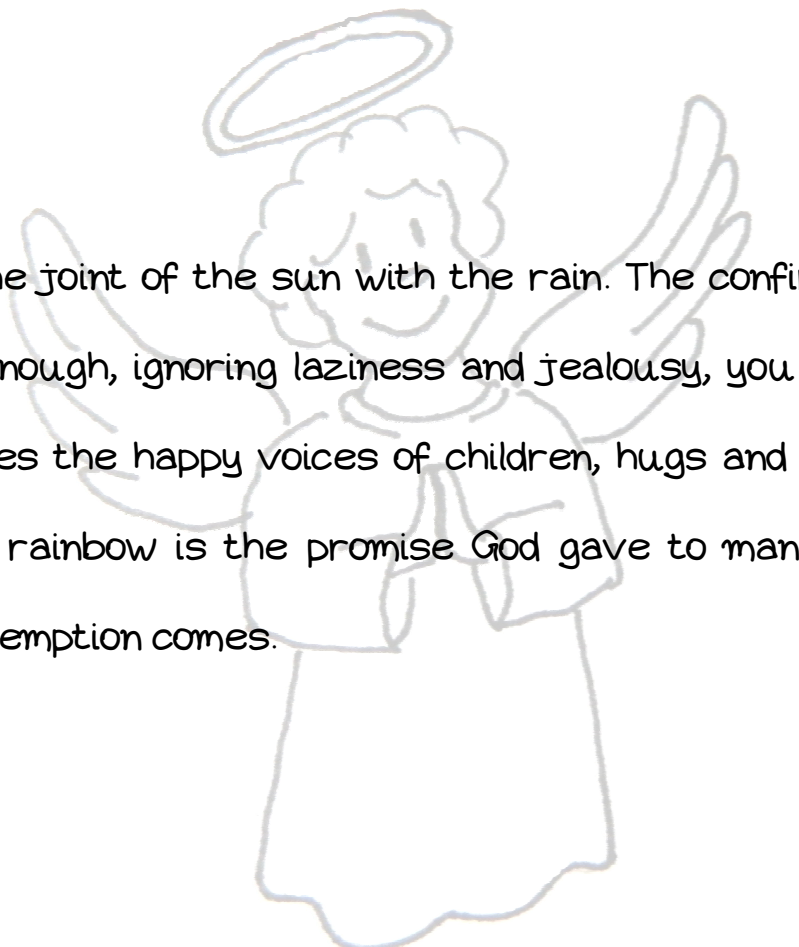
(And do not rush to think that what you have just read is a lie and that animals do not talk. Trust me. This can happen in the world of fantasy in which most fairytales are hosted.)

Once, it confided in her: 'I promise you. No matter what, I will never leave you, because we should care about our friends'. Mati could not imagine that the little ant meant that. She believed that it was just a thought.

Once, twice, three times it saw her being sad. It was at that moment that it took the matter into its own hands. Since no one and nothing had a positive effect on her mood. 'Rainbow', it mouthed with all the courage it had. It was then that the girl pulled her socks up. Despite her supposed indifference, she asked with quite a lot of curiosity everything about it. The tiny insect collected its antennas without saying anything else. However, it had just achieved its goal! It encouraged her to search.

'Grandpa, grandma' she cried almost terrified. No one responded to her call. She searched the whole house to find them, inch by inch. No trace, they were nowhere. She headed for the kitchen window. She was surprised to see them sitting on the grass and laughing satisfied. Together with the creatures of the garden and countless butterflies. 'Rainbow, Mati! Come and see!' An impertinence of colours filled the whole place. A company different from the others. Humans and elves became one! They danced, shouted, laughed!





A rainbow is the joint of the sun with the rain. The confirmation that if you try hard enough, ignoring laziness and jealousy, you will make it. A rainbow encloses the happy voices of children, hugs and the desires of our dreams. A rainbow is the promise God gave to man, that through hard times, redemption comes.



The sweet little girl stood there with her mouth wide open. She was baffled when she saw the miracle! For a few seconds she thought she was flying. She couldn't speak. She just felt. New feelings of relief and impatience for *tomorrow*. No, that wasn't the most beautiful day of her life, if you are wondering. There were more, more days on which she saw, touched, felt even more important things. No day exceeds the others. I promise you that all of them overflow with uniquely magical moments as long as we do not defile them with meaningless thoughts. They lived happily ever after and "let's give a kick to the yarn ball so that it will unfold and no longer *Mati's story* hold"¹!



¹ part of a Greek nursery rhyme used sometimes before the beginning of fairytales

*Dedicated to children all over the world,
to my daughters,
to Mati and the way she sees the world.*

What if she is a girl with special needs. She is the same as everyone else. She keeps inside her, the same fears, the same questions, the same insecurities, the same curiosity to experience the future and the right to live, a right that every child carries from the day they are born, regardless their colour, gender or origin.

So, it is easy to find how different we are from each other, but it is also easy to discover that we have many similarities.

*Theofanis, Rafaela, mum Christina
and Saita publications wish you: **Have Happy Flaps!***



The idea of **Saita publications** popped up in July 2012, having as primary goal the creation of a web space where new author's work can interact with the reading audience directly and free, without any obstacles.

Saita publications' aim is to redefine the relationship between Publisher-Author-Reader, cultivating a true dialogue, an interaction and an effective communication among the ebook and the reader. **Saita publications** stay far away from profit, exploitation and commercialization of literary property.

The strong wind of **passion** for reading,
the sweet breeze of **creativity**,
the zephyr of **innovation**,
the sirocco of **imagination**,
the levanter of **persistence**,
the deep power of **vision**,
guide the saita of our publications.

We invite you to let books fly free!

This is the true story of a girl who did not tame the waves, did not defeat mythical monsters in one night, and was not called as the heroine of any fairytale! She just managed to overcome her fears and hesitations, realising life exactly as it is... great!

