

ON THE WAITING LIST OF LIFE



EMI'S DIARIES

POSTHUMOUSLY PUBLISHED DIARIES BY AMERICAN-MACEDONIAN CHILD-AUTHOR

Prof. Jovanka Denkova, PhD in children's literature, University Goce Delcev – Stip,
School of Philology, Department of Macedonian language and literature

“On the Waiting list of life” written by Emilija, Emi, Kukubajska are the first posthumously published diaries for children and young adults in the Macedonian literature. They are written in English, the official language of the author, a Macedonian born in Africa by Macedonian parents, and raised in the U.S.

The child-author begins her intimate life evidence with no intention to publish them, except to keep record of her personal perspectives on life, people and the world, from her age of 13. Later in the diaries she revealed her new wish to publish them one day.

Emilija Kukubajska is a gifted child who twice skipped grades in elementary school, excelled in math achievements, attended Kumon Math Institute, demonstrated above average IQ and memory, read Carl Sagan and Stephen Hawking at age 12, aspiring to be a cosmologist and astrophysicist like them, was an award winning singer at inter-scholastic competitions, played piano, loved drawing, and above all loved people for their inner beauty, and loved the world for its wonders. She could never dream or envision the nightmares of fighting for life that began two years later, when the lupus nephritis autoimmune disorder declared its first attacks and continued to brutally decline Emi's health until it destroyed her life at age 27.

To her existential conscience and constructive conscientiousness the child-author admitted that her diaries are not to be considered as her personal history of the illness as weakness or helplessness. She self-imposed distance from her health problems, not because she was hiding them from the world, but because she resisted them with a silent and sober courage, without confusion or fear, but with confidence in science, and in love shared with her dearest, and ultimately with God who is not an imaginary or outdated cultural category for her, but a mystery beyond all mysteries and reality that contains all “realities”.

A contemporary and cultivated child-author, she articulates her desire for active quality life in a simplified and sincere narration, free from descriptions of external details. With lucid thought and direct

language free from pretentious metaphors, her narration is psychological, using discourse of a child and later a young adult, focused at the characters' inner world. She analyzes them, debates their opposing views and documents facts and events that partially include travelogue and memoir elements found in autobiographical, authentic diaries.

Emi's diaries are not fiction, but a personally documented life journal that communicates with more than 400 characters in her environment. The fact that those characters are given fictitious names in the editing process, does not decrease the originality of the narrative. By doing this, the author-narrator and the editor of this publication, protect the characters' identity and the freedom of expression, renouncing any coincidental similarities, censorship or lawsuits.

Emi's diaries record her health wars, living between "dialysis imprisonment" and her noble love for life... A journey through her growing pain from a healthy, gifted childhood exaltation to a lupus devastation. An uneasy encounter with her generation's atrophy of human values. At 15, Emi's blissful innocence is torn apart between a cry for cure and a creed to win in these health wars, in pursuit of freedom from early death. Determined to survive until science discovered solutions for her illness, she is sustained by her innate gentle grace, genuine love and gratitude for being alive shared with all, inspired by the Creator of the worlds and his ultimate power of love, and miracles.

Expecting a new kidney "on the waiting list of life", Emi dives deeply and conscientiously into her teenage and young adult survival. She cultivates her inordinate altruism and dares to question and correct moral, cultural and social misconceptions of her peers, in America and Europe. Overwhelmed by severe vortexes of health battles, she manages to exert her loyal dedication to understand those who failed virtuous moral visions, and educate their self-serving, superficial ego, obsessed with materialism.

The character exploration of her friends and admirers goes beyond her verbal discourse about mind over matter. In her candid intellectual confrontations with their basic instincts, she often encounters severe obstacles, protecting her pitiless honesty against their deception, with her openness vs. hypocrisy, courage vs. cowardice, and faith in the future beyond despair. Her love for the gift of life enabled her to add 11 fabulous years to life, far beyond doctors' prognosis. Her belief system built bridges between extremes: "to have and not to have health". Her own intuitiveness and intelligence ventured to question herself and the others, employing earnest emotional, mental, spiritual and cultural qualities to handle character differences. Storming through the killing fields of lupus, Emi inquisitively exposed herself to dangers of fake qualities among *people of the lie, on the roads less traveled*. She intensely demanded from herself to be reassured that freedom to understand others does not mean freedom from being responsible, in a world of distorted views and perplexed identities, among the privileged and the others, the healthy and the sick among both, in the illnesses of society and culture.

There were diseases, torture and death in Anne Frank's camp, and there were recurrent *lupus wolf* attacks in Emi's fragile body. They killed Emi on 9/11/2006. She came from the U.S. to Macedonia, to comfort her beloved grandma, who died of cancer, 6 weeks after Emi went back to eternity. (Her mom)



Hoping to heal others, with care and cure, Emi went to sleep, but never woke up. She was 27.



ISBN – 978-608-4726-21-0