

This diverse anthology pools together the far-away and close-to-the-heart dreams of nineteen emerging talents into an eclectic collection of fresh takes and original pieces guaranteed to provoke, inspire, and nourish the soul.

The literary world is changing rapidly. There is a new “of the people, by the people, for the people” movement emerging. These contributors blend genres, mix styles, and forego traditionally accepted rules of structure and criticism to create honest works of raw expression. Dreams of '23 celebrates these voices in their purest, most unfiltered and unedited forms.

In this first volume, you'll find short fiction and poetry by Ace Allen, Aimee Newsom, Awais Chauhan, BEE LB, Carl Boon, David Williams, Eli Evans, Ellen White Rook, Erin Jamieson, Jane Lake, Lori Lamothe, Margaret Marcum, Mark Levine, Mykyta Ryzhykh, Naomi Azriel, Ryan Rahman, Ruby Liu, S.A. Kennedy, Tyler Hayes, hand-selected and published by Barbar.

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Hints at 3 a.m.

Flying thoughts at 3 a.m.

pass like a fruit fly

landing on the phrase

“it’s quiet.”

I veer around a charcoal corner

past the lamp, the table.

I turn the corner, going after a riddle

in a cypher -

a mazy haze

inside a shadow box.

Back in my sleeping coma,

Shakespearean reveries repaint my dreams.

I fight cougars in a row of strange houses ablaze.

The faces of familiar strangers appear at a park.

Rivers become crystal blue waters

teeming with orcas - friendly performers or foes?

Sharks glide into my swimming pool

(the Ringleader is on break.)

Tinkling, relief overcomes me.

I made it.

“I am here,” I say. “I am ok.”

The shrapnel of the day has dissipated.