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13.05-28.06.2023

Sum of its parts

a text by Giada Olivotto for Maya Hottarek

9 May 2023
Moon Sunset 08:26
Sun in the sign of Taurus

The last hour of today is bleaching the sky. A woman walks briskly wearing her pair of sky-hued pants. A vociferous rush in the present, thinking about her future. She's a short time away at this point. The worn sidewalk creaks under her heels. It took two trains to get to Clayton before the pizzeria turned off his wood-fired oven. Written on a small scrap of paper, which she clutches with her fingers in the pocket of her soft jeans, the name of the pizza she has to order. In her condition, memory tricks her. At this point it's impossible to live like she used to. At first, they told her that after 9 months everything would end. No belly, no marks. It it's been 27 months now living symbiotically with a new creature. *Ammò, sarà na sirena*¹ her friend used to tell her. But she didn't believe her. No way. She has never made love to anyone and especially not to the sea. Her heel clicks into something sticky. She suddenly realizes she's there. Finally something to eat. Finally, the craved circular miracle is near. As the waiter arrives, she pulls out her note. She is ready: *I'll have a Prego*². After several minutes the steaming round pie arrives on the table. She looks at it as if she's looking at the Earth from the moon. She grasps a slice and, with closed eyes, prays that the first portion will fulfill its magic.

Discomforts are often the birth pangs of our rebirth. Like tiny nests we welcome and intertwine with the universe. We float around, asking questions and trying to find an explanation to the things that surround us. And yet, in this story, we could be as useful as the slice of pizza. We wonder why we bleed while lighting an incense. We wonder what time we are living in, if the correct planet will align at the right time. All of this while she is trying to give birth to herself in a remote pizzeria in California. *Sì*, that's why she took two trains from San Francisco. Her purpose was to be reborn. She believes in the magic contained in the slices of that pizza. The sum of those stringy triangles will take her far.

And now we have to wait to see if the miracle happens. Is it what we see something incredibly new and unexpected? Behind this new figure I am sure we can catch a glimpse of the previous one. Sitting, eating a good marinara, waiting for someone else's water to break.

¹ From the Neapolitan dialect: *Love, it will be a mermaid.*

² The legendary pizza Prego (which literary means *I pray*), able to stimulate labor pains, was invented in the pizzeria Skipolini in 1981. Since then 140 documented cases of women who managed to give birth has been documented and the site became a pilgrimage destination.