



EDITOR'S
CHOICE

THE TRAVELER: A LONELY WONDERER

These few lines aim to be a black and white picture of what I feel when travelling. These are just a few words to paint my idea of the traveller; who I believe is a lonely wanderer.

by Gabriele Erba

Once the traveller tastes the sweet bitterness of his journey, once he deeply touches the essence of wandering, once he understands the true meaning of his loneliness, he will never be able to rest in peace. He will always hear that solitary call from the unknown that needs to be discovered, as much as he himself needs to encounter it in order to really feel alive.

When the traveller starts his trip he perceives a sense of excitement which might be close to the birth of a new being. The newborn comes alone to the world to see and feel what he has forgotten, to go beyond that limit which prevented him from reaching the truth. In the same way our wanderer gets on his ship like an angel coming down from the sky. He forgets everything he knew of his world, and during the crossing toward the lands untouched, he eventually becomes a new being with little resemblance to his past self. He is ready to absorb the treasures that will find him on his way through his refreshed life.

It is peculiar how little one can realise the uniqueness of the gifts one receives while travelling, all the moments that give meaning to the wanderer's new life flee so fast that he cannot deeply comprehend what they really signify. Later, in the solitude of his room, staring into space, he appreciates that what he lives becomes a memory. In that precise moment, all the previous instants become enriched with an army of emotions whose potential flows down from his brain, to his heart, making his past acquire an infinite strength. Only then is he able to make one step forward in his quest for his own essential truth.

What is almost paradoxical is that the solitude in which the traveller finds himself makes him meet with souls he would have never met if he was accompanied. These lone wondering spirits hear the mutual calls that come from one another, congregate and exchange their emotions so as to accumulate the most precious of the treasure, that which was already conquered by their companion, which will make them closer to their supreme goal of truly knowing. Ultimately, the wanderer has an unconscious desire to stop his rebirth cycle, to gain that quiet peace which is like a new pair of glasses, with which he will be able to travel and discover, while staying in the place where he feels deeply at home.

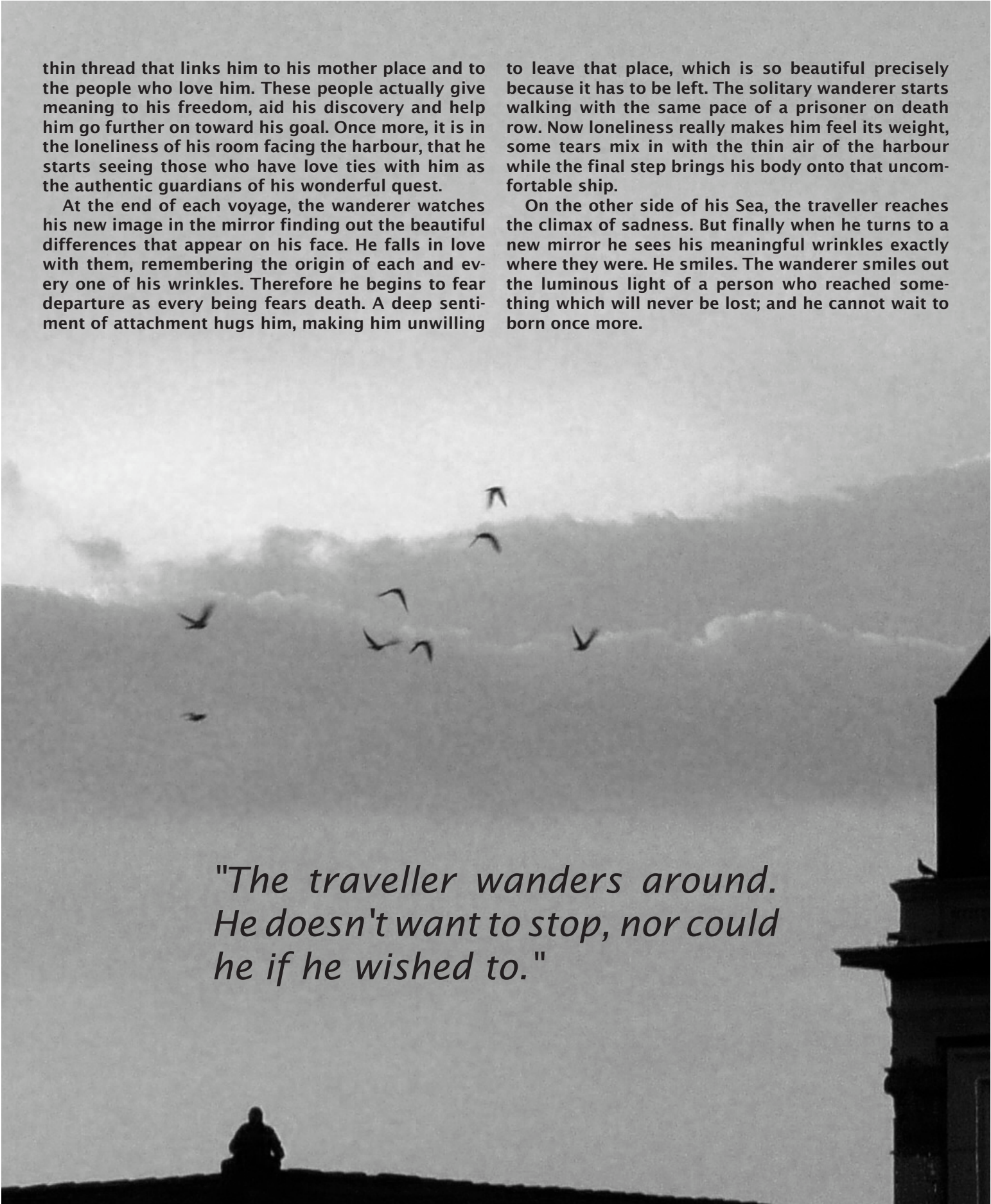
The relation our wanderer has with this home place (which sometimes collides with his first birth place) is weird, contradictory and during his first journeys can make him suffer a lot. Usually the traveller's first home-related thought is of rejection. He feels homeless. He does not want one and he hates the idea of having any kind of mind forged manacles which would prevent him from totally enjoying his freedom, his divine power of creating a new life when he wishes. With time moving on, with many lives helping the traveller to get closer to his goal, he realises how foolish his perception of home was. He suddenly understands that all the incredible people and the experiences that are happening to him are nothing but empowered by the

thin thread that links him to his mother place and to the people who love him. These people actually give meaning to his freedom, aid his discovery and help him go further on toward his goal. Once more, it is in the loneliness of his room facing the harbour, that he starts seeing those who have love ties with him as the authentic guardians of his wonderful quest.

At the end of each voyage, the wanderer watches his new image in the mirror finding out the beautiful differences that appear on his face. He falls in love with them, remembering the origin of each and every one of his wrinkles. Therefore he begins to fear departure as every being fears death. A deep sentiment of attachment hugs him, making him unwilling

to leave that place, which is so beautiful precisely because it has to be left. The solitary wanderer starts walking with the same pace of a prisoner on death row. Now loneliness really makes him feel its weight, some tears mix in with the thin air of the harbour while the final step brings his body onto that uncomfortable ship.

On the other side of his Sea, the traveller reaches the climax of sadness. But finally when he turns to a new mirror he sees his meaningful wrinkles exactly where they were. He smiles. The wanderer smiles out the luminous light of a person who reached something which will never be lost; and he cannot wait to be born once more.



*"The traveller wanders around.
He doesn't want to stop, nor could
he if he wished to."*