

FICTION

Maia had a big day ahead, her essay was due for the next morning and she hadn't written a single word. She had woken up early to get it over with before noon, but inspiration did not come along. She definitely would have to take it up with her sister, who assured her it would be a kind of miracle technique as soon as she'd wake up. She yawned. «Describe yourself in your ideal job». Her teacher was out of her mind, how could she, at 13 years old, know what her life was about. She moved wearily to the balcony and as the sun dappled its rays of light on the infinite successions of roofs, her heavy eyes fell on the Ceramic Institute right before her.

She started contemplating the building she knew so well.

A white truck parking caught her attention, a loud man coming out, carrying heavy crates filled with earth. The big Institute doors opened to let him in and then closed as if the building had swallowed the delivery whole.

Her eyes then followed the transformation process she knew by heart. First the purring of the mixing machines. She had memorised it so well she almost could hear the water smoothen the earth in the big tank and the sharp blade cutting the extruded clay at the end. Through the large left window, she saw the worker stacking clay lumps on the shelves while his coworker started to collect a few to start moulding.

She imagined what was the current production about, and reckoned how much she loved walking down the side street to catch a glimpse of how the ceramics were put in shape. This time was it moulded and turned? Or gently shaped on the potter's wheel.

She often tried to observe the drying atrium through the windows but she knew the best point of view was through the shop. To go there her favorite path was along the enamel workshop. She loved all the colours scattered on the wall, illuminating the workers. She remembered the first time she saw the multicoloured craftsmen and thought they were actually wearing make-up all over them. How her sister made fun of her. She hesitated to go wake her up just out of revenge but her daydream was too captivating.

Skirting the facade she would perceive the oven room wall, she imagined the latter big and filled with treasures, but she never got the chance to see it for real. She perfectly knew however the masterpiece multitude that came out of this sacred room.

She loved admiring the new arrival of stock in the shop, and marvel at how the craftsmen softly arranged the shelves. She could feel how proud of their work they were.

A sharp laughter came from above. Early students starting drinking coffee on the golden terrace, and the beat of the dance studio nearby getting louder. Some ceramists and dancers waved at each other, this never failed to make her laugh.

The group of students then slowly divided, some went back to the Innovation Laboratory where they would examine ceramic samples composition's and work with an unmatched precision.

She wondered what would happen if a scientist suddenly found a miracle way to produce a clay prosthesis. Would he run down his usual stairs to tell his peers or rather make a big announcement up on the roof? He would perhaps, stop the production to silence the building and whisper its discovery in the atrium. Mmm yes probably. Surrounded by drying masterpieces, the echo would highlight the dramatic effect. The perfect place to each everybody would however be the central multicoloured patio. There, the muffled sound of the back-end production pipes would set a perfect pushed warm atmosphere.

Then archeologists would gather upon the patio to see what was happening, and astonished would applaud, to then swiftly go back to their analysis with a new mindset. Their work would get energized, their inspiration renewed, their production refreshed. The gigantic chimney would then spit a denser smoke.

The conference they give would change perspective. What if they urged into the huge amphitheater to break in the news, euphorically figuring out how that will impact the works they choose to expose just above, on the second floor exhibition hall. She imagined people hurrying up and down the wonderful staircase, updating the gallery collections with their flow of inspiration. As when she usually marveled at the turnover during the conference cycle transitions, but this time with much more frenzy.

A small van with a « biblioteca napoletana » inscription arrived in front of the stock exit, - no wonder they needed new plates, everybody kept falling down on the huge ramps -. It got immediately integrated in her daydream. With the busy atmosphere of the discovery, it would be difficult for the workers to handle this kind of shipment. She would then maybe give a hand, helping perhaps with the shop. To carefully pack the precious plates, or she would take care of the layout of the exhibition, or ... mmm no she pictured herself in a much more important role...

Maia suddenly ran inside her room to grab a pen. The answer was just in front of her. She knew exactly where she wanted to work. And the announcement of her future discovery was already meticulously planned!