

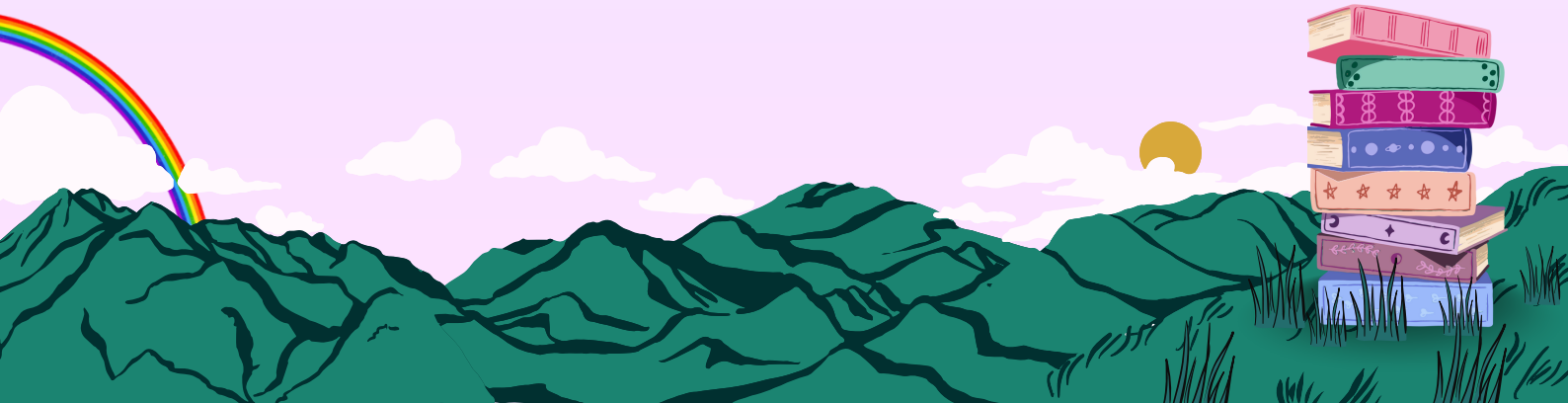
THE WONDROUS WAILING WORLD

Ella Lamont

I sat beneath a tree in the grove
shivering leaves cling to serpentine branches
zig-zagged and unfurling to make my canopy
and when sunshine begins an early descent
it will rain from my ceiling
a precipitation of olives
a symphony of soft thuds on short grass

I sat for a season
an autumnal listener
I sat for another
winter's silent watching warrior
I breathed into the next
a sigh of relief for spring
and as I reminisce on the crunchy concord of fall,
June's overcasted skies, July's dreams of snowfall, and the cold embrace of
august,
the wondrous wailing world
knelt down to beckon me forth
and with tired helping hands
ushered me out of my hermitage

I intertwined my fingers
with the wondrous, wailing world
and she led me; I was her own
a weary mother's clutch on her wide-eyed child



and as I stumbled alongside her gliding, gilded strides
I wondered aloud whether I had really spent so many moons
sat beneath the olive tree

the wondrous world stifled her wails to laugh
a brief upturn of the corners of her mouth
before they fell again and
the wondrous world became the wondrous, wailing world again

her whimpers were strange sounds this time
whimpers and wails that erred on anguish
I quipped as to why she wailed,
“Why would a wondrous world carry grief?
why would such heavy heartache find rest on her shoulders?”

She began to speak.
“I fear I am losing my wonder.
as you sat, season upon season, did you not notice the change?”
“Of course, I did” I said, kicking a stone in my path.
She whimpered again.
“Did you not feel it in your bones?” she pleaded.
“The air of difference? the writhing restlessness in your gut?”
We stopped.

The wondrous world began to weep.
“I did.” I said, eyes beginning to brim with tears too.

We found pause on a nearby stump.

“You are strange creatures but mine nonetheless. However, I fear I have
created my own demise,” she sighed, defeated.



I prompted her to continue.

“It seems you have forgotten the aftermath. To any action there is an outcome. Do you not think, when you pillage me, when you kill the creatures that walk alongside you, only to devour them, when you strip my body bare of its luscious green canopies, that I do not wince?”

An ache erupted in my chest.

“I do not want to be a wailing world. But I fear you will steal my wonder for fruitless endeavours, and I may become just that.” I nodded, but could not find the words to respond.

She looked at me with unease.

“You drill under my skin, and you christen my seas in the ugliest of ways. You reach into me, and take. You take again. And again. For what? You are here so briefly, you walk my halls, you grace my marble floors for the shortest of time. What is so important that you must destroy? What is it that holds such significance, what is it that breathes down your neck, whispers and seethes into your ear that you must maim and ravage?”

As she spoke, I felt a stirring in my being, building; building, slowly. It reached a crescendo, and I began to weep, wail and whimper alongside her.

“I don’t know,” I managed to say between cries. These were the only words I could afford.

And so, we sat, whimpering, wailing and weeping in harmony, on the tree stump.

We sat for a season, and we sat for another.

Two tired beings leaning on each other, natural yet strange, for a child to lean on the wondrous world, and the wondrous world to lean on a child.

“I do not want to be a wailing world,” she whispered,
“but I fear that is the only way you will listen.”

