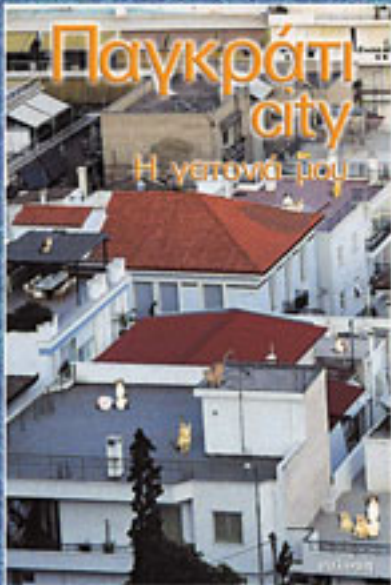


Παγκράτι city

Η γειτονιά μου



PAGRATI CITY - My neighborhood

To my children,
Spyros and Matilda

Fantasy has no limits, let's hope it won't get worse.....

I live in the most curious, erotic, sexy, sensual, sweet, cute, happy, Indian district, in the center of Athens.

I live in the “ neighborhood of the happy people”, under the neighborhood of “ Apatsi”, who sometime destroy our part of the city, but we put sleeping pills in their milk, we put them to sleep and we save them bald.

When their hair grows up then we'll become friends again.

Why is it curious?

Because it has ears.

Yes, you are not mistaken.

There are ears everywhere.

Ears glued on the walls, planted into the pavements, hanging from the trees, from the streetlights, and in every imaginable place.

One dares not talk; for fear that the ‘Apatsi’ will listen to what one says.

Some times we forget that, sometimes we simply ignore it, other times we get really pissed about it, and some times we have no alternatives.

Of course we don't know exactly where these amazing products are, so we decide to talk in low voices, to have our meetings and to make our decisions behind closed doors.

To tell you the truth, I found myself in a very difficult position because I liked to chief of the wild tribe and because right from the start I hated their actions- they kept ambushing us.

It as a confusing situation.

When the war begun I was against it, because I'm a true believer of peace, but I had no choice.

I had to fight by the side of my neighbors, and to defend our part of the city.

At the beginning I tried to discourage looting in every way I could, but I failed.

I never get near their neighborhood, because they will aim a poisoned arrow straight at me from the castle where their chief dwells, which is big enough and well castellated.

So I have to make a whole circle to get to the bank.

I cross sand dunes, (here, in the sand the Apatsi hide their heads, just like ostriches), rivers, side-rivers and groves.

When I finally arrive at my destination, after a long and tiring route, I collapse because of the long run.

Each time the clerk sees me, he runs and brings me a glass of water, because he feels sorry for me.

One day he told me:

- You must have walked a long way to come here!

- No, I live at the next corner, near the square!

The man was left speechless.

What was happening in our beautiful neighborhood became an obstacle for our creative work, it began to tire and exhaust us, so we, the residents of the “neighborhood of the happy people”, ceased fire.

So there is peace, because we pursued, we wanted it, and because we have more important things to do, like showing you our hangouts and making Greek movies!

Acquaintance with our ‘country’

Most of the districts of Athens are alike each other, and ours is no different.

A sad, hazy color prevails.

The apartment buildings are old, build one next to the other, with balconies that are hanging with no grace at all.

Their back view is dull- some of them have stripes created by the rain- whereas their front view is grey or white-grey.

Cars, cars, one sees cars everywhere, parked in double lines, on the pavements; the cars are parked almost inside our stores and our houses.

And now let's get to know together this joyful 'little city', where I live and which I began to love a long time after I first came here.

My house is a true palace, as in 'the palace of Versailles', with many rooms, huge verandas and gardens.

In a few words, we have to jump over our sheets, pillows and furniture to go from one room to the other, because we simply don't have enough space!

My street is about 5 kilometers long, that is to say, not even 5 meters.

Our small street has its name written on the upper corner correctly with two 'p' and at the other corner with two 's'.
Greece of Christians Greeks!

The 'symphony orchestra' of Pagrati, and I mean the instrument players and repairers at the basement, who have become great with their magnificent performances.

The 'Teo's wood factory', which extends to four blocks, and it really is just a small shop, where one can hardly order a wooden shelf.

The shop with the electric apparatus and its jovial employers who are more than the hardware it contains.

The cleaner's, where I go to eat tasty candies.
I'm sure its sweet owner thinks I'm suffering from hypoglycemia, because no other client eats so many candies as he or she gives it's clothes to be cleaned.

The former owner of a dairy of well-known dairy-products, Sakis, who closed his shop after he became rich and went to live to the Caribbean islands for the rest of his life.

Poor man, he didn't have enough money to pay his rent when he left.

The 'huge Lilliputian' gym, from the windows of which one can watch people with perfect bodies as they workout.
So one decides to start exercising, in order to get the attractive body of his or her dreams.

The pharmacy, who's nice and very clever owner sells as many apartments as medicines.
It's something like a combination of a real estate office and a drugstore.

The teacher of Greek literature, with her faultless Greek, who's always in time for her appointment with the stray cats.
The cats are always waiting for her and their food, morning and evening, at the specific time of their appointment.

Uphill one finds the street-walk of the grill-houses.
They are one next to the other, competing with other about which one makes the most delicious grilled chicken.
Cute lightsome girls cook and serve everyday.
The men wait in a line that reaches to Syntagma square, because of the tasty chicken and the tasty girls.

At Stadium, where the 'perfect bodies' of our neighborhood- and not only- run.
There works out Madame Nettleweed, who taught me to collect nettle-weeds for my pies.
Her recipes are fantastic, but, thank God, I never use them, because I'm sure I too would gain 100 kilos.
Madame Nettleweed runs 7 kilometers everyday.

Our fruit market, near Stadium.
Boutiques of fresh fruits, flowers, potatoes, lettuce, beans, artichokes, onions, garlic, cabbages, carrots, cauliflower, fresh fishes, fresh vetex, wet mops, etc., etc.

The biggest super market of Greece is at the second in history and size square, beside my 'palace'.

It has ten elevators, 5 moving staircases, 20 checkouts, 650 baskets, and 200 caddies.

There are plenty of ducks, wild geese, cartridges, caviar, and pates for sale.

There are also as many beggars at its the front door.

The magnificent square near my house, where one finds the café 'Greece of Greek Pagratians'.

The 'Café Royale', where we drink superb coffee overlooking the small square through the gel, among sandwiches, donuts, cheese-pies, crepes, noise and the squeaking of the birds.

The very nice and arty veterinary surgeon, who's a great conversationalist and an expert more in history than in veterinary.

His vet office is big enough even for an elephant.

The ouzo-square, where ouzo-drinkers hang out.

The smells from grilled squid, octopus and cuttlefish, from tzatziki and hot-peppered cheese reach to Stadium and torture the hungry athletes who are working out there.

The beauty shop, where one goes to buy only one nail lacquer and leaves having bought ten, because the nice shop-owner has convinced her to buy them.

The 'Funaro House', with its creator 'Donatella'.

A three stories minimal building, a fashion house, in other words, a private store of three square feet with an inspired woman-owner.

The 'Hyde Park' of our district, in other words, the park.

There are so many things there.

Big lakes, coffee shops inside small and cute wooden buildings, huge trees, ducks, birds, cows (no, that's a mistake, one can find those at the 'Apatasi' neighborhood).

Of course all these exist only in my imagination.

Coffee shops, coffee shops and coffee shops at our 'Champs Elysees', in other words at Ymittos Street.

Here we can see our 'reach poverty', as a friend of mine used to say.

One can see girl faces everywhere, each one in agony as to which one is the most beautiful of all and which one is going to say the smartest line.

Still, the music is so loud that nobody ever hears each other talking!

Why on earth do they have the music so loud since they don't dance and it doesn't allow them to talk to each other?

The small taverns of our neighborhood, where one finds warm atmosphere and delicious wine.

Here we make some of the scenes of our movies.

The bakeries, almost twenty at each block, with a variety of breads, cookies, sweets, cakes, biscuits, all ready to come out of their shop-windows and go straight into our stomachs!

The cinemas of our neighborhood.

'Hellas' is the one that really stands out at the square in front of the fountain.

This is where the festival of the Greek Oscar cinema takes place.

The awards are called 'Pagratian Oscars'.

Of course, in order to watch a movie during winter time one must have with him or her at least one ...blanket.

The 'Happy Nails' shop, where we go to make our nails smile, or rather cry from the pain....

The 'La Fiesta', in other words the large pret-a-porter shop with the most classy and elegant clothes.

It's a 4x4 shop, where if one wants to try out a pair of trousers one must kick aside the small table, the cash register, the small drawer, because one simply doesn't have enough space because of the many clients.

The 'Cio', at the highway, a shop representative of our impressive 'state'.

Everything one wants to eat costs only one Euro.

It's amazing!

Even to noise and the crowds of people cost one Euro, nothing more.

Beauty parlors.

When my neighbors go in there they are fat but when they come out, the next day, they're slim.

They make even the optician jealous.

Afterwards they never step inside the bakery, which is at the first floor of the parlor.

It makes me worry that it might bankrupt along with the beauty parlors.

One can find glasses, sunglasses and contact lenses only at the optician that geographically belongs at the 'Apatsi' area, but ideologically belongs at our 'Neighborhood of the happy people'.

I have placed a bet that one day I'm going to find the people of the shop sullen, especially the sweet blonde girl who's never sulky.

Our churches.

One is at the top of our square, guarding and watching us all.

The other is next to 'Kallimarmaro Stadium', where it should be.

Schools of foreign languages.

Each block has one of those.

There are more schools than there are children!

But the school of my friend stands out, because it's not a typical school but a true playground.

Children are happy to learn foreign languages with her as their teacher.

The only things missing are the swings and the teeterboards!

The Boutiques of all kinds are at the main streets.

Their luxurious shop windows with the expensive clothes, the accessories, the jewelry and the shoes are a temptation for the people.

Bahama, Barama, Perama, and I don't know what else!

And the well known square at the park, where the famous 'Frape' is.

Here we make our crossings.

There are four corners with street lights.

One waits at the first corner for the little green man to appear, and then one crosses the street.

At the second corner one waits again for the little green man and then crosses the street.

At the third corner one waits once more for the little green man, crosses the street, and arrives, finally, at the fourth corner and heads for her or his destination.

The 'Apati' are all suffering from cervical syndrome, because of all the time they spend spying people from their castle.

They move their heads back and forth watching people as they come and go from one corner to the other!

The miracle of our neighborhood is 'super auntie'.

She is our mascot.

There's no need to say more!

The mall, where all the 'centers' of the universe are.

Shops that sell clothes, beauty parlors, coffee shops, stairs, smaller stairs, plants, moving staircases, a transparent elevator, shops that roast coffee, hairdresser's salons, ticket agencies, record shops, sky dome, the only things that are missing are wild animals and little birds!

The original floristry, from the window of which is impossible to pass by without stopping to admire its inspired flower-bouquets!

'Kiki's beauty parlor', where one goes for a massage and afterwards can barely walk because of the relaxation.

The picturesque small coffee shop near the stairs of the park, where one can drink his or her coffee smelling the ...scent of the dogs coming out of the ground, while one watches the... opposite wall.

The square of the pigeons, their favorite place, where they eat the variety of wetted bread on the grass, and they have 'endless conversations'.

The old lady with her bicycle outfit and her helmet, walking her dog while riding her bicycle at the National Garden. She's unbeatable uphill.

The mini spa opposite Vasilopoulos Super market. All day at the spa, we have our body detoxified. Afterwards, at evening, we visit the super market, buy all kinds of delicatessens and devour them.

The hairdresser's salons, there are too many salons. You go to one of them in order to have your hair washed, then to another to have a hair-dye, then to the next in order to have a hair cut, and so on.

There are too many sexy ethereal girls. One can admire them at every corner, alley, street, pavement, shop, coffee shop, cinema, supermarket, bakery, in the air (these are the flying ones).

And finally there is love. Oh...love is everywhere in our city. In every corner, street, alley, pavement, shop, coffee shop, cinema, supermarket, bakery, and in the air.

THE GREEK MOVIES- At the church of Saint Elias

At one corner of the square, which the church of 'Saint Elias' dominates is the coffee shop ' Blue'.

Each morning, Madame Maria wears her best clothes, combs her hair, puts on her earrings and her pin and walks uphill the broad street panting lightly.

She enters the coffee shop, passes by the table where Mr. Aris sits with a smile and a thousand polite words.

- Good morning Mr. Aris.
- Good morning Madame Maria
- It's a beautiful day today!
- Yes, it's a beautiful day. Thank God, the weather is getting better.

Every day they exchange 'good mornings', 'hellos' and 'how are you'.

A true romance is on its way.

Today ten words, next day twenty and finally they find themselves talking for hours sitting opposite each other at the same table.

Almost at exactly the same time, Mr. Aris all dressed up, sits at their table- he always goes first-, and waits to see her entering the coffee shop with her happy, calm, bright face.

If she's late, he worries, because they are both at a dangerous age.

He wants them both to be able to enjoy their warm company during those last years, days, moments of their lives.

We are at the heart of the summer.

The sun is very strong and the heat unbearable.

It's the fair of the church of Saint Elias.

The coffee shop is filled with people, because of the celebration.

Madame Maria takes out of her purse her fan and a small packet that she places on the table.

- I brought you cheese pies today. I made them this morning, so they're still warm.

- But you got up early in the morning just to make cheese pies? Thank you very much.
- I get up early everyday, she smiles sweetly.
- I don't want you to get tired, he chides her.
- But it doesn't make me tired, on the contrary it gives me great pleasure to cook something for you. Did you visit your doctor yesterday evening?
- Yes, I did and he told me I'm fine. You see, you're not going to get rid of me easily.
- But, what are you talking about?
- My dear Maria, you're making me so happy. It's something I never expected to feel in my old age.
- You're making me happy, too. Sometimes I talk about it with my daughter, because she's asking me about it.
- Does she have a bad opinion about me?
- No, on the contrary. She's very happy for us.

She takes hold of his hand and he looks at her straight in her eyes.

It's his way of saying 'thank you' for her love.

They are both thinking the same thoughts: that they're very lucky to be together, because God has given them this unexpected happiness towards the end of their lives- to get to know each other.

- It's very noisy in here. Shall we go to the church to say our prayers?
- Of course, let's go.

Madame Maria takes her loving companion by his arm.

They arrive at the church, they kneel in front of the icon and they light a candle.

They have only one wish to make:

That God keeps both of them, their children and their grandchildren well and healthy.

Then they walk around the fair.

The noises, the crowd and the people that push them don't bother them.

They are peaceful, happy.

Aris buys for her the icon of Saint Elias and she buys for him an amulet.

The icon is hanging over her pillow.

The amulet is under his pillow.

AT THE TAVERN OF NICOLAS

At the tavern of Nicolas Artemis and Markos are sitting at the table with the paper tablecloth.

In front of them they have dishes with fava beans puree served with plenty of onion rings, beans with onions, fried potatoes, cheese, spicy lima beans, hot tzatziki and excellent red wine.

- Did you notice my dear that today we're eating with no music?
- Yes, you're right. Where are our guitar players?
- They're not here. Eh, Stavros where are the musicians?
- They oldest one is sick and the other one is taking care of him. You see they've been together for many years, they're good friends.

Mr. Stavros comes and sits at their table.

He likes them both a lot.

- How are you, my dear friends?

He friendly pats Kostas on his back.

- We're fine. Sit down and have a glass of wine with us.
- Ok, pour me a glass. How are you Artemis?
- Better. My ex-husband now comes by my house often to see the kids and so they're happy now. And more relaxed, too.
- That's very good news. To your health my friends. I wish you my best, with all my heart. There's nothing we can do. Life is difficult, unjust, but very beautiful, let's not forget that.

- Ehhhh, Stavros!
- Oh, they're calling me again. I can't sit down for even one minute.
- You should be glad. You have many clients and so you're making lots of money.
- Ah, I've had enough. I've working since I was fourteen years old. What good is money at my age if I can't enjoy it? I have to leave you now. I'll come by your table again later, as soon as my customers leave.

Kostas looks worryingly at Artemis.

- You look tired today; there're black circles under your eyes.

He caresses her hair.

- I don't sleep well at nights. I'm worried about my divorce.
- Try to calm down. Everything's going to be Ok.
- I try my dear Kostas, I try. Unfortunately I'm not like you, so most of the times I'm very pessimistic.
- You must be optimistic.

He kisses her tenderly at her forehead.

- When a woman is alone with two children and there are so many problems is it possible for her to think that everything is just fine?

Tears roll down her face.

- Oh, come now, after all you've been through, now you've finally reached the finish. I'm going to get the guitar down from the wall and play your favorite song. Will you sing along?
- Yes, I'm going to sing. After all these fava beans and onions, my voice is going to be just perfect.

She laughs.

- That's my girl. You must laugh more often. You have such a perfect smile!

The guitar and her voice are heard softly.

The rest of the clients sing along.

There's a special atmosphere inside the small tavern.

They leave before midnight, in each other arms.

Tomorrow is going to be a new day, who knows what happiness and what sorrows it is going to bring along.

SPORTSWEAR 'HAUT COUTURE'

As the elegant tailoress closes down her atelier for the day, she says good night to the middle-aged man who's the owner of the sportswear shop next door.

- Good night Mr. Achilleas
- Good night Mrs. Amalia, have a pleasant night.

He replies tiredly but warm-heartedly.

- Thank you. We'll be here again tomorrow, to earn our living.
- Yes, yes, see you tomorrow.

Each morning they roll up the doors of their shops and each night, at exactly the same time, they roll them down.

- Good morning Mr. Achilleas.
- Good morning Mrs. Amalia.
- How are you today?
- Fine, thank you. And you?
- I'm Ok, thank you. Would you like a coffee? I'm going to make one for me.
- Yes, please I would love a coffee, but only if you're going to make one for you, I don't want to get you into much trouble.

I didn't have time to drink a coffee this morning. Thank you, you're very kind.

- What kind of coffee would you like?
- I'll drink anything you'll make.
- Ok. How do you like it?
- Sweet, with one spoon of sugar, please.

In a few moments Amalia places the cup with the hot coffee on the coffee-tray and enters the shop next door.

Some customers are inside.

She puts the tray on the counter.

- You've made it already? Thank you again.
- You're welcome. I'll come back later to collect it.

When the customers leave, Achilleas sips his coffee quickly and goes at the atelier next door.

- Nice coffee! Shall I say the common saying that it's so nice because you've made it?
- Thank you very much. I think it's better to stop this plural. Please call me Amalia.
- Ok, I agree, I'm Achilleas, just Achilleas.

So day after day, sip after sip, the morning coffee made by Amalia becomes an everyday habit. And so they become friends.

At evenings, when they close their shops, they walk to the nearest bar for a drink, small talk and relaxation.

At first they were just friends but later they became very intimate and finally they became lovers.

One night inside the quiet bar:

- I've been thinking of buying more stuff for my shop.
- Are you going to risk it? The economic crisis is very serious right now.
- I believe I must take a chance, risk something, for once in my life. I've always been very careful and conservative.

- But why take such a risk now? At your age!
- Why not? It's not too late. And what's wrong with my age?

He asks her, pretending to be hurt by her remarks.

- Well, go ahead then. I've only said my opinion, my dear.
- So, you're going to make sportswear.
- Who, me?

Very quickly the two shops became one and the sweet tailoress created 'sportswear haute couture' that became famous all over Europe.

Besides love, richness came too.

'Pagratia sportswear haute-couture'.

POOPIE AT THE VET

One day the most beautiful body of the neighborhood with her dog enters the veterinary office of Vassilis.

She is a tall brunette, simply dressed, but with a very sexy blouse.

Vassilis drops his tools from his hands.

He's never seen such sensual breasts or such sexy curves on a body.

She's a goddess and she has with her the ugliest dog alive.

- Good morning. You're the vet, aren't you?
- Yes, I am
- My Poopie's been throwing up and I'm very worried.
- Please, come in. What did he eat yesterday?
- Yesterday I went to visit some friends at the country and I had him with me. He ate what we all ate.
- What was that?
- Well, he ate some burger with potatoes and some chicken with spaghetti.

- He ate all that?
- Yes, you see he eats a lot, he has a very big appetite.
- Put him up here, please. I want to examine him.

As she bends to get Poopie, her breasts overflow her blouse whereas her firm butt can be seen clearly through her tight skirt. Vassilis gets very excited.

How is he going to examine Poopie with a clear head now? For the first time in his life he finds it extremely difficult to concentrate.

And the damned dog begins to bark in shrill voice as soon as he touches it.

Finally he finishes his examination.

- You're going to give him the pills I'll prescribe and you'll come again in a week. I'm sure his stomach is going to be just fine by then.

The sexy girl pays him and leaves his office.

Vassilis watches her as she walks away and he comes to the inevitable conclusion:

She is the most sensual woman he's ever met and Poopie is the ugliest dog he's ever examined.

Days go by in a desperately slow rhythm.

Tuesday, Wednesday...and our vet waits for the day to come when the sexy doll will appear at his door with her dog-monster by her side.

And the long-awaited day finally comes.

Poopie and his owner appear early in the evening.

He experiences the same inner heat.

Examining Poopie he discovers that he's cured, but cunningly he doesn't tell her.

Instead he tells her to come again after three days.

(He doesn't want to wait for a whole week this time.)

- He must take three more pills.

- Even though he has a great appetite, this time I was very careful. He didn't eat anything that would harm him.
- Don't worry, he'll be fine, he only needs three more pills Mrs.....
- My name is Emmanuelle. Goodbye for now see you soon, she replies saucily.

With a name like that she gets him even more excited.

- Goodbye and...I'll be waiting for you.

The three days pass by quickly, of course.

Today Vassilis isn't wearing his white robe.

He's smartly dressed and he's anxiously waiting for Emmanuelle to come.

Late in the evening the door of his office opens and the dark beauty appear with Poopie, who doesn't want to come in the vet's office.

He's barking loudly with his awfully shrill voice.

Emmanuelle has to carry him in her arms, but as she's going down the stairs she takes a false step and falls down, carrying Poopie with her.

He immediately runs to help her.

Her skirt is high and he can see her beautifully long legs.

Emmanuelle pulls down her skirt with unbelievable speed and she bows her head out of shame.

He must have cast a spell on her, unintentionally of course.

- Are you hurt? He asks her with agony in his voice.
- A little bit, at my knee.
- Come, please sit down here.

He helps her. Poopie sits beside her and rubs his face on her feet.

' Oh, how I wish I could rub myself on her, too!' Vassilis thinks to himself as he brings her some cotton and peroxide.

He's surprised to see that she's allowing him to take care of her wound. That makes him immensely happy.

Of course he can't rub himself on her knee like Poopie, but he'll soon manage that as well...

- Sorry for all this trouble I've caused you.
- Trouble? There's no trouble at all. Are you feeling better? It didn't hurt too much, did it?
- No, just a little.

He brings her a glass of water.

Slowly the ice between them breaks and they talk about animals. It's one thing they have in common, but soon there will be more.

Vassilis dares to propose her to go out together and have dinner at Hilton Hotel.

It's the first time in his life that he makes a pass at a woman so quickly.

Despite her surprise, Emmanuelle accepts his invitation with a secret enthusiasm.

Poopie is very quiet all this time.

He seems to be getting used to the atmosphere in the vet's office.

At night they both taste the delicious food at the hotel's terrace, admiring the fantastic view.

After one week, at the same hotel, inside the best room, he enjoys her body and her fire.

So Poopie has secured free visits to the vet!

RICE PUDDINGS

Every day Johanna from Poland mops the entrance of the apartment building.

Next to it there is a dairy shop whose owner is Sakis.

He usually stands by the entrance of his shop waiting for the customers to come.

At the same time he's flirting with the beautiful foreigner who cleans up next door.

He likes her a lot.

She's tall, blonde and slim, whereas he's short and dark, a veritable middle-class Greek.

- Good morning Mr. Sakis.
- Good morning, girl. Would you like a rice pudding, my treat?
- Thank you, but you don't have to do that
- It's fresh and tasty, exactly like you.
- Thank you

He goes inside his shop, opens up the freezer and he returns holding two rice puddings.

- If you don't want to eat them now, you can take them with you.
- Thank you, you're very kind. I'll eat one now and I'll take the other with me.

She stops mopping, sits down on the marble stairs and she eats it with appetite.

Next day:

- Today I've crème broule. It's sweet like you. It just came in.
- Oh, Mr. Sakis, you're going to make me fat...
- You're very slim; you don't have such a problem. Come in.

And so from rice pudding to crème broule and from crème broule to rice pudding, Johanna becomes fatter.

As soon as she finishes her work, she runs to his shop.

She sits on the old wooden chair and they talk for hours.

Day after day Johanna becomes more and more sweet, more beautiful and so does his shop, because now she's taking care of its decoration and its cleanness.

At the shop window the rice puddings, the cremes and the yogurts are all nicely placed behind the clean glass, waiting for the customers, who have now been doubled after her 'mild' invasion.

Sakis is very proud because his lover wasn't just a cleaner back in Poland, but a certified nurse.

On the contrary he's only finished elementary school.

Every Friday he goes to the fruit market with her, in order to help her.

Sakis pulls the heavy trolley, loaded with fruits and vegetables.

He buys and pays happily anything Johanna wants.

He gets all kinds of vegetables and fruits for her!

- Would you like us to buy cauliflower today my sweet one?
- No, no, today we're going to buy a rocambole, I'm going to make a rocambole pie for you.
- Anything my cook wants! The only thing I don't want to eat are Polish dishes, I don't like them at all. I only ate these for you, in order to please you.
- No, I won't cook Polish food again. I'm learning to cook Greek food. Ah, these eggplants are good.
- We're going to buy as many as you want.
- Well, two or maybe three?
- Just be as fast as you can. We must open up our shop. The fresh rice puddings and the cremes broule are going to arrive soon, and I want to feed you...
- Shall we buy some tomatoes, too?
- Here, these tomatoes are red and fresh like your cheeks my dear. Let's buy some.

Sakis walks proudly at the fruit market, among the vegetables and the fruits, next to his beautiful and kind companion, whereas the fresh Polish girl feels happy and lucky to have such a tender man next to her.

The foreign land has paid her back with a wonderful man.

SNOW WHITE, THE SEVEN INSTRUMENTALISTS AND THE ACCORDION

Every morning, the youngest of the seven instrumentalists waits for hours in front of the window of the shop that's repairing musical instruments, at the basement.

He's waiting for the beautiful girl to walk down the street, so that he can play a wonderful tune with his accordion for her legs.

In the evening he's waiting for her again, to see her walking up the street, so that he can play again in his accordion the same song that'll accompany the tick-tack of her heels.

Oh, he likes that woman so much!

One day he finally dares to say to her:

- Good morning
- Good morning, she replies surprised but not annoyed.

Next day he asks her courageously:

- Good morning. Would you like me to play another song for you today?
- Play anything you like, she replies and smiles shyly.

She's the beauty of the 'pavement' and as she walks slowly until he can see her no more at the corner of the street, Markos plays with his accordion a melody-soundtrack from a movie.

Next day, at the afternoon.

-Good evening, I know you're in hurry, but please stop for just a minute, I would like you to listen to another song.

The girl stands in front of him in a playful manner, leaning against the cherry tree and Markos's fingers dance on his accordion, so great is his happiness.

His melody is spread along the street.

The shop-owners of the neighborhood come out of their shops, bewitched by the sweet sound.

- Do you like Mrs. Claire?
- Do you know my name?

She's very surprised.

- I heard it one day from a friend of yours who was speaking with you. Since then I cherish it in my heart, he replies bravely.

He's made up his mind that now he's going to tell her everything.

Claire's cheeks are blushing.

Markos can't sleep at night.

He composes the song of his life just for her.

In the morning, as soon as the ticktack of her heels is heard, his accordion takes fire from the sound of his song.

It makes Claire stop in front of his window and say to him a sweet good morning.

It's August and it's her name day.

The seven instrumentalists are all gathered in the shop that's decorated with many flowers.

Claire is wearing a medallion in the shape of a heart, a gift from Markos.

She's like a doll in her red dress, among the seven music teachers, who play the most wonderful melody of happiness for the couple and for themselves.

The sign of the shop has changed.

Now it says:

“The snow white and the seven instrumentalists”.

TICKTACK GOES MY HEART

At the park sweet little Elsa is waiting for her lover hidden behind a tree.

It's the usual place of their dates.

She's sneaked out of school during her last class and she's anxious to see her 'baby-face'.

She glances at her watch.

It's been ten minutes since she arrived.

'Oh, why is he late? When is he going to come?'

The ticktack of her heart flies from tree to tree, from flower to flower, from bush to bush, it seems like it, too, is searching for Spyros.

At the bark of the pine tree they have curved their initials: "E.S."

Finally he arrives, out of breath.

She manages to hide from him, but not very well.

Oups, her 'baby-face' grabs her and hugs her tightly.

They kiss and caress each other.

Some old people, who are sitting at the benches, are looking at them with smiles on their faces.

They feel bitter because time has passed them by and has left them only with memories.

- How are you my baby?

He kisses her ear.

- Fine. Fine. Fine. Today I hadn't done my homework.

- Me neither because I had my mind on you.

She kisses his lips.

- Shall we go to the movies at night?

- But I have to go to my private lesson tonight. Can't we go tomorrow?

- Tomorrow I have a private lesson. What about the day after tomorrow?
- Ok
- And then we can go for a coffee
- I don't want to be late
- Ok, you won't be late. Besides, it'll be Saturday; you have to right be a little late.
- Yes, but my dad won't like it.
- It doesn't matter so much. You have to make a start and return to your place later during Saturday nights.
- Well, I don't want to worry him, you know how much I love him

They are happy.

They walk among the trees in each other arms.

They are kissing.

Life is ahead of them; it's so far ahead that they have time for 10.000.000 more kisses.

EPILOG

After all this I go to a wedding every day.

I put on my one and only expensive dress, after I've washed it the night before, and I run from one church to the other.

I run from the church of Saint Spyros to the church of Saint Elias, and from there back to the church of Saint Spyros, etc.

After each wedding I gain five kilos and I take five packets with wedding sugar almonds.

I wish you, too, have your own weddings, real or imaginary!

The awards were given to the above movies at ' Hellas', on the 30th of May, with all the glamour and the grandeur it becomes the art of cinema.

Bright lights, limousines, red carpets, expensive dresses, gowns, high heels, and cameras, all were present during that night.

The famous people, the stars, were all there.

Our little ‘ county’ was celebrating.

We were all enjoying the biggest holiday of the most famous part of Athens.

The neighbors were present, cheering their favorite actors.

The beautiful chicken-waitresses served crunchy fried chicken on silver trays, and there was plenty of beer and wine.

When the ceremony ended multi-colored balloons and fireworks filled the sky.

A fairy-mermaid came up from the fountain and she tempted the beautiful women that were present to dive into the water with her, to sing and dance with her under the colored waters, while the rest of us were dancing the samba.

Why samba?.....Because!

THE END