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## The Dream Diary

by MaryPat Campbell

When he was younger, Jose liked to write things down. Memories of his childhood in Lisbon, homework and to-do lists, books he wanted to read, and occasionally his dreams. The dream diary was awkward, it didn't fit it into bullet points he liked to use with his other diary entries. He imagined the dream diary like a picture being drawn of something that he didn't quite know about yet, like a message to the him of today, from both a knowing and mysterious part of himself.

These days Jose didn't remember his dreams. He didn't know what had happened to them. It dawned on him one morning at breakfast when his daughter Lily said, "Do you want to hear what I dreamed about last night!" It wasn't a question, as Lily launched into telling Maria and Jose her dream. Jose continued with his toast and coffee, only half listening to Lily's animated account. He felt suddenly thin, sad and insubstantial. Where had his dreams gone? He caught bits and pieces of Lily's dream.

There were three men asleep in the same bed, they looked like kings and they looked squashed and uncomfortable. They all had furrowed brows, and all three still had their crowns on. They tossed and turned and looked anxious, as if they were dreaming too. Lily wondered, looking anxious herself, who they were and looked preoccupied as she ate her porridge.

Jose felt like a shadow of himself these days, his own furrowed brow constantly worrying about work, his family, figuring out how to pay for everything with his wife Maria on maternity leave due to the immanent birth of their second child. He couldn't join in with Maria and Lily's growing excitement about the coming birth, thinking up names for girls and boys, fantasising about who the baby would look like, along with Lily's wish for a baby sister. He longed to feel free enough to dream this child into existence, like he and Maria had dreamed Lily into the world.

Early next morning when he woke, Jose felt that old familiar sense of resurfacing up into the daylight as a new dream faded before his eyes. He smiled to himself as he recounted it to

Maria, who was still half asleep and not really listening.

“The baby was small and fitted in my hand like a tiny animal, and she was perfect. She squealed like a kitten and looked up at me with quizzical brown eyes. I put her on the kitchen table with the plates and bowls and we included her in our breakfast time chat. She looked up and around at all of us, she even sat up and reached out for some of Lily's toast.”