

IRAKLIS
LAMPADARIOU

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ΚΙΤΑΒΟΠΡΟΒΟΛΕΣ

Illustrations by
Apollonia
Paramythioti





Iraklis Lampadariou was born in Katerini in 1988, but grew up in Kavala. He has been dealing faithfully with volunteering, both organising and participating in various collective actions, since the age of 10. He has studied classic literature in the Democritus University of Thrace (2005-2009). He loves learning foreign languages; he already speaks English, French, Spanish and he has started learning Slovak and Chinese. He has travelled in many places in Europe, involving himself in a multicultural dialogue that has certainly affected his way of thinking. He writes stories for the child each one of us hides inside them and constantly tries to figure out ways in which schools could cultivate students' creativity and imagination.

In August 2012 he created Saita publications, a digital, non-commercial space from which books are distributed for free. He's the author of "Creative class with enough imagination", "The magic bookmark" and "Greetings and wishes".

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IRAKLIS LAMPADARIOU

THE MAGIC BOOKMARK



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"Not again! Let me sleep a little more... Why do you want me to say this every day, over and over again? Nothing has changed. I don't want to go to school today, either. And why does it always have to be your way?"



"Not another day with books, notebooks, lessons, problems, pencils, pencil cases, bells and reading!" said Jason to his mother. It was yet another morning call. Every school day started like that for Jason or God forbid the planet would go wrong.



For Jason school was his worst nightmare ever. There were times you would think he could get a rush all over his face only with the sound of the word "school".



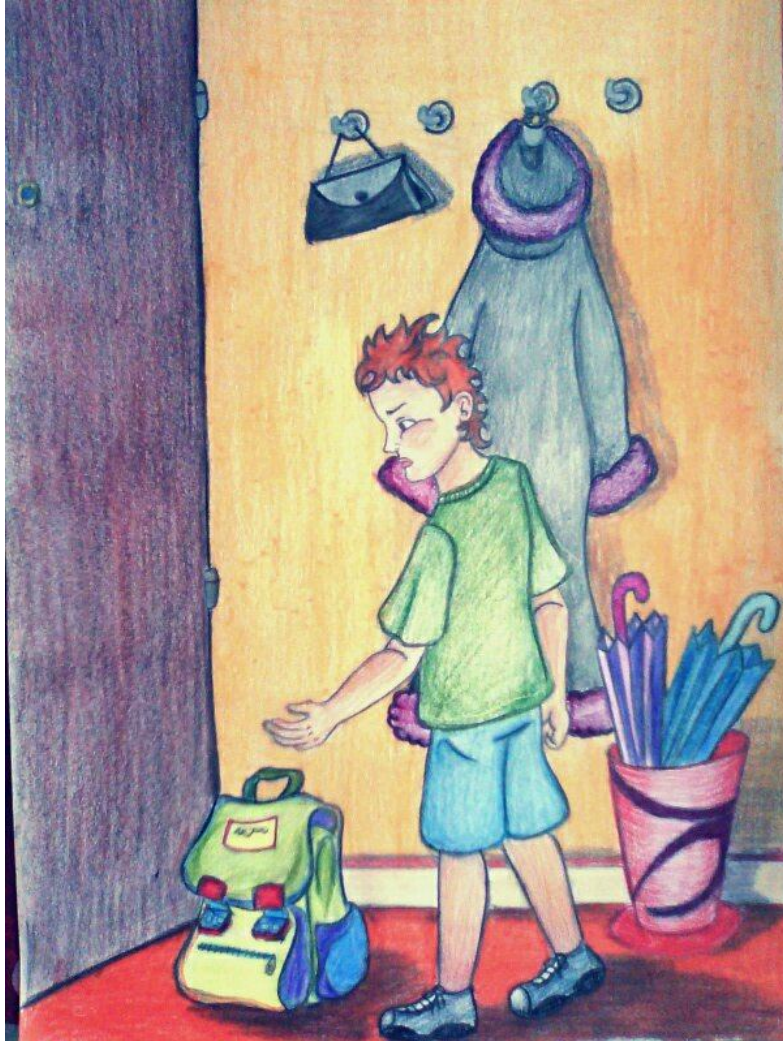
As much as he liked chocolate, candy, ice-cream and french fries, at the same degree he disliked school. He would rather not see his favourite friends for a whole year than go to school for a day. And if his attendance was not compulsory, he would not set foot in there.



He would rather play games on his computer, watch TV, listen to music, draw pictures and paint clay models of his favourite heroes.



Being in such a bad mood and unable to avoid going to school with his usual excuses, he got up, had breakfast and...



... picked up his backpack, in really slow motion like taking screen shots of a movie. Of course, he didn't know and he didn't care if he had all that he needed for his classes.



He stayed in class counting the hours patiently, until the sound of the last bell rang. That would make him jump from his desk and be the first to run out the door and back home.



The seconds, the minutes and the hours felt like ages in Jason's mind. There were different teachers but they all sounded exactly the same in his mind; tedious and boring. Despite the diversity of the subjects, nothing seemed to trigger the interest of our young pupil.



Not even the intermissions had any meaning, since they would also come to an end.



It was only until the last hour and while waiting for the last “bell” of the day to ring- the one that would liberate him from school- when the words of the teacher magnetised his senses: “For your next assignment, let go of your imagination and create something for a book. Remember that imagination has no limits and you can design anything you like.” That was the first time that a school project excited Jason so much that he could not wait to go home and start his own, unique craft.



The project was exciting, but his limited relationship with books and reading did not help him a lot in providing him with ideas on what to create. So he understood that he had to ask for help in order to complete the task. And it did not take him long to find that person, who loved books and reading; his mother!



He ran home, opened the door with excitement and shouted "Mum, mum do you have any ideas about a book project?".



That was the first time his mother saw her son so excited coming back from school and asking for her help on a school project. All previous homework was done after discussions and negotiations that ended in some sort of an agreement. Like the most recent one: seven math exercises for an additional half an hour of TV. These kind of agreements were strange, but they were the only way to get Jason to do his homework.



“So let’s see what kind of thing you could make regarding a book...” said Jason’s mother as she was trying to get Jason’s imagination to work. “I think it has to be something with vivid and bright colours, closely related to the book and to be useful, so as to be used over and over again. It shouldn’t be something that you only made for your class and then threw in a drawer and forgot. The clock for example, is useful because it shows us with its index the time of the day and helps us organise our workload effectively”.



Jason felt suddenly like he was very close to what he was looking for. The word "index" sounded strange in his ears. Like a lighthouse shined its light to the solution of his enigma. "That's it. Like the index shows the time, I will make a bookmark to show me the page I stop reading, every time," he shouted with joy, the young student.



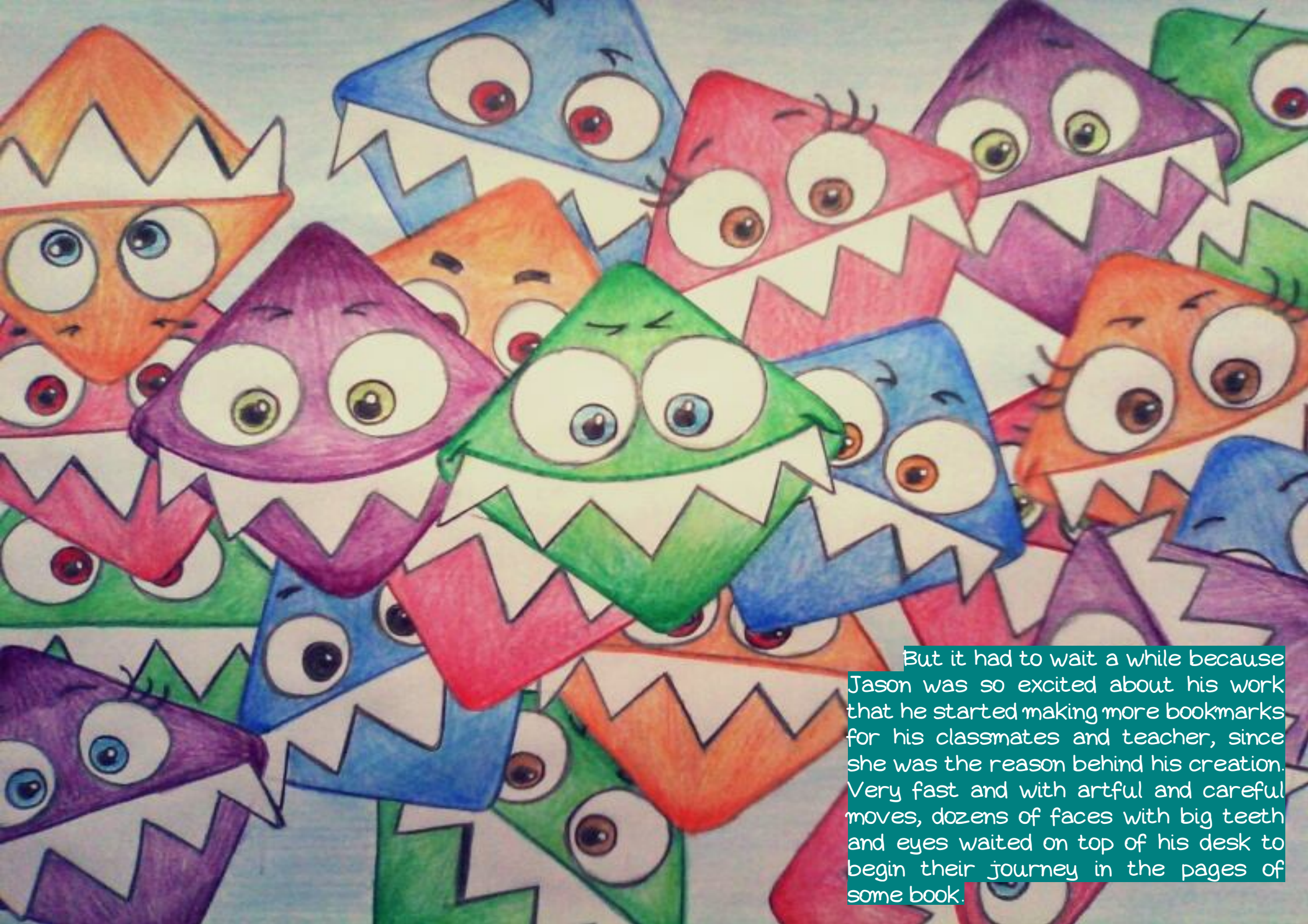
Without wasting any more time, he went to his room and started gathering the materials he would use to make his own unique bookmark. Shortly, on top of his desk there were coloured papers of different sizes, colouring pencils, markers, rulers, scissors, and other things that would probably be useful to draw simple geometrical shapes with.



After making a couple of rough sketches and letting his imagination free to travel to a land of colours and shapes, he finally concluded to the look of his bookmark. He measured, he cut, he glued and he made everything with total commitment and attention. It was giving him so much satisfaction and joy that he put all his strength into making something so unique, so original and special such as his own creation.

And there it was. He was staring at the thing that a few minutes ago existed only in his imagination: a small square bookmark made out of recycled paper bag. It looked like a cute little monster ready to devour the pages of a book with desire and anticipation. With its mouth constantly open, its large teeth protruding from it and with big bulging eyes, it was giving the signal to start reading immediately, like it was trying to suck out all the knowledge and the feelings of each book that Jason was going to use it in.





But it had to wait a while because Jason was so excited about his work that he started making more bookmarks for his classmates and teacher, since she was the reason behind his creation. Very fast and with artful and careful moves, dozens of faces with big teeth and eyes waited on top of his desk to begin their journey in the pages of some book.

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