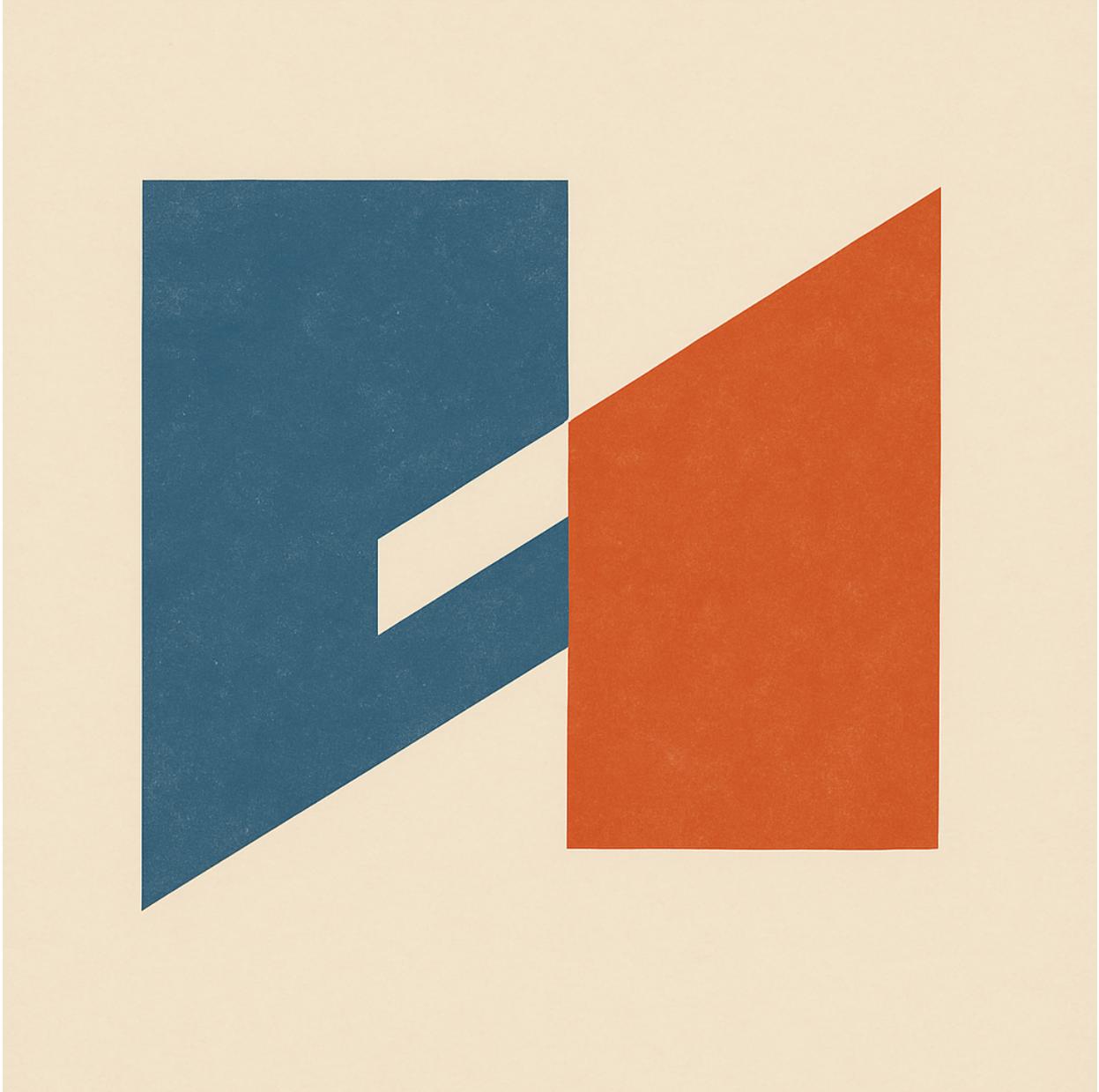


Parallel Fragments

A Poetry Collection by The Dreamer (2003)



Introduction

By The Wanderer

In these pages, The Dreamer continues her exploration of consciousness through the fragmented prism of perception. Where "Whispers in Static" mapped the territories between thoughts, "Parallel Fragments" charts the multiple realities that exist simultaneously within a single moment of awareness. As I stand before her words, I am reminded of those sacred texts I encountered during my travels—not in their specific content, but in their ability to reveal the infinite contained within the finite.

The Dreamer's academic precision continues to complement her artistic vision, creating a synthesis that defines the essence of our movement. Her understanding of neurological processes gives scientific weight to mystical experience, bridging worlds that often stand divided. Yet it is her musicality—that profound sense of rhythm and counterpoint acquired through years with her viola—that transforms these theoretical concepts into visceral experience.

What strikes me most about this collection is its courage to embrace multiplicity. The Dreamer does not seek to resolve contradictions but to inhabit them fully, showing how consciousness can hold opposing truths without diminishing either. In this way, her work embodies what Ouspensky might call a "higher logic"—one that transcends the limitations of our conventional either/or thinking.

These poems are best experienced not as discrete units but as a constellation, each piece reflecting and refracting the others. Read them as you would navigate a labyrinth—with presence, patience, and the understanding that the journey itself is the destination.

The Wanderer

Spring 2003

I. Mirror Neurons

The science is simple:
Same cells fire
whether performing an action
or watching another perform it.

Neurological empathy.
Biological basis for connection.

When you lift your hand to brush hair from your face,
somewhere in my motor cortex,
a perfect simulation occurs.

I watch you from across the café,
and my brain rehearses
every movement of your body.

The Architect sketches equations on napkins.
I study his fingers around the pen
and feel phantom graphite
between my own.

We mirror each other unconsciously,
an orchestra without sheet music,
following cues too subtle to name.

This is how we know each other –
not through words
but through the silent symphony
of reflected motion.

Science calls this the basis of understanding.
The Wanderer calls it the thread
that binds all consciousness.

I call it the first poem:
body reading body
before language
divided us.

II. Stereophonic

Left channel: academic discourse

Right channel: artistic expression

Adjust the balance
until they harmonize
into a single perception.

I stand before students,
explaining neuroplasticity,
while inside my mind
a viola plays counterpoint
to every theoretical concept.

The department chair warns:
"Your research presentations
contain too many metaphors."

What would he prefer?
Data without meaning?
Numbers without narrative?

The brain processes information
through both hemispheres –
the analytical and the intuitive
are complementary systems,
not opposing forces.

I listen to Pearl Jam
while grading examinations.
Eddie Vedder's voice
bleeds through equations
of statistical significance.

This is not contamination
but completion.

When I close my eyes
during faculty meetings,
I see sound waves
translated into color,
theory into texture.

Synesthesia is not a condition
but a revelation.

These are not separate lives
I'm living,
but parallel frequencies
of the same existence,
broadcasting simultaneously
on different wavelengths.

Turn up both channels.
Let them saturate the space
between conscious
and unconscious thought.

Listen.

III. Reflection Study #1

The lake surface at dawn:
perfect mirror,
until a stone breaks
symmetry.

The self I observe
is not the self observing –
recursive loop
without resolution.

I photograph my reflection
in Writer's Block Café windows,
camera visible in the image,
creating infinite regression.

The Architect says:
"Identity exists at the convergence
of infinite mirrors."

When I practice viola,
I watch my bow hand
in the studio mirror,
adjusting pressure and angle.

But the sound I create
exists outside reflection –
vibration that cannot be captured
in glass or still water.

The journal asks for my photo,
to accompany my latest paper.
Which version should I submit?
The academic with perfect posture?
The artist with viola in hand?
The woman who exists
between categories?

Heisenberg understood:
the act of observation
alters what is observed.

I am both the scientist
and the experiment,
the viewer and the viewed,
caught in the endless feedback loop
of self-awareness.

Break the glass.
Let the fragments show
multiple angles
of the same light.

IV. Counterpoint

Bach structured counterpoint
with mathematical precision,
separate melodic lines
maintaining independence
while creating harmony.

Two thoughts can occupy
the same moment in time
without contradiction.

Like quantum particles,
holding multiple states
until observation
collapses possibility.

I believe in empirical evidence.
I believe in the unknowable.
These are not contradictions
but contrapuntal themes.

In my laboratory,
we measure brain activity
during meditation.
Alpha waves surge
as cognition quiets.

The subject reports:
"I felt both present and absent,
contained and boundless."

Science would call this
a paradoxical state.
Music would call it
resolution.

When I play Bach's Chaconne,
my left hand creates melody
while my right draws harmony.
Separate motions
combining into wholeness.

The Wanderer catches my eye
across Writer's Block Café.
He understands:
we can inhabit multiple realities
without fragmenting.

This is not madness
but the highest form of reason.

V. Refraction

Light bends when passing
from one medium to another.
Physics calls this refraction.
Perception operates
by similar principles.

Same stimulus,
different interpretations.

The prism on my office windowsill
splits sunlight into spectrum.
Seven colors
from single source.

The Architect sees mathematical proof.
The Wanderer sees mystical significance.
I see both,
and neither,
and something else entirely.

Memory functions like light through glass –
bent by the medium of time,
separated into component wavelengths,
reconstructed into something
both accurate and illusory.

Students ask how consciousness
processes contradictory information.
I place a pencil in a glass of water.
Show them how the straight becomes curved
at the boundary between elements.

"Truth depends on your medium," I say.
Some write this down verbatim.
Others look confused.
A few understand immediately.

The department wants clear boundaries
between disciplines,
between research and creativity,
between the personal and professional.

But consciousness refuses
such artificial divisions.

I've measured the angle of refraction
between what I experience
and what I express.
Calculated the mathematical constant
that allows translation
between inner and outer realities.

Still, something is always lost
in the passage between mediums.
Something is always gained.

VI. Tenured

The letter arrives in spring,
official university letterhead,
words I've been waiting for:

"We are pleased to inform you..."

Achievement unlocked:
academic immortality,
institutional validation.

I should feel completion.
Instead: bifurcation.

Part of me celebrates
with champagne at Writer's Block.
The Architect offers congratulations.
The Wanderer sketches my portrait,
adding "Professor" to the title.

Another part watches from distance,
assessing what this means:

Security.
Legitimacy.
Boundaries.

Later, alone in my office,
I place my viola on the desk
beside the tenure letter.
Two artifacts
from parallel lives.

The instrument doesn't care
about academic credentials.
It responds only to touch,
to the authenticity of emotion
transmitted through horsehair and string.

I play a single note – middle C.
Let it resonate against
institutional walls.

The vibration creates standing waves,
peaks and valleys of sound
that exist simultaneously.

Like the multiple versions of myself:
Dr. Dreamer, faculty member.
The Dreamer, movement founder.
The prodigy who played Prokofiev at twelve.
The woman who still listens for voices
in radio static.

Tenure doesn't resolve these fragments.
It simply provides a stable platform
from which to acknowledge
their coexistence.

I sign the acceptance letter
with my left hand,
then with my right.
Different signatures
from the same source.

Both equally valid.
Both equally real.

VII. String Theory

Physics proposes:
fundamental particles
are actually tiny vibrating strings,
oscillating in multiple dimensions.

Different vibration patterns
create different particles,
different realities.

My viola has four strings,
each calibrated to specific tension,
each producing distinct frequencies
when activated by bow or finger.

G string: grounding, earthy, foundational.
D string: balanced, centered, narrative.
A string: emotional, questioning, human.
E string: transcendent, ethereal, seeking.

I am all of these simultaneously,
vibrating at different frequencies
in different dimensions.

In quantum mechanics,
observation determines reality.
Until measured,
particles exist in probability clouds.

When I play for The Architect,
I become one version of myself.
When I lecture to students,
another.
When I practice alone at midnight,
yet another.

Each observer collapses
a different potential state
into momentary reality.

The vibration of a string
creates not just sound
but ripples through spacetime.

When I draw my bow across G string,
I feel the resonance
in my sternum,
in dormant memory,
in possible futures.

The Wanderer understood intuitively
what physics describes mathematically:
we exist in more dimensions
than we perceive.

The universe is not a collection of objects
but a symphony of vibrations.

Listen closely.
You can hear yourself
resonating at fundamental frequency.
You can hear me responding
in perfect fifths.
You can hear us all,
every consciousness,
creating cosmic chord progression.

No dissonance,
only complex harmony.

VIII. Hysteresis

The term describes systems
whose output depends not only on input
but on their previous state.

Materials that remember their history.

Apply magnetic field to iron,
then remove it—
residual magnetism remains.

The brain works this way too.
Neural pathways strengthened by use,
maintaining patterns
even after stimulus ends.

I still wake at 5 AM
to practice viola,
twelve years after conservatory.
Body remembering what mind forgets.

The department renovated my office
last summer.
New paint, new furniture,
wiping history clean.

Yet I still avoid
the corner where my desk once stood,
navigate around a chair
no longer there.

Spatial hysteresis.
The ghost architecture
of previous configurations.

The Architect speaks of "muscle memory
in architectural spaces."
The Wanderer calls it "the persistence
of alternate realities."

I call it evidence
that time is not linear
but layered.

At Writer's Block Café,
I sometimes see The Wanderer
sitting at his usual table,
though he hasn't visited in months.
Perceptual hysteresis.
The mind filling gaps
with probable configurations.

We are not just who we are
in this moment,
but an accumulation
of who we've been,
the paths we've traveled,
the fields that have acted upon us,
the residual magnetism
of past experience.

When you touch my hand,
you touch not just present skin
but history inscribed in cells.
When I speak your name,
I speak not just current emotion
but layered associations.

We are palimpsests,
text written over partially erased text,
meaning emerging from the intersection
of what remains and what's been added.

Science measures hysteresis
with precision instruments.
Poetry reads it
in the spaces between words.

IX. Doppelgänger Theory

The department chair introduces me
at the symposium:
"Distinguished neuroscientist,
leading researcher in consciousness studies."

Across town,
at an underground gallery,
The Architect introduces me:
"Visionary artist,
co-founder of Psychosurrealromanticism."

Both introductions accurate.
Neither complete.

I've developed techniques
for transition between identities:

In my office: hair pulled back,
glasses, neutral clothing,
vocabulary precise and academic.

At Writer's Block: hair loose,
contacts, clothing with texture and color,
language flowing between registers.

But the boundaries blur.
Students notice viola calluses on my fingers.
Colleagues find poems scribbled
in research margins.
The Wanderer observes how I cite journal articles
in aesthetic discussions.

I'm not hiding either self from the other –
simply allowing each to exist
in its natural environment.

Quantum physics suggests
parallel universes where
every possible outcome occurs.
In one reality, I chose music exclusively.
In another, only academia.
In this one, both.

The Architect designs buildings
with multiple entry points,
rooms that can be reached
by different paths.
"The journey determines what you find," he says.

I've constructed my life
on similar principles.
Different access routes
to the same core self.

When our movement meeting
coincides with faculty dinner,
I exist in superposition,
simultaneously present and absent
in both locations.

This is not fragmentation
but multiplication.
Not division
but expansion.

I am not less
for being many.

X. Palimpsest

Medieval monks recycled parchment,
scraping away old text
to make room for new.
But traces remained,
ghost words beneath fresh ink.

Modern scientists use
ultraviolet light, digital enhancement
to recover erased layers.

The Wanderer creates art this way –
painting over previous works,
allowing textures and colors
to show through deliberately.

My own consciousness operates
on similar principles:

Childhood viola lessons
beneath doctoral research.
Pearl Jam lyrics
interlined with lecture notes.
The movement's manifestos
overlaid with department policies.

When I speak at conferences,
sometimes a phrase from "The Pamphlet"
slips into academic discourse.
When I write research papers,
sometimes my sentences
follow the rhythm of Vedder's vocals.

Not contamination
but integration.

The most interesting texts
are those that reveal their history,
that don't pretend to singular origin.

I've stopped trying to separate
the layers of my thinking.
Instead, I hold manuscript to light,
examine where previous text
shows through current ideas,
appreciate the complexity
of accumulated meaning.

The Architect tells me:
"Buildings remember their foundations,
even after renovation."

The brain operates the same way.
New neural patterns
form atop existing structures.
Nothing completely erased,
only written over,
integrated into emerging complexity.

Read me under different lights.
See different texts emerge.
All authentic.
All incomplete.

This is not a flaw
but the fundamental nature
of consciousness itself:
always palimpsestic,
always revealing traces
of what came before,
always creating new meaning
from the intersection
of past and present.

XI. Cross-Section

The brain reveals its secrets
in thin slices.

Stained tissue under microscope
shows neural architecture,
connection patterns,
the physical substrate of thought.

I've seen brains sectioned
in research laboratories—
horizontal, coronal, sagittal planes
each revealing different relationships,
different organizational principles.

The Architect creates blueprints
showing buildings from multiple angles:
floor plan, elevation, cross-section.
"No single view tells the whole story," he says.

Similarly, no single perspective
captures a complete self.

I exist in cross-section:

Academic papers display
one plane of thought.
Viola performances reveal another.
Movement writings illuminate
yet another dimension.

The Wanderer sketches me
from different angles,
attempting to capture
what exists between viewpoints.

The challenge is not choosing
which cross-section is most authentic,
but understanding how they connect
into three-dimensional reality.

In dream research,
subjects report experiencing
multiple perspectives simultaneously:
both observer and participant,
both present and removed.

This is not confusion
but higher perception.

When I teach about consciousness,
I show students brain sections
alongside poetry excerpts,
architectural drawings,
musical notations.

Some understand immediately
these are all maps
of the same territory,
viewed through different instruments,
at different scales,
from different angles.

Others require time
to develop dimensional thinking,
to see how fragments connect
into complex wholes.

I've stopped apologizing
for presenting multiple cross-sections
of my research, my art, myself.

Complexity is not a failure of simplicity
but its natural evolution.

XII. Temporal Parallax

Different vantage points
create different perceptions
of the same object.

Moon appears to move
against distant stars
when viewer changes position.
Astronomers call this parallax.

Time creates similar effect.

The Pamphlet read at twenty-four
reveals different meanings
than at thirty-four.

The self I was
views the self I am
across temporal distance.
Both perspectives valid,
neither complete.

When I listen to recordings
of my viola performances
from conservatory years,
I hear technical precision
I no longer possess,
and miss emotional depth
I hadn't yet developed.

The Wanderer says:
"Time is not linear
but simultaneous."

Those words meant something different
when first spoken
than they do now,
echoing across years.

When I meet former students,
now colleagues,
we experience temporal parallax—
seeing each other
from shifted vantage points,
measuring apparent movement
against fixed background
of institutional memory.

Pearl Jam sounds different now
than when first released.
Same notes, different context,
altered by history
of listenings.

The Architect designs spaces
that change perception
as one moves through them.
"Architecture is experienced
in four dimensions," he says.
"Three of space, one of time."

Consciousness operates
on similar principles.
We perceive ourselves
not from fixed position
but while moving
through temporal landscape.

The parallax effect
reveals not illusion
but dimensionality—
proof we exist
in more than static moment.

Measure the apparent shift.
Calculate the distance.
Find your position
in spacetime.

XIII. Recursion

Function that calls itself.
Pattern that contains itself.
Mirror reflecting mirror.
Consciousness observing consciousness.

The Architect sketches
a hand drawing a hand
drawing a hand.
Escher's paradox
made manifest.

I study brains
that study brains.
Use consciousness
to examine consciousness.
The ultimate recursive loop.

Bach's fugues demonstrate
mathematical recursion.
Themes that repeat
at different scales,
in different keys,
creating infinite regression
of musical self-similarity.

When I compose research models,
I build recursive structures:
hypotheses containing
smaller hypotheses,
each reflecting larger patterns.

The Wanderer creates
nested narratives in visual form –
stories within stories,
frames within frames.

Our minds operate
in similar recursive patterns:
thoughts about thoughts,
memories of memories,
dreams that contain dreams.

"To understand recursion,"
I tell my students,
"you must first understand recursion."
Some laugh immediately.
Others need explanation.

The department complains:
"Your research methods
are circular."

They miss the point.
All consciousness is circular.
The observer cannot step outside
the system being observed.

This is not a limitation
but the fundamental nature
of awareness itself.

The pamphlet contains poems
about writing poems.
This collection contains poems
about creating this collection.
You read words
about reading these words.

We are caught
in endless recursive loop,
consciousness folding back
upon itself,
creating infinite regression
of self-reference.

This is not a trap
but a spiral staircase,
ascending through levels
of self-awareness.

Step into the infinite.
Watch yourself
watching yourself
watching.

XIV. Integration Theory

The brain binds separate processes
into unified experience.

Visual cortex, auditory cortex,
prefrontal regions, limbic system—
all synchronized
into seamless perception.

When integration fails:
dissociation, fragmentation,
divided consciousness.

I've studied split-brain patients,
their divided awareness,
how corpus callosum severing
creates parallel consciousnesses
within single skull.

The Architect speaks of buildings
where separate spaces
flow into one another.
"Boundaries that connect
rather than divide," he says.

I've stopped seeing my roles
as separate identities.
Academic, artist, musician –
not fragmentation
but facets of integrated whole.

The Wanderer's art
combines disparate elements
into unified vision.
"Wholeness emerges from fragments," he says,
"when properly arranged."

Integration doesn't mean
eliminating differences.
It means creating harmony
from distinct voices.

Like orchestral composition
where viola doesn't become violin,
but combines with it
into something greater than either alone.

I wear my professor clothes
to movement meetings now.
Bring my viola to faculty functions.
Quote research in poems.
Include metaphors in lectures.

Not to provoke,
but to demonstrate
integration in practice.

Some colleagues uncomfortable.
Some movement members concerned.
Both missing the point:

The boundaries were always artificial.
The separation was always illusion.

Brain doesn't compartmentalize
as neatly as organizational charts suggest.
Emotions influence reason.
Logic shapes feeling.
Memory colors perception.
Perception alters memory.

The Dreamer contains The Professor.
The Professor enables The Dreamer.
The Musician informs both.
All contained within
single consciousness.

Integration theory suggests:
higher awareness emerges
from successful binding
of parallel processes.

I am not diminished
by multiplicity.
I am expanded by it.

Not fragmented,
but complete.

XV. Coda: Writer's Block

The café where it began,
where paths first crossed,
where fragments first assembled
into movement.

I sit at corner table,
viola case beside me,
research papers stacked neatly,
coffee growing cold.

The Wanderer sketches patrons,
capturing fragments of conversation
in visual form.

The Architect calculates angles
of afternoon light
through rippled glass.

We exist in parallel,
each pursuing separate trajectories
that somehow intersect
in this specific spacetime coordinates.

Outside, students pass
on their way to campus.
Some were in my morning lecture.
They see me differently here,
context shifting perception.

I've stopped hiding aspects
from each other.
Let the parallels become visible.
Let the fragments show their edges.

The barista knows to bring
chamomile with honey.
"Good for the nerves," she says,
echo from previous collection.

Time folds here.
I'm simultaneously twenty-four,
writing manifestos on napkins,
and thirty-four,
mapping the neural correlates
of creative consciousness.

The Wanderer catches my eye.
Holds up his sketch:
me, drawn from multiple angles simultaneously,
cubist rendering of overlapping perspectives.

Exactly how I experience myself –
not as linear narrative
but as parallel processing,
simultaneous awareness
of multiple dimensions.

I open my viola case.
The instrument unchanged
by academic achievements,
by movement manifestos,
by years passed.

When bow touches string,
all fragments align.
All parallels converge.
All dimensions collapse
into single present moment.

This is what I've been researching.
This is what I've been creating.
This is integration theory
made manifest.

Not absence of fragments,
but their perfect alignment.
Not elimination of parallels,
but their harmonious convergence.

Music speaks what research investigates,
what poetry articulates,
what consciousness experiences:

We are all parallel fragments
of the same whole,
temporarily arranged
in patterns we call selves.

When I draw the final note,
silence contains
all that came before.

The perfect integration.



2003 *The Dreamer*