My uncle’s house was full of Parisian kitsch. I remember it well.

MY UNCLE’S DREAM
By Jordana Glberman

Who is the dancer, Nadia?

Nobody.

Uncle likes things that remind him of university and Paris.

My uncle wanted us to be enamored of Europe, as he had been.

You don’t feel nostalgia secondhand.
When I was 14, we all went to Paris on vacation...

Welcome to the birthplace of liberty!

Look we are surrounded by art!

I felt like an outsider...

Oh my god, they are all so thin.

Uncle bought the ugliest scarf and wore it every day.

I miss him.

The next time I saw Europe was in Greece.

Paris didn’t seem so bad after that.

Still, there were moments when I could almost see Greece through my uncle’s eyes.

You are a vision out of The Aeneid, Nada.
After Greece, we travelled through the Balkans...

Walsh!
Where do you think there is Sara?!

Are we there yet?

Mama!

...to focus on the better memories.

Beautiful isn’t it?

Wow!

I’ve tried to forget a lot of that time...

Sometimes, life was almost normal.

I like it here. The statues are fun to play on.

We’re lucky, Sara. People couldn’t always play over here.

We made do without a lot.

Hey! Come back.

You’re here everyday. I can’t have you starving.

But often Europe surprised me.
Europe had its problems.

Shouldn't you be collecting benefits somewhere?

Go back to Arabia!

Anti-migrant sentiments are on the rise after attacks in Paris...

I know how it is...

They just want a scapegoat.

I'm Polish and these guys feel the same about me.

sigh

Thanks. It's nice to know I'm not alone.

There's a difference between nationalism and hate.

Too bad, some people don't get it.

Can I get you another coffee?

Yes, please. Can I buy you a croissant?
I liked Munich. It was the first place in Europe to feel like home.

They knew me at the corner shop.

Hi, Mister Andrea!

Nadia!

I made friends from all over.

Let me teach you Italian.

Sono un brutto ananas!

My sisters were happy too.

Munich taught me what I cared about...

It’s called CODING, Dad.

Meet my son, Nic.

He’s so good at the computer!

Oh! Hi there.

...and I was happy to learn.

Louie’s

Nic! Mister Andrea! It’s snowing.

Come on, Nadia, we’re almost done the program.

I can’t believe how fast you built this system, Nadia.

We built it together, Nic.
Until I went away to university, I never got to choose where I lived. I decided to make Berlin my new home.

Nadia, do you understand C++ at all? I'm going to fail.

I think it loved me back.

I completely fell in love with the city.

I met students from all over. We had lived very different lives, but I felt connected to them. We were all passionate about learning and full of dreams. It felt like a family.
I finally made it back to Paris.

I like it more this time...

...but not as much as my uncle did.

It was never about Paris itself, Nadia. To me, Paris symbolised an intellectual dream. It represented an exchange of culture and of thought. It represented Peace.

I understand that now. Those ideas aren’t just here though, Uncle.

I saw them in Slovenia.

And for moments, in Greece, I heard you whisper them to me.

I see them expressed in Berlin...
Some days I have to remind myself that I’ve built a life on my uncle’s dream.

Life in Europe can be hard work sometimes.

Everything I’ve been through helps me appreciate what I have ... and what I’ve lost.

It’s too easy to take good things for granted until they are gone.

But nothing’s been easy...

...and I don’t intend to start living like it is.