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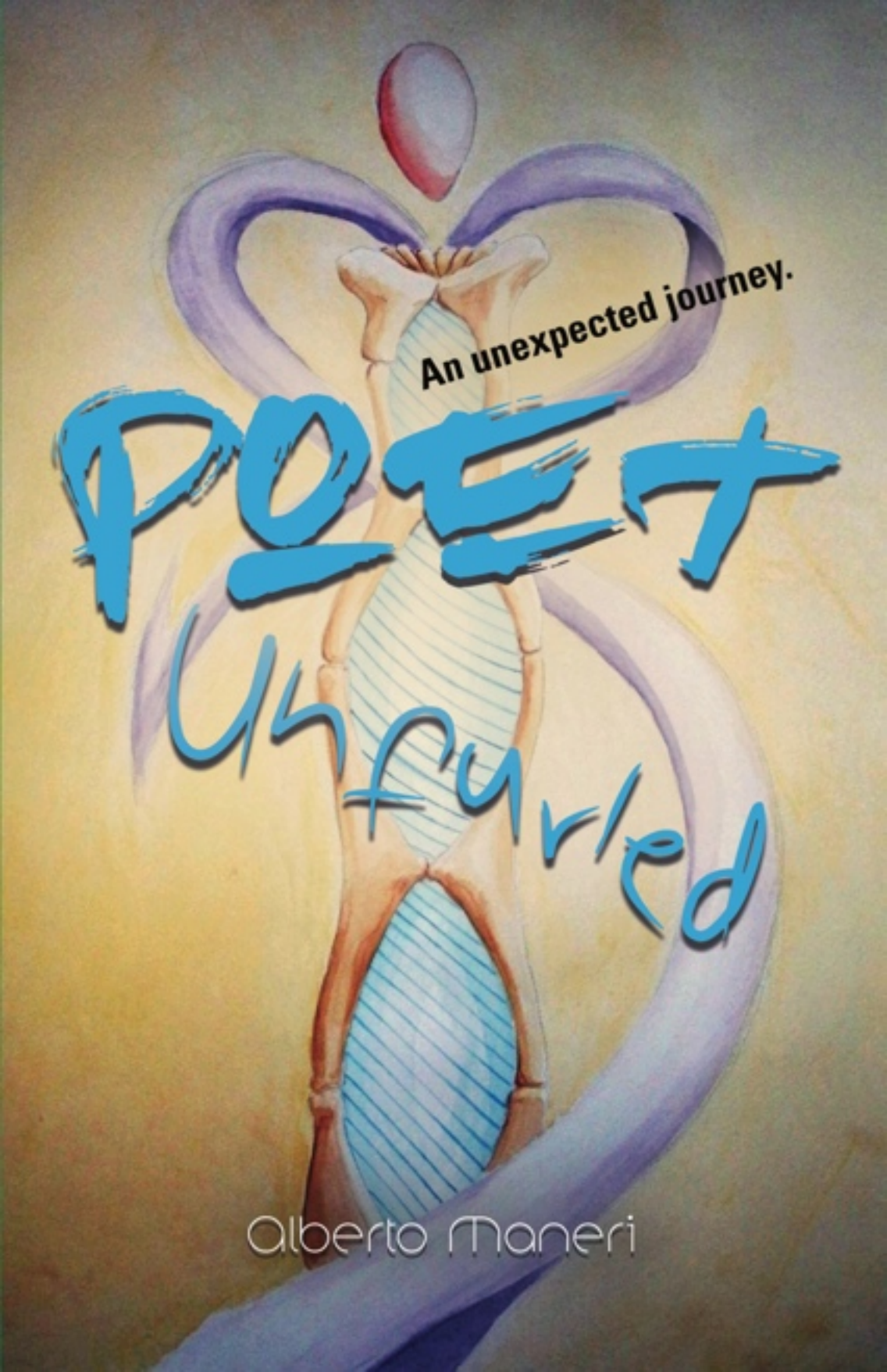
## **Poet Unfurled**

by Alberto Maneri

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An unexpected journey.

# Poet Unfurled

Alberto Maneri

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**SHE WAITS**

In her serenity she stands pale  
Awaiting her cue.  
Getting it, she brightens then blushes.  
Her silent beauty bursting forth,  
A starburst of fiery hues.  
Coily, she sways back and forth,  
As a whisper runs across her brow.  
Ever so stealthily sensual,  
She sheds her brilliant garb;  
Not all at once, oh no;  
Just one tiny piece at a time.  
Each one conveying a million memories  
As it travels on the winds of change.  
Naked at last, she settles down  
To await the crystalline kisses  
That will drift down to her from above.  
In anticipation she quivers.  
A sensual sigh escapes her.  
Fall has ended.  
She lays ready  
For the white passionate embrace of winter.



## **I SAW GOD**

I saw God in the eyes of a gay teenage boy tormented by intolerant peers for simply being.

I saw God in his eyes when he sought shelter in his home, finding instead parents parroting scriptures tainted by hate. Scriptures twisted and corrupted into blades that sever his last shreds of hope. A sermon ending in the cold dark night staring into a door slammed to shield a farce of normalcy. Blades of despair spiraling into chaos finally shed as a lone silvery blade stained crimson shatters the night.

I saw God as his tormentor's cries fade into blackness while the light fades from his eyes and his life spills on the windswept street. One last act of desperation, one last reach for peace. A blade at his feet, crimson and shattered a testament to hate and a life shattered.

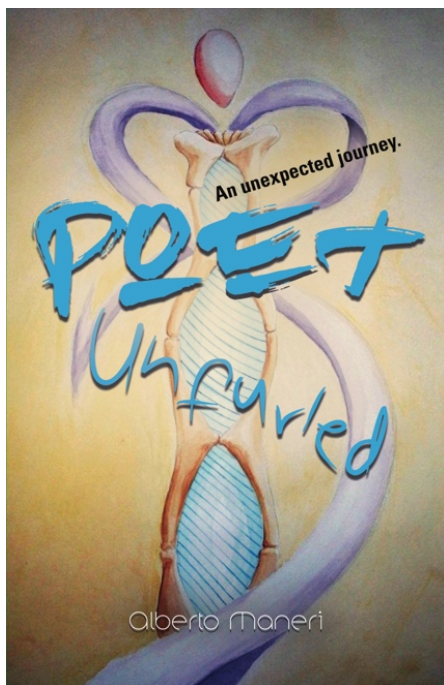
I heard God in the echoing voices in an alleyway. The echoing voices of a shattered mind. A mind torn apart by atrocities committed in a causeless war. A mind left quivering at the sound of clanging bottles, once brave now meek. A battalion leader now a discarded pawn hiding from the multitudes of death witnessed by his hands.

The crowd in his head silenced at last by the frigid embrace of neglect inches away from the multitudes he once served. Embracing peace, he slips into the everlasting night.

God and the voices fade into indifference.

**FADED IMAGE**

It would be easier to move mountains,  
    To part oceans,  
    To reverse the course of a stream,  
Than to live according to one's own philosophy.  
    To live as one dreams.  
For to do so, would be to live outside reality.  
And to embrace what is real, is to live in everlasting duality.  
    So we choose to move mountains,  
    To part oceans,  
    And reverse the course of stream upon stream.  
Thus, we merely exist when we could live.  
We compromise our values, restrict our dreams,  
We anchor them to the norm,  
    Negating our own potential.  
We, one and all, are culpable.  
    Blame no-one but the faded image in the silvered glass.



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