

Antyvir 2024

FRAGILE. Handle with care

Usually, we take care of fragile objects. Whether it's an antique vase or grandma's signature jam in a glass jar, it will be tightly covered in layers of bubble wrap and solicitude. Old buildings are protected with historic site status, and endangered species are added to the Red List. People are concerned about the temporality, danger, and vulnerability of living beings and material objects to the influences of the outer, turbulent world. Yet there is some strange and delicate beauty in temporal things, such as in sand drawings on the shore, which can have a special meaning.

Japanese culture has a term for that — *Mono no aware*. It's a philosophical concept popular among those who value the fleeting beauty of things and the bittersweet delight of our short and vulnerable human existence. It questions the black-and-white approach to life, which is rather different, polyphonic instead. It encourages us to appreciate life in the whole spectrum of its manifestations while it lasts. Such a vision teaches us not only to care about our vulnerability by wrapping it in a film of defense mechanisms but also to accept it, using its soft power.

Your experience with fragile objects, life beings, worlds, and fragile self, matters. It is a valuable evidence of our emotional and spiritual resilience against harshening and numbness dictated by our hostile reality. This experience deserves to be described and shown to the world as if it were a delicate and exquisite flower gently held in your open palms. We encourage you to describe your encounters with fragility and temporality and join our Antyvir project, which is dedicated to the free literary and illustrative creativity of teenagers.

We appreciate brave approaches to this task and encourage you to choose from the various forms and shapes your creativity may lead you to. You can write prose or poetry, illustrate your text, or submit your graphic novel. Any original fictional universe or individual literary voice is important and valuable to us.

We accept all works without exception and formal evaluation. Thus, all submitted texts and illustrations will be published on the Book Arsenal website, as the story of our collective journey in these fragile yet decisive times is yours to tell.