

Phoebus rotated in a twelve hour dance like a spinning wheel of light, before turning back into stone at sunset like a solar powered statue beside the wall. His fearful mother Magdalena cursed first the shadows, then the absent light, before covering the hole in the rooftop.

But for the musical resonance generated deep within him by the beat of his heart, Phoebus would have ceased living at the age of seven. Although it might have been years, the passage of time to the present felt like a single day. For how could one measure the number of days without the sun? Mother Nature's light might have shone on the garden below but in the world of Phoebus' room there was only night.

His mother believed that he had caught an extinct brain complication, which left patients speechless and motionless. Yet unlike other patients Phoebus never suffered a sore throat: a sign that Magdalena noted as conclusive. She welcomed neither doctors nor visitors into the house and pretended that life moved on as it always had. Indeed, it had changed only as much as a repetitive habitual pattern when viewed in a different light.

Magdalena filled Phoebus' head with all manner of books from the library. From the intensity of his eyes she believed he understood every word. She tried to imagine the workings of the child's mind, where information flashed in his brain like a light bulb, but short-circuited when required performing the simplest instructions. He was like a mysterious still life sea creature from the deepest ocean: never appearing to move, the slightest motion explained by the flow of an underwater current. Nobody would imagine that such a life form could think, let alone dream, underwater.

Once Magdalena spotted a tsetse fly in the room. She accused the little creature of having robbed Phoebus of his ability to dream. Phoebus, however, had never even closed his eyes. Over time, Magdalena repainted the room with a black sky, and inserted objects such as plastic silver stars from her own dreams. So Phoebus effectively lived in his mother's dreams; yet he remained as stationary as the shining ornaments in the living room.