



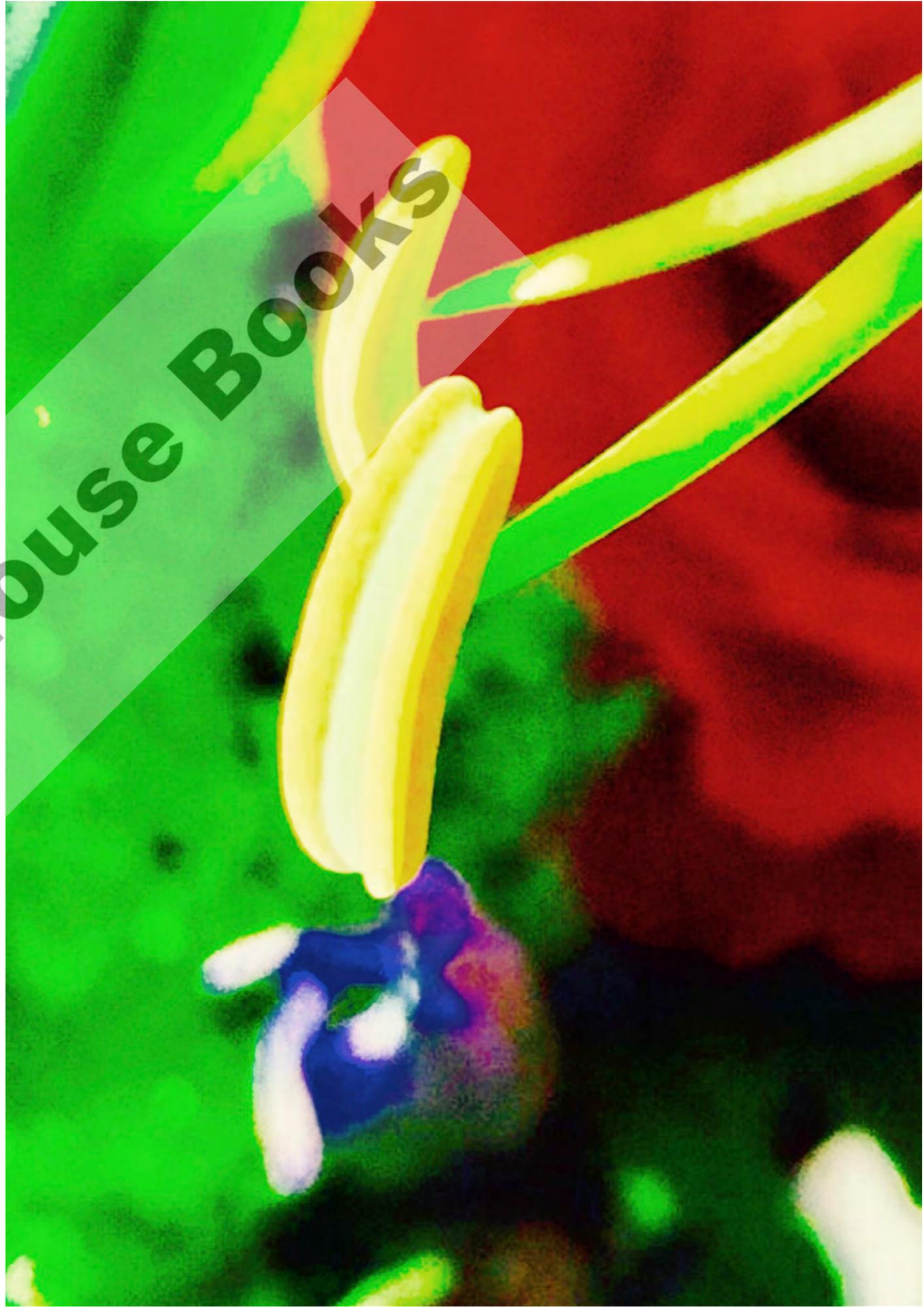
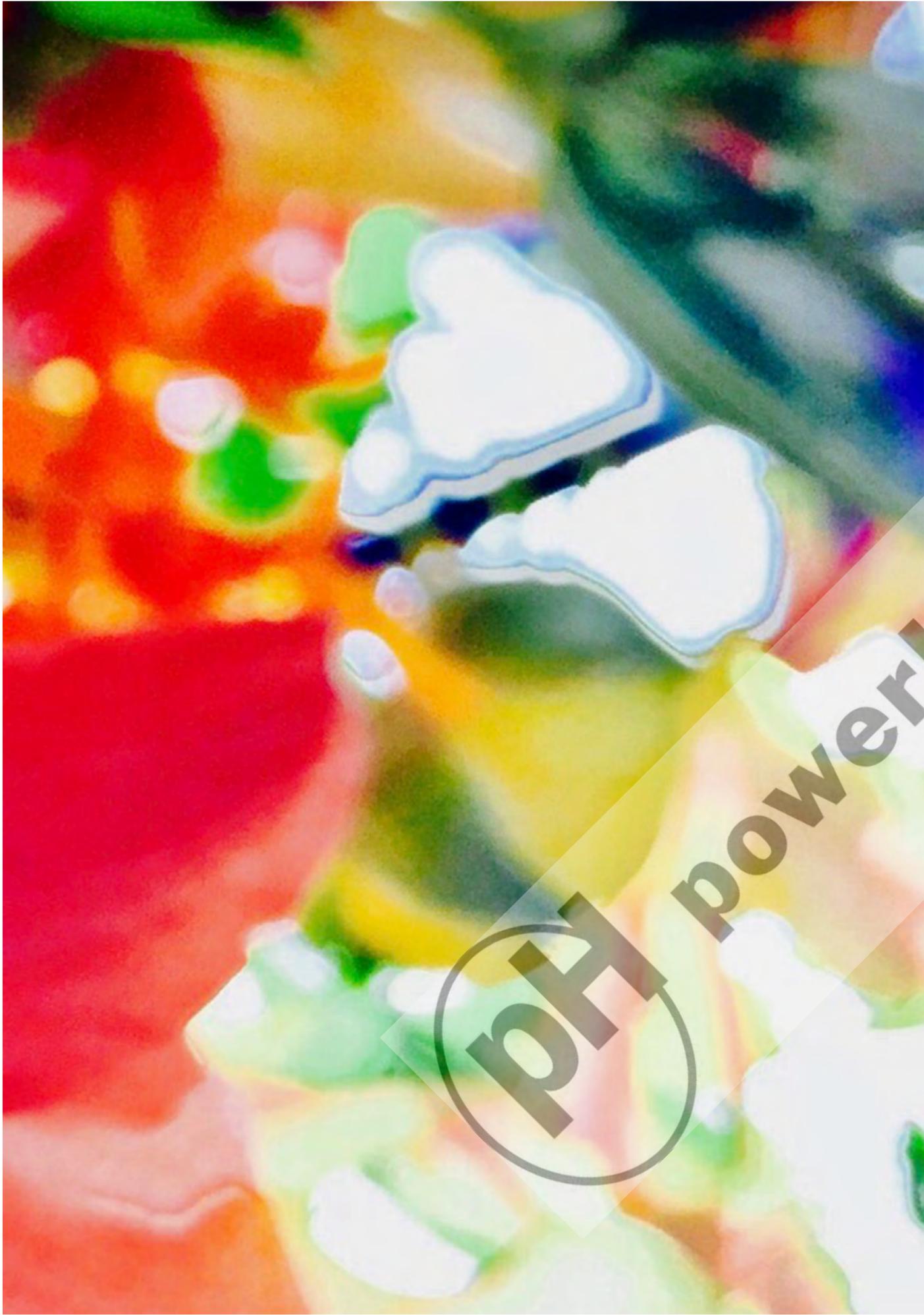
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FLOWER

WHISPERER





MY DAD THE FLOWER WHISPERER

One of the greatest gifts I've inherited from my father is his devotion to cultivating, or recognizing, the essential nature of ineffable beauty in the simplest things.

It's one of the few things one can have agency over—the ability to enhance one's experience by waking up to the beauty that is right in front of you. Flowers have always been requisite staples of this practice.

I've never put flowers in water without thinking of my dad and his simple but steadfast, step-by-step instructions on flower arranging: consider the right pairing of the vase, fill it with water (always less than you would think), then comes the mindful meditative placement (only ever one stem at a time, a dialogue—the flowers are telling me where they want to be) It all harkens back to the considered and steady rhythm that was modeled for me, growing up with the Flower Whisperer.

My dad's relationship to flowers—which has been indelibly imprinted on me—goes far beyond mere aesthetic affection and into, I'd argue, the realm of the spiritual. His is an appreciation of their exotic diversity and complex mysteries. A story within a story. The stages of life enacted in dramatic fashion: the tight bud meets its unfurling, unaware of what surprise it's holding within itself, then comes into its fullness, the petals outstretched in an impossible yearning to express all that resides within, and then the almost imperceptible shift towards its inevitable demise. The desiccation of the petals turning in on themselves, twisting and shrinking, until they seem frozen in time. It drops some of its fairy dust, maybe a rogue petal, and then in the blink of an eye, it's over.

Anthropomorphizing the inner life of a flower, imagining the story it is here to tell, might seem strange to someone else, but I know no other way to consider a flower. Perhaps it's my way of honoring a living thing, a fleeting thing, a thing of great beauty. Perhaps it's nothing less than a deep appreciation for life itself.

I hope that you too are inspired by my father's insatiable desire to capture every speck of magic with his camera, his steadfast allegiance to every beat of a flower's story, marveling at the unfathomable beauty and quirkiness of each bloom.

JENNIFER GREY



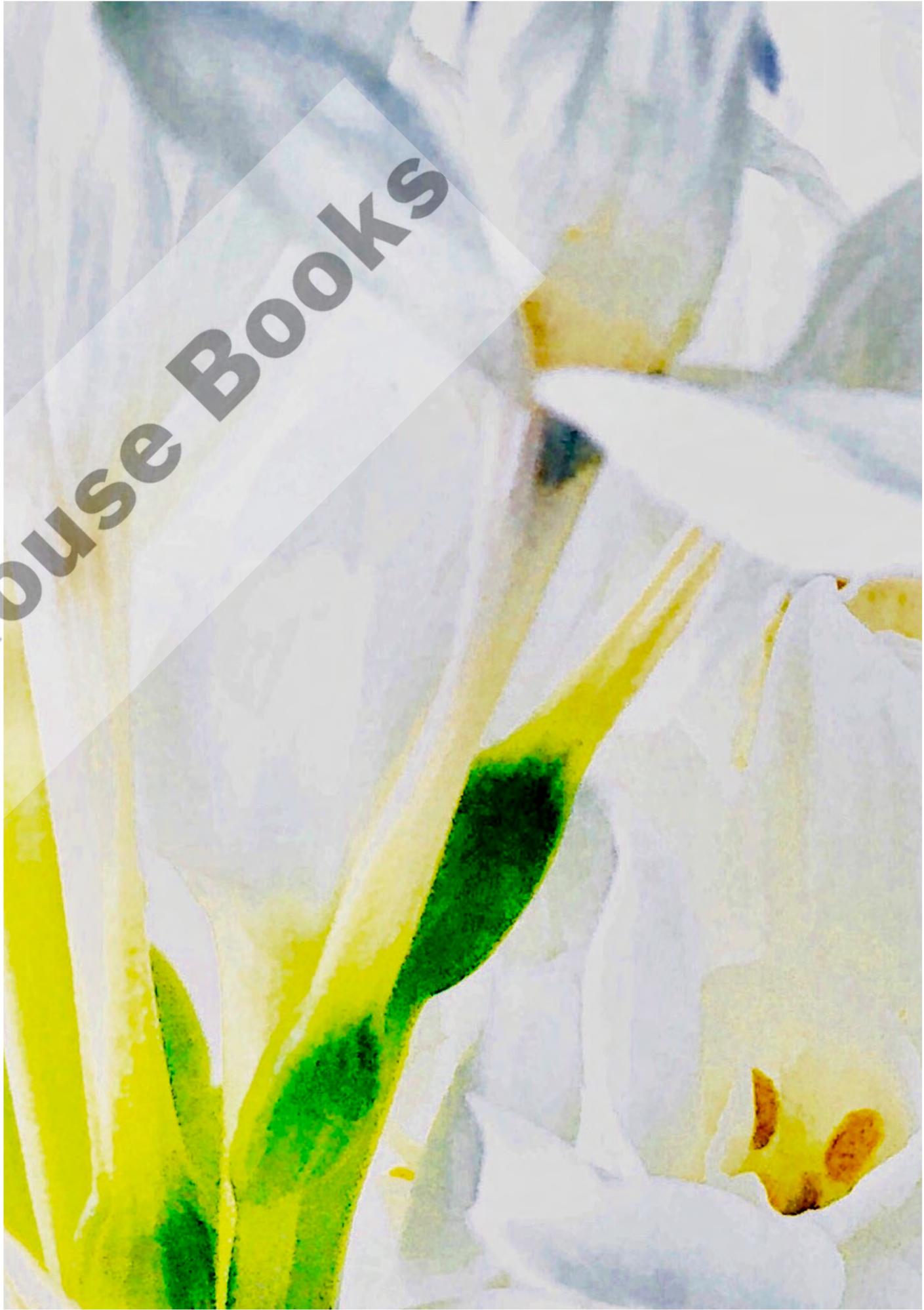
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