

THE MASKLESS MASK & THE TIRESOME TASK

I'm sitting at my desk, and I hear the teacher say
That we'll be learning about Roman Numerals today!
"Oh no!" I think, "They're SO boring!"
and I unwittingly get caught up in my thoughts
while Teacher makes selections
that make my stomach twist & tie up in knots!

I dream of escaping, I just want to flee,

Please don't pick me, I plea. 🤔

***"Wendy, you haven't been listening, this shouldn't
take you so long..."***

I haven't a clue what I wrote in my notebook,
so, my homework is certain to be all wrong.

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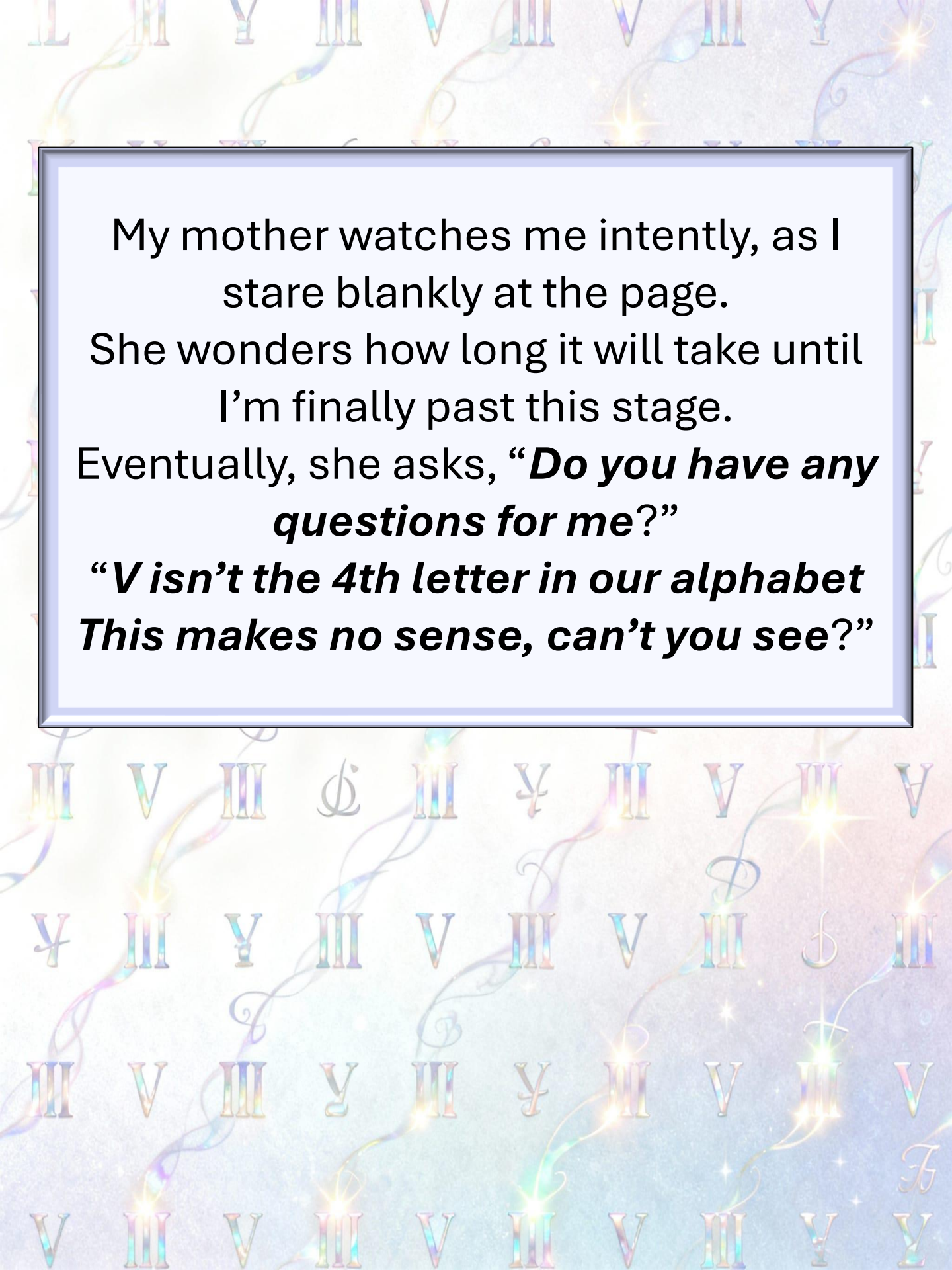
Date: Written during COVID Quarantine (~2020)

At home I look at those symbols and begin to bawl.
Forever ago, didn't the Roman Empire fall?
Why aren't there Greek, Parisian, or Canadian
numerals?
Whatever, regardless, tomorrow is going to be my
funeral
because Mom just finished her call.

My homework is incomplete, little was drawn
because the thought of Roman Numerals, still makes
me yawn.

Mom sees the signs; she knows I'm not fine.
Afterall, this is our routine. In a second, she'll say....

***“Dearest Daughter– food feeds the soul.
I'll help you after we dine.”***

The background of the entire image is a light blue and purple gradient. It is decorated with a repeating pattern of musical notes (treble clefs, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes) and a glowing DNA double helix. The notes and helix are rendered in a rainbow-like, iridescent style with bright light flares.

My mother watches me intently, as I
stare blankly at the page.
She wonders how long it will take until
I'm finally past this stage.
Eventually, she asks, "***Do you have any
questions for me?***"
***"V isn't the 4th letter in our alphabet
This makes no sense, can't you see?"***

Then she replies using her frightening
teacher tone,

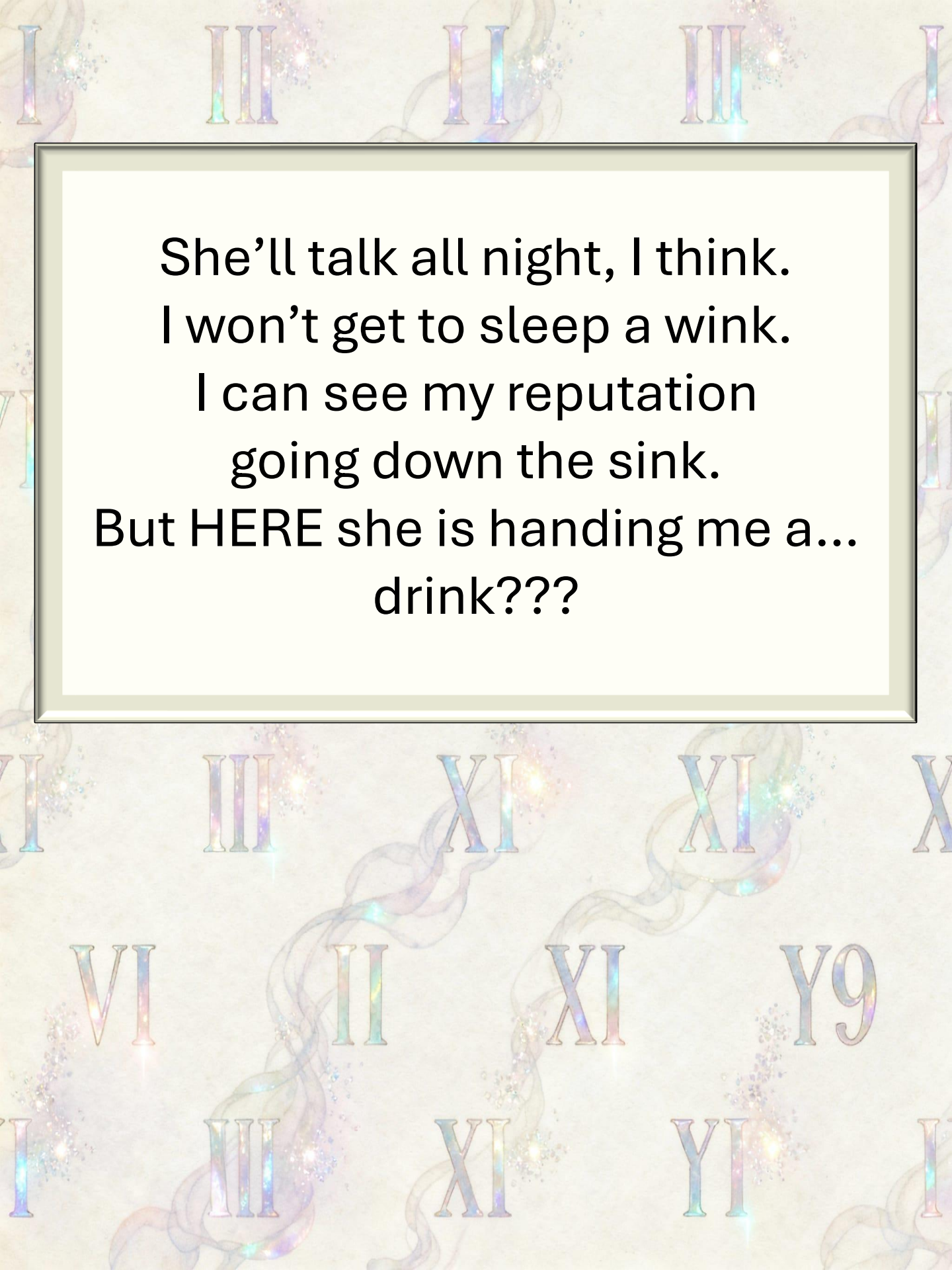
“1, 2, 3 – Wendieeee...

Listen to me,”

But we're interrupted by the phone.

My opportunity to complete my homework
is gone, and I groan!

If only my mother had a clone!

The background of the entire image is a light cream color. It is decorated with a repeating pattern of Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII) in a serif font. The numerals are rendered in a multi-colored, iridescent style, giving them a shimmering appearance. Interspersed among the numerals are thin, wavy lines in shades of blue, green, and purple, which also have a shimmering, ethereal quality. The overall effect is one of a magical or celestial theme.

She'll talk all night, I think.
I won't get to sleep a wink.
I can see my reputation
going down the sink.
But HERE she is handing me a...
drink???

“Why aren’t you able to do your homework?”

mom knew to ask.

In class, you weren’t wearing a mask.

Your teacher knew you weren’t on task.

Who do you think I was speaking to on the
phone?

All along, the truth, my mother must have
known,

and that was how my cover was blown.

WHYZ TRIES (A Little Diddy)

(If only shy students spoke up and asked more questions...)

Without a clue, your teachers can't assist you.

They are paid, to give you aid.

That's how their reputation is made!

You aren't the only one -I promise you that, hon...
You still have time; you haven't committed a crime.

Don't feel sour, **being inquisitive is your power.**
Don't feel shame - when GAINING knowledge is
your aim!

Don't be shy – continue to ask why.

Don't let another moment go by –

Do your best and try, JUST try!

{and now I'm gonna go eat some pie!}