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**THE MELANCHOLIC GAZES  
IN THE GRAPHIC NOVEL *THE MAGIC FISH***

Os olhares melancólicos  
na graphic novel *The magic fish*

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**ABSTRACT:** The semi-autobiographical graphic novel *The Magic Fish* (2020), by the American-Vietnamese cartoonist Trung Le Nguyen, received several nominations for important awards such as the GLAAD Awards and the Lambda Literary Awards. The author Le Nguyen used a plethora of artistic resources from the sequential narratives to tell different experiences of his protagonists as mother and son, Hiên and Tiên Phong, with the Fall of Saigon and the discovery of the son's queerness as an immigrant in the United States of America. Many of these experiences were embodied through the various representations of the melancholic gaze. For these reasons, this article intends to discuss the characteristics of the melancholic gazes through *The Magic Fish* (2020)'s sequential narratives. As a result, various representations of gazing, looking, and wandering are identified about the protagonists' painful reminiscences during the Fall of Saigon and their current challenges to live as queer immigrants.

**KEYWORDS:** The Magic Fish (2020); The Sequential Narrative; The Melancholic Gaze.

**RESUMO:** A graphic novel semiautobiográfica *The Magic Fish* (2020), do cartunista americano-vietnamita Trung Le Nguyen, recebeu diversas indicações para prêmios importantes como o GLAAD Awards e o Lambda Literary Awards. O autor Le Nguyen utilizou diversos recursos artísticos da narrativa sequencial para contar diferentes experiências de seus protagonistas como mãe e filho, Hiên e Tiên Phong, com a Queda de Saigon e a descoberta da *queerness* do filho como imigrante nos Estados Unidos da America. Muitas dessas experiências foram corporificadas por meio das diversas representações do olhar melancólico. Por essas razões, este artigo pretende discutir as características do olhar melancólico em *The Magic Fish* (2020). Como resultado, várias representações de contemplar, olhar e vagar foram identificadas sobre as reminiscências dolorosas dos protagonistas sobre a Queda de Saigon, bem como seus desafios atuais de viver como imigrantes *queer*.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** The Magic Fish (2020); A narrativa sequencial; O olhar melancólico.

## INTRODUCTION

The graphic novel *The Magic Fish* (2020) was composed by the American-Vietnamese cartoonist Trung Le Nguyen. This is his debut artistic

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work and was published by the Random House Graphic, an imprint of the Penguin Random House. Consequently, Nguyen was nominated for the most prestigious Comic Book award: the Eisner Award. In addition, he was nominated for the British Fantasy Award, the GLAAD Media Award, and the Lambda Literary Award. *The Magic Fish* (2020) is a semi-autobiographical story, which narrates Ti ền Phong's journey into self-acceptance as well as self-discovery. He is a second-generation American-Vietnamese pre-adolescent, who has a very close relationship with his mother, Hi ền Phong. He spends most of his time teaching her English through the Vietnamese fairy tales. While he struggles to accept being gay, Ti ền learns more about his mother's survival escape from The Fall of Saigon.

The Fall of Saigon represents the end of the Vietnam war and the first belligerent loss for the United States of America. Through a horrible defeat, the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell completely to the North Vietnamese troops on April 30, 1975. As a direct result, the American Army began the process of evacuation. Although thousands of lucky American soldiers and South Vietnamese civilian fled the North Coup, other thousands died along the way. The cartoonist Trung Le Nguyen and his family were considered the lucky ones, because they were able to escape alive from the Vietnam war. Escaping alive does not mean psychologically health. In fact, this took a toll on his entire family's relationship. According to Nguyen, this was one of the reasons he decided to create *The Magic Fish* (2020). Now and then, his characters seem to display signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, most of the times, they have a type of melancholic gaze in their faces.

The melancholic gaze concepts encompass various humanlike elements which are densely fragmented and extensively multi-faceted. Its presence traverses the history of humankind, but it appears to be quite constant as well as relevant in warlike survivors. Based upon the literary critic Piotr Śniedziwski's book entitled *The Melancholic Gaze* (2018), there are fundamentally three distinctive perspectives to understanding this form of human behavior toward life: gazing, looking, and wandering. For Śniedziwski (2018), gazing means the act of staring steadily and intently. While looking is thinking about something in a specific way and wandering is moving aimlessly as well as leisurely through that way. All characters in *The Magic Fish* (2020) show or possess these types of melancholia. For these reasons, this article aims to discuss the representation of the three melancholic gazes (ŚNIEDZIEWSKI, 2018) in the American-Vietnamese cartoonist Trung Le Nguyen's debut graphic novel *The Magic Fish* (2020) and their various relations with The Fall of Saigon. Therefore, the achievement of this discuss will be founded by a very short summary about the main events of The Fall of Saigon and its direct connections with the

American government. Subsequently, the chief characteristics of the three melancholic gazes will be presented in great details. Finally, a sequential narrative analysis of the representation of the melancholic gaze in *The Magic Fish* (2020) will be proposed.

## THE VIETNAM WAR AND THE FALL OF SAIGON

The Vietnam War lasted from 1954 to 1975. It was a traumatic conflict for both the United States and Vietnam. For the historian Liz Sonneborn (2020), this conflict was so traumatic that it expanded to neighboring countries such as Cambodia and Laos subsequently. In relation to Vietnam, the war was a terrible scuffle for independence. With the withdrawal of France from the conflict, the USA took the lead with a view to stopping the advance of communism. The Vietnam War was a horrible byproduct from the Cold War. Right off the bat, the South Vietnamese and the United States of America were attacked by the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong troops on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1968. This event was known as the Tet Offensive. The war dragged on for years, with both sides suffering heavy casualties.

In relation to the United States of America, the Vietnam War was considered its first lost in an international conflict (SONNEBORN, 2020). The world started seeing the USA as a less powerful country. On the one hand, throughout Richard Nixon's American presidential campaign, he asserted that his political party would be the new leaders of pacifying the various struggles in Vietnam. Additionally, the USA would help the South Vietnamese fight for their dignity and freedom. In 1970, the Nixon administration had begun the Vietnamization process. The Vietnamization hoped to equip consistently and train practically the South Vietnamese military to properly the fight against the North Vietnamese.

The Vietnamization process failed, and the governmental representatives from the South Vietnam and from the United States of America signed the Paris Peace Accords in 1973 (SONNEBORN, 2020). This Peace Accords aimed at a possible ceasefire. Although the American president promised to enforce the ceasefire, his Congress had other objectives in mind. They passed the Case-Church Amendment, which cut off all military funds for helping the Cambodian, Laotian and the South Vietnamese. The American Congress just wanted to retrieve their soldiers from these territories. To make matters worse, Nixon had to resign due to his involvement in the Watergate scandal in 1974. The following president, Gerald Ford, took over and promised to end the Vietnam War altogether. As

a result, he started promising the evacuation of the USA's allies from the Vietnam. This would be later known as The Fall of Saigon.

In the beginning of The Fall of Saigon, the North Vietnamese launched a major offensive against the South in 1975. According to the historian Keith Greenberg (2022), this resulted in catastrophic events toward the realization of the Paris Peace Accords. Consequently, the South Vietnamese government was in complete chaos. For this reason, their president, Nguyen Van Thieu, had to resign and flee his country rapidly. In succession, the American president had already asked the withdrawal of his combat troops. After that, he started to evacuate the American as well as the South Vietnamese civilians with its embassy as a focal point of the evacuation. Most of these evacuations occurred using helicopters and ships. Usually, the civilians were shuttled from the roof of the embassy to one of these means of transportation.

The Fall of Saigon was mainly the caught of Saigon by the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) and by the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front (Viet Cong), plus its dissidents (GREENBERG, 2022). The General Văn Tiến Dũng was the military commander of the PAVN. One of his first acts to catch Saigon was a direct and fatal assault against the American soldiers on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1975. The counterparts of PAVN were the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). Thusly, the ARVN suffered heavy bombardment from the North artillery. The General of ARVN Nguyễn Văn Toàn were forced to remove his combatants. Subsequently, the PAVN and with the help of the Viet Cong occupied various central points of Saigon. This terrible capture precipitated many evacuating processes.

The most famous American evacuation process was called The Operation Frequent Wind. As stated by the historian Philip Gavin (2023), it was more infamous than famous because it was very disorderly and tumultuous. Many civilians crowded into the American embassy without any sign of hope to be rescued. Various helicopters crashed into each other as well as lots of people were ditched into the cold sea and, unfortunately, died as a direct consequence. All in all, more than 7,000 people were evacuated, being one third of them Americans. In contrast, thousands of South Vietnamese were abandoned, caught by the North Vietnamese government, and then imprisoned, or even killed. The Fall of Saigon were also known as the end of the Vietnam War. At last, the two Vietnams were reunified under a communist dictatorship.

The Vietnam War was considered the first bellicose loss for the United States of America (GAVIN, 2023). In total, experts estimated that more than three million people, among civilians and soldiers, were brutally killed. Additionally, more than 300.000 Cambodians and 62.000 Laotians

also lost their lives during the bloodiest battles. It is believed that more 300.000 people died at sea through the larger Indochina refugee crisis.

#### MELANCHOLY: GAZING, LOOKING AND WANDERING

The concept of melancholy, also known as melancholia, is quite fragmented and multi-faceted. Etymologically speaking, it derives from the Greek word μέλαινα χολή, which means black bile. Its presence traverses the history of humankind and encompasses feelings such as bodily complaints, difficult concentration, extreme sadness, lack of reactivity, loss of interest, and mood swings (TONDO, 2020). All in all, there are many approaches to the concept of melancholy. In literary studies, it is very common to analyze melancholy through the perspective of staring, i.e., the melancholic gaze. According to Śniedziewski (2018), this gaze is apathic, impatient, sorrowful, and wavering. To defend his point of view, he divided the concept of melancholic gaze into three distinctive perspectives: gazing, looking, and wandering.

The gazing perspective is related to the melancholic solitude, the melancholic landscape, and the melancholic writing. The melancholic solitude can be comprised as the inability to cope with one's anxious tendencies. For Jean-Jacques Rousseau (2020), the melancholia is a type of acedia, which is an apathic state of mind and/or spirit. In other words, the characters, especially the protagonists, can show clear symptoms of cyclothymia, which is a rare mood disorder. The cyclothymic mood can oscillate from heightened excitability to long periods of depression. These tendencies can torment a character's life for a long time and distance himself from the society. This can also result in a type of ennui feeling, which may let the person be in constant state of boredom and tiredness.

The melancholic landscape can be comprised as the "hungry eyes" metaphor, which devours everything and everywhere vaguely. According to Étienne Senancour, in *Obermann* (1909), it is the traveler's eyes who hope for nothing and wander around aimlessly. However, this traveler is not oblivious to his surroundings. In fact, he scrutinizes them frequently as a scientist without research. The melancholic writing can be comprised as the act of living for oneself and oneself only. This means that any story is built through the melancholic protagonist's solitary standpoint and his supporting characters are adventitious and subservient to the main story. In this sense, they are not supporting, but solely disposable. Comparatively, this protagonist is also disposable because only his fragmented imprint should be considered into his characterization.

The looking perspective is related to the sad glances, the sad mist, and the sad world. As stated by Robert Kopp (2015), the sad glances are wobbling because the melancholic characters cannot fix on anything or anywhere. These glances can never elicit happiness, nor ease any type of tension. Usually, the protagonist can only see the contours of a story. As a result, his readers can never trust his words completely. His gaze does not wander about his surroundings, but it is wandered within. The world always happens inside the characters' sad glances. The sad mist represents the character's loss of directions. For this reason, he is doomed to wander gropingly without a cause.

The character's groping wandering is full of uncertainties that he may return to his home one day. For Antoni Malczewski (2012), the contemplation is more important than a character's return to his home. In addition, everything and everywhere are alien to the character's estranged feelings. These feelings are so strong that are actualized as constant fogginess, gloominess, and hazing, i.e., mist. Therefore, the fictional world is always empty, skeptical, and sterile. In other words, the character is always suffering fits of sadness and his space is constantly yellow like the bile. All in all, he is in a current state of lassitude. His space can be easily described with dark skies, nightmarish atmosphere, and swathed in mist.

The wandering perspective is related to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's herbarium and Chateaubriand's stone. According to Kuhn (2006), in his botanical writings, Rousseau wants to teach his readers to "see well" their natural spaces. In consonance, he hopes his readers can notice other individual realities as well as their surroundings with disinterest. Therefore, the melancholic wandering is not just to perceive accurate details nonchalantly, but also to be attentive to the particularities of others from a certain distance. Hence, Rousseau wanders in both directions, i.e., into the depths of one's own soul and toward the unknown. In addition, he believes that a sense of homelessness and abiding apprehension should always follow the wanderer's journey. No matter what direction one takes, the path must be curiously uncanny.

The Chateaubriand's stone is about the true beauty of the melancholic gaze. For Śniedziewski (2018), in *Memoirs from Beyond the Tomb* (2014), Chateaubriand appreciates the seductress of the "mystic languor" which encompasses the sorrowful aura of melancholia. This seduction is related to the sources of torment which lies in any round character's feelings and thoughts. Altogether, this torment can be understood as wounds, which are usually self-inflicted and rarely solved throughout the narration. For Chateaubriand (2014), the characters can heal from the wounds if they lovely meditate about them. This meditation must be lovely, insomuch as the characters must aspire to analyze their surroundings profoundly,

contemplate them solitarily along their diegetic journey as well as seek disquietly within the pleasing objectives of their melancholic gazes.

#### THE MELANCHOLIC GAZES IN THE GRAPHIC NOVEL *THE MAGIC FISH* (2020)

The graphic novel *The Magic Fish* (2020) is a semi-autobiographical narrative by Trung Le Nguyen. Its plot takes place in 1998 and tells the story of the Phong family. The plot revolves mainly around the melancholic relationships between a mother, Hiền, and her son, Tiễn. The melancholia derives from the various incidents that happen after The Fall of Saigon and their lives as refugees in the United States of America (USA). The mother starts her diegetic journey in a crossroad: she must decide if she will stay with her son in North America or return to Saigon to help the sick grandmother. *The Magic Fish* (2020) is a semi-autobiography, since Trung himself was born in a refugee camp in the Philippines. Just after his birth, his parents fled his homeland Vietnam during the Vietnam War. They went to the USA. In addition, Nguyen's protagonist Tiễn is trying to understand his sexuality. He begins identifying himself as gay, which is a word that does not exist in the Vietnamese language.

The plot starts with both main characters, Hiền and Tiễn, choosing a new fairytale to read together. This is a very common characteristic among the dreamers. They tend to help each other become fluent in the target language. Right from scratch, Hiền reveals to her son that she is feeling homesick. In fact, she immediately declares that she is trapped between two distinctive places, i.e., Vietnam and The United States of America. All in all, the sequential arts seem to be the best narrative form to transmit her mixed feelings. In the first comic book page (Fig. 01), the cartoonist Nguyen (2020) sets the groundwork for the rest of *The Magic Fish*. The first panel, he illustrates with light reddish. This color will represent the current lives they are leading throughout the diegetic story, including Hiền's marriage to Vinh. The second panel, he illustrates with opaque yellowish. This color is crucial, because it will display Hiền's homesick memories from her life back in Vietnam. Finally, the third panel is dark blueish, and it will constantly show their escapades to the idealized fairytale world.

Image 1: First Comic Cook Page



Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 01.

The blueish panel tells the fairylike story of Alera. It is the Vietnamese version of the Eurocentric Cinderella. However, Alera is the Princess of the sea. The conflict rises between her father and, the antagonist, the Old Sea Man. He desires feverishly to marry her. In a defiant act, Alera flees and, consequently, becomes a refugee of Prince Maxwell's kingdom. From now on, this becomes an allegory of Hiên's refugee's journey to the United States of America during The Fall of Saigon. Usually, after the fairytale, Hiên reminisces about her tumultuous path to the New World. The cartoonist Nguyen (2020) always paints her homesick memories yellowishly. Her eyes rarely elicit cheerfulness or eases her worries (KOPP, 2015). They are in an intermittent state of melancholia. In contrast, Nguyen subverts Hiên's melancholic gaze with brushes of despair or horror. These dreadful feelings can be verified upon the figures 02 and 03 below:



Image 2: The refugee's journey



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Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 27.

The refugee's journey of Hiền to the United States of America during The Fall of Saigon seems to return quite vividly to her memories. By remembering about her escape, she can look at her choices with fear. In the first frame, Hiền breaks down in tears completely. In the fourth frame, she recovers, but there is still a teardrop which connects her with the horrors of the Vietnam War. In contrast, in the eighth frame, there are no more tears left, and she stares at her lover steadily and intently. Hope appears to be born at this exact moment. By looking and staring, Hiền faces different facets of melancholia.

Image. 3: The refugee's journey



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Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 28.

For the time being, Tiễn asks Hiền if she is feeling okay. In response, she nods positively. Sequentially, Tiễn inquires Hiền about his grandmother who still lives in Vietnam. Covertly, Hiền says she hopes to visit her mother soon, changes the subjects and tells him to go to school. There, he comes out to his best friend, Claire. This is a direct reaction to Claire's romantic feelings toward their mutual crush, Julian. Supportively, Claire enquires Hiền if he will also come out to his Vietnamese parents. Apprehensively, he declares that "I want to. I tried looking up how to tell them at the library. The librarian and I couldn't find the word for it in Vietnamese [...] It felt weird technically coming out to the librarian before I even told my parents. It's all weird" (NGUYEN, 2020, p. 46). Hence, Claire invites Tiễn to the prom dance, so he could talk to Julien more properly. Back home, Hiền resumes reading the Vietnamese Cinderella's story with his mother. Once again, Hiền returns to her life in Vietnam before The Fall of Saigon. Although Hiền has a melancholic gaze, her gaze is more nostalgic than sad.

The cartoonist Nguyen (2020) overthrows the stereotypical concept that refugees are only depressed and displaced (Fig. 3). According to Śniedziewski (2018), characters with the melancholic gaze tend to remember

their homeland lives fondly, but apathetically. In turn, for Senancour (1909), they are always wandering aimlessly. Coincidentally, Hiền is the character who wanders more frequently without clear objectives and remembering her experiences during the Fall of Saigon (Fig. 3). This occurs, especially on her boat to flee the Vietnam war.

Image 4: The melancholic happy gaze



Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 83.

Unfortunately, Tiễn's grandmother passes away before his prom. Dismally, his mother travels to Vietnam for the funeral. She is very worried, because she believes her mother was angry with her decision to move to The United States of America. In one of her attempts to confess to her aunt that she feels frequently stuck between two places, her aunt starts telling her a new fairytale. This is the second fairylike story in *The Magic Fish* (2020). Coincidentally or not, it is another Vietnamese Cinderella story, but a different version. This version is closer to the American plot than the one which is being told between mother and son. The heroine, Tấm, lost her mother to death. As a result, her father remarries an evil stepmother. Terribly, her stepmother forces her to do all the housework. Based on Rousseau (2020), the protagonist's mother, Hiền, seems to display symptoms of

cyclothymic mood, because she oscillates from heightened excitability (Fig. 3), to long periods of depression (Fig. 6), consequently.

As similar as the Eurocentric Cinderella, Tầm befriends many animals, especially a magic fish. This fish lives in the garden where Tầm sleeps, and it is her only emotional comfort. Later, Tầm discovers that her mother used to feed this same fish. A spiritual connection is created. Grievously, Tầm's found out about their connection and decides to cook her best friend. Horrendously, she feeds Tầm with the magic fish in a stew. Unexpectedly, Tầm unearths this atrocity and buries his bones in the garden. Subsequently, a very rich merchant proposes to host a ball to which all unmarried women are invited. This information comes across Tầm's stepmother who ends up making her hide and sort grains of brown and white rice. In an act of defiance, she hears a bird's voice telling her to unbury the friend's bones in the Garden. Consequently, his bones become a beautiful ball dress. Thusly, Tầm goes to the ball with the help of white birds (Fig. 5). These types of Vietnamese birds symbolize help sent from heaven to those destined for eternal life.

Image 5: A new future



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Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 154.

As soon as Tám arrives at the ball, her story unravels similarly to the Eurocentric Cinderella’s diegetic path. However, in a more gruesome twist, Tám is killed by her stepmother when she gets back home. On the lookout for his true love, the merchant finds out that Tám is dead. For this reason, he begins to wish she were still alive, and magically, Tám is brought to life. In an even more gruesome twist, the white bird whispers to Tám’s stepsister that Tám showers in hot oil. The bird tricks the stepsister to enter the hot oil and, consequently she dies. Unknowingly, the stepmother eats her biological daughter and dies from shock. In consonance with Śniedziewski (2018), Tám shows clear signs of happy apathy. In figure 05, she is happy to participate in the ball, but her face also demonstrates distance, and even sadness. In this moment, Hiên inquires her aunt: “Is that true?” and her aunt just replies: “How should I know? It’s an old, old story. Details change. Things change. And now this story is ours. Yours and mine” ((NGUYEN, 2020, p. 46, p. 184). This is a tipping narrative moment, because Hiên starts feeling freer from her guilt. As stated by Chateaubriand (2014), she can start appreciating the seductress of the “mystic languor”. As a result, Hiên can finally cherish and treasure her surroundings, because she possesses both worlds.

Image 6: The unbelonging feeling



Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 176.

Back to the current world, Claire convinces Tiễn to participate in the prom. Luckily, Julian asks Tiễn for a slow dance. Although Julian makes clear he does not correspond Tiễn's infatuation, he dances with Tiễn to display his antihomophobic attitudes. In counterpoint, Tiễn's teacher, Mrs. Flynn sees both boys dancing and orders Tiễn to talk to the school's priest, Father Niles. While in counseling, the priest makes Tiễn feel guilty for being gay and threatens to tell his mother. Afraid of causing another death in his family, Tiễn does not want to reveal his sexual orientation to his family. In vain, Mrs. Flynn meets with Hiên. At this moment, Nguyen's readers have no idea if the principal told Tiễn's mother about his sexuality. They both remain dead silent on the way back home.

Subsequently, Hiên and Tiễn resume the third fairytale, the Vietnamese version of the little mermaid. The protagonist wants desperately to be reunited with her beloved man, Brandon. As the Walt Disney's adaptation (1989), she also saves him from drowning after his ship accidentally capsized. As well, in the Vietnamese story, she must also give up her voice to have legs. As opposite to the American story, this drastic change does not only cost her voice, but the whole process is excruciatingly painful. This representation is closer to Hans Christian Andersen (1836)'s *The little mermaid* version. She feels as if she walks on daggers. Conforming to Malczewski (2012), this little mermaid is alien to her estranged feelings. Although she will have the opportunity to have legs to meet her prince charming, she is devastated internally (Fig. 07), due to the costly price to be paid.

Image: 7: Split in half



Source: LE NGUYEN, 2020, p. 202.

After acquiring legs, the little mermaid tries to find her beloved man, Brandon. When she finds him, she notices that he is extremely cheerful. She starts dancing to make him fall in love with her. Unsuccessfully, Brandon does not. In contrast, he has amorous feelings toward Bertie. At an amazing twist, Bertie declines Brandon's love interests and falls in love with the little mermaid. At the end, both women live happily ever after. This change is paramount to Nguyễn's readers understand how inclusive Tiễn's mother has become. It is Hiền who deliberately modifies the end of the Vietnamese little mermaid. In fact, this is not only a display of inclusivity, but also of unconditional love.

## CONCLUSIONS

The graphic novel *The Magic Fish* (2020) displays different facets of melancholia (SNIEDZIEWSKI, 2018). Through its American-Vietnamese protagonists, Hiền and Tiễn, the cartoonist Le Nguyen tells us the story of those who find themselves between two worlds. This cultural chasm results in mixed-feelings such as homesick and terror. By gazing, they stare at their

memories steadily and intently. By looking, Hiền and Tiễn look at their new environment with fear and hope. By wandering, these protagonists try to be more familiar with this new environment as well as rewrite their own stories.

These melancholic feelings can be intensified through Le Nguyen (2020)'s sequential artistic dexterity. When he opts for blueish or yellowish backgrounds, he does consciously to increase his readers' perceptions about his characters' melancholia. The protagonists' countenances are also attentive and well-thought. They can easily illustrate the variations of the melancholic stages with their sudden changes. Nevertheless, the fairylike plots distance his readers from more realistic perceptions of the Fall of Saigon and the Vietnam War. All in all, *The Magic Fish* (2020) is an amazing journey through the memorialistic experiences of some of the contemporary American-Vietnamese descendants.

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