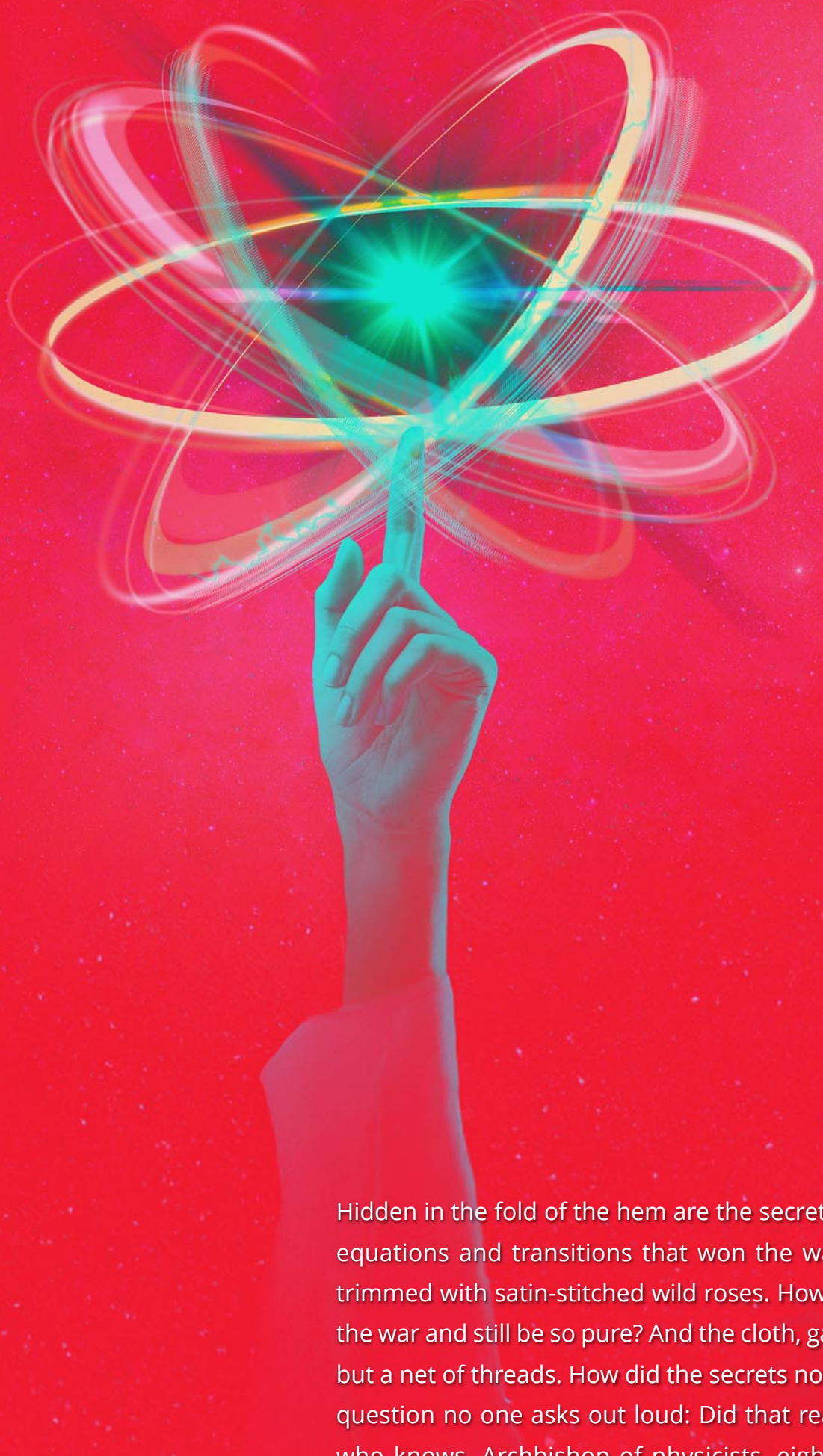

Aha: Atomic Apron

Hidden in the fold of the hem are the secrets of the atomic bomb, the equations and transitions that won the war. A white cotton apron, trimmed with satin-stitched wild roses. How can it have gone through the war and still be so pure? And the cloth, gauzy, open-weave, nothing but a net of threads. How did the secrets not leak through? Always the question no one asks out loud: Did that really happen? He's the one who knows. Archbishop of physicists, eighty years ago they say, he inscribed the breakthrough on the cloth, then stitched it up tight. He is now so famous that credit, blame, renown no longer concern him. All respect is temporary. He knows this, as surely as he knows everything atomic reverts, sooner or later, to hydrogen. Ad infinitum, he will remember the moment when he understood: My God, he'd said, *ja mei, mais non, aha.*

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Karen Greenbaum-Maya is a retired clinical psychologist, former German major and restaurant reviewer, and three-time Pushcart and Best of the Net nominee. Her work has appeared all over the place. Her work in fairy tales and dream interpretation, and her obsession with Kafka and flirtation with Buber have led her inevitably to prose poems. Her collections include three chapbooks, Burrowing Song, Eggs Satori, and, Kafka's Cat (Kattywompus Press), and, The Book of Knots and their Untying (Kelsay Books). Bamboo Dart Press publishes The Beautiful Leaves and Eve the Inventor.