

Short Stories Collection

“Eco-Life: Our Way”

2014-2016



I.E.S. José Luis Castillo-Puche Spain
St Albans Girls' School United Kingdom
Mataré-Gymnasium.Europaschule Germany



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I.E.S. José Luis Castillo- Puche (Spain)
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Diseño de la portada: Ángela Romero

FOREWORD

We are a Strategic Partnership involving three schools: the Spanish IES José Luis Castillo-Puche as the coordinating partner, the German Mataré-Gymnasium Europaschule and the English St Albans Girls' School. This Erasmus + Project has lasted two years, from 2014 to 2016, and its title is "Eco-Life: Our Way".

The aim of our project is to achieve a common awareness about the importance of our way of living and its impact on the environment. We, as global citizens, must realise that sustainable development, energy saving, ecological footprint and climate change are global concepts to be tackled locally and individually. The idea is that every single person can make a change and effects can be enhanced by cooperating.

We have promoted active citizenship among our pupils, and for this reason, our Erasmus + Students have become Eco-Ambassadors among their peers, Primary students in other city schools, Parents' Associations and Local Authorities.

Students have taken part in activities such as an analysis of our resources invoices, have produced video clips promoting environmentally-sensitive behaviour; they have also done research about our carbon footprint or experienced a European Ecological Christmas.

One of these scheduled activities was a short story contest related to the theme of sustainability, the result of which is this compilation of very touching tales.

The winning story, "The Tree" became the basis of our collaborative script-writing workshop. The complete script of our collaborative Drama Play is also included in this book.

Our final objective has been to raise awareness of ecological issues in our Communities and to enhance our students' self-esteem, critical thinking, leadership, collaborative learning, communication skills, languages and ICT, as a way to improve their future employability in our common European home.

The theme of the Erasmus + programme is "Changing lives. Opening minds" And besides all our main objectives, this has also been our theme. We believe that the holistic education of our students includes opening inner windows and doors, with better views, that will let them decide the best option among their aspirations and secure their future dreams.

We consider that every experience you live, each person you meet, each time you break out of the routine and each challenge you deal with, will transform your personality and the way you face life.

We like to think that we are doing our bit so that this idea can be a reality for our students.

By way of summing up these two years of hard work, I am going to finish with the last three lines of our project report, which explain what it has meant for us: "A way of increasing motivation and satisfaction in our daily work inside the classroom, a window to promote welfare and realize that this kind of European project is worth stepping beyond the wall of the classroom, in order to open minds and broaden horizons"

Thanks from the bottom of my heart to everyone who has worked to make this project come true.

Begoña Castillo Miñano,
Co-ordinator of the Erasmus + Project "Eco-Life: Our Way"

PRÓLOGO

Somos una Asociación Estratégica que ha unido a tres institutos europeos: el IES José Luis Castillo-Puche, de España, que coordina este Proyecto Europeo; Mataré-Gymnasium Europaschule, de Alemania y St Albans Girls' School, de Reino Unido.

Este proyecto Erasmus + ha tenido lugar a lo largo de dos cursos académicos, desde 2014 hasta 2016, y lleva por título "Eco-Life: Our Way".

El objetivo del proyecto es conseguir una concienciación común sobre la importancia de nuestra forma de vida y su impacto sobre el medio ambiente. Está centrado en el ahorro energético y de recursos naturales, así como en la sostenibilidad.

La idea principal es que cada persona de modo individual puede cambiar las cosas, y que cooperando, estos efectos beneficiosos, se verán multiplicados.

Hemos promovido la ciudadanía activa en nuestros alumnos, y por ese motivo, algunos de ellos han constituido un grupo de ECO-EMBAJADORES, y han sido los encargados de difundir nuestro trabajo, haciendo llegar el mensaje medioambiental a sus compañeros, a los colegios de Primaria, a las familias y a las Autoridades.

Los alumnos han tomado parte en actividades tan diversas como un análisis de las facturas de la luz, el agua y el gas; han grabado videoclips promocionando el comportamiento respetuoso con el medio ambiente; han investigado sobre la Huella de Carbono y han vivido unas Navidades Ecológicas Europeas.

Una de estas actividades programadas fue un concurso de relato breve, cuya temática era la sostenibilidad y esta es la compilación de las obras ganadoras de los tres países. La ganadora internacional "El Árbol", fue la base para redactar el guión de la obra de teatro colaborativa, que también está incluido en este libro.

Nuestro objetivo final ha sido concienciar a nuestras Comunidades Educativas sobre la importancia de los temas medioambientales, y aumentar en nuestros alumnos la autoestima, el pensamiento crítico, el liderazgo, el aprendizaje colaborativo, las habilidades comunicativas, las competencias lingüísticas y digitales, a fin de mejorar su empleabilidad en un marco común Europeo.

Este es el lema del Programa Erasmus + a nivel europeo: "Cambiando vidas. Abriendo mentes". Y además de nuestros principales objetivos, éste ha sido también nuestro lema.

Creemos firmemente en que la educación integral de nuestros alumnos pasa porque se abran puertas y ventanas en su interior; con vistas más amplias, que les permitan decidir en un futuro con qué se quedan y a qué pueden aspirar.

Consideramos que cada experiencia que vives, cada persona que conoces, y cada vez que sales de la rutina y superas un nuevo reto, estás conformando tu forma de ser y de enfrentarte a los desafíos que la vida te va a ir poniendo por delante.

Y nos gusta pensar que estamos poniendo nuestro granito de arena en que todo eso sea una realidad para nuestros alumnos.

Como balance de estos dos años de trabajo, voy a terminar con las tres últimas líneas que escribimos en la memoria del proyecto "Eco-Life: Our Way": "Una forma de aumentar la motivación en nuestro trabajo de cada día en clase, una ventana para promover el bienestar y darse cuenta de que merece la pena traspasar las paredes del aula para abrir mentes y ampliar horizontes"

Muchas gracias de corazón a TOD@S los que lo habéis hecho posible.

Begoña Castillo Miñano,
Coordinadora del Proyecto Erasmus + "Eco-Life: Our Way"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With these words, I would like to acknowledge the good work carried out by the team of teachers of the three educational institutions taking part in this Project: the IES José Luis Castillo-Puche, from Yecla (Coordinator), Mataré Gymnasium Europaschule, from Germany, and St. Albans Girls' School, from the United Kingdom, which have been, in one way or another, actively involved in the development of the planned activities in the Erasmus + project "ECO-LIFE: OUR WAY". The passion, effort and commitment that you have shown in order to meet the challenges within this ambitious Project are admirable.

I have felt with you the joy of things well done. You have been pleasantly surprised by the work that your pupils have been able to carry out. Proof of this are the short stories collected in this book. This is the best evidence of the achievements in inculcating in our students values such as teamwork, effort and a sense of community. They have assumed the role of eco-ambassadors in order to disseminate in society those actions that will result in saving energy and natural resources, and to raise awareness of the impact of our way of life on the environment.

I extend congratulations and heartfelt thanks to the pupils who have taken part in the range of activities developed within the project. You have contributed your grain of sand to the internationalisation of your school. You have shown that the knowledge of foreign languages enables people from different countries to pursue common goals, and that language must not be the barrier that deters people from understanding each other.

Warmest congratulations to teachers and pupils for your magnificent job.

**D. José Antonio Ortega Hernández,
Director del IES José Luis Castillo-Puche**

AGRADECIMIENTOS

Quiero agradecer con estas líneas, el trabajo realizado por el equipo de profesores de los tres centros educativos asociados en este proyecto, el Instituto de Educación Secundaria José Luis Castillo Puche, de Yecla (coordinador del proyecto), el centro alemán Mataré Gymnasium Europaschule y el de Reino Unido St. Albans Girls' School, que de una manera u otra se ha implicado y ha colaborado en la realización de las diferentes actividades planificadas en el proyecto Erasmus + "ECO LIFE: OUR WAY". Es admirable comprobar la dedicación, pasión y el esfuerzo que habéis puesto para conseguir los retos que se han planteado con este ambicioso Proyecto.

He disfrutado también, junto a vosotras, junto a vosotros, cuando habéis saboreado la satisfacción del trabajo realizado y muy bien realizado. Cómo en ocasiones os habéis sorprendido gratamente por el trabajo que han sido capaces de desarrollar vuestros alumnos, prueba de ello son los relatos que se recogen en este libro. Esa es la mejor evidencia de que habéis conseguido inculcar en ellos valores como el trabajo, el esfuerzo, el compañerismo y han sido capaces de desempeñar ese papel de ECOEMBAJADORES para difundir en la sociedad acciones encaminadas al ahorro energético y de los recursos naturales, conseguir la concienciación de todos de la importancia del impacto que tiene en el medio ambiente nuestra forma de vida.

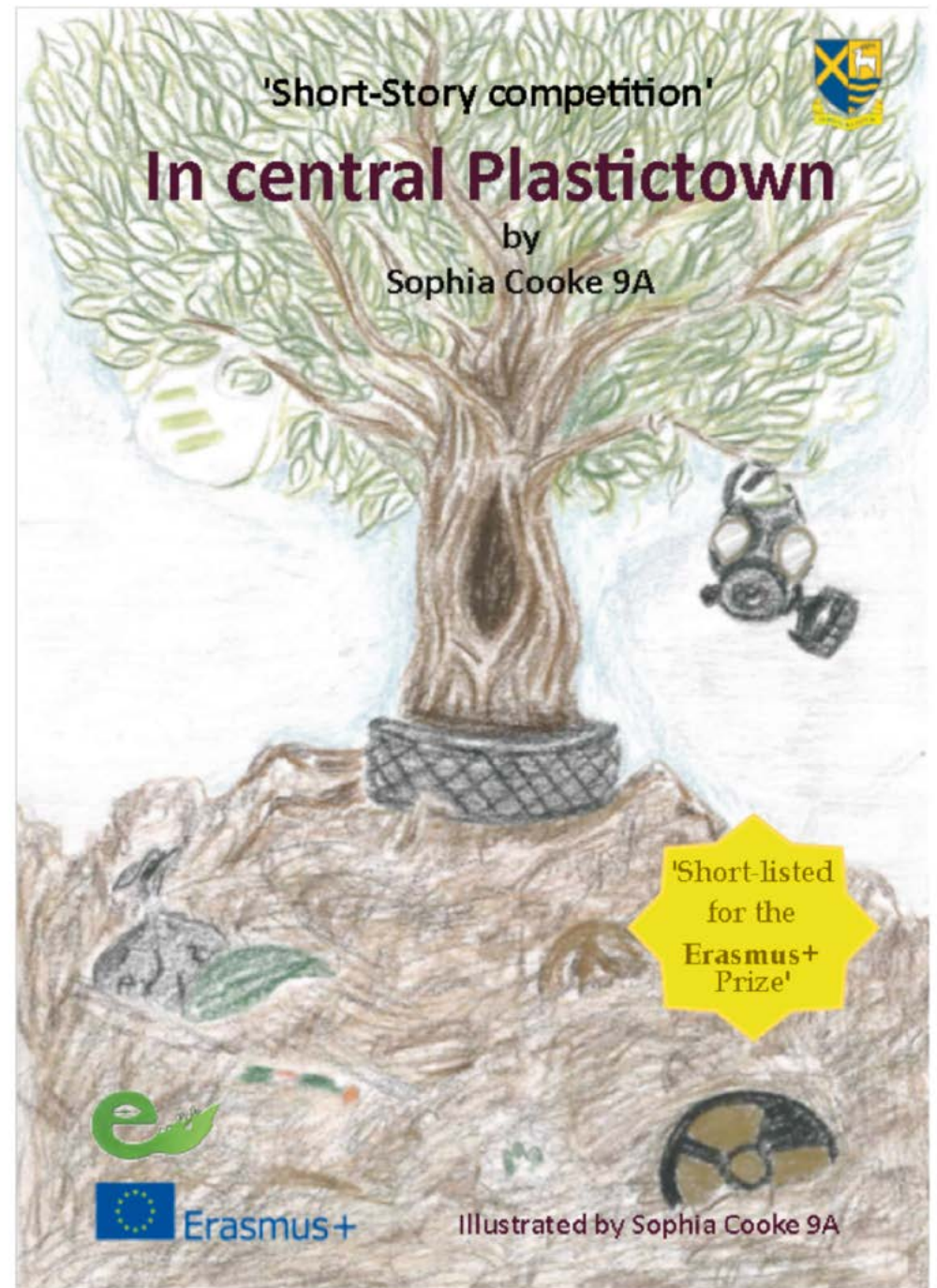
Extiendo mi felicitación y reconocimiento a los alumnos que han participado en cualquiera de las actividades desarrolladas en el Proyecto. Habéis puesto vuestro granito de arena para conseguir la internacionalización de vuestro Instituto. Habéis demostrado que el conocimiento de otras lenguas permite a personas de diferentes países y culturas luchar por objetivos comunes y beneficiosos para todos y que no debe ser la barrera que facilite la separación entre los pueblos.

Enhorabuena a profesores y alumnos por el trabajo realizado.

**D. José Antonio Ortega Hernández,
Director del IES José Luis Castillo-Puche**

Winning Short Story

The Tree
El árbol
Der Baum



The Tree

In central Plastictown, a thick melancholy haze covered the land. This was not uncommon, however, as the fog almost never left the walled city. Back in the day, you would be able to see the sun for a good hour before disappearing back into the clouds and the poisonous gases that killed millions. But now there are only solemn rays that shone every once in a while. But for little Thomas, he knew nothing different. Every day, he would sling his gas mask over his shoulder and make his way to the local school, being careful that he didn't step into the sinkholes that were constantly appearing and disappearing. The sinkholes had made automobiles impossible to drive, so everyone just walked. His mother disapproved of seeing her little boy walk out into the dangers that he was completely unaware of to get an education, but she had no choice. The air had left her weak and confined indoors. She often wondered whether to lock him indoors and keep him safe, or to let him live his life to its fullest potential, neither of which were good choices.

The two things Little Thomas was really aware of when walking alone was: Don't talk to strangers and don't walk through the black air. However, on this particular day, he found the "Don't talk to strangers" rule quite difficult. Old Man Joe stopped him, a madman who enjoyed nothing more than spewing stories about things he called "trees" and machines that did things you asked them to do. Little Thomas quickly picked up his pace when he realized Joe wasn't going to leave him alone. Thomas wasn't very quick, due to his tiny, skinny, malnourished body, but neither was Joe, who kept a steady pace behind him. "I have a tree, you know," he hissed. Little Thomas didn't answer; "Do you want to know where it is? I'll tell you, but only if you stop to properly listen. Little Thomas stopped to consider the offer, he did want to know what a "tree" was and what it did, but he couldn't go against Mother's rules.

He kept walking and heard a low grunt and a mutter of disappointment. Thomas turned around, and quickly followed after Old Man Joe, who chuckled to himself as he heard the boy scurry towards his direction. "So you've had a change of heart, eh?" the boy gave a small, unsure, nod, and then a second nod to be sure of himself. Little Thomas didn't speak a single word. Old Man Joe stared directly into his eyes and said, "Behind the plastic graveyard, there is an old tyre - a black rubber ring - that protects the little tree. It is frail and needs sunlight and water; two things that aren't easy to find. You will go there every day and pour water on the tree and provide it light, do you understand?" Little

Thomas frowned, unsure of whether he could handle the responsibility, he was only seven after all. But he never disappointed anyone. Ever. So he gave a final nod and ran towards the school, making sure no one had seen him talking to the old man.

Little Thomas struggled to concentrate in school that day, not that it mattered, as it was exactly the same every day. Once they taught you how to read and write, all the lessons were about survival. The school had around 50 children, but many disappeared and never came back. Thomas didn't really think too much about it when a friend would disappear; it happened all the time. Of course he was sad for the first day or so, but quickly found someone else to talk to. Today he talked to no one, declining any offers to play games in his free time, instead he thought up ways to bring light to the tree. He could get water from the well, as long as no one saw him, but finding light was slightly more difficult because most lights require plugs and electricity, which was hard to get and very expensive. Little Thomas eventually settled for the emergency torch that could be found in the cellar at home. As school ended, Thomas ran towards the plastic graveyard, which was as daunting and terrifying as everyone had made it out to be. It was filled with rubbish, bodies and old broken devices that couldn't be used anymore. It was the graveyard for the history that created Plastictown, which dated all the way back to the times when people were inventing, creating and prospering. Only that was gone, carelessly thrown away into a pile of junk.

Thomas walked around the graveyard, wishing he had brought a friend, but they wouldn't understand and might tell someone about it. He didn't really understand why he was forcing himself to go through so much trouble in order to look after something he had never known existed before today, but Old Man Joe had made it seem important- made *him* seem important. It was a long walk, but he finally made it to the back of the graveyard.

To his disappointment, he saw no magical object he was sent to take care of. The land was barren and all he saw was a cracked tyre resting on the ground, so he knew he was in the right place. He solemnly walked towards the tyre, not expecting much, and as expected, he saw nothing. He blinked and looked harder, and saw a tiny green stem, poking out of the earth. Old Man Joe wasn't joking when he said it was frail, but Thomas didn't think it would be that small. Something that small couldn't be that important, Thomas thought, but he had made a promise and began to pour the well water on the tree. It did nothing. He took the torch out of his rucksack and shone it on the

tree. Because he didn't really know how much light the tree needed, he made himself comfortable and sat there for a few hours, mesmerized by its colour. It was a bright green shade, which was extremely uncommon in the barren wasteland he called home.

The boy had returned home late that night, but avoided trouble because Mother was taking a nap, and was probably asleep hours before school ended. It was often like that, since she became ill. He figured he would easily be able to look after the tree, as long as he wasn't caught stealing the water rations from the well. He went to the tree every day after school. He quickly learnt that it didn't do much but grow over time and rustle in the breeze. He liked the tree; he believed it helped him breathe. Perhaps he was right. Maybe that was why it was so important to look after the little green creature. He finally saw the tree in a new light - it wasn't a frail little creature, but a glimmer of hope that everyone could breathe again. He was going to be the saviour of the town. Little Thomas knew his idea may have been a little over the top, but it didn't stop him trying. He wasn't going to give up the chance to become a hero.

Years passed, and Little Thomas was now twelve. He had continued his routine for so long that the tree's stalk was brown and strong, and was as tall as his shoulders. Thomas was the only child in his class without some sort of breathing illness, and was often named a miracle. The boy knew this was no miracle, however, it was the hours he spent looking after the tree that provided him with clean air. As the tree grew, more trees began to grow. Less water was required as the rain fell just a little more often. The air began to clear up. The fate of Plastictown was going to change.

El árbol

En una ciudad llamada Plastictown, una gruesa capa de melancolía cubría la tierra. Esto era muy común, puesto que la niebla casi nunca abandonaba esta amurallada ciudad. En otro tiempo podía verse el sol brillando con fuerza entre las nubes, pero los gases lo habían ido eliminando y hoy en día sólo podían verse algunos pequeños rayos que brillan de vez en cuando. El pequeño Thomas siempre lo había conocido así de gris

Todos los días tenía que llevar colgada sobre sus hombros su máscara de gas para ir al colegio, llevando mucho cuidado de no caer en los socavones que constantemente aparecían y desaparecían a sus pies. Estos socavones hacían imposible que los coches fueran circulando, así pues, todo el mundo caminaba. A su madre no le agradaba ver como su hijo pequeño caminaba por lugares peligrosos para poder estudiar, pero no tenía otra opción. El aire contaminado la estaba debilitando y la limitaba a permanecer siempre en casa. Ella siempre se preguntaba si sería mejor encerrar a su hijo en casa, para que se mantuviera a salvo, o dejarlo vivir su vida con todas las consecuencias, pero ninguna de las dos opciones le parecía correcta.

Las dos cosas de las que el pequeño Thomas se preocupaba realmente cuando iba solo eran: no hablar con extraños y no caminar por el aire negro. Sin embargo, ese día en particular, la norma de no hablar con extraños fue muy difícil de cumplir. Joe, un hombre mayor, medio loco, que sólo contaba historias increíbles sobre árboles y máquinas que hacían lo que tú les ordenases, paró a Thomas.

Éste se dio cuenta de que iba andando a su ritmo y que no tenía intención de dejarlo tranquilo. Thomas no podía caminar muy rápido debido a su pequeño, delgado y malnutrido cuerpecito, pero Joe mantenía un ritmo constante a su lado, cuando le susurró: "Tengo un árbol, ¿sabes?" El pequeño Thomas no contestó pero Joe insistió "¿Quieres saber dónde está? Te lo diré, pero sólo si paras y me escuchas con atención". El pequeño Thomas paró para considerar la oferta, en realidad él quería saber qué era y qué podía hacer un árbol, pero no quería ir en contra de las normas de su madre. Continuó caminando, y escuchó un gruñido bajo y un murmullo de decepción, entonces Thomas se giró y siguió rápidamente al hombre mayor, Joe, quién se rió entre dientes mientras oía al muchacho apresurarse hacia él. "Así que, has cambiado de opinión, ¿eh?". El chico hizo una pequeña e insegura señal de aprobación,

después una segunda, para asegurarse el mismo, pero no dijo nada. Joe, el hombre mayor, le miró fijamente a los ojos y le dijo: "Detrás del cementerio de plástico hay un viejo neumático, un anillo negro de caucho que protege el pequeño árbol. Es frágil y necesita luz del sol y agua, dos cosas que no son fáciles de encontrar. Irás todos los días, lo regarás y le proporcionarás luz, ¿lo entiendes?"

El pequeño Thomas frunció el ceño, sin estar seguro de si él debería asumir esa responsabilidad, después de todo, sólo tenía 7 años. Pero él nunca quería decepcionar a nadie. Así que hizo una última señal de aprobación y corrió hacía el colegio asegurándose que nadie lo había visto hablando con el hombre mayor.

Al pequeño Thomas le costó mucho concentrarse ese día en clase, algo que, por otra parte, ocurría casi todos los días. Siempre les enseñaban a leer y escribir y luego sobre supervivencia, porque en el colegio había alrededor de 50 niños y algunos desaparecían o no volvían nunca. Thomas no pensaba mucho sobre eso, sucedía constantemente. Obviamente él se sentía mal durante un día o dos, pero enseguida encontraba otro amigo con quién hablar. Ese día no había hablado con nadie, rechazando las invitaciones de sus amigos para jugar en su tiempo libre. Estuvo todo el tiempo pensando en la manera de dar luz al árbol. Podría coger agua del pozo sin que nadie le viera, pero encontrar luz sería mucho más complicado porque la mayoría de luces necesitaban un enchufe y electricidad, algo que era muy difícil y caro de conseguir. El pequeño Thomas finalmente cogió la linterna de emergencia que encontró en el sótano de casa.

Cuando las clases terminaron, Thomas fue corriendo al cementerio de plástico que era tan deprimente y terrorífico como todo el mundo decía que era. Estaba lleno de basura, cuerpos y utensilios rotos y usados que ya no servían. Era el cementerio de Plastictown, que se había creado mucho tiempo atrás cuando la gente creaba, inventaba y prosperaba, ahora todo se había descuidado y convertido en una pila de basura. Thomas caminó por el cementerio, pensando que debería haberse traído un amigo, pero el amigo podría habérselo contado a alguien. Realmente él no entendía por qué se estaba metiendo en un lío para cuidar de algo que él nunca había sabido que existía hasta hoy, pero el hombre mayor, Joe, había hecho que pareciera importante, incluso había hecho que él pareciera importante.

Era un largo camino, pero finalmente llegó hasta la parte de atrás del cementerio. Para su decepción, no encontró el mágico objeto del que había sido encargado de cuidar. La tierra estaba yerma y lo único que vio fue

un neumático agrietado en el suelo, así supo que estaba en el lugar correcto. Thomas caminó solemnemente hacia el neumático, no esperaba demasiado y así fue, no vio nada. Parpadeo, fijó su vista y vio un tallo verde diminuto saliendo de la tierra. Joe, el hombre mayor no bromeaba cuando decía que era frágil, pero Thomas nunca había pensado que fuera así de pequeño "¿cómo algo tan pequeño podía ser tan importante?", pensó. Pero había hecho un promesa y comenzó a regar el árbol con el agua del pozo. El árbol no hizo nada. Thomas sacó la linterna de su mochila e iluminó el árbol porque no sabía exactamente cuanta luz necesitaba, se puso cómodo y se sentó allí durante horas hipnotizado por su color. Era una sombra verde y brillante, algo muy poco común en la tierra estéril que él llamaba hogar.

El chico volvió a casa tarde aquella noche, pero no se metió en problemas porque su madre estaba durmiendo, incluso se había quedado dormida antes de que las clases terminaran. Solía ser así, sobre todo desde que ella se puso enferma. Él imaginó que sería fácil cuidar del árbol, siempre que nadie le pillara robando agua del pozo. Iba a ver el árbol todos los días después del colegio. Aprendió que el árbol sólo crecía poco a poco y se movía con la brisa. Le gustaba el árbol, pensaba que lo ayudaba a respirar. Quizás estaba en lo cierto. Tal vez por eso era tan importante cuidar de la pequeña criatura verde. Finalmente vio el árbol desde una nueva perspectiva, no era una pequeña criatura frágil, sino como una luz de esperanza para que todo el mundo pudiera respirar de nuevo. Thomas iba a ser el salvador del pueblo, sabía que su idea podía ser solo un granito de arena, pero no dejó de intentarlo, no iba a abandonar la oportunidad de convertirse en un héroe.

Pasaron los años y el pequeño Thomas cumplió doce años. Había continuado con su rutina durante mucho tiempo y el tronco del árbol era marrón y fuerte y era tan alto como sus hombros. Thomas era el único niño en su clase que no tenía ninguna enfermedad respiratoria, lo que consideraban a menudo como un milagro. El chico sabía que no era un milagro, habían sido las horas que había pasado cuidando el árbol que le habían aportado aire fresco. Mientras el árbol crecía, más árboles empezaron a nacer alrededor. Necesitaban menos agua, porque empezó a llover con más frecuencia. El aire comenzó a limpiarse. El destino de Plastictown estaba cambiando.

Der Baum

Sophie Cooke, St Albans Girls' School
translated by English classes 8, EF and Q1 at Mataré-Gymnasium
Meerbusch

Ein dicker, trüber Nebel bedeckte das Zentrum von Plastictown. Das war allerdings nicht ungewöhnlich, denn der Nebel lichtete sich fast nie über der Innenstadt inmitten der Stadtmauern. Vor Jahren konnte man noch die Sonne für eine gute Stunde sehen, bevor sie wieder in den Wolken und Giftgasen verschwand, die Millionen den Tod brachten. Aber heute gibt es nur noch ein paar Strahlen, die ab und zu ernst durch die Wolken kommen. Der kleine Thomas kannte es nicht anders. Jeden Tag warf er sich die Gasmasken über die Schulter und machte sich auf den Weg zur Schule, wobei er aufpasste, nicht in den Sinklöchern zu verschwinden, die immerzu auftauchten und wieder verschwanden. Durch die Sinklöcher war es unmöglich geworden, Auto zu fahren, sodass alle einfach zu Fuß gingen. Seine Mutter sah ihn gar nicht gern durch die Gefahren draußen wandern, die Thomas selbst gar nicht bewusst waren, aber sie hatte keine Wahl denn er sollte ja etwas lernen. Durch die schlechte Luft war sie schwach und darauf beschränkt, im Haus zu bleiben. Sie dachte oft darüber nach, was besser sei: ihn in der Sicherheit des Hauses einzuschließen oder ihn sein Leben frei leben zu lassen – keines von beidem war eine gute Lösung.

Es gab zwei Regeln, die für Klein-Thomas wirklich wichtig waren, wenn er alleine draußen war: Sprich nicht mit Fremden und geh nicht durch die schwarze Luft. An diesem bestimmten Tag jedoch fand er es ziemlich schwierig, sich an die „Sprich-nicht-mit-Fremden“-Regel zu halten. Old Man Joe hielt ihn an, Old Man Joe, der Verrückte, aus dem ständig Geschichten sprudelten, Geschichten über Dinge, die er „Bäume“ nannte und über Maschinen, die das taten was man ihnen befahl und der an diesen Geschichten große Freude fand. Klein-Thomas beschleunigte, als er merkte, dass Old Man Joe ihn nicht in Ruhe lassen würde. Thomas war nicht sehr schnell, was an seinem kleinen, dünnen, unterernährten Körper lag, aber Joe auch nicht, sodass er Thomas im gleichen Abstand folgt. „Weißt du, ich hab einen Baum“ zischte er. Klein-Thomas antwortete nicht. „Willst du wissen, wo er ist? Ich sag's dir – aber nur, wenn du stehenbleibst und gut zuhörst.“ Klein-Thomas blieb stehen um über

das Angebot nachzudenken, denn er wollte wissen was ein „Baum“ war und was er machte, aber er konnte nicht gegen Mutters Regeln handeln.

Er ging weiter und hörte ein tiefes Ächzen und ein enttäuschtes Murmeln. Thomas drehte sich um und ging schnell Old Man Joe hinterher, der in sich hinein lachte, als er den Jungen in seine Richtung eilen hörte. „Na, hast du deine Meinung geändert?“. Der Junge nickte kurz und unsicher, dann noch einmal, wie um sich selbst zu bestärken. Klein-Thomas sagte kein Wort. Old Man Joe starrte ihm direkt in die Augen und sagte: „Hinter dem Plastik-Friedhof liegt ein alter Reifen, ein schwarzer Gummiring, der den kleinen Baum schützt. Der Baum ist schwach – er braucht Sonnenlicht und Wasser, zwei Sachen, die schwer zu bekommen sind. Du wirst jeden Tag hingehen und in mit Wasser gießen und ihn mit Licht versorgen, verstanden?“ Klein-Thomas runzelte die Stirn, unsicher, ob er die Verantwortung übernehmen könne. Er was schließlich erst sieben Jahre alt. Aber er enttäuschte nie jemanden. Niemals. Also nickte er noch ein letztes Mal und rannte Richtung Schule, immer aufmerksam um sich schauen, ob ihn jemand mit Old Man Joe gesehen haben könnte.

Klein-Thomas fiel es schwer, sich zu konzentrieren an diesem Schultag. Nicht, dass es wichtig gewesen wäre, denn der Unterricht war der gleiche wie jeden Tag. Wenn sie dir einmal lesen und schreiben beigebracht hatten ging es nur noch ums Überleben. Zu seiner Schule gingen etwa 50 Kinder, aber viele verschwanden und kamen nie wieder. Thomas dachte nicht viel darüber nach wenn ein Freund verschwand, es geschah dauernd. Natürlich war er vielleicht einen Tag lang traurig, aber dann fand er schnell jemand anders zum Reden. Heute sprach er mit niemandem und lehnte alle Einladungen zum Spielen ab. Stattdessen dachte er darüber nach, wie er dem Baum Licht bringen könnte. Wasser könnte er vom Brunnen bringen solange ihn niemand sah, aber Licht zu finden war doch etwas schwieriger, denn dazu waren eigentlich immer Steckdosen und Strom nötig, was schwierig und teuer war. Klein-Thomas entschied sich schließlich für die Notfalltaschenlampe, die sich zu Hause im Keller befand.

Als die Schule aus war rannte Thomas zum Plastik-Friedhof, der genauso düster und unheimlich war wie über ihn erzählt wurde. Er war voller Müll, Körper und alten kaputten Geräten, die nicht mehr brauchbar waren. Es war der Friedhof von Plastictowns Geschichte, die auf die Zeit zurückging, in der Menschen noch erfanden und produzierten und das Leben florierte. Das war vorbei, achtlos auf den Müll geworfen. Thomas ging um den Friedhof

herum während er wünschte, er hätte einen Freund mitgebracht, aber der würde es wohl nicht verstehen und könnte es weitererzählen. Er konnte selbst nicht recht verstehen, warum er so viel Mühe auf sich nahm um sich um etwas zu kümmern, von dem er bisher noch nicht einmal wusste, dass es existierte, aber Old Man Joe hatte geschafft, es wichtig klingen zu lassen – ihn, Thomas, wichtig erscheinen zu lassen.

Es war ein langer Weg, aber endlich kam er hinter dem Friedhof an. Zu seiner Enttäuschung sah er kein magisches Objekt, das er versorgen sollte. Das Land war öde und alles, was er entdecken konnte war ein rissiger Reifen, der auf dem Boden lag, daher wusste er, dass er den richtigen Ort gefunden hatte. Ernst schritt er zu dem Reifen. Er erwartete nicht viel, und wie erwartet sah er nichts. Er kniff die Augen zusammen, guckte genauer und sah einen winzigen grünen Stiel, der aus der Erde herausschaute. Old Man Joe hatte die Wahrheit gesagt, als er sagte der Baum wäre schwach, aber Thomas hatte nicht gedacht, dass er so klein sein würde. Etwas so Kleines kann so wichtig sein, dachte Thomas, und er goss ihn mit Brunnenwasser, wie versprochen. Der Baum rührte sich nicht. Thomas nahm die Taschenlampe aus seinem Rucksack und leuchtete auf den Baum. Er wusste nicht, wie viel Licht so ein Baum genau brauchte, deshalb machte er es sich bequem und saß da für ein paar Stunden, fasziniert von der Farbe des kleinen Baumes. Er hatte einen leuchtend grünen Farbton, der extrem selten war im kahlen Ödland, das er sein Zuhause nannte.

An diesem Abend kam der Junge spät nach Hause, bekam aber keinen Ärger von seiner Mutter, denn die schlief, wahrscheinlich schon seit Stunden. So war es oft seit sie krank geworden war. Er schätzte, dass es leicht sein würde, sich um den Baum zu kümmern, wenn er nur nicht dabei erwischt würde, wenn er die Wasserrationen vom Brunnen stahl. Er ging jeden Tag nach der Schule zu dem Baum. Er lernte schnell, dass sich der Baum kaum bewegte, aber mit der Zeit wuchs und im Wind raschelte. Er mochte den Baum, er glaubte, dass der Baum ihm beim Atmen half. Vielleicht stimmte das. Vielleicht war es deswegen so wichtig, nach der kleinen grünen Kreatur zu sehen. Plötzlich sah er den Baum in einem neuen Licht – er war keine schwache Kreatur, sondern Schimmer der Hoffnung. Hoffnung darauf, dass alle wieder atmen könnten. Er würde der Retter der Stadt werden. Klein-Thomas wusste, dass seine Idee vielleicht etwas übertrieben war, aber das hielt ihn nicht davon ab, es zu versuchen. Er würde nicht die Chance aufgeben, ein Held zu werden.

Jahre vergingen, und Klein-Thomas war zwölf. Er hatte seine täglich Routine so lange durchgeführt, dass der Stiel des Baumes braun und stark geworden war, und so hoch wie seine Schultern. Thomas war das einzige Kind in seiner Klasse ohne Atemwegserkrankung und wurde oft als Wunder bezeichnet. Der Junge wusste, dass dies kein Wunder war, sondern das Ergebnis von Stunde um Stunde, die er sich um den Baum kümmerte und der ihn mit sauberer Luft versorgte. Der Baum wuchs, und um ihn herum weitere Bäume. Es wurde nicht mehr so viel Wasser benötigt, denn es regnete etwas öfter. Die Luft wurde sauberer. Das Schicksal von Plastictown würde ein anderes sein.

Spanish Winning Short Stories

*A different family
Una familia diferente*

*Story about a fish
Historia de un pez*

*All for one, one for all
Uno para todos, todos para uno*

*The woodcutter and the talking tree
El leñador y el árbol parlante*

*We recycle for the good of everyone
Reciclemos por el bien de todos*

*The can of tomatoes
La lata de tomate*

"Short-Story competition"
**A different family
Una familia diferente**



by María Olivares, 4º ESO

Illustrated by Rosa Leal y Natalia Ferrándiz 1º ESO



Phil y Carol son una pareja de alienígenas que viven en un pequeño planeta cerca de la Tierra.

Tienen un hijo llamado Tom, su sueño desde pequeño ha sido el de convertirse en veterinario.

Tom decidió mudarse a la Tierra ya que en su planeta no había universidades para cumplir su sueño.

Él es muy feliz allí, pero tiene un gran problema... Tom es un alien, cosa que en la Tierra no está muy bien visto, por lo que debe ir a la universidad disfrazado de hombre.

El planeta donde viven Phil y Carol es un planeta muy limpio, Phil está enamorado del medio ambiente y es por ello que trabaja en una planta de reciclaje.

Carol, es una amante de los niños por lo que trabaja en un colegio, ama su trabajo y no hay ningún día en el que se queje de él.

"¡Phil, corre, ven ! ¡Tom nos ha enviado un e-mail!"

"¡Hola papis! Hoy ha sido un día diferente para mí, hemos ido al zoológico para ver los distintos tipos de animales que existen, en que se basa su alimentación, sus manías... ¡Ha sido fantástico! La verdad, es que me ha sorprendido bastante algunas curiosidades de ellos.

Bueno, al lado del zoológico hay un sitio de información de la ciudad, y he ido para ver lo que podía hacer esta tarde.

Cuando he llegado, había una chica guapísima que me ha explicado algunos sitios interesantes que puedo visitar.

También, me ha dado un mapa y me ha explicado dónde se encuentra cada uno. Sin pensarlo dos veces he decidido ir a una central eléctrica para poder descubrir cómo llega la electricidad a nuestras casas en este planeta tan genial.

Cuando he llegado, había un montón de gente y he empezado a hablar con unos estudiantes. El guía nos ha explicado la forma en la que la central trabaja y hemos hecho una mini ruta por ella. Nos ha dado un folleto con datos sobre los gastos de electricidad y he leído que durante estos últimos años se está gastando mucha más electricidad que en otros anteriores, también, nos ha explicado los diferentes tipos de energía que existen y ha dicho que las mejores son las renovables, pero que son las menos usadas.

Creo que este tema es interesante ya que no entiendo cómo la gente no hace las mayores cosas posibles por cuidar su planeta, creo que investigaré sobre ello.

Ahora, me voy a dormir, ¡buenas noches!"

"Ohhh mi pequeño, cómo lo echo de menos..." Dijo Phil melancólico.

"No te preocupes mi amor, volverá en verano"

Los alienígenas se fueron a dormir.

Phil and Carol are a couple of aliens who live on a small planet near to the Earth.

They have a son called Tom, whose dream has always been to become a vet. Tom decided to move to Earth since his planet didn't have any universities where he could fulfil his dream.

He is very happy there, but he has a big problem... Tom is an alien, something which has never been seen on earth, which means that he has to go to the university disguised as a human being.

The planet where Phil and Carol live is a very clean planet, Phil loves the environment, and that is why he works in a recycling plant. Carol loves children and that's why she works in a school, loving her work and never regretting a single day of it.

'Phil! Come and see! Tom has sent us an e-mail!'

'Hi parents! Today has been an unusual day for me, we went to the zoo to see the different types of animals that exist, what food they eat, how they behave... It was fantastic! In truth I've been really surprised at some of the things about them.

Well, outside the zoo there was an information board about the town, and I went to have a look to see what I could do this evening.

As I arrived, an extremely beautiful girl was there who told me about interesting sites to see and things to visit. She also gave me a map explaining how to get to them. I didn't think twice, and I decided to go and visit the power station to discover how the electricity gets to our homes on this fantastic planet.

When I arrived, there was a crowd of people and I started to talk to some students. The guide explained to us how the power station works and we had a short tour around it. He gave us a folder with data about the waste of electricity and I read there how in the past few years much more electricity has been wasted than in previous years, also it explained to us the different types of energy that exist, and told us that the best are renewables, but they are the least used.

I think that this topic is interesting, and I just don't understand how people aren't doing as much as possible to look after their planet; I think I'm going to investigate this.

But now I'm going to sleep. Good night!'

'Oh, my little one... I miss him!' said Phil sadly,

'Don't worry my love, he will be back in the summer'

The aliens went to bed.

Al día siguiente, Tom comenzó su investigación y preguntó a sus compañeros lo que pensaban sobre el medio ambiente y la energía.

Uno de los compañeros contestó: "Mmm... El medio ambiente, ¿Para qué sirve cuidarlo? ¿Para qué sirve reciclar? Si total, yo dentro de unos años ya estaré muerto, pienso totalmente que es una tontería "

"¿Tontería?, reciclar es una cosa importante para nuestros bosques, para nuestro planeta en general..." Pensó Tom.

Más tarde fue a un restaurante y mientras comía, comenzó a leer el periódico: "Un bote de cristal arrojado en un bosque, ha producido un grave incendio en el que han muerto cientos de animales."

"Accidente nuclear, acaba con la vida de varias personas y produce grandes daños."

"Accidente de barco petrolero derrama litros de petróleo en el mar."

Tom se asustó, este tipo de cosas no sucedían en su planeta. Los días pasaban y la Tierra cada vez se destruía más...

Tom quería cambiar estas cosas pero nadie hacía nada...

Preocupado, decidió llamar a sus padres: "Mami, papi, están ocurriendo cosas terribles y nadie hace nada, ¡¡¡por favor, venid conmigo!!! "

The following day, Tom started his investigation and asked his friends what they thought about the environment and about energy.

One of his friends answered, 'Mmm, the environment. What's the point of looking after it? What's the point of recycling? In the end, I'm going to be dead in a few years, so I think it's just stupid.'

'Stupid? Recycling is really important for our forests, for our whole planet...' thought Tom.

Later he went to a restaurant, and while he was eating he started to read the newspaper: 'A glass jar thrown into a forest has caused a very serious fire in which hundreds of animals have died.'

'Nuclear accident has cost the lives of many people and has caused much damage.'

'Accident with a petrol tanker has caused petrol to spill into the sea.'

Tom was scared, this type of thing did not happen on his planet. The days passed, and the Earth continued to destroy itself more and more... Tom wanted to change things, but nobody did anything.

He was very worried, so he called his parents, 'Mum, Dad, terrible things are happening and nobody is doing anything. Please, come!'



Sus padres, sin dudarlo viajaron en OVNI hasta la Tierra. Cuando llegaron, la gente sorprendida y asustada de que un objeto volador y tan grande estuviese volando sobre su cielo, comenzó a gritar y la policía intentó arrestarles.

“Hola, somos Phil y Carol, lo primero, no os vamos a hacer nada, y lo segundo, ¿de verdad os asustáis de unos seres inocentes como nosotros y no os asustáis de lo que estáis haciendo con vuestro planeta? Sólo hemos venido a ayudaros, hemos visto desde nuestro planeta las cosas que hacéis y creemos que no son ni normales, ni buenas para la Tierra.

La Tierra, es un planeta maravilloso, lleno de cosas espléndidas donde tenéis todo lo que queréis, pero... ¿Sabéis lo que estáis haciendo con todo eso? Lo estáis destruyendo, estáis destruyendo vuestro planeta, el lugar donde vivís, el lugar donde vivirán vuestras futuras familias... ¿Queréis un futuro mejor para ellas? Bien, pues no es tan difícil si todos colaboráis.

Ahora, nadie está haciendo cosas simples como reciclar, porque muchos pensáis que es una “tontería”. Nadie, tiene bombillas de bajo consumo... Mmm, nadie... ¡Nadie está haciendo nada por éste planeta! ¿No creéis que es un poco triste? Hay pequeños gestos que pueden cambiar el mundo y si los hacemos podemos conseguir un lugar mejor donde vivir.”

Todo el mundo guardó silencio.

“Tienen razón ” dijo una niña pequeña.

Entonces, comenzó un murmullo: “Sí... han dicho la pura verdad... ” “Es verdad, si nosotros queremos, nosotros podemos... Estoy seguro ”

Desde ese día, la gente empezó a cuidar su planeta, ya que era la cosa más valiosa que tenían.

La Tierra se recuperó, y la familia de los alienígenas se quedó a vivir en ella.

Juntos, construyeron **un mundo mejor.**

His parents jumped onto a flying saucer straight away and flew to Earth. When they arrived, people were so surprised and shocked to see such a huge flying object in the sky above them, that they started to yell and the police tried to arrest them.

‘Hi! We are Phil and Carol, and most importantly, we don’t want to harm you. Secondly, why are you scared at a couple of innocent beings like ourselves, and you’re not scared at what is happening to your planet? We’ve just come to help you, we’ve seen from our planet the things that you are doing and we think that they are not normal, and they are not good for the Earth.

The Earth is a wonderful planet, full of splendid things where you have everything you could want, but, do you know what is happening to all of this? You are destroying it, you are destroying your planet, the place where you live, the place where your future generations will live. Don’t you want a better future for them? Well, it won’t be so difficult if we all work together.

At the moment, nobody is doing simple things like recycling, because lots of people think it’s stupid. Nobody has low energy lightbulbs. Nobody, nobody. Nobody is doing anything for this planet! Don’t you think that’s a bit sad? There are small things that we can do to change the world and if we do them, we can build a better place to live in.’

Everybody kept silent.

‘You are right ’, said a small girl.

Then, a murmur started, ‘Yes, they are telling the truth ’, ‘It’s true, if we want to, we can do it, I’m sure ’.

From that day on, people started to look after their planet, since it was the most valuable thing that they had.

The Earth recovered, and the alien family decided to live there.

Together, they built **a better world.**

"Short-Story competition"

Story about a fish Historia de un pez



by Mariam García, 4ºESO

Illustrated by Laura Poveda y M^a José Verdejo, 1ºESO



El pequeño Pyp es un pez que vive feliz nadando en el mar con su familia. Por las tardes, va al coral-casa de su abuelo Bob que, hace muchos años, fue mascota de un niño llamado Alberto. Este niño sufrió pena de que estuviese en una pecera sin poder nadar mar adentro y decidió liberarlo. Es por esto por lo que sabe miles de historias muy raras para un pez.

A Pyp le encantan las historias de su abuelo, unas son graciosas como las de echar agua en una especie de recipiente para beberla, que le cuenta cuando se porta bien; otras son de miedo, en ellas se comen otras especies de peces, de las mismas que peces que él conoce. Estas últimas se las cuenta cuando se porta mal.

Una de estas tardes, ya en casa de su abuelo:

-Abuelo, abuelo, hoy quiero cambiar, cuéntame una historia extraña que nunca me hayas contado.

-Tengo muchas historias raras, pero hoy te voy a contar una especial, con moraleja .

«Una vez, estaba descansando en mis piedras de colores (cabe decir que con el agua recién limpiada) y pude ver como el hermano pequeño de Alberto, Gus, sacaba las pilas del mando de la tele y las tiraba al suelo muy enfadado.

Después las recogió y las tiró al váter; pasaban las horas y no ocurría nada, pero, de repente, empezó a salir agua y más agua que desprendía un olor extraño, era de colores: sustancias negras, sustancias azules... Llamaron al fontanero, pero a todo esto se unieron las autoridades locales y todo, ya que era una ciudad muy comprometida con el medioambiente. A los papás les cayó un puro muy gordo y el pequeño estuvo castigado mucho tiempo. Nos trasladamos a vivir al campo ya que decían que teníamos que cerciorarnos de lo importante y bella que es la naturaleza cuidada.»

-¿Y eso pasó de verdad, abuelito?

-Claro Pyp; ¿con qué te quedarías de esta historia?

-Con la importancia del reciclaje y con que una ciudad limpia es mejor que una sucia. Me ha llamado la atención que todo el mundo estuviese tan pendiente de si se ensuciaba algo.

-¡Muy bien! Ahora corre y vete a jugar con los demás peces.

Pyp se fue con sus amigos.

-¡Peces! ¿Por qué no formamos la "patrulla reciclaje"? ¡Podemos ir nadando entre los corales y recoger la basura que tiran los humanos formando una pila!

(Todos)- ¡Sí!!! ¡Qué emocionante, vamos a salvar el mar!

Little Pyp is a happy fish who lives happily swimming in the sea with his family. In the evenings he goes to the coralhouse of his grandpa Bob, who, many years before was the pet of a boy called Albert. This boy was sad when he saw Bob in the fish tank, not able to swim in the sea, and so decided to set him free. That's why he knows many more stories that are very strange for a fish.

Pyp loves the stories of his grandpa, some are funny like the one about putting water into some sort of a container in order to drink it, which his grandpa told him when he behaves well; others were frightening, in which other species of fish were eaten, some of the same species as the fish that he knew. These stories were the ones he was told when he behaves badly.

One evening, when he was at his grandpa's house:

'Grandpa, grandpa, today I want something different. Tell me a strange story that you have never told me before!'

'I have many rare stories, but today I'm going to tell you a special one, with a moral.'

"Once upon a time, I was relaxing among my coloured stones (it must be said that water had recently been cleaned) and I could see how the little brother of Alberto, Gus was taking the batteries out of the TV remote control and threw them on the ground very angrily.

After that he picked them up and threw them in the toilet.

Many hours passed and nothing happened, but suddenly more and more water began to come out and spread, and a strange smell. It was colourful: black and blue substances...

They called the plumber, but the local authorities came too, since this was a city really involved in environmental problems. Parents got in trouble and the little boy was told off for a long time. We moved to live in the countryside because they said we should get closer to the important and beautiful care of nature."

'Did this really happen, grandpa?'

'Of course, Pyp. What's the important lesson for you to remember from this story?'

'It's important to recycle, and a clean city is better than a dirty one. And I've learnt that everybody must be aware if the world is affected by pollution.'

'Very good. Now run and go to play with the other fishes'

Pyp went off with his friends.

'Fish! Why don't we form a 'recycling club'? We can go and swim amongst the corals and pick up rubbish which the human beings have left in a pile.'

(All) 'Yes!!! How amazing! We are going to save the sea!'

Pyp y sus amigos empiezan a rastrear la zona, y encuentran todo tipo de cosas: bebidas, cristales, anzuelos, desde monedas de oro hasta céntimos, cubiertos... Los llevaron todo a la escuela y se lo mostraron a la profesora:

-¡Peces! ¿Qué habéis hecho? ¡Pero esto está muy bien! ¡Qué cosas tan extrañas! ¡Voy ahora mismo a decírselo al Alca-pez!

-¡Aquí estoy! ¿Qué queréis de mí?

-Verá, Sr Alca-pez, estos peces, demostrando **gran valentía y conciencia para con el medioambiente**, han ido recogiendo los restos de basura que nos tiran los de arriba.

-¡Oh! ¡Es fantástico! Propongo una ceremonia de entrega del Título de "Eco-Peces de Honor" en mi Ayunt-alga.

(Todos muy orgullosos)

-¡iGenial!! ¡Sr Alca-pez, muchas gracias! ¡Y muchas gracias Pyp! ¡Y a ti también abuelo Bob!



Pyp and his friends started to check the area, and they found all sorts of things: cups and lids, glasses, wrappers, as well as golden coins: cents. They took everything to school and showed it to their teacher.

-'Fish! What have you done?'

This is very good. What strange things! I'm going to tell Mr Mayor-Fish about this.

-'Here I am. What do you want?'

-'Have a look, Mr Mayor. This fish have shown **courage and concern for their environment**, they have gone out and collected rubbish which people have thrown into the sea.'

-'Oh! That's fantastic! I propose an awards ceremony called 'Honoured Eco-Fish' in my algae town hall.'

(All very proud) 'Great! Mr Mayor-Fish, thank you very much.

And thank you Pyp. And also thank you grandpa Bob.'

"Short-Story competition"

All for one, one for all
Uno para todos, todos para uno



by : Lucía Martínez, Elena Soriano, Marta Román,
Henar Jiménez, Alejandra Candela y Andrea Hernández, 3ºESO

Illustrated by Elena Azorín, Laura Rodríguez
y Corinne Fernández, 1ºESO



Érase una vez unos niños que vivan en un pueblo llamado Yecla. Los habitantes de este pueblo nunca reciclaban nada ni cuidaban el medio ambiente. Como consecuencia de esto todo estaba muy sucio y descuidado. Era un pueblo muy triste.

Los niños querían hacer algo para arreglar el problema tan grande que tenían. Uno de ellos, Jaime, estaba muy preocupado por su madre. Había enfermado a causa de la contaminación y necesitaba aire limpio y un tratamiento para poder recuperarse.

Jaime le contó a sus nueve amigos, Elena, Henar, Lucía, Marta, David, Alejandra, Natalia, Andrea y Carlos lo que le sucedía a su madre y les pidió ayuda. Estos se informaron sobre lo que podían hacer y crearon un nuevo movimiento al que llamaron "Eco-Life: OurWay".

Primero, buscaron información e ideas por internet para saber qué hacer. Después comenzaron a hacer reuniones semanales en la plaza del pueblo para advertir y concienciar a todo el mundo de lo que estaba pasando. También crearon un foro en el que colgaban imágenes y blogs, cada vez tenían más seguidores de todos los puntos de España.



Otra de sus actividades era que cada domingo se reunían y limpiaban los parques locales, ya que el resto de niños necesitaban un lugar limpio y más seguro donde poder jugar sin miedo a coger infecciones como la de la madre de Jaime.

También, recaudaban dinero en el mercado local, con pequeñas actuaciones en la calle: Lucía y Natalia tocaban la guitarra, mientras Marta y Elena bailaban; o David tocaba el teclado y Alejandra bailaba ballet.

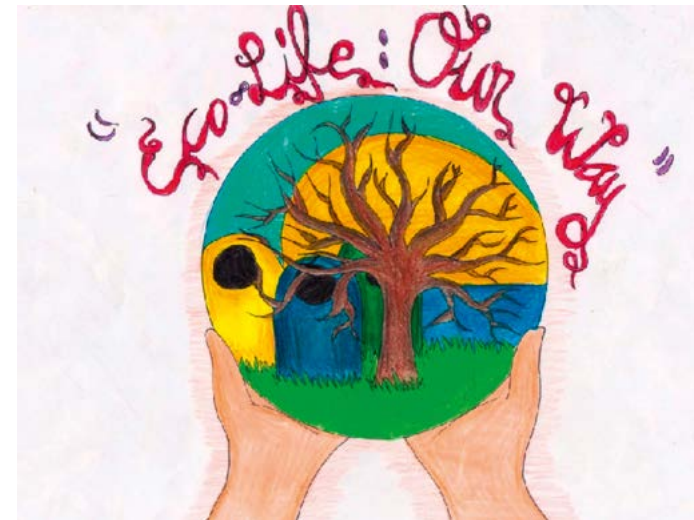
El resto repartía publicidad hecha de papel reciclado en el que se anunciaba las ventajas de reciclar y de llevar una vida ecológica.

Once upon a time there were some children who lived in a town called Yecla

The inhabitants of this town never recycled nor did they look after the environment. As a consequence of all of this it was very dirty and careless. It was a very sad town. The children wanted to do something to solve this big problem that they had. One of them, Jaime, was very worried about his mother. She was ill due to the pollution and needed clean air and treatment in order to recover. Jaime told his nine friends what was happening to his mother and asked them for help. They found out about what they could do and created a movement that they called 'Eco Life; Our Way'.

First of all, they looked for information and ideas on the internet in order to know what to do. Later, they began to have meetings every week in the town square to warn and to alert everyone to what was happening. They also created a forum on which they upload images and blogs where every time they had more followers from all over Spain.

Another of their activities was that every Sunday they would meet and clean the local parks since the rest of the children needed a safe, clean place so that they could play without fear of getting infections such as the one that Jaime's mother had. They also collected money in the local market with small performances in the street. Lucia and Natalia played guitar while Marta and Elena danced. David played the keyboard and Alejandra danced ballet. The rest shared out publicity made from recycled paper on which they announced the advantages of recycling and having a more ecological life.



Los primeros meses el dinero recaudado lo donaron al Ayuntamiento con la finalidad de que ellos colocaran más papeleras y contenedores por todo el pueblo.

Cada vez su movimiento llegaba a más gente y crecía.

Recogían donaciones anónimas de toda España y comenzaban a llegar de otros países.

Como habían crecido mucho, se dividían a la hora de hacer las actividades: iban a los colegios para dar charlas sobre ecología a los niños.

A pesar de todo lo que estaban haciendo, la madre de Jaime empeoró y el médico les recomendó llevarla a otro lugar donde la contaminación fuera menor hasta que pudieran costearse el tratamiento. Jaime estaba muy triste ya que sus padres habían decidido mudarse al pueblo donde vivían sus abuelos, lo que significaba que no podría seguir ayudando en el movimiento y dejaría de ver a sus amigos.

Llegó el día en el que Jaime tenía que partir. Sus amigos le organizaron una fiesta de despedida para que tuviese un buen recuerdo y le prometieron que seguirían luchando por su proyecto e intentarían ayudarles lo máximo posible. Unos meses después decidieron crearse cuentas en redes sociales: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Skype, etc.

Así consiguieron que les llegase ayuda de gente de todas las partes del mundo, en especial de Alemania e Inglaterra. De estos dos países llegaron propuestas muy interesantes y al movimiento se unieron muchas personas. Se organizaron varios viajes entre estos tres países para compartir ideas.

Al poco tiempo, la madre de Jaime mejoró aunque no estaba totalmente recuperada, y decidieron volver al pueblo por un tiempo. Al llegar se dieron cuenta de lo mucho que había mejorado el entorno de Yecla. Jaime estaba muy contento de ver de nuevo a todos sus amigos. Estos le contaron las propuestas de los alemanes y los ingleses y a él le entusiasmaron mucho.

En el instituto al que ellos iban, IES José Luis Castillo Puche, había tres profesoras, Begoña, Reme y Marta quienes estaban muy interesadas y a favor de su movimiento en el que colaboraban siempre que podían, realmente hacían un buenísimo trabajo. Estas se prestaron voluntarias para acompañarlos en el viaje a Alemania que estaban organizando para reunirse con las personas alemanas, que junto a los ingleses habían apoyado mucho en el proyecto.

Dos meses después, se realizó el viaje a Alemania en el que Jaime también participó. Todos estaban muy contentos y entusiasmados.

The first months, the money that they collected was donated to the town hall with a view that they would put more bins and containers throughout the town.

As time went by, the movement got to more and more people and it grew. They collected anonymous donations from all over Spain and began to be known in other countries.

As the movement had grown up a lot, they divided the time between doing activities. They went to schools in order to give talks about ecology to children. In spite of all they were doing, Jaime's mother got worse and the doctor recommended that she be taken to another place where the pollution was less until they could afford the treatment.

Jaime was very sad, since his parents had decided to move to the town where his grandparents lived, which meant that he couldn't continue in the movement and he would no longer see his friends.

The day arrived on which Jaime had to leave. His friends organised a farewell party so that he would take a good memory with him, and they promised that they would carry on fighting for the project and would help others as much as possible.

Some months afterwards, they decided to create accounts on social media networks: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Skype etc. This enabled them to receive help from people from all over the world, especially Germany and England. From these two countries a few interesting proposals arrived and lots of people joined the movement. They organised various journeys between the three countries to share ideas.

After a while, Jaime's mother got better although she was not totally recovered, and they decided to return to the town for a while. On arriving, they realised how much the environment of Yecla had improved. Jaime was very happy to see again all his friends and they told him about the proposals of the Germans and the English which encouraged him very much.

In the school that they went to, the IES Castillo-Puche there were three teachers, Begoña, Reme and Marta who were very interested and in favour of the movement in which they collaborated whenever they could, and they really did a great job. These teachers lent their services free to accompany them on the trip to Germany which they were organising in order to meet the German people and along with the English people, who had supported the project.

Two months later, they went on the trip to Germany in which Jaime also participated. Everybody was very happy and enthusiastic.

Al llegar allí se encontraron con todos sus amigos que habían ido al aeropuerto a recibirlos.

En Alemania realizaron muchas actividades y visitas, con ello recaudaron mucho más dinero. El viaje fue realmente impresionante.

Al margen de Jaime, sus amigos, decidieron regalarle el dinero para que pudiesen emplearlo en el tratamiento de su madre y pensaron dárselo en una fiesta para celebrar el éxito de su proyecto.

Al día siguiente invitaron a la fiesta a todas las personas que les habían ayudado con su movimiento ecológico y todas confirmaron su asistencia.

A los pocos días todo estaba preparado para la gran noche: comida, decorado, música, incluso la gran sorpresa. Un poco antes de la hora de la cena comenzaron a llegar todos los invitados. La cena fue muy agradable, llena de risas, de recuerdos de su viaje a Alemania y recuerdos también de todo lo que habían vivido hasta llegar donde estaban, todo lo que habían conseguido.

Después de la cena, pusieron un poco de música y hubo un pequeño baile y más tarde cada uno de los niños subieron al escenario para agradecerles a todos y cada uno de los asistentes a la fiesta todo lo que habían hecho por ellos.

Llegó el momento de la sorpresa, todos estaban muy nerviosos y Jaime y su madre seguían sin tener ni idea de lo que estaba a punto de sucederles. De repente bajaron las luces y comenzó a sonar una canción un tanto melancólica, todo el mundo quedó muy sorprendido.

Aparecieron en el escenario los nueve niños, uno a uno cogieron el micrófono, explicaron y detallaron que era lo que estaba pasando y cuál era el motivo por el que estaban allí.

Jaime y su familia no pudieron contener las lágrimas. Sus amigos bajaron del escenario y les entregaron un sobre con el dinero suficiente para que su madre pudiera recuperarse.

Jaime no tenía palabras para decir lo mucho que les estaba agradecido.

Unos meses después, la madre de Jaime estaba totalmente recuperada y el pueblo de Yecla había ganado muchísima fama y había atraído una gran cantidad de turismo al pueblo al que habían convertido en **un lugar limpio** y sin ningún tipo de contaminación.

On arriving there, all the friends met up and the partners had gone to the airport to receive them.

In Germany they carried out lots of activities and visits, collecting as much money as possible. The trip was very impressive.

Jaime didn't know but his friends decided to give him the money so that he could use it to pay for his mother's treatment and they thought about giving it to him at a party to celebrate the success of the project.

The next day, they invited to the party all the people who had helped with the ecological movement and all confirmed that they would attend.

Some days later, everything was ready for the big night: food, decoration, music, even a big surprise. A little bit before the supper all the guests began to arrive. The supper was very nice, full of laughter, and memories of the trip to Germany, memories also of everything that they had lived through and everything that they had achieved.

After the supper, they played music and there was a small dance and later each one of the children climbed up onto the stage to thank everybody and everyone what they had done for them.

Later came the moment of the surprise. Everyone was very nervous. Jaime and his mother didn't have an idea of what was about to happen to them. Suddenly, they lowered the lights and a very sad song began to sound and everyone became very surprised.

The nine children appeared on the stage one by one they took the microphone and explained in detail what was happening and what was the reason for them being there.

Jaime and his family couldn't stop their tears. His friends came down from the stage and gave them an envelope with enough money so that his mother could recover. Jaime was left speechless and couldn't say how much he was grateful.

Some months after Jaime's mother was totally recovered and the town of Yecla had become famous and had attracted a large amount of tourists to the town which had become a **clean place** without any type of pollution.

"Short-Story competition"

*The Woodcutter and the talking tree
El leñador y el árbol parlante*



by Alejandro Azorín, 2ºESO

Illustrated by Alejandro Azorín, 2ºESO



Noticia que ha aparecido hoy en el periódico "Siete días Yecla":

Hoy en Yecla van a talar 35 árboles para construir más casas.

Reproducimos íntegramente la noticia: Un leñador encontró un árbol que hablaba, el leñador se sorprendió y el árbol dijo:

Árbol - ¡Usted, señor tiene que proteger el bosque!

Leñador - ¿Por qué?

Árbol - Porque si no, vosotros no podréis vivir, porque los árboles os damos oxígeno para que podáis respirar igual que todas las demás plantas.

Leñador - Tienes razón, yo impediré que os corten.

Árbol - Por favor, proteged el gran bosque.

Leñador - ¡Lo haré!

El leñador fue a hablar con el alcalde: - ¿Dónde estás alcalde?

Alcalde - Aquí... ¿Qué quieres?

Leñador - Tiene usted que parar a los leñadores, por favor... que no corten los árboles.

Alcalde - No lo voy a detener, ideo no es tan fácil!

Leñador - Ven entonces conmigo que te enseñaré una cosa.

Alcalde - Vale (sin convicción)

Entonces el leñador le enseñó el árbol que hablaba. El alcalde se dio un susto de muerte.

Alcalde - ¡AAAAH!

Leñador - No se asuste y hable con el árbol.

El árbol habló con el alcalde y se lo contó todo.

Alcalde - Tienes razón leñador, no tenemos que talar el bosque.

Leñador - ¡Ya te lo dije!

Alcalde - Ahora iré a hablar a los leñadores para que detengan la tala de estos árboles.

Alcalde - ¡Parad! Dijo el alcalde a los leñadores

Leñadores - ¿Por qué?

Alcalde - Parad y ya... estos árboles no pueden ser talados.

Leñadores - Vale, vale ichicos, parad ya!

Y así gracias al leñador y al gran árbol, los yeclanos conservamos ese **bosque tan grande y bonito.**

Notice appearing today in the newspaper "Seven Days Yecla":

Today in Yecla 35 trees will be cut down to build more houses.

We publish the notice in full: A woodcutter found a talking tree. He was surprised and the tree said:

Tree - Sir, you need to protect the forest!

Woodcutter - Why?

Tree - Because if not, you won't be able to live. Because trees gives you oxygen so that you can breathe the same as all other plants.

Woodcutter - You're right, I will prevent you from being cut.

Tree - Please, protect the great forest .

Woodcutter - I'll do it!

The woodcutter went to talk to the mayor: -Where are you, mayor?

Mayor - Here...what do you want?

Woodcutter - You need to stop the woodcutters, please... so they don't cut the trees.

Mayor - I'm not going to stop it, it's not that easy!

Woodcutter - Then come with me and I'll show you something.

Mayor - OK (without conviction)

So the woodcutter showed him the talking tree. The mayor was scared to death.

Mayor - AHHHH!

Woodcutter - Don't be scared; talk with the tree.

The tree talked with the mayor and told him everything.

Mayor - You're right, woodcutter, we don't need to cut down the forest.

Woodcutter - I have already told you!

Mayor - Now I'll go talk to the woodcutters so they stop cutting down these trees.

Mayor - "Stop!" said the mayor to the woodcutters.

Woodcutters - Why?

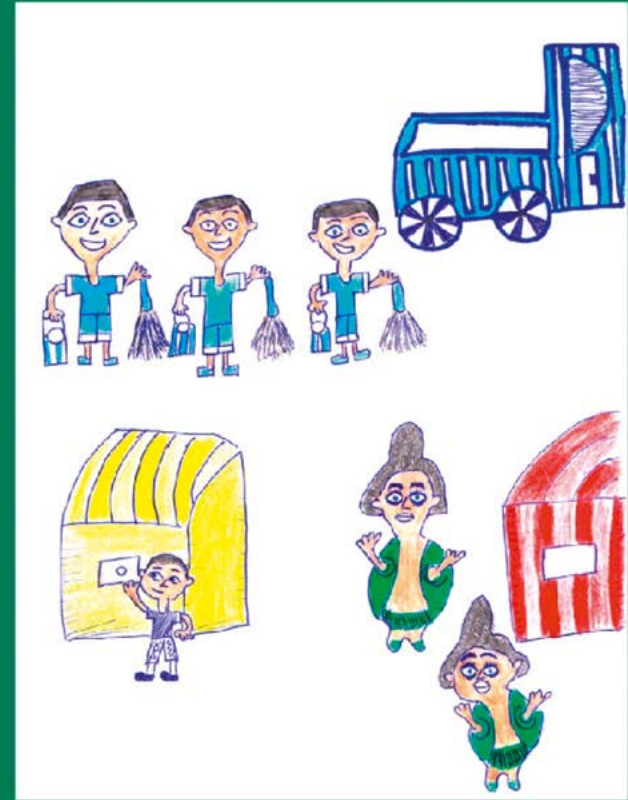
Mayor - Stop and...these trees can't be cutdown.

Woodcutters - OK, OK, men, stop!

And in this way thanks to the woodcutter and the great tree, people in Yecla conserve **the big and beautiful forest.**

"Short-Story competition"

*We recycle for the good of everyone
Reciclemos por el bien de todos*



by Francisco Javier Pérez, 2ºESO

Illustrated by Francisco Javier Pérez, 2ºESO



Juan, Perico y Andrés cada mañana iban al bar a tomarse algo. Después iban a recoger la basura, pero había unas vecinas que nunca reciclaban. Juan, Perico y Andrés se quejaban siempre aunque pensarán que si no fuera por ellos, el pueblo no estaría limpio.

A las vecinas les llegaron las quejas de que no limpiaban y reciclaban bien. Era verdad, aquel barrio se había convertido en un verdadero estercolero.

A la mañana siguiente los vecinos estaban esperando a los basureros y barrenderos. Estaban muy enfadados y pensaron decirles que por qué decían eso de ellos... "si dejaban la basura en su lugar", "en el contenedor de siempre".

- *No tenéis compasión de nosotros* - dijeron todos.

- *Nada está sucio* - apuntó otro vecino.

Uno de los basureros dijo:

- *¿Cómo? ¿No os dais cuenta que hay que separar la basura y reciclar bien?*

Los basureros hablaron entre ellos y les explicaron dónde iba cada tipo de basura. Así llegaron a un acuerdo entre todos los vecinos para reciclar.

Por la noche, un niño del vecindario, bajó la basura para reciclarla en los contenedores donde iba cada cosa, así lo hicieron todos los vecinos de aquel barrio. Y siguieron, cuidando el barrio hasta dejarlo bien.

Por la mañana estaba todo reluciente y limpio, porque los vecinos se habían preocupado de **reciclar bien** y de procurar que toda la basura estuviera en el contenedor que le correspondía. A partir de entonces, aquel barrio siempre estaría cuidado por los vecinos.

Every morning Juan, Perico, and Andrés went to the bar to have something. After, they went to pick up trash, but there were some residents that never recycled. Juan, Perico, and Andrés always complained even though they thought that if they didn't do anything, the town wouldn't be clean.

The residents heard the complaints that they weren't cleaning and recycling well. It was true, that neighborhood had become a true landfill.

The next morning the residents were waiting for the trash men and street sweepers. They were very angry and told them why do they say those things about them if they left the trash in the right place, in the same container as always.

"You don't feel sorry for us," they all said.

"Nothing is dirty," noted another resident.

One of the trash men said, *"What? You don't realize that you need to separate trash and recycle well?"*

The trash men talked amongst themselves and explained to them where each type of trash goes. In this way they reached an agreement between all of the residents to recycle.

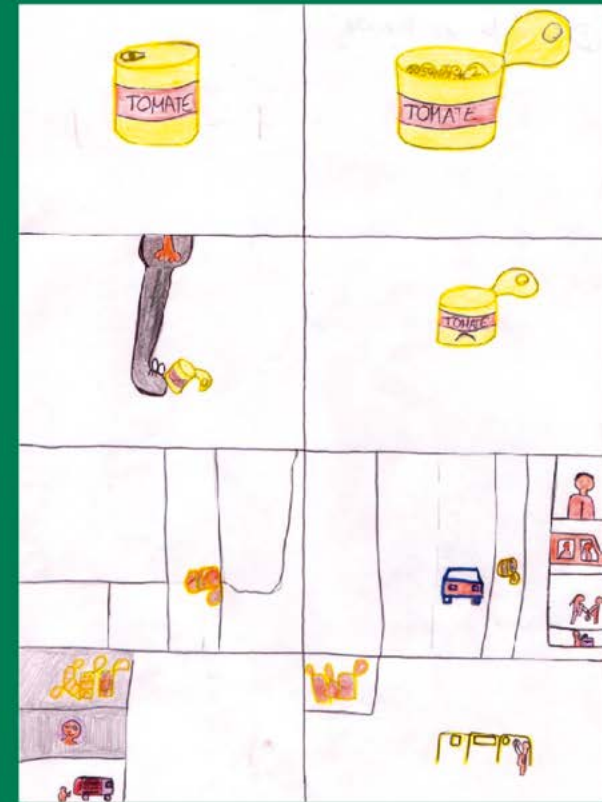
At night, a boy of the neighborhood brought down the trash to recycle it in the containers where each thing should be, and all of the residents of the neighborhood did the same.

And they continued, taking care of the neighborhood until it was clean.

In the morning everything was shining and clean because the residents had worried about **recycling well** and made sure that all the trash was in its corresponding container. From then on, the neighborhood would always be taken care of by the residents.

"Short-Story competition"

The can of tomatoes *La lata de tomate*



by Alejandro Marco, 2ºESO

Illustrated by Alejandro Marco, 2ºESO



Os voy a contar la historia de una lata de tomate... en principio de tomate, porque con el tiempo fue cambiando de forma y de otras cosas...

Se usó de lata de conservas, se usó como hucha, se usó como pelota dándole patadas los niños etc... pero esta lata no se sentía feliz.

Pasaron años y fue abandonada en el arcén de una carretera.

Estaba oxidada, su etiqueta no se distinguía... ¡estaba hecha un desastre!

Hasta que un día, encontrándose la lata todavía en el arcén, pasó un coche con una familia y uno de los niños se sintió mal. Su padre paró el coche, el niño vio la lata en el suelo y dijo que ese no era el sitio donde debería estar la lata. Su madre bajó del coche y cogió una bolsa que llevaba en el coche para echar la lata en ella. El niño le dijo a su madre que la cogía él. La echó a la bolsa y emprendieron el camino hasta que al final vieron una papelera y la tiraron. La lata por fin estuvo en su sitio, donde debía estar...

¡Oh!, qué decepción – pensó la lata - Mi casa, mi lugar, no es este... ¡Todo a mi alrededor es negro y oscuro!

De pronto avanzó y su cuerpo chocó contra algo... eran otras latas.

Al chocar escuchó un fuerte ruido y se asomó. Alguien estaba con ella en la papelera. Miró hacia arriba y vio a un chico de pelo corto y ojos pequeños vestido de color verde. Ese chico cogió la bolsa donde estaban todas las latas, las depositó en un extraño vehículo que hacía mucho ruido y ese vehículo las transportó a un **contenedor amarillo**.

Ahora sí estaba donde debía estar, tan feliz como las demás latas que estaban allí.

I'm going to tell you the story of a can of tomatoes... first of the tomato, because with time it changed form, and of other things...

It was used as canned food, it was used as a collection tin, it was used as a ball that children kicked, etc... but this can wasn't happy.

Years passed and it was abandoned on the edge of the road.

It was rusty, its label couldn't be read... It was a disaster!

Until one day, the can still on the side of the road, a car passed with a family and one of the children felt bad. His father stopped the car, the boy saw the can on the ground and said that it wasn't the place where the can should be. His mother got out of the car and took a bag that she was carrying to put the can inside. The boy said to his mother that he would do it. He put it in the bag and they set off on the journey until they saw a trash bin and threw it away.

The can was finally in its place, where it should have been...

"Oh, how disappointing," thought the can. "My house, my place, isn't here... everything around me is black and shady!"

Suddenly it moved forward and bumped against something... other cans. Upon the bump it heard a loud sound and peeked out. Someone was there with it in the trash bin.

It looked up and saw a boy with short hair and small eyes dressed in green. The boy grabbed the bag where all the cans were and placed it in a strange vehicle that made a lot of noise. The vehicle transported them to a **yellow container**.

Now it was where it should be, as happy as the other cans that were there.

German Winning Short Stories

*Is it the world's end?
Struggle for water
Nameless short story*

Is it the world's end?

Helen Hack – Lovis Hofmann – Lea Püllen – Mandana Sciola –Valeria Sciola
(class Q2)
illustrated by Daniela Kreft (class 9c)

PROLOGUE

“Good evening, ladies and gentleman! Welcome to BBC News Report. It is eight am and here are the latest news of the day.

The whole world exists in a state of emergency. The reason? Devastating tsunamis. These unthinkable dangerous waves are typically caused by large, undersea earthquakes at tectonic plate boundaries. When the ocean floor at a plate boundary rises or falls suddenly it displaces the water above it and launches the rolling waves that will become a tsunami. A tsunami is usually composed of a series of waves, called a wave train, so its destructive force may be compounded as successive waves reach shore. A devastating disaster is imminent throughout the world. Many parts of the world have been completely destroyed. It is the power behind the waves, the endless rushing water that causes devastation and loss of life. When the giant breaking waves of a tsunami batter the shoreline, they can destroy everything in their path. Thousands of people have already died by this disastrous flood disaster. People living in coastal regions, towns and villages have less time, at worst, no time to escape. The violent force of the tsunami results in instant death, most commonly by drowning. Buildings collapsing, electrocution, and explosions from gas, damaged tanks and floating debris are another cause of death. Parts of the world aren't affected yet, such as Miami. Radio and television reported in the steady state of the catastrophe. People are in panic and want to bring their families to safety. There is a complete exceptional circumstance. Ultimately we all hope that this day will still turn good.”

There are many people who have managed to flee from their homes in an emergency camp and for the time being in safety. People are shocked by the situation and a group of people get together and talk about their escape to the emergency camp.

“Hi, my name is John Miller and I am from Miami. I am 36 years old and I have a wife and two children, which are 6 and 7 years old. This morning I drove to work like usual and listened to music on the radio. Suddenly there were those frightening news in the radio about a tsunami coming up our area. They said that there were only 7 hours left until the tsunami would reach our country. When

I heard those news I did not know what to do. I was so shocked and could not realize how grave our world's situation was. The only thing I was thinking of was my family. How can I save my wife, my son and my daughter? This was the only question I wondered. Firstly I decided to drive to my children's school to collect them and drive them home safely. On my way to school I noticed how many people were on the streets and the moving traffic became quickly a stop and go traffic. Normally I only need 10 minutes, but today I needed half an hour. It was unbelievable, how fast the people reacted to these bad news. The whole city was in an emergency rule. When I arrived at school the police already started to manage the frightening situation. All children were picked up by their parents to get in safety. I got my kids in the car and we drove home. On our way I asked my kids if they knew what was happening and they told me that their teachers only told them that there is a very big wave which is coming from the ocean to our country and which could get us in extreme danger.



Of course, they did not tell them how massive the consequences of these waves are to save them from getting in panic. After further twenty minutes we finally reached our house. My wife cleaned the house and did not seem to be informed about the coming natural catastrophe. She wondered why we came home so early and asked for the reason. The kids and I told her what was going on and she got very terrified. I told her to calm down. We sat down on our

table to hear the latest news on the radio. We needed to think about a plan. First we called our family to get to know if they were informed. They already knew and told us to look for the next supermarket to buy many foodstuffs, to pack all important things together and to find an emergency accommodation. But they also said that it was not sure if we would survive those gigantic waves. I never felt so afraid about my family.

There was and almost is one question which is always on my mind – will we survive this catastrophe? “The best accommodations are miles away from the coast. And there is no chance to leave the country because the whole world is in danger” we heard the reporter. We turned on the television and saw the emergency rule on the streets, on the airports, on the train stations, on the supermarket and on the emergency accommodations. But the moderator said that there is space for everyone to get in safety. But I think he only tried to calm us down. I could hear his frightened voice. But I wanted to trust him that he is telling the truth. My wife and I shared the work. She packed all our important stuff and I went to the supermarket to buy foodstuff. The supermarket was overfilled with frightened people. Many shelves were already empty, but I found enough for my family and me. Back home we loaded our car and said goodbye to our home with the hope that it will not be destroyed by the tsunami. We drove three hours to get to the accommodation where we are now. I am so lucky that they had room for us, because the other five we approached before did not. Now let us hope that we all will get out here without any mischief!”

During the same time at the other side of the camp a women was crying: “I just can’t believe it. I can’t believe that yesterday I thought I was the happiest person in the whole world and now my world is over, completely destroyed. Everything collapses on me. He is dead...he is dead...how is that even possible? He is dead. How did that happen? It’s not fair! If I imagined I would be at home now, lying on the sofa in my living room...but then I wouldn’t have met him. Him...who is dead now...dead. I will never see him again.”

Samantha realized her tearfulness and tried to help: “Hey, are you alright? You seem pretty confused and devastated. Do you need something? I could get you water. Can you tell me your name?”. Camille tried to answer but immediately started stuttering: “I am Camille.”

“Nice to meet you Camille, I am Samantha and this is my daughter Emma and her friend Amy. We arrived just a few hours ago. Do you want to tell me what happened to you? Have you lost someone?” Camille could have broken out in tears again but started to tell her devastating story. “I am here for two hours now. I live in Seattle, but I am on vacation in Miami. Two weeks ago I came here with my parents to have a nice holiday at the beach. Our flight back home

was booked for yesterday, but I didn't leave. A few days ago I met Adam, the love of my life. I met him in a nice restaurant at the beach. We both knew right away that we are destined for each other. It was love at first sight. So I decided to stay here a little longer. Adam and I had a wonderful time together; it was the best time of my life. We were happily in love. Even though we didn't know each other for a long time, we made plans for our future. We planned to live together. I know it sounds crazy, but it didn't feel wrong at all. Its till doesn't. But..Well I first continue.. I was crazy in love. How is it possible that everything can be destroyed within minutes? When we heard about the Tsunami we were at the beach, lying in the sand, enjoying the sun and the warm weather. In the next moment everyone was extremely troubled. The restaurants nearby turned the radios and TVs on. The news announced that a tsunami is about to hit the coast of Miami. They gave out the warning that the wave could hit at any moment. I still hear all the screaming people. Everyone was worried instantly. The speaker warned the people and called everyone who was still out in the water. Everyone was requested to go home or leave the city. First no one really knew how serious it was, but I felt the general feeling of panic. Some people immediately ran to the street and left the beach. It was dreadful; everyone wanted to leave with his or her cars. I remember that I heard a lot of crashes. The people were in a hurry and desperately tried to leave as fast as they could. Some people who were still at the beach, including Adam and me, stood there, shocked. For a moment I did not understand what was going on. Then Adam shouted at me. He shouted that I have to leave the beach. He gave me the keys of his car. I asked him why he is not coming with me. He told me he that he had to find John, his best friend. He was at the beach too. I panicked and screamed at him that he has to come with me. I remember his words. He said: "Hurry, the news said there is a rescue center. Turn on the radio, you will find it. I need to find John, I can't leave him here. I will follow you. See you there. Be safe." Then he kissed me and ran away. I started to cry. It was too much to take in. The next moment I grabbed my cellphone. When I reached the car it happened. It got darker. And something was roaring on the horizon. I drove away. Worrying and crying. The streets were full and in an absolute disaster. It was so hard to see something through trouble. Almost unconscious I reached the rescue center. The people immediately helped me, but all I could think about was Adam. I left him behind and lost him. I waited for hours, but there was no sign of him. Of course my parents called me. My mother was hysterical and cried a lot. When she heard I was alright she was relieved. Everything is just terrible. I don't know what to do. He is dead. Adam is dead. It can't be true!" This story plucked Samantha's heartstrings. Samantha asked: "How do you know that he is dead? Maybe he will still show up." Camille broke down in tears and cried: " No, I am

sure. His name is on the list". Samantha responds: "Which list?" "There are lists with all names of the persons which bodies were found. Adams name is on it"

...one hour later...

Somewhere Camille heard someone shouting her name. It was he. It was Adam! She could not trust her own ears but there he was, standing in front of her. "Adam! How is that possible? I thought you were dead! Your name... I don't understand. Your name is on the list. They said you are dead. Where were you? What happened?" Adam, drowned in tears, answered: "I am alive. Here I am! But it is so sad. I couldn't find John though. He is dead. They made a mistake. I am not dead, he is. They wrote down my name on the list, because he had my identity card in his pocket. And..." While Adam started to cry Camille hugged him and tried to understand the misunderstood situation: "What? How do you know he is dead? Why did he have your id?" Adam tried to think clear and responded: "Yesterday I gave him my id because he registered us at the surf shop. Do you remember? We wanted to take a lesson. When they found his body, his face couldn't be identified anymore. He was... I... his body looked terrible. He is dead, Camille! I couldn't save him!" Camille did not know what to say. Surely, she was thoroughly happy to have her love of her life back in her arms, but she could not believe this whole scenario. She asked herself if it could even get worse. She has never thought about natural catastrophes before and that they could happen right where she was... During the same time John Miller tried to take his mind off things and started talking to many other people who sat around him. Maybe he could help somehow and tried to give solace. The atmosphere was tense. You could hear people screaming, crying for help. Nobody knew what would happen next. John turned around and started talking to Samantha, asking her how she got here. "Hi, my name is Samantha and this is my 16-year-old daughter Emma and her friend Amy. Our way to this emergency camp was also a terrible trip. It was a relaxed Saturday morning, when I got up. I surprised my daughter with really delicious pancakes for breakfast. We listened to music and danced around. Afterwards we dressed up, we went out of the house quite early, because we wanted to spend our day in our beloved city Miami. We shopped through countless shops and stores. I saw the joy in the eyes of my daughter and it warmed my heart to see my daughter so happy. Afterwards we made a break and sat on a bench to enjoy the little sunshine, which came out despite the dense clouds. It was a perfect Saturday afternoon with my daughter. I enjoyed every minute with her and I think she felt the same way. We got hungry so we walked back to the city and went to our favorite sushi restaurant. When we went out of

the restaurant a really creepy little man who looked like a crazy scientist ran through the crowds of people and screamed loudly “WE ALL WILL DIE! THE DOOMSDAY IS APPROACHING”. He jumped in front of me and looked in my eyes deeply. I stood there transfixed and stopped breathing for a second. The little man could only whisper “Bring yourself in safety”, before police officers caught the man and drove away. The people, who stood there for a while, started laughing about the little man and stepped forward. But suddenly I did not feel comfortable anymore and knew that something strange was happening here, that no one knows yet. My daughter wanted to go back home and I shared her opinion. When we arrived home my daughter asked if she could meet her best friend but I didn't let her. She was angry but I still had this strange feeling after I met the little man in Miami city. I lay on the couch and watched TV and fell asleep. Suddenly I heard loud noises, which sounded like helpless screams. In this moment my daughter woke me up and looked really frightened. She said that I should make the TV louder, because our president was holding a speech.

The president said that a huge tsunami wave is on the way to Miami and that already many countries are destroyed. Moreover he said that we should keep calm and seek for emergency camps. My daughter was really confused and only asked what was happening here. I couldn't answer her, but only said that we have to bring us in safety. I didn't take anything with me and we quickly left our home and drove away. Outside, it really looked like the doomsday is coming. Children looked for their parents, women were screaming, old people walked helplessly through the street, because they didn't know what to do and at the end of the street we could see two car accidents. All people were running somewhere completely in panic. I asked my daughter to search for an emergency camp in our area but the internet was overloaded. We could find a police officer and I asked for an emergency camp in our area. He described the way and we drove further. Suddenly the phone of my daughter started ringing and it was Amy. She cried and said that her parents were off to work and she didn't know what to do. She cried desperately and I had no other choice than driving back, keeping in mind that I could risk my daughter's life. There was such a panic on the streets and many accidents that we picked Amy up next to the gas station. I quickly drove the same way, the police officer told me, but I had to stop my car and we had to walk the rest of the route because there was a big car accident with four cars in front of us, which blocked the street. We had to walk half an hour until we reached the emergency camp. A really friendly man received us and now ultimately we are here with you and hope that this horrible day will have a positive turn.” But what was that.

Earsplitting siren's wailing started, people started to scream and a mass panic broke out immediately. John started to get through the mass of people to his family, so they could try to stay together. Also, the staff tried to shout but nobody listened. Samantha put her arms around Emma and Amy and tried to calm them down, but without any success. The two girls started to cry and did not know what to do. Meanwhile the staff turned on the radio and within seconds all thousand of people listened in silence. The radio connection started to rustle already and everybody directly knew that this was a bad sign. “Shrshshrsh – attention please shrsh... tsuna shrsh.. Tsunami shrsh. Attention please! The tsunami is no longer only a great concern shrsh.. Some parts of Miami are already flooded. Shrsh try to remove to a safe place shrsh get out of the houses!” It was creepy. First total stillness but only a few seconds later people started to realize this catastrophe, they rose in chaos, some screaming, others shouting orders that nobody could hear, falling over the chairs and each other, crushing children. John, his family, Camille and Adam, Samantha, Emma and Amy tried to get out of the emergency camp. Then they heard it, the sound of a monster wave, usually known as a relaxing sound but now as a sound they have never heard before. It was extremely loud and scary. There they stood transfixed. Some started running, others climbing. The roar was deafening and the sky got darker and darker. On the horizon they saw something huge coming up. As they started running they realized their life depends on it...

Struggle for water

Leo Hilperath - Jana Vierhuf - Hannah Böschges - Clara Geißler - Jörn Brandt
(class Q2)
illustrated by Jule Nachtigall (class 9c)

"Do you see John over there in his garden?" Mary looked at me and then walked to the window. "Yes, what's wrong with him?", Mary asked. "I saw him a couple of days before when he went into his garage. You don't believe what I saw there! He was hiding a lot of big bottles of water. I don't understand how the government does not have any knowledge of it!" Mary was very surprised, and said: "I can't believe it! Our daily water rations are so little - we have to be thirsty all day long! We only have enough water to survive, and this guy thinks that he can hide it at home!"

I walked back to the table and thought about what to do next. "Look Mary, it was always hard for us to survive in this world. Since the water rations became even smaller, life became more difficult. The government told us that we should always observe our neighbours and friends. When they do something against the law, we have to tell the government to get more coupons for the water ration." Mary already knew what I wanted to say and interrupted me: "Peter, we can't do this! John is a good man. We've been friends forever! We can't tell the police what he is doing! Please!" After a few minutes of silence I said: "I know, we are very good friends, but this is the only possibility to get more water! With the coupons the government would give us, we would have enough water for a few months and a better life - at least for a short time!" Mary sat down and began to cry. "There must be another possibility!" But there wasn't. I had to spy on him. I didn't like the idea and therefore I hated myself for doing this to my best friend. So I left the house. Mary tried to stop me, but I already made my decision. I said to myself: "When you do this, you support the government! You will never be free!" But I tried to ignore it. We needed these water coupons.

So I walked to John's house. At first, nobody opened the door but after a few seconds, John stood in front of me with his usual outfit - a noble jacket, suit pants and his leather shoes, holding a cup of tea in his right hand. He was friendly as usual and asked me to come in. We sat down in the living room. A great room in the Second Empire style. I had always been a bit jealous about his wealth because he was the richest person in town. That was the point I

didn't understand. Why should he be hiding water from the government? He had enough money to drink water all day long.

"What leads me to the pleasure of your visit?", John asked. I didn't know how to start the conversation, but the small pause after his question became longer and longer and finally I said: "It is nothing. I only wanted to see you. We didn't talk for a while so I thought about visiting you." "Oh that's nice!" I saw that John became more nervous. He started to rub his hands and tried to be as casual as always. When he saw that I watched his fingers he stopped immediately and looked away. I asked: "What's the matter John? You seem a little nervous!" "Oh it's nothing, I was just having a hard time at work lately. My employees don't understand that I can't give them free water anymore. Times are getting harder and water is something not anyone can afford!", he said. "Well, we have problems with water, too. You know Mary is seven months pregnant and needs a lot of water. Our air-conditioner isn't working either and we cannot afford to fix it because we are spending everything on water!", I said. We were talking for another thirty minutes but I didn't have the courage to ask him about the water. Maybe he just got it because of his social status. I left his house and thought about my relationship with Mary. We have been together for more than five years but I still love her as much as I did the first day I met her. I knocked on the door because I had forgotten my key. Nobody opened. I went through the



backyard and the backdoor was open. Mary was nowhere to be seen. I thought that she might have an appointment with the gynecologist to get another check-up until I found a letter in my kitchen: "We have your wife. She will die if we don't get twenty rations of water. You have 24 hours. If you inform the police, she is dead! JC." I asked myself what JC could stand for. I didn't know anyone who would do this to her. She never had any enemies. Everyone liked her. The only person I knew with the initials JC was my neighbour John Cerrar. But this was impossible because I had spent the afternoon with him. Was there anyone else?

I went over to my uncle, who lived next to me. Before he retired he had worked for the Secret Service. As he opened the door and I looked into his face I started to cry. I was scared about what would happen to Mary. I told him everything and he said: "I have read in the newspaper that there is a gang from Uganda, which blackmails young families. They normally kidnap pregnant women and then ask the husband for water. But the weird thing is that there is a person who gets all the water. And he is from our country, but no one knows who he is." "Well, there were initials on the letter. It says JC. But the only person I know with these initials is my neighbour John. Furthermore Mary and I saw a lot of water in his garage. But he can't be the boss because I was with him when Mary was kidnapped.", I said.

He told me that he was going to get some new information and that he was going to call me the following day. I left his house and went back to mine. The sun was burning and I was sweating. I needed a glass of water. Water. What did the people do a hundred years ago to our earth, that we have to suffer so much today. In our history class we learned that people were driving cars and using airplanes to get to other countries. Today only the really wealthy are allowed to have a car and airplanes are not produced anymore. I would love to see the world but ships are too expensive.

I asked myself, what had happened to this crazy little world. Water should be something like a fundamental law, actually it was a fundamental law, until resources became low and people had to fear for their lives. What had happened to this world, in which best friends were lying to each other, were maybe kidnapping wives, only because they could not get the most important groceries they needed to survive. I went into the living room, to get a small glass of water. Since some time, this became a luxury. The thought of my wife and the little baby in danger nearly brought me to my knees, more than the thirst or the thought for water. I could not sit around and wait any longer, so I

decided to make my own investigations, in order to find Mary and the person who did this to her.

I called my uncle once again, hoping that he would help me with my plans. "I cannot wait any longer, uncle." I heard a loud sigh at the other end of the line. "But tell me Peter, what do you want to do? We are nearly helpless against this gang, they are too dangerous and we do not have the skills to convict them." I had expected this answer of my uncle, but the thought of giving up was as impossible as the feeling of having no water anymore. "Maybe this gang is dangerous, maybe they can become violent, but Mary is the reason why we should risk all these things. I thought about the initials and my neighbour is the only possible offender that comes to my mind." "But Peter", my uncle replied "you are the one, who gives him an alibi or excuse for what has happened." I know that I was the one who had defended my neighbour beforehand. "It is obvious that John could not kidnap my wife, but have you thought of the possibility that he is only the client? Think about the big bottles of water and the initials JC and think about his nervous way of acting! If we go and search for proof in his garage, maybe we can convict the whole gang and save Mary."

I heard another sigh at the end of the line and already knew that I was expecting much from my uncle. "You have convinced me. I will help you", he said with fear in his voice. "I knew that I could count on you", I replied and hung up in order to prepare the first investigation. I went downstairs to get the black cap, that had been Mary's gift on the occasion of my last birthday. Then I packed a big crowbar and a torch in one of Mary's bags. If John really was the offender, he would have secured his garage in a very good way. My fear was big, but the fear of an injured Mary was even bigger. A loud knock on the door pulled me out of my sad thoughts. "Hello Peter, are you ready?", my uncle, also wearing a cap and carrying a torch, asked me carefully. I nodded and closed the door quietly. My uncle scanned the bag with the crowbar and looked at me with a strange expression on his face, then nodded with content. "John will have secured his garage very thoroughly", he said and therefore supported the thoughts I had before. We carefully sneaked through my garden, in order to get to the back entrance of his garden. "The most difficult step will be to get through his garden, but we have to take this way in order to prevent curious witnesses at the front side.", I whispered to my uncle with a beating heart. He put a finger on his mouth and went on sneaking through the garden. Suddenly we heard a loud whisper at the end of the garden. Quickly my uncle and I jumped into the bushes at the sides and tried to listen to John and the strange persons next to him, but we could not understand a single word. „What are they talking

about?", my uncle asked and looked at me. "I don't know, do you think that this is the gang that kidnapped Mary?" My uncle shrugged his shoulders and made his way through the bushes. "The only way to find out is to go into this garage, it is unavoidable."

We arrived at the garage and I started to pull the crowbar out of the bag. While opening the garage, a thousand thoughts were running to my mind. The loudest one was the thought of what has happened to this cruel world. I was actually suspecting my best friend to have kidnapped my wife, just to get water, the resource that should make people survive and not kill each other. But these thoughts were not going to help me now, in this miserable situation I had never planned, nor wished for. Again, I started to swear at the previous generations, the old generations we all had never known, having done this catastrophe to us and our life style. I put the thought away. Sitting between the chairs was miserable, but doing nothing was not going to help me out.

Having thought this, I finally entered the garage, hoping to find anything - but what exactly? I found the light switch and saw - not much, but water. There were finally a lot more bottles than I had imagined, and it shocked me quite a bit. Who was this person I had called my best friend since I could think? What was his plan and, the more important: where was my wife? My uncle and I stepped forward towards the water bottles, trying to understand.

John had said that he was wanting the people working for him to have enough water. This must have been the reason why he was storing this high amount of it here. But was it all only friendliness, or was there a certain calculation, another reason why he did it? I was hating myself for these thoughts: Why was I thinking things like these about my friend John? Of course, the reason was, that whatever his plan was, it was against the law, against the government. Would John have acted in this way, if he had not been put under pressure for certain reasons? Who were these people, wanting all of his water? And, rather important: If these people were not the ones who worked in his company - was there a connection to Mary? I looked at my uncle, who was frowning, which was a bad sign, because I knew him as the most positive person ever - which was unavoidable if you want to do a job like his. "I don't think all of this has to do anything with John's employees", my uncle said. speaking out my silent thoughts of a minute ago.

At this moment, I remembered John's voice, having sounded a bit different today. At first sight, he had been happy and friendly and sunny like always, but

as I closed my eyes, I meant to remember a certain pressure in his voice, some stress, as he had been talking about the water and his employees.

What should I do? Go into the house and try to talk his lies off? Try to find out more about this mystery by asking questions which would lead me to a solution? "We have to divide", I addressed my uncle. "One of us goes into the house, trying to talk to John. What he said about his employees is not going to be true. I think that he lied to us, he was under pressure." Since my uncle didn't stop to frown while listening to my words, I tried to convince him: "I know John! I know him since the 5th grade and I know he is a good actor, but he cannot lie to me. I will go into the house, he will talk to me rather than to you. What can you do? You are not going to find out much by watching the water bottles, so I guess you try to find out what Mary might have been doing when I wasn't at home. Also, you should have a look at this message again, maybe there is any hint. Most important thing: They want all of our water. I am going to give it to them if we get Mary back, but if it is avoidable, I will do everything to keep it. It is the only thing that can help us to survive, and we are more dependent on it than ever." My uncle looked at me, still frowning, and I felt excited about that because he was not saying a word. I finally turned around, leaving him behind in the garage while making my way to John's door, behind which I hoped to get more hints about what had been happening to my wife.

When I finally arrived ringing the bell, I wondered if this would be going to be the point at which our friendship was destroyed forever, or if that had even happened before, at the point when John lied to me. And the source of all those problems was always the same one: the water problem. John opened the door with a fake smile which I identified as nervous immediately. "Oh, Peter! It's you again. Do you have hints about your wife?" I thought about packing the words in a soft nutshell so they wouldn't hurt, but I just couldn't wait to get them out: "John, I am assuming that you have something to do with my wife's disappearance. And I assume that you are having fear for some reason. Please, tell me. I don't blame you, but it is about my wife's life". "I know you're shocked Peter, but I don't know where your wife is and I have nothing to do with this!", John replied. But I know that he was lying. I could see it in his eyes. It's somewhat sad, that John really believes, after all these years, that I'm not able to see, when he's lying. "John, I am not stupid. I know when you're lying. And you are DEFINITELY lying to me. So please, tell me what is going on here?", John swallowed. „All right“, he said „but I can't talk to you here. Come on, let's take a walk.“

John put on his shoes and closed the door. A long time we didn't say anything.

But suddenly John looked at me sadly and said: "I'm so sorry Peter! I know we are best friends since middle school, but the world is cruel and even I have to fight for my life. I'm in big trouble. I owe someone a lot of water. Oh yes, a lot of water. So I have to help him kidnapping pregnant women. I'm just the spy, I have to find pregnant women and his employees kidnap them. Then I have to pick up the water of the families and give it to him." "Is that the reason, why there is so much water in your garage?" I asked, "How...? Well, never mind. Yes, that's the reason. But it's not mine. Every month the man I owe the money comes to my house and picks up the water." I was really shocked about what John had told me. What has happened to John? He never was in trouble before. But that was not the question. The question was, where Mary was. So I stopped walking, looked at him and asked: "But please John, why Mary? And where is my Mary?" John was not able to look me into the eyes and whispered: "I don't know. Somewhere in the city, but I really don't know where exactly. Please, believe me Peter, I never wanted Mary to be kidnapped. I have always tried to protect you two. But one day, my boss came to get his water and saw Mary working in the garden. He asked me why I have not told him about her. I said, she was my sister, but he didn't believe me. He threatened me with killing me, if I did not get him information about you."

I was disappointed about John. "I thought you were my best friend John. Even if you tried to protect us, after all you betrayed us." John seemed desperate. "I know Peter, please forgive me, what can I do, that you will forgive me?" I have not thought about an answer. I already knew the answer: "Help me to find Mary." John was scared, I knew this, but he had no other choice. So he replied: "Yes, I will help you. I know some places where she could be." "Well, that is better than nothing. But first we have to let my uncle know, what we want to know. He is in your garage." I started to run to John's house. "He is what?" John asked and started to run as well. I answered quickly: "Come on, I will explain it to you later!"

Back at John's house I told my uncle about the proceedings and about what's going to happen now. Of course, my uncle wasn't really happy about the plan. But he loves Mary just like a daughter, so he agreed. "Well and how do we start?", he asked. I looked at John and asked: "Where do you think could Mary be?" "Maybe we should first look in the headquarter. It is on the other side of the city, so I think we should take my car." "Well, then let us go!" I said and ran to his car, the other two followed. My uncle was still sceptical: "And what will you do if we find her? Will you go into the room, grab her with one hand and kill the guards with the other hand?" My uncle laughed. But he was right,

my plan was ill-conceived. I just thought about finding Mary, not about what I would do when I had found her.

While we were driving on the highway, heading to the eastern part of the city, my head started to hurt like hell. The sun slowly set over the roof tops of the city. Should the next day be the first one without Mary? The first one without my great love? Coming closer and closer to the hiding place of the gang my mood turned more and more from optimism into anger and hatred. What have we done to this place that it punishes us in such a severe way? Because of former behaviour of humankind our generation or at the latest the one of our unborn child is one which is born on earth and maybe meant to be the last generation of our kind at this place. Dying and closing the chapter humankind on earth. A thought that still seemed far away for me but in reality must be expected in the next years, maybe, if we are lucky, the next decades.

Having arrived in the old industrial area which was not used anymore, we got out of the car. "Follow me, I know where to go", said John with a quiet voice. The three of us walked further and further through the area, passing big storehouses with broken windows and old machinery, which seemed not having been used for at least five years. "This place seems to be totally reconquered by nature. How far is it still to go for us?", I asked not being able to hide my fear of the upcoming cruelties one had to expect listening to John's explanations about the gang before. No one answered. A raven cawed and flew through the broken glasses of the upper windows of a warehouse. After that silence occurred again. Deadly silence. After another three minutes of walk we arrived at a grey steel door, which was the entrance into a smaller hall, which from the outside seemed to have been used as a slaughterhouse before. John said: "I do not know what we have to expect, so please be careful." My uncle slowly opened the door and we went in. It was too dark to see anything. Suddenly all the ceiling lights were switched on. We were scared and immediately turned around to find coverage close to the door. But he blocked our way. John. He aimed with a pistol at my uncle and me. This all must have been a nightmare. Wake up Peter! But it was not.

"How can you be so stupid and blind?", shouted John with a mixture of anger and pride in his voice. "John, what the hell are you doing? Put away that gun! Did you completely lose your mind?" My uncle said the words I also wanted to say but I could not. I could not bring out another tone. "For you I have always been the conservative and boring neighbour. But our time changes and we have to change too. And this time it is not a change for improving our

living conditions or something insignificant like that but it is a change which is necessary to survive. We cannot afford still paying attention to the others. We have to concentrate on ourselves to secure our survival! For meanwhile four months I do this trade: water for people. There is somebody who seems to be very keen on people who disappeared from the radar. But that is none of my business as long as I get my water. And now enough justifications. I will bring you to the others."

Nameless short story

**Roxana Philippi - Zoe Lasota - Lena Honerla - Daria Amani - Sun Young Lee
(class Q2)
illustrated by Joana Reintjes (class 9c)**

"President Johnson opens new public swimming pool in Regentville. Studies show that 5000 litres could be saved per person the last year due to the abolition of showers in private households. The ultimate goal is to decrease the number of necessary washing to once a month. This is going to be possible because of the great innovation made by William Barner who discovered a plant compound that makes showering nearly needless because it reduces sweating to a minimum. The tasteless substance will be contained in the weekly water supply by the government and is as the delivered water in general proportional to the number of persons living in a household..."

Anne turned the TV off and rolled her eyes. It was always the same. Politicians and hypocritical journalists, calling the recent measures necessary and praiseworthy. Water was scarce but in Anne's opinion the government exaggerated. Showering once a month? That was absolutely absurd. Once a week was already not enough, apart from the fact that the water in the public showers was rationed. 30 seconds to wash your body and your hair. For people with long hair like Anne hardly possible. That was the reason why the female majority in Aquaterra had short hairstyles. Poorer families from the working class had even less time to shower, just 20 seconds. The law was simple. The richer you are, the more water you and your family get. Water was a luxury item. Anne got up from the sofa and rearranged the magazines and newspapers she had thrown down when she had laid her feet on the table during the TV show. A man with a grey beard was on the front page of the Daily Messenger. It was he, President Johnson. Anne snorted. She hated that man more than she dared to say. Her mother was a secretary in his office and they were dependent on her salary. Anne was not sure if her mother liked her employer. She never said anything negative about him but probably she just remained silent because of her fear of becoming unemployed. In addition to that, since Anne's father died, her mother did not talk a lot anyway. She was a sad woman and totally overwhelmed with the situation. Anne's family was not rich, but they never had serious financial problems when her father was alive. But now it was nearly impossible for the two women to pay the bills. Anne's father had worked as a climatologist, an important job in the year 2110. The earth has

gotten warmer and warmer over the past 200 years due to the population's refusal to take climate problems serious. From an expedition to the Sahara Desert, Anne's father and his colleagues never returned. Experts said they had probably underestimated the brutal heat and died because of water shortage. Anne always thought her father's death was characteristic for the situation on earth. Even in her temperate climate zone desertification started to appear. The government had to adapt to the situation and established harsh new laws concerning water distribution. Water was now a magnificent good that did not run through pipes into everybody's house anymore but was delivered by the National Water Department. All in all, the situation was critical.

"That's enough", thought Anne. "I should not think about such sad things. I should go out, meet my friends and just be a normal teenager, like everybody else at school. I am 17. Not thinking about anything serious should be my speciality." But in fact, Anne knew exactly that it was not possible for her to behave like a normal teenager. Even if she tried to forget her story, her father's death and her mother's situation again and again every day, she was not able to. If Anne had the possibility to start working or just help her mother financially after school, she would do it immediately. But the laws had become stricter with every day. Over 75% of the world population did not have work at the moment due to millions of machines and robots that took over the work because they were more efficient and much cheaper.

The world had completely changed. Women were mostly not allowed to work because studies showed that men had the ability to work more quickly and to serve the companies for a longer period. The same rule was put into law for people under the age of 21 and over the age of 45. The world just consisted out of efficiency and productivity. People were not seen as equivalent, but healthier or stronger persons had a higher value than others.

Anne's mother was just given the possibility to work because of her husband being an important part of finding answers to the water problem in the world. Anne hated everyone, who was responsible for the water problems. It was more than hatred she felt for the people having lived in the beginning of the 21st century. How could anyone be so ignorant to the nature and the things happening around them and at the same time, be so egoistic that the own wealth and comfort would be more important than the consequences of the behaviour? At school the children's only subjects were history, politics and geography as they reached the age of 14. So Anne had learned a lot of the past of her country and she felt like the world had been thrown back into the Middle Ages. People did not have enough food, because there was no water

to make crops grow. Diseases were widely spread amongst the lower classes, as the people's immune system was weakened due to the lack of water in the body. The hospitals were very advanced and the political system was perfectly under control, which made a huge difference to the earlier times and which made the people close their eyes concerning the problems. At least that is, what the people were told by the state.

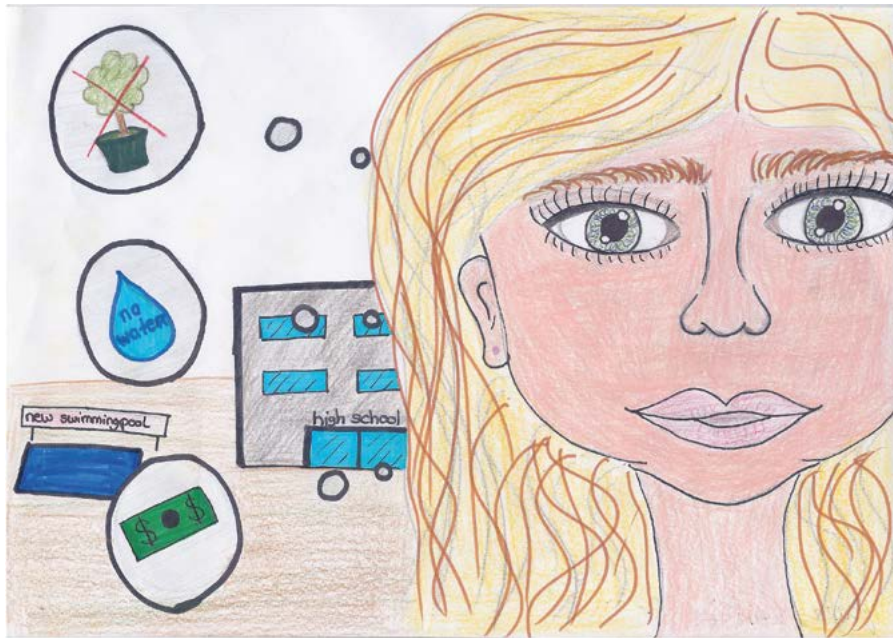
Anne had difficulties to believe in an organized state, as there was not even a currency or money, one could pay with. The only comparable thing was water. So everyone tried to trade things with the goal to win some water in the end. Anne was happy, she belonged to the part of the world, where desertification was not as far as in other countries. Two whole continents were even evacuated, because of conditions, which made life impossible.

These conditions were even hard for Anne and her mother. When her grandfather used to be alive, he talked about the times when people were able to shower everyday and when they had a paddling pool in their back garden which they were able to refill every other week. Anne did not know whether she should be disappointed or angry at the people from the 21st century for being responsible for the water shortage. The only thing she knew was that they were living without enough water to supply the whole world.

One day, Anne was sitting in her politics lesson; she made a huge mistake which should be the beginning of a disaster to her family. Being the last Monday of the month, her teacher handed out the monthly essay that the girls had to write. The girls were put into separated classes as the boys were taught the financial topics which the girls did not need as they were not allowed to work. The essay's topic was: *"President Johnson opens new public swimming pool in Regentville. Discuss the pros and cons."* Anne laughed. She knew this topic. Some days earlier she was sitting on her sofa watching the news about Mr. Johnson. Already then, she was angry, but feared to talk to her mum about it, as she was not able to afford any criticism on her employer. This essay was the perfect chance to let go of her thoughts, was the first thing that Anne thought. The second one was that she might keep her criticism low, as her mother might be disappointed about how Anne was talking about the President if she got to read the essay.

These used to be her thoughts one week earlier. In the first week of June, Anne knew that she should never have written any criticism on Mr. Johnson. The feeling of being lost had never been greater. When her mother came home this night, she was totally in tears, not being able to explain what happened, due to the mixed feelings she had. On the one hand she looked more than shocked, on the other hand she responded in a confusing way telling her daughter that she loved her, but also that she was disappointed of what happened. A long

hour later, she finally recovered from crying. Anne still knows every single word that her mum used to describe the incidents. Basically, Anne's teacher was the one being shocked of how negative Anne wrote about Johnson. She mailed the six pages of hatred against the President to Anne's mum.



The President then checked her Email account looking for an Email that she kept on her Computer. Well, everything that happened from then can be self-explained. After her mother was fired, Anne and her mother lived without any money for three months. Anne never experienced anything like this in her life before. Never had she been so frustrated of life and never had she felt so guilty. Food was not the problem. Neighbours and family friends were kind enough of sharing and luckily the tiny fridge still contained some provisions. Water was the problem. No money meant less than 20 seconds to shower. Most of the time, the two women showered together as less than 20 seconds of water was impossible to wash their bodies and hair. People were talking about them. The family that criticised the President. Children were told not to talk to them while passing them on the street. Anne never regretted anything more in her life than having had written that essay. Sometimes she thought how funny it sounds to say that she lost all her hope because of a school essay. But then she reminded herself that this is exactly what happened and that it is all her fault. After a long walk, where she met a boy, who wanted to sell her some drugs,

to gain extra money to shower again, Anne had the idea to do the same. She asked the boy from where he has got the drugs and he told her something about a big field with a lot of different plants. When she arrived at the field, Anne was looking for the plant the boy had. After a while she was shocked of the discovery. Anne found a plant, that she saw three months ago in the news. It was the plant that gave the opportunity to shower less than a month, which was discovered by William Barner.

Anne knew that if she would sell the plant, she could pay the bills for her mother. But then she thought about the consequences: The government, no the President, would ask from where they got the money. Anne did not like the idea of using the plant because of the side effects that were not mentioned in the news. But she knew that the plant could help her, so she decided to take the plant with her.

Later at home, Anne was sitting in her room and was staring at the plant. In this moment her mother came in and saw the plant and was shocked. Anne's mother knew which plant it was and stared at it too. After five minutes of staring, Anne's mother started to smile at her daughter. The mother knew the plant could solve their problems and that they finally had some luck. But after talking to Anne from where she got the plant, she also knew that the field is in an unauthorized area and if Mr. Johnson finds out about that, Anne and her mother would get bigger problems.

Some weeks later Anne met the boy who wanted to sell her the drugs again and he wanted to know if she could gain some money. Then Anne told him about the plant she found on the field and the boy wanted to help her to sell the plant to some rich people in the city of Regentville.

Anne knew it was a big risk for them to go to the city, but it was their only chance to get the money they need.

The teenagers hasted to Regentville. They were nervous, but full of hope. 'We can finally get out of this hell!', Anne squealed in her mind. She could gain back her lifestyle.

Out of excitement however, the Aquaterraneans have forgotten that affluent cities were shielded by guards. One tall, sturdy man blocked their way and frowned at them. „Regentville is no place for you kids“, he judged after he had traced their clothings and hygienic condition with his emotionless eyes. "B-but we need to sell this plant- Ouch!" Anne tackled unconsciously which is the reason why the boy stamped on her left foot immediately. But too late, the guard questioned "A Plant?" while looking at them suspiciously. Just as he tried to blow the whistle-

"Stop! They are my guests. Please let them enter!"

It was a man in white coat. His face was familiar, Anne noticed. "It's William

Barner from the news, the one who discovered the plant!", the boy shrieked. The two anxiously asked him: "Why are you helping us?" "Don't worry. I don't mean any harm. Are you Anne Rabern?" The gentle, but somehow blue voice asked Anne. The climatologist unexpectedly seemed to have mixed feelings. But why? "...Yes. How do you know my name?" After the stranger replied calmly "We need to talk", he invited the party to his house.

"Anne, you probably know me as William Barner. They say I made the great innovation possible due to my discovery. And this young man", he pointed at the boy politely, "is my assistant. I asked him to escort you. I didn't have any other options. I apologize." Anne was confused. Why does he have to talk with me? That William Barner?

Barner continued abruptly, "I have to confess that my real name is Alexander Richardson. It has some complications. Of course, I will tell you everything. And .. I was your father's colleague."

"My father?"

"Yes. Your father, your father... was a competent climatologist." Richardson muttered reflectively. "He aspired after the solution to the water scarcity. Nevertheless, it took not too long until he noticed the deterioration of the current situation", he continued after a deep sigh, "through to the extinction of humanity."

Anne could not believe her ears. Extinct? All of us? She was shocked beyond her capacity, but her floating mind told her that she had already sensed this catastrophe. She had to try so hard not interrupting him and his severe confession.

He went on: "Of course he soon noticed that his research founding wasn't something unknown. The elite minority had kept this truth to themselves in order to.." His words just did not come out of his quavering lips.

"In order to do what?"

This time, Anne's question just burst out. She was so eager to find out about the truth of the higher-ups and her father:

"When a human being is on the edge of his life", the colleague growled, "he is willing to do everything for his own survival. Everything, whatever it takes, even if it means decimating your own kind. Pure egoism, it is our true nature."

"No way!", Anne gasped. She was so disgusted she could throw up. ,,You mean, our own government would kill us all when the situation gets worse? What if-"

"No Anne." The subdued voice interrupted her. Anne thought he looked so depressed that he seemed as if he had given up his life. ,,The decimation has

already begun."

Before she could breathe in again, the man who has made her experience the ultimate shock of her entire life quickly carried on. ,,This plant you have brought with you", he laughed satirically, "is a dangerous, colourless and odourless slow killer with side effects such as light hallucination and dysfunction of senses. The subtle interaction of these two side effects prevent us from noticing anything. It's impossible to take so short showers to maintain health.

William, your father insisted to announce this conspiracy. It was reckless to stand alone.."

Anne could not say a word. After a heavy, helpless silence the climatologist soullessly continued, "Johnson furied at Will's defiance. Not only he ordered his subordinates to assassinate him but he also insulted the deceased. Ha! William Barner, the one who made the great innovation!"

"William Barner? My father's name is William Rabern!" Anne cried as her face became pale as she noticed something which used to be undoubted until now. "It's exactly the way you think it is. Rabern is an anagram of Barner. You were young, so you might not remember." Anne covered her mouth, covering her despair from spilling out. "That old Johnson with his doubting disease employed your mother as his secretary to supervise her and her family. But for a long time he didn't notice any suspicious actions and finally, your e-mail, Anne, was a superb excuse for him to fire her."

"Has.. has my mum heard about this..?"

"I don't think so. At least not in detail. Yet I think she knows the most important." Anne's head was full of unanswered questions it felt splitting up. "But why, why are you known as William Barner? Why do you carry the name of my father? Why would you tell me all this now?" she breathed heavily, "Isn't it too late?" Richardson knitted his brows. His pulled face was so miserable Anne had to refrain herself from asking more questions.

"The news, they are partly true. I did discover that cursed thing!" He tore his hair in anguish of despair. "I, I couldn't tell you earlier. Nothing can elude government monitors! I am very sorry. I really have nothing to say..." The old man was sobbing convulsively.

Anne, who has just been exposed to the deathly cold truth, could do nothing but space out. En passant, she had to think about the chicks in the neighbourhood. Even if they knew they were being bred and would be slaughtered, would they dare back to the wilderness? Or maybe..would there even be a wilderness?

St Albans Girls' School
Erasmus+ Team 2014-2016



STAGS staff

Mrs Buckley
Miss Jones
Miss McHugh
Dr Lawlor
Miss Hulme

STAGS students

Amber Hatia-Khawaja
Valentina Law
Katya Rees
Jaymi Stanley
Teo Zvonar
Lucy Hawker
Helen Jenkins
Freya Bowker-Howell
Aria Braden
Molly Brown
Ella Ovenden
Isabelle Kinghorn
Naimal Tayyab
Lauren McQueen
Scarlet Smiles
Lily Brown
Harriet Rawlinson
Genevieve Williams
Elizabeth Cattermole
Rachel Walsh
Tomi Odesola
Elyse Baker

British
Winning Short Stories

The care for one can cure all
The Daffodil

'Short-Story competition'



The Care For One Can Cure All

by
Natasha Peiris 9H



The care for one can cure all

Sunlight fights its way through the gaps in the curtains that cover my window. I wake up and turn my head towards them, wishing the sunlight would reach my cheeks to bring me warmth. It doesn't. I slowly swing my legs onto the floor in a sitting position and bury my face in my hands. Great! It's my birthday and I have no one to share it with. If my family were here, they would have been standing at the foot of my bed with a cake, waiting for me to wake up. I miss that.

I force myself up on my feet after I finish my wallowing and walk towards the window and draw the curtains back. It overlooks the streets that once were full of ignorant people, but now it is strewn with litter and too much empty space. I am the only one that didn't flee this town in search of hope because I know that hope is a lost word that they try and latch onto for comfort. I'm not one of those people. I figured that Doomsday had already hit this planet and there was nothing that could be done.

My father had managed businesses that contributed to the disease that has destroyed our population. His job was to decide how best to dispose of chemical waste that was very hazardous. His methods cost the world their lives. The waste was dumped into the lakes and rivers across the world; not just by my father, but by so many others as well. They have all had their input in the destruction of mankind and have killed so many. They may well have been murderers. My father too.

Animals in the lakes and rivers became the first victims of their thoughtlessness very fast as humans began dumping the waste there. They died almost instantly and then the animals outside of the water started to carry a disease that affected their appearance by sucking the colour from them, turning them grey in colour. Although it wasn't fatal to those animals, it was fatal to humans and as soon as it came into contact with humans, people started to die everywhere. All over the world, chaos broke out with riots, violence and war. Self-destruction was amplified to their worst until suddenly everyone gave up. Everywhere. They miraculously accepted the fact that they were all going to die.

Before people started to leave my town, my mother was a nurse who tried to find a cure for the disease by asking me to fetch the different herbs and plants from the woods that stretched far towards the coast. Obviously it had no effect and in the end my mother died with everyone else. For some strange reason I survived.

I reflect on what has happened in the last few months as I get ready for the day. It's easy to forget. It's easy to forget the loss of so many. It's not easy to forgive. I half-jump and half-run down the stairs to the dark corridor where my jacket is hung and my shoes are laid. I pull the jacket over my shoulder and slip my arms through the sleeves and then look down for my shoes. And then I see. I see. I see my baby brother's shoes laid down neatly next to mine. He was alive once, but now he's gone just like my parents when they were devoured by the disease.

I feel a big hole forming in the pit of my stomach, although I know it was there before. I was just filling the space temporarily to avoid the ever growing pain, but it's always been there. Tears start to run down my cheek and onto the black, wooden floor that I seem to be sinking slowly into. My hands start shaking slightly as I try to hold back the weakness I feel, but fail and clumsily slump against the wall, tears streaming down my face with my shouts of anger echoing through the empty house. I scream louder so that the whole world will hear but no one hears.

I sit there for what feels like hours with wet sleeves and shirt. I come to the conclusion that my brother hasn't been stolen from the world and neither has my family. They're lost and I need to find them and so before I have even registered what I have decided to do, I feel the cold morning air hitting my face as I open my front door. I think to myself that I haven't been living but just surviving because I felt as though there was nowhere to go but now I can think again.

For half an hour I walk through the woods towards the cliff that overlooks the endless blue sea until I find myself nearing the edge. I stop and admire the waves that crash and wonder why we could be so cruel to not only cause the death of so many, but also to take away the precious beauty that succeeded in making this world a better place to live in.

I float towards the very edge of the cliff. I lean over. I feel the wind pushing me over the edge. I am ready to see my family again.

And then the sound of a bird pulls me back. I search around for the source of the noise and then see the baby bird scrambling around helplessly with a look of terror on his face. He has a wound through the middle of his tiny stomach. I can't quite see what type of bird he is because of his grey feathers. I know he has the disease. I think to run away because I am afraid of catching it, but then I realise that there's no point. This animal is hurt and I need to care for it. I look around for his mother, but she is nowhere to be seen.

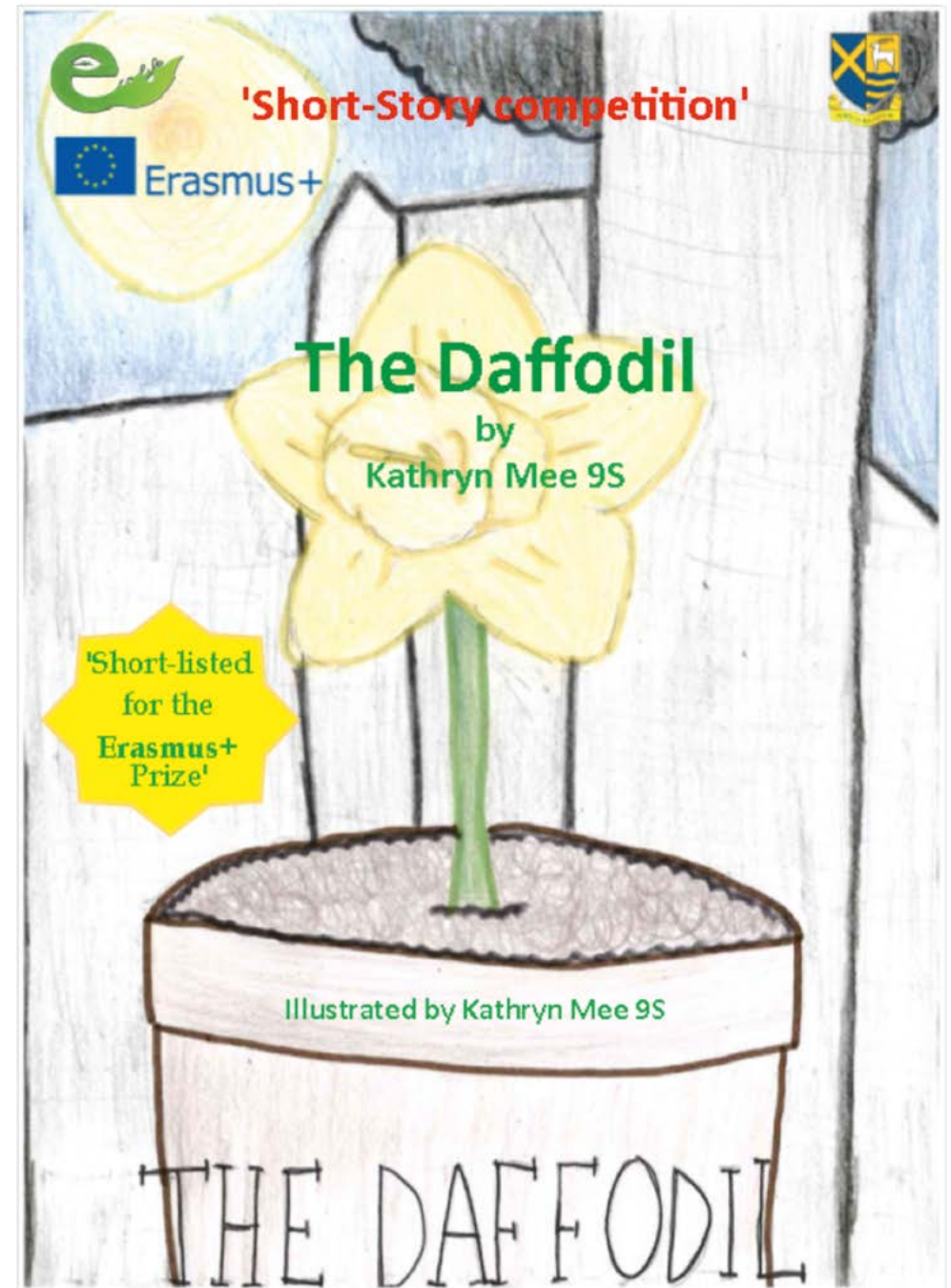
I feel the fear of this animal fading away when I see how vulnerable he is. I

scoop the bird into my hands and walk back into the forest towards the centre to find the herbs that my mum used when she attempted to cure the people in the town after the disease hit.

I start rummaging through leaves and plants, searching for the herbs I had memorised the days my mother used to nurse until, eventually, I find all of the things I need. I gather them before starting to work them together on top of the bark of a tree that had fallen, to create a remedy for the robin. It is restless while waiting, squirming and crying loudly. I reach over with the cloth that I ripped from my shirt and then I dip it into the poultice and swipe the cloth across the wound on the bird and watch the bird calm down while the paste soothes his pain.

It takes a while to realise what is going on. The wounds dramatically heal and the blood that was seeping out of the bird's wound is crawling back into its body and the beautiful colours of the bird devour the grey, defining every feather. I start to see a robin. Over a few minutes, the colour starts to soak through the animals that had gathered.

I run back home and find that the TV had turned on and the news was being blared out through the speaker phones. It shows the animals all across the world healing and the people being cured along with them. It's as though they started healing when I cared for the one bird.



The Daffodil

This was the day; the day my class saw nature. None of us had ever seen any form of plant or vegetation before, as they were not grown in the city. The plants were grown in the country, far away from the pollution of our everyday lives. In school we had only seen pictures of what the world used to be like, greenery everywhere you look.

Everybody around me began to get up. We followed the teachers outside into the stench of the smog. As we trudged to the coach, occasional people suffering from asthma began to choke; this happened every time they stepped out of the door. I sat down next to my friend on the run down seats of the coach and we watched dirt roads slowly emerge from the maze of skyscrapers. On the horizon you could see distant specs of green rise up from the horizon. Soon enough we were staring into the face of nature.

A transparent dome towered over our heads as we came out from the coach; everyone had a dazed expression painted across their faces. Every plant imaginable stood before us. A man wearing a luminous orange waistcoat started to tell us about the dome, he mentioned a couple of tree names I recognised, but most of the language he used was completely alien to me; tulip, sycamore tree, vines... After the man finished talking we divided ourselves into groups and started to venture into the jungle of greenery.

Several artificial air dispensers were dotted around the entrance of the dome which I recognised from the city. As we hopped over the root infested path leading further inside the dome, I noticed small bugs buzzing all around us. We all took deep breaths of the crystal clear air. The tour guide was explaining about all the fantastic different species this dome held. Although I was only half listening as I was too engulfed in the beauty of nature. Something the tour guide said caught my attention "The tour will last 30 minutes and then you will go back to school". Suddenly it all hit me, 30 minutes of paradise and then back to the polluted disaster of the city. I had to think of a way to keep the nature with me.

I tried to make the most of the short time we had in the dome by learning about all the different types of plants and vegetables that were grown there. But the end soon came around, before I knew it we were told to start making our way to the exit. I started to panic, frantically thinking of a way to stay. As we neared the way out I reached down, grabbed a plant pot labelled 'Daffodils' and shoved it into my bag. I heard one of our guides raise his voice to say "please leave the plants where they are, they won't survive outside anyway".

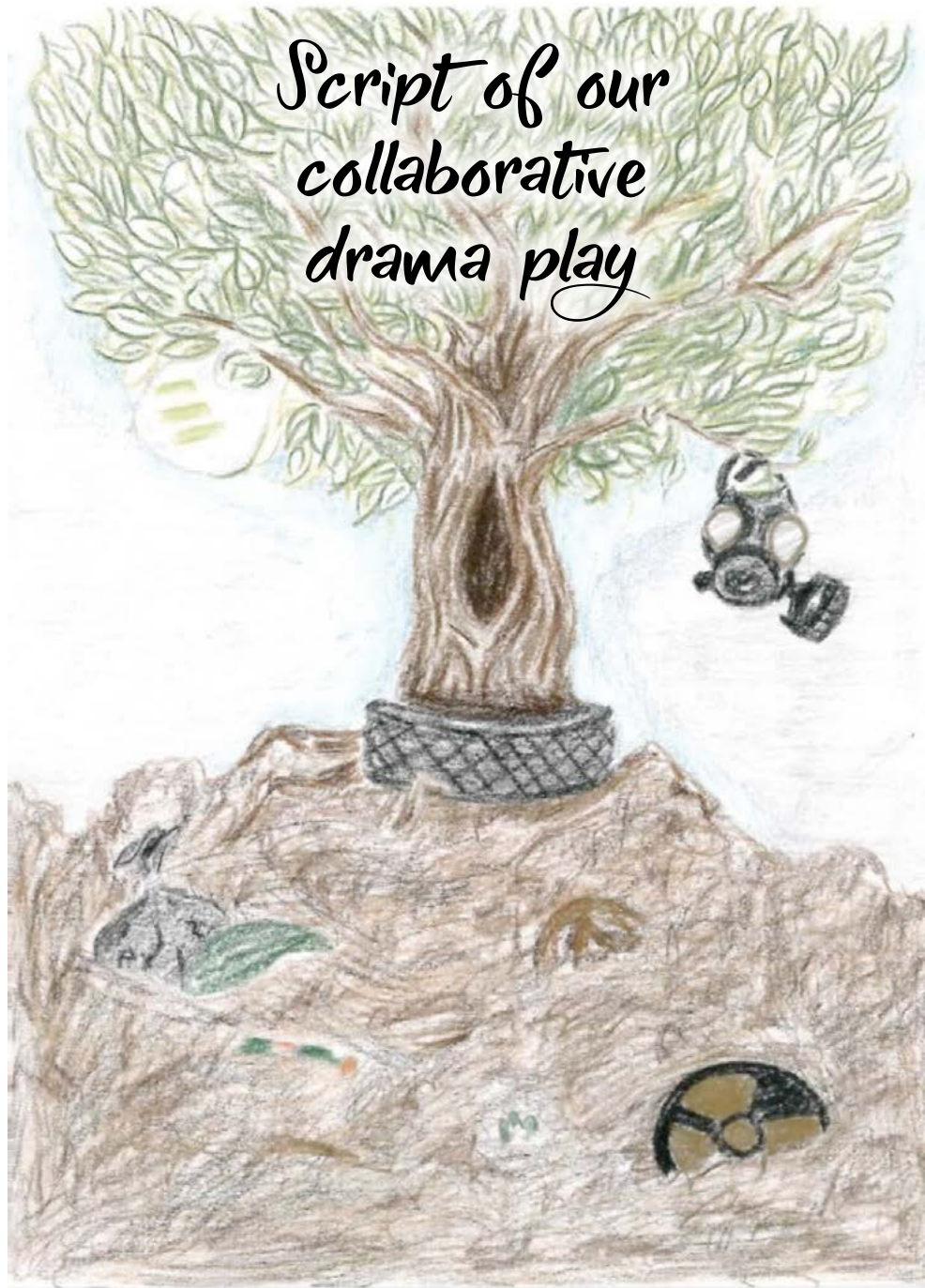
I ducked my head down, hoping he hadn't seen as I rushed out of the door towards the coach.

I sat down on the coach next to my friend once again. I leaned over to her and whispered what I had hidden in my bag. "You're crazy", she said. "That plant will never survive out in the city, and besides what are you even planning to do with it?" I only replied with silence because I didn't know what I was going to do with it. As we sat through the long journey home I held the daffodil upright inside my bag so it at least had a chance of staying alive.

As we reached the outskirts of the city an idea appeared in my mind: I could use the plant as an example of what life could be like if we included nature in the city. Before we got off the coach I explained my thoughts to my friend, who seemed intrigued by the idea. Whilst I stepped into the thick, moist, polluted air of the city I imagined what life could really be like if nature was incorporated into our everyday lives. After school we started making posters and taking pictures of the daffodil before it started to wilt. Tomorrow we would give a presentation to the class about our ideas.

The class was excited about our ideas the next day and were very happy to help. Mrs Hudson our teacher suggested that we go to the mayor of the city and explain why this difference could make such an impact on us. That afternoon the class and I went around the city putting up posters and persuading local citizens to join our campaign. Over the next couple of days more and more people seemed interested by the idea, and sure enough the mayor did catch on and asked for us to see him. So we told him about our campaign and how it would make a difference to our society, he promised to help but he did warn us that things like this did take a very long time to happen.

Over time people started to use cars less often, more wind turbines and solar panels were made making less need for fossil fuels and more and more people were made aware of the change our city needed. As the air got cleaner and our lives were less polluted, people started to plant flowers and trees in their gardens, and after a couple of years they actually started to grow. There was still much need of the dome even five to ten years later but the city really had transformed; trees dotted around, maybe two or three on each street, plants and grass in parks and people's gardens. All because of one daffodil brought back by me from a school trip all those years ago.



Script of our collaborative drama play

In Central PlasticoTown

**Based on a short story by Kathryn Mee
Adapted for the stage by
Erasmus Team 2015**

Character List (Between 15-20 cast members)

Thomas/Tammy
Mother
David (T's best friend)
Old Man Joe
Mr Candy
Mrs Whiskers

(T's friends):
Matthew
Sophie
James
Josie
Amanda
Hannah

Mrs/Mr McNutt (Teacher)
Policeman/woman
TV Presenter
Shopkeeper
Tree (3-6 actors)
Paparazzi

Members of Plastic Town (to be multi role-played by friends, teacher, policeman, tree, paparazzi etc)

Act I Scene 1- Plastictown

Members of Plastictown on stage, coughing and dragging themselves around, slowly. Old man Joe staggers on stage right, towards centre stage. He looks out at the audience and begins to narrate.

Old Man Joe: (addressing audience) I am Old Man Joe, the oldest man in Plastictown. It didn't use to be like this. (Gesturing to the ill and coughing members of Plastictown)

When I was young, it was green everywhere. Trees grew and there was grass on the ground. People were happy and loved to play.

As OMJ speaks the members of Plastictown transform into the town that he describes. Some become trees, some play happily, some garden and others greet each other/jog etc.

OMJ: But then the factories and industries moved in, they started cutting down the trees and Plastictown became a dumping ground.

Members of Plastictown begin acting out what OMJ describes, some cut down the trees, others begin throwing away rubbish and some create a factory conveyor belt/soundscape to show the industrial change.

OMJ: People started dying. The industries ruined us. Plastictown is as good as dead.

Members of Plastictown drag themselves off stage, coughing once again. OMJ staggers off stage right.

SONG & DANCE NUMBER 1: IN CENTRAL PLASTIC TOWN

Act I Scene 2- Thomas

Thomas and his friend David are playing chess centre stage. Thomas' mum is lying on a sofa upstage left, half asleep.

Tom: Chess is so boring!

David: It's not so bad! But I do wish we could go outside and play football.

Tom: (Looking towards the audience as if out of the window) It seems to get worse every day. The fog is so thick.

Mum starts coughing, interrupting the conversation. Tom and David look towards the sound and then return to their conversation. David coughs too.

Tom: When did the doctor say you are going to get better?

David: Soon.

Mum: Thomas, can you go and get my medication from Mr Candy please dear?

Tom: Of course, mother.

Thomas and Daniel walk stage left where Mr Candy enters with his cart. Customers are waiting in line and Mr Candy serves them.

Daniel: I don't like the pharmacy, it's so boring.

Tom: I know, but we can't go outside.

Tom and Daniel get to the front of the queue.

Mr Candy: Hi boys! Welcome to Mr Candy's pharmacy! (spreads his arms out joyfully) Do you want the usual, son?

Tom: Yes please. (depressed)

Mr Candy goes to the cupboard to fetch the medicine. He hands the pills to Tom.

Mr Candy: I hope that this will work. It's the strongest thing I've got.

Tom: I don't think it will, she's getting worse and worse (sadly)

Mr Candy picks two lollipops off his jacket.

Mr Candy: Would you like a sweet?

Tom and Daniel both accept, take the sweet and leave the shop.

Tom and Daniel are walking until they bump into students from school, sitting on a bench.

T&D: (tiredly) Hi

Student 1: How's your mum?

Tom: She's not doing well. How's your family?

Student 2: (sadly) My dad died last week. His chest was so bad there was nothing they could do for him.

Everyone: Oh dear, that's so sad. I'm sorry (etc)

Mrs Whiskers storms on from stage right, marches up to Thomas and shouts

Mrs W: Did you steal my cat?

Tom: Why would I steal your cat? I hate cats!

Daniel: Yeah, cats are ugly.

Mrs W: Ugly? No they're not!

Tom: They're just animals!

Mrs W: (*Shouting angrily*) Excuse me! Cats are my life!!

Tom and Daniel run away from Mrs W.

Tom and Daniel arrive at Tom's house. Tom walks up to mum who is lying on the sofa.

Tom: Hi Mum, here are your pills.

Mum: Thank you Thomas. You're a good boy.

Tom: I love you mum. You will get better.

Daniel: I have to go home.

Tom: Are you walking home?

Daniel: I will be fine.

Tom: Ok. Remember to wear your gas mask!

Daniel: I will. Bye.

Tom: (*to himself*) It's not fair Plastictown is ruined and everything is dying, even my mum. (*He begins to cry*)

MUSIC WHILE CHARACTERS MOVE INTO ACT 2

Act 2 Scene 1 - Old Man Joe

Thomas is standing outside his house, stage left. Mum is off-stage. Thomas is packing his school bag and turns stage right to leave.

Mum: Ok, Thomas. Be careful. What do you say?

Tom: Don't walk in the black fog, and don't talk to strangers.

Mum: I love you! Have a nice day! (*coughs*)

Tom: Bye Mum!

Tom leaves the house, stage left. Mr Candy walks on; stage right with his candy cart.

SONG AND DANCE NUMBER 2: LOLLY POP

Mr Candy: Lolly pop, lollypop, lolly- lolly- lollypop (*twice*)

Mr Candy starts a new song, standing centre stage. He claps too. He walks through the audience and throws sweets proudly.

Mr Candy: (*singing*) In Plastictown we have a lot of sweets. We have a lot of sweets, for you to eat! Come on! Sing with me! In Plastictown we have a lot of sweets. We have a lot of sweets for you to eat!

Suddenly Mr Candy stops singing.

Mr Candy: Stop! The sweets have run out! There is not enough water to produce the sweets anymore!

Mr Candy goes back to his seat, stage right. Thomas comes to Mr Candy's seat to buy some sweets.

Mr Candy: Hey, Thomas!

Tom: Hey Mr Candy! Can I have one of these please? (*points to them*)

Mr Candy: Yes, of course!

Mr Candy takes the sweets and gives them to Thomas.

Tom: You haven't got as many sweets as normal, have you?

Mr Candy: There is a lack of water, so we can't produce as much as normal.

Tom: Ok. How much is it?

Mr Candy: (*smiling*) It's free for you, Thomas.

Tom: Thank you, Mr Candy. Bye!

Mr Candy: Bye, Thomas!

Mr Candy walks to the back of stage, centre. He shouts, 'Candy! Candy!' He exits.

Mrs Whiskers and Old Man Joe appear stage left. Mrs W is walking her cats. One cat scratches OMJ and he shoos it away.

Mrs W: Oh, Old Man Joe, I'm very sorry!

Thomas approaches Mrs W as she leaves the old man and bumps into Thomas.

Tom: Hello, Mrs Whiskers!

Mrs W: Oh, hello Thomas. You've grown so much!

Tom: How are your cats doing?

Mrs W: Oh, you know, they are all the same.

Cat scratches Thomas. Mrs W apologises for Pippin (her cat). OMJ walks slowly behind Thomas and he touches his shoulder.

OMJ: (croakily) Thomas!

Thomas turns around, surprised.

OMJ: I have got a tree!

Tom: (afraid) My Mum said that I shouldn't talk to strangers.

OMJ: The tree needs water, and light...

Tom: Oh, ok, ok

Thomas goes away, stage right and asks audience for help

Tom: A tree. I've read about them in my history books at school, but I've never seen one before. I've always wanted to. But I don't know this old man, although he seems harmless enough. What do you think? Should I trust him?

Returns to OMJ.

Tom: Where is the tree?

OMJ: The tree is outside the city, in the Plastictown graveyard.

Tom: So, the tree needs water and light, yes? To make it grow?

OMJ: Yes, it's very important!

Tom: Yeah, I understand...

Thomas walks to school (stage right).

Act 2 Scene 2- School

School children/ T's friends enter from stage right. They are talking when Thomas comes in.

Tom: Hi Matthew! (Shakes hands etc. as he greets each student). Hi Sophie, Hi

James, Hi Josie, Hi Amanda, Hi Hannah. Where is Daniel?

Sophie: Maybe he is late.

Hannah: He is always late.

All the friends shrug. Teacher enters from stage left. She's very happy, skipping on.

Mrs McNutt: (in a sing song voice) Hello everybody! Is everything fine? Where's Daniel?

Josie: We don't know. Maybe he's late.

Mrs M: Ok. Now, let's start our geography lesson. Does anybody know where Yecla is?

Students don't know. Mrs McNutt turns to audience.

Mrs M: Does anybody of you know where Yecla is? (audience responds). There are the clever kids (to audience), not you (to class). Now how about this one. Where is St Albans?

Matthew: In England?

Mrs M: You're not as stupid as I thought!

Class laughs

Amanda: (putting her hand up) Mrs McNutt it's very hot in here. Can we open a window please?

Amanda fans herself with her hand. James gets up to open the window.

Mrs M: (scared) No! Don't open the window! It's very dangerous.

James: Why can't we open the window?

Mrs McNutt: If the polluted air gets inside, you can get sick and you will all die. You know this children, this is why you must wear your gas masks whenever you go outside. The smog is getting worse.

Amanda: Is that why so many people are missing?

Mrs McNutt: I don't know. (very nervous) Now put your books away. We have a test.

Students groan.

Act 2 Scene 3- Daniel

Policeman enters stage through the audience greeting them with 'Hello, Bonjour, Guten Tag, Hola!' He shakes hands with members of the audience as he passes. He joins the class which are stage left. He stands centre stage.

Policeman: (to audience) Repeat after me: Hello, Bonjour, Hola, Guten Tag

Turns to face the class and all students stand up.

Policeman: Sit down please! I am Sergeant Smith and I am here because a student at this school has been reported as missing. His name is Daniel. Does anyone know where he could be?

Matthew: He might be at a football camp. He loves football.

Policeman: I will have to ask you some questions. When did you last see Daniel?

Thomas: I saw him yesterday. We played chess together.

Class talk loudly amongst themselves

Policeman: (claps hands together) Quiet please! I'm sure we will find him.

Everyone holds freeze-frame and Thomas talks to audience.

Tom: I wonder where Daniel is? I hope he's ok. He's my best friend, I don't know what I'd do without him. Maybe Old Man Joe's tree could help. If I give it water and light, maybe Daniel will return.

MUSIC WHILE CHARACTERS MOVE INTO ACT 3.

Act 3 Scene 1-Tree

Mrs W walks on from left to right towards centre stage. Tom walks from right to centre and they meet half-way. Mrs W is holding her cat and stroking it. They are both sad; heads are looking down to the ground.

Tom: Hi Mrs Whiskers.

Mrs W: Hi Thomas

Tom: What are you doing out here?

Mrs W: I'm looking for my cats.

Tom: I was just coming back from school. I just found out that my friend Daniel has gone missing.

Mrs W: My cats have gone missing too.

Tom strokes Mrs W's cat.

Tom: Is it ok?

Mrs W: My cat needs water. I have some water here. (She takes a bottle out of her bag)

Tom: My Mum needs water too.

Mrs W: I can give you some water

Tom: Really? Are you sure?

Mrs W gives Tom the bottle of water.

Tom: Thanks very much. I'll keep an eye out for your cat.

Tom walks away and Mrs W keeps on looking for her cats.

Tom's Mum is on the sofa (stage centre) and she's watching TV (stage right). Tom's mum coughs and Tom pats his mum's shoulder.

Tom: Mum, are you ok? I brought you some water from Mrs Whiskers.

Mum: Thank you Tom. You are a good boy.

Mum sips the water from a cup. Mum coughs.

Tom: I'll turn on the TV to make you feel better.

Tom turns on the TV remote.

TV Presenter: Hello. Good afternoon. Today I'm going to teach you how in the olden days people used to plant what they called trees. First, you get a seed and plant it underground. Then you water it, and after a few days, when it starts to grow, it needs light

Tom nods towards the TV and runs to the shelter to get the light (torch) which is back stage left. Tom gets the torch and his mum turns and watches him.

Mum: Tom, where are you going?

Tom tries to think of an excuse.

Tom: Um, I...um..it's very dark outside and I..umm..need the light to see...um.. through the fog.

Mum: Oh, poor Tom! It's Ok and I'm very sorry.

Tom: It's okay Mum.

Tom leaves the house and goes to the well, centre stage. He gets to the well and looks around nervously, being wary of who is watching him. Mrs W and Mr C are hiding behind the well.

Tom: I need to get water for the tree. Otherwise, it will die!

Tom begins collecting water. He turns to leave and Mrs W and Mr C jump up to stop him.

Mrs W: Stop!

Mr C: What are you doing here?

Tom tries to back away but they stop him. Tom looks scared

Tom: (scared) I..um..just need to...um...get water...for my...mother! She is very ill and she needs water!

Mrs W: We all need water, but it's rationed in Plastictown, you know that! Stop! Get him!

Mr C: Thief! Thief!

Mrs W: Thief! Thief!

Tom backs away and runs away. Mrs W and Mr C hobble towards him but he is too fast. Tom runs into the graveyard and looks around for the tree. He begins to look amongst the rubbish and plastic for the plant.

Tom: I could have sworn that Old Man Joe said that the tree was here.

He lifts up some rubbish and finds the tree.

Tom: Oh! Hello little tree! I have some water for you!

Tom waters the plant and it grows a bit.

Tom: Oh, and some light.

Tom shines the torch on the plant. The plant grows a bit more.

Tom: Wow! Old Man Joe was right! Trees are real!

Act 3 Scene 2- Happy Valley

We see Thomas watering the tree, centre stage. Thomas is kneeling down, giving water from a bottle.

Tom: Come on little tree, keep on growing!

Thomas seems healthier and happier. We see the tree growing. He smiles. Papparazi run through the audience to centre stage, taking photos.

Papparazi: Look! The miracle boy!

Walk around tree, looking excited. Taking photos. Exit stage left.

People come on from all around the stage and they walk around, happy.

People: I can breathe again! The sun has come out! The sky is blue again!

Mr Candy enters from stage right..

Shopkeeper: Good morning, Thomas. Do you want to come in?

Tom: Yes, sure.

Shopkeeper: Do you want some candy?

Tom: Yes, thank you.

He gives him some candy.

Mr C: (smiling) You look so healthy

Thomas: (waving) Thank you. Bye!

Tom's mother enters stage left. Tom guides his mum to the tree.

Tom: *(pointing)* Look Mum! It's a tree!

Mum: *(smiling)* You're a good boy Thomas!

Tom: I've watered the tree for a long time now.

They return home to stage left. People come on stage and there is water.

Mr Candy splashes water into his face and drinks water. Old Man Joe is fishing.

paparazzi takes off shoes and plays in the water. Mrs Whiskers is giving water to her cats. People look around as if the sun is shining and begin taking off their gas masks. All are happy and healthy.

People: Oh wow! The water is so cold! The air is so fresh! The smog has gone!

Old Man Joe comes from back to front. Walking with a walking stick.

Old Man Joe: That was the story of Plastictown. Now it's called...

All: Green Valley!

SONG & DANCE NUMBER 3: HAPPY VALLEY

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