

Special guest star: Portugal



DISCOVERING PORTUGUESE LITERATURE

Welcome back, to the third issue of our Twin Bulletin, the periodical publication of the partner schools of the eTwinning project Twin Library.

We continue our gallery of writers and works from modern and contemporary literature in the partner countries.

This month we are glad to introduce two Portuguese writers, José Maria Eça de Queirós (1845 - 1900) and the 1998 Nobel Prize Winner José Saramago (1922 - 2010).

Our partner students of EBS Pinheiro in Portugal will introduce us to the writers and to two of their works: "Singularities of a Blond-Haired Girl" (*Singularidades de uma rapariga loira*) by Eça de Queirós (1874) and "Death with interruptions" (*As intermitências da morte*) by José Saramago (2005)

Happy Reading!

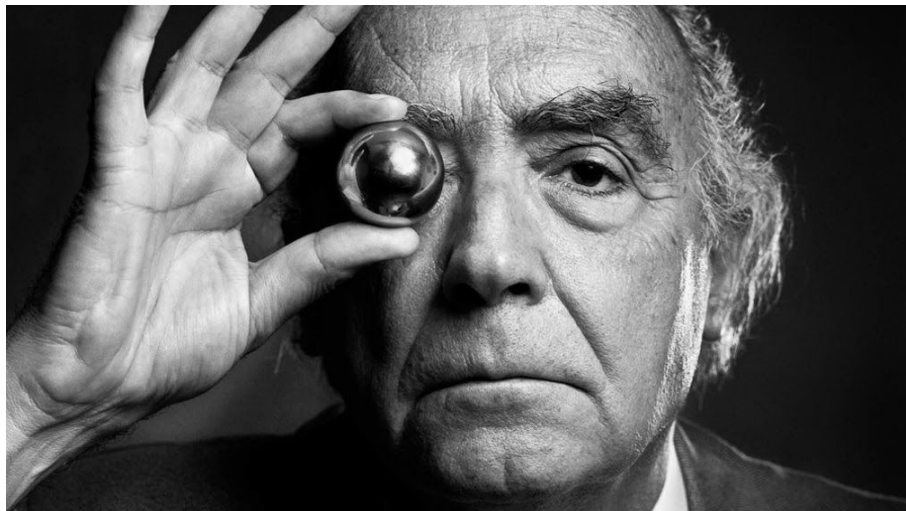
The Twin Library Team

**"Reading is probably another way of being in a place."
— José Saramago, *El hombre duplicado***



AUTHORS AND BOOKS

MEETING JOSE' SARAMAGO (1922 - 2010)



SHORT BIOGRAPHY

José Saramago was the first Portuguese writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998.

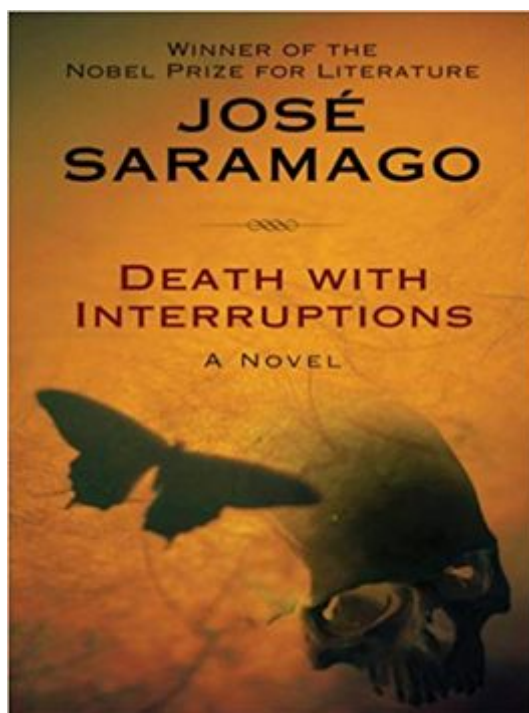
The beginnings of his life and career were quite hard: he was raised in a poor family in Lisbon. He started working early and after being a mechanic and a worker he became a journalist and a translator. He joined the Portuguese Communist Party in 1969 and published several poetry collections. He worked as editor of a Lisbon newspaper in the years 1974-75, at the time when the dictatorship of António Salazar was overthrown. Due to an anti communist wave in politics, Saramago lost his position and in the 1950s he began writing the novels that would make him internationally famous.

Among his most important novels we remember *Memorial do convento* (1982), *O ano da morte de Ricardo Reis* (1984), *A jangada de pedra* (1986), *O evangelho segundo Jesus Cristo* (1991). This work provoked the reaction of the Roman Catholic Church, who tried to prevent its publication. As a protest, the writer moved to a volunteer exile to the Canary Islands where he died in 2010.



DEATH WITH INTERRUPTIONS (2005)

As intermitências da morte



Synopsis

This book tells us about a fictional country where Death is suspended for seven months.

From first of January, no one else died in this country invented by José Saramago. Although Death is cruel and merciless, her suspension has brought several consequences for political, social and religious structures such as funeral agencies, hospitals and the church. With this, Máphia (a secret organization), arises and benefits from this chaos.

In the second part of the book, Death already appears as a character and communicates through a letter that she has returned to work, but in



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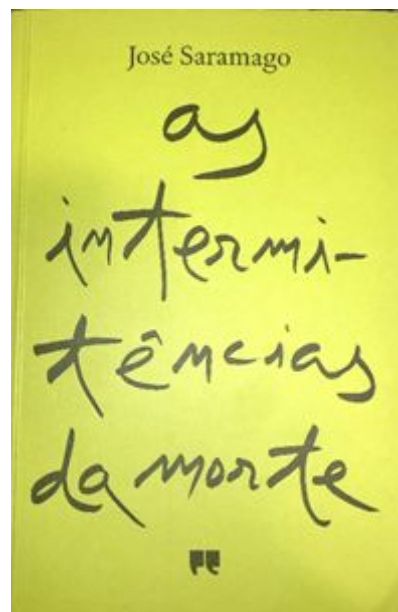


a different way. This time, Death will send violet letters to their next victims informing them of their time of death. Chaos among humans returns.

That is when everything changes, when one of the letters is returned to Death, refusing to carry the message to the victim. Death decides to investigate, turning into a beautiful and determined woman. During the investigation, she comes across a 50-year-old cellist.

The two start meeting often and eventually fall in love. This passion makes Death change her mind and as it says at the end of this story: "The next day no one died."

by Cátia Silva, Jéssica Silva, Tânia Cruz 10ºA





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Book review

After reading this book, we can say that it is not the best book we have ever read, but it contains an interesting story, as we never know what will happen next, it is unpredictable.

It presents a vocabulary which is a little difficult to interpret without respecting various spelling rules (author's style).

The author often uses irony to express himself, especially in describing the concern of various sectors of society before and after death has ceased its activities.

With this work José Saramago intends to demonstrate that the idea that we all have of a life without end, that is, without death, would have enough implications if this happened.

The part of the work that struck us most was when the various sectors of society realized that the fact that death had ceased its activities would be harmful to them, thus demonstrating the selfishness and character of various people in society.

We appreciate the courage that family and others have had to get their loved ones across the border, but we don't like the ending very much because despite being unpredictable, we find this to have too much fantasy in the latest reported facts.

In conclusion, this book conveys to us the consequences of immortality and that we need death for the beliefs we believe to make sense and for the economy not to stop.

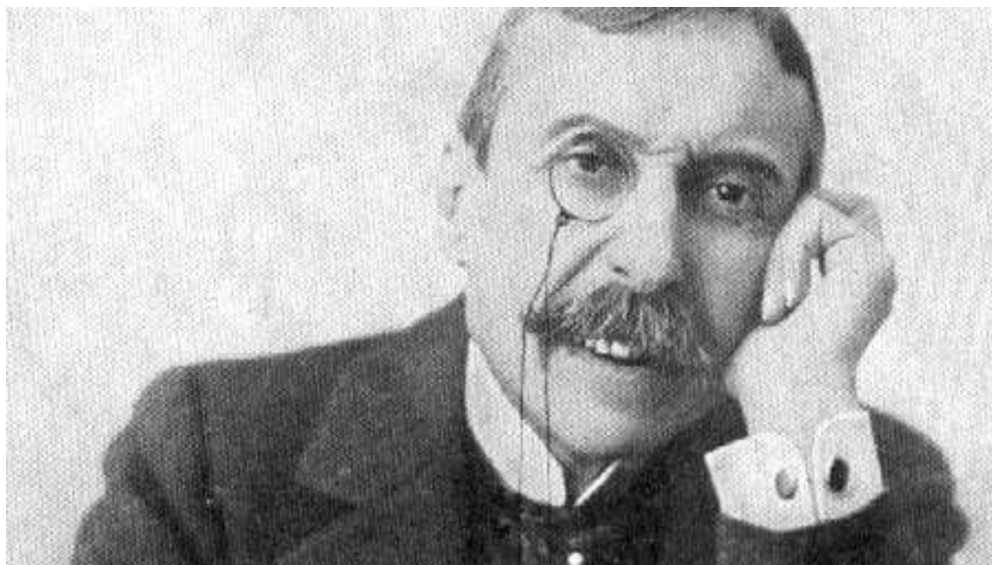
by Joana Ferreira and Pedro Rocha, 10.ºA



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MEETING JOSÉ MARIA EÇA DE QUEIRÓS (1845 - 1900)



LIFE AND WORKS

Early years

José Maria de Eça de Queirós was born in Póvoa de Varzim in 1845 from an unmarried couple. His parents' marriage took place four years after but the little child was immediately taken to his paternal grandparents' house where he remained until the age of ten.

When his paternal grandmother died, he started living with his parents and four siblings in Oporto. He was admitted to the Colegio da Lapa in Oporto and at the age of 16 he started attending the University of Coimbra.

In Coimbra, Eça met future writers such as Teófilo Braga, Ramalho Ortigão, Guerra Junqueiro, Guilherme de Azevedo and Oliveira Martins, but above all he became friends with Antero de Quental, who encouraged him to write for the magazine "Gazeta de Portugal", where he published his first works, later collected in a volume called "Barbarian Prose." Eça finished his Law Degree and began to live in Lisbon, working there both as a lawyer and a journalist.

He founded the newspaper "The District of Évora" where he worked as a director and a



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journalist. He collaborated in periodical publications, newspaper and magazines throughout his life.

In 1869 he made a six-week trip to the East to attend the inauguration of the Suez Canal, in the company of D. Luís de Castro, brother of his future wife, D. Emília de Castro. During the trip they also visited Palestine and based on his travel notes he wrote some of his works, including the most notable "The Mystery of Sintra Road" (1870) and "The Relic" (1887).

The "Cenacle"

Returning to Lisbon, Eça de Queirós joined the informal group of Lisbon intellectuals named "Cenacle" discussing about politics, arts, society and science.

It was at this time that the group invented a character together, called a "satanic poet," named Carlos Fradique Mendes, and who produced a book called "Macadame Poems" that was even published. Eça de Queiroz liked the character so much that he used it for another creation, called "Fradique Mendes's Correspondence", which served to denigrate bourgeois and well-behaved morals.

On 18th May 1871 the signatures of these young writers, including Eça de Queirós, appeared in the newspaper "The Revolution of September", signing a manifesto intended to "reflect on the political and social changes that the world was undergoing, to investigate society as it is and should be, to study all the new ideas of the century and all the currents of the century. "

These young writers refused to keep Portugal from ignoring the new ideas circulating in Europe and thus aimed at a social, moral and political transformation of the peoples and intended to link Portugal to the modern movement, as well as to stir public opinion with the great questions of philosophy, modern science and study the conditions of political transformation, economic and religious background of the Portuguese society.

The manifesto was also about the dissemination of a series of lectures called "Casino Lisbonense Democratic Conferences" but simply known as "Casino Conferences", which defined the group of writers of this "Generation of 70".

A warning from the authorities outlawed them all of a sudden. State authorities claimed that they attacked state religion and institutions, since they conveyed ideas that were considered dangerous in the eyes of the high ranks of society.

Faced with prohibition and censorship, Eça's response came in partnership with another young Upper Room writer, his friend Ramalho Ortigão. Together they began a series of monthly publications which they called "The Barbs" in 1871. Published in the "Diário de Notícias", they satirized with humor not only political, but also economic, cultural, social and even moral aspects; the religion and the Catholic faith; the social role of women; romantic, false and hypocritical literature.



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"The Barbs" thus became a new and innovative concept of journalism - the journalism of ideas, social and cultural criticism that today is a journalistic panel of late nineteenth-century Portuguese society.

It was also with Ramalho Ortigão's partnership that Eça wrote "The Mystery of the Sintra Road", published in the "Diário de Notícias", in the form of weekly leaflets that resembled real anonymous letters and aroused public enthusiasm.

However, at the end of the year 1871, the imposition and responsibility of the position his father had urged him to take on forced Eça de Queirós to move permanently to Leiria and to leave Lisbon at the age of 27.

Literature and social reality

The seemingly quiet city had a great impact on Eça's life as it was there that Eça gathered material to write his most controversial work and one of his most popular ones: "The Crime of Father Amaro", published in 1875.

It can be said that it was there, when dealing with social reality, that Eça gained the ability to know how to combine the idea of naturalistic-realistic literature, with everyday characters and not just archetypes, which let him stand out among other realistic writers.

In 1873, by choice and family influence, Eça resigned as Administrator of the Municipality of Leiria and entered the diplomatic career assuming the position of Consul of Portugal in Havana, Cuba.

The detachment from the Portuguese milieu did not prevent him from collaborating in national newspapers, as he had always done so far, with chronicles and short stories, but he made the decision to stop collaborating with the "Barbs" since it could not keep up with Portuguese daily social events. Therefore, Eça decided to draw his attention to the Cuban society.

A few years later he was transferred to England, first to the Newcastle Consulate and then to the Bristol Consulate. The years between 1874 and 1878 were the most productive ones in his literary career, when he wrote some of his most important works, such as "The Capital".

During these years, he continued his journalistic activity, occasionally publishing in the "Diário de Notícias", in Lisbon, the "Letters of England" section.

Return to Portugal

At the end of 1885 Eça became seriously ill and in order to recover, he returned to Portugal indefinitely. It is during this period that he established a love relationship with D. Maria Emília de Castro. They got married the following year in a very private ceremony because Eça was then forty and she was only twenty-nine. This relationship resulted in



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four children (Alberto, Antonio, José Maria and Maria).

In 1888 he moved to Paris with his wife. It was also in that same year that the novel “Os Maias”, considered as his masterpiece, was published.

In 1887, some of the former young Portuguese writers who formed the "**Generation of 70**" decided to meet periodically at Café Tavares, Hotel Bragança or the homes of its members. Eça joined this group whenever he came to Portugal.

The group assumed the character of an exclusive society, bringing together the majority of writers, intellectuals and politicians who had tried to transform the country culturally and socially. They called themselves the “Losers of Life,” a denomination that clearly stems from the group members' renunciation of their aspirations of youth.

This feeling of disillusionment is most pertinently felt at the end of the work "Os Maias", which at bottom is almost a reflection, more than any work of Eça, of his own life; what he knew and defended as a young man, and the realization that he was after all a "Loser of Life."

The later novels, “The Illustrious House of Ramires” and “The City and the Mountains”, move away from the realism and criticism of the Portuguese society at the time, and give way to some optimism about the future.

In 1889 Eça found a magazine directed from Paris, “Revista de Portugal”, which was immediately seen as a “national project”, with thoughts, criticism and adverse opinions. Eça wrote in “Revista de Portugal”, as soon as Prince D. Carlos ascended the throne: “The King emerges as the only force that still lives and operates in the country.”

However, the group's discredit caused the Revista to end its editions after 24 issues, three years after its foundation.

An uncertain and never ascertained illness led Eça to a premature death on 16 August 1900.

by Francisca Rocha and Tânia Fernandes, 10.ºA



A video-version of the biography of Eça de Queirós is visible [here](#).



SINGULARITIES OF A BLOND-HAIRED GIRL (1874)

Singularidades de uma rapariga loura



The plot

It's a love story. The love of a hardworking honest young man, Macário, for a blonde girl who “had the blond character like the colour of her hair. Bearing in mind that blonde is a weak and faded she spoke little, always smiled with his white little teeth, said ‘yes’ to everything. She was very simple, almost indifferent, full of compromises. It is for this girl that is apparently docile and unwilling to love, that Macário decides to leave his uncle Francisco’s house, where he worked as a clerk, and goes to Cape



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Verde on business, only to deserve the hand of Luisa. However, Luisa is, in fact, a blonde and singular girl. Marcario decides to ask her to marry him. He takes the bride shopping and she steals a ring with two pearls.

The employee of the jewellery catches Luísa in the act. Macário apologizes to the employee and pays for the stolen ring, without losing his temper.

When they leave the jewellery, the young man abandons Luisa, calling her a thief and the next day he calls off the wedding.

by Bruna Sousa, Sara Ribeiro 10ºA

Our comment

This text surprised us due to its ending.

Eça de Queirós captivated the reader and, at the same time, deceived him because the end was unexpected, in spite of the clues he gives us during the text.

We considered the careful descriptions made about the characters really relevant.

Eça put all the details necessary for the comprehension of this tale. When we finished the reading, we understood the utility of the characterizations made.

In this tale it is shown the persistence of Macário to get out of poverty, that is, his effort and willpower.

Giving up on our problems isn't the solution, we have to fight to overcome our difficulties.

We also think that it is pertinent the fact that the uncle helped Macário, although he was against the marriage.

At the beginning of this story the narrator tells the amazement of Macário when he saw the girl with such an expensive fan and later weird events are reported like



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the missing of a package of scarves from India and the golden coin. These little details indicate, indirectly, the character of the girl.

The message transmitted through this text is that "appearances can be deceiving" because Luísa was really pretty but also a thief, in other words, she had a bad personality.

We advise all the people to read this tale. It's a fantastic choice, because it transmits us a lot of feelings and moral messages that reflect our society.

by Beatriz Alves, Carolina Marques, João Silva, 10ºA

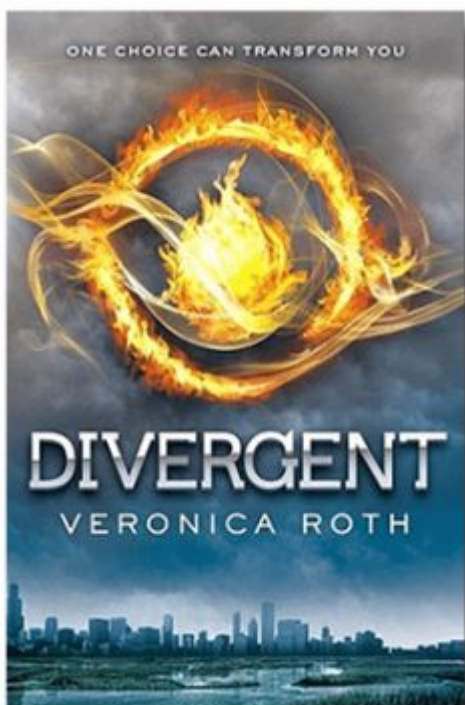


We can't judge by the appearances.

Sometimes, what's outside doesn't show what's inside.



TWIN BOOK REVIEWS

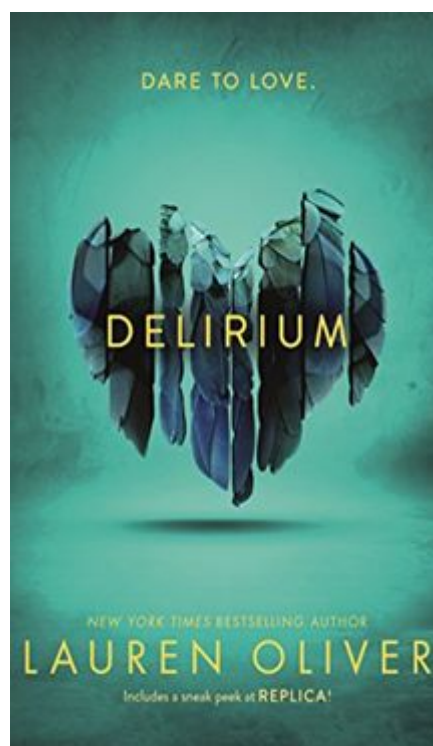


DIVERGENT, 2011

I think that this book is very nice. I liked the main characters a lot and it seemed very interesting and captivating to me.

The protagonists are Tris (Beatrice Prior) and Four.

The story takes place in Chicago. Its inhabitants are the only human beings left in the world and, to protect themselves from



DELIRIUM, 2011

In the future Lena lives in, Love is a disease. Life is quite, simple, monotonous and predictable (probably this situation is the result of a catastrophic world war). All those who turn eighteen undergo an operation that deprives them of the possibility of falling in love. Lena is looking forward to being "treated", so she will be



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external threats, they have built a fence without even knowing what is outside. To maintain the peace achieved after a long war, the population has been divided into five “factions”, each of them having a specific role in society. The factions are called:

- Abnegation (The Selfless)
- Amity (The Peaceful)
- Candor (The Honest)
- Dauntless (The Brave)
- Erudite (The Intelligent)

At 16, all the teenagers must take an aptitude test. This test allows them to understand which faction they could belong to and recommends a faction they should choose. The test can also have a special outcome and show that someone can belong to all the five factions, being what is called a “Divergent”.

The government is against the Divergents because they see them as dangerous, so hunt them down.

Beatrice is a 16-year-old girl who lives with her family and her brother Caleb. They belong to the Abnegation faction. Like all the other 16 year-olds she undergoes the test. She finds out she is a Divergent and she has to make a choice that will bind her for the rest of her life. Beatrice chooses the Dauntless faction, where she will carry out her training, and chooses to change her name, nicknaming herself “Tris”. Tris gets to know Four, her trainer, Will, Cristina and Al.

At the end of the training, Tris must pass a test and, being a Divergent, she struggles because her secret can't be revealed.

deprived of “the love feeling”, starting the peaceful life that was decided for her. There are still a couple of days to go to the operation when Lena meets Alex, who she falls in love with. Facing up to thousands of adventures, the guys try to escape from this reality in order to live their love story.

I think that this novel is complete and has got a very nice plot. Its precise descriptions give us all kinds of information to imagine this dystopian world. The reader can easily identify with Lena and live the story of her forbidden love. Therefore the reader's experience is very deep and you turn its pages with great excitement and feeling.

In my opinion this book is engaging and exciting in all its aspects. Long descriptions are often boring for teenagers. On the contrary, in this book they are nice and well done

MAIN CHARACTERS

The protagonist is Lena Haloway. She is almost eighteen and she is spending the last summer of her life as an “untreated”, like her best friend Hana. Throughout the novel her entire existence will be questioned because of her new sensations, and she will finally realize the terrible condition in which she lives. She will also discover the “truth” about her strange world and about her mother destiny. Alex presence will change the reality around her. Alex is a seemingly well-groomed and harmless nineteen-year-old boy.



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Nonetheless, Four immediately understands her nature because he is a Divergent too, thus he helps her with the simulation test.

I really like this book because the characters are intriguing, especially Tris, as she is always very brave.

I think the plot is very interesting and captivated me from the very first moment. The thing that struck me most was the fact that Tris was able to find her way against all odds.

I would recommend this book to people who like science fiction: they should read it because it is amazing.

THE AUTHOR

Veronica Anne Roth is an American novelist and short story writer.

She was born in New York in 1988. Her mother, Barbara Ross, is a painter who resides in Barrington and Veronica is the youngest of three children.

Roth is best known for her trilogy of novels: *Divergent*, *Insurgent*, and *Allegiant*.

by Lucia Ballarin, Liceo Mamiani - Pesaro (Italy)

He works as a guardian of the city laboratories and he is “untreated”.

Hana is the best friend of Lena. She lives in a richer neighbourhood, she is very beautiful, loved by everyone and self-confident. Despite these differences, the two girls are inseparable since they went to primary school.

Initially this book did not convince me very much. The first pages were quite slow and I didn't like Lena very much. I didn't really appreciate the fact that she accepted the reality as it was. But when she meets Alex, the plot starts to become more exciting and I got involved in Lena's thoughts. When Alex appears, the story begins to move forward with more emphasis and passion. Lena undergoes a huge psychological change when she discovers the great meanings of the different human feelings and especially love. I found this book beautiful and exciting because I was able to enter the story and to finish the reading in one breath. I recommend reading this dystopian book even if you don't like this kind of story. You could understand how feelings are important in everyday life and how much they influence our choices.

THE AUTHOR

Lauren Oliver is the author of the novel “And finally I will say goodbye” and of the “Delirium” trilogy. She was born in



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Queens and raised in Westchester, New York, in a small town very similar to the one described in “And finally I'll say goodbye”. Her parents are both teachers of literature and since when she was a little girl, she was encouraged to write stories, to draw and to paint, to dance in costume and to use her imagination as much as possible.

by Stella Bragagna, Liceo Mamiani - Pesaro (Italy)



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TWIN LIBRARY NEWS

Since 2017 Pesaro, the seaside town where our partner school " Liceo Mamiani " is located, has been named "Reading town" ("Città che legge"), for its commitment to promoting extensively reading habits and love for books by means of a wide range of projects and activities.

An App which marks all the places where reading activities are being carried out has been recently released.



Furthermore, a special "reader's licence" has been created which allows people to collect stamps according to the readers' participation in activities related to reading (borrowing books from libraries, participating in courses, etc.) and give them some benefits like discounts in bookshops, museums, events and special prizes.

Congratulations to our Twin Library friends in Pesaro!

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