



Our Green Book



Be the Guardian of the Galaxy Yourself!

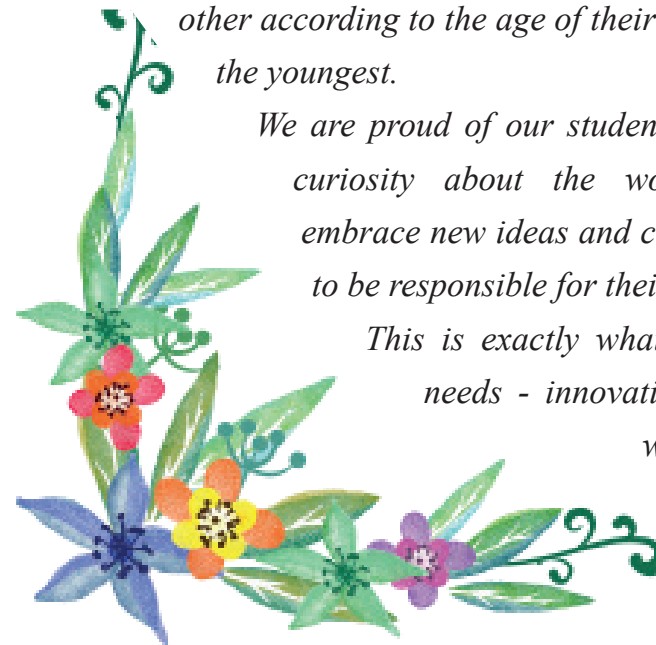


OUR GREEN BOOK

This collection of stories was compiled in the framework of the Erasmus+ project (“Be the Guardian of the Galaxy Yourself”), in which five schools from five countries (Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Sweden and Türkiye) work together on different topics like environmental protection, sustainability or individual responsibility. The stories in the book are the best ones of each school. The local winners were marked with a small goblet and the stories follow each other according to the age of their writers, starting with the youngest.

We are proud of our students because they have curiosity about the world, willingness to embrace new ideas and cultures and they want to be responsible for their future.

This is exactly what Europe desperately needs - innovative students endowed with great initiative and responsibility.



UNLIKELY FRIENDS!



Class 2, age 9 - 10

A long, long time ago, there was a beautiful forest right in the heart of a verdant island. In this magical place, full of trees, streams and mountains, happy animals and plants lived. One of them was a beautiful wood lizard who loved the sun.



One winter morning, Mrs. Lagartixa came out of her little hole all wrapped up to enjoy her breakfast. Brrr! It was so cold that her beautiful greenish tail had lost its shine. As she walked, she thought of the delicious repast she used to find by the Levada. There lived his friend Uveira-da-Serra who always offered him a ripe, round and shiny berry.



The clever little lizard was already licking her lips when she came across a group of cockatiels chattering away. What happened? Mrs. Lizard was curious and went to find out what was going on. Several forest animals had disappeared after all! The more adventurous said that it was the Beast of the Dark Mountain who had carried them away in his black and smelly mud, full of rubbish left by men.



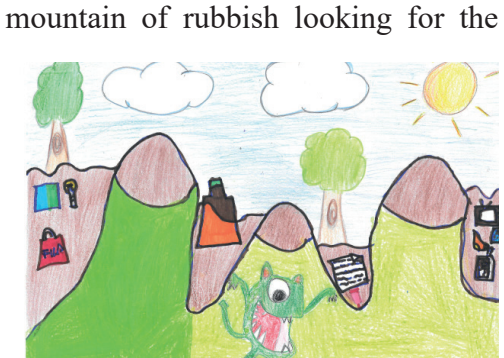
The Beast was very greedy. Soon, the group thought of a foolproof plan.



The Lizard gave the idea, the Blueberry provided the fruit, and the Massarocos, waving their little purple flowers, sent on the wind the message of a treasure hidden in the trunk of an old Barbusano tree.



They didn't wait long. The Beast soon appeared with his stinking mountain of rubbish looking for the surprise, behind every tree, under every rock. As soon as he found it, he widened his eyes and, for the first time, gave a big smile. Blueberry jam! Cool! He ate, ate, ate until he was satisfied. He was no longer ugly or mean! The gesture of the forest dwellers turned him into a good giant.



- Thank you, my little friends! -he thanked the giant, now ashamed of the evil he had done. So, as a sign of good friendship, he set all the animals free.

From that day on, the former monster behaved very well and was received by the inhabitants of the Magic Forest as a special friend. After all, Goodness and Friendship always win!



AN ADVENTURE IN THE BUTTERFLY KINGDOM



Class 3, age 9 - 10

Once upon a time, a very colourful butterfly was flying over a flower bed on a beautiful sunny morning. As she gathered nectar for her companions, she shone the intense yellow of her wings. As she passed, everyone bent down to greet the monarch of that enchanted kingdom named after an Egyptian queen - Cleopatra of Madeira.



The day flowed in harmony. Then, suddenly, it got dark. The sun disappeared behind an immense and terrifying black cloud. It didn't seem to be rain. It made a lot of noise. A horrible humming noise. All the animals in the forest fled in fear and the plants, once so green, were now falling down asphyxiated. It was a swarm of killer mosquitoes, the kind brought by the heat and pollution! The butterfly queen was very frightened and hurried to gather her advisers.



The Bis-bis was a tiny and fragile bird, but very clever and fast. So Queen Cleopatra trusted her ideas. In the throne room, she found many larvae and chrysalises in danger of being destroyed by mosquitoes. As soon as the queen told him about the attack, the little bird thought about it and said - I already have the solution. I need to go on this mission at once.



It flew swiftly between mountains and valleys, crossed fluffy clouds, followed the water in the streams to the sea. There, on the salty cliffs, he called out to the Madeiran lizard with its tuneful chirping. He told her that Queen Cleopatra's kingdom was in danger. The clever Regulus asked the brave Lacerta to gather the best army.

And so it came to pass. The lizards with sharp claws, shiny scales and powerful tails fought the mosquitoes without fear. Bis-bis commanded the troops from above and Queen Cleopatra's butterfly warriors wove traps with the sticky nectar of flowers. The battle was won and the mosquitoes defeated forever. Some lizards had even lost part of their tails. But, nothing to worry about. They would grow back.



In the end, there was a big party in the forest to celebrate the victory. And the butterflies so beautiful and colourful went dancing with the grey, creeping lizards. In the distance, perched on a branch of a sanguine tree, the Bis-bis proudly held up his orange crest. And he thought: unity is strength. Whatever the colour!



THE MANTLE OF THE FOEREST-FLAME



Class 1, age 10 - 11



On a faraway island, there was a leafy and relaxing forest where many animals and plants lived. The birds liked to wake up very early, before sunrise. Except for a small, yellow-faced bird of the Flavetree family who was very lazy. Her brothers used to warn her:

- Beware! You will get lost in the forest when you go foraging alone.



The sleepyhead turned a deaf ear, as if to say, she paid no attention to the wise advice. One day, however, a terrible storm came over the island. The unfortunate Laundress was caught off-guard. She wanted to run away, she screamed and tried to fight, but her efforts were in vain.

Lightning, thunder, wind... Nothing could withstand the fearful whirlwind. Even less the tiny bird, which was as light as a feather and was dragged through valleys and mountains.



The truth is that the Lord of Storms took pity on Laundry and allowed it to survive. So the next morning, when he awoke, he had suffered little more than a few ruffled feathers. However, as she looked around, she didn't recognise the place. "I'm lost! Help!". She shivered with cold and was starving.



Nearby, a showy tree seemed the perfect help. Its red, cup-shaped flowers held cool water, and its long branches offered shade and protection. But Lavandeira was not welcome. Mrs. Spathodea campanulata soon chased the visitor away:

- That's what was missing. Me, the Forest-Flame, to welcome a homeless person. Go away".

The conversation did not go unnoticed by the giant Jacaranda tree that lived nearby. Generous as he was, the old tree invited the little bird to stay overnight in his arms and told him the story of a town where its lilac flowers joined the yellow "tipuanas" to resemble flags, wine and sugar.



Laundry was getting ready for bed when a terrible scream startled the forest. The tropical Flame-of-the-Forest had lost all its beautiful red flowers. Oh, what a disgrace! There was talk of punishment for being so presumptuous. The Laundress remembered Jacaranda's generosity and decided to repay her with a good deed. Through the streams, the clouds, the deer and many other little animals, her cry for help reached the country of the Lavandeiras.



All her sisters came to sew a coat of red and gold flowers and leaves for the Flame Tree.

Now the embarrassed tree was bundled up and much prettier. From that day on, both Laundry and Forest-Flame learned to value their friends. Sloth and vanity are cured with humility!



THE LUMBERJACK'S DREAM



Class 1, age 10 - 11

Once upon a time, there was a butterfly who was humming very happily in the forest. Her name was Cleopatra of Madeira, and she was very vain. She perched on all the flowers and fluttered her yellow wings in the wind.



Suddenly her antennae picked up an unfamiliar noise. She peered through the bushes and found a lumberjack cutting the branches of an old Laurel. He had never seen such a thing, and it seemed to him that the man was behaving very badly, because he was not at all concerned about the damage he was causing. He was thinking only of the beautiful skewer of meat that would be roasted on those laurel skewers. The poor tree, on the other hand, groaned every time the axe hit its trunk. It couldn't care less that it is an important species of the Laurissilva Forest of Madeira - Natural Patrimony of Humanity, nor that its oil serves as medicine for men.

The butterfly, very distressed, decided to ask Tyto Alba, an owl that lived on the top of a hill, for help. The butterfly was tiny and fragile. It could do nothing, but owls and owls were very wise! The owl quietly listened to the fluttering words of Cleopatra of Madeira and said to her:
- Don't worry! We owls are creatures of the night and can enter the dreams of humans.



They waited for the woodcutter to fall asleep. As soon as he lay down in the shade of the laurel tree for a nap, the owl crept softly into his sleep. The man then dreamed of a bird with bright eyes, a very white face and brown feathers that asked him to respect the old trees on the island, for without them there would be no water and all life would disappear.



The woodcutter woke up startled by a shrill chirp. What a strange dream, he thought, but took little notice. He was getting ready to leave when the soft sound of beating wings made him look up at the old laurel tree. The tree looked like a giant sun, all covered with beautiful yellow butterflies. And at the top, an owl hooted nonstop. How beautiful!



The woodcutter realized that he



had received a great gift. Life! From that moment on, he decided that he would never hurt the forest again. More. He studied to be a biologist and began to give lectures on nature protection. He wanted all people to learn to live in harmony with plants and animals. He never forgot the owl's words: Whoever does good, does good will receive it!



THE FAIRY EGG



Class 3, age 10 - 11

In a beautiful village, situated at the foot of a mountain, lived two little birds, a Goldfinch and a Goldwoman. One was gray and thieving, the other dressed in many colors and loved to sing. They were very friendly and woke up early to play in the Laurissilva Forest. They liked to flutter from branch to branch and search for bugs among the rocks in the creek. The forest was green and beautiful, but the little birds missed the color whenever they saw the rainbow shining over the waterfall.

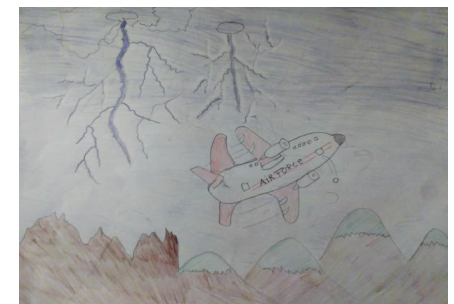


The two friends' wish must have been heard by Mother Nature, because thousands of miles away, there in tropical Africa, an airplane, which was preparing to take off, carried in its belly a very special cargo. As soon as it took off, a big storm began. It was a very bad trip!



The plane shook so hard that one of these little treasures shook, jumped, jumped, and just before someone could grab it, it slipped through a gap in the plane door... and fell, fell, into the bottom of the storm!

And that could have been the end of the story. But, the Goldfinch was smart, and when he got to his nest built in the church tower, he found that there was something different coming



from above. What a big snowflake! - he thought. He called Laundry, and when she saw the whiteness of the snowflake, she said, without stopping wagging her tail

- That's a fairy egg. So take good care of it!

So did the Goldfinch, thinking of the joy of bringing magic to the forest. At night he kept the egg cozy, and throughout the day he would sing beautiful melodies.



One day, the egg went PLIM... It was hatching! All the birds were on the lookout. And Goldfinch and Laundry were already making plans to play. Only, instead of eyes and beak, a leaf appeared, and a very green one at that!



As time went by, the egg that was a seed grew, right there in Goldfinch's nest, on top of the church tower. It stretched out its arms, lifted another leaf, peeked at a flower bud. Ohhh!!! - they all exclaimed as they saw the orange-red petals for the first time.



The little plant was now a beautiful tree that covered itself with fire every spring.

The wise men of the village gave it the name "Flame of the Forest". The birds, because they quench their thirst and find shelter there, prefer to call it "Nanny-Flower".

THE STORY OF SARAH THE TURTLE

Written by Ágnes Bedecs, Zsolna Siklósi & Borbála Gaál, age 11

Illustrated by Borbála Gaál, age 11

On a wonderful day in June in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, Sarah the turtle felt very hungry. She was swimming around looking for something to eat for breakfast when she suddenly spotted a small fish. The minute she wanted to catch it, the fish fled so she had to keep searching for a little while. Then came a tiny clownfish. Sarah opened her mouth to swallow it but she felt that something absolutely unlike a clownfish stuck into her mouth. For a moment she could not see anything but then she realized there was a transparent plastic bag around her head. The clownfish slowly recovered from the shock of the attack and started laughing when she realized the predator got trapped. It laughed until it cried while Sarah shed tears for a completely different reason: she simply could not get the bag off her head. The clownfish stuck out her tongue at Sarah and swam away quickly. The little turtle also decided to head home. On the way she met a hermit crab.

"Hello, could you please take this bag off my head?" – asked Sarah.

"I'm sorry, could you repeat it please? I could not catch it" – shouted the hermit crab.

"Take the bag off my head!" – shouted Sarah.

"Oh these youngsters.... Why cannot they speak up, I wonder."

"Never mind" – said Sarah.

"What are you whispering?" – asked the crab.

The little turtle decided to leave him and swam off to find her way home. She felt very lucky when she bumped into her best friend.

"Hello, Yvette" – Sarah said with relief in her voice.

"Wow, who are you, bag-headed-monster?" – asked Yvette.

"I'm your best friend, Sarah."

But Yvette didn't hear the reply since she was laughing so hard. Sarah swam off feeling miserable. She hardly had any oxygen left and she knew she couldn't take a breath with the plastic on her head. She hardly paid any attention on her route and did not realize she headed right towards a fishnet. She got trapped in the net and found herself out of the water in a



split second.

“Look, Daddy, I’ve caught a turtle!” – a little blonde haired girl exclaimed.
“How exciting” – reacted her dad with a bored sigh and opened a bag of chips.

The girl called Lilly gently took the turtle out of the net. She examined it closely and found that there was a plastic bag stuck around its head.

“Hang on, I’ll help you get rid of this” – Lilly assured Sarah.

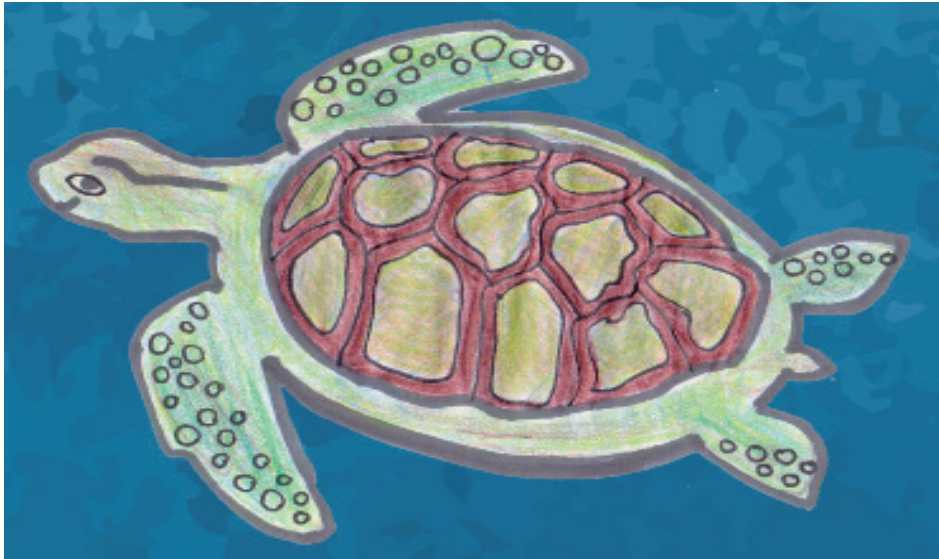
In a minute the little turtle was free again, swimming in the sea again. Sarah was extremely happy. On her way home she met Yvette who was desperately fighting with a bag herself. Sarah stopped and helped her. Then she met the hermit crab too, struggling with a chewing gum stuck into its scissors.

“Help me, please, help me” – cried out the crab to her.

Sarah tried and tried, but could not get the sticky plastic off. She suggested the crab to find Lilly’s net and ask her to free him.

On that day in June, Sarah decided to be more careful in the water. Lilly decided to reduce the amount of trash that could get into the waters. When they got on shore, she made sure her dad would throw the bag of the chips into a trashcan. Lilly has kept on telling her story to all the people she knew to make them care more.

That’s why we wanted to tell you this story: to make you care more.



ONE (WO) MAN

Written and illustrated by Julka Gunda, age 12



Kinga kicked off her rubber boots upset. This day turned out pretty lousy. “Hi, my little one...” - Mum greeted her from the kitchen. The answer was just a humming.

“Did your presentation go so badly?”

Not badly, catastrophically, Kinga thought, but again she only answered with a grunt. Of course, that wasn’t true. This one was just as bad as the previous two. For the third time, Kinga delighted the class 7B with a lecture on nature conservation. The first time, the topic was the work of David Attenborough, then she was teased that she was in love with the scientist. When she drew attention to the wasting of water in her second presentation, they mocked her by claiming: she certainly does not take a shower and they walked past her holding their noses. Today when she was speaking about climate change and its consequences, everyone was weltering of boredom on the desks and kept asking when she would finish, then someone moaned that he hoped that Kinga’s menacing predictions would come true so soon that she didn’t have time to prepare another lecture. Then all hell broke loose, everyone was giggling at the joke, and many of them felt encouraged to throw uglier and uglier shouts at her. It took the teacher five minutes to get the class silent.

Picking up her bag, Kinga ran towards her room. She fell down on her bed and was in a terrible mood. She felt like an ocean explorer in the desert.

She heard Mum’s voice from the other side of the door:

“I cut this article out of a newspaper, I think you should read it.”

With that, she slipped a piece of paper under the door. The teenage girl wiped away her tears and picked up the piece of newspaper. Above the text there were two photographs. One showed something like a seaside garbage dump site. Not a soul was walking on the gray mounds of rubbish. The taller buildings of a city could be seen behind the mounds. On the other there was a stretch of beach, the kind you see on postcards: clear



water, sand, trees, people walking. The only thing that was strange, that the same buildings towered in the background. The pictures caught her attention, she forgot her desperation and started reading.

The article was set in India. The seashore outside the city was so full of garbage that the sea could no longer be approached. A man's eyes were deeply hurt by the sight. He decided to go to the shore every day and pick up a bag of trash. That was all he could do alone after work. Initially there was no visible change and people laughed at him. But slowly and surely the place started to look different, and a growing number of curious people first came to watch and later joined the work. After ten years, the efforts bore fruit: the coast was entirely cleared, animals and plants returned and people started to admire it. It is now the most beautiful beach in the city where people like to go out.

Kinga was shocked: the two pictures showed the same place, only ten years apart! All due to one man! She took out her laptop with renewed enthusiasm.

She decided to write this down as a short story.



THE DRAGON'S FOREST

Written by Milán Zimmer and Artúr Nyeste, age 13

Illustrated by Julka Gunda, age 12

Once upon a time, there was a seven-headed dragon who destroyed villages, robbed people, castles, and farmlands. All because the peasants chose his magic forest as a dumping ground for their garbage.

Once it happened that the daughter of the king sitting on the throne was not kidnapped by the dragon, but his son was. When the king realized that he would not have an heir to the throne, he became very sad. That's why he announced that he would give his son or daughter and half of his kingdom to whoever gets his son back and stops the dragon's attacks.

A royal garbageman who lived alone in great poverty heard this. But the royal

garbage burner also heard it. In the entire kingdom, only these two people realized that the dragon was angry only because people had destroyed its home and had taken away its food, because the animals were allergic to plastic bottles and non-degradable waste, so they either fled or died.

The garbageman came up with the idea to start collecting waste selectively and

reduce the production of non-degradable materials. He began to advertise his efforts by plastering the empire with posters made of recycled paper.

His program became very popular, but the royal garbage burner took notice and realized that it could cost him his job, because if they start using recycled, easily degradable materials, there will be nothing to burn. That's why he decided to find the weak point of his rival's program, which was nothing more than it was expensive and involved a lot of discomfort. After he had begun to spread these concerns, his insights found open ears.

The two

fought each other for a month and a half. But in the end, since most people still continued to live an environmentally conscious life, the garbageman prevailed over the royal garbage burner. A couple of weeks after the debate

ended, the dragon's attacks stopped completely. So, some of the king's soldiers took the courage and went inside the dragon's forest. They found the prince living safely in a house. The prince told them that the dragon had died not long before.

The soldiers took the prince back. The garbageman married the princess, and they lived happily until ... suddenly the royal garbage burner appeared in front of their house and started complaining because he lost his job. Thus, the garbageman appointed him as the chief recycler. And now they really lived happily until they died.



EVERYONE CAN MAKE A CHANGE!

Written by Alexander Logemann, age 13

Illustrated by Julka Gunda, age 12

Global warming is all everyone talks about - thought Gergő, sitting in the classroom on March 12, 2035. But what does it really mean? Does anyone know the true danger it poses? Something we hardly changed in 30 years, even though we could have if we really wanted to. There were many people who tried to live an eco-friendly lifestyle, but only a few individuals don't count for much. We must work together to help our planet. If I could go back to 2022, I would tell people to stop! This is the end!

We must do something together. Because if we don't, there could be catastrophic consequences such as floods, earthquakes, etc... Could I have changed this? - wondered Gergő.

When he left school, he felt the 48-degree summer heat on his face. "Summers are getting hotter"; he thought. Somehow, he needed to go back to 2022 and change things. Should he go see Dr. Emmett Brown from the Back to the Future movie?

But the problem was that he was just a movie character. "There must be a solution" - said Gergő.

Gergő became increasingly impatient. He kicked a stone and it flew far away. He heard a beeping noise coming from there. What could it be? Gergő searched for where the noise was coming from, but couldn't find it. The next day, when he went back to school, he heard it again. He went over and looked at it.

He didn't know what it was, but he knew that what he saw was the solution. He felt it. It was a small device covered in yellow stripes. A time machine, or perhaps a spaceship? "Time machine for secret messages"; Gergő read. It was a signal device that sent letters to the past to every phone in the world.

Well, then let the messaging begin. Gergő stepped into the narrow cabin. What should I write? - Gergő pondered. Ten minutes later, Gergő wrote, "SOS to everyone, I am writing from the future and I want you to pay close attention. It's important to change your lifestyle, otherwise there could be

unimaginable consequences. We're talking about global warming. Here in 2035 on March 12, the coldest day of summer is already 45 degrees, and the hottest is 50 degrees. If this continues, humanity will die out. Please help." Gergő hoped people would do something about it in 2022. Gergő told one of his friends to check what he found, but Máté, Gergő's friend, couldn't see anything. However, Gergő could. When Gergő went home, he hoped he hadn't just imagined everything.

When he went to bed, he had a very bad feeling. "What if I just imagined everything? Are we going to die?" - Gergő sadly thought.

When he woke up, he went to school as usual, but something was strange. THE WEATHER! - he exclaimed. What's the temperature? - Gergő checked his phone. 25 degrees! They helped!



FOUR HEROES



Asya Çepe, age 13

I have been working on an article for a long time. In this article, I had to write a text about how we can save our world from waste. I thought so much, but nothing came to mind. I was so focused on the article that I didn't even realize my trash was full. Suddenly I heard a click. When I looked to my right, three people were looking at me. One of them was a crumpled paper with chewing gum on its head, the other a crumpled plastic bottle and the last one was a banana peel. One of them asked me to help them. When I still couldn't shake my astonishment and asked why, they said that there was a malfunction in the waste system on their planet and they would perish if they were not fixed. After thinking for a



while, I accepted this situation with understanding and asked their names. The plastic bottle came forward and said that her name was Peti, and her

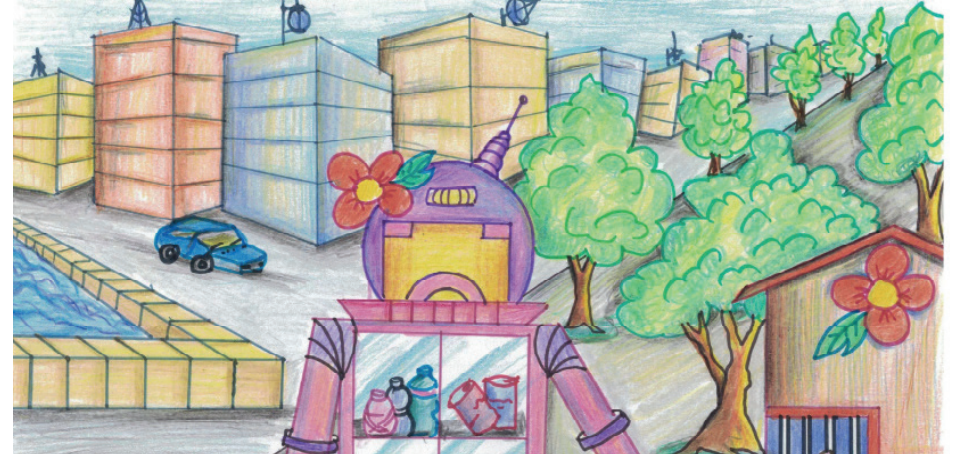
friends' names were Suzi and Muzi. Shaking my head, I said my name is Işıl. I told them we could put together a board on how to recycle waste to help them. We have prepared a lot of papers on how to make things like pencil holders from plastic bottles. I told them that I have a website and that we can share what we have prepared on my website and inform people. All three of them nodded to show that they agreed with me. We shared the papers we prepared on my website. This article, which broke the record for clicks, was really the focus of attention. That's how I finished my post. The other three had returned to their planets. I won the first prize in the article I wrote. People were more conscious than before. Everyone was doing projects to evaluate the waste in their homes. Everyone seemed happy. We FOUR HEROES had accomplished a great job.

GARBAGE ROBOT



Hüseyin Talha Yıldız, age 13

It was a beautiful spring day. I had my breakfast. I went outside. I have seen that there is a lot of garbage on the roadsides and under the trees, and people do not throw the garbage in the garbage cans. I'm so sorry about that. I thought I should do something about it and invented a robot.



I named it Trash-grass. With the help of the software and sensors I made, this robot would detect the garbage waste and throw it into the relevant trash. In this way, it would separate the garbage. And the garbage would become recycled. It will turn the garbage collected from garbage-grass food wastes into fertilizer, collect plastic, metal, paper, glass wastes and send them for recycling. Thanks to this robot, we will contribute to the country's economy.

Cleaning staff sweeping the streets will be less tired thanks to the garbage weed. It will be clean around us. There was only one problem, it was to introduce Trash-grass to people. I opened a live stream to promote my robot. I shared it on social media. In this way, the relevant authorities got back to me. They said they wanted to replicate my robot. In this way, my garbage-grass began to be used in all cities. In this way, people became more sensitive to garbage waste by emulating what the robot did.

“Garbage-grass Collects Garbage”



HOPE-UMUT



Anıl Yiğit, age 13

Umut was running and playing with his rocket in hand.3,2,1 throw.'Umut you should stop play games you should sleep now.'said mom.Do you know mom? I will be a astronaut when I grew up.'said Umut.'I hope you take me to space too.'said mom.Umut said good night to his mother and went to sleep.Umut heard a click from the window.when Umut looks to window,Umut saw a smiling astronaut.'Hello Umut, I heard you want go



to space.Do you want come with me?said astronaut.'I want very much'said Umut.Umut got on rocket and started the count:3,2,1 throw.he looked very happy planets and talking the satellite when he went to space.But he saw the unhappy and dirty world.when he looked to the world.'Why is the world very unhappy and dirty very much?'said Umut.If you want we can ask him.said astronout.when they went to the near of the world,I

used to have blue seas and green forests.I smell very bad because people are trashing to everywhere.And people are firing my forests.Umut was knowing he must do one thing..He looked to astronaut and 'I must go home.'said.

When he went to school,first he come together to with his friends and he made them aware of this.And they made a plan.One team will collect waste,One team will classify the collected waste,one team will also raise awareness of people about keeping the environment clean and speak with factories to better use energy consumption in the environment.Mr.Principal saw that Umut was trying very hard and he called the news agency to the school for people to support Umut.

World watched Umut and his friends seeing this good behavior of Umut. People started to be more sensitive about keeping the environment clean. Yes,our world has already begun to heal.Umut didn't say this'What can I do alone? and he will be the 'hope' of the world.

MERMAID ELY

Aysel Elif Dağ, age 13



One day, while she was wandering around, Ely the Mermaid, who came a little too close to the shore, had a fishing net on her tail fitted. The fish



came to the aid of Mermaid Ely, who was trying to get out of the net. After Ely escaped from the nets, she made a decision and surfaced for

the first time. She was very surprised by what she saw. She was also very sad, because there was a sea full of garbage in front of her. There was also garbage under the sea, but this place was filled with much more garbage. Ely made a decision and she was going to clean this place with her own magic. She collected the garbage bags in the sea and put them aside and threw the garbage she collected with her magic into them. When this place was finished, it occurred to her that all the seashores would be full of garbage.

She visited the seashores one by one and collected the garbage there for days, and the seashores were one by one. She put a protection spell there so that it wouldn't get more dirty.

Finally, when Ely went under the sea, there was the Caretta. She noticed the garbage on the body and legs of the carettas and cleaned them with her magic and performed a protection magic.

Noticing what they were doing, fish and other creatures were talking among themselves about Ely. At last they made Ely their Queen and the seas were never polluted again.



WHEN I FIRST WOKE UP



Juno Plastrougi, age 13

When I first woke up, I didn't think of anything special. It was a normal day, and I was going to go run some errands. When I went outside the door, it was extremely foggy. I couldn't see anything. It is foggy very often now and then, but today's fog was extremely thick. It's just getting worse and worse, and it's caused by the humans who destroy their planet and this affects us fairies. The humans don't understand that we need their help, and they need ours. If they keep trashing our planet, we aren't going to have a planet anymore.

All of a sudden, I can sense a loud vibration, it's a human. We all panic as we try to hide. I didn't have time to hide and so the human picked me up. It was a girl, she had blonde hair, cute freckles, green eyes and a really pretty smile. She looked down at me and said "hi". I replied but then realised that the fog wasn't just air and water anymore; there were chemicals in the air! My wings slowly started to fade away and the girl tried to help me - but it was too late. Everybody on this planet is about to die if we don't fix this, I explained to the girl. I went on talking about the situation and how if we don't start taking care of our planet – it will die. We need to make everyone understand how serious this is and that we need change now.

Me and the girl, whose name was Steffi, started to plan how we were going to make people hear us and understand us. We need to educate them on the fact that if they don't stop destroying the planet, it's going to die. After a while we finally came up with a plan. If we show the humans that fairies exist, they will get all crazy about it, the biggest news channels are going to want to interview us and then we are going to be able to push our message that we need to save the world.

-But how are we going to save the world, what can we do to save the planet and what can everyone of us do to help it, Steffi asked?

-Well, my mother always used to say, "treat the nature like you want to be treated". Don't throw away trash on the street or in the ocean – it is simple, just throw it in a trashcan. Instead of oversizing your portions in the school cantina, you can start with a little and go for seconds when you have finished to minimize food waste, I said

- Yeah! That's some good stuff that everyone can do at home, we can also say that instead of taking the car to school or work you should take the buss or the bike so that we don't pollute the air.

-Wow I didn't think about that, I'll go and get my friends and see if they want to help me with this, Steffi said and rushed off.

I talked to as many people as possible and I got 5 of my friends to help me. Steffi, some fairy friends, and I started to fly all around the world and people started taking interest in us. Two days later we received a letter from the biggest news channel in the world where they asked us if they could do a interview with us, we answered yes, on one condition; that we got to send out a message to the world through their channel. They said yes and we were going to get interview the next day.

We got to the tv house and it was big, really big. There were people



everywhere and I felt really lost. I was shown into a dressing room and someone did my hair while some other person did my makeup. After a long time of waiting, we finally got to the seats where the live interview was about to start

-And we are live in 3-2-1-go, said the production manager.

-Hey everybody and welcome to Krimelit channel, today I'm with the fairies who have been all over the world and with my new friend Steffi and today we are going to interview them but first they are going to send out a message. Over to you.

-Yes, thank you so much. We are mostly here to send out the message that we need to save the world NOW or it's going to be destroyed. We must change the way we, repeatedly, let out toxic chemicals so that we can keep on living on this planet. Take the bus or the bike to school and work instead of the car. Eat up all your food and don't throw away food.

When the interview was over many people came up to us and said thank you. We had made many people change their lifestyle and I'm proud, really proud.

Maybe you should start think about what you can do to save the world.

PLASTIC SEAS



Tyra Sandberg, age 14

I didn't know that this day would come to change both my life and many others'. It all began early in the morning, the sun was shining up in the clear blue sky, and from the small hotel room, I could hear the birds chirping. It was a beautiful sound that got my thoughts going. It made me think about how beautiful our nature is and how beautiful all the animals that live in it are. I got up from the comfortable bed and started to walk to breakfast. On the way from the hotel to the breakfast buffet, I passed a chalk-white long beach that lay next to a clear turquoise sea. I stopped and fixed my gaze on the turquoise water for a long time, and after a minute, I saw something jump out of the water. I squinted to see despite the strong light of the sun, and then I saw what it was. It was some dolphins jumping playfully together. Seeing their strong joy filled my whole body with light. A little later, I decided that I would go out on the beautiful clear sea and snorkel among all the fish. I wanted to see what was under the water's surface, the things that we usually don't think about but are always there. I managed to book a guide who would guide me on what to think about when snorkeling. The guide was a tall, slim guy in his twenties with thick, curly blond hair. We went down to a small wooden boat that would take us out to sea. The brown little wooden boat's engine hummed as it started up, and then we headed out to the open sea.

I lay down in the rocking boat and felt the sun's warm rays burning against my thin skin. My eyelids became heavier and heavier, and after a while, I felt a big sweaty hand push my arm. My whole body was pushed to the side at the same time as I heard a deep male voice:

"We're here now, hurry up if you want to see some fish. The fishing boats are already here, and they're clearing out the fish like crazy."

Something burned in my stomach when the guide said the last words. What did he mean that the fishing boats were clearing out the fish like crazy? Did he really mean it?



I nodded quickly to him and gave him some kind of grimace that was supposed to be a smile. Then I quickly changed into the red swimsuit I had planned to snorkel with, put on the big blue flippers, and the matching goggles. Even though I didn't really feel scared, there was some kind of uncertainty in what I was about to do. Completely alone and inexperienced, I would now jump into a cold sea and snorkel among fish, sharks, and dolphins.

"Hurry now, soon the fish will be gone, and then you'll have to swim among plastic and motorboats."

This time when the guide started talking about the fish soon being gone, I felt anger growing within me. My gaze was fixed on the big fishing boats standing a few hundred meters away. On the fishing boats stood several people dressed in yellow suits that covered their entire bodies. On their heads, they all had a big black hat with "fish worker" written on it, and they looked like they were standing and laughing while talking to each other. "How could they stand and laugh while at the same time clear the oceans of living creatures," I thought.

I moved my gaze down towards the sea and jumped in. I swam around the wooden boat once and looked down into the water hoping to see something alive. But the guide was absolutely right, the only thing I could see was plastic. Plastic bags from places like ICA, candy wrappers, plastic packaging, etc. were floating around in the turquoise sea. No matter where I turned and looked, I could see some form of plastic floating around. Suddenly, I could discern something moving vigorously a bit further away. I turned around and, out of curiosity, started to swim towards the movement carefully. My body stiffened when I could see what it was - a small struggling dolphin calf was caught in a large sturdy fishing net. Its cute eyes caught my gaze and looked imploringly at me.

"The next speaker, Zoe Smith, welcome to the stage!"

In that second, I was jolted back to reality. I went up on stage with my trembling legs and looked out over the 705 members. Ever since that vacation day, I had fought to create conditions for marine life. Now, they were about to decide on the project I had been fighting to push through for nearly 10 years. My goal was to create the world's largest marine nature

reserve where the entire marine environment would be allowed to live without human interference. Fish stocks would get a chance to recover and hopefully, ecosystems would once again come into balance. I took a deep breath and began to talk about my project. My gaze roamed around all the curious people there in the European Parliament who were listening.

"Thank you, Zoey, for your speech! We will now vote and get back to you shortly."

I nodded happily and began to walk off the stage. It was as if all the tension and nervousness that had been inside me just released, and my body became as light as a feather. I was asked to step out of the voting room for a while so that the members could make up their minds in peace. Outside, I slumped onto a soft green sofa. An older woman with thin gray hair, black glasses, and a leopard-print long coat sat down next to me.

"Well, so what brought you here?" She looked a little curious at me while smiling.



“I am here for the European Parliament to decide on my project. I am fighting to create the world’s largest marine nature reserve where the environment will have a chance to recover. I have been fighting to push through this project for many years, and since a special vacation day in Greece, I have studied marine biology and worked with everything that is in the water.”

“Well, that’s great! People like you are needed more right now when the marine ecosystems are so threatened on this earth.”

After an hour or so, the door to the voting room opened, and a bald, short man came out. Our gazes met, and he nodded at me to come back in.

In the room, people sat in a large semicircle, with various people sitting in many rows. The walls were white, and the desks where everyone sat were navy blue.

“In our vote, we have come to the decision that we really should listen to you, and therefore we will let this marine nature reserve be created!”

My tears began to flow with joy as I heard the applause in the room. My dream had come true, I had succeeded.

Something I learned on this long journey is to never give up. No matter what it is, how difficult it is, or how long it takes. Not everyone can do everything, but we can all do something.



AFTER THE END



Ingrid Kyllermark Ytterström, age 14

It’s been about a century since the whole world collapsed. In 2043 the water levels rise about 10 meters and drowned whole cities. Then the tsunamis came. The buildings weren’t built for extreme weather in 2043, so many cities were destroyed, and millions of people were buried in the safest place they knew - their own homes. The whole world panicked. But they had been warned since the 1900s. They shouldn’t have been surprised, but they were. It’s like they ignored all the red flags and warning signs that were shown right before their face and just moved on with their lives. They looked away and couldn’t be bothered whenever they could do something for the world. They knew they didn’t have the time to walk to their jobs or stop over consume cheap clothes from children who were forced to work hard every day to get a single penny under extreme conditions. They didn’t care about the billions of people in Africa who dehydrated and died like flies in a sauna-like continent. They were too absorbed with themselves to even lift a finger.

The consequences for the people that could have done something but just ignored everything was that their children and grandchildren were doomed in a world that was nearly impossible to survive in. We didn’t live, we survived.

The world they built for their children was a place a little bigger than Europe to fit eight billion people. Impossible. In the place that was the only place on our planet cold enough to survive in, and that’s 40 degrees Celsius. It isn’t tears on your cheeks; it’s sweat. Or both. The sun lives up to its reputation of being a giant, burning, gas cloud.

A city called Venice was exposed to the rising water levels. The water levels completely drowned a whole city, and the people lucky enough that weren’t trapped in their overflowed apartments drifted around on rafts made of scrapes from the boats. Boats that they carefully had taken care of just a couple hours before and that peacefully and slowly made their way around the city were torn apart in the chaos and panic. When the news that the city had been destroyed reached the rest of the world and a big rescue operation was initiated about three hundred people were found alive. The



rest of the people drowned or were lost in the perception of an endless ocean.

The rich people that had enough money went to Mars; God knows how it is there. In small tents like homes and trying to start a new ecosystem, because the planer we had didn't do the job? The rest of us that didn't own a spaceship needed to take ourselves to the only place that wasn't so hot and where the air didn't burn the lungs. If you could see the ocean from space, you would see black spots from the billions of rafts where desperate people crowded to get a chance for a life on the most south part of the planet there was: Antarctica. Like swarming ants. I've heard that it once was covered in snow and birds called penguins who stood pressed against each other and made use of each other's body heat to survive the freezing cold. Sounds like a fairy tale.

It was dangerous. Especially when it rained. The carbon dioxide in the atmosphere made the rain acidic. You could be killed or get terrible scars from the corrosive rain. But the people that managed to survive were instead met by an island covered in the Old world's trash. Plastic was floating around everywhere. It was like an ugly copy of a kelp forest.

A city started to grow on the trash and poisoned ground, built on high poles. After only a short period of time, the once dead ground had turned into a maze of buildings, and then when the area wasn't enough plural floors were built on top of the original city. The richest were always at the very top of each building. And year after year the houses became higher and higher until the materials ran out and the people couldn't get more children. It started to become impossible. The microplastics in the products and the scarcity of food had poisoned our blood and turned most of it into plastic rather than blood cells. But we were a dying race already from the beginning. We have only ourselves to blame.

For many decades the polluted air was impossible for us to breathe. A mask that filtered the air when you were outside was essential. The few children that were born snook down to the very ground and found trash that was made into toys. Including me. We knew it was bad, that it was deadly to touch the Old world's legacy. But we couldn't resist. Because a child doesn't know, doesn't care for the consequences for a bit of fun and excitement. Life was a game.

Sometimes the ocean brought something radioactive ashore. It was always fun to explore. An old bomb or a stick that glowed in a neon green-, yellow-

ish colour. We collected treasures. Then we sold our greatest findings to a pawnshop for money to buy expensive food. Our parents told us bedtime stories filled with all the stunning glory from the Old world. Green forests and animals with fur, not just cockroaches. It sounded amazing. Too good to be true. I'm not sure if I believe them. Trees? I know that they are just something that is made up. And animals that lived free in them, like something called deer or wolves. What kind of strange ecosystem was that? It was just too perfect to have existed. And if it was true, why had all the humans that lived there then destroyed everything with purpose?

As one of the last humans on the planet Earth, I'm actually not that sad that everything of this is ending soon. I hope it does. This is no life worth living. I wonder what it had been like to live back then. Or maybe on Mars? I wonder what my life had been like if everything were different, if the planet was saved. If someone, just one person, cared for the future. Cared for the planet that gave us life, a chance, for us to do whatever we wanted. Maybe everything would be different? Maybe I could have lived a life, a life worth living, not one that was just about surviving for nothing. But that, I'll never know...



THE PLASTIC WHALE

Oppedisano Elisa, age 14 - Bellantone Rebecca, age 14 - Impusino Cinzia, age 14 - Borgese Federica, age 14 - Pasqualone Marta, age 14



Three years earlier...

The sea was clear and clean and other marine species swam around me; only seaweed stained the sea with its greenish colour. Life was peaceful and serene, and it seemed that no danger could end this tranquility. I spent my days chasing other marine species in the depths of the ocean and enjoyed spending time with other whales. As I did every day, I was looking for new prey to feed on; I headed toward a shoal of fish and saw a strange object floating on the surface with a strange



shape and whitish colour. I had never seen anything like it and, driven by curiosity, I decided to come across it. Without even thinking about it I approached the imminent danger and swallowed it. Shortly afterwards I went to tell my

mother about the object I had come across and she told me not to go near it again, but I did not listen to her because of my curiosity and naiveté that prevailed.

Not only on the surface but also on the bottom I began to see strange things, but this time they were all different from each other. The other species also began to notice them and just like me they swallowed them thinking they were a different kind of prey. Day after day, all around me, everything began to fill up with those



strange objects of different shapes and colours. At first I'd never thought that these would cause me the same pain that haunts me till this day. My parents kept telling me to stay away from anything I did not know, but, undaunted, I kept on feeding. As the months went by I began to see fewer and fewer fish and other species down the seabed, but at first I didn't pay much attention; it wasn't until the preys began to become scarce that we all began to ask questions about what was going on. Because of this even my parents resigned themselves and began to feed on those still unknown objects as well, because they couldn't find anything else to eat. We began to suspect that the decrease in prey was caused by human beings due to overfishing but we still did not know where those objects came from.

Today...

I am alone now; after my parents' death I tried by myself to find the cause that had provoked this. I came to the conclusion that the humans and objects were to blame for everything, which turned out to be the greatest danger. The dangerous objects came from humans, the makers of the disappearance of sea creatures and the death of my family. Going to the surface I saw



humans throwing those strange objects into the sea and immediately the suspicion became truth. I knew that the responsible were the humans. I still didn't know what they were but I knew for sure that they were destroying not only the aquatic environment but also the land environment because humans were also throwing them on the land causing problems even to the living beings that inhabited those lands. Over time I began to stop seeing my whale friends; I knew that they too were trying to find out the truth about the death of aquatic creatures. While I was on the surface I saw the same whales stranded on the beach, and there I realized that the situation was getting out of control. A few days later I no longer saw the bodies of my friends and I saw some men on the beach picking up what they had thrown away, maybe that was



the solution to the problem. So it was necessary for the men to pick up all the items thrown on the beach and into the sea, so that the lives of other sea and land creatures could be safeguarded. From then on a series of boats appeared on the ocean and with hooks collected the objects; other guys on the beach did the same work.

Two Years Later...



A lot of time has passed and the sea is cleaner than before but still those objects are seen around; humans have tried to make up for the problem they caused, but there are still people who throw them into the water and therefore a lot of fish continue to die. I hope that over the years the situation will be completely solved so that no other marine animals I know will die before my eyes.

THE FANTASTIC STORY OF LAUREN SINGER

Written by Marci Módos, age 15

Illustrated by Noémi Duzmath, age 15

Imagine life without any garbage or waste. It seems pretty hard, doesn't it? But a girl from New York did it! Lauren Singer is a zero-waste activist from the USA. She hasn't produced more garbage than what can fit in a jar in three years!

The selective waste collection is a good thing, but zero-waste is something way better. See, selective waste collecting just reduces the amount of garbage, while zero-waste doesn't produce any trash whatsoever. The zero-waste movement sees garbage as potential raw material. People who follow this lifestyle want to reuse, recycle and say no to plastic all together. In one year, humanity produces one trillion plastic bags. A normal plastic bag will still exist 3,000 years later.

Today, our oceans and seas are full of them, and these literally kill thousands of animals every year.

When Lauren was an Environmental Studies student, she noticed how all her classmates threw out a lot of trash. She was so bothered, that when she went home, she noticed all of the food was covered in plastic in her fridge! This shocking experiment turned a switch in her life: she decided to not use any plastic. But it's way harder than it sounds. See, your everyday objects contain plastic: you wake up, brush your teeth with a plastic toothbrush, and a toothpaste that is packaged in plastic packaging. You take a nice, refreshing shower, but your shampoo is also in a plastic container.

So first, Lauren decided not to buy anything in a plastic cover. Then she started to bring her own bags, jars and bottles to the stores, and asked the shop assistants to put the goods in them. Also she started to buy her fruits and vegetables unpackaged. She was happy, because she had done something for the planet, but suddenly she realized there's still way too much plastic in her life.



So then what she began doing to be completely plastic free was that she started to make her own products. See, you can't buy toothpaste without its cover. At that time, her boyfriend was always brushing his teeth with baking soda. At first, Lauren thought it was gross, and it doesn't really clean your teeth, but later, she made her own toothpaste out of baking soda too. So when she ran out of something, she learned how to make it. She learned how to make deodorant, lotion. As a matter of fact, all the things she had previously purchased were made by her. So just like that, almost all of her stuff became plastic free.

The third thing that she started doing was buying second hand clothes, because she didn't want to put new waste in the waste cycle. She decided to buy things that are completely recycled or second hand.

Lastly she began downsizing. She only bought things that she really needed, or items that were truly necessary. For her, this was hard, because she was raised in a society that reminds her every minute: you need to buy this, need to buy that... But after going through this process she was way happier. Her home is so much easier to clean, because many of the useless stuff disappeared. She realized, when someone has fewer things, they learn to appreciate what they have. And if something is broken, they

won't throw it away, simply because they can and this way, they won't produce any garbage! And as a bonus, Lauren doesn't have to spend so much money on useless things, so in the end she saved a lot.

All in all with these methods, she realized she had three main sources of waste: first, the food packaging, second the product packaging, third was the organic food waste, so she learned how to compost. After she eliminated the sources mentioned, she reduced her garbage intake by about 90%.

So in the very end, Lauren was happier than ever. She was caring for the planet, she was healthier, she was saving money, and her life was simply so much easier.

She started to live this lifestyle back when she was in college, and she's still following the idea of zero-waste even nowadays. And that's how she produced only a single jar of trash in three years.



RILEY THE SEAL

Marzano Michelle Miriam, age 15



In the midst of the Arctic region, in the cold characteristics waters complimented by blocks of ice floating in the freezing ocean, lived a special harbor seal. Her name was Riley, and since she was born, she had always showed an optimistic and energetic personality, differentiating herself from her fellow peers though, many of them took her positive views on the world as pure naiveté, and nothing more. Few of her friends actually listened to her when she started talking about how the world was such a beautiful and colorful place, and usually, everyone dismissed her monologues as “a child’s innocent ramblings”.



Of course, the glum atmosphere in her seal community was justified. Seals harbor seals like her, especially were dependent on the ice that calved from glaciers. They used the ice to give birth, rest, protect pups and to molt, so with the temperatures rising and their natural habitat falling apart like a house of cards, all of the harbor seals were left with worried looks and negative thoughts. The humans were entirely responsible for this. Everyone knew that, and everyone seemed to despise the other species’ actions so much that, even talking about the glaciers melting because of human activity, was considered a “taboo topic”.

But Riley, she never stopped believing in humans. Even though she had never met one before, and every single one of her friends sounded scared at the mere mention of the word, she believed at least some of them had a good heart. Obviously, no one really believed her. She was still a child, after all. They were all in danger, and she was well aware. But, well, in her mind, keeping a positive outlook could at least let her be happy and hopeful.

One day, Riley got up to find her mom and go swim with her to

celebrate her birthday. Seals didn’t... exactly engage in festivities, but each of them had a different way of expressing affection, and some of them liked to remember the day they were born. The young one was no exception to the latter. But when she finally found her mother after roaming around searching for who knows how long, she was struggling with something around her neck and couldn’t seem to move a lot.

It didn’t take Riley much time to figure out what it was: a “plastic bag”, or so the humans called it. She was not naive, contrary to popular belief, and she perfectly understood what was happening.

Panicking, she hurried over to the bigger seal, but admittedly, she couldn’t do much. She tried, tried and tried to remove the plastic, but nothing seemed to be working. As little Riley started to give up and lose her usual smile for good, she spotted something in the distance and her hope sparked again.

To her lovely surprise, it was a human. Well, for what she knew, of course. It was... different from how she had imagined it, but she supposed humans were used to much higher temperatures than seals were, therefore they would be wearing heavy clothing to avoid frostbites. Riley couldn’t communicate with it,

but maybe she could signal something so it could help her mother. She hoped, and began clapping her flippers.

The human immediately noticed the attention, and hurried over to the hunched body of the adult seal, neck constricted in plastic. The human’s face was barely visible, but visible enough for Riley to notice the dread and horror behind its eyes. Pity, empathy, worry, that’s all she saw in them. She watched as the human



broke the transparent material and her beloved mother got up and took a big breath, clearly alive and well. Riley was grateful, and so was she. A glance at the human's expression and, instantly, everything seemed to make sense.

She was right all along. Not all humans are bad. Their actions as a whole did have a negative impact on the world's environment, but there will always be someone

ready to face potentially dangerous situations to save the very same creatures that thought they were evil. And those, she realized, were the kind of people she loved.

Save the seals. Change your lifestyle. Don't let little Riley lose her light again.

TOGETHER WE WIN!

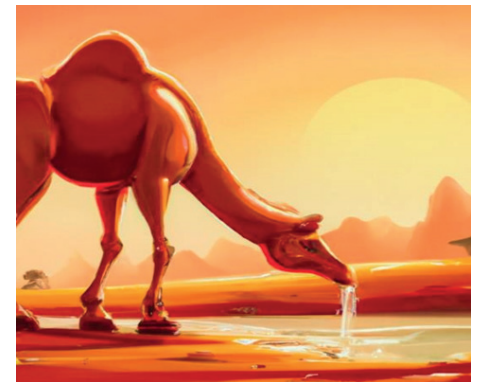


Multari Benedetta, age 15 - Cannata Carol, age 15

Maggie and Selene are two best friends who work as influencers and have always posted contents that attract millions of views. They also love travelling and have just decided to visit heavenly places for their followers. Maggie proposes the desert and Selene the tropical islands and Alaska. It's decided. After discussing the places to visit, the two girls find these three destinations the most interesting. The trip would last two weeks and they would find themselves having to fight against problems that until then seemed very distant. The plane ride lasts about 4 hours and the first place chosen by Maggie and Selene is the desert.



This destination, described by social media as beautiful and interesting, actually turns out to be the opposite. The camels are tired, they have no water, the heat is incessant and very strong because of the global warming. The situation is horrible. Maggie and Selene are quick to inform their followers of the reality of the facts: the post portraying the real world collects many likes and shares. In the evening, the two girls reflect about the situation.



They stay in this place for 3 days, then they venture in Alaska. Forget the fresh air and the immensity of the glaciers, it's not what it seems. The hungry polar bears, a cool climate, not as cold as it should be,

the melted glaciers that raise the sea level, are the sad reality. Our influencers decide to catch those “scary” images in photos that they publish on their blog. Again the shares are many but none of them really do anything. Just looking is the first problem to solve.



The situation of tropical islands is the worst: the sand, the sea, the coral reef, all polluted. The two girls can't just watch, they have to act in some way and try to change the situation. So, they decide to write an article that remains online for 24 hours. The article represents the problem: do we really want to keep hurting ourselves? Is this the future world we want to live in? From there, what seemed like just an abstract project became a reality. In the next days, two agencies which care about the environment contact the two young influencers and together they organize a REAL project, created by people who together want to change the world. The project plans to clean the sea, coral reefs full of trash, but also the other countries to be an example. It's all ready. What does it mean in 2023 to reach a goal? You need an idea, people who help, but also a smartphone to share everything and say that together we can if only we really want it. Why destroy our home? Why limit ourselves to sharing a post or putting a like? The project begins, it's hard work but not impossible.



Maggie plans to record all the progress and post it on her blog. Day after day, hour after hour, minute after minute, it seems that unity really makes strength. In about a week, more than two quintals of plastic were extracted from the sea. Besides, trash in the village is not a problem anymore. The

bins are large and now full of a lot of waste, are ready to be recycled to create new, beautiful objects. Maggie and Selene's videos inspire others to do better. Can you really change the world with a smartphone? The answer is yes, but not just with it. It takes love, collaboration and courage. Unfortunately, pollution today is not completely resolved. But certainly this story has encouraged everyone to give our best. The world and nature around us are our home. Why hurt it? Nothing is impossible if you really want it.

Together we can, together we win!



THE POLLUTED KINGDOM



Calopresti Alex, age 16

Once upon a time, in a beautiful kingdom surrounded by vast forests and crystal-clear rivers, lived a prosperous population. They were proud of their land, their culture, and their traditions. But as the years passed, they noticed a disturbing change in their surroundings. The once-clear rivers had become murky and foul-smelling. The trees in the forests were dying, and the air was thick with a hazy smog. The people of the kingdom were alarmed, and they knew that they needed to act fast to protect their land and their way of life. They called upon their leaders to act against the pollution that was affecting their kingdom. The leaders listened to them, and they began to take steps to reduce the pollution in their land.



They passed laws to regulate the emissions from factories, to promote the use of clean energy, and to protect the forests and rivers.

Despite these efforts, the pollution continued to spread. The people of the kingdom soon realized that they had been overlooking a crucial factor in their fight against pollution: their own actions. They were using too much energy, producing too much waste, and not doing enough to reduce their carbon footprint. They began to realize that they needed to change their own habits if they wanted to save their land. The people of the kingdom sprang



into action and they began to take steps to reduce their own impact on the environment. They started recycling, using public transportation instead of cars, and energy in their homes. They also educated others about the importance of environmental protection and encouraged them to adopt sustainable practices.

As the people of the kingdom continued to act, they noticed a significant change in their land. The rivers became clearer, the air was cleaner and the forests began to thrive once again. The people of the kingdom were overjoyed, and they knew that their efforts had paid off. They had saved their land and ensured that future generations would have the opportunity to live in a clean and healthy environment.

Finally, the people of the kingdom learned that to protect their land and their way of life, they needed to work together and make changes in their own habits. They realized that small actions, taken by many people, can have a big impact on the environment. And so, the kingdom remained prosperous and beautiful for generations to come, a shining example of what can be achieved when people work together to protect the environment.



THE FOREST'S CRY



Pecora Simone, age 16 - Caccamo Luigi, age 16

Once upon a time, in a lush and thriving forest, lived a community of animals who had lived there for generations. The forest was teeming with life, with towering trees, sparkling streams, and a variety of animals that roamed free. The animals of the forest were happy and content, as they had everything they needed to survive and thrive in their home. One day, a group of humans arrived in the forest.



They came with bulldozers and chainsaws and began to clear the land. The animals were terrified and confused as they saw their homes destroyed and their families separated. The humans seemed to have no regard for the damage they were causing to the forest and its inhabitants. As the days went by, the forest grew quieter and emptier. The animals had lost their homes, their food sources, and their habitats. Some were forced to flee to other areas, while others were unable to survive in the harsh conditions that were left behind.



However, not all hope was lost. A group of animals banded together and decided to fight back against the humans who had destroyed their homes. They formed an alliance with other animals, including birds and insects, and worked together to rebuild their homes and restore the forest to its former glory. The animals knew that they couldn't do it alone, so they reached out to humans

who cared about the environment. These humans helped the animals by planting trees, cleaning up litter, and educating others about the importance of protecting nature.

Over time, the forest began to recover. The trees grew tall again, and the animals returned to their homes. The streams flowed clear, and the air was fresh and clean. The animals were grateful for the humans who had helped them and promised to do their part in protecting the environment.

The humans and animals lived in



harmony, respecting the delicate balance of nature. And so, the forest thrived once more, a shining example of what can be achieved when we work together to protect our environment.

I WANNA BE LIKE JOE



Luccisano Sara, age 16

Joe was made fun of at school because he behaved differently from other children. In his backpack, there were always two types of paper, the new one he rarely used and the recycled one, on one side it was white and on the other it was printed. When he was bored, he drew with the sheets of the second type. He loved vegetables, and in the cafeteria, he asked for more vegetables than fish or meat. When they were showering after PE, he was so quick to do it that he got the nickname of “FastClean”; he challenged his classmates who teased so him to do better: a race of fast showers. He walked home every day except when it rained.



One day the classmates decided to ask him why he was acting that way and he very calmly explained it: “it all started when one day, after watching the news about environment protection, I turned to my parents and asked them what I could do”, he said with a smile. He became serious and continued: ”There are some small actions that help to protect the environment, we will explain everything to you”. Recycling paper is very important, so when I print out sheets that I



don't need or prints come out wrong, I collect those sheets to reuse and give them a new life and, instead of using new sheets for a drawing, I use those.

Eating less meat or fish helps to protect the environment because their production wastes a lot of water, so I try to reduce their consumption; more over, vegetables taste even better so I don't mind making this small change. I used to take very long showers but when I realized that I was wasting all that water I stopped immediately: I started taking fast showers to waste as little as possible and I challenge others to beat me so they don't waste water too.

Lastly, I asked my parents not to pick me up in car and they accepted but in case of rain, they come to take me because they don't want me to get sick. I do this to protect the environment in my own small way..

The other children were amazed, they did not expect that behind this strange way of behaving there was this intent. They looked into each other's eyes, gave Joe a round of applause, and hugged him. “We're sorry we treated you like this because you were different from us. But now we want to take an example from you and protect the environment ourselves!” said the children all at once



*I Wanna Be Like Joe...
...And You?*



THE CORRUPTION IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Written by Áron Károlyi and Levente Ujvari, age 15

Illustrated by Bajkov Julián Bendegúz, age 15

Have you ever seen the film called *Seaspiracy*? If you have, then this news is not going to be new to you. If not, then I am going to tell you a story about what is happening to our oceans and what the impact is on the human population. It all started with a guy called Ali Tabrizi. He grew up on the Southeast Coast of England and has always loved exploring the oceans with his camera. In his teenage years he became interested in untold stories that were about corruption and injustice, and from that point he became certain that he wanted to expose the truth about environmental issues. This led him to start working on the Netflix Original Documentary, *Seaspiracy*.

Seaspiracy is about unimaginable secrets and the corruption of companies and governments that use the oceans to their benefits. In the first few minutes of the movie we meet Ali and he tells us about his beliefs about how people can help save the oceans. For example, he tells us how he pitches in to help the oceans, things like going to beaches and picking up garbage, or using wooden utensils, and bringing a reusable water bottle around wherever he goes, but he felt like this was not enough. Determined to search deeper, what he'll eventually find would bewilder his conscience. Such things about plastic like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, 1.6 million square km wide, the equivalent of a garbage truck unloading a load of plastic into the sea every single minute. Think about that for a minute, by the time you finish thinking about it, a whole truck has already dumped its garbage into the sea and added to the 150 million tons of plastic already there. The weird thing is, that in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch 46% of its garbage floating around are fishing nets, but none of the plastic campaigners are talking about it, yet it's obvious. I bet that you have seen the video wherein a group of people take out a plastic straw from a turtle's nose. The whole of social media was talking about not using plastic straws and the plastic campaigns also joined the cry. However, plastic straws only take up 0.03% of all the plastic in the oceans. While the whole

“stop using plastic” campaign is true, the companies and governments are not talking about the bigger problems like bycatch, and they don't talk about these because they want to keep it away from the public.

A fishing boat targeting blue tuna (which is endangered and one of the most expensive fish in the world.) catches much more than what they are aiming for, this is called bycatch. For example approx. 50 million sharks are being killed every year, 11,000 - 30,000 sharks being killed every hour just from bycatch, and the reason is because they are killing humans, but sharks kill 10 people per year. The contrast is immense. Another example is on the coast of France over 10,000 dolphins are killed every year also from bycatch. The aggressive bycatch going on in the seas is the problem, but the ironic thing is that these are the companies which say that their product is totally “sustainable”. For example, MSC company's income is \$30 million per year and 80% of that income comes from licensing blue stickers that say “sustainable product” which are totally false yet people still fall for it. Furthermore the companies send observers to check on their product and if it is sustainable, these observers are either thrown overboard or assassinated. About 24,000 fishermen die every single year, but their cause of death can be questioned due to the lack of evidence. When Ali found out about these facts he was furious and devastated. He was in search of the meaning of sustainable fishing. He went to the world's largest marine conservation group, called OCEANA. He asked them what their definition was on sustainable fishing, but they weren't able to answer. He also went on a very exclusive meeting with the European Union's Fishing Industries they weren't able to answer it either, in fact they advised Oceana's website to “do more sustainable fishing”. Do more fishing that is said to be sustainable, these companies care more about business than about saving our planet. Even if you wouldn't donate to these organisations, even then you would still be helping the fishing industry with your taxes. The fishing industry receives 35 billion dollars in subsidies alone, in comparison the FAO has estimated that we need about 30 billion to combat world hunger.

Just when Ali was about to give up hope he found SeaShepherd. A non-profit organisation that travels around oceans and takes down ships that



are illegally fishing. For example nowadays the EU has most of its fish imported or the European fishing companies travel to the African seas. These countries are not able to protect their own seas, so other countries are able to illegally fish in the area. This is where problems start, first of all the people of West Africa are starving because other companies are taking the fish from the area. Second of all this causes them to kill other animals and because animals like monkeys can spread diseases, these animals caused, for example, the Ebola epidemic. Illegal fishing aside, even if we fish normally, then we would still be destroying the ecosystem. For example, as I mentioned earlier, in Taiji over 700 dolphins are killed every single year. First Ali thought that they were being caught because of their value in marine parks, but as it turns out the fish companies think of dolphins as competition, killing them because they're eating the fish that other companies are aiming for. Another example is sharks, species like thresher, bull and hammerhead have lost up to 80-99% of their populations in the last two decades, because some guy in China thinks that shark fins give you good luck. In fact, in the 1830's a typical fishing boat caught 1-2 tons of halibut per day, but today the entire fishing fleet catches 1-2 across the entire year. Also about 2.7 trillion fish are caught every single year, this means that 5 million fish are caught every minute. The fish population is near extinction, which means that soon the human population will be facing starvation.

Still searching for answers, a glimpse of hope presented itself; fish farming. It seemed the perfect solution, no dangerous working conditions, no bycatch, no illegal activities, no killing of endangered animals, and no sea floor damage, however it was only a cover up for what truly is happening. For this Ali had to travel back to Scotland, to salmon fish farms. As we see it from a distance we are able to see some normal looking fish farms, but as we take a closer look we are able to see much more. For example the fish live in poor conditions being crammed in small spaces which causes disease to spread easily most of the salmon die of lice infection, anemia, infectious diseases, chlamydia and even heart diseases. Another hard fact to accept is that each salmon farm in Scotland produces the equivalent waste to a 10,000 - 20,000 people farm, in fact the whole salmon industry produces the same amount of waste as the whole of Scotland. When we



ask the question; what are these fish being fed, and the answer is shocking. For the feed to be created it needs fish chopped, this means that many more fish are going into the farm than coming out, and to add to that the farmers can decide what colour the salmon will be. People are basically eating gray fish painted pink.

Ali wasn't able to believe that the world was like this, it seemed impossible to do anything about it, but he had one last flight to the Faroe Islands. He booked this trip still when looking into the absurd facts of killing whales. In the Faroe Islands each year they kill one big flocks of whales, this seems absurd and even more so if you are there present, but as it turns out it is more sustainable than any other way of fishing. The governor of this town says that he would rather take three whale lives than kill 1000 chicken lives. Listening to this Ali finally understood what sustainable means. It is something that could continue on and on forever regardless of how much suffering it caused.

As Ali's journey came to an end he finally saw the big picture, he saw things that people would never want him to see and now he knew what to do, to save the oceans. Not eat fish. It seems simple and it feels like it will never change the oceans but this is the best and one of the only ways to save our oceans. This however is not something that will change overnight. It needs time and more and more people have to not eat fish, because nobody can do everything but everybody can do something.



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