



# **Comenius**

**A European Writing Project**  
**Ein europäisches Schreibprojekt**

**2007-2009**



# Comenius\*: “A European Writing Project”

(A two-year-project with financial support of the European Union)

Since the end of September 2007 it had become certain: Teachers from five different countries, who in March 2007 had declared their willingness to co-operate together with their students from different age groups, were asked to participate in a **Comenius project\*\*** of the EU which in return would grant financial aid for the project work and for the international meetings. The Conference of the Ministry of Education in Bonn as responsible “national agency” subsequently had approved the corresponding application of the German school. The authorizing procedure in the other participating countries went similar after in March 2007 an extensive process of co-ordination as to the drawing-up of a common application including a precise description of its objectives could successfully be accomplished.

What does that mean in reality? The title reads: “**A European Writing Project**”.

In the **German and English lessons of classes 5-11** the teachers and their students work on common topics in their regular lessons, for instance on subjects such as “**fairy tales**” (class 5/6), “**short stories**” (class 7/8) and on “**topical issues**” (classes 9-11) that were discussed in the English lessons. In each case the participating students were expected to produce **texts of their own** either in English or German (e.g. for an anthology of short stories or fairy tales in serial form) and in co-operation with the respective schools in **Estonia, Germany, Greece, Turkey and Romania**.

In the course of the four approved school terms two or three teachers and a student delegation met once at the various schools in order to co-ordinate and plan the continuation of the project work as a whole. These meetings also included the possibility for motivated students involved in the project to get acquainted and make friends with people from their partner countries. In preparation for this bi-lingual EU project it partly came even to small voluntary “work groups on Europe” among the students of the different schools.

The first work meeting took place between November 28<sup>th</sup> and December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007. Students, teachers and headmasters of the foreign school were guests at the coordinating school in **Mühlheim**. The students were accommodated in the families of their hosting partners, the teachers stayed in hotels or with their German colleagues.

The following meetings took place in **Sakarya/Turkey** (April 2008), **Narva/Estonia** (November 2008) and in **Thessaloniki/Greece** (May 2009). Moreover, the teachers from **Bucarest/Romania** had invited their hosts from Mühlheim to a return visit to Bucarest in October 2008.

All meetings allowed a close check-up of the preceding **work results**, an **outlook** on the remaining work, and eventually led to a better **understanding** of the partner country and its people, and – last, but not least – a warm and **friendly relationship** among the European partners.

K.R.

\*Comenius, Johan Amos, a well-known Czech educationalist, 1592-1670, developed ideas of educational reforms...

\*\* A Comenius-Project is a school project of the EU in connection with the campaign “Lifelong Learning”. At least three schools from different nations work on a common subject. The acknowledged school projects are granted a financial promotion by the EU to cover the expenses for the work itself and for the regular work meetings of teachers and students. Turkey is also given the possibility to participate in Comenius projects

*translation: O.T.*

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“Mini Olympics” at the Local Stadium of Ampelokipi in Thessaloniki, May14<sup>th</sup>2009  
Closing Ceremony, leaving the balloons in the air with the words “friendship” and “peace” written on them.



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... and many more students who produced lots of texts and pictures

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Our First Meeting in Mühlheim: Visit to the „Staatskanzlei“ in Wiesbaden

# TES-İŞ ADAPAZARI ANADOLU LİSESİ

Karaman Mah. 1427 – 1428, Sarkarya / Turkey

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| 7. EKİCİ EMRE           | 15  |
| 8. ESENBOĞA MEHMET      | 17  |
| 9. FEVZİOĞLU ALPER      | 15  |
| 10. GİRAL ALPER         | 16  |
| 11. GÜLER MEHMET        | 16  |
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| 14. ORHAN ÖZGE          | 16  |
| 15. ÖMEROĞLU FATİH BAHA | 16  |
| 16. ÖNER ÖMER           | 15  |
| 17. ÖZTAŞ BATUHAN       | 16  |
| 18. SERT ENES           | 15  |
| 19. SÖĞÜTÇEPİNAR MELİKE | 16  |
| 20. TURGUT İLKNUR       | 16  |
| 21. TÜRKMEN ECE         | 16  |

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1 As only students’ texts are published in this part of the documentation, the applied literary terms are to be understood as mere working terms the participants dealt with. However, it was not the primary objective of this writing project that all the authors of texts keep to these criteria, on the contrary, the creative writing process and the idea of a European exchange were always in the centre of our work.



# INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

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2 Da hier ausschließlich Schülertexte veröffentlicht werden, sind die literaturwissenschaftlichen Begriffe als Arbeitsbegriffe zu verstehen, mit denen sich die Teilnehmer beschäftigt haben. Das Projekt setzte sich jedoch nicht das Ziel, dass alle Teilnehmer diese Kriterien vorrangig einhielten, vielmehr stand der kreative Schreibprozess und der gesamteuropäische Austausch im Vordergrund.

# PRELIMINARY REMARKS

## Europas Rolle heute

Europa entwickelte sich mit der Renaissance zur führenden Hochkultur der Welt. Wissenschaftlich, kulturell, wirtschaftlich und technisch übernahm unser Kontinent die erste Position. Die Menschen wandten ihre Energien dem Leben zu und sie überwandten die Enge der religiösen Bevormundung.

Dieser Vorsprung ging später aber verloren, weil der Nationalismus des 19. Jahrhunderts - verbunden mit der Armut, die Folge des starken Bevölkerungsanstiegs gewesen ist - zu Kriegen und zum Entstehen von totalitären Ideologien führte. Mit dem Ersten Weltkrieg war die Vorherrschaft Europas vorüber. Der Zweite Weltkrieg, der dem Ersten nicht nur numerisch folgte, brachte die Niederlage und Zerstörung Deutschlands. Österreich-Ungarn gab es schon lange nicht mehr, Frankreich und Großbritannien waren deutlich geschwächt und Russland dem Joch der kommunistischen Diktatur unterworfen.

Der Faschismus hielt sich in Resten noch bis Mitte der 70er Jahre des letzten Jahrhunderts in Südeuropa, der Kommunismus ging Anfang seines letzten Jahrzehnts zugrunde. Für die Menschen bedeutete dies jeweils Unfreiheit, Armut, Krieg und Bürgerkrieg.

Nun kann im 21. Jahrhundert Europa keineswegs mehr führender Kontinent sein. Europa ist zu klein und die Bevölkerungszahl reicht nicht aus. Und doch schuldet dieser Kontinent der Welt etwas, und es stimmt mich glücklich zu wissen, dass er diese Verpflichtung erkannt und aufgenommen hat. Wir alle können heute dazu beitragen. Europa gibt der Welt ein Beispiel, dass sich ethnische, kulturelle und politische Unterschiede friedlich gestalten lassen und dass Geschichte nicht dauerhaft Herrschaft über die Lebenden gewinnen muss.

Mit der Einigung Europas wurde von mutigen und vorausschauenden Politikern ein Projekt angefangen, das beispielhaft ist und das bisher noch nirgendwo auf der Welt Vergleichbares findet. Ich schreibe „noch nicht“: Gerade dieser Weg wird auch anderswo verstanden und kopiert werden. Darin besteht heute die führende Aufgabe der Europäer. Sie sind Beispielgeber dafür, dass man den jungen Menschen, die heute großwerden, eine Zukunft in Freiheit und Frieden nur so geben kann, wenn man über nationale und kulturelle Grenzen hinweg zusammenfindet, Kompromisse schließt und voneinander lernt.

Für uns Pädagogen heißt das, dass wir in der Bildung und Erziehung, aber auch in unserem Beispielhandeln als Demokraten in unseren Ländern die Richtung der Einigung unterstützen.

Das Comenius-Projekt ist ein Schritt dazu. Gerade die Zusammenarbeit mit Ländern an der Peripherie des Kontinents ist wichtig, denn oft waren diese Länder Opfer der politischen und militärischen Entscheidungen der Hegemonialmächte.

Ich danke allen, die an dieser großen Aufgabe mitarbeiten, und ich versichere Ihnen, dass wir uns auch in Zukunft für die Einigung Europas einsetzen werden.

*Jürgen Hegener  
Schulleiter des Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasiums  
Mühlheim am Main, den 6. 4. 2009*

## **„Kennen Sie einen berühmten Letten oder gar eine lettische Tradition?“**

*„Kennen Sie Vorurteile über die Letten? Da könnten Sie wahrscheinlich genauso gut Spanier, Engländer, Dänen, Italiener oder Deutsche fragen und bekämen mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit die gleiche Antwort: Nein! Wen interessiert schon, was in Litauen oder Lettland los ist? Warum sollten wir die faszinierende und fast unberührte Natur Lettlands genießen? Das ist nach meinem Empfinden die wahre Krise Europas; wir sind viel zu viel mit uns selbst beschäftigt. Wie sollen wir eine Gemeinschaft werden, wenn wir so gar nichts übereinander wissen?“*

*(Falk Dünning, 20 Jahre alt, in einer Broschüre der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung)*

Ähnlich wird es manchem von uns mit Menschen aus Estland oder Rumänien gegangen sein, während man schon eher einmal Griechen oder Türken als Mitbürger oder als Gastgeber im Urlaub kennengelernt hat. Über Estland und Rumänien weiß man offensichtlich relativ wenig. Besonders kompliziert wird es dann, wenn man erfährt, dass die Schüler/innen und Lehrer/innen unserer Partnerschule in Narva / Estland mehrheitlich Russisch sprechen und wiederum in ihrem Land zu einer Minderheit gehören. Wer wusste schon genau, wie unsere Partner mit dieser speziellen Situation umgehen? Wer kannte bisher den landschaftlichen und kulturellen Reiz eines baltischen Landes?

Gelegenheit hatten nun die Beteiligten unseres Comenius- Europaprojektes in den letzten zwei Jahren, herzliche Gastfreundschaft und viel Interessantes in Partnerländern zu erleben. Schüler und Lehrer werden ihre Eindrücke von Land und Leuten lange in Erinnerung behalten und eventuelle Vorurteile einer kritischen Reflexion unterziehen. Sicher ist vieles anders im Partnerland, sowohl in der Schule als auch auf der Straße, beim Empfang durch Offizielle oder beim Essen im Restaurant; aber über alle Unterschiede hinweg, die nicht aufgegeben werden müssen, war immer wieder der Wunsch zu spüren, das Verbindende und Gemeinsame in den Vordergrund zu rücken.

*„Mitglied einer Familie zu sein, hindert niemanden daran, gleichzeitig Individuum zu bleiben. Mitglied der Europäischen Union zu sein, hindert niemanden daran, weiterhin Bürger seines Landes zu bleiben!“ (Valéry Giscard d’Estaing)*

Für das „europäische Schreibprojekt“ (im Rahmen des Comenius-Programms der EU) bedeutete das Verbindende, an gemeinsamen Themengebieten zu arbeiten und vor allem durch Texte und Bilder kreativ zusammenzuwirken. Dabei sind gute und beachtliche Arbeiten von Schülerinnen und Schülern entstanden, die in der Dokumentation zu begutachten sind. Als ich im Januar 2007 im Internet nach potentiellen Mitstreitern für ein bilinguales Literaturprojekt suchte und dieses mit der realisierten Dreiteilung „Märchentexte“, „Kurzgeschichten“, „Essays zu aktuellen Themen“ vorschlug, konnte ich noch nicht ahnen, mit wieviel Ausdauer und Energie sich die beteiligten Schüler/innen und Lehrer/innen an die Arbeit machen würden, auch wenn teilweise sehr viel Koordination zur Regelung der verschiedenen Organisationsfragen und zur Kompromissfindung bei differierenden Interessen notwendig war. – Jetzt können wir stolz sein, dass unsere Projektarbeit zu einem guten Ende gekommen ist; dass die geschaffenen persönlichen Beziehungen unter Lehrerinnen/Lehrern und Schülerinnen/ Schülern über den Zeitrahmen des Projektes hinaus sicher noch aktiv bleiben und die Schulen sich weiterhin als europäische Partner betrachten werden.

Während man vor einigen Jahren – oft vergeblich – darum bemüht war, Partnerschulen in Ländern zu finden, deren Sprache man im Unterricht der eigenen Schule lehrte, was im Falle unserer Schule nur im Austausch mit Frankreich zu positiven Ergebnissen führte, haben die Bildungsprogramme der EU den Blick aller Beteiligten geweitet auf Partnerschaften mit anderen Ländern, in denen „Europa“ viel mehr zum Thema wurde als im alten „Kern der EU“.

Mein Dank gilt Bettina Dey und vor allem Oskar Thiergärtner für ihr großes Engagement innerhalb des Projektes, den Schülerinnen /Schülern und Lehrerinnen /Lehrern aus Mühlheim, Narva, Sakarya, Bukarest und Thessaloniki - auch für die vielen Zeichen herzlicher (Gast-) Freundschaft bei den internationalen Treffen. Wir haben sicher einen praktischen Beitrag zur europäischen Integration geleistet, der für alle Beteiligten greifbar und spürbar ist und seine Fortsetzung finden wird.

*Klaus Reinhard, dt. Koordinator*

## Foreword

A modern human being means a creative, an initiative person who can analyze knowledge. The most important steps to be a modern person are to follow scientific improvements and to be able to express oneself in any situation. The projects, which are held by the Center For European Union Education And Youth Programmes (National agency), provide the teachers and the students with valuable opportunities in life and education. Like all the other schools aiming at the education of modern individuals, Tes-İş Adaazarı Anatolian High School Teachers and Students wanted to participate in this project as we think the only way to do this is to experience and creating things. After we had applied for the project through the Internet, we were accepted as a partner of 'A EUROPEAN WRITING PROJECT' in the coordination of Germany and with the partnership of Greece, Estonia and Romania.

The project which is considered as a school cooperation started in 2007. The primary objective of the project was to write an international fairy tale including some cultural characteristics of the above mentioned countries. The other objectives were to write short stories on topics like dreams, idols and the problems of the youth and to write free essays. The secondary aim of the project was to keep the texts for later use in language lessons. All the outcomes would be a book in the end.

Generally, the aim of education is to improve human beings' abilities. The students who participated in this project have improved both their native and foreign language. Therefore, we grasped the wisdom of Confucius claiming that it is impossible to understand the power of human beings without grasping the power of words.

The best thing about the project was that we had the opportunity to learn about different cultures in the original atmosphere. The first journey was to Germany, the country of fairy tales. Then, we continued travelling in Anatolia, which is a mirror reflecting many different cultures. In Estonia, the legends of Vikings accompanied us all through the journey. Finally, we finished the project with the Olympic fire in Greece. During this project, we have experienced lots of things since 2007. We have learned specific characteristics of each country and this has been a great thing for a person who can appreciate the importance of such knowledge. We not only are impressed by the natural beauty of the countries but also obtained a lot of information about their social, cultural and political structures. All the museums, churches, mosques, castles, schools and municipalities reflected the countries' way of life. We had the chance to share what we had experienced in those countries since we had videos and photos of those moments. Eventually, our teachers and students have reached a better understanding of global thinking which had been the main objective of the project.

All through the meetings in different countries, we have experienced the taste of sharing ideas to improve the details of the project. The fairy tale, that Germany had initiated, travelled to Greece and then to Turkey. While we were thinking on how to continue the tale, we couldn't ignore a well-known tale hero, Keloğlan and decided to use this figure in the fairy tale. We hope we have managed to reflect our cultural richness in the tale. Our students tried to express their point of view in their essays and short stories. Thus, we could see the difference between how young people reflect their ideas in different countries.

This book, which we are writing the preface for, is the production of five different countries. While we are writing this preface for the Turkish part, all the memories, friendships, tastes, tiredness and the beauty remind us that this project reinforces humanism and tolerance. A philosopher suggests that life does not give us any gifts more valuable and precious than friendship. We think that we received our gift from this project. Actually, this is not just a preface but a beginning as well: a new beginning to further beauties.

*As The Representative of Tes-İş Adapazarı Anadolu Lisesi  
Comenius Group  
The Headmaster of the School  
Adil ŞENOL*

## Turkish Translation:

Günümüzde çağdaş insan; paylaşımcı, girişken, üretken, bilgiyi işleyebilen, insan demektir. Bilimsel gelişmeleri yakından izlemek ve uluslararası platformlarda kendisini rahatlıkla ifade edebilmek çağdaş olma yolunda atılan en önemli adımlardır. Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı bünyesinde kurulan Avrupa Birliği Eğitim ve Gençlik Programları Merkezi Başkanlığı'nın (Ulusal Ajans) yürüttüğü eğitim ve gençlik programları kapsamında uygulanan projeler, öğretmen ve öğrencilere bu yönde gelişim için bulunmaz fırsatlar sunmaktadır. Çağdaş birey yetiştirmeyi amaç edinen bütün diğer okullar gibi Tes-İş Anadolu Lisesi olarak biz de bunun ancak görerek, yaşayarak ve üreterek gerçekleşeceği düşüncesiyle böyle bir projeye dâhil olmak istedik. İnternet ortamında yaptığımız başvurular sayesinde Almanya'nın koordinatörlüğünü yaptığı 'A EUROPEAN WRITING PROJECT' e, diğer ortaklarımız olan Yunanistan, Estonya ve Romanya'yla birlikte katılmış olduk.

Beş ülkeden oluşan bir okul ortaklığı projesi olan çalışma, 2007 yılında başladı. Üye ülkelerin ortak olarak yazacağı ve kendi kültürlerinden katacakları çeşnilerle zenginleşen bir masal ortaya koymak projenin başlıca amacıydı. Ayrıca rüyalar, idoller ve insani ilişkiler gibi konularda yazılacak kısa hikâyelerle birlikte, istenilen konuda yazılabilecek denemeler projenin diğer çalışma alanlarıydı. Ortaya çıkacak ürünlerin yabancı dil derslerinde örnek metin olarak okutulması ise, projenin hayata geçirilmesi kısmını oluşturuyordu. Proje bitiminde bütün çalışmalar bir kitap haline getirilecekti.

Eğitimin amacı, insanlarda bulunan kabiliyetleri geliştirmek değil midir? Elbette bu projede görev alan öğrenciler, ürettikleri eserlerde dillerini en geniş imkânlarıyla kullanırken, bu eserlerin birebir çevirilerinde gösterdikleri özen ve gayretle hem kendi dillerine hem de öğrendikleri yabancı dillere yönelik kabiliyetlerini geliştirdiler. "Sözcüklerin gücünü anlamadan insanların gücünü anlayamazsınız." diyen büyük düşünür Confucius'un ne kadar haklı olduğunu gençlerimizin yazdıkları eserler sayesinde görmüş olduk.

Projenin en güzel tarafı farklı kültürleri bizzat yerlerinde tanıma fırsatı bulmamızdı. Masallar ülkesi Almanya'dan başladık proje gezilerine sonra medeniyetlerin beşiği Anadolu'da devam ettik gezmeye ve gezdirmeğe, Estonya'ya geldiğimizde Viking efsaneleri süsledi gezimizi, Yunanistan'da ise olimpiyat meşalesini teslim ettik ve projeyi nihayetlendirdik. 2007 yılından projenin sona erdiği 2009 yılına çok şey gördük, yaşadık ve öğrendik. Her ülke kendine has özellikleri barındırıyordu; bakan ve gören insan için bu ne büyük nimetti. Gezdiğimiz ülkelerin doğal güzellikleri karşısında etkilenirken; siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel yapılarına yönelik tanıtım turları sayesinde o ülkeler hakkında zengin bir birikime sahip olduk. Gezdiğimiz müzeler, kiliseler, camiler, kaleler, okullar, belediye başkanlıkları o ülkelerin yaşayış ve düşünüş tarzını gözler önüne sererken, bizler de gezerek, görerek öğrenmenin güzelliğini tatmış olduk. Bütün bu anları ölümsüzleştirmek için çektiğimiz videolar ve fotoğraflar sayesinde yaşadıklarımızı başkalarına da gösterme fırsatı bulduk. Öğretmen ve öğrencilerimizin vizyonu genişledi, eğitim ve öğrenim gözlerde daha farklı bir boyut kazandı. Zaten bu projeden beklentimiz küresel düşünen ve bu düşüncelerini ulus kavramıyla bütünleştirebilen ve ulusun geleceğinde, gelişmesinde etkin olabilecek bireylerin yetişmesi değil miydi?

Çalışma toplantıları için gittiğimiz ülkelerde projeye yön verirken, birlikte çalışmanın ve farklı fikirlerden yola çıkarak ortak paydada buluşmanın insanı nasıl geliştirdiğine ve başarıya götürdüğüne şahit olduk. Almanya'nın başlattığı masal, tamamlanmak üzere sırayla bütün ülkeleri dolaştı. Masal yazma sırası bize geldiğinde kendi hesabımıza düşen kısımda olmazsa olmaz masal kahramanımız Keloğlan'dan bahsettik. Masal örgüsünü kültürümüze has unsurlarla donatmaya çalıştık. Bunda da başarılı olduğumuzu umuyoruz. Öğrencilerimiz yazdıkları hikâye ve denemelerde kendi bakış açılarını yansıtmaya çalıştılar. Genç beyinlerin neyi nasıl edebileceği, farklı kültürlerin evrensel konular karşısındaki farklı hassasiyetleri yazılan hikâye ve denemelerde gözler önüne serilmiş oldu.

İşte bugün önsözünü yazdığımız bu kitap, beş farklı kültürü bünyesinde barındıran ortak bir çalışmanın ve emeğin ürünü. Kitabın bize ayrılan kısmının önsözünü yazarken proje esnasında yaşadığımız bütün güzellikler, arkadaşlıklar, tatlar, yorgunluklar, şaşkınlıklar birer birer hafızamızda canlanarak, içinde sevgi olmayan eylemlerin ne kadar boş olacağını, bütün bu çalışmaların aslında hümanizmi ve hoşgörüyü ne kadar destekler mahiyette olduğunu hatırlatıyor. "Hayat, arkadaşlıktan daha büyük bir hediye vermez" demiş bir düşünür. Bu proje sayesinde bizler, bu büyük hediyeden nasibimize düşeni fazlasıyla aldığımızı düşünüyoruz. Aslında bir önsöz değil elbette bu, bir başlangıç. Daha sonraki güzelliklere açılacak kapıların başlangıcı...

# Foreword

Dear friends,

In an age of rapid changes and challenges, some time ago, five schools around Europe decided to bring a Writing Project into fruition.

The fairy tale, the stories and the articles -embodied in it- transcended borders to appeal to every person, every nation irrespective of religion or ideology. The whole work not only turned their young writers into inmates of a universal inn but it also guaranteed their transition to a hope-filled future.

The project highlighted some real human values: friendship, tolerance, mutual understanding and respect. It offered moments of universality and it was an unforgettable experience in many different ways. Besides the joyful moments, students and teachers shared during the meetings, we mostly gained knowledge and, if joy lasts for a moment, knowledge lasts for a life time.....

During the procedure we met difficulties and we felt like setting off for a marvellous voyage between fantasy, myth and reality, on high seas and unknown places, where legends still live on and inspire their inhabitants.

Constantinos Cavafis, the great Greek poet, in his famous poem "Ithaca" says characteristically

"When you set on the journey to Ithaca  
pray that the road be long,  
full of adventures, full of knowledge

.....

When with that delight, that joy  
you 'll enter into harbors you have not yet seen  
always keep Ithaca in your mind

.....

and once you are old, cast anchor on this isle,  
rich with all you 've gained along the way.  
Ithaca gave you the wondrous voyage,  
as wise as have come to be, with such experience  
you 'll have realized what Ithacas dignify".

The participants, especially the young ones, identified some of their future goals through co-existence and intercommunication. Their youthful freshness, the enthusiasm of their hearts, their inventiveness and their spontaneity led five different countries to a common cultural route.

I feel most honored to have been participated in this Project as the Greek Coordinator. I wish all the best for the students who took part in it and no less their advisors who inspired in them the desire to write so creatively.

I 'm sure that the unique moments we shared will remain within us as beacons for our thoughts and actions, while reminding us for the loftiest values of cooperation among the peoples on earth.

And as Dionysis Savvopoulos, a Greek popular musician, sings the following lyrics:

"May God Keep us healthy  
So we can always meet and celebrate  
Dancing in circles as free as a river"

**may the river be long!...**

*Aspasia Athanassiou  
English Teacher  
Coordinator of the Greek Participation*

# Εισαγωγικό Σημείωμα

Φίλες και φίλοι,

Δύο χρόνια πριν, και σε μια εποχή ραγδαίων εξελίξεων και προκλήσεων, πέντε σχολεία από διαφορετικές περιοχές της Ευρώπης αποφάσισαν να συνεργαστούν και να υλοποιήσουν ένα κοινό πρόγραμμα Δημιουργικής Γραφής μέσα από μια διαδικασία μακρά και επίπονη.

Τα Παραμύθια, τα Διηγήματα και τα Άρθρα, που εμπειριέχονται στην κοινή αυτή έκδοση, όλον αυτό τον καιρό άλλαζαν διαδοχικά σύνορα και πρόσφεραν μοναδικές συγκινήσεις στους δημιουργούς τους, παραμερίζοντας κάθε είδους θρησκευτικές προκαταλήψεις, ιδεολογικές διαφορές και κοινωνικές αντιθέσεις.

Μέσα από το Πρόγραμμα οι νέοι κατάφεραν να συμβιώσουν και ήρθαν πιο κοντά εξασφαλίζοντας έτσι την ομαλή τους μετάβαση σ' ένα ελπιδοφόρο μέλλον. Ανέπτυξαν ένα όμορφο κλίμα αλληλοκατανόησης, ανεκτικότητας και αλληλοσεβασμού και προήγαγαν τις αξίες της κοινωνικότητας, της φιλίας και της αλληλεγγύης.

Το εγχείρημα αυτό, ήταν μια αξέχαστη εμπειρία από πολλές απόψεις. Εκτός από τις ανέμελες, χαρούμενες στιγμές που πρόσφερε στους συμμετέχοντες, κατά τη διάρκεια των συναντήσεων τους στο Muehlheim, στη Sakarya, τη Narva και τη Θεσσαλονίκη, το Πρόγραμμα χάρισε κυρίως Γνώση. Τα παιδιά έγιναν πλουσιότερα σε εμπειρίες, και σοφότερα με ό,τι είδαν και άκουσαν, ξεπερνώντας με τον αυθορμητισμό τους τις όποιες δυσκολίες και εμπόδια. Κι αν η χαρά –λένε– διαρκεί μια στιγμή, η Γνώση διαρκεί για πάντα....

Ένα υπέροχο Ταξίδι ζήσαμε, λοιπόν, όπως αυτό του Οδυσσέα περιπλανώμενοι μέσα στον κόσμο της φαντασίας, των μύθων και της πραγματικότητας. Σε πλατιές θάλασσες και άγνωστους τόπους, όπου οι θρύλοι και οι παραδόσεις συνεχίζουν ακόμη και σήμερα να εμπνέουν τις ψυχές των ανθρώπων.

Ο μεγάλος Έλληνας ποιητής Κωνσταντίνος Καβάφης στο ποίημά του «Ιθάκη» λέει χαρακτηριστικά:

Σα βγεις στον πηγαιμό για την Ιθάκη,  
Να εύχεσαι να 'ναι μακρύς ο δρόμος,  
γεμάτος περιπέτειες, γεμάτος γνώσεις,...  
Που με τι ευχαρίστηση, με τι χαρά  
Θα μπαίνεις σε λιμένας πρωτοϊδωμένους.  
Πάντα στο νου σου να 'χεις την Ιθάκη  
Το φθάσιμον εκεί είν' ο προορισμός σου....  
Και γέρος πια ν'αράξεις στο νησί,  
Πλούσιος με όσα κέρδισες στον δρόμο  
Η Ιθάκη σου έδωσε τ' ωραίο ταξίδι  
Έτσι σοφός που έγινες, με τόση πείρα,  
Ήδη θα το κατάλαβες οι Ιθάκες τι σημαίνουν.

Γι' αυτούς τους λόγους λοιπόν, το Πρόγραμμα ήταν μια δυνατή πρόκληση και είμαι βέβαιη πως θα συνεχίσει να αποτελεί κινητήρια δύναμη έμπνευσης για κάθε νέο και νέα που έχει στόχο τη γόνιμη επικοινωνία και την ειρηνική συνύπαρξη με συνομήλικους από άλλες χώρες. Η φρέσκια ματιά, ο ενθουσιασμός και η επινοητικότητα των παιδιών μας βοήθησαν να προσεγγίσουμε ο ένας τον άλλον και να πορευτούμε σε μια κοινή πολυπολιτισμική διαδρομή, όπου η εναλλαγή των χρωμάτων, των μυρωδιών και των γεύσεων της κάθε χώρας μας γέμιζε ενθουσιασμό σε κάθε μας βήμα.

Αισθάνομαι πραγματικά υπερήφανη που συμμετείχα στο Πρόγραμμα, ως Συντονίστρια της Ελληνικής Συμμετοχής, και εύχομαι σ' όλα τα παιδιά από τη Γερμανία, την Τουρκία, την Εσθονία, τη Ρουμανία και την Ελλάδα να συνεχίσουν να στέλνουν τέτοια μηνύματα συνεργασίας στον κόσμο, αναδεικνύοντας αυτά που τον ενώνουν και παραμερίζοντας αυτά που τον χωρίζουν.

Είμαι σίγουρη πως οι μοναδικές στιγμές που μοιραστήκαμε τα τελευταία δύο χρόνια θα παραμείνουν βαθιά μέσα μας και θα καθοδηγούν τις σκέψεις και τις πράξεις μας, υπενθυμίζοντας τις πολύτιμες αξίες της ευγενούς άμιλλας και της φιλίας ανάμεσα στους λαούς της γης.

Και όπως λέει ο μεγάλος μας τραγουδοποιός Διονύσης Σαββόπουλος:

«Να μας έχει ο Θεός γερούς  
πάντα ν' ανταμώνουμε και να ξεφαντώνουμε  
με χορούς κυκλωτικούς  
και άλλο τόσο ελεύθερους σαν ποταμούς»

**Μακάρι το ποτάμι της Χαράς και της Γνώσης να είναι για όλους μακρύ!...**

*Αθανασίου Ασπασία  
Καθηγήτρια Αγγλικής Φιλολογίας  
Συντονίστρια του Προγράμματος Comenius για την Ελληνική Αποστολή*

## Foreword and Greetings from Estonia

Dear friends,

In your hands you are holding the book we have created together. The topics we selected are very close and clear for all of us – young and elderly, dreamers and pragmatists, men and women alike. *Comenius* has united us, so different and living so far from each other. We are very glad that we got acquainted with you and became friends.

All is changing in our life, but we would like everyone to have a right to dream and to make dreams come true.

With best regards,

*Students and teachers of  
Narva Soldino Gümnaasium, Estonia*

## Turkish Students' Opinions of the Project

This project has been very useful for my life. I learned different languages and I saw different ways of life. So this project is a very good experience for me. I learned a lot of things and experienced two decisive weeks in Estonia and Greece which will always be present in my memory. This project is finished now, but I wish we will meet again and keep our friendship alive. I thank all the teachers involved in this project for giving us this unique chance. I will never forget this experience all my life...

*Melike SÖĞÜTÇEPINAR*

Comenius was the best thing that I've ever had in my life! I met different cultures and saw different places. All of the participants understood that all of us were brothers and sisters. We learned the meaning of the 'Peace' better and forever. Therefore, we deduced that wars are the most nonsense and disgusting phenomenon in the world.

In short, this project was for the 'Peace'!

*Damla BAK*

I have been in this project since it started in 2007. If I had not been participating in this project, I wouldn't have had a chance to go abroad and practise my English. I have become more social, too. I met new people and different cultures. This has been a very precious experience that will guide me in my future life.

*Fatih Baha ÖMERÖĞLU*



# German Students´ Foreword

## Das Comenius-Projekt

Wir sind sehr froh und stolz, dass das Comenius-Projekt ins Leben gerufen wurde und uns Schülern die Möglichkeit gibt, mit ausländischen Jugendlichen in Verbindung zu treten und ihre Kulturen und Lebensformen kennenzulernen und zu vergleichen.

Da dieses Projekt im Rahmen der EU zu Stande kam, fühlen wir uns geehrt, Brücken zwischen den Ländern und Kulturen zu errichten und zu erhalten. Das Reisen und die Arbeitstreffen vermitteln bleibende Eindrücke, prägen Erinnerungen, und internationale Freundschaften werden geknüpft.

Das europäische Gemeinschaftsgefühl wird entwickelt - durch das Comenius-Projekt, das als Band zwischen den mitwirkenden Ländern fungiert.

Wir schätzen die Gastfreundschaft und die Bereitschaft der Teilnehmer sehr und hoffen, dass solche Projekte weiterhin verwirklicht werden können, damit Europas Jugend noch näher zusammenrückt und darauf eine erfolgreiche gemeinsame Zukunft aufbauen kann.

Wir wollen uns bedanken, dass wir die Möglichkeit hatten, unseren Horizont im Hinblick auf Länder, Kulturen und Politik zu erweitern, internationale Gastfreundschaft zu genießen und Verständnis für das europäische „Wir“ zu erlangen.

We are very glad and proud that the Comenius Project has become reality which gave the students the possibility to get into contact with young people from abroad and to get to know and to compare their culture and their way of living. As this project was created in the framework of the EU we are greatly honoured to build and maintain bridges between different countries and cultures. Travelling abroad in connection with regular work meetings convey ever-lasting impressions, create unforgettable memories and, consequently, international friendships are formed.

By means of the Comenius Project a sense of solidarity arises which serves as a bond among the countries involved in the project.

We highly estimate the hospitality and the commitment of all the participants in the project and hope that in the future similar projects can be realized so that the European youth gets even closer together which will give them the unique chance to build a successful common future.

We are grateful that we were given the opportunity to widen our horizon with regards to foreign countries, their culture and politics, to enjoy international hospitality and friendship and—last not least- to have attained a deeper understanding for European identity.

**Thanks again!**

*Dhiluni Kandage, Nadija Sijaric, Mühlheim /Germany*

## On Our important Comenius Writing Project...

Born in the creative environment of Friedrich-Ebert Gymnasium of Mühlheim am Main, the idea travelled into five countries, excited sensitive teachers and finally touched the souls of us, the teenagers, in order to fire our creative spirit that was hidden inside.

The multi-dimensional traditions of our lands have shaped an active field within which we gave form to our own personal expressions and dreams.

The fine cooperation among us - under the guidance of beloved teachers - made it possible to achieve this wonderful documentation, a fact that clearly shows that the young generations can work together and develop an awareness of their coherence, even when less privileged days come with the passage of time.

We believe that such important initiatives should be followed in the best possible manner and, although the Project has finished, its flame will continue to warm our hearts.

So, we send our greetings to all of our friends around Europe and the rest of the world as well, with the well-merited feelings of true friendship and peaceful co-existence.

We want to make a pledge to each other: that love and peace across borders is our main goal and we will always try to showcase what makes us ALIKE and NOT DIFFERENT.

Dear friends, we will miss you all, but we will always cherish our memories from our meetings. Thank you Mühlheim! Thank you Sakarya! Thank you Narva! Thank you Bucarest! Thank you Thessaloniki!

Hope to meet you all again one day, and in Greek:

**“Kali antamossi”**

*The Students of the Comenius Group,  
1st Gymnasium of Ampelokipi,  
Thessaloniki,  
GREECE*

## About the Comenius Project

I feel very honoured to have been participating in this project for many reasons:

It gave me and my classmates the opportunity to deal with creative writing through texts, such as fairy tales, short stories and essays according to our age, so that we, the kids, can present this work in a common, selective edition with multi-cultural content.

It strengthened multi-lingual within our school community by motivating us to practise other foreign languages, apart from our own mother tongue, such as English or German.

It helped us to improve our translating skills and get familiar with any linguistic peculiarities, phrases or idioms that we met while writing our own texts.

It developed our intercultural background by urging us to compare fables, legends and folk tales or any traditional stories that are found in the cultural heritage of our countries.

I think that most of the aims have been accomplished. The Project was like a dream where we lived in altogether the last two years.

**May our friendship last forever and may eternal peace spread on earth like a prayer.**

*by Antoniadis Katerina / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

# FAIRYTALES MÄRCHEN



Sinikliiski Victoria / Thessaloniki, Greece



Daniel Schmitt, 11 years old, Mühlheim / Germany

# The Three Tasks

Once upon a time there was a great kingdom which was surrounded by deep lakes, high mountains and a dark and mysterious forest. The mountains were really beautiful and their tops were capped with snow glittering in the sun. At the foot of the highest mountain a beautiful castle with turrets and four high towers was embedded into the brilliant landscape. The old king and his wife lived there. They had no children, but a lot of servants, maids and a court jester who worked for them for entertainment. One of the king's most faithful servants was a poor young boy from the village which looked rather ugly and dirty. His name was John. He was a good-looking boy with brown hair and brown eyes. He was sixteen years old and lived together with his sister Lillian in an old cottage in the village close to the dark forest. Many poor people lived there, too. The village was not big, so everybody knew everybody. The people were afraid of going out in the dark because there were many thieves around who were trying to rob the people.

Lillian was a very beautiful girl with long blond hair and blue eyes.

In winter time it was always cold in their cottage and the children were constantly freezing because they had no fireplace.

The cottage had only one room and this room consisted only of some old furniture. There were two hard beds, one chair and a carpet. They really had to lead a very hard life.

Lillian worked in the castle like her brother as John and Lillian's parents had died ten years before and the two children had to work hard to earn their living.

Since the day the parents had died they were in the king's service.

The king was very friendly to them because he had no children of his own.

However, they did not get much money. Sometimes they did not have enough to buy something to eat.

So they had to go into the forest and collect mushrooms and berries, but they only found poisonous mushrooms or they found nothing at all they could eat.

John and Lillian did not like to go into the forest because it was the home of a horrible witch. She was cruel, old and very ugly. On her hooked nose a terrible spot could be seen. The witch had employed a dwarf who served as her slave. He had promised to work for her because two years before the witch had saved his life. Otherwise a magician would have turned the dwarf into a toad.

It was rumoured in the village that the witch had brutally killed an inhabitant of the village every year by infecting him with a fatal disease.

The witch hated the king because she wanted to be queen and reign the kingdom.

Many years ago the witch had been a normal woman and the king's sister.

Her father had decided that if he died, his son would be the successor to the throne. On this very day she transformed from an ordinary woman to a witch.

One day the old king felt terrible.

He was very ill and he knew that he would die soon. The whole kingdom was very sad and helpless because they did not know how it would go on.

Only the witch was happy. Had she anything to do with the disease?

The king did not know how and by whom the kingdom should be reigned after his death.

He decided that his best servant should become the next king.

This message made the witch very angry. But the king was thinking of three very difficult tasks for his servants...

*Daniel Schmitt and Tim Hainz, 11 years / 2007, Mühlheim/Germany*



Sikli Malvina / Thessaloniki, Greece

The last passing years had been extremely difficult ones for the Kingdom because of the alarming increase of bandit attacks on caravans, merchants and even villages. Also, in those times of troubles, a rumour of a strange presence in the forest nearby was gradually growing, which made everyone think twice or even thrice travelling out of the realm.

The King was in despair. "I have sent my best soldiers to stop these attacks, I spent a fortune on the best mercenaries to do the same and what did I get? Absolutely nothing" his voice echoed throughout the throne-room.

"So I'll give the **first task**":

"I need someone very brave to pass through the woods where this restless spirit is rumoured to dwell and find the hiding place of the bandits in order to stop them in any possible way".

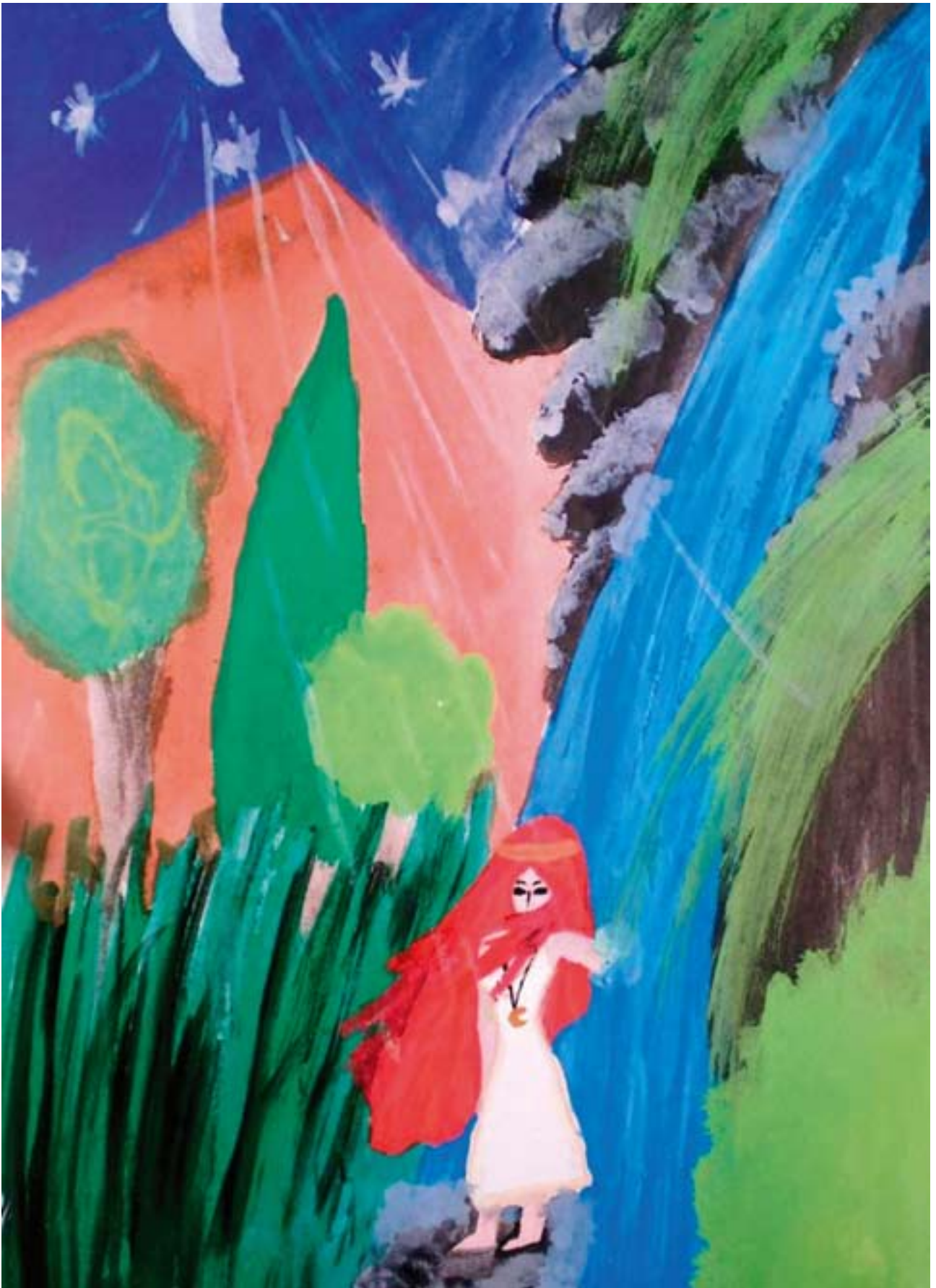
John decided to take the risk and next morning, after saying farewell to his sister, he set out to take his chance. It was noon when he stepped into the forest. There was no living presence but his ears caught the sweet twittering of birds and the slight whispering of the wind through the leaves. After wandering for many hours, the sky started darkening and the bright sun gave his place to a full moon. A thick mist lifted all over the place and the trees looked more like threatening shadows.

Suddenly he felt uneasy. He twitched and stood panting against a tree when a sound of hooves reached his ears like an echo. He felt something watching him and froze when he noticed a shape that shouldn't have been there. He slowly lifted his eyes. A short distance in front of him, under the moonlight, stood an incredibly beautiful mare. It was white as snow, with a dark red mane and a bright golden streak around its neck.

The boy stared back in awe, tearing his clothes through the bushes and thorns but the horse lowered its head to show that it would not hurt him. It was not long before John realized that there was no danger for his safety. When the horse came nearer he saw some pain and sorrow portrayed in his eyes. Without delay, he jumped on its back and let it lead him through the forest to a darker place, which then opened up into a waterfall with crystal, clear water.

The mare halted and snorted as if signaling to someone. In a little while, it disappeared and John saw a figure emerging from the waters. He squinted to see better. It was a woman dressed in a long white dress with red hair flowing down to her waist.

"I'm Hyppoliti. Only a good in heart and mind could manage to reach here and you are the one I have been waiting for after a very long time" the woman said.



Sikli Malvina / Thessaloniki, Greece



It took them endless time of talking till John found out that she once had been the Queen of an ancient Amazon tribe. Her storytelling was full of the bravery, the wisdom and the strength those female-riders used to live with. That region was their homeland where they had developed a great culture with impressive cities, mighty fortresses and holy sanctuaries until they were defeated by a troop of invaders. All the women-warriors had fallen dead on the battlefield besides her.

It was then that Zeus, the greatest God of Olympus, made her take the shape of a mare. Her palace was left deserted till it sank into the bottom of the lake for evermore. Since then, on every full moon, she has been searching for the brave man who will release her from the divine will and help her take her female form back.

“The only way for someone to break the spell is to make a sacrifice for a good cause” continued the woman, “I know that you took the risk to save your country from a gang of bandits so I will help you. I will guide you to their camp.”

“But you are a spirit” John wondered. “Why haven’t you been at rest after such a long time?”

“I can’t rest” Hyppoliti said “before I make myself sure that the symbol of our glorious sisterhood is given to righteous hands. Thus, the Amazons shall never be forgotten and our brave deeds will live in eternity.”

She then showed him an amulet in the shape of a moon with a white rearing horse in the middle, hanging from her neck, and John understood.

“Let’s go, my friend” said the woman and all of a sudden she turned into the white mare urging John to jump on her back.



Sinikliiski Victoria / Thessaloniki, Greece



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They galloped across mountains and rivers, valleys and lakes when they sprinted over the last hill. At the distance of a few miles they reached the camp. A tall wooden wall surrounded a tower as well as little huts and stables. As they walked by, some rogues turned and sent sharp glares at them. A huge, scary-looking man walked out and faced them.

“Who are you?” he asked in a tough, iron voice.

“I’m here to stop you” John answered and readied himself for battle.

The man’s eyes darkened dangerously.

“As you wish...” he said.

And the bandits attacked.

John revealed his blade and Hyppoliti flung her head with strength and speed, badly injuring anyone who stood in her way. Some men fell helplessly to their attack but many others kept coming, trying to kill her and her friend. Not a minute had passed she saw John lying unconscious next to her. Rage overwhelmed her heart. She rose on her hind legs neighing with all her might.

It was then, when her hooves touched the ground that the earth started shaking and cracking open. Great flames came out of the cracks burning everything in their wake. The bandits tried to escape, but the smoke had covered all over the place. Soon all of them were killed leaving people safe from their attacks. It was over.

John’s eyes flickered open and gazed at the still burning wreckage “Hyppoliti? Hyppoliti?” he called. There was no response. He called her name again and again but still nothing seemed to react. He remained breathless for a while.

“What happened to her? Is she...?” he didn’t even want to think about that.

Suddenly, a soft melodic voice was heard from above as if it came out of the sky and the clouds themselves.

“John...” A speechless joy split his face as he gasped.

“Hyppoliti... The spell is broken...” he whispered.

“Yes ...and you fought with strength, bravery, honour and grace. Artemis, the goddess of hunting called upon me to anoint me maiden in the Temple of Apollo. From now on, the spirits of the Amazons dwell in the hearts of every single woman in the world.”

And she added. “Go on my friend and take care of yourself but never forget the Amazons. Tell the world about the maidens of the shield of power and honor and keep our symbol with respect and gratitude. It will help you whenever you find yourself in trouble.”

Then the wind carried her spirit around the place before laying it to rest in the quiet crystal waters of the waterfall.

“Rest well now, Queen Hyppoliti” said John and knelt down to take the precious amulet that was left on the ground.

When he touched it, in a matter of seconds, a beautiful stallion with fur of abyssal black appeared in front of him. Then he and his new friend started galloping like the wind out of the enchanted forest.

He was in a hurry to tell the king and the villagers the good news and the story of the Amazons, as well. But mostly he was ready to undertake the second task. He was sure that Hyppoliti’s amulet would protect him from any evil and bring him **good luck**...

*By Alexandros, Efi, Grigoris, Korina, Maria, Pantelis, Stavroula, Theodoros, Thomas, Vassilis and Victoria, 2008, Thessaloniki / Greece*

He kept on galloping unconsciously with his mind full of thoughts that he couldn’t hold back. He wanted to arrive at the castle before the sunset. He knew that the amulet would be always with him and would never stop protecting him.

The sound of his horse’s hooves calmed his mind, whereas the wind helped him escape from his thoughts. He had completed the first mission and he was proud of that.

The sky tidied up its white-blue sheet and the darkness of the night covered it. His strong black horse was moving fast. The dim shape that John saw made him smile. It was the King’s castle in front of him. While John was narrating the story to the king, he revived all the difficult moments he had suffered and felt gratitude to Hyppoliti again. That feeling warmed his heart. The king listened to him carefully. When John stopped talking, it was his turn to speak. After crossing his arms on his chest, he looked at John in a determined way. He wanted them to discuss about some important things. Then, his voice sounded loud.

“John, you have finished the first task successfully but the second one is more difficult”.

John listened to the king, being curious to know about it.

“Once, many years ago”, the king said “I climbed up the tower of my castle. From on high, I stretched my arms and shouted a swear in the distance that I would never let anybody harm my kingdom and I would always fight evil so my people would live in this country forever. Suddenly, a dark fog, coming from the forest, passed through the tower’s windows, turned round my throne and disappeared as mysteriously as it had come” the king said. John was so upset that he could not keep himself from interrupting the king.

“How .....what.....was it like a.....;”

“Yes, John, it was a curse” the king said with wet eyes, “and not only does that curse prevent any successors to take my throne but it will kill them in the end” he added. When John heard about these, he shivered with fear but he had lots of questions in his mind.



“Actually”, the king continued “the only way for someone to break the curse is to scatter the ashes of Simurg Anka - the magnificent bird that dies every year but is reborn out of its ashes - around my throne. I mean that only the bird’s death could help for the rebirth of our kingdom” the king added. “So, I need your help to bring Simurg Anka’s ashes here in the palace”. John remained speechless, but after a while he decided to accept the task although he knew that he had no much time.

Unfortunately, while John and King were talking, they couldn’t realize that another person was overhearing them... It was a woman with dark hair and a black cape - the vicious witch - who was walking angrily to and fro pushing her crystal ball away. “It’s not that easy” she grumbled. Then, the dwarf, as oddly dressed as usual, entered the room with a penguin-like walking.



Illustrations: Turkey

“Is there anything wrong?” he asked hesitatingly. The witch didn’t reply at first. Then she turned towards him. She was so furious that her anger flashed up on her eyes

“Now it’s high time you paid back the favor you owe me“ she said, “you are going to help me, aren’t you?” she continued. The dwarf nodded his head hesitatingly. Immediately, the witch told him about her plans. Everything became clear then. He was supposed to follow John like a shadow and threaten him to give up his mission. But if John insisted on going on he would kill him. Her determination made the dwarf feel frightened because he knew how wicked the witch was. He was worried only about one thing. The witch was planning to send him to Anatolia using her magical powers, but those powers could not work during his journey on Mount Kaf - the mystical mountain where rumour has it that it keeps a treasure. He thought of drawing back for a moment but immediately he got rid of this thought. He started getting prepared for the journey without knowing what was going to happen.

The sunrise was painting the nature with bright colors as if it sent greetings. John breathed the fresh air deeply. His horse was ready. He wore new clothes and checked if he had taken all that he needed. Yes, everything was in its place. He rode his horse and set out greeting the king who was watching from the tower of the castle wishing him good luck.

The witch was still angry. Everything, even the singing birds made her feel angry. She was walking up and down the room. Then she looked out of the window and whispered “Today will be my day”. When she turned back, she saw the dwarf standing beside her. He told her that he was ready. “Don’t forget that you mustn’t return unless you prevent him from accomplishing his task “said the witch and raised her stick.

John finally reached Anatolia after passing lots of hills, valleys and rivers, an exotic place with many colours around, butterflies, plants and fruitful trees. He stayed calm and fascinated by the splendid beauty of nature. He was riding so fast that he could hardly realize a figure only a few meters far from him. He stopped and saw someone still coughing because of the dust in the air. He felt guilty about it but in a few seconds the figure became clear. It was a young man who wore a salvar, a short waistcoat and a fes on his bold head.

“It’s easy to travel fast, brave man, but can you tell me how long does the journey from the east to the take? “the young man asked him.

All the disturbing thoughts in John’s mind flew away. It took him some time to give some answers. However, none of them was right. Finally, he was all ears to learn the suitable one.

“It’s only a day trip” the young man said full of pride. John was surprised.

“How is it so?” he asked, “It is impossible” he continued. The young man explained calmly.

“The sun rises from the east in the morning and sets from the west in the evening. That’s why it takes only one day long”.

John was impressed by that intelligent boy whose name was Keloglan. Somehow, he felt that he could trust him. Then he told him about his secret mission. After telling all about it, Keloglan invited him to his house for dinner. On the way home, John thought that that clever boy could help him with his task.



They reached Keloglan's house when the stars had already appeared in the sky. John noticed that the house was too small, however, a pleasant smell - though unusual to him, coming from the kitchen - reminded him of his hunger and sent his thoughts about the house away. Keloglan introduced John to his mother and then they started making their plans about their mission until Keloglan's mother called them for dinner. The food was delicious and John asked what it was. Keloglan's mother was pleased to hear that he liked it and said that it was a traditional dish called "tarhana soup". Then she offered John to have more as there was plenty of it. John felt relaxed in this warm house feeling as if they had known each other for long. That night he enjoyed a relaxing, long sleep.



Illustrations: Turkey

The following morning, John and Keloglan went to the local bazaar to buy some food. John was pushing his way through the big crowd when he saw a very beautiful young woman. He was impressed by her beauty. He asked Keloglan who she was. He told him that she was the Sultan's daughter and his face turned red. He also said that she used to go to the bath with her maids every week.

"In fact, I'm...er..." Keloglan stammered and John finished his phrase "I see....in love with her".

Keloglan admitted his feelings for her but he added that the Sultan didn't agree with the idea of their marriage just because he was poor. While Keloglan was talking about it John was thinking about the valuable treasure on Mount Kaf-where the bird, Simurg Anka, lived-a fact that his friend had no idea. For the time being, John decided not to tell him about the treasure in order to make himself sure about Keloglan's friendship. If his feelings were true and pure, Keloglan would be rich soon and he would made his dreams come true. John smiled meaningfully at the thought of it. Meanwhile the dwarf was moving hastily, worried about the situation he was found in. All the help from the witch would be given to him till he reached the mountain.

"From then on I'll be by myself " he grumbled.

He continued walking even faster without catching not even a glimpse at the beautiful scenery around him. The first thing he had to do, after reaching Mount Kaf was to set some dangerous traps for John. He regretted that he didn't have the witch's crystal ball with him at that time to see where John was but soon, he realized that regretting the past was nothing but waste time on trivialities. After some time he found the footpath to the Mountain. He started climbing up and shivered with fear when he looked down the steep slope.

Mound Kaf stood there. The summit reached the clouds and a tower on it seemed to protect the whole mountain. It was then that the dwarf felt that his mission was not an easy one. He concentrated on his plan to prevent John from getting up there, yet unaware that he had already found a helper.

On the way up the mountain, John and Keloglan had fun but they were thoughtful again from time to time due to the importance of the mission they had undertaken. After some time the weather changed. The birds hid in their nests as the sun was setting. Their mood changed and they became gloomy and depressed. The wind was blowing so hard that they couldn't hear each other easily. Soon both of them were aware of what was about to happen.

They nodded their heads in a determined way and lost into the deep darkness. They knew that their harsh way to the Mountain had just begun. The silhouette standing next to the tower decided that it was the right time to attack. A merciless smile appeared on his face. He had to stop them no matter what. The stones that he had already piled were in front of him. He put the biggest one near the edge of the mountain.

"Time for action" he whispered. However he didn't expect that John was with someone else when he started rolling the rocks down the slope, one after the other. The noise from the rolling stones made John and Keloglan stop immediately. Suddenly they saw a rock rumbling down towards them. They were frightened. The horse, with the amulet on, hardly managed to escape. Keloglan was really afraid of being hurt. When the rock fell on them the horse reared up and the two young men fell off the horse. When they stood up they realized that the black horse, as dark as night, had passed away into the eternity.

John mourned for his stallion in despair. Keloglan was also sad. But the rocks were not a threat any more. Everything was silent till they heard someone moaning. For an instant, John and Keloglan looked at each other, more worried about any other traps that might put them in danger again. The dwarf was really angry because of his failure. Even worse, he was trapped under the weight of a huge rock in his effort to push it over John and Keloglan. He tried to escape from the difficult situation he was found in. His right leg was squeezed under the rock and he couldn't move.

"I wish I had run away from here" he grouched.

When John and Keloglan walked across the narrow path they saw the dwarf trapped under the rock. Soon they found out that it was him who had set all the traps against them. For a while they couldn't decide what to do but finally they agreed that it was cruel to leave the dwarf helpless there. They tried to push the rock away from him and they did it at last. The dwarf's leg was badly injured. Keloglan





wrapped it up with a piece of cloth that he had torn from his clothes. The dwarf was shocked. He felt so much gratitude to them that soon that feeling became stronger than his hatred.

He forgot all about the witch's orders and decided to stand by John and Keloglan's side. He told them everything about the plans of the vicious witch admitting that he had prepared lots of traps on his way to the tower of Mount Kaf.

Suddenly they realized they didn't have much time so they started climbing up again to reach the tower as soon as possible.

John thought that now he had one more friend who would help him to save his Kingdom. After a while, they saw the tower standing high there in its full splendor. With the dwarf's help, they moved forward avoiding any other traps.



Illustrations: Turkey



Illustration: Turkey

When they reached the tower they saw a huge door. Coming closer, they were still unaware of the mystery that was hidden on it and they had to solve it. Some figures and symbols were engraved on the door. After much effort, John managed to decode the message. It said:

“There are three doors inside the tower. The key of each is hidden in your hearts”

Then they pushed the door and entered. They found another door just in front of them. There was also something written on it. “Gratitude opens this door. Everyone who has this feeling in his heart has got the key”.

The dwarf thought that he was full of that feeling. After exchanging some glances with John and Keloglan, he felt like being the right person to open the door. He moved towards it in a calm way. He put his hand on the handle recalling the moments of his rescue and felt gratitude for John and Keloglan one more time. All of a sudden, the door opened. As soon as they entered the room they reached another door. There was also something written on it.

“Goodness opens this door. Everyone who has this feeling in his heart has got the key.”

Keloglan and the dwarf nodded their heads urging John to move forward. John brought back memories of his sacrifice with the bandits in the name of the King and the door opened.

Now they stood in front of the last door. This time it was the dwarf who read what was written on it.

“This land should be always full of love. Every person who is deeply in love can open this door”.

Keloglan was the tailor-made boy for opening this door it as he was in love with the Sultan’s daughter.

“Off you go” John encouraged Keloglan, “we don’t have much time”.

Keloglan touched the door as the other two had done before but the door didn’t open.

“Think of her” John said.

Keloglan thought about the first time he had seen the Sultan’s daughter and how beautiful she was. Then his love for the young woman filled his heart again and the door opened.

At last they found themselves in front of Simurg Anka. They looked at the bird in astonishment. It sat on its nest with valuable stones spread all over it.

“What glaring stones!” they exclaimed.

John said “We have to hurry up”.

At that time they heard a pleasant sound. Looking at each other in surprise they wondered if they had really heard it or not. But they heard it again telling them to calm down. It was the bird’s voice. It was Simurg Anka speaking who offered them his help by giving them the treasure. He also told them that but there was short time till its rebirth.

John and the dwarf said that it was their wish Keloglan take the treasure for himself. Keloglan smiled in gratitude. In a short time, Keloglan managed to put the treasure in a bag and Simurg Anka offered to carry all of them on its wings to wherever they wanted. But they had to hurry in order to arrive at the King’s palace on time otherwise the ashes from its rebirth would be scattered in the sky.

The three friends jumped on its wings quickly. The bird flew away in the blue sky and after a few miles it landed near Keloglan’s house. Keloglan said his farewell to his friends and carried the treasure home. The bird flew away again with John and the dwarf on this time, who were waving their hands till Keloglan disappeared.

They went on travelling for some time when John saw the tower of the King’s castle. He couldn’t believe that he had almost achieved the second task. They approached the castle. The bird speeded up and flew through the door of the tower.

The dwarf shouted. “The rebirth is starting. We won’t make it”.

But John was sure that the bird knew what it had to do. It flew towards the King’s throne. John shouted to the King.

“Your majesty, go away from your throne” Then the bird sat on it. All the eyes riveted to the bird that suddenly was burst into flames and changed into a pile of ashes. The throne filled with them at last.

The King couldn’t believe in his eyes and shouted “Our Kingdom is free from the curse. It’s getting reborn”. Then, a new baby bird, a new Simurg Anka, got out of the ashes. It said farewell and flew away in the sky.

The time passed. As John was watching the starlit night, he recalled all the memories with the amazed but happy King, his new friend Keloglan who had helped him and the dwarf who had unluckily returned back to the witch.

The King's words, after the curse had been broken, echoed in his mind for one more time.

"Just one more task for you, John, and you will become the new King of my Kingdom. I'm pretty sure that you will make it once more".

With all these thoughts John laid down on his bed

"Yes, I will" he murmured meaningfully and let his body float in endless dreams.

*Third part from Turkey*



Illustration: Turkey

Then the King explained to John what his third task was: "What you have to do to become a King is to look at a flower". The King paused and then added: "It is a most difficult task, I'm afraid. But you will have to handle it." Hearing the King's words, John burst into laughter and then retorted: "What do you mean? That's the simplest thing possible. I can go and look at a flower right away.....in a minute...And the task is solved..." The King smiled. "Why, I'm terribly afraid that it's not so simple..." "Oh, but it is....," John replied and rapidly rushed outside into the garden of the kingdom, filled with the most incredible hyacinths in the whole world. He quickly cast a glance at them and he dashed back to the King: "See, I've just done it in less than a minute. I went into the garden and looked at the wonderful hyacinths there....Now the task is done...It was that simple." The King looked at him in contempt and pity: "I'm terribly sorry, but you are in the wrong." "But I looked at the hyacinths, didn't I?," John asked, a bit taken aback by the King's words. Then the King fell into silence and only after a long period of time did he raise his glance towards John, to whom he spoke thus: "My dear, it is true that you have looked at the flowers with your eyes, but this is not what is asked of a future King. Anyone can look at a flower with the eyes of his body. What you have to do is to look at a flower with your soul's eye. You have to look at a flower with your heart." "Now, set forth, my dear, and do not disappoint me. Come back when you have completed your task. You'll know it when it happens."

John got out of the King's castle and started to think about the King's words. He was pacing through the garden to and fro, looking at the white roses and trying to follow the King's advice. But to no avail.....He simply looked and looked at them....And he thought they were extremely beautiful, but that was it. At one point, he even tried to think that his heart had an eye with which it could really look at the hyacinths and he strove to use this eye to really *look* at the beauty of nature. He almost succeeded, he thought, but then he realized he hadn't really. It was no use. Nothing happened. He picked up a hyacinth just in case he might figure out the secret of looking at a flower and he put it into his bag....But there was not much hope left in his heart. He walked and walked and walked..... He travelled across seven valleys and hills....

And, as he was walking, so engrossed in thought that he didn't even notice the world around him, he came across a little boy shepherd who was driving his sheep to graze on the mountains surrounding the King's castle. The shepherd was a very good-natured boy, his eyes sparkled with peace and joy. Flute in hand, the shepherd was playing a lovely tune to his beloved sheep. As he was listening to the tune, John's heart melted to pieces.....He was listening to the voice of peace and quiet....and it felt good. "No battles, just quiet", he thought. And this seemed the best possible way to live one's life.....

The shepherd finished his tune and then he addressed John: "Hello, stranger! Where are you heading to?" "I am very happy to meet you. It's usually just me and my sheep here...A friend is always a blessing." John was thrilled at the shepherd's welcoming words and he answered: "I am happy to meet you too...My name is John and I am one of the King's servants....But I wasn't heading anywhere in particular...I was just wandering about, thinking about something important that I have to do ..." As John's eyes turned sad, the shepherd came close to him and said: "Whatever it is, you must never lose hope. My name is Bucur." Then Bucur invited him to his place to eat something and gather strength after so many days of walking.....

John and Bucur and their sheep (for they were now *their* sheep) walked to the shepherd's hut. Here, Bucur invited John to have dinner together with him. Dinner consisted of mămăligă with cheese and some milk. John was truly impressed by Bucur's kindness. Although very poor, the little shepherd was most generous. John tasted the incredible food Bucur offered him and he told his friend that he hadn't tasted anything more delicious in his whole life. Bucur was very proud to hear such words, but he said that it was not his merit and that the sheep were to blame for this extraordinary meal.

John asked Bucur whether living his life in the mountains wasn't too hard for such a little boy as he was (for he was no more than thirteen years old). Bucur told him that it was, but that he had to do his duty. He had a sister in the town nearby who was suffering from a terrible illness, and he had to help her. He was the only one she could count on. Their other relatives, whom she was living with now, were very poor. As for their parents, they had died a couple of years ago, so the children were on their own. Bucur had moved to the mountains to help his sister recover. Every week, he would go back into town and bring his sister the cheese and milk she so much needed. "My sheep are a blessing for me and my sister. If it weren't for them, I don't know what we would do." Bucur continued to speak about his beloved sister. He told John that it was her birthday the next day and that he wanted to surprise her with something beautiful. Since she was very fond of flowers, he wanted to bring her a lily of the valley, only he didn't know where he would find one. He hoped that he could find one in town. Hearing Bucur's words, John's eyes lit up and he smiled a most peaceful smile, casting a glance at his precious bag.

He thanked Bucur for his kindness and he told him that he had to return to the castle, as night was drawing near. Bucur told him that he was very glad to have met him and that he hoped he would come to see him as often as he could.



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The next day, as Bucur woke up, he couldn't believe his eyes. Right beside him, on the bed, there lay a most beautiful hyacinth, the very gift he wanted to bring his sister for her birthday. His wish had come true.

And not only his. When John returned to the castle, he was no longer ignorant of what it meant to truly look at a flower, not just to see it with your eyes. John was now a wiser man, for he knew that a flower could treasure the most precious love in the world. The King was happy that he had finally found a new leader for his Kingdom, a wise and generous soul. King John invited Bucur to stay at the castle and he married his sister, who had meanwhile recovered from her illness, thanks to our

little shepherd's efforts. The sheep were not forgotten either. They were brought in the vicinity of the castle and Bucur would sing them a tune every morning, in praise of their kindness. As for the flowers, King John and the Queen would take a stroll through the garden every morning and *look* at the hyacinths shining in the sunlight. And so they lived happily ever after.

*Fourth part from Romania*

**Glossary:**

Bucur- the shepherd from whose name derives the name of Bucharest, the capital of Romania (“a se bucura” means “to be happy”)

hyacinth (“zambilă”) - a flower Romanians are very fond of

mămăligă and cheese (“mămăligă cu brânză”) - a dish made out of yellow maize traditional for Romania



Sinikliiski Victoria / Thessaloniki, Greece

# MÄRCHEN



Leon Gäbler, 12 Jahre, Mühlheim / Deutschland



## Der weiße Ritter

Vor langer, langer Zeit lebte in einem Dorf ein Junge namens Balduin. Er war der Sohn eines reichen Geschäftsmannes. Eines Tages, als sein Vater wieder losreiten wollte, fragte Balduin, ob er mitkommen dürfe. Der Vater sprach: „Mein Sohn, bleib du zu Haus! Wenn nun Raubritter kämen, könnte ich es mir nie verzeihen, wenn du verletzt oder sogar getötet würdest. Wie du siehst, reite auch ich nur in Begleitung einer bewaffneten Eskorte.“

Er schickte Balduin weg, während er zu einem seiner bewaffneten Männer sprach: „Wir reiten heute Nacht im Schutze der Dunkelheit fort.“ Doch Balduin hatte alles verstanden und schlich sich heimlich in einen der Wagen.

Nachts wurde er von einem Rumpeln geweckt. Die Fahrt begann. Erst fuhren sie nur auf normalen Schotterwegen, doch dann ging es in einen Wald. Balduin war so müde, dass er von dem gleichmäßigen Schaukeln wieder einschlief. Am nächsten Tag wusste er gar nicht, wo er war. Doch dann erinnerte er sich wieder.

Als sie eine Stunde gefahren waren, hörte Balduin im Gebüsch neben sich ein Rascheln. Plötzlich preschten ungefähr fünfzig bewaffnete Räuber auf Pferden aus dem Gebüsch. Die Eskorte wurde rasch überwältigt und in Fesseln geschlagen.

Als ein Mann der Eskorte sich zu wehren versuchte, wurde er von dem Anführer der Räuber mit einem Schwerthieb niedergestreckt. Balduin hatten sie auf dem Wagen noch nicht entdeckt.

Auf einmal raschelte es wieder zu beiden Seiten im Gebüsch, und ein weißer Ritter mit ebenso weißem Gefolge kam aus dem Gebüsch gejagt. Balduin dachte mit einem Schaudern, es würden noch mehr Räuber kommen, doch der geheimnisvolle weiße Ritter metzelte mit seinen Begleitern alle Räuber nieder. Er verschwand mit seinem Gefolge genauso schnell wie er gekommen war.

Balduin hielt alles zuerst für eine Erscheinung, doch als er die toten Räuber am Boden liegen sah, vergaß er das mit der Erscheinung schnell...

### *1. Teil, leicht korrigiert, Leon Gäbler, 12 Jahre, Mühlheim, Deutschland*

Balduin hüpfte aus dem Wagen raus um zu sehen, was genau passiert war. Alle Männer waren zum Glück noch am Leben und hinter einem Busch trat auch sein Vater hervor. Er war nur leicht am Arm verletzt. Alle umarmten sich und waren froh über ihr Glück.

Balduin aber war abenteuerlustig und tapfer und wollte auf eigene Faust den weißen Ritter finden und ihm für die Rettung seines Vaters und seiner Eskorte danken. Sein Vater sah, dass es zwecklos war ihm davon abzuraten. Am Ende gab er nach und gab ihm seinen Segen.

So ritt Balduin über Berg und Tal, über Gebirgsketten und durch Wälder bis ein Fluss ihm den Weg versperrte. Er überlegte wie er den Fluss durchqueren könnte, als plötzlich ein kleiner Kerl hinter einem Baum hervortrat.

Balduin fragte ihn: „Wer bist du? Was machst du hier? Woher kommst du?“

Der Kerl antwortete: „Mein Name ist Edgard und ich komme aus dem kleinen Dorf Leonberg. Ich habe mich im tiefen Wald verirrt und weiß auch nicht mehr wie ich in mein Dorf zurückkomme.“

Balduin erzählte ihm auch seine Geschichte und so wurden die beiden schnell gute Freunde und entschlossen sich zusammen nach dem weißen Ritter zu suchen. Edgard hatte auch als kleines Kind viele Geschichten über den weißen Ritter gehört.

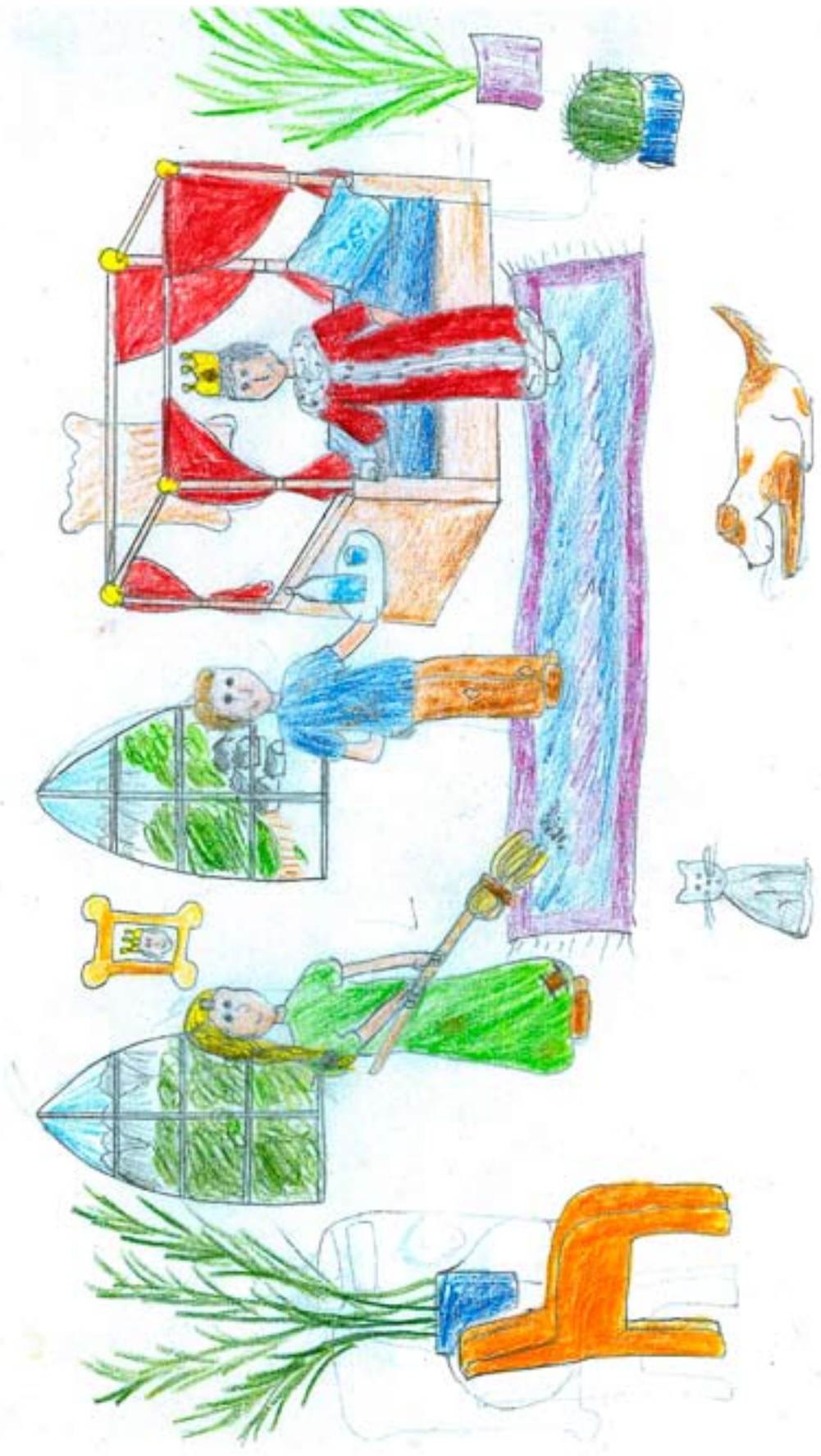
So ritten die beiden nun los, machten einen großen Bogen um den Fluss herum und sahen von weitem Rauch. Sie dachten, dass es vielleicht der weiße Ritter mit seinen Männern wäre und ritten noch schneller.

Als sie näher kamen, sahen sie ein Dorf, das unter den Flammen eines fürchterlichen Feuers völlig zerstört wurde. Edgard fing an zu weinen und Balduin fragte ihn: „Warum weinst du?“

Edgard antwortete: „Das ist mein Dorf, das da unten brennt“.

Nachdem sie alles untersucht hatten, stellten sie mit Freude fest, dass es keine Toten gab. Wahrscheinlich hatten die Einwohner es rechtzeitig verlassen.

Plötzlich sahen sie ein schwarzes Pferd, das auf sie zurannte und Edgard erkannte, dass es sein Pferd war. Es war Lucky. Balduin war auch sehr glücklich und freute sich für seinen Freund.



Sarah Bergner, 11 Jahre / 2007, Mühlheim / Deutschland

Ohne Zeit zu verlieren machten sich die Beiden nun wieder auf den Weg, um den weißen Ritter zu suchen. Doch leider ohne Erfolg. Alle schienen den weißen Ritter zu kennen, doch niemand wusste genau, wo er lebte.

Schon eine Woche ritten sie umher und hatten noch nichts gefunden, doch eines Tages, es war kurz vor Mittag und sie waren auf einer Straße, die zu einem Dorf namens Wasserburg führte, hörten sie eine Frau schreien.

Sie ritten schnell zu ihr und sie sahen, wie ein Räuber sie überfallen hatte und ausraubte.

Ohne ihn gehört zu haben sahen sie plötzlich den weißen Ritter aus einem Gebüsch hervortauchen und wie der Blitz schlug er den Räuber mit seinem Schwert nieder.

### *2. Teil, Glykeria Karamitiliniou, Klasse 7, Thessaloniki, Griechenland*

Die Frau wollte dem weißen Ritter danken, aber er verschwand so schnell, wie er gekommen war. Balduin und der Junge gingen zu der Frau und fragten: „Konntest du sein Gesicht sehen?“

„Tut mir leid...aber das konnte ich nicht....! Aber seine Haare waren blond und auf seinem Schwert und auf der Rüstung sah ich ein Wappen mit einer Taube, die im Schnabel einen Zettel trug. Auf dem Zettel standen drei Buchstaben: RNM.“

„Vielen Dank, gute Frau! Aber jetzt müssen wir weggehen, den Ritter zu finden! Auf Wiedersehen!“

Balduin und Edgard gingen in den Wald, in die Richtung, in die der Ritter verschwunden war. Sie gingen und gingen tiefer in den Wald, aber bald kam die Nacht. Sie bauten aus Zweigen und Kleidern ein kleines Obdach. Sie dachten immer an die Inschrift RNM.

„Was könnte dieses RNM bedeuten?“, war ihre unlösbare Frage. Sie dachten auch an den Ritter. Sie wussten nur, dass er blonde Haare hatte. Als sie aber am Morgen aufstanden, gingen sie voller Hoffnung weiter. Plötzlich hörten sie etwas Merkwürdiges und versteckten sich. Zwei Ritter saßen vor ihnen neben einem Feuer. Sie aßen Wildschweinbraten und sprachen über etwas, was sie nicht hören konnten. Beide Ritter waren blond. Balduin und Edgard waren neugierig, wer der wahre Ritter sein könnte.

Sie warteten bis zum nächsten Tag, bis die beiden Ritter weggingen und verfolgten sie. Sie liefen durch hohe Berge und endlich sahen sie ein Riesenschloss mit weißen Türmen. Balduin und Edgard gingen hinein und sahen viele Ritter. Alle waren weiß gekleidet, sie marschierten hin und her oder trainierten.

Balduin und Edgard fragten einen von ihnen, wie sie erfahren könnten, was RNM bedeutet.

„Oh, das ist aber einfach: das bedeutet RITTERORDEN IM NAMEN DER MENSCHHEIT. Ich gebe euch Schwert, Rüstung und weiße Pferde. Wir brauchen immer Hilfe, denn wir wollen alle guten Menschen vor den Räubern schützen. Ein echter Ritter könnte keinen seiner Mitmenschen im Stich lassen.“

„Aber wir sind keine Ritter.“

„Wie habt ihr den Weg zum Schloss gefunden?“

Sie erzählten ihm die ganze Geschichte.

„Na gut! Ihr müsst mit unserem Anführer sprechen. Er wird sicher wissen, was zu tun ist.“

„Und wo könnten wir ihn finden?“

„Das müsst ihr alleine entdecken, weil ihr keine Ritter seid. Ich gebe euch nur einen Ratschlag: Sucht mit euren Herzen und vergesst eure Menschlichkeit nicht.“

Beide blieben lange stehen und schauten umher. Der Hof war voll von weißen Rittern. Eine schwere Aufgabe hatten die beiden Jungen vor sich.

„Wie könnten wir ihn erkennen, den weißesten Ritter?“, fragten sie sich besorgt. Sie gingen durch den ganzen Schlosshof und neben einem Brunnen fanden sie mehrere Ritter, die im Kreis saßen. In der Mitte war ein Ritter, der Geschichten erzählte. Alles, was er sagte, war so spannend, dass sie sich auch zu ihnen setzten. Sie hörten und hörten. Auf einmal gaben sie sich Rechenschaft, was sie machen sollten.

### *3. Teil, Grosu Petru, Klasse 7A, Bukarest, Rumänien*

Der Ritter erzählte von seinen Heldentaten während des gestrigen Tages. Er war aber leider auch nicht der Anführer. Die beiden Jungen entschlossen sich dazubleiben und den Rittern zu helfen. Da sie aber noch sehr jung waren und sich nicht im Kampf gegen das Böse nützlich machen konnten, beschloss der Ritter namens Roland, dass sie in der Küche und bei den Arbeiten an der Ritterburg mithelfen sollten. Sie mussten saubermachen, kochen, Teller spülen und Holz hacken, aber sie beschwerten sich nicht, denn abends saßen alle Ritter um ein großes Feuer und erzählten sich die spannendsten Geschichten. Und sie waren übergücklich, denn sie durften sich zu den Rittern dazusetzen und sich alles mit anhören.

Eines Tages, es war sehr früh morgens, kam eine Hofdame in die Burg gestürzt und sagte, dass der rote Ritter ihre Kutsche überfallen und ihre Schwester, die schöne Lady Elisabeth entführt habe. Alle Ritter waren aber schon seit Stunden weggeritten und niemand war in der Burg, außer Balduin und Edgard.

Sie schauten sich kurz an und ohne lange zu überlegen, entschlossen sie sich der Hofdame zu helfen. Sie aber war sehr empört darüber, dass zwei Küchenjungen und keine Ritter ihr helfen würden. Sie ritten alle zusammen los. Auf dem Weg zur Burg des roten Ritters trafen sie einen Drachen und die beiden schafften es ohne viel Mühe, ihn zu töten, aber die Hofdame war davon auch nicht beeindruckt. Kurz vor Mittag erreichten sie die Burg des roten Ritters. Als er sie kommen sah, bereitete er sich auf den Kampf vor, denn er glaubte, er hätte es mit richtigen Rittern zu tun.

Balduin, der als weißer Ritter gekleidet war und Edgard, der ihm half, schafften es spät am Abend und nach sehr hartem Kampf, den roten Ritter zu besiegen. Sie befreiten Lady Elisabeth, denn der rote Ritter hatte sie gefangen genommen, um von ihrem Vater - dem Fürst von Wolfsburg - Lösegeld zu verlangen.

Alle zusammen kehrten zur Burg der weißen Ritter zurück. Die Hofdame namens Anne-Marie war endlich sehr zufrieden mit den beiden, denn sie hatten ihre Schwester befreit.

In der Zwischenzeit war auch der Anführer der weißen Ritter nach monatelanger Abwesenheit in die Burg zurückgekehrt. Er war beeindruckt von den Heldentaten der beiden Jungen und ernannte sie zu Ehrenrittern des Ordens, denn sie hatten bewiesen, dass sie alle ritterlichen Ideale, wie Edelmut, Tapferkeit, Loyalität und Großzügigkeit besaßen.

Am Hofe wurden viele rauschende Feste und Ritterturniere gefeiert zu Ehren der beiden Helden. Alle wurden eingeladen und kamen zur Burg. Der Fürst von Wolfsburg, der übergücklich war über die Rettung seiner Töchter, der Vater von Balduin, der seinen Sohn bewunderte und stolz auf ihn war, und die Mutter von Edgard, die nicht aufhörte ihren Sohn zu küssen.

Und durch die Burg huschte eine Maus und das Märchen ist aus.

*4. Teil, Pantelis Komninos/Theodoros Kousenidis, Klasse 7, Thessaloniki, Griechenland*

## Die Reise ins Paradies

Diese Geschichte handelt von einem Wissenschaftler, der einen Sohn namens Nemo hatte. Der Wissenschaftler selbst hieß Dr. Alfred Mimt.

Dr. Alfred Mimt hatte nicht viel Glück in seinem Beruf und war deshalb auch kein berühmter Wissenschaftler. Er verdiente auch nicht gerade viel Geld, und aus diesem Grund fing Nemo an als Nachwuchswissenschaftler zu arbeiten.

Schon bald merkte man, dass Nemo mehr Erfolg hatte als sein Vater. Er erfand eine Kleidungsmaschine, eine Anti-Staubmaschine und noch vieles mehr. Eines Tages kam ihm eine Idee: „Ich habe noch keine Wunschmaschine entwickelt, dabei habe ich doch so viele Wünsche!“

Und so entschloss er sich, eine Wunschmaschine zu konstruieren. Er baute zwei Jahre lang an der Maschine, und nach dieser Zeit war das Kunstwerk vollbracht. Er wünschte sich viele, viele Sachen, aber irgendwann einmal gingen ihm die Wünsche aus.

So beschloss er, die Wunschmaschine auf den Marktplatz seiner Heimatstadt zu stellen, um allen Kindern ihre Wünsche zu erfüllen.

Nun kam auch schon das erste Kind neugierig angerannt und wünschte sich eine Reise ins Paradies. Nemo fing an zu lachen.

„Jetzt warte doch mal“, sagte er, „Wenn du es dir wünschst, ins Paradies zu reisen, kannst du vielleicht nie wieder zurückkommen“.

Darauf antwortete der kleine Junge:

„Das ist mir egal; ich wünsche mir das schon so lange, und jetzt kann es in Erfüllung gehen. BITTE!“

Nemo hatte Angst, den kleinen Jungen allein wegzuschicken und wusste nicht, was er tun sollte...

*1. Teil, Katharina Freer, leicht korrigiert, 12 Jahre, Mühlheim, Deutschland*



Sinikliiski Victoria / Thessaloniki, Greece

Der kleine Junge fing an zu weinen und flehte Nemo an. Er warf sich auch auf den Boden und bat und bettelte. So entschloss sich Nemo am Ende, die Reise mit dem kleinen Jungen zu wagen.

Nemo bereitete die Wunschmaschine vor, nahm den kleinen Camillo (so hieß der kleine Junge) an der Hand und verabschiedete sich von allen Bekannten und Verwandten, die sich um die Maschine herum am Marktplatz versammelt hatten. Alle wünschten ihnen eine gute Reise und eine gute Rückkehr.

Nemo drückte auf den Knopf und nach ein paar Minuten waren sie schon an ihrem Wunschort angekommen. Der kleine Camillo schaute erstaunt um sich herum. Alles war wunderschön. Die Blumen rochen herrlich. Die Vögel flogen fröhlich umher und die Landschaft war einmalig.

Und da plötzlich sah er sie. Sie war wunderschön, noch schöner als er sie in Erinnerung hatte. Sie sah den Kleinen auch und rannte auf ihn zu.

Sie umarmten sich und küssten sich. Sie waren überglücklich sich wiederzusehen.

„Nemo, das ist meine Mutter! Ich wollte sie so gerne wiedersehen“, sagte er.

Nemo aber war erstaunt und verstand am Anfang nicht, was passiert war. Allmählich begriff er und fing an zu weinen.

„Ich habe meine Mutter vor ein paar Jahren verloren und ich wollte sie so gerne wiedersehen!“, sagte Camillo.

„Ich war noch so klein, als sie krank wurde und starb. Ich danke dir, dass du meinen Wunsch erfüllt hast.“

Nachdem sie lange Zeit miteinander gesprochen hatten, wurde es langsam finster und Zeit für die beiden, wieder zurückzukehren.

Camillo verabschiedete sich von seiner Mutter und ging für immer fort. Seitdem ist er der glücklichste Junge auf der ganzen Erde und Nemo ist sein bester Freund.

## *2. Teil, Evgenia Symvoulidou, Klasse 7, Thessaloniki, Griechenland*

Camillo besuchte Nemo jeden Tag. Camillos Mutter war gestorben und sein Vater schenkte ihm keine Aufmerksamkeit. Darum war Nemo für Camillo wie ein Bruder. Camillo und Nemo sprachen immer über alles. Aber eines Tages sagte Camillo:

„Nemo, ich vermisse meine Mutter sehr, obwohl ich sie im Paradies gesehen habe. Ich will sie auf die Erde mitnehmen!“

„Hmm.....das ist ein bisschen schwer...Niemand hat so etwas bis jetzt gemacht. Und wir wissen nicht, ob deine Mutter das möchte.“

„Ach, bitte, Nemo! Wir können es aber versuchen. Du bist mein allerbesten Freund.“

„Ok, dann gehen wir morgen dorthin!“

Am nächsten Tag gingen sie entschlossen zu der Wunschmaschine. Sie wünschten sich ins Paradies zu reisen und ... in einer Sekunde waren sie schon da. Die beiden suchten nach Camillos Mutter und endlich fanden sie sie. Camillo fiel in die Arme seiner Mutter. Er küsste sie sanft und fragte gleich:

„Mami, auf der Erde vermisse ich dich sehr. Ich bin so alleine ohne dich. Ich weine immer! Bitte, möchtest du auf die Erde mitkommen? Möchtest du wieder leben?“

„Mir gefällt es hier...aber ich möchte mit dir zusammen sein, wieder leben. Glaubst du, dass mir das erlaubt wird?“

„Ach, Mami, versuchen wir es doch!“

Die Mutter, der Sohn und Nemo machten sich auf den Weg und sie liefen bis an die Grenze des Paradieses. Da kam ein Engel. Er war schön, jung, hatte weiße Flügel und war nervös.

Er sagte: „Warum versucht ihr diese Frau auf die Erde mitzunehmen? Ihr dürft das nicht! Es ist doch verboten“

Als Camillo das hörte, begann er zu weinen.

„Bitte, schöner Engel, gibt es denn überhaupt keine Hoffnung für uns?!“

„Hmmm... doch! Ihr könnt mit Sankt Petrus sprechen. Er hat die Schlüssel des Paradieses!“

Sie fanden Sankt Petrus unter einem Baum, lesend, und sprachen mit ihm. Sie erzählten ihm alles und baten ihn, ihren Wunsch zu erfüllen.

Nach einer Weile sprach er leise:



Caroline Letzl, 14 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland

„Ich weiß.... das ist eine sehr ungewöhnliche und unmögliche Bitte! Nur sehr wenige haben sich bisher getraut, mich um so etwas zu bitten. Eure Geschichte hat mich beeindruckt. Gut! Ihr dürft diese Frau auf die Erde nur 3 Tage lang mitnehmen...aber zuerst müsst ihr eine Aufgabe erledigen! Ihr müsst nach Eden, in den Garten des Paradieses gehen. Dort müsst ihr einen Apfelbaum finden. Ihr müsst mir einen Apfel vom Baum bringen und dann dürft ihr mit dieser Frau weggehen. Von nun an... habt ihr nur 10 Stunden. Viel Glück!“

Voller Hoffnung gingen und gingen sie, sahen sich die wunderschönen Bäume an, die es im Paradies gab, aber sie wussten nicht, ob der Apfelbaum wie ein normaler Baum aussah. Sie gingen weiter und sahen viele Tiere und komische Wesen. Sie waren seit sechs Stunden unterwegs und gingen noch tiefer in den Wald. Das dauerte noch weitere drei Stunden! Sie hatten nur noch eine Stunde und noch keine Idee, wo der Baum sein könnte. Plötzlich sahen sie einen alten Mann auf dem Boden sitzen. Er hatte viele Wunden und war müde.

„Wer bist du?“, sagte Nemo.

„Bitte, gute Leute, seid so nett und bringt mir ein bisschen Wasser, ich brauche Wasser! Da ist ein Bach sechs hundert Meter weit weg von hier. Ich kann mich nicht mehr bewegen.“

„Das würde fast eine Stunde dauern. Wir haben leider keine Zeit mehr. Entschuldigung, aber wir haben es sehr eilig!“

„Nein, Nemo!“, sagte Camillo traurig, „In einer Stunde können wir diesen Baum nicht mehr finden. Er könnte dieser sein, oder da ist auch noch einer. Es ist ein Wald voller Bäume! Alles was wir noch machen könnten, ist diesem alten Mann den Durst zu stillen.“

Sie brachten ihm das verlangte Wasser und der Alte trank und sagte: „Vielen Dank, Camillo! Du bist sehr gutherzig! Jetzt darfst du wieder auf die Erde gehen. Sei nicht traurig! Such in deinem Zimmer!“

„Aber wer bist du?“

Aber der Mann verschwand. In einer Sekunde waren Camillo und Nemo wieder auf der Erde. Die Mutter war aber nicht da. Camillo begann wieder zu weinen.

„Weine nicht! Geh in dein Zimmer, wie der Alte gesagt hat!“

Camillo ging in sein Zimmer. Da war seine Mutter! Sie lächelte. Die Mutter blieb drei Tage auf der Erde. Diese drei Tage waren für Camillo glücklich und unvergesslich! Sie schienen unendlich lang gedauert zu haben.

### *3. Teil, Grosu Petru, Klasse 7A, Bukarest, Rumänien*

Nachdem die Mutter von Camillo nicht mehr auf der Erde war, blieb Camillo allein in seinem Zimmer zurück und dachte über alles, was geschehen war, nach.

Er glaubte am Anfang, dass alles nur ein Traum gewesen war, aber es war kein Traum. Nach einer Weile wurde es dunkel und Camillo betete zu Gott, dass er seine Mutter noch einmal sehen würde. Er hatte ihr versprochen, dass sie sich bald wiedertreffen. Mit diesen Gedanken im Kopf ging er zu Bett und schlief auch bald ein. Kaum war er eingeschlafen, da hörte er ein lautes Geräusch. Jemand war draußen und klopfte laut an der Haustür.

Camillo stand auf und ging zur Tür. Da stand sein Freund Nemo.

„Ist etwas passiert?“, fragte Camillo besorgt.

„Nein, nein, hab keine Angst“, sagte Nemo und beruhigte Camillo.

„Ich habe mit deiner Mutter geredet, als du kurz in die Küche gegangen bist, um ihr ein bisschen Wasser zu holen und sie hat mich gebeten, dass ich auf dich aufpasse. Also, warum kommst du nicht zu uns nach Hause, dann bist du nicht mehr so allein, denn ich habe einen kleinen Bruder“, sagte Nemo.

„Ich habe auch deinen Vater gefragt und er hat nichts dagegen. Er muss ja sowieso so viele Stunden arbeiten und ist nie für dich da“, sagte Nemo. Camillo überlegte kurz und dann packte er einige Sachen in seine Tasche und nahm auch das Foto seiner Mutter mit.

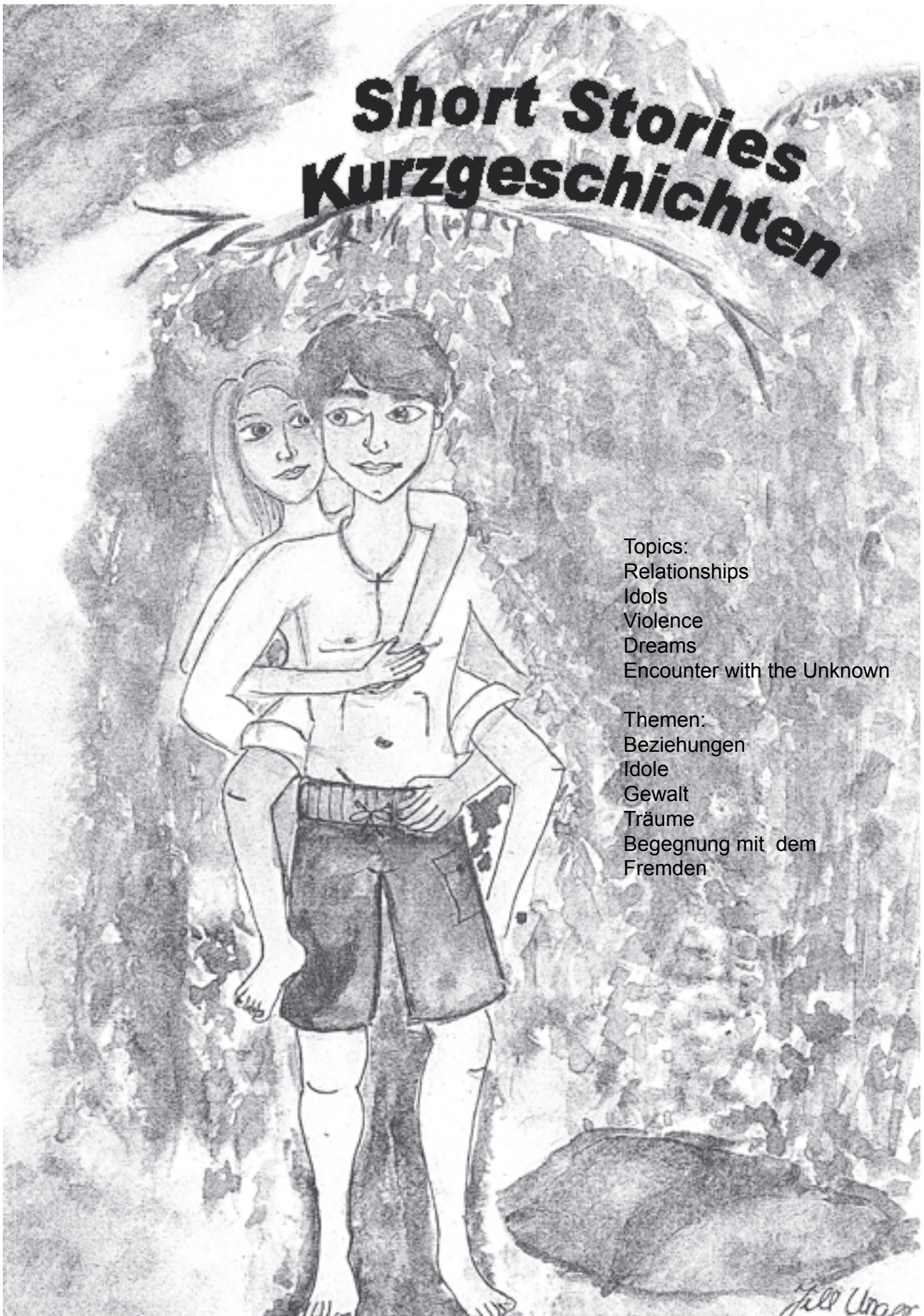
In seinem neuen Zuhause fühlte sich Camillo sehr wohl. Nemo spielte mit ihm, zeigte ihm alle Erfindungen, die er gemacht hatte, und half ihm bei den Hausaufgaben.

Endlich war Camillo nicht mehr allein und hatte eine neue Familie gefunden und natürlich hatte er auch seine Mutter, die ihn vom Himmel beobachtete und beschützte und die glücklich war und stolz auf ihren Sohn.

### *4. Teil, Evgenia Symvoulidou, Klasse 7, Thessaloniki, Griechenland*



# Short Stories Kurzgeschichten



Topics:  
Relationships  
Idols  
Violence  
Dreams  
Encounter with the Unknown

Themen:  
Beziehungen  
Idole  
Gewalt  
Träume  
Begegnung mit dem  
Fremden

Jill Unger, Mühlheim/Germany

# ESTONIA

## Dream Catcher

*Everyone has a Dream. It can be just a usual thing or the purpose of the whole life. We can dream about many things. Often we need something that makes us believe in our Dream. From ancient times people have been interested in magic. The great invention of peoples` belief is a Dream Catcher - the wooden ring covered in leather, with the bird's feathers around. It is popular nowadays because people still trust in miracles.*

*Unknown Philosopher*

Maria had always dreamt about Happiness and once she decided to buy a Dream Catcher. You, of course, know that everyone can buy it in every corner shop. So Maria bought a Dream Catcher for £5.99 and put it above her bed. She told me she didn't believe that Happiness would come soon, it would come when it was necessary to come. Some time later she got a strange letter. "Soon you will be happy", was written there. Maria was very surprised but didn't believe in it. The next day she met Him and fell in love. I saw her, she was very happy. Maybe the Destiny sent her a letter? No one knows the answer. The next week the Dream Catcher disappeared.

My friend Max dreamt about buying a car and being rich. My brother Alexey wanted a cottage on the Maldives. Most girls I know dreamt about love. The end of their dream was the same. One day all of them bought a Dream Catcher for £5.99 and their dream came true.

Actually I'm the only person who hasn't used a Dream Catcher. You probably think I haven't got a dream. That's not right. I dream about many things that can make me happy. Why don't I buy a Dream Catcher? Happiness for me is not just a short moment when you feel OK. How can I explain it so that you could understand me?

Once I got an interesting book. It was Goethe's *Faust*. I read it with pleasure in Russian. When I finished reading, I wanted to read it one more time but in the language it was written. Now I want to learn German to get my Dream. But I want to learn it myself, I want to enjoy the process, not just to wake up with all German words in my head. I mean only we can make the Dream alive. We must go towards it, catch it for a tail without any Dream Catchers. Am I right?

*Aleksandra Karetnikova, 15 years old*

## **A 500 Dollar Wish**

Recently I have read a wonderful story and I want to tell it to all people so that everyone could understand that if you have got a very strong wish, you can make miracles.

Fifty years ago an old druggist arrived in town and came into the first drugstore on his way. There he bargained with a clerk about something for an hour. After that the clerk gave the old man 500 dollars and the old druggist gave the clerk a piece of paper where a recipe of a medical drink was written. 500 dollars just for a recipe of a medical drink? Why?

When the clerk tasted that drink, a vague idea came to him that if he added something to the beverage, it would be... He couldn't say what it would be, but he started experimenting. And one day, when he had already tried a lot of different varieties, he suddenly decided to aerate the drink.

Whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever you do, remember every time when you see the logo *Coca-Cola*, that this huge empire was made from one piece of paper and from one idea of one man - Eza Candler, the clerk. The multinational where thousands of people work now started just with a wish.

This story is not the only one when people invented something improbable due to their imagination and a great wish. These are people who make miracles.

*Mihhail Rjabov, 17 years old*

## **Lift Me Up**

It was 9 p.m. I'd already done my homework. To go to bed? Early. To read a book? Boring. I turned on the TV. I don't know what exactly they were showing, I remembered only one moment – a strong man lifting up a car with some people inside. I even exclaimed, 'How can it be?' It staggered me.

In the night the reflections didn't leave me. When I finally fell asleep, I saw myself lifting up a red car inside which there were all my teachers.

The next morning I woke up with a heavy cloud in my head. I forced myself to go to school but I couldn't concentrate at the lessons, I couldn't think about anything but the man lifting the car.

In my notebook I kept drawing pictures of that strong man lifting up the globe. It was like obsession. I thought the school day would never end.

As if in the mist, I was staggering to the cloak-room when I noticed a colourful announcement on the billboard.

*The school wrestling team enrolls the boys of all ages...*

Why is life so unfair? Why don't they take girls?

*Roman Kitajev, 17 years old*

## A Kimono for the Son

It started on that day when my father came back home from his job, had his dinner as usual and then unexpectedly came up to me, I was playing with my toys at that moment, and said,

'Roma, you are already a big boy, you are six years old. I think it's time you started doing something in your life.'

I was confused and didn't know what to say, but dad didn't expect any answer from me, he just took my hand and we went out. I didn't know where we were going and I didn't ask.

Soon we reached a big grey building and came in. I felt frightened. We were walking down a long corridor and then I saw many people wearing the same clothes and fighting. My dad took me to a serious man who looked at me and said,

'Well, Roman, you want to do Taekwondo, don't you? Go to Robert, he'll give you your kimono.'

That day was my first training. The next day was the second. My interest to Taekwondo was growing with every time. For me it was absolutely another world, unknown and mysterious. At the beginning I did not so well as others and I felt uncomfortable because of that. But gradually from a novice I turned to *very promising* and eventually I became one of the best fighters in my club. I won one competition after another. I gave all my time to trainings. Sport was more important for me than school, than friends, than all pleasures in the world.

...That competition was in our town. I had never been preparing as intensively as that time. I knew I had all chances to win. My opponents were really strong, but I defeated them all and reached the final. Only one step separated me from Great Victory.

The fight began. I felt superiority over the opponent. But suddenly I stumbled and terrible pain pierced my leg. I tried to continue the fight but the pain was so *unbearable* that I had to stop.

I spent a month in hospital. The doctors' verdict was merciless. That was the end of my sport career.

Many years passed after that. I don't regret anything. Yesterday I took my six-year-old son to a Taekwondo club.

*Roman Kitajev, 17 years old*



Illustration by Darja Ivanova, 15 years old

## Believing

I like situations when you believe and all your hopes come true. I hate people who don't believe in themselves, who think that they haven't got any hopes to be happy. They are satisfied with little things and don't want to have something greater. Those people don't have own opinions, they just listen to what others say. I don't respect people who can't dream. They have uninteresting life. When the moonlight covers the streets, they just sleep. When the sunset paints the sea, they just work in their office. Those people just listen to the majority. I usually try to avoid such people but they always manage to appear on my way.

Once, when my favourite football team had some problems before World Cup 2006<sup>3</sup>, those people claimed that my tears because of that problem were senseless, and my team didn't have any chances. However, I continued to believe in my dreams, my hopes, and didn't stop supporting my team. All Italian fans were very sad, because they loved football like I did. We believed, we hoped, we wanted to see our triumph. Our favourite players knew that and wanted to justify the hopes of their fans and they knew that they had to win, in spite of all the intrigues.

On 12 June 2006 at 10:00 p.m. I turned on my TV and the first match started. I'd never seen such a great game before! After the final whistle, my friend called me and said,

'You are very glad, but I have to say that this victory is just because of luck.'

'It is because of my hopes, my friend,' I answered.

Five days later I witnessed the second Italian victory, and my friend again said,

'You're lucky, but know - it's your team's end.'

'No, it's just the beginning of a big victory,' I answered with a smile.

On 9 July 2006 the big victory happened. Italy won the final game. After that, when I saw my friends, they said to me,

'You believed and you deserved this victory. But it's the last triumph of your team, at Euro 2008 you have no chances.'

I smiled, I wasn't surprised. Because I knew all my dreams had to come true.

*Artjom Bahhir, 17 years old*

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3 Some time before World Cup 2006 some Italian football players and managers were accused of corruption, the participation of the Italian National football team in the World Cup was under question. (*Author's note*)

## Writer

I've just begun working as a journalist in the newspaper, which is considered prestigious and rather perspective in our small town, and all due to Vadim Gryzin who put everything he had into it. Here I have to say some words about him.

He started dreaming about publishing a newspaper in the childhood. He dreamt about the day when he could declare, "Look, people, it is my newspaper, I have created it by fair work!" However, poor background, seven younger brothers and sisters, didn't give him an opportunity to make his dream come true. Moreover, he had to leave school a year earlier and start to work.

For fifteen years Vadim worked as a yard keeper, a mechanic, a watchman, a carpenter and tried a lot of other jobs. Everything changed when one day he found an abandoned building on the river bank. Vadim at once remembered his child's dreams about his own newspaper. He tried his best and he managed to buy the building, to repair it, to find the personnel - his dream came true.

I respect Vadim and admire him, but I have to admit that at times he is rather severe in relations with people. He often puts the newspaper above people, and once he had to pay for it.

One day a man came to our editorial office. He was about 60 years old, with a big beard and long grey hair and he was wearing simple peasants' clothes. He reminded me of the bible prophet. I had a strange feeling that I knew him, but I couldn't remember who he was. He was holding the manuscript in his hands and went straight to Vadim.

In a week the man came again. He was in the same clothes and again went directly to Vadim. That time I could hear their conversation.

'What do you need? Good day.'

'I came last week, brought the story for you. Have you read it?'

Vadim thoughtfully looked at the man. After a minute of reflections he said,

'Aaah! It's you! That mediocrity which decided I could spend my precious time on reading this rubbish.'

'Excuse me, what?'

'What?! Look at your story! Read it attentively. There is no feeling of style in your story. The main idea is not clearly expressed. The sentences are constructed badly. It seems that you have no concept how to write at all.'

'Hmm, it's strange. Earlier the editors spoke of my works rather approvingly.'

'Your works? And what works, I dare ask, did you write earlier?'

'Well, for example, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*.'

The man in the peasants' clothes was Leo Tolstoy.

*Pavel Gerassimov, 17 years old*

## **When You Have to Choose**

Once, when winter evenings were so long and dark, I was walking along the street, cheerful and carefree. I felt a lot of energy but as usual didn't know how to use it. And just when I was about to go home, I saw a girl who forced me to change my decision. I'd never had problems how to start a conversation with a girl, moreover, I can say I was a great specialist in this area. So I decided to use my usual strategy.

'Hi!' I said with a charming smile.

'Hello,' she said.

'I've been waiting for you here for twenty minutes.'

'Er, were we to meet each other? I can't remember,' her voice sounded uncertain.

'Don't worry. I saw our meeting in a dream, so we have nothing to do but to walk together.'

She smiled, and our story started. That evening was full of smiles and happiness. I felt I was falling in love. The discovery really shocked me because I'd never felt like that before. I'd met with girls just to spend some good time, no feelings, no responsibility. But that evening changed me. I liked my new sensation and I didn't want to let her go.

During the next few days I was in perplexity, I didn't know what I had to do. On the one hand I wanted to be with her, but on the other hand I didn't want to change all my life because of her. I wasn't ready for it.

And one warm spring evening she said,

'You are not ready to be with me. You should find yourself first. I can wait as long as necessary. It's not goodbye yet.'

She smiled and went away.

I understood that a man who makes a girl feel alone soon will be alone himself. I smiled about that philosophic thought and went along...to live. It was the last evening I saw her.

*Artjom Bahhir, 17 years old*

Hello,

My name is Laine. I'm one of  
How are you?  
What plans do you have about

I like your film "Harry Potter and the  
very much.. It's very interesting and the

I'll be so happy to get a photo from you with your  
autograph..





## December Girl

Some years ago I read a book about Harry Potter and then I watched a film. Or maybe first I watched a film and then read a book, I don't remember. What matters is that I became a great fan of Daniel Radcliffe. I can guess that I wasn't the only one, but I was so excited that one day I decided to write him. I found his address on the Internet and wrote a letter. I still remember it by heart.

*Dear Daniel...My name is Laine...I'm from Estonia... studying... hobbies... What are your future plans?...*

After two months I got the answer! He answered all my questions and...offered me to play in his new film *December Boys!* 'The shooting will be in Australia.' I had never been there! It was a great chance to show what I could. (When I was seven, one of my dreams was to be an actress.) I was so happy about it that I ran to mum to tell her my news. She was shocked, of course, but allowed me to go and I'm so grateful to her for this.

*...Passengers for Sydney please proceed to gate 9 for boarding...*

Australia, *The Crazy Kangaroo* hotel. Daniel is waiting for me near the reception. We go to a café.

The next day the filming started. It was so tiring. But Daniel told me I was a very good actress. Three months passed - all my summer holidays. I had a good time with Daniel and his friends. Everything was so nice. I got my fee and came back home.

After seven months the film was released and I became famous. Now I'm a film star and one of Daniel's best friends. So many exciting events and amusing incidents have happened to me since then. Once I was signing autographs when my mobile started ringing...

...Stop it, stop ringing! I want to sleep! I opened my eyes. My letter to Daniel was lying unfinished on the table. The mobile kept ringing.

'Hello!'

'Er...hallo! Am I speaking to Laine?'

'Yes.'

'This is Daniel Radcliffe, I've got your letter...'

*Laine Videl, 15 years old*

# GERMANY

## The Tin

“Oh, hell“ he said to himself angrily. He had stumbled carelessly over a Coke tin. It lay in the middle of the platform. He was so lost in his thoughts that he did not see it. Coke had run out and his shoes were now covered with some splashes. Just these expensive shoes. He looked at the tin, it had landed near the edge of the platform with a little lake of brown liquid around it. It was half empty now.

He thought that if the tin fell on the rails it would be flattened by the next passing train. And it would make a splintering noise. The tin had several dents, and the one at the side was rather big. He looked at it for a while from all sides and went on asking himself what the hell he was doing here on the platform.

He had just wanted to drink a quick cup of coffee in the departure hall after work which had been stressful and tiring as always. He had to work very hard for his professional career and frequently do overtime. That is why he desperately needed a coffee.....but then he got lost and inexplicably found himself here on the platform. He had not been on a railway platform for a long time, therefore he was sauntering among the waiting passengers down the platform and back again.

He observed a little boy who was the only person on the opposite platform. He was sitting on an old chequered travel bag and was looking at his worn shoes. In the front part the leather was rough and down-trodden. Certainly those shoes were no longer waterproof. Nobody took any notice of the boy. Perhaps he had been visiting his grandma and was now waiting in vain for someone to pick him up. Or perhaps his mother was to arrive soon with the next train the man thought.

After a seemingly endless time of waiting a train came in and stopped at the platform where the boy was waiting.

The boy looked around expectantly and with joyful anticipation. Many people got off the train, but after a few minutes they all disappeared to their homes and to their families. And the platform was empty again except for the boy. He lowered his head, he had to keep waiting.....

The man went on. Once again he glanced at the Coke tin. It lay on the platform in a position so that everyone could easily and involuntarily knock it over and kick it onto the tracks.

He looked down on the ground. It was dirty, dogs` droppings, empty paper cups, and all sorts of other waste everywhere. In addition there are the pigeons, the rats of the cities. They are doing their business everywhere, thus making the whole platform dirty.

He forced his way through all the rubbish.

He caught sight of a young couple sitting on a dirty bench. The girl had tears in her eyes, but the young man only glanced at her uncomprehending and unconcerned. He did not fill her with courage, neither did he comfort her.

A travel bag was lying between the two. The young lady was rummaging in her handbag for a handkerchief, but the young man did not offer her one. The girl kept talking insistently to the boy, but he did not react at all.

He only shook his head now and again or shrugged his shoulders. The girl was unable to hold back her tears anymore; they just came out of her eyes.

A train arrived, the young lady got up slowly and boarded the train without turning around. She had forgotten the travel bag, but the young man did not bring it to her and he did not wave her good-bye either. He was only upset and motionless.

The man who originally had wanted to buy himself a paper cup of coffee watched the scene from some distance and thoughtfully went on with downcast eyes.

And again a train was approaching. Parts of it were sprayed with graffiti. One carriage held a colourful inscription saying “Is it all over?” “Was that all?”. It came to a standstill right in front of the man. In some of the windows and doors mirror images of passengers could be seen.

While looking at the train casually the man suddenly recognised another man in a black suit. His face looked rather old with wrinkles around the eyes. His brown hair was short-cut and orderly combed and had grey streaks in some places. His look was empty and inexpressive and his beard was painstakingly shaved. Not even one stubble was to be seen.

His long arms hang down on both sides of his body, unmoving and dead. In one hand he was holding a shining briefcase; it looked clean, elegant and immaculate. Just like the man himself except for his black leather boots which showed spots of spilt Coke.

The elegant man looked gloomily at his mirror image in the carriage window. He looked lonely. In fact, he was lonely. Successful, but unhappy.

A voice came through the loudspeaker: "Attention, please! The doors are closing ..." and soon the train slowly pulled out of the station.

At this very moment the man was torn out of his thoughts. He turned around in bewilderment and saw that the Coke tin was still there.

Walking on he looked down to the ground. The floor tiles formed a systematic pattern. Each white tile was followed by a black one and vice versa. He raised his eyes and found himself standing right in front of a timetable. He could see which trains were due to arrive within the next hour. He examined the timetable just because he was interested in reading timetables.

A train to Holland was due to leave at 9.10 p.m. He became reminiscent of windmills and of the flower market he had often crossed so many years ago.

On the flower market he had been surrounded by so many colours whose view always filled him with enthusiasm and peace of mind. The various kinds of flowers on sale had always fascinated him when he was there. He was particularly fond of the proud tulips which were offered in many different colours, in sunny yellow, deep red, marine blue and snow white.

Moreover, one florist even sold specially bred tulips beaming with green and orange colours. Above all had he been attracted by the lavender which spread its fragrance so intensely that it always reminded him of a sunny late summer evening in La Provence.

Yes, the flower market had always invited him to escape into a land of dreams where low sounds nearby and, pleasant to the ear, even intensified all the impressions around him.

The flower market lay directly alongside a softly rippling brook heightening the impression of an idyllic atmosphere. Sometimes a girl had been standing by the brook and they had been singing together. Those melodies had been charming love songs and her voice sounded very soft and calming. He had loved to stroll across the market to inhale the different smells, the sounds and the colours and to watch the people. Those friendly people were not in a hurry or under any strain, on the contrary they seemed to forget father time at least for some moment; some seemed to live only for the moment being caught by the sight of those beautiful flowers. When it was raining the florists put up large colourful umbrellas so that their precious goods would not get wet. But this did not spoil the harmonious atmosphere at all. There were the majestic sunflowers which contributed to this peaceful mood, and with their yellow petals and their brown faces they seemed to smile at the regular visitors of the market.

Abruptly Mr Miller was torn away from his thoughts by the noise of the station. He saw the train to Holland slowly entering the station. He once more looked at the Coke tin which was still lying on the platform. The doors of the train opened automatically and the passengers got off. Some were getting on the train, among them was Mr Miller who boarded the train without hesitation. In his compartment he looked out of the window and studied the Coke tin for a last time.

"Half-full" he said to himself smilingly.....

*Yvonne Emig, 18 years old, translated by o.t.*

## Encounter with the Unknown

“No worries” was what snapped her back into reality. She must have fallen asleep but now ..... As she was getting up and approaching the exit with the other passengers she was wondering what would happen next. Where am I going?, she thought – no answer. In a huge country on the other side of the globe there will be hardly anyone who needs me. Lost in her thoughts she wandered through the streets ... intuitively following an increasingly clear sound. Suddenly she noticed that she did not know where she had gone and where she was. Not knowing what else to do she kept following what she now identified as tones. Was it rumbling? Or more of a knocking sound? She turned into a side street, passing an Asian

Sushi restaurant and two black men that wore hats and smoked cigarettes. ... And now the sound was distinct and absolutely clear. She stopped and listened. Just a few steps – the gate! She looked into the yard behind it where there were painted black men sitting on the ground. They were blowing into a tube and their cheeks were swelled. And, indeed, it sounded like a mixture of rumbling and knocking – simple, but good. She liked the music. ... Again she lost any sensation for time and space. The next thing she consciously experienced was the lighting of torches by one of the men who, at the same time, saw her. He was a little shocked and furious – with some fear in his eyes. But as she raised her hands and stammered “Sorry”, he opened the gate and let her enter after having talked to the others. First the stranger was looked at suspiciously but soon they moved closer to each other in order to let her sit in their circle. She now saw that the long wooden instruments had only one hole located at the bottom. She wondered how it is possible to play different tones with only one hole? The men continued to play. How do they know when to start playing or simply how to play? Neither written music nor conductor! She was fascinated.

Suddenly the musical spell was broken by a loud noise at the gate. White men (there were some Asians among them) jumped into the peaceful yard. They seemed to be enraged. They yelled and screamed as if they were about to enter a war. Took the musical instruments. Destroyed them. The painted men tried to defend themselves. But defense was useless since they were outnumbered. Then, the attack became more bloody and destructive. The white girl hid behind the garbage can. When the “evil” men disappeared she came out. She just heard one of the injured men that was lying on the ground shout angrily at her: “GO AWAY!”

*Paula Seipel, 18 years old /2008, translated by J.H.*

## Turn of the Year

It was already getting dark when she was walking out into the street. At once an icy air surrounded her. She was freezing. Hurriedly she had rushed out of the house and was now standing forlorn on the empty crossroads. Her pulse was vibrating and she was trembling all over from top to toe.

It had happened again, as of late it has been frequently the case. The two of them had intended to spend New Year's Eve alone and without the company of other people. He had given her a wonderful, golden pendant as a present and they had been laughing quite a lot. But out of the blue their good spirits disappeared and it seemed as if a masque had suddenly fallen from his face. He had insulted her and even slapped her face.

What for God's sake had she done wrong?

Aimlessly she wandered through the familiar streets and onto more unknown districts of the town. She was looking for the quiet and undisturbed parts of the area burying her hands in her coat pockets while holding the golden pendant firmly in her left hand. Her present situation was not his fault. She was simply unable to part from him and to let him go.

Does a new year also contain a new chance?

Does every human being get a new chance with the New Year as well?

Will there be new perspectives? And will everything become different?

As a child for a long time she had believed in the magic of the turn of the year; today only the pleasant memory of this magic moment remained alive in her.

Meanwhile she arrived at the old town hall. She had never noticed the cracks on the facade of the proud and venerable building. Today, however, it looked shabby and in desperate

need of restoration. In the distance the muffled chimes of the church bell could be heard. It was midnight. The lights of the town multiplied and seemed to explode in all colours.

A new year had begun. Her thoughts of an unknown future and her worries about things that might happen were distracted by the softly falling snowflakes. Suddenly she was reminded of her childhood again when she looked at the sky with her eyes wide-open, when she lifted her arms high up and sticking her tongue far out in order to catch the snowflakes. And as she was turning and leaping with joy the little pendant flew in a high arc through the air and landed in the snow. Then she stopped moving and stood still for a while. The snowflakes fell upon her face while she was calming her breath and watching the fireworks until all the glittering ended up in smoke.

Anxiously she stared at the glistening pendant which in the meantime had almost totally been covered with the snow and the shadow of the old building and whose contours more and more vanished in the dark.

Suddenly she heard a slight sound; however, in the darkness she could not recognize anything beside the stone stairs of the old town hall. She came closer to pick up the pendant and to put it back into her coat pocket. There she saw a moving shadow and immediately noticed the two stiff little ears of a cat which had sought shelter near the stone stairs of the old building.

In order to allure the frightened kitty she knelt down and held out her hand towards the cat. With a gentle voice she managed to gain confidence of the little straying animal. The cat in turn summoned up all its courage, rubbed its little head on her leg and obviously enjoyed the warmth.

Slowly she wanted to walk on, but the poor little animal did not leave her alone and uneasily followed her through the deepening snow. As her pursuer she always kept the same distance, and when she stood still the cat did the same.

Finally she stopped, turned around and looked down to the kitty which fixed her with a fearsome stare. For a long time they stood there without moving and for a moment it seemed to her as if her own stares were merging into those of the green eyes of the cat.

At that very moment they both bent their heads towards each other and it was as if they understood each other at once. Unspoken it was evident that from now on none of them would continue their way alone. Henceforth they would share her warm apartment, have their meals together and in the evenings fall asleep together on the old and cosy sofa.

Deep in her heart she felt the uniqueness of this moment and the magic of the turn of the year reminiscing her childhood, and when both had left the scene only the traces of their feet in the snow were clearly visible which ran harmoniously side by side into the dark whereas the golden pendant had meanwhile disappeared under the snow.

*Marion Müller, 18 years old / 2008, translated by o.t.*

## **Flowers**

And suddenly he saw her. Her hair was whitish-grey and she looked intimidated. He sensed how this fear immediately was passed on to him. With very slow and little steps he approached her. She was sleeping, at least as it seemed. Her eyes were closed and her aged body hardly moved. The only noise in the room came from the peeping of the respirator and the computer which indicated the rhythm of the beating of the heart. What he saw had shocked him so much that from this very day on he was frightened to grow old and to be alone one day and that his life would be dependent on a number of plastic tubes. He was scared to come closer to her, but he was seized by an indefinable feeling of being obliged to look after the old lady.

Her room was full of colourful flowers which gave him the impression that in front of him a well-liked elderly lady was lying in her sickbed. Instantly he was thinking of his own grandmother and was wondering that nobody else had been at the beside of the old lady. HE by all means would sit up with his sick grandma day and night.

He liked one flower in particular; it had a marvellous shape and beautiful colours. Fascinated by a single flower he forgot about the old lady. He went up to this flower and inhaled its faint smell. It did not only look wonderful, its fragrance even captivated him so that he got the feeling that he had completely been torn away from reality. He found himself on a beautiful meadow surrounded by exactly the same flowers. He walked along the meadow and thereby did not realise that his paces had become faster and faster. At once he stopped out of breath gasping for air. He felt as never before.

Suddenly he heard a low humming sound which he at first mistook as the buzz of a bee. This sound, however, was so intense and penetrating that it abruptly roused him from his dreams. At once he was thinking of the old lady again and turned around towards her. She was still lying there motionless with her hands besides her body, with the blanket up to her belly, with all the wonderful flowers and the peeping. And yet, something had changed. The zigzag on the computer had changed to a straight line.

*Jennifer Roth, 18 years old, translated by o.t.*

## **The best daydream I've ever had**

I was sitting in our Chemistry lesson and was listening to the words which came out of the mouth of our Chemistry teacher like a waterfall. I knew that I could not overcome this Chemistry lesson without another activity. Hitherto my day wasn't really the best day of my career as a pupil. First I got a D in Maths and then I found out that I had forgotten my breakfast. While I was looking out of the window I was thinking about my assignment in my exercise book and outside I saw snowflakes falling down slowly.

I was standing on the top of a mountain and the winter sun was shining on my face. The snowboard was fixed on my feet and the helicopter rose up again. I looked forward and my heart started beating faster. The feeling was back and blood surged through my veins!! I bent to the direction of the valley and jumped to free my board from the snow. On the first 10 metres I put on speed! Then there was the first jump: The wind blew past me and then I saw a vertical rock face behind me while I was doing a 360 backside. When I landed safely I screamed because of happiness and exclaimed in delight! It was an unimaginable feeling to ride down the mountain, which I had often been riding down on holiday. The speed was ingenious. I cruised through the fresh-fallen snow. When I saw the next mountain side I knew: if you don't do it the helicopter will take me directly to hospital. I lifted up my nose to put on speed. I jumped and was flying for 8 seconds. It was like a flight through the universe - but when I touched the white surface again my legs were suddenly ice cold.

I was shocked and fell off my chair. Somebody had poured ice water over my trousers - purposely!!! Everybody was laughing. I was so surprised that somebody did something like that! Then the teacher looked at me and said: "Well, you should never dream in my lessons!" I laughed. I knew that he was a cool type but that he was so cool, I didn't know before!!!

*Jan Priestersbach, 14 years old / 2008*

# GREECE

## The Twilight Zone

After a crowded day's journey they were driving back home. It had been a steamy, foggy, showery night. They had crossed a big valley and were heading north, along narrow hill-roads. There was no moon and the stars faintly lit in the sky. One could say it was devilish dark.

It all happened in a minute. Before Clio could warn her husband about the slippery road, their car was rolling over and over downhill. When she found her consciousness it seemed to her like awakening after a thousand years, as if she had emerged from a tunnel into sunlight. She ached in every bone.

Suddenly a voice crept in at the corners of her brain, uttering her name in a gasping moan.

"Clio, Clio", she heard someone shouting, "For God's sake, try to get out of the car, honey. You've got to pull yourself out..."

She tried to free her hands and then she slid among shattered pieces of glass to the ground. She struggled in pain thinking "So, this is how it'll end" but a furious desire not to die seized her and she ran away from the car wreck. It was then she heard the same voice again, calling her, "Keep going, darling. Hurry, hurry Clio. Don't give up..."

It might be her husband who thought they should go to that house nearby to stay for the night. It was a small, shabby house with a garden of weeds and shrubs all around. She thought that the place was isolated and wondered how many hours they should stay there until they managed to go back home safe and sound.

She forced round the handle and gave a push with her foot on the creaky old door. Cold air came out to meet her as she went in. Shutters on the windows had put the inside in thick darkness. She thought they should have spent the night somewhere else than in that house with the ghostly atmosphere but she was about to collapse.

There was no living presence within the house. Not even a sound near them. The silence was so intense that she could hear her heart beat from the steady pulse of fear to the leap of panic. Darkness, shuttered windows, drawn curtains... It was dead calm as if...

A breath of wind made her shiver.

"I fear so, Paris", she said and tried to reach her husband's arm.

"Why?" said the man in a startled tone, "There is nothing bad with the house, is it?"

"I don't know. Really, I don't know", she drew a long breath and let her arms fall along her body. Paris was fast asleep but she stood there, swaying the top part of her body slowly backwards and forwards, looking at the doorway.

Through the shut windows she only heard rain fall on the roof. She found a blanket and wrapped herself gazing into the darkness with wide-open eyes.

Two hours went by...

The fear had stirred the most intimate of her thoughts when the air was disturbed by an icy draught that reached up to her face. She came to a standstill. She felt as if...

"Paris" she whispered again.

"Yes, love" said her husband with his eyes remained closed.

"I'm afraid of the dark".

"Don't be silly, darling. You know there is nothing to be afraid of in the dark. Try to sleep. "

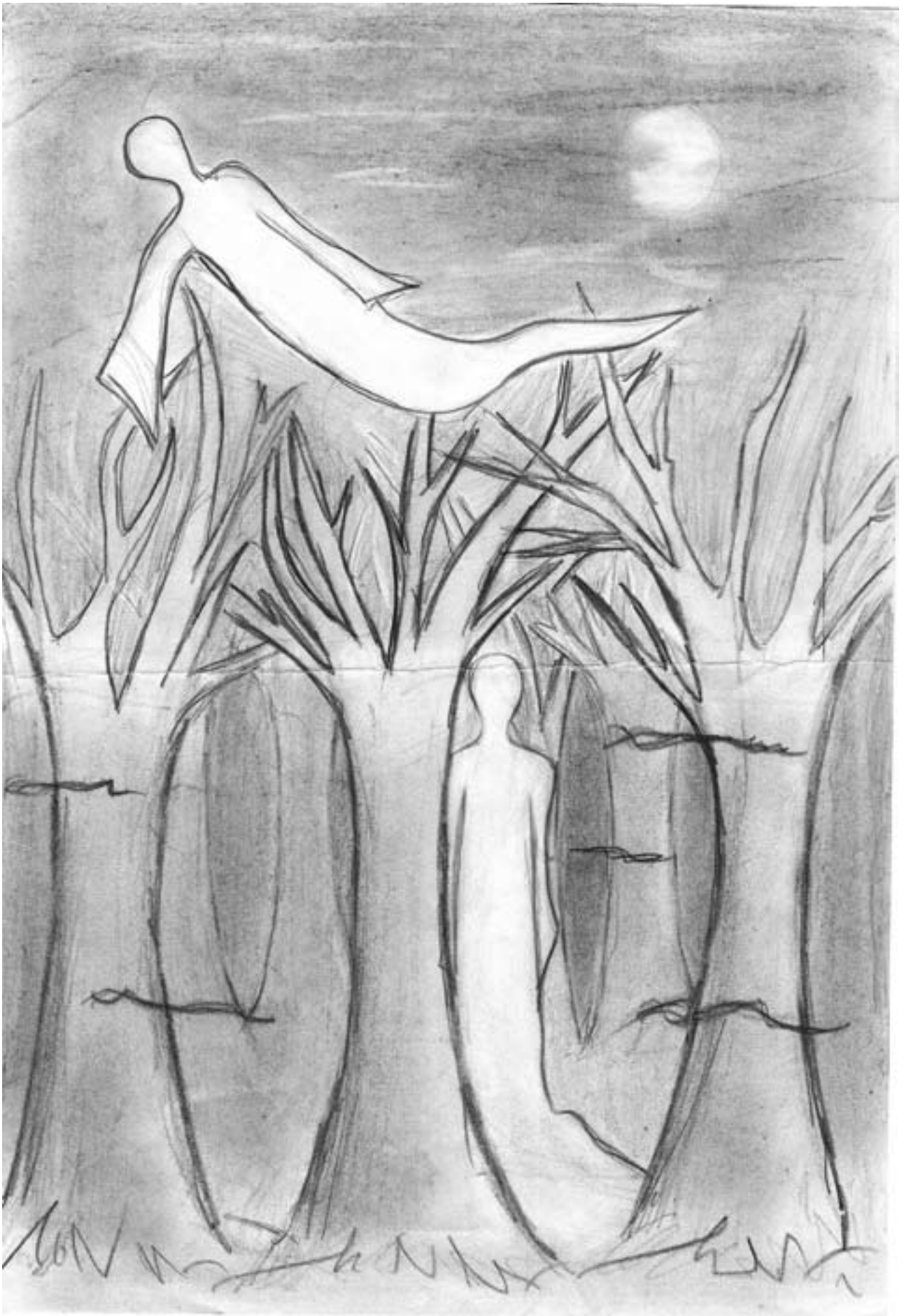
"I think I hear voices".

"Voices? What voices?"

She spoke not. She stood still with a grim on her cream - coloured face and looked at the garden. Voices were calling. Yes, voices. She could hear several voices calling and breaking the silence as if many people were haloing through the air for a while. The mist very slowly rose and uncovered some blade-like trees that waved from root to top. Her heart began to beat faster.

One hour went by...





Papanastasiou Vassilia, Thessaloniki / Greece

She had almost managed to control the increasing threat of darkness when she felt some unnatural power between her and the rest of all the human kind. No other way could have made her feel so apart, so lost ...

Suddenly the door flew open. At the sound of the whirling wind something roused in her blood. It seemed to her like voices calling again. She jumped with her fear.

"Paris, don't you hear them now?"

"No, Clio, I hear nothing."

"There, Paris" she said with unmoved face staring at the garden. "You mean you hear nothing?"

"Only you, honey. Only you!" The man said while rubbing his eyes.

"But ..." she looked a little dismayed.

"Look, Clio. You must stay as calm as you can till tomorrow morning. I can't hear any voices". Paris paused for a moment, then asked in a quiet, incurious tone. "Where do they come from?"

Clio didn't say anything. The only thing she did was to turn her head instinctively towards the garden again.

One more hour went by...

Now, there was a perpetual, wild whistling sound of voices.

"Here they are! They have come!" she murmured desperately.

She was in a high fever, her lungs ready to burst and she could no longer get enough air into her chest. The house was stifling. She felt like fainting.

She rose and opened the door. She gave a last glance at her husband, who was still sleeping, and stepped out into the night.

She could see no more than a tuft of trees against a background of fog. With short, brisk steps she crossed the garden. A gleam of yellow light through some dark rustling bushes struck her eyes. She came closer. It was a candle. Its flame shone faintly in the distance with a hazy glow. She tripped over something. With the candle in her hands she cast light on what it was. It was a stone ... a gravestone. A name was engraved in a flowing script "Clio Mantas, 1978-2008". Her hand flew into her open mouth. Then she saw a bunch of flowers. Her vacant eyes rested on the note "To my beloved wife."

It took her only a few seconds to realize the whole situation. Paris was a normal person, a living man. It was actually she who was the... dead one.

She did not move. With stony eyes she looked beyond the trees into the darkness of a world of illusions. Because she was the Forsaken, a spirit of another world. She was from what some call the Transition Phase, the Twilight Zone.

She quickly unlatched the garden gate and disappeared into the rain. The voices ceased. The air was no longer heavy with the spirits of the unwilling dead.

"Hey, Clio. It's nearly daytime, honey. We're almost home!" said the man looking tenderly at his sleeping wife.

"Oh, no", Clio shouted as she woke with a start. "No, no..."

"Darling, what's the matter? Are you feeling ill? You must have slept a little bit heavily, I think".

"Did I?" she answered with weariness. "Oh, Paris, I dreamed I was dead. Am I alive again?"

"You are, my little one, certainly you are" said the man calmly while drawing his wife to him.

Beyond the horizon the sun appeared dazzling. As it was going up, it caught some clouds and everything seemed to be on fire. Warm golden sunbeams came through the car windows. It was all overcast with a yellow shine.

"I've never seen anything more beautiful than this, Paris. Life is so wonderful!!!..." she whispered.

Clio did not talk any more or think. It was comfort, however, to be there, alive, holding her husband's hand. She did feel so happy! So grateful! So hopeful! And so REAL!!!...

*Georgia Avramidou, 15 years old / 2008, Thessaloniki / Greece*

## Attitude is everything

Have you ever thought that your everyday mood can be affected by your dreams? Can you imagine how they influence our general attitude in life? But let me tell you about it.

Zisis was the kind of guy you would like to “kill” some day. He was always in a good mood and had always something positive to say. When someone asked him how he was doing he used to reply:

“It can’t be better, my friend, it can’t be better.”

The reason why everybody followed Zisis was because of this attitude. Whenever a fellow had a bad day, Zisis was there telling him how to look on the positive side.

This attitude had almost driven me mad, so one day I visited Zisis and asked him

“I don’t get it! You can’t be so hopeful expecting the best in all things all the time. How can you manage it?”

“Our dreams affect the way we behave, old chap.” Zisis replied.

“Each morning I wake up I say to myself: Zisis, you have two choices today. You can be in a good mood or you can be in a bad mood.’ I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to act as a victim or to act as a fighter. I choose to act as a fighter. Every time someone plays a trick on me I can choose to revenge or to forgive. I choose to forgive.”

“Yes, but it’s not so easy” I murmured.

“Yes, it is” Zisis said.

“Thanks to the dream-therapy, my friend. While asleep, through your dreams, you imagine everything in the way you would like them to be. Your mind travels beyond the harsh reality and you escape from any fears, miseries or problems... Dreams give you relief from pain, distress, anxiety. So, if you take the dreams’ positive energy inside you, even when awake, you learn how to fight against odds, how to behave to people and facts, how to go on when things fail to be as good as they were hoped for. The more positive you think, the better you live... It’s a give-and-take affair, my friend, it’s a give-and-take affair... So, it’s your choice, how to live life, as a miserable **pragmatist** or as a happy-go-lucky **dreamer**. I choose to live as a happy-go-lucky dreamer.”

I reflected on what Zisis said. Thereafter, we lost touch but I often thought about him whenever I made a choice about life.

Years later, I heard that Zisis did something that nobody was supposed to do in a similar situation. While entering a local bank he was held up as a hostage by an armed robber who finally shot him due to panic. Luckily, he was rushed to the nearest emergency centre and after many hours of surgery and three weeks of intensive care, Zisis was released from the hospital with few fragments of bullets still in his body.

I saw Zisis about a year after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied

“It can’t be better, my friend, it can’t be better”.

Looking at his wounds I couldn’t resist asking him what had gone through his mind during the robbery that day.

“As I lay on the floor, I remembered that I had two choices. I could choose to live or I could choose to die. Thanks to my positive attitude I chose to live.

“But weren’t you scared? I asked him.

“To tell you the truth, when they wheeled me into the emergency room I saw the expressions on the doctors’ faces and I got really scared. In their eyes I read ‘He’s a **dead** man’ so soon I had to make another choice.”

“And what did you do?” I asked him again.

“Well, I heard them shouting questions at me. They wanted to know if I was allergic to anything, ‘Yes,’ I answered, ‘To what?’ they yelled, waiting anxiously for my reply. I took a deep breath and shouted ‘To bullets !!!’. Over their laughter, I told them ‘Listen, I chose to live but please, will **YOU** operate on

me as if I am alive or as if I am dead? So, if you don't mind, operate on me as if I am **alive** ...”

Zisis lived thanks to the skills of doctors but mainly because of his amazing, positive attitude.

I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully, with hope and faith for the future despite the many problems.

Attitude, after all, is everything, my friends. Attitude and dreams! Mainly the positive ones.

*Vassiliki-Maria Vaitsidou, 15 years old / 2008, Thessaloniki /Greece*

## **The boy on the tiers**

For some time now Andreas has been training hard for the preliminary of the next Olympic Games. He was in perfect shape. The fourth golden medal was a matter of a few months, his trainer kept telling him.

However, tonight he was very stressed. A thought had been torturing him ever since last night. “What if something bad happened to him? What may have happened?” Thousands of fears had overtaken him which quickly turned into panic.

About a year before he had first seen the little boy. He was sitting on a wheelchair on the front tiers of the stadium while he himself was running, deeply blushing and sweating, trying to outdo his own time.

Ever since then, the little boy would come every morning, at the same time. A young girl, older than him, would bring him, helping him push his wheelchair. A blanket covered his body from his waist down and Andreas soon realized that the boy had no legs. Both children used to stay for about an hour, carefully watching his efforts and afterwards they would leave just as they had come.

At first he paid no attention. However, little by little, without realizing it, the little boy's presence on the tiers became a necessity for him. It was not his disability that was shattering him, but his look. His eyes. Two big pitch-black eyes that fixed on him so persistently as if they wanted to hand over a tremendous strength to him.

Lots of times he felt the need to ask him “Who are you? What's your name? How did you lose your legs?” On the other hand, however, he was afraid of betraying that silent relationship which had developed between them.

Ever since then, they never exchanged a word but they communicated with their eyes. He was silently sharing all his preparations, his pains, his dreams through a secret agreement with that boy.

Every time he started running he would catch a glimpse of the tiers and this revived him. He was running with determination. For one hour, for two hours, for many hours... And so they kept chatting in the language of the heart.

Day after day, the little boy's look made him fear nothing and nobody. And he kept running...running... For the golden medal. Only once, when some pessimistic thoughts about the sacrifices a victory needs, seized his mind, did he look up, saw the wheelchair and the guilt shook him.

“Everything is difficult in life until we achieve it”, he muttered and carried on.

He was feeling more and more that the little boy was struggling spiritually with him. “Go on! Fight! Try more! You can! You can!” as if he was saying to him. That's why he would win! He was sure. He was clenching his fists. The blood in his head kept hammering. He was sweating all over. But he didn't care for anything. He had to achieve his purpose for a double cause. For himself but even more for the little boy. To prove that he was able to run not only for one but for both of them. And he kept running...running.... As if he had four legs. His own and the little boy's.

For a week now, however, the tiers had been empty. He had been looking for him anxiously. He knew nothing about him, where to look for him. So today, not even for one moment could he concentrate on his training. He left soon. He wandered about the streets, with a blank expression on his face as if he was looking for something in a vacuum. He soon found himself back home, exhausted as never before. He turned his key in the door lock, opened it and thrashed his sack onto the floor. He felt his throat dry. He slumped into his bed and closed his eyes. He must have dropped off at a point

because when he woke up it was already completely dark. Without thought he turned the TV on. He needed to hear a human voice because bad thoughts had been spinning in his head once more.

And then he saw them. First he saw the girl. She was holding a panel with the word “Greece” on. Then he saw the little boy. He was looking straight ahead with those big, pitch-black eyes. Behind him the giant screen said: “Closing Ceremony of the Worldwide Paralympics.” The boy was struggling to keep the flag up and on his chest a medal was glittering. A golden one. He caught a glimpse of his lips forming the words ‘Thank you... thank you’ again and again.

He sprang up from his bed. His heart was about to break. He didn’t want to lose sight of him even for a moment. He saw him amidst a crowd which was applauding. Banners were moving to and fro. Fireworks! Balloons! He saw him finish his lap. Everybody stood up then cheering: “Bravo! Bravo!”

From then on he couldn’t see what was happening. His eyes welled up with tears. The only thing he remembered was that he had knelt down shouting: “Hey, this is my friend. We’ve been together every single day. There! On the tiers! Can anybody hear me? He’s my friend, for goodness’ sake! And I am the most proud, the happiest man in the world...”

But his voice faded away, only his tears kept trickling down his cheeks, for the little boy’s victory who had struggled not only for one but for two. As if he had four legs. The ones he had lost. And Andreas’ as well.....

*Victoria Vassiliadou, 15 years old / 2008, Thessaloniki / Greece*

## **The chain watch**

He carefully pulled the chain watch out of his pocket. It was twelve at noon. Nikolas quickly sprang out of the meeting room and left the Stock Exchange Market. He sped up. The heavy briefcase made his movement difficult and despite the chill he felt he was sweating all over. He raised his hand and hailed a taxi. “To the airport please” he said and made himself comfortable at the back of the taxi. His grandpa would already be there waiting for his flight to Greece in the next few hours.

The traffic lights turned red. He had another glance at his watch. Now it was twelve fifteen. He switched on his mobile and dialed some numbers. Was everything done in the way he had planned them over the last days? The voice at the other end was quite reassuring and this calmed him down. He hung up. John Lennon’s “Imagine” on the radio filled the air.

The music took him years back, when he had first seen his grandpa. It was straight after the loss of his parents when the old man had come to Thessaloniki to collect him, toddler as he was, and take him to Kalymnos to bring him up all by himself. Grandpa Dimos worked as a sponge diver and he had been a widower for the last two years.

Nevertheless, despite the many misfortunes, he was still brave, full of strength and confidence. He proved both a father and a mother to him. One day when he took him on the sponge boat he told him “Look, one day we will sail to the end of the sea, where the sky leans over and kisses it, to meet them, but now we must go on...” So this is what happened. The old man was the only relative who stood by him and gave him support to continue his life in such a tough world. It was the old man he had put his worries on, as a child and an adult as well.

But the best memory was the smell of coffee his grandpa used to make after work; with him around, ready to hear the stories the old man had to tell him while sipping his coffee. Those years were tough but tender at the side of his grandpa!

Later on, when the sponge business slowed down, they emigrated to Germany. Grandpa Dimos told him that he had to work hard to cope with his studies. In his turn, he honoured the many hardships and sacrifices the old man had made for him. He managed well. He completed his studies and from then on the future was open, promising for him. He became the Manager of the Economics Department at the biggest telecommunications company in Frankfurt.

A Benetton hoarding with cute faces from all over the world took his mind off his memories. He pulled out his watch again. It was one o’clock. He remembered the day he had brought Myrto home to meet his grandfather. “It’s time you settled down and had a family” grandpa said and his face lit up

with happiness on their wedding day. He gave them his wish and an old chain watch as a wedding present. "It's the only heirloom passed over to me by your late grandma on our engagement day. It may be old but it still works, never lost a minute."

It was then, that the idea of Greece arose in old Dimos' heart "I'll go back home" he told them the following day. "I can't bear the thought of dying one day without seeing my birthplace for the last time." Nikolas tried in vain to change his grandpa's mind but the old man was determined not to give way.

"Here we are, sir" said the taxi driver and he immediately came back to the present. He glimpsed at his watch again. It was one fifteen. He paid the fare, got out of the taxi and made straight for the inside of the building. He went down two steps at a time on the escalators and arrived at the departure lounge. He persistently looked around until he spotted him seated calmly reading his newspaper.

"Grandpa" he shouted out and the old man on hearing the familiar voice stood with a jerk.

"Well, well, how come this way, young man? Haven't we finished with the farewells? Haven't we kissed goodbye? What's up? You didn't come to wave even the handkerchief, did you?" he teased him in the old way.

"So, you took your decision, you stubborn old man" Nikolas muttered tenderly, "You are going back home... We were hoping till yesterday that you would change your mind and stay with us."

"Come on, don't start the same boring stuff. Haven't you been fed up with all those age whims so far? I told you, we'll keep in touch on the phone and I will be proud of you from where I am. After all, now that your house will be full of kids it's time some old guys stood aside" said old Dimos smiling at the thought of his expected great –grand twin children.

Nikolas didn't say a word. He just took another glance at his watch. It was one thirty. He moved a bit further and dialed the same number as before in the taxi. On hearing the same, familiar voice at the other end he gently turned his eyes to the passport control. A smile was about to come out on his face but he carefully hid it at the edge of his lips. The watch showed one thirty-five.

The plane took off at three fifteen. The old man leaned against the window staring at the white clouds. "Thank God,! What more could one wish for? Everything turned out just as the ones, up here, wished" he murmured thinking of his beloved persons who had passed away so early. The only bad thing he thought, was the loneliness that was yet to come and that feeling-so sad- of resigning from life that makes the people of third age feel so....useless.

He closed his eyes. He had almost dropped off, when he heard something, like a tick—tock, near his ear. He turned aside and then he saw it. Hanging from a chain, something was moving like a pendulum. It was his own, old chain watch. Fully amazed he turned back and saw his grandson with his wife smiling meaningfully.

"Dearest persons, just as precious belongings, are not to be thrown away, grandpa. They are kept lovingly even if they have turned old" Nikolas whispered. "My company, as good luck would have it, is setting up a new branch in Greece and I'll work as the General Manager in it. So, grandpa, keep well, it's about time the smell of your coffee and your stories kept company to your great –grandchildren, as well."

*Corina Maniaka, 14 years old / 2008, Thessaloniki / Greece*

### Three “Whys” expect an answer

Dear diary,

The setting with the refugees under the rain seemed to be more mute than ever. Deserted villages, tents among barbed wires, fallen trees, empty containers of water, parcels with food and medicine... scattered all over the camp.

In the background, our small flag, with the pigeon on it - the Doctors of the World- was waving as if in support of the crying sky.

Since morning, I had been fighting to bring hope and comfort where there was sickness and pain before.

The girl was waiting in the queue, in the mud, until her turn came for the bus on the way to a foreign country. It might have been Estonia, Germany, Turkey, Romania, Greece. She seemed not to care the least bit about the destination.

On her face you could see the anger for what was happening, the insecurity for her uprooting, the fear for what tomorrow would bring.

I approached her. Deep in her eyes I saw three “**Whys**” I could not answer.

“**WHY** does it rain pain?”

“**WHY** is our land watered with hate?”

“**WHY** do our fairy tales have a sad ending?”

I stretched my hand and gave her a chocolate.

She searched in her pocket and found a small coin. She insisted that I should take it because, she said, that was the way she was used to...

Since then, I have kept it to remind me the great poet's<sup>4</sup> words I had learned at school and sometimes forget.

“If you cannot make what you want  
out of your life,  
just do this, at least,  
do not degrade it.”

Dear girl, this is something I promise not to forget, so as to HATE WAR for EVER.

*Antoniadi Katerina, 15 years old / 2008, Thessaloniki / Greece*

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4 Constantinos Cavafis (1863-1933): one of the greatest Greek poets

# TURKEY

## Nostalgia hidden inside the frame

The wooden door which had black spots was slowly opened creaking and a blonde lady in a black dress appeared.

As soon as she entered the peaceful room which had paintings on the wall, she noticed the coffee table between two armchairs standing in front of the table. There was a silver frame surrounding a family photo and a satin tablecloth. She couldn't remember exactly when they had taken that photo. However, it was clear that the photo reminded her of the excitement she had experienced those days.

She slowly moved forward into the room. Her face seemed calm as the sunlight succeeded to diffuse through the heavy curtains. Suddenly her face was lightened. Her body was really warm, but it was nothing compared with the fire inside her heart. She drew the curtains most hesitatingly because she was irritated by the sunlight. From then on, the light in the room was dim again.

She was sitting on the armchair on which her father once used to sit holding her in his arms. When she was a child, this part of the house used to be very important for her. Her father used to tell her stories, read tales being lost in her deep blue eyes and give advice to her on this armchair. Due to this, she considered him as a model. She was impressed especially by his power. Therefore, she had always wanted to get married with such a powerful man like her father. While she was thinking of her father, she suddenly felt rebellious and she took the photo asking herself 'I can't understand why this happened so early?'

In fact, there was not a concept as 'early' in life. Since human beings live spontaneously without thinking of the consequences, they say 'It's too early' when something unexpected happens to them. She was irritated by this feeling and asked herself whether she was one of those irresponsible people. There were lots of thoughts in her mind and it was impossible to stop them.

She looked around the room. Then she started to think about the things that happened that day... the funeral... two big bunches of her family who had always been there whenever she had any problems. She thought that there would be nothing to hold the family together anymore.

She had shouted silently at the funeral but nobody had heard her voice. They even hadn't lifted up their heads. Maybe now, she wasn't talking, but she was fighting with her emotions and question marks and it was possible to feel that she wasn't able to utter a word. She couldn't admit that they had left the world so early.

The house 'where she had a good time once' smelled of melancholy and mourning. At that time, the young woman understood that it was her turn to show up at the life theatre. Now, she was on the stage and she could show her role.

She had always been jealous of her parents' love to each other. Their feelings were so different. Yes, she was jealous of her mother from her father or her father from her mother. She didn't deny her feelings. The reason of that feeling was being an only child of her parents. They had even died together. While she was thinking about this event, there was a smile on her face.

Then, suddenly, she felt lonely again. Both loneliness and silence depressed her. These feelings got revenge on her. Today, she had wanted to appear as strong as her father and tried not to cry. Now, she felt relaxed, but her body had been occupied by all those feelings.

At the funeral, when the guests were whispering to each other that she suffered mentally not physically, she had felt proud of these speeches.

At one point she looked around the empty room. There was the begonia which her mother had watered every morning, and the bookcase for which her father had bought a book every day. She liked reading like her father. From now on, all those missions had been inherited from her parents.

After that she will water the begonia politely and put new books on the book shelves. Of course she will look after them with great care. Once upon a time, there were so many guests in her house, but now, the only guest was the scent of her parents. But she knew that, this smell would want to go one



day as the other guests.

Her hands started shaking quickly again. She couldn't put up with it while she was taking the photo. While she was looking at the photo for the last time, she smiled but actually, she was crying...

*İlknur Turgut, 12/FA*

## **Letters to Nowhere**

She was watching the rain through the window of the bus and asked the man sitting next to her for the time. She didn't want to be late. She was very excited. When she learned that 20 minutes were left for the arrival, she leaned on her seat. She was lost in thought and remembered the first time she met him.

It was the first day of her new school because of her father's job and this was her fourth high school. She was a senior that year at school. Duru was so stressed because of the exams for the university. In addition to this she had no friends there. When she sat down on her desk in the classroom, she saw Barış. He came towards her and asked her for her name. At first, she couldn't believe that Barış had talked to her because the other students used to ignore her but she regained her self-control and answered his question. They began to talk and this was just a beginning of a beautiful love. Their love was so big that they were both afraid of losing each other. However, they couldn't show their love openly to each other. Duru was so shy that Barış couldn't understand her feelings. They spend so much time together but the exam day was nearing day by day.

The time had passed so quickly and time at school was over. They both attended universities but in different cities. They were both crying while leave-taking. They promised to write each other every month.

As time goes by, they wrote regularly. After a year, Duru couldn't receive an answer to her last letter and waited for one more month but there was still no answer and she wrote again and again...

Her mind was full of questions: "Why didn't he reply? , did he forget her?" And suddenly she thought how stupid she was; but he forgot her whereas she loved him so much. But he forgot her. "It was a big mistake to believe that he was different from the others" she murmured.

There was no reply from Barış, so Duru quitted.

Four years passed without hearing anything from him. Duru graduated from the university and started to work in İstanbul but Barış was still in her mind, the way he loved and supported her... It was difficult to forget his affection. But what about leaving her suddenly? 'Perhaps he has found another girlfriend' she thought. She couldn't stop thinking of this possibility, however she knew that she had to forget him.

One day when she came home and checked her mail, she found an envelope. There was no address on it. As soon as she opened it, she recognized his handwriting. She was so surprised and confused. "Why did he write after so many years?" she thought. She read the letter. It was full of love and he was telling that how much he loved her. It was so strange that there was no address and no name of the sender on the envelope. So she could not reply. In three months time, she received three more letters.

"It must be a joke" she thought when she got the last one. It was obvious that the sender was Barış but why didn't he let her reply? Maybe he was afraid of Duru's words to him because he couldn't explain where he had been all these years. He had no excuse. After reading the last letter, she went out. She came across Mehmet, who was a friend of Barış from high school, while she was walking along the beach. He was handsome but rather snobbish. Although she doesn't like him, they began to talk about the past.

Suddenly Mehmet stopped talking for a moment. There were some signs of sorrow on his face and he said "I'm sure you are as sad as we are. Barış was a good man but it was unfortunate of him to have a disease at his age. Why didn't you come to his funeral?" Duru was shocked.

She went away without saying goodbye. He can not have died, it was unbelievable because of the letters. When she arrived home, she decided to wait for another letter. "There must be an answer."

She thought. The days hardly passed. She could not focus on anything those days. One day when she checked her mail as usual, there it was: the letter! She opened and read it quickly. Barış wanted to see her and told her the time and the place for a meeting. She couldn't understand but she had to solve this problem so she decided to go there.

She was on the bus and remembering all those things made her worried. While the bus was crossing the bridge, she noticed the seagull's and the ship's screams. She got off the bus and saw the maiden's tower and the ship passing underneath the bridge and then she thought how beautiful and gorgeous it was. She kept on walking and saw a man when she arrived at the meeting point. He was wearing a long raincoat and a hat which couldn't cover some of his dark brown hair. It was obvious that he was cold and was watching the seagulls. He was the only man waiting there.

She walked towards him to see his face because she couldn't recognize him until she saw his eyes...

*Ece Türkmen, 11 FB*

## **Nightmare**

It was dark and she was frightened. At that moment she first saw a light and a horrifying object like a face. She was really frightened. She was sweating and shivering. She was trying to understand what had been happening. She could hear someone screaming. She was really confused and woke up screaming. She looked around and she realized that it was just a nightmare. She had a deep breath and slept again. In the morning she was supposed to go on a trip with her friends but she was not willing to go with them instinctively. However, she had promised to go; so she packed her baggage. As she walked out of her house, she remembered the nightmare she had the previous night. She couldn't find out what it was and the reason why she got so afraid. She got on a taxi with all these questions in mind. When she arrived, she was relieved a bit but not completely.

Aysun was talking about how the journey would affect them positively when they set out for the journey. Dolunay and Yağız nodded their heads as if they were approving Aysun. After a while, Yağız realized that Melisa was quite silent and asked her if everything was alright. She wanted to tell everything at first but then she changed her mind and she explained that she wasn't able to sleep the previous night.

The journey ended. They arrived at Cappodocia. Dolunay and Aysun were really excited like children. They were willing to stroll around as soon as possible. Yağız was still thinking of the reason why Melisa had been so silent. However, it was not the exact time.

They walked to the hotel because they wanted to get accustomed to the place. They arrived at the hotel after a 20-minute walk. Everything seemed to be very mystical. Everything in the entrance and their locations were amazing. The horrifying trinket near the mirror was the same as the one in Melisa's nightmare. She was shocked. Then she walked up to her room as her friends had already done.

Although Aysun was really excited about Cappodocia, Melisa was suspicious about this place. Instinctively, she felt that there would be something wrong if they stayed there. She was wondering what that trinket meant. She had a glance at Aysun who had already fallen a sleep. She went downstairs and took the trinket in front of the mirror. Suddenly, something entered her body. After five or six seconds everything was normal. Her head started aching. The headache was different than any of the similar incidents before. She went back to her room and took a painkiller. As she was thinking of the things that had happened, she fell a sleep.

She woke up in the morning. She looked at the other bed but Aysun wasn't there. She called her name but there was no answer. She got dressed and went to Yağız's room to ask whether they had seen Aysun. They didn't know where Aysun was. Melisa had a deep pain in her heart because she believed that this was because of the thing she had done the previous night. She was shivering as if she had lost her consciousness. She was asking herself where Aysun was in that case. Yağız was shocked and tried to understand what had happened. Yağız asked them to get ready and went downstairs to the entrance of the hotel.

When they came to the entrance of the hotel, Yağız was with someone they didn't know. He told them that the stranger was a tourist guide. Then they tried to explain everything to the guide.

Then, the guide started to tell them the myth of the trinket. Immediately afterwards, they started walking quickly. About half an hour later, they reached a cave house and started to go downstairs. Melisa was really worried when she asked the guide if he had any idea what had happened to Aysun and didn't get any response.

They stepped forward through the darkness. The corridor was getting narrow and hallow. They saw a small light at the end of the darkness. They were coming nearer to the light. Suddenly Melisa heard Aysun's voice. She couldn't understand what she was saying but she still felt relieved. The guide warned them to be silent. Finally, Melisa could see Aysun. She seemed to be fine. Just as she decided to go near her, Yağız stopped her and said " Can't you see that she seemed as if something was directing her." "She might hurt you!" Yağız said. Then the guide took out a green stone from his pocket. He started saying things in Latin. Melisa was really horrified and she closed her eyes. The guide was inside. After a few seconds, a green light enlightened the darkness. At that moment Aysun started screaming and crying. She was begging someone saying not to kill her. Melisa couldn't wait any longer and went inside. When she saw the scene, she fell on her knees and fainted.

When Melisa opened her eyes, she was out of the cave and everybody was with her. When Melisa saw Aysun, she hugged her and said that she was really sorry because everything had been her fault. Aysun claimed that everything was over. She was smiling at Melisa.

Then they walked towards the hotel, Melisa wasn't frightened anymore. She was happy and relaxed. Now it was time to enjoy the holiday.

*Melike Sögütcepinar, 11 FB*

# KURZGESCHICHTEN

## Auf der Rolltreppe

Die Rolltreppe, auf der sie stand, bewegte sich langsam und völlig geräuschlos auf die Öffnung über ihr zu. Sie blinzelte in das grelle Licht, das durch die Öffnung in den Schacht fiel. Mit geschlossenen Augen atmete sie dann tief ein. Alles war ruhig um sie her, obwohl sie von vielen Leuten mit großen Koffern umgeben war. Auch die Luft war sonderbar frisch und klar. Die letzten Stufen der Rolltreppe sprang sie hinauf und schleifte ihren Koffer hinter sich her. Sie rannte einige Schritte und blieb dann stehen, um sich ein wenig umzusehen. Ihr Blick schweifte von der hohen Decke ganz aus Glas hin zu der großen schwarzen Anzeigentafel. Eine ganze Weile blieb sie so stehen, betrachtete die ständig wechselnden Anzeigen: Das Flugzeug aus Kairo verspätete sich um zwanzig Minuten, der Flug nach Atlanta / Georgia ging in zehn Minuten. Welche Leute saßen wohl in diesen Flugzeugen, wie fühlten sie sich?

Plötzlich spürte sie einen Stoß in den Rücken. Sie blickte sich um und hörte den Mann in dem Anzug noch „Entschuldigen Sie!“ sagen, bevor er mit seinem Köfferchen davoneilte. Nun erst nahm sie die Menschen um sich herum richtig wahr. Obwohl es noch sehr früh am Morgen war, war die Halle voll von Menschen: Ankömmlinge, die von ihren Familien freudig begrüßt wurden, Verreisende, die unter Tränen von Angehörigen verabschiedet wurden. Ihre Familie war nicht da. Sie hatte sie gebeten, nicht mitzukommen, sondern sie schon zuhause zu verabschieden. Es war ihr schwer gefallen, doch irgendwie fühlte es sich richtig an. Das hier sollte ihre Sache sein. Vom ersten Augenblick an wollte sie ohne fremde Hilfe sein.

Inzwischen war sie am Schalter für ihren Flug angelangt und zog nun ihren Pass aus dem Rucksack. Die Angestellte der Fluggesellschaft blickte auf und lächelte sie fröhlich an: „Guten Morgen, Miss. Sie sind aber früh dran.“ Sie erwiderte das Lächeln und nickte bloß. Alles verlief reibungslos, und bald hielt sie Ticket und Pass in den Händen. Ein angenehmes Kribbeln breitete sich in ihrem Innern aus. Ein Gefühl, das sie in den letzten Tagen öfter gespürt hatte. Ein Gemisch aus Vorfreude, Ungewissheit und auch ein bisschen Angst. Ein Jahr voller Abenteuer, neuer Eindrücke, aber auch voller Verantwortung lag vor ihr. Und weit weg von ihrer Familie. Sie liebte ihre Familie und ihr Zuhause, doch schon seit Langem hatte sie immer öfter die Sehnsucht nach der Ferne überkommen. Nun wollte sie eine längere Zeit etwas anderes sehen, völlig in die fremde Kultur einzutauchen.

Sie lächelte und blickte auf das Bild in ihren Händen. Es zeigte ein junges Paar mit zwei kleinen Kindern: Einem Jungen und einem Mädchen im Alter von drei und fünf Jahren. Alle lachten. Mit ihnen würde sie das nächste Jahr verbringen.

Sie musste schlucken. Trotz der Vorfreude wuchs noch ein anderes Gefühl mit jedem Schritt. Es behagte ihr nicht. Es machte sie unsicher und ließ sie immer langsamer werden. In dem Moment, als sie ihren Rucksack aus der Plastikwanne auf dem Laufband der Sicherheitskontrolle nahm, fiel ihr Blick auf das zweite Bild in ihren Händen: Das Bild ihrer Familie - und das seltsame Gefühl gewann die Oberhand. Ohne dass sie darüber nachdachte, was es für Konsequenzen haben würde, ohne dass sie einen Gedanken an ihre Vorfreude auf das vor ihr liegende Abenteuer verschwendete, drehte sie sich um und rannte zurück. Sie konnte das nicht, das wusste sie. Oder es fühlte sich so an, als wüsste sie es.

Sie rannte, flog schon fast, bis ihr eine Person den Weg versperrte. Als sie aufsah, entdeckte sie den Mann in dem Anzug, der sie vorher angerempelt hatte. Er sah jünger aus als bei ihrer kurzen Begegnung zuvor. Jetzt blickte er sie mit seinen tief grünen Augen fest an und lächelte dabei ruhig. Genauso ruhig nahm er ihr dann vorsichtig die beiden Bilder aus der Hand, die sie immer noch fest umklammerte. Er trat an ihr vorbei und schritt in die Richtung, aus der sie gekommen war. Sie lief ihm nach. Doch obwohl es schien, als hätte er keine Eile, schaffte sie es nicht, ihn einzuholen. Sie liefen durch viele Gänge immer weiter ins Innere des Flughafens, bis er schließlich stehen blieb. Hinter ihm erkannte sie ein Gate. Ihr Gate. Noch einmal legte er sein warmes Lächeln auf, und dann war er verschwunden. Sie hielt die Bilder wieder in ihren Händen.

Völlig in Gedanken reichte sie der Stewardess ihr Ticket und trat durch die Absperrung. Wer war dieser Mann gewesen? Wieso hatte er ihre Bilder genommen und sie hierher geführt? Sie hatte ihn noch zur Rede stellen wollen. Ihn fragen wollen, was ihm denn einfiel... Aber sie war ihm dankbar.

Er war wie ein guter Geist gewesen, der sie geführt hatte. Sie hatte die Entscheidung nicht allein treffen müssen, hatte die Verantwortung abgenommen bekommen. Ein Engel.

Und sie hoffte, dass er auch in Zukunft auftauchen würde. Im Flugzeug suchte sie ihren Platz; sie verstaute ihren Rucksack und ließ sich in den Sitz fallen. Sie schloss die Augen...

*Mareike Forchheim, 18 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland*

## **Der rote Regenschirm**

Mario läuft die Straße lang. Er begrüßt hier und da Leute, die er kennt. Die Frau aus dem Blumenladen, den Herrn aus dem Käsegeschäft. Mario kennt alle, und alle kennen Mario.

Es fängt an zu regnen. Um Mario herum gehen die Regenschirme auf, nur Mario hat keinen bei sich. Er wird nass, aber das stört ihn nicht. Während er die Straße lang läuft, sieht er einen roten Regenschirm. Er läuft in die Richtung des Schirms, weil er darunter seine Mutter vermutet. Rufen möchte Mario nicht; das ist ihm zu peinlich. Also läuft er zwischen den anderen Menschen hindurch auf den roten Regenschirm zu. Langsam kommt er dem Schirm näher.

Als er unter den Schirm guckt und fröhlich „Hallo!“ ruft, schaut ihn eine junge Frau an und nicht seine Mutter. Mario ist sprachlos. Er weiß nicht, was er sagen soll. Er kann die junge, hübsche Frau nur anschauen...

Mario wird angerempelt, das holt ihn in die Wirklichkeit zurück. Mario sieht in die Augen eines Passanten, entschuldigt sich, dreht sich um und läuft schleunigst davon. Das war ihm sehr peinlich!

Während Mario durch die Straßen nach Hause läuft, denkt er an die junge Frau. Sie war richtig hübsch gewesen. Sie hatte braune Haare und Augen - wie er. Ob sie auch nicht von hier kommt - so wie er? Er würde sie gerne wieder sehen...

Mario läuft grübelnd weiter, als er seinen Freunden begegnet. Zusammen spielen sie eine Runde Basketball. Dadurch denkt Mario nicht mehr an die schöne Fremde.

Nach dem Spiel geht Mario nach Hause zu seiner Mutter. Mario muss lächeln; er hat das Bild der hübschen Frau vor Augen. Als Mario fertig ist mit dem Essen, legt er sich auf sein Bett und denkt an die Fremde; irgendwann schläft er ein.

In seinem Traum begegnet er der hübschen Fremden noch einmal. Sie lächelt ihn an, reicht ihm ihre Hand und zieht ihn mit sich. Es regnet wieder, aber das ist den beiden egal. Ihre Haare werden nass, während sie durch den Regen rennen. Sie lässt seine Hand nicht los. Hübsch sieht sie aus, findet Mario. Sie trägt rote Gummistiefel, Jeans, eine dunkelblaue Jacke und einen weißen langen Schal. Der Schal weht hinter ihr her, während sie eine Düne hinunterrennen. Mario läuft hinter ihr her. Beide lachen und spielen Fangen. Mario fängt sie und kitzelt sie, bis sie vor Lachen nicht mehr kann. Er hält sie fest in seinen Armen. Doch als sie sich küssen wollen, wacht Mario auf.

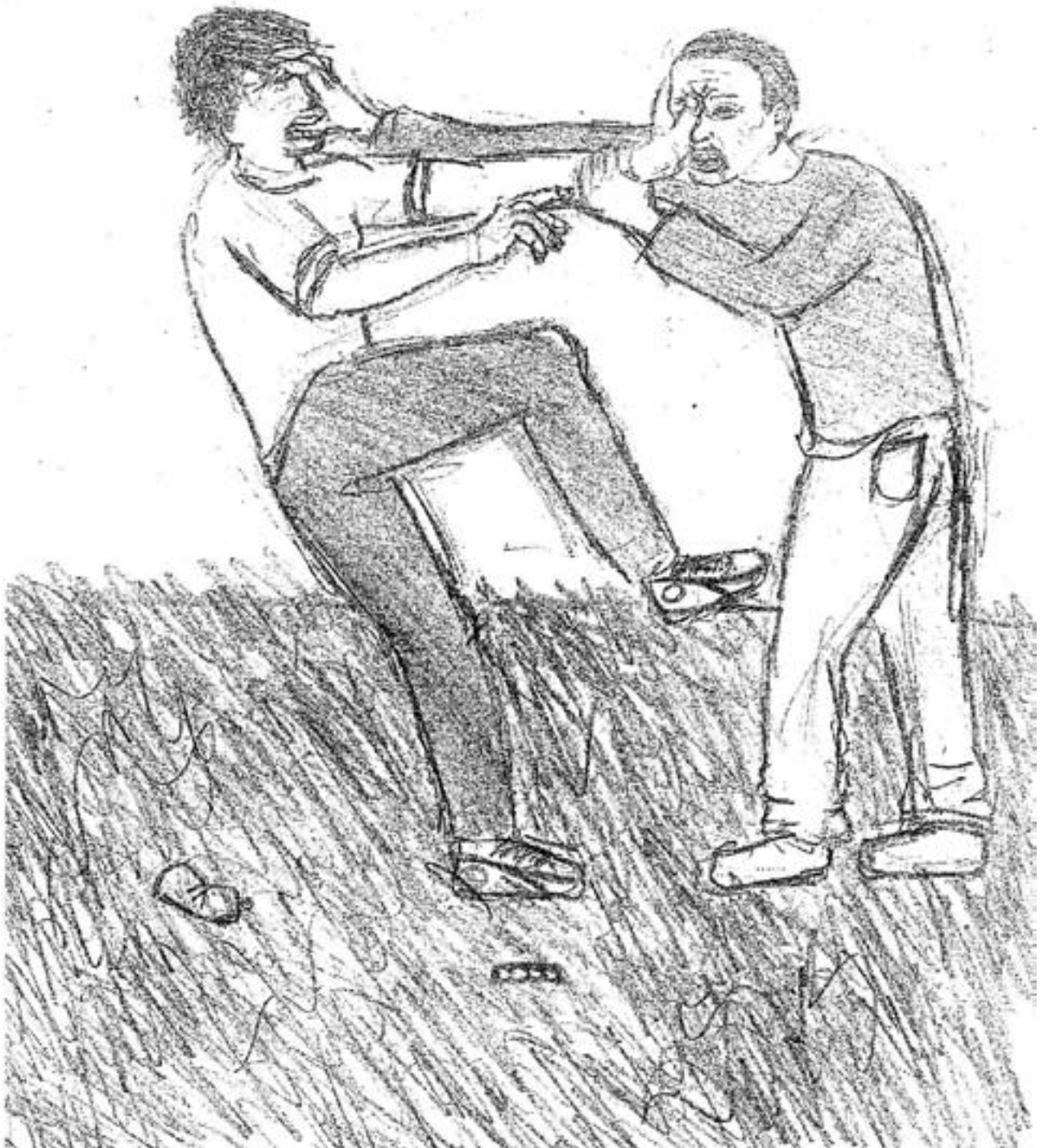
Draußen wird es langsam hell. Es ist trüb; die Sonne kommt nur schwer durch die Wolken, und es tröpfelt. Mario steht auf und beschließt, heute die schöne Fremde zu suchen. Nach dem Frühstück geht er für seine Mutter zum Einkaufen, und er hofft, dass er den roten Regenschirm noch einmal sieht.

Auf den Straßen laufen nur wenige Menschen. Alles ist trist und dunkel; auch die Regenschirme sind es, die die Leute über sich halten. Mario sieht keinen roten Farbtupfer. Enttäuscht geht er in das Geschäft. Als er alles eingekauft hat und wieder nach draußen tritt, haben sich die Straßen etwas gefüllt. Doch es ist kein Rot zu sehen.

Kurz bevor Mario in die Straße einbiegt, in der er wohnt, dreht er sich noch einmal um. Er sieht einen roten Regenschirm. Aufgeregt läuft Mario in die Richtung des Schirms...

*Melanie Ockel, 18 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland*

# Gewalt



Philipp Staab, 13 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland

## Das Leben ist nicht fair

„He, Neger! Warst du schon wieder betteln? Gib uns lieber das Geld, oder müssen wir es uns gewaltsam holen?“ Simon und seine Clique verfolgten Alex, seitdem er neu in ihrer Klasse war. Aber seit kurzem wurden die Demütigungen, denen er ausgesetzt war, immer schlimmer. Am Anfang hatten sie ihn ignoriert und bei allem ausgeschlossen, danach ihn dauernd beschimpft, ihm Sachen geklaut und ihn erpresst; aber noch nie hatten sie ihm Gewalt angedroht. Alex fürchtete sich. Er überlegte fieberhaft, was er tun sollte.

Sonntagabends war nicht viel los auf den Straßen. Alex stand alleine an der Bushaltestelle und Simons Bande lauert auf der anderen Straßenseite. „Ich habe kein Geld mehr, ich habe euch alles gegeben“, rief Alex zu ihnen hinüber. Seine Stimme zitterte, und Simon spürte seine Angst. „Ja wie? Du hast kein Geld mehr?“, lachte Simon mit einem spöttischen Unterton in der Stimme. „Du kriegst doch sonst alles hinterher getragen!“ Jetzt brüllte die ganze Clique vor Lachen. Seitdem seine Mutter ihm einmal sein Pausenbrot während des Unterrichts gebracht hatte, wurde Alex als Muttersöhnchen aufgezogen. Doch seine Eltern wussten nichts davon, was Alex jeden Tag in der Schule durchstehen musste. Er hatte Angst, es irgendjemandem zu sagen, weil er fürchtete, dass sie ihn dadurch nur noch stärker erniedrigen würden.

Langsam kam Simon näher, und seine Bande folgte ihm bedrohlich. Alex fühlte sich bedrängt und wurde unruhig. Sie drohten, ihn zu umringen. „Dann werden wir mal sehen, was noch alles in deinem Rucksack ist. Vielleicht meine neue Sonnenbrille, auf die du doch so neidisch warst?“ Es war nichts Neues für Alex, dass sie ihn des Diebstahls beschuldigten. Sie suchten ja nur nach einem Grund, um ihm wieder etwas wegzunehmen. Sie hatten schon die Hälfte der Straße hinter sich, die immer enger zu werden schien. Alex war es Leid als der Sündenbock dazustehen. Er dachte nicht mehr nach, er wollte nur weg, weg von Simon und seiner Bande, weg aus dieser Stadt. Er hatte genug. Die ständigen Gemeinheiten der Jungen belasteten nicht nur seine schulischen Leistungen, sondern auch das Zusammenleben mit der Familie. Alex war oft angespannt und verängstigt, doch wenn seine Eltern nachfragten, stritt er nur alles ab - wegen seiner Angst hinsichtlich der Folgen.

Er merkte, wie er rannte. Er rannte, so schnell es ging, doch er kam nicht weit, da ihn einer der größeren Jungen schnell einholte und ihm ein Bein stellte. Alex fiel. Seine Hose war an den Knien zerrissen, und an den Händen hatte er Schürfwunden. Sein Kinn brannte, und er spürte, wie Blut auf sein T-Shirt tropfte. „Wie soll es nur weitergehen?“, fragte sich Alex. Er wünschte sich, dass das alles nie passiert wäre und er und seine Familie nie hierher gezogen wären.

„Was wollt ihr eigentlich von mir? Ich habe euch nie etwas getan!“, schrie Alex verzweifelt. Er hatte zwar Tränen in den Augen, doch Wut kochte in ihm hoch. Er stand nun Simon gegenüber, der ihn feindselig betrachtete. „Was du uns getan hast? Du störst mit deiner Anwesenheit, wenn du verstehst, was ich meine“, antwortete Simon. Er lachte und stieß Alex wieder zu Boden.

Er holte schon aus zum Schlag, als die neue Lehrerin um die Ecke kam. Sie starrte perplex Simon und seine Freunde an, die nun einen Kreis um Alex geschlossen hatten. Als die Gruppe die junge Frau bemerkte, rannte sie weg. Simon warf Alex noch einen gehässigen Blick zu und verschwand auch.

„Geht es dir gut?“, fragte die Lehrerin vorsichtig und trat näher zu Alex. Aber dieser stand auf und rannte weg. „Ich will dir doch nur helfen!“, rief ihm die Frau hinterher. Aber Alex wusste, dass es dadurch nur noch schlimmer werden würde...

*Astrid Schaufelbühl, 14 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland*

## Die alte Dame und mein Traum

„Hallo, Emily, ich habe Pizza gebacken! Wie war es in der Schule?“, rief mir meine Mutter entgegen, als ich nach der Schule zur Tür hereinkam. Ich brachte meine Sachen in mein Zimmer und ging in die Küche: „Es war ganz okay in der Schule! Aber mal eine ganz andere Frage: Was macht der Möbelwagen vor unserer Haustür? Willst du etwa umziehen?“ „Ach Quatsch, gegenüber in das Haus, das schon so lange leer steht, zieht eine ältere Dame ein“, antwortete Mama. Ich ging zum Fenster und sah gerade, wie eine alte schrullige Frau mit einer Katze im Arm in das Haus ging. Hinter ihr trugen mehrere Möbelpacker eine uralte dunkle Kommode und Sessel, die wie alte Kinossessel aussahen, ins Haus. Die Sessel gefielen mir auf Anhieb, denn schon lange träumte ich davon, später einmal ein eigenes kleines gemütliches Kino zu eröffnen. Ich setzte mich wieder an den Tisch und begann, die köstliche Pizza meiner Mutter zu essen...

Nach ein paar Wochen hatte ich mich daran gewöhnt, dass die ältere Frau den ganzen Tag mit einem Kissen auf der Fensterbank lag und ihre Katze streichelte. Als ich eines Nachmittags vom Schwimmunterricht nach Hause kam, sagte meine Mutter: „Ich habe mich heute mit Frau Jansen unterhalten.“ „Wer ist denn Frau Jansen?“, fragte ich völlig irritiert.

„Na, unsere neue Nachbarin. Sie hat mir erzählt, wie schwierig es für sie ist, in ihrem Alter noch alleine einkaufen zu gehen. Da sie aber leider keine Familie hier in der Nähe hat, habe ich ihr spontan angeboten, dass du bestimmt mit ihr zum Einkaufen gehen würdest. Sie meinte natürlich sofort, dass du dafür auch Geld bekommen würdest.“ „Aber Mama, ich hab doch keine Lust mit einer alten, schrulligen Frau einkaufen zu gehen“, entgegnete ich genervt.

Doch Mama blieb hart und meinte: „Du jammerst doch immer, dass du zu wenig Taschengeld bekommst. Außerdem finde ich, dass du ruhig mal etwas Zeit opfern kannst, um einer älteren Frau zu helfen.“ Und so holte ich Frau Jansen einmal pro Woche, immer mittwochs um 15.30 Uhr, ab und ging mit ihr einkaufen. Eigentlich war sie ganz nett, aber viel geredet haben wir nicht miteinander. Was eindeutig an mir lag, aber ich hatte einfach überhaupt keine Lust, mit dieser Frau einkaufen zu gehen, anstatt mich mit meinen Freundinnen zu treffen.

Es war wieder einmal Zeit, Frau Jansen abzuholen. Ich ging also über die Straße und klingelte; doch sie machte mir auch nach dem dritten Klingeln nicht auf. Irgendwie kam mir das komisch vor, und so lief ich durch den Garten, um zu gucken, ob die Tür zum Wintergarten offen war. Wie ich vermutet hatte, stand sie offen. Ich ging hinein und rief: „Frau Jansen? Sind Sie da?“ Doch es blieb still, nur ihre Katze hörte ich leise miauen. Ich ging in die Küche und wollte eigentlich nur einen Zettel hinterlassen, dass ich morgen um dieselbe Zeit noch einmal wiederkommen würde, als ich plötzlich total erschrak. Frau Jansen lag regungslos auf dem Boden. Ich kniete mich nieder, tätschelte sie leicht und rief: „Frau Jansen, können Sie mich hören?“ Doch sie reagierte nicht.

Schnell lief ich zum Telefon und rief einen Krankenwagen. Es kam mir vor wie eine Ewigkeit, bis der Krankenwagen endlich da war, doch dann ging alles ganz schnell. Die Sanitäter machten einige Untersuchungen, luden die Frau dann auf eine Trage und nahmen sie mit ins Krankenhaus. Plötzlich stand ich alleine in diesem großen Haus. Ich fütterte noch die Katze, bevor ich die Schlüssel nahm, die Tür schloss und nach Hause ging, um mich von dem Schrecken zu erholen.

Am nächsten Tag fragte meine Mutter: „Wollen wir Frau Jansen nicht mal im Krankenhaus besuchen und ihr ein paar Sachen von zu Hause mitbringen, du hast doch ihren Schlüssel?“ Ich nickte, denn irgendwie fand ich die Frau ja doch ganz nett, und sie tat mir leid. Ich ging also in ihr Haus, fütterte ein weiteres Mal ihre Katze und packte ein paar Sachen zusammen. Dann fuhr ich mit Mama ins Krankenhaus. Dort erfuhren wir, dass Frau Jansen alles gut überstanden hatte und dass sie in den nächsten Tagen wieder nach Hause kommen konnte. Wir tranken noch einen Tee mit Frau Jansen, und ich versprach ihr, dass ich mich, solange sie hier im Krankenhaus lag, um ihre Katze kümmern und die Blumen gießen würde.

Nach drei weiteren Tagen im Krankenhaus wurde die Frau entlassen. Als ich sie dann wieder im Fenster liegen sah, wie sie ihre Katze streichelte, beschloss ich, einen Kuchen zu backen und ihr ihre Schlüssel wieder zu bringen. Sie freute sich riesig über meinen Besuch und bedankte sich bei mir. Wir tranken zusammen Tee und aßen Kuchen. Sie erzählte mir von ihrem Sohn, der mit seiner Familie in Rom wohnte, von ihrem verstorbenen Mann und ihrer Weltreise. Langsam fing die Frau



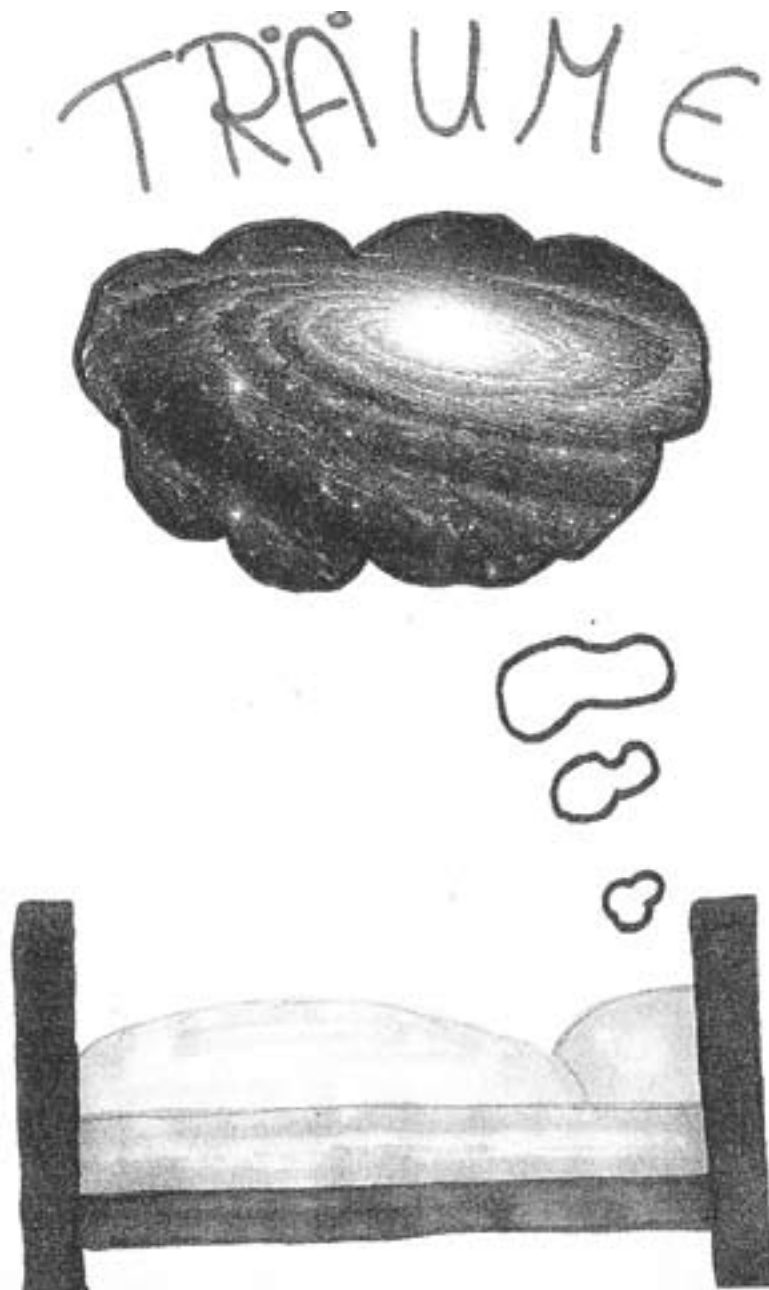
an, mich zu faszinieren. Sie hatte schon so unheimlich viel erlebt und durchgemacht. Doch das Tollste an ihr war, dass sie den gleichen Traum in ihrer Jugend verfolgt hatte wie ich.

Sie hatte es geschafft, sich diesen Traum zu verwirklichen, als sie fünfzig Jahre alt war und endlich mit ihrem Mann genügend Geld gespart hatte: Sie kauften sich zusammen ein Kino, aus dem übrigens auch die tollen roten Sessel stammten. Doch als ihr Mann ein paar Jahre später starb, verkaufte sie das Kino wieder. Sie erzählte mir so lebendig von der Einrichtung, den Filmen, die damals liefen, und von den vielen Süßigkeiten, die es bei ihr im Kino gab, dass ich kaum noch unterscheiden konnte, ob es Traum oder Wirklichkeit war.

Doch für mich wird es wahrscheinlich nur ein Traum bleiben, weil es in der heutigen Zeit sehr schwierig sein wird, ein solches Kino noch zu verwirklichen. Das war jedoch nicht so schlimm, denn ich hatte eine wunderbare alte Frau kennengelernt, mit der ich mich öfter traf. Zusammen träumten wir davon, wie unser Kino denn wohl aussehen würde und was es alles für Süßigkeiten geben würde..

Und vielleicht schaffe ich es ja doch noch irgendwann, mein eigenes Kino zu eröffnen....

*Alica Kühne, 14 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland*



Lisa Hofmann, 14 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland

## Familienidylle

Es war ein wunderschöner Sommermorgen. Die ersten Sonnenstrahlen fielen schon in mein Zimmer. Unten in der Küche hörte ich Mutter, wie sie für uns das Frühstück vorbereitete. Durch das geöffnete Fenster drangen verzweifelte Rufe meines Vaters, der wohl gerade versuchte, das Gepäck für unseren Familienausflug im Wagen zu verstauen. Doch all diese Wahrnehmungen wurden von einem sehr vertrauten Klopfen übertönt. Mein jüngerer Bruder spielte gerade wieder mit seinem Lieblingsspielzeug, besser gesagt, er schlug es mit aller Kraft gegen die Wand. Das war nicht normal für einen 13-jährigen Jungen, und auch sonst unterschied er sich sehr von allen anderen Jungen. Seit jüngsten Jahren war er durch eine Krankheit an einen Rollstuhl gebunden. Bei den alltäglichen Dingen wie Essen, Trinken oder sich Umziehen benötigte er Hilfe. Er konnte nicht einmal sprechen; nur durch Zeichen konnte er sich mit uns verständigen. Mit dem Spielzeug an die Wand zu schlagen, das war ein Zeichen, um Aufmerksamkeit zu erlangen. Schon kam meine Mutter die Treppe hinaufgeeilt, um meinen Bruder mit zärtlichen Worten wieder zu besänftigen; denn, wie sie immer sagte, das Wichtigste seien sehr viel Liebe und Zuneigung.

Nachdem nun auch ich mich endlich aus dem Bett bequemt hatte und das Frühstück beendet war, brachen wir auf. Ich freute mich schon lange auf diesen Tag, denn Familienausflüge waren für mich immer das Größte gewesen. Unser Ziel war ein kleiner See, nicht sehr weit entfernt, an dem wir erst angeln und dann am Abend ein Lagerfeuer machen wollten. Nachdem wir angekommen waren, schlugen wir also unser kleines Lager auf und setzten uns auf den Steg zum Angeln: Ich, Mutter und dann Vater zusammen mit meinem Bruder. Früher, als er noch nicht mit zum Angeln gehen konnte, durfte ich das mit Vater zusammen machen. Das war immer ein Riesenspaß gewesen. Gemeinsam hatten wir uns ausgemalt, wie es wäre, auf einem Seemannsschiff auf dem Meer zu treiben und dabei die größten und außergewöhnlichsten Fische zu fangen. Und Vater erfand dann spannende und lustige Geschichten, denen ich immer fasziniert gelauscht hatte. Nun erzählte er die Geschichten meinem Bruder, und er war es, der von großen Abenteuern mit meinem Vater träumen durfte.

Doch das war okay, denn ich war ja sowieso schon viel zu alt für solche Spielchen...Wir saßen schon eine Weile, als sich an der Angel, an der Vater mit meinem Bruder saß, etwas rührte. Es war ein langer Kampf, den Fisch aus dem Wasser zu ziehen. Und als dieser endlich gefangen war, freuten sich alle.

Meine Eltern waren furchtbar stolz auf ihren kleinen Sohn. Fast so, als wäre er es gewesen, der den Fisch fing. Dabei hatte Vater das doch ganz alleine geschafft. Am Abend hatte sich ihre Freude immer noch nicht gelegt. Meine Eltern waren vollkommen fasziniert von meinem Bruder und jedem seiner Fortschritte, selbst wenn sie sich diese eigentlich nur einbildeten. Ich hatte an diesem Tag sieben Fische geangelt, den größten Fang, den ich bis dahin jemals gemacht hatte. Als Anerkennung dafür bekam ich ein halbherziges Schulterklopfen. Aber so war es immer gewesen! Immer war er derjenige, der Bewunderung bekam. Immer wurde er gelobt, und immer war er es, der Mutter und Vater stolz machte.

Ich kann mich noch an den Tag erinnern, als wir um sein Grab standen. Wie bitterlich Mutter geweint hatte. Bei mir würde sie das sicher nicht tun. Es ist nicht meine Schuld, dass es nun soweit kommen musste. Er hatte es einfach nicht anders verdient; er provozierte es ja beinahe schon. Ich habe nichts zu bereuen.

„Abführen“, schreit einer der vielen Polizisten, die sich um unser Haus postiert haben. Ich soll nun bestraft werden, dabei wissen die gar nicht, welche jahrelange Strafe ich durch diese Missgeburt ertragen musste.

*Romina Ringat, 18 Jahre / 2008, Mühlheim / Deutschland*

# ***Students' Views and Reflections*** on contemporary Issues ***şçüleressays***

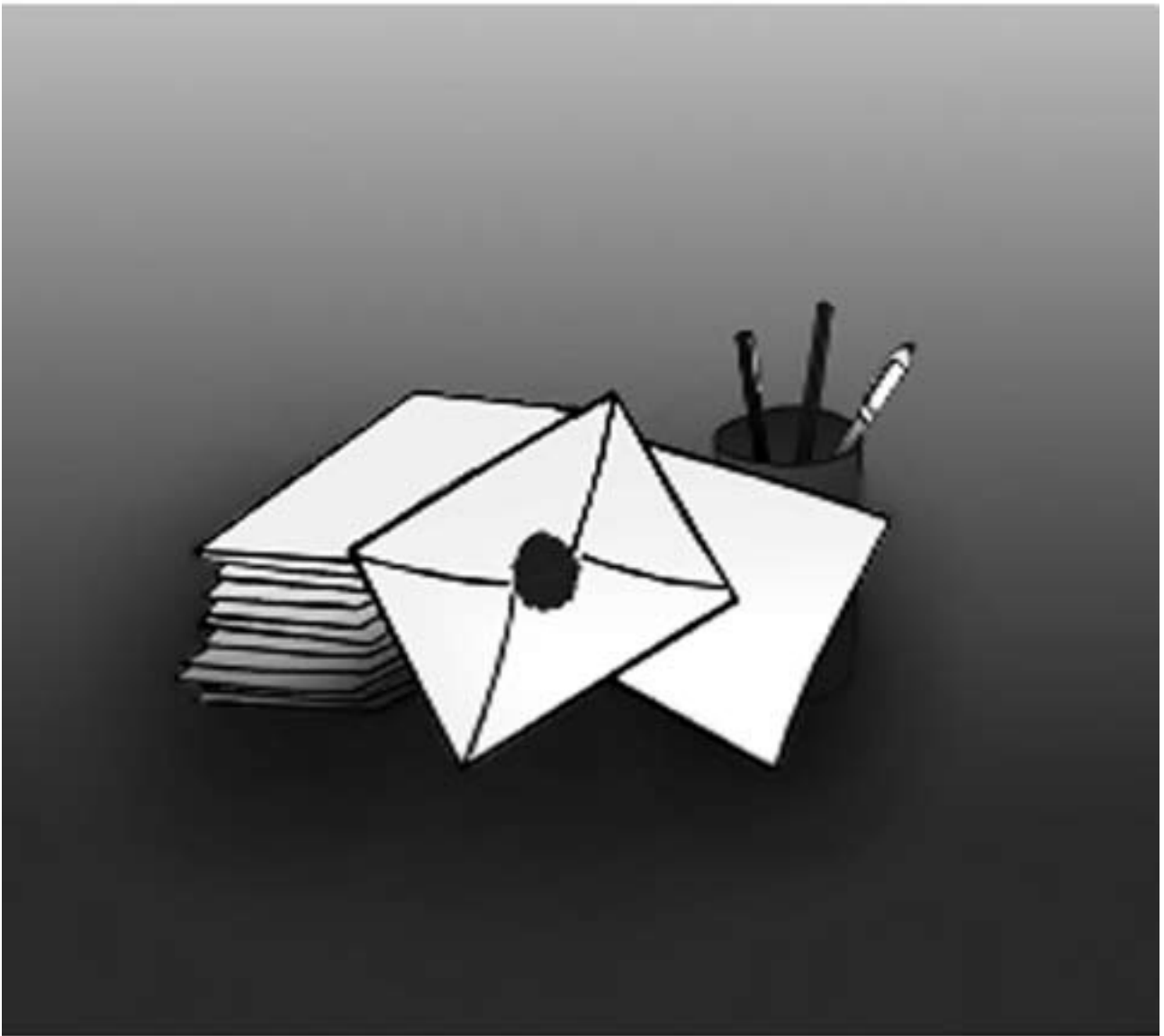


Illustration: Turkey

# ESTONIA

## Winter Mood \*5

The weather has not been good recently. If you look through the window, you will see a dim picture. Pools, slush, naked trees and infinite rain are presents from late autumn for us. On such days a lot of people have headaches or even depression, but for me autumn time means that soon winter will come to us.

I love winter. I always wait for it with impatience. Of course, most people associate this season with snow, Christmas and New Year. So do I, but for me winter is something more than that. Winter time is like a miracle which gives us an ability to see all around in a different way. In winter all is so quiet and silent that life seems to move more slowly than usually. When snow drops out of the heavens, it is just incredible, especially at night, when white snow reflects light of bright stars in the dark blue sky. And how pleasant is to walk with friends, when the frost bites your cheeks and under your feet snow crackles melodiously.

I love winter. I have many good memories connected with it. Every year I celebrate Christmas in an interesting and always different way. Once I even celebrated Christmas in hospital and it was one of the funniest Christmases in my life. Last year I was in Germany during Advent and it was great.

I love winter. It finishes the year and starts a new one. New Year's celebration unites people all over the world as this is the time when everyone hopes only for good and expects happiness. In the New Year's night I always make a wish, some of them have come true. I already know what wish I will make this year. And you?

*Mihhail Rjabov, 17 years old*



Illustration by Alina Timohhina, 15 years old

## **Why Does a Man Need a Dream?\***

I will not make a mistake by saying that everyone has a dream. Every man, rich or poor, happy or unhappy, lucky or unlucky, has his own dream. Even those people have one who, as it would seem, have everything – wealth, good family and a happy life in general. Even the luckiest man needs a dream. Yes, just needs it.

A dream is like an engine that lets one move forward. A man who wishes to make his dream come true will make an effort and will act to achieve the aim. He will have a dream and he will know what he wants to achieve whereas a man without a dream has no aim to reach. It is possible to say that a dream uncovers a man`s hidden potential, opens new powers and dimensions in him and shows him new opportunities.

A dream is a future. Thanks to a dream we can see our future, look at it and aspire to it. We will already know the point of our lifeline we have to reach, and we will never turn aside, not at any price. A dream, like a lodestar, will lead us to our objective and will not let us stop; on the contrary, it will push us any further.

However bad the present is, a man who has a dream will always trust in a better future and he will understand that not everything is so hopeless. A dream gives a man a little bit of optimism, it helps him not to be worried looking upon the world that surrounds him.

A dream is probably the main thing in life - when it exists, there is nothing to be afraid of. A man needs a dream, like the air he breathes, and the most important thing is to trust a dream and not to betray it.

*Pavel Gerassimov, 17 years old*

## **Hard Days**

There are a lot of successful people in the world. Some of them have invented something important, others have written brilliant books that can change the readers` life. We admire them, so happy and without any problems. But it is not true. They are ordinary people, like we, and their life is not always idyllic. If you have read biographies of famous people, you know that the way to the glory is long and hard. For example, Abraham Lincoln started as a postman, then, after entering politics, he often lost elections, but he did not give up and nevertheless became president of the USA. There are many stories like Lincoln`s and I think that hard times make people stronger and give them power to move forward and strive for their aims.

It is natural for people to consider their problems the most important, but if a person is always talking about problems, it is really annoying. There are people who blame everything and everyone in their own failures: manager, government, global warming. Such people are dissatisfied with the situation but do not do anything to solve it or after an unsuccessful attempt give up. I personally think that each person must resolve his problems himself.

When I was fifteen years old, I had problems with my back, and a doctor said that I had the backbone curvature. First that news made me depressed but then I decided to fight. Every day for forty minutes I did special exercises. It was not easy, but after a month pain disappeared and a medical examination showed that the curvature practically had gone. After that case I started believing in myself.

Maybe my situation was not so critical, but I am sure that all hard days can disappear if you believe and fight for it.

*Mihhail Rjabov, 17 years old*

## **Estonia`s Future in the European Union\***

Living in community is easier and more interesting than living alone. If you lived in a student`s dorm, you will understand what I am talking about. That is the reason of the creation of the European Union and of its successful existence during fifty years.

For me, Estonia`s future in the European Union is a part of my future, too. I think that quality of education in Western Europe is really higher than in Estonia. Of course, Estonia has one of the

oldest universities in Europe – Tartu University, but other Estonian universities' diplomas are not accepted in developed countries like Britain, Germany or the United States. That is why some of my classmates want to study in the EU. So do I. In my opinion, it will give me an opportunity to live and work in Europe not as a non-qualified worker, but as a member of society. Maybe in some time Estonia will create the best education system in the EU and my grandchildren will come here to study in one of the best Universities in Europe. Why not?

Personally I think that Estonia has all chances to become the leader in the area of information technology and produce the best software not only in the EU but in the world. In my opinion, now we have a good foundation for this – we have made 'e-school' system and we are the first country in Europe where voting on the Internet is accepted. As well as this, Estonia has human resources and the biggest number of computers per family in Europe. This all can lead to the result that in ten years a corporation like *Microsoft* will appear here and make Estonia one of the richest and one of the most known countries in the world.

Estonian cinematography is developing fast now. Have you seen such films as *Klass (Class)* and *Mina olin siin (I Was Here)*? They are psychological dramas and the problems of young people shown there are very actual not only for Estonia but and for the whole world. Sceptics can contradict that there are only two good films, but we can make more. Estonia has potential for becoming European Hollywood with greatest film studios and greatest movie stars, too.

I have mentioned only three aspects of Estonia's future in the European Union, but there are hundreds more: medicine, agriculture, engineering etc. To achieve success Estonia has to understand that for having good tomorrow we have to work today. Government should spend less money on conflicts with neighbours and more money on education and development, on our rich and pleasant tomorrow.

*Alexander Misak, 17 years old*

### **What Is Important for a Young Man?\***

What is important for a young man? It seems to me that there is no concrete answer to this question because everyone has his own opinion about this topic. Of course, I can mention things like education, future job, in one word – future is important. However, I find it all too trite. Emotions, feelings, getting older – all these things I consider trite, too.

Nevertheless, I am respectful to my parents, relatives and friends. I think highly of them and of my relationship to them. Just I do not consider it so important in my life. I am trying not to pay too much attention to many things. Of course, I have my own objectives and aims, like any other man has, but I do not struggle to realise them and do not worry about if I happen to fail. I am just trying to live, to live successfully and sometimes even carelessly. It reminds me of shopping in a large shopping mall: before you find the outlet you need you visit a hundred shops on your way. With no hurry at all you walk around with pleasure and in the end you get to the place you have wanted to come.

That is about the principle I try to live on. But it is important to remember that there is no need to look at the world with despondency, complain about life or become sad and disappointed because of a failure. Why to do that? Will it help with something? Vice versa –

the world will treat you in the same way you think of it. If you are in a gloomy mood, the world will show only shades of grey to you. But if you are glad of every day you have lived and show your sincere smile to the world, the world will treat you in the same way – and then it will certainly give you joy and happiness.

So I consider it to be important in every young man's life to learn to look at the world optimistically and to rejoice in everything that is possible. One ought to understand that a gloomy grumbler can never benefit from the fruits of life and be happy. One should always take the best out of one's life and should also realise that a man is and will always be the creator of his own destiny.

*Pavel Gerassimov, 17 years old*

## **The View on My Future Profession**

In the world there are many professions and all of them in their own way are interesting. Choosing a future profession is an important step in each person's life because your position in the society will depend on your choice. Nowadays your profession shows your life prosperity as modern people are more materialistic than before.

The first time when a person starts seriously thinking about the future profession is at the age of 16-19 because during this period a teenager faces a dilemma - to start working straight after school or to continue studying and get a higher education. It often happens that the pupils who start working after school get disappointed with their choice because in most cases they have to earn a living by hard physical work and not always it brings a decent income. When people realize they need qualification, it may be quite complicated to get it and people regret they had not continued their studies after school.

However, we cannot assert that a person who has received a higher education will be definitely satisfied with his profession, because not always students make independent and considered choice. After some time they may realize that the chosen job does not suit them and want to try themselves in another realm. Being in a state of constant searching tells about the versatility of a person although earlier it was considered immoral.

The future profession must coincide with a person's interests, abilities and talents. Each person chooses his own area according to his needs and possibilities.

my mind, the hardest is physical work, it is also the most widespread as it does not demand a good education and mental abilities. Nowadays many students have tried to earn money in the summer in agricultural works, especially abroad. It is a good way to earn money but it seldom brings satisfaction. For many people this work becomes their first experience in life and a stimulus to study further.

Creative work supposes new discoveries every time, a person has to find new ideas and not standard solutions. Creativity is very demanded presently and really well-paid, but sometimes people working in this area experience a creative crisis because of constant pressure.

Next year I am finishing school and I have already made my choice what kind of profession I would like to get. After school I want to enter a police academy because in our country a police officer's job has prospects for the further growth as well as being well-paid. For me the main thing in life is stability, that is why I have chosen a profession where I would earn decent money and would realize myself. But if I find something more perspective, I will think about that, I do not exclude that in the future I will have more than one job.

*Roman Kitajev, 17 years old*

# GERMANY

**“It’s incredible how much it broadens one’s horizon in many different ways”**

*My exchange year in the United States of America – a big challenge, a big adventure, and absolutely worth it*

The idea of spending a whole year far away from home, in a different country with a different culture, being separated from friends and family for a long time might discourage a lot of teenagers from going abroad as an exchange student.

And, indeed, it is a big challenge. You learn and experience so much that is new and educating and will always have an impact on you for the rest of your life.

Despite this big challenge (or maybe because of it) it is worth it in so many different ways. Language proficiencies, for instance, improve a lot – almost just by itself as it seems. But this aspect is not surprising to most people; it is what you would guess. However, my experiences exceeded these kinds of expectations. For example, I became friends with people from all over the world, learnt about their cultures (especially about the American one), about their views on topics the world is dealing with, exchanged ideas and shared great experiences with them. It is primarily these kinds of experiences that were the most valuable ones and that shaped my understanding of different cultures and the entire world.

Upon my arrival, I started experiencing the American culture. August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007, was the departure day. Together with many other “AFSers” (AFS = American Field Service, my exchange organization), I started early in the morning at the Frankfurt International Airport, arriving at the Kennedy International Airport in New York nine hours later. While waiting for our connecting flight to Cincinnati, Ohio in the Midwest of the U.S., a few of us met a very friendly woman that was about 40 years old. She and her son and daughter had spent the week in New York City and were now returning back home to Cincinnati. We were happy that we had found someone who would be able to show us where to go at this busy and chaotic airport, we started talking about the exchange experience that was lying ahead of us, about Cincinnati, and even about politics and the U.S.-German relationship. Further, typical stereotypes and different perspectives were discussed. We talked for about four hours with a family we had not known before. All of us were really impressed by the open-minded, welcoming, and incredibly friendly attitude. But that was not everything. On the plane, we exchanged contact information, promised to stay in touch and were invited to a get-together at the family’s house. It was almost surprising to us but seemed rather normal to them. Even more surprising was that, about a month later, we were sitting in their backyard, having dinner together and enjoying a nice evening of Cincinnati’s nice fall. Right at the beginning of my stay I had a great opportunity to experience the friendliness and cordiality Americans from the Midwest are so well-known for.

This friendliness made things a lot easier than they could have been. However, it was still a challenge to fully adapt to a different life style especially when you do not know anybody at first. But through this challenge our “social skills” improved a lot. At one of our AFS meetings of all exchange students in the area with the purpose to analyze our experiences we noticed how much easier it was to talk to people we did not know, to forget about stereotypes and to become friends.

There were six of those official meetings, organized by AFS volunteers that had been exchange students themselves. But since we had much fun together, this was not the only time we met. In fact, we became really good friends and met up more and more often to go to the movies or to celebrate someone’s birthday. We were teenagers from all over the world, no matter if from Germany, Italy, Thailand, Ghana, or any other country and we got along with each other very well. I found this multi-cultural experience very interesting as well as educating. It clearly demonstrated something we had believed in the whole time that now became obvious: We all might have looked different from each other, we might even have thought differently about certain issues. But despite all this, we behaved similarly, had the same type of concerns, and simply were equal and all humans.

Moreover, I noticed that some people I met – no matter if American or foreign – reminded me of friends or others I knew from my home country. For example, they behaved similarly, thought the same way, or reacted in the same manner to jokes, for instance. It was especially these analogies



that immensely supported the fact that I was and still am convinced that all different kinds of people act and think in manners alike to each other. Further, the same kinds of experiences back in Germany are continuing to shape this idea.

Although I have only mentioned a few selected examples of different experiences of my exchange year, they clearly show that it is absolutely worth accepting the big challenge one is facing in the beginning. I am glad that I did. Furthermore, I am grateful for this unique opportunity that I was given by the German Bundestag through its scholarship programme.

As the parliament's president, Norbert Lammert, put it, the purpose of this program was to "strengthen the U.S.-German relationship on a personal, individual level" [my own translation].

According to my personal experience this goal is very well met. It is only one of the many positive aspects of such an exchange year. It is incredible how much it broadens one's horizon in many different ways.

*Jonathan Hackenbroich, 18 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

## **Remembering the Past – Even the Darkest Parts of It**

*How German students learn more about and deal with the National Socialism era and the Holocaust – the Auschwitz-Project at the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium, Mühlheim/Main, Germany*

"... And even though our generation is not responsible for what happened during the 1930s and 40s in Germany: We undoubtedly are responsible for what happens now, for what happens in the future. Lest we forget about the cruelty and ferocity of the holocaust. Lest we forget about our responsibility for the future so that something barbarous like this will never happen again!" – The curtain opens and the presentation begins. This year, it starts off with several acted scenes demonstrating the situation and circumstances during the Great Depression in Germany and the rise of Adolf Hitler and his followers. Then, the main part of the commemoration ceremony begins. The audience watches a movie produced by the presenting group, follows arguments during the Auschwitz Trial of the 1960s where former SS-officers (SS = "Schutzstaffel") which had been stationed in Auschwitz arrogantly denied that they were responsible for the killings of millions of people, and is shown pictures of the horrible conditions in the camp. In the end, candles are put on the stage and "Lest we forget" are the last words of the ceremony.

Every year, on the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp (January 27<sup>th</sup>), 12<sup>th</sup> graders of the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium (FEG), Mühlheim, Germany, share with the public what they experienced about four months earlier, when they participated in the school's Auschwitz-Project. And every year, the room is packed. After all, the project is well-known not only in the small cities of Mühlheim and Apolda where the FEG's partner school is located, but also among politicians in Berlin.

Every year, these presentations take place – they have been for almost 20 years. Yet, the topics vary greatly, depending on the individual experiences the students make and on how they choose to present them. For the participants, the public presentations mark the end of a period of almost six months of intensely dealing with the holocaust and, more specifically, with "Auschwitz" which was the biggest of the Nazi's extermination and concentration camps. Being one of this year's participants, I am still aghast. Spending two weeks in the former concentration camp, learning about what, specifically, happened, how millions of people were exterminated will have an impact on you.

In the beginning, during the preparation stage of the project, participants gain more specific knowledge about the exact function, history and circumstances of Auschwitz, preparing for their stay right at the site of the former camp. Then, in September, they visit Oswiecim, Poland where it is located and where they stay in the former barracks of the SS. After two to three days of guided tours and of trying to get a general idea of what one would be dealing with, the participants work in small groups covering different topics. For example, this year, a group produced a short movie about the cynicism in the concentration camp whereas another group studied files of the Auschwitz Trial in the archives. Thereby, they analyzed the perpetrator's personalities and backgrounds as to try to find out how it was possible that the holocaust took place. In the end, each group presents the results.

After returning back home to Mühlheim and Apolda, the students start preparing for the public presentations in January which are, at the same time, commemoration ceremonies. Further, a booklet containing all results and impressions is produced and an exhibition is planned. This year it was the extreme consternation we felt when being in Auschwitz which became the overall topic of the presentation.

I am convinced that this well-known project honored and lauded by several local politicians as well as by the German Federal President Horst Köhler and one of his predecessors, can be seen as a good example of how we should handle our past.

After years of uncertainty about how Germany would deal with the National Socialism era, in the 1960s it became increasingly obvious that Germans decided to face the truth, to criticize what was wrong, to let justice reign, to never forget about the past, and to never let something similar happen again. By this, the holocaust, the darkest part of our history, became part of Germany's identity and we decided to advocate peace around the world. Because of this and because of the enormous responsibility we have, Germany might be doing a very important job when it comes to the process of coming to terms with the past. But we will have to keep on doing so and also improve.

Lest we forget...

*Jonathan Hackenbroich, 18 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

*"Schutzstaffel" means an elite guard, i.e. a unit of Nazis created to serve as a bodyguard to Hitler and later expanded to take charge of intelligence, central security, policing action, and extermination of undesirables.*

# NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

*Comments on the state of environmentalism today in comparison to the situation in 1995.*

In 1995, when The Earth Day was celebrated, people in general did not know very much about environmental problems and about different sources of energy . Nevertheless, during that time, people around the world started to become aware of the environmental problems. The result of this new awareness was The Earth Day, a day to encourage people to think and act more environmentally friendly.

But, fourteen years later, not much has changed in the environmental policy , in fact, the air pollution, the greenhouse effect and the global warming are today's headlines of the world's environmental problems. Especially in the United States, where 26 states want their government to act more efficiently with regard to environmental problems, the American administration has not taken any decisive steps in order to improve the environmental situation, for example taking part in the Kyoto Protocol, although one should consider that the United States is not the only nation refusing to take part in the current environmental movement: China and India for example also refuse to take part in the Kyoto Protocol.

The main question that arises by observing this situation is: Why do these nations refuse to help in the fight against environmental problems? Is it the fault of the citizens who are not aware of the dangers that are represented by pollution and global warming and subsequently do not know that there are alternative, renewable kinds of energy? Or are the politicians and industrial bosses profiting so much from the current situation that they do not care about the environment?

The industry nowadays is obviously the biggest problem for the environment. Even if the ordinary citizens are going to change their ways of living there will still be huge industrial companies creating the majority of the pollution. Therefore, the only way to really change the current situation is by a collaboration of both groups, ordinary citizens and politicians, with the industrial bosses. Everybody has to change the way of treating their environment, and by doing so, they will certainly put enough pressure on the industry which will eventually result in a change of policy of a friendlier and more responsible treatment of the environment. The awareness nowadays can not only be created by media-centralized campaigns that are shown on TV, but by a worldwide movement that will inspire and stimulate everybody, especially our politicians to act more responsibly. This change of attitude seems to be the only way of preventing an "environmental rollback" and providing a real chance for the preservation of an intact environment which is worth living in for the generations to come.

Many governments are afraid or even reluctant to pass strict environmental protection laws because they fear that businesses will move to other countries where the laws are less restrictive. But fact is that pollution knows no borders and therefore international cooperation combined with the general awareness mentioned above is necessary and essential in order to improve our environment.

*Christine Zwergel, Katharina Meyer zu Eppendorf and Felipe Carrillo,  
17 years old / 2008, Mühlheim / Germany*

# GREECE

## **“When the Greek Youngsters met famous quotes”**

**“Nothing can bring you peace but yourself”**

**R.W. Emerson**

Imagine that your parents didn't let you go out on Saturday night or that you were being bullied at school.

Suppose that a teacher yelled at you even though it is others who cause trouble or that a friend made a rude comment about your appearance.

How do you deal with similar problems?

How do you react to such difficult situations?

Maybe you burst into tears, you argue, you speak rudely, you become furious...

Well, violence is not the answer. Respond to anger with love, respond to hatred with compassion, respond to violence with affection. Take a few deep breaths and try to find your own inner peace, although this is becoming more and more difficult as the stresses of modern life increase. Make a conscious effort to be at peace with yourself.

But what is peace?

When we think of the word “peace” we always connect it with the absence of war.

What we don't realize is that peace begins within the individual. Peace is a state in which people don't feel the need to be aggressive.

So, PEACE is many things:

Peace begins with giving hugs and kisses.

Peace begins with saying sorry.

Peace begins with not hurting others.

Peace begins with honesty and trust.

Peace begins with showing cooperation and respect.

Peace begins with YOU!...

*Athanassiadou Olga, aged 13 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**“To be or not to be”**

**William Shakespeare**

Suppose William Shakespeare's Hamlet lived today, do you think he would wonder “To be or not to be” or maybe “To know or not to know.”

Nowadays, the development of genetic enables scientists to predict that someone is going to suffer from some specific diseases in future. Is it a nightmare or a blessing?

On the one hand, when somebody knows the condition of his health in the future, then he can be prepared for what is going to happen and live accordingly. He can plan how his life is going to be when he finally has to face the disease. In other words, he can organize in advance his professional and family life.

On the other hand, knowing that someone is going to suffer and even die at a specific period in the future may have a lot of negative effects. It is possible that the person who receives such depressing information he may feel deeply disappointed and sad and have some psychological problems. He may not have the strength to accept and face his fate. Furthermore, employers may refuse to hire him once they know that he is going to face health problems.

So, “To know or not to know” could be Shakespeare's question today. And you are free, once again, to make your choice. What do you prefer?

*Ioannidou Athena, aged 14 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**“History will be kind to me for I intend to write it...”**

**Winston Churchill**

We like to think of history as something which should not be doubted. However, Winston Churchill raises the issue of whether history can be considered as being objective or not.

In the first place, it is a strong statement on HOW history is made. And here comes the question of what exactly history is. Most people believe that it is facts and dates. However, their interpretation can lead to misjudgments because human nature has the tendency to be biased on grounds of expediency.

Consequently, what we study in history books, maybe, is not always what happened, because some people claim that history is written by victors... This is probably what lies behind Churchill's famous words.

Really, it is a witty statement that proves his awareness of how things clearly function.

So, through this humorous approach you may realize that the search of the truth, is sometimes an endless process, “after the curtains come down.”

*Emmanouilidis Spiros, aged 15 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**“The truth is rarely pure and never simple”**

**Oscar Wilde**

Truth... here there is a very controversial issue. To be more specific, few people love it but most of us find it tortuous, excruciating, intolerable....

Without doubt there are some situations that require delicate handling or even the so-called “white lies” in order to avoid unpleasant results. For instance, breaking the news about the death of a family member to someone with a severe heart condition can lead to disaster. Consequently, there are times when you should avoid the truth to protect your loved ones.

However, there is always the other side. The truth may hurt, but it must never be concealed, whatever the circumstances. No matter what happens, the truth must always come on surface if we want to have close relationships and trust our families and friends. The world is getting increasingly worse day by day and the lies that hide behind the news we watch on TV every day make it harder to see the difference between true and falsehood.

As for me, I believe that if we want to become honest people we should never succumb to lies but stick to the truth without thinking of the possible consequences. It is better to sleep with a clear conscience than toss and turn all night because you deceived someone.

*Victoria Sinikliiski, aged 15 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**“The problem with land is that they stopped making it some time ago”**

**Mark Twain**

We live on a perfect planet, where everything seems to be working just as it is supposed to.

We have oxygen, smog, hamburgers, people starving, factories, cars, slums, rock n' roll, hospitals, malaria, Coca-Cola, bombs, toxicals, diamonds, chemicals, PCs, animals under threat, high cholesterol, rainforests in danger, cattle farms, skyscrapers, rubbish...

All is good and all is fine. Nothing is missing.

But... in fact, there is a little problem!

God stopped making land some time ago. About five billion years ago, indeed. You are surprised, aren't you? And this land, our land, may stop existing some day. More incredible, isn't it? And in some centuries there won't be even US. Now it's become a bit scary, hasn't it?

Sorry, I caused you some anguish, but I'm talking about air, water, trees... about natural resources... I'm talking about Earth...

So, take a moment and ask yourself. What more can this planet STAND ?

In case you can't find the answer, ask God to start making another... Earth, but as soon as possible...

*Kourtidou Ioanna, aged 13 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**You can make me do it but...  
you can't make me like it!!!**

This is a very common phrase that you will hear if you are an eyewitness in a fight between a parent and an adolescent. It is explained by the revolutionary spirit of young people when they see that the world around them doesn't fit them. It's difficult for youngsters to accept the bare truth of this cruel world whereas adults have been accustomed to its hard reality. So, when teenagers talk about their future they mean that they want to fight and conquer the world in order to change things they don't like. There is, let's say, a generation gap that doesn't turn out to be a simple gap but a real chaos!!! And this is how things work out.

On the one hand, young people need to decide for themselves. They feel suffocated, they struggle for freedom and some space to unfurl their wings and get ready for their long trip into life, a trip that seems to be like walking on clouds and they don't want anyone to destroy this magic moment.

On the other hand, parents care a lot for their children so they become overprotective, sometimes in the wrong way, and they aren't prepared to accept that their authority can be questioned.

So, the "show" begins. Parents accuse their offspring of greediness and ingratitude though they give them abundance of goods and teenagers declare their intention not to be told what to do though they enjoy the provided comforts.

The only way for both sides to solve the problem is to keep a BALANCE, to learn to compromise. You win a little and you lose a little. If parents were a bit more patient and the young "rebels" took a minute to think more clearly before declaring their war, it is certain that both could get over their differences and build a strong bridge to fill in the gap between them. After all, the journey to adulthood can become easier if you have an experienced guide who gives you some leeway to falter on.

*Ifigenia Doubalakidou, aged 15 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

**You always pass failure on the way to success.**

Have you ever felt extremely disappointed? Have you ever felt you are a number one loser? Have you ever thought that you have achieved absolutely nothing in your life so far?

If so, there is a strong possibility that you will **SUCCEED** in the future!!!... Take Einstein, for example, he was the worst student in his class, yet he made his name an international synonym for genius...

While growing up, everybody wants to be successful with his life. But the way to success is difficult, full of obstacles. There are times when we feel disappointed or pessimistic and we cry. This is natural. But every failure should be seen as a new challenge, a supreme test of human skill since it gives us the ability to improve ourselves. Whenever you set some goals, you should be ready, at the same time, to accept some failures on your way to accomplish those goals.

No matter how brilliant or how well-qualified you are, you need to work hard and have a great deal of patience before you can start enjoying the fruits of your labour.

Obviously, life is a combination of sadness and happiness, failure and success. And if we have never experienced failure, then we will never fully appreciate the joy that success brings.

After all, the sky is the limit and any effort is the **KEY** to reaching its heights!!!.....

*Batola Kleoniki, aged 14 / 2009, Thessaloniki / Greece*

# TURKEY

## Happiness\*

Happiness! It is a magic word. So what is happiness? Is it a life without any problems or the ability of managing those problems?

Most of us admire the way to happiness. While some of us are seeking it in our heart, others are seeking it elsewhere. In my opinion, it is possible to find happiness everywhere. At home, at school, in your cars or on the street. While someone has discovered it, the other is still trying to find it.

So what is the secret of discovering happiness? First of all make a trip through your heart, listen to the voice of your heart. Then encourage the values which come from your heart. Be honest and never lie ! Because when you lie, you need to lie again to hush it up and it goes on like this. And feel a twinge on your conscience. But if you really want to be happy first you need a clear conscience.

Love is able to transform noise into music. So fall in love. Maybe it sometimes makes you depressed, but on the other hand you can't find happiness without love. A life without love is not different than dead wood.

Happiness can be shared and when you share it it will even increase. The meaning of life love comes with exuberance. You don't find conceit in love but exuberance.

Never say "I wish". Never be afraid of affliction in life. Acquiesce the reality of life calmly. Think that the problems you run up against are guides which illuminate your life. I'm sure you will be happy at that time.

One of the roots of happiness is «determination». Never hesitate. Hesitation causes lots of problems. Never be afraid to make a wrong decision because fear underlies perfectionism. Remember that you are a human being and therefore resist your fear.

Sport! Be energetic! Be aware of yourself, your talent and your beauty.

Never forget to thank God! Because if you want to be happy and relax, you must always thank God. And the most important thing: smile. Reflect your happiness to your face, to your movements and to all parts of the world. By the way, people can understand your happiness and they become happy, too. Happiness increases by sharing it with others. If you reflect your life love, your energy and the light on your eyes to your smiling, it will return to you as happiness.

*Özlem Caner, 11 TMA*

## The Leadership Instinct\*

One of the interests of the social sciences is to investigate the role of leaders and leadership qualities. Research made on animals have shown that leaders are like the locomotives of life which the masses follow. Those who oppose their leaders while others obey their orders will be expelled from society and become outcasts. The interesting side of this phenomenon is that the followers capture the rebels before the leaders do the same. Owing to the fact that to challenge nature is not a kind of work that can be done easily.

To adapt to a leader is the best way before doing something rebellious. Everything will be fine if you don't mind that there are members of society with less power and authority.

The only way of being a good leader is to be strong both physically and mentally. If someone lives in an extended family or is disabled, it will be impossible for him/her to be a leader, because the leader must be a role model for the followers. That is the leader who proves his strength!

The hierarchy among animals mirrors the struggle for leadership. Some member of the group always wait for the leader's weakest moment and then attack him when they feel strong enough. The same thing occurs among human beings, but in a more civilized way, of course, because life gives more to the leaders so someone cannot put up with it. The most important feature of the structure of the group is the existence of the leader and his followers. All the groups (both among the people and animals) have leaders. Leadership is the power of influencing and persuading the subordinates. It doesn't matter whether he is the leader of a company or a group, he is the leader in every part of life. All the living things on earth more or less accept to be ruled in some way except the leaders themselves !...

*Ömer Karakaya, 11 TMB*

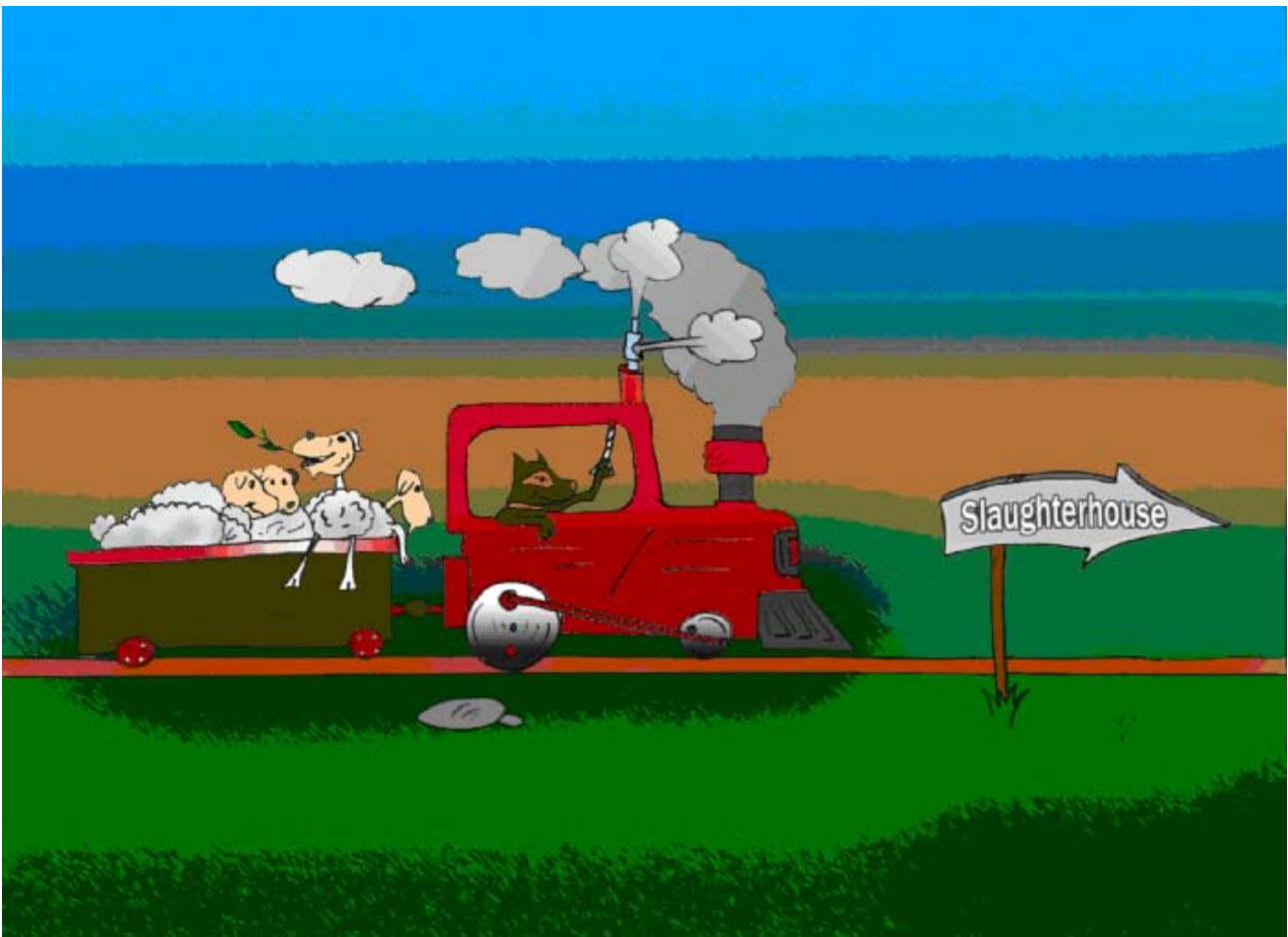


Illustration: Turkey



## **The eighth colour\***

All the preparations start days and days before the time comes. Everyone feels excitement deep inside their souls. Every corner of the house is cleaned; under the carpets, the windows, the mirrors... everywhere... Different than normal days, all the meals and various desserts are prepared attentively, especially the delicious 'baklava' with nuts and sherbet. We need to keep Bairams alive because they are completely different from all the other seven days of the week.

Excited children put their new clothes near their beds and can't sleep till the morning because of their excitement. In the morning when they wake up, most of them start singing the lyrics of a bairam song which is associated with this special day.

People solve their problems and find resolutions on this day. Lots of people come together around dinner tables. The meaning of being family is highly appreciated on Bairams. The visits are not only to people living around but also to the graveyards.

The Bairams are just a break during the busy rhythm of life. They are generally full of happiness and joy. Human beings regain the spirit of life that they have lost while they are trying to cope with technological developments.

Time passes really quickly and we have a busy life style. Therefore, these days we consider Bairams as the time for us to relax. The young generation has difficulties in understanding the spirit of Bairams.

Nevertheless, as a young person, I want to experience this special day as it used to be. I asked my father if he missed those old Bairams. He claimed that he definitely did. So did my mother. If you share the same feeling, we will be at home this Bairam for you to visit us.

*Ceren Catalbas, 10 TMA*

# ADDENDA

## Students` Comments

### “Winter Mood” (Mihhail Rjabov)

We accept your opinion, but we prefer the summer period because of the warm temperatures. Nevertheless, there are also some things which we like in winter.

Is it really great to walk around the Christmas market with the smell of burnt almonds in the air?

That is why we like summer rather than winter. Many more activities are offered and you can do little trips or excursions to a lake or to the beach.

Concerning next year we just wait and see what will happen and let it be a surprise then.

*Alina Ganzwohl & Volker Schäfer, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

Corresponding to this season you spread a wholly nostalgic atmosphere through my mind. I really like the way you describe natural phenomena.

I think winter is a time when can reflect on all the experiences you had throughout the year. And therefore I agree with you that winter is the time when you draw a mental line and look at the results.

This is the way people think when they have a home, heat and something to eat and drink. A homeless person, however, would certainly prefer the summer because there are fruits; there is warmth and enough rainfall for water to drink. But we are not savages anymore.

So in my eyes winter can be hard and make people vulnerable, but it is also a season with positive qualities and effects.

*Pierre-Maxime Lothar, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

### “Why Does a Man Need a Dream?” (Pavel Gerassimov)

First and foremost, I would like to agree with what Pavel Gerassimov says about the importance of having a dream, a goal in one’s life. There are two new ideas which come to my mind when reading this text. Given that having a goal in life is of that much importance, what happens if a man does not have one? Or if he does not see any possibility of making it become true whatsoever? Disillusionment often is the consequence. And there are numerous examples for this phenomenon around the world. Only people having no hope, no dream, or no possibility to make the latter become close to being realistic will become criminal, out of hopelessness and disillusionment. This has to be taken into consideration when thinking about how to deal with socially disadvantaged people. Secondly, I would like to point out a phenomenon which does not occur very often and which (possibly because of that) should be very much appreciated. Once again, this is closely connected to the importance of having hope and a goal in one’s life. As this is so important and as “we will never turn aside, not at any price” in order to make our dream possible and become true, it takes a lot to give it up. If someone gives up his dream being of incredible importance to him in order to benefit from the common good out of love, out of charity and goodness, everyone should be aware of how much he/she is giving up.

*Jonathan Hackenbroich, 18 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

## **“Estonia’s future in the European Union” (Alexander Misak)**

Economic interests are behind any political action. A functioning economy allows improving all the parts you mentioned (medicine, agriculture, engineering, film industry, etc).

While mentioning Microsoft (IT) you talk about the possibility to make Estonia the richest and best-known country in the world. What I do not understand is that you at first talk about the advantages of living in a community. In my opinion it is not necessary to pursue the aim of being better than any other country. Theoretically the EU unites the different countries and offers co-operation among the member states. Viewed by practical considerations one country is mightier than the other; the electoral system depends on the number of the inhabitants and national interests never are and will be the same.

Living in a community has some limitations, but it leaves room enough for cultural exchanges. That means that living within a community is more interesting than living alone. The chances of your dream of a highly developed Estonia are limited by the responsibility a country has for the EU as a whole and the expectations other nations have so that the EU will be able to exist for another 50 years.

*Pierre-Maxime Lothar, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

When Estonia and nine other countries joined the European Union, it was clear that the Union’s expansion would have a significant impact on its actions, politics, and its situation in general. The high number of newcomers seems to be enough evidence for this thesis – after all, with 10 new countries joining the Union the total number of members increased significantly. This means a big change in how the various different members interact and, in the end, make decisions.

Further, politically and strategically as well as culturally, it created a new situation as there were several countries which had formerly been part of the Soviet Union during the time of the Cold War. Moreover, the economic aspects and changes this expansion would cause had been discussed – sometimes controversially. Especially for Germany, the country which pays the most of all members to support the EU and whose money is very much used as development aid for less liquid and aid-requiring countries within the Union, this was an important topic during the discussions.

There are numerous advantages to the extension. Economically, basically everyone benefits – not only those countries which are given financial aid for development in order to be able to expand the infrastructure, for instance. It is countries like Germany, as well, which benefit greatly or will have the possibilities to do so quite soon. Through the expansion new markets open up – mostly even because of increased governmental spending from the EU in these areas.

This last aspect is one reason why I do believe that Alexander Misak’s hopes about a bright future for Estonia in the European Union are absolutely justified.

Culturally and on a human level, there is no doubt that the decision made sense. This also sheds light on a principle which is fundamental: Besides the economic aspects, it was the wish of the people in Europe to create peace after two World Wars – to unite and to live peacefully together, without giving up their own national identities. The European Union’s motto sums this up quite well: “United in diversity.” It is great that Estonia now is part of this union, because a Europe which does not work together cannot succeed – no matter if you talk about the economy or diplomacy or even inter-personal issues.

*Jonathan Hackenbroich, 18 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

### **“What is important for a young Man?” (Pavel Gerassimov)**

We agree with author, the text includes good comparisons and ideas which are relevant today and which we can follow easily. The use of good metaphors makes the topic even more plausible.

We both live with a great deal of optimism and can understand the author when he points out the experience of people who see the world with positive eyes.

*Sonja Müller & Pierre-Maxime Lothar, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

I find the text very good and I also agree with the author`s opinion on the way how people should manage the business of their lives. When you are happy and content other people around you will be friendly to you as well.

*Alina Ganzwohl, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

### **“Happiness” (Özlem Caner)**

In my opinion this essay is written full of optimism. But I think you should not consider things too spontaneously because decisions are mostly followed by consequences.

It is always good to be reminded of happy incidents in the past because then you know you can always be happy. Even small things or little gestures can make a man happy. To make someone else be happy is so easy, and I think we should always try to make other people happy and feel good. You will be rewarded for this attitude as well and will be given back what you once gave to other people.

Sometimes we refer too much to unrealistic ideas or dreams and are blindfolded by the wish of full happiness. We should also pay attention to or take notice of the small things in life.

*Dhiluni Kandage, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

To me it is my family and is my friends rather than only one person that make me happy. If I am unhappy I normally listen to music, but the best means against sadness is to do or undertake something with my friends. Their company makes me smile and happy and I soon forget my sorrows.

I think everyone can be happy in different situation, for example someone can be happy when he eats something delicious for lunch or just satisfies his hunger. On the other hand people are unhappy when someone close to them has died.

I think the real reason why so many people buy the same CD on which a singer sings about his unhappiness or bad luck is because they can share the same feeling with him.

*Carola Staab, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

### **“The Leadership Instinct” (Ömer Karakaya)**

It is incredibly interesting how nature has created this leadership instinct the author talks about. It prevailed over thousands of years and is therefore nature's best method for animals to survive. As human beings are animals (at least biologically speaking) an inevitable question arises: when it comes to hierarchy and leadership, do we behave a lot like animals as well? Or how close or similar are we to animals in terms of our behavior, social skills, and social structure? How strong are we as human beings? Are we heavily influenced by natural drives and instincts (as are animals) or do we differ from animals significantly? These are ethical questions philosophers and anthropologists have tried to find an answer to.

I like to think that the latter is the case, that we are morally and ethically strong, and *think* about what we do and how we do it. But certainly, animalistic tendencies are noticeable. This is literally natural. However, in my opinion, the closer to the “free sane being” (Immanuel Kant) we get the better.

In connection to the topic of leadership, this turns out to be of significant importance because it is closely connected to the concept of democracy. Of course, no-one could seriously call for a system in which there are no leaders – this would be impossible and anything but desirable.

When talking about what constitutes a leader, one has to differentiate between what is necessary to be a good leader. Throughout history, there have been enough examples of rhetorically and strategically excellent leaders – Adolf Hitler would most likely be the worst example. Obviously, they had what was necessary to become the leaders, but they were far from being good leaders. And there is one crucial aspect to it: Leaders must be ethically strong, stronger than their subordinates. At least, under stable conditions, it is the system of democracy which best ensures stability and justice for all.

*Jonathan Hackenbroich, 18 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

### **“The Eighth Colour” (Ceren Catalbas)**

In my opinion the Bairam festival is an important event for the muslim population. I myself am a muslim and my family also celebrates this event twice a year. But during the Ramadan month I do not abstain from food and drink every day because when I go to school or to my sports training I have to eat and drink something to be concentrated and not tired.

I think that is a point where the meaning of the festival has changed. And our society has changed, too and now women are also going to school and to work. Therefore it is impossible for them not to eat and drink anything during the day for a whole month. But all in all to me the Bairam Festival is a festivity for families to be together and to feel happy.

*Nadja Sijaric, 17 years old / 2009, Mühlheim / Germany*

# TEACHERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

## Some Reflections on European Unity and the German Past

EUROPE –

for many Germans it had been the only opportunity and meaningful perspective after the historic catastrophe which emanated from the German people. As far as the handling of national symbols is concerned it was difficult for the Germans to behave correctly, and it still is today because there existed a widespread abuse of German nationalism which in turn brought misfortune and death, war and suffering to so many peoples in Europe. This is the reason why this experience of guilt has always been a sensitive topic in Germany. As a rule dealing with national symbols does not occur as uninhibited, casual or out of pride as it is possible in other countries.

During our visit in Turkey we constantly came across those national symbols: the Turkish flag, diverse references to and pictures of Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, or the common national pride of one's country.

The young generation in Germany perhaps sometimes wishes for themselves not to be caught up with the shadow of the past again and again, instead to be able to handle national symbols as easily and casually as it is the case in other countries. Since the young people do not bear a personal responsibility for the war that was begun in Germany – even less than me and my generation - this deep-felt wish is intelligible and a legitimate right. Nevertheless, each nation in Europe has to face its past including any injustice that was caused by its country.

If in Germany of today national symbols are abused by minority groups in order to argue again in a nationalistic, racist and xenophobic way everyone is called upon to be on the alert, to contradict decisively and act responsibly. Then, I am sure, there will remain only a minority of so-called unteachables who will not get any impact on politics even though in times of economic crises the danger arises that many of them are joining radical groups or following false prophets who promise simple solutions.

I am very glad about the fact that in recent years it has been possible for the Germans to cope with their national symbols more casually, for instance during the period of the German reunification in 1990 or on the occasion of the World Cup in Germany in 2006 where the people used national symbols like the German flag as marks of joy, of sporty encouragement for the German team rather than as a means of aggressive nationalism.

Possibly a certain normality has meanwhile occurred in Germany with regard to its historical experience. The Germans have obviously recognized their own responsibilities and at the same time are able, however, to be pleased with their national symbols during competitions in sportsmanship and fairness with other nations.

Yet, we will need a second symbol today, the flag of the European Union symbolizing European unity.

Why have I mentioned that about the special situation and conditions in Germany? As the Germans did not have any alternative in their post-war history. For the Germans a common Europe has been the only possible way and perspective after the national disaster which was caused by extreme nationalism. For the Germans the European idea had been a new chance and challenge - initially to be partner of only a small group of western European countries, above all with France at its side, a country where the first attempts for reconciliation and mutual trust have been successful. Meanwhile the European Union consists of 26 nations; and Turkey is standing at its doorstep.

Today a common Europe is even more important than ever before because now is the time to oppose the dangers of worldwide terrorism, economic globalisation and to combat impending climatic catastrophe.

Therefore we will have to stand together and develop a sense of solidarity in order to live well together in peace and prosperity. And in order to achieve this aim we will have to create a new identity, a European identity!

Of course, not everything is ideal concerning European politics in the European Union. We sometimes complain its enormous bureaucracy, we are often uncertain with regard to the question of how much national competence, authority or jurisdiction should be transferred to the higher body of the European Union.

Some people in Germany believe for instance that they will have to sacrifice more money than they hoped to receive, and therefore it is sometimes not easy to create a common European solidarity. National egoism still exists and will continue to exist in the European Union.

Nevertheless, in my opinion there is no plausible alternative to any other political union in Europe.

We should be pleased and happy about what has already been achieved even though there are still plenty of problems ahead of us. We are still far away from an ideal situation, but it is worth struggling for it and for the benefit of the generations to come.

Comenius is a good and positive example. Young people mix with those from other countries, they communicate and work together, sometimes celebrate together. All those activities help to gradually overcome prejudices towards other nations.

Teachers as well get an authentic insight into the way of life in other countries and into the different systems of education.

This is a good and hopeful road, and should there be any obstacles on this promising road to a common European future we should talk about them openly and honestly and should never lose sight of our highest aim of a positive and peaceful Europe as it is in the interest of all European citizens.

*Klaus Reinhard, Germany, translated by o.t., 14.04.2008*

## **Some Thoughts about Europe from Greece**

The year 2008 has been declared by the European Parliament as the European Year of Cross-cultural Dialogue. The conditions that led to this decision were basically two:

1. the rapid changes that consequently resulted in a continuous migration of citizens within EU borders
2. the widening of the EU with the participation of now 27 countries and with the prospect of new members to join.

The objective of the EU is the construction of a single European identity that is open to the world, that respects cultural diversity and diversity in general, and that gives equal opportunity to everybody.

Through the Programme of School Co-operation students and their teachers who participate in the programme have the chance to be part of and feel committed to the European ideals and to acquire knowledge and abilities that are required in order to develop their personalities which also means to live and work in a pluralistic society without losing its unique cultural heritage, however.

The existing fear of complete assimilation and alienation can be refuted very easily. The objective of the EU is not the levelling-out of the particular characteristics of each nation, on the contrary it is mutual respect and understanding.

Comprehension and taking advantage of different cultural backgrounds and set-ups can become a stabilising factor of economic, social and political growth.

Its geographic location at a natural crossroads of continents and countries has made Greece to a centre of culture since the antiquities. Greece has always been a place of an encounter of different nations, people and cultures. The Greeks have always been open for the various cultural stimuli, and have been eager to help citizens of other countries to find asylum in their country, so as the Greeks themselves had been immigrants to other countries in the past.

The Greeks have already moved towards that direction and they have included in their system of values (as part of the educational process) the practical meaning of multicultural approach, that is to say tolerance and respect towards other nations. Within the Greek territory there are many groups with different nationalities, religious and cultural beliefs.

How can there be mutual understanding without languages? It is not the simple learning of languages alone that contributes to mutual respect, communication and understanding. Above all, it is the transfer of different ideas when we become acquainted with other cultures, morals and customs, ways of thinking and behaviour. When we in this respect begin to learn foreign languages open-mindedly, and when we become familiar with other cultures we will realise the differences as well as what we have in common.

Therefore, culture is a common "bridge" of communication. It should be the measure and corner stone for all our inter-human activities and of our patterns of behaviour, either economic, social or political.

Culture in general and cultural achievements should characterise the identity of the European citizen and it should guarantee respect, peace, equal opportunity and co-operation.

Respect towards the environment, love for the arts and education, maintenance of values and traditions, justice and democracy are all expressions of culture. This is our dowry in the world-wide cultural and economic process which is called globalisation.

During recent years we have become witnesses of profound changes. Political, economic and social systems have been demolished whereas others have been established.

Enormous technological achievements that today are of major importance will certainly be replaced in the following 50 or 100 years by developments that are even more advanced. However, valuable works of art should be preserved and safeguarded at any rate because we should never forget that culture and civilisation have always been in danger of being destroyed by barbarism and ignorance.

*Written by Sofia Papadopoulou, German teacher, Greece  
translated by Afrodite Loutsiodi and Oskar Thiergärtner/Germany, 26/10/2008*



## The Europe I Could Fall In Love With

Europe has recently got past the frontline of two millenniums. What is the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the Europeans who are at a crossroad at the moment? What are the options? What will Europe look like in fifty years? And who will decide on its appearance? Most probably, the answers to these questions can only be given by those who have the future of Europe in their hands. No, these are neither the politicians who preside in various organizations of the united Europe nor the billionaires from highly-developed industries of Europe, though both of them still keep surprising us. The future of Europe is in the hands of the youth who are committed to shape their future. ***The youth are the key to Europe's prosperous future and sustainable development.***

For a better understanding of the role of young decision-makers, let us put ourselves for a moment in a global picture. For the last decades the world's leaders have been trying to eradicate poverty in the world, even in the highly-industrialized and "democratic" Europe, to ensure sustainability for all inhabitants of our planet. But despite all these commitments, the humiliating poverty is still a reality; more than a billion people still live below the poverty threshold, millions of people in the developing countries do not have access to clean water, millions of children go to bed hungry every night or do not have access to education. Many countries in the world – several states even in the very heart of Europe - are still devastated by war, ethnic conflicts, abuse of human rights and democracy. To struggle all these horrible phenomena, the politicians have to tackle certain challenges which are, at the same time, challenges for the youth. The challenges are about democracy, the dark forces of racism, xenophobia or anti-democratic ideas

in Europe. During the last decades Europe has already given home to numerous immigrants and refugees. But do they get the right welcome? How can we live in harmony together? How can we fight fanaticism and extremism, with tolerance and mutual respect?

Another challenge is identity: we are living in a moment of European history when the traditional meaning of many words is changing. Europe, European, abroad, national identity, national boundaries: each generation has different perception of these concepts. Europe is a continent of many languages and multilingualism is a rewarding challenge. Languages are one of the key features of cultural identity, thus, multilingualism should be considered as a valuable asset. Traveling throughout Europe does not really mean "going abroad", but only changing language and flying from one European capital to another without noticing national boundaries, as our parents did.

So where is Europe now? Is Europe doing enough? Where are we today and where do we want to be in five, ten or fifty years' time? The youth represent a broad constituency across Europe. Young Europeans should have a huge commitment to shape their future through being productive and responsible citizens. They must believe that they are the key to their future and sustainable change. The young should be eager to make a difference in the world about them, to make their "mark" upon it. This can be done either negatively, through vandalism, intolerance, extremism and xenophobia, or positively, through human rights' respect, democracy and self-esteem. Obviously, it is much easier to «make a difference» destructively than creatively. It requires almost nothing of us. But as for myself, I would like to see a ***dynamic*** Europe founded on prosperity and development, a ***productive*** Europe where everyone has got a job, a ***caring*** Europe where the sick, the elderly and the handicapped are looked after, a ***just*** Europe where there is no discrimination and everyone has equal access to jobs and education, a ***clean, green*** Europe that cares for its environment and helps meet the global challenges, a ***secure*** and ***free*** Europe where the rule of law preserves liberty for all citizens. This is my vision of ideal Europe and this is the Europe I could fall in love with.

*Karen Sukiasyan, a teacher from Estonia*

## What I Think About the Future of Europe

*You don't choose the time,  
You live in it and die.  
Alexander Kushner<sup>6</sup>*

Future... When we hear this word, involuntary fear seizes us: what awaits us there, behind the horizon, behind a new turn of the course of life. That is why from time immemorable there have existed different prophets and fortune tellers who have earned money by predicting the future – not only of individuals but also of whole nations and states. Let us remember legendary Michel Nostradamus and Vanga, a Bulgarian clairvoyant, whose predictions are still being discussed and in many events occurring in the world people tend to see the prophecies of those amazing personalities which have come true.

I do not have a different view by no means, I am neither a clairvoyant nor a futurologist or politologist. I am just a teacher of Russian language and literature living in a small town in Estonia. My essay is an absolutely subjective and emotional view on a significant problem.

'Who does not remember the past lives without the future', says an Estonian proverb. One of the most difficult lessons taught to mankind in the twentieth century are, undoubtedly, the two World Wars during which Europe lost millions of lives. After World War II new borders of states were fixed and during some decades no-one tried to revise them. However, recently separatist tendencies have increased all over Europe: each nation, even a small one, wants to live in its own independent state. And here we can see an obvious inconsistency of the European Union: the community accepts the independence of Kosovo but refuses to give this right to South Ossetia and Abkhazia. For me as a teacher such an approach seems to be absolutely inadmissible. It looks the same as if I allowed Masha and Vanya to leave the classroom whenever they want to, but strictly prohibited it to Petya and Grisha. Undoubtedly, the children would be indignant and we could forget about a friendly class team. For children the idea of justice is very important. But adults are former children. Is fairness not important for them? So that mankind could live peacefully, not worrying about the future of their children, it is necessary to solve the question of borders, once and for all, and to recognize their inviolability.

People are not free in their thoughts, they are ready to follow their leader, as first of all the mass person respects the power: Erich Fromm writes about this phenomenon in his book *Escape from Freedom*. So the only way to save you from falling into a precipice and destroying mankind as a species can be guaranteed by the existence of bright political leaders with humanistic ideals who are able to preserve their people from a disaster.

However, only legislative decisions will not help if deep inside people's minds there is no conception that 'bad peace is better than a good quarrel' (Russian proverb), and it will happen only after the system of upbringing and education of children has changed. School must prepare a young person to cope with his future life on earth. Like in a horse race for a horse the main quality is to run fast, for a hunting dog to have a good nose and for a cow to give a lot of milk, for a human being the main quality is to remain an individual, to value life in all its forms more than anything else and to remember that the main difference between a human being and an animal is not intellect but a code of morals, that moral law – conscience – which, in Immanuel Kant's opinion, is rooted deep inside people's hearts.

To arouse people's conscience, to awake a desire to be better, kinder, more high-minded are, to my mind, the main aims of a modern school if we want mankind to continue to exist.

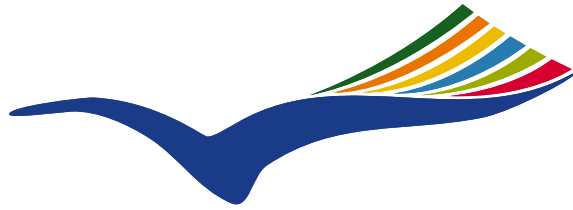
The future of Europe is only in our hands. Our final destination depends on what way we will choose. Will we choose seemingly wide and spacious ways of entertainment, chase after material goods by causing spiritual blindness, which mankind is confidently following by not thinking that it might directly lead to destruction? Or will we choose a thorny path of virtue and moral self-improvement, which at first sight seems so boring and old-fashioned but which in the long run will lead to prosperity for all humankind on our little planet.

A great linguist Claude Lewis-Strauss wrote, "The twenty-first century will be a century of humanitarian culture, or it will not be at all." The twenty-first century is only beginning. How will it continue? What will the future of Europe and all mankind - because Earth is an integral whole - be like?

One thing is undoubted – the future of Europe is only in our hands and I really hope that we will be able to make it worthy and happy.

*Ljudmila Skokova, Russian and literature teacher from Estonia  
translated by Olga Nagibina*





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