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STORIES EMPOWERMENT



EBOOK: REWRITTEN STORIES

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Introduction

Let us offer you, as an example, these rewritten stories. With this collection we want to promote the values we have been working on in this project: creativity, problem solving, self-confidence, social inclusion, resilience, equality, active citizenship and democracy.

Rewriting stories enhances our creativity and reflection, as well as enhances our learning in the different values. These stories have been rewritten to help us learn and apply these values in our daily lives, as we all face situations that we can reinterpret and therefore rewrite.

The stories in this Ebook are only examples of how stories can be rewritten and are arranged in alphabetical order in order to make them easier for the reader to find and read.

Each educator or person interested in this material should rewrite their own stories, since, as stated at the beginning, these are only examples of rewritten stories. Many different stories can be created from the same story.

Stories4Empowerment team hope that this eBook will serve as a guide to rewrite their own stories. And we wish you the best of luck!

*“30% ceiling for foreigners and
love...”*

Once upon a time there was a ship. On the ship there were many people travelling. Almost all of them could not stop gazing worriedly at the sea and especially at the horizon. Yet there was someone among them who could smile and play. They were Hassan and Said. The two were both six years old and had known each other since birth. They were called the lovebirds and never had that nickname been more apt. They liked each other and enjoyed playing together, that was all. The day came when the sea ended and they set foot on dry land, in Italy. The months that followed were very hard and the obstacles that the two children and their fathers faced were unspeakable. Yet even in those difficult moments, Hassan and Said managed to find a way to smile and play. It is nature's gift to children. It is called lightness and should be protected at all costs. The two fathers finally found a home. They were not the only ones to have found it. The fortune, like the flat, was to be shared with ten other travellers for life. That's what Grandma Karima called the men who left for Europe and Hassan and Said liked it. Despite the small space in the house, the children did not disappoint and were almost always cheerful. Then came the time for school.

On the first day the fathers were very nervous, as were the sons. Going to school was something extraordinary for their life on the road. Hassan and Said had realised that even school, despite being a place built especially for them, might not be easy for either of them. They were travellers for life but since arriving in our country, they had realised that there were many other ways for the inhabitants to call them and none of them was as rewarding as the first. However, I think it is now established how invincible the presence of the other was for each of them. Fate, however, can be mocking. "I'm sorry," said the teacher, letting only Hassan in, "I can only have thirty per cent foreigners in my class" Then she closed the classroom door. Said's father called Said's name, to lead him to his classroom, but he did not move and stood there, motionless, with the memory of Hassan's frightened eyes locked in his own, as the teacher closed the door. Fortunately, the school headmaster, who was walking down the corridor saw the scene and asked the boys what was going on. After the youngsters explained their situation to him, the headmaster agreed to find them a new class to be in together. However, the headmaster did not stop there; on the contrary, he organised a debate with the other teachers on the topic of youth immigration.



From this debate arose an association for the protection of migrants, whose first goal was to cancel the law "on 30% of foreigners", a petition was proposed and approved in parliament, which changed the lives of young people like Hassan and Said.

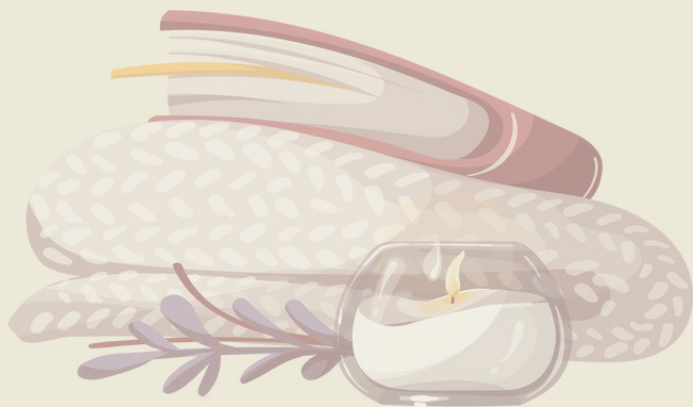


“A blanket of words”

Auntie used to call it pinwheel. Then the war came and Auntie no longer called it that. They had gone to a new country to get to safety but everything there was strange: the people, the food, the animals and the plants. No one spoke to the child. When she was away from home no one spoke to her and she felt as if she were under a cascade of strange sounds. When she was at home, she was wrapped in a blanket of words and sounds that she knew. She called it her old blanket that was warm, soft and sheltered her. She felt safe there.

The girl found the courage to get out from under the blanket and looked for her friend again. She thought about making signs to try to communicate, hoping to make herself understood. When they saw each other, the little girl pointed to a merry-go-round in the park. Her friend understood and they began to play together. In the meantime, the aunt approached her friend's parents, thinking that it was a good idea to start meeting new people. She did not know the language of that country either, but she knew that in some way what she was doing could help her and her niece.

By playing, the girl began to learn a few words, but going to school helped her even more. The other child also learned a few words of her language. When school started, however, the little girl felt watched by the other children. She felt even more lonely. There were those who approached her without prejudice, wanted to engage her. While others teased her because of the way she was dressed and because her name sounded strange. The teachers encouraged her and decided to invent games to play in class, showing a map: we are all from the same world, we are all different. Let us help those who come from another country: one day the foreigner could be us.



“A fairy tale about a cheerful king”

Once upon a time there was a cheerful king. He lived with his queen and his daughter in a magnificent castle. In the centre of the castle garden there was a fountain where funny stone dwarves sat. "The fountain is the best way to preserve our castle culture," the castle steward explained to everyone who passed by. "When the water splashes over the stone sculptures, it sounds as if someone is laughing in every corner of the garden! That's why we call it the 'Fountain of Happiness'."

The cheerful king and his family lived happily ever after until one day three evil giants stomped out of the forest and broke into the castle garden.

These giants had been seen from afar because they had never laughed in their lives. Their faces were so grim that everyone ran headlong from the castle, including the king and his family. They ran as fast as they could to the other side of the valley. There they found shelter with a farmer who had his farm up on the hillside, where the king sat on the courtyard wall and was no longer at all cheerful. For days he looked over to the castle, where the giants now lived. They had destroyed everything, even the well, so the king sent his messengers into the country.

"Whoever defeats the strongest of the terrible giants shall have my daughter as his wife!" he announced. The knight galloped across the valley to the castle, shouting fiercely, brandished his sword and wanted to attack the giants. But the strongest giant merely stretched his huge arm out of the window, plucked the armoured knight from the saddle like a hazelnut and hurled him in a wide arc into the stream. There, the knight struggled to get up and limped back to the farm. "Unfortunately, you can't fight these giants with a sword," he said.

"If not with the sword, then with science!" said the princess, and she sent for Professor Immerschlau and his assistant Cupidi. The professor stroked his long white beard and made a serious, important face. A little later, the two of them were standing in front of the castle. They had both taken out their books and just as they were setting up the projector, they were hit by an earthquake. The Covidian had simply struck the ground with his hand and the two of them were thrown away like two little kittens! "If not with the sword and not with science, then with magic!" said Queen Amalia, and she sent for the best wizard in all the land. The wizard Magnus stood before the king with his apprentice Omnibus.

"Nothing is as effective as the magic of the best wizard in the world!" said Magnus. "No living creature can stand against our supernatural powers," confirmed his apprentice. When they arrived at the castle, the wizard said: "So, Omnibus, draw a round magic circle on the floor." "Yes, master!" The wizard stood inside and began to recite his spells: "Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet - sed diam nonummy..." But the largest giant stood in the window of the castle, took a deep breath and blew the wizard away like a feather until he was caught in the crown of a tree.

When he climbed down from the tree and returned to the king, he still had a serious and important face, but had to admit: "Unfortunately, you can't fight these giants with magic." The king became even sadder. "I have no hope of ever getting my castle and the Fountain of Happiness back," he moaned. So one day he sat weeping on the courtyard wall again and looked over to the castle. The giants were throwing golden baubles at his head, which they had broken off the delicate spires, when the young shepherdess Esperanza came wandering past and asked: "You look so sad! What's the matter with you?" "Look over there," said the king. "Then you'll understand. The giants have taken away my beautiful castle and blocked up the Fountain of Happiness. And no one can drive them away!"

"Really no one?" asked the shepherdess. "Come on, let's show them where Barthel gets the must." She laughed so loudly that the giants on the other side of the valley stopped and looked over. "How can you laugh when I have to be so sad?" asked the king bitterly. "What my best knight, the cleverest professor in the land and the most powerful wizard couldn't do, you won't be able to do either!" "Only time will tell!" said the shepherdess. "But I would have to ask you and your people to do everything I say!" "Fine by me," said the king with little hope. "So what should we do?" "Be happy!" said the shepherdess.

"As cheerful as possible! Laugh, sing and dance so that the whole valley can hear it!" "You're asking a lot of us," said the king. But as he wanted to leave no stone unturned, he ordered his family and everyone from the castle and even the peasants: "Laugh, sing and dance!"

And he led the way, laughing the loudest, singing the happiest and dancing the wildest. After a while, he said to his wife: "That's funny. I was only pretending to be cheerful, but this 'doing as if' drives the sadness out of my heart, and now I'm even enjoying laughing and singing so happily!"

After a whole day of celebrating, dancing and laughing, the shepherdess Esperanza said to the king: "Look over to the castle now!" The king stopped dancing for a moment and looked over. The giants were still trampling around in the castle garden, but they now seemed much smaller to him! Everyone had to laugh even more, and with every laugh the giants shrank further and huddled together in fear. "Stop it, stop it, the laughter hurts so much!" cried the giants.

Then the king and his people climbed over the wall and everyone laughed louder and louder at the funny little men in the garden. "There's just a bunch of grumpy dwarves trying to hide under the bushes," laughed the princess. "Stop!" shouted the king between fits of laughter. "Go to the castle and get a broom and a shovel," he then said to his daughter, "and sweep up this rabble!" She ran into the castle and when she came back, the dwarves were already so tiny that you could hardly tell them apart from the ladybirds on the rose petals. It looked so funny that everyone had to hold their stomachs with laughter. When the princess had finally finished sweeping, she exclaimed: "Oops, that's just a bit of dust blown away by the wind!"

And then everyone helped to restore the castle, the garden and the fountain. As soon as the beautiful fountain was babbling again, the king solemnly announced: "Shepherdess Esperanza, I have promised to give my daughter in marriage to the one who saves us from these giants!" "Thank you, dear king," replied the shepherdess. "According to Article 14 Paragraph 2 of the constitution, legally regulated cohabitation is open to all couples, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. I look forward to seeing your lovely daughter!" And so they continued to live happily and contentedly at the castle. However, if someone later made an overly serious face, the king would say to them: "Be cheerful and laugh a little! It could be that an evil giant is hiding under your fingernail and is starting to grow again!"





"A friend"

Once upon a time, there were two brothers. Garifalia and Dimitris. These two brothers seemed like twins. Unfortunately, they had no friends at all because everyone thought they were crazy because of their imagination. They were 8 years old and I don't know any other kids who weren't so, so adventurous. They were fascinated on space and decided one day to go on a daring trip. They took the rocket of their uncle who was an astronaut, and started by leaving a letter to their parents. The letter read:

Dear parents,

Don't worry at all in case you can't find us. We cannot tell you now where we have been but as soon as we return we will describe everything in detail. See you in a few months.

With love, your children,

Garifalia and Dimitris

As soon as their parents read this letter, they were very sad and very anxious. But they knew that their children would survive because of their imagination and their love of adventure. How could they imagine that their own children were moving away from the vast (for them) land. After a while, the children almost reached space. They were so happy that their uncle showed them how it works.

In fact, they were proud that he trusted them and left them to deal with a spaceship! When they landed, they were surprised to see a huge stone with a rather large hole. They stepped forward and were left speechless at what they saw. Purple, tiny and full of cute little creatures poked their little heads out full of curiosity and a little fear. Garifalia and Dimitris got even closer. Then, much to their surprise the purple strange creatures spoke! And that's not all, they also spoke Greek! The language of the two children! So they said to them:

- You are very good children, we feel it!

- Thank you very much! They answered.

Then, deep in the thicket, they see another green alien this time, alone. They go discreetly and approach him.

- You little, funny alien! What are you doing here alone? Let's play outside together!

- The other aliens don't want me to play and talk with them. I better stay here.

- But why wouldn't they want you? You are very good.

- I'm green...

- And so?

- I'm different...

- There are no differences in space. You should join us!

- Other aliens don't see it that way.

- No, that's not true. Do you want to be our friend?

- Do you really mean that?

- Of course, we don't have any friends either.

- Perfect! What is your name?

- Garifalia and Dimitris. You?

- I don't have a name...

- It's okay. From today, you will be called Bobbi!

- Perfect name, thanks!

- Nice Bobbi alien!

So with those words, they explored the planet, took pictures and set off for their home on Earth.

After months, the children had gone to their parents, introduced them to Bobbi, and described everything to them in detail, as they had promised in the letter. But one day, as soon as they woke up, they found the rest of the aliens in their bedroom. Aliens wanted to see the green alien Bobbi and be friends. His absence from space made them unhappy and realized that they should not stay alone without him in the space.

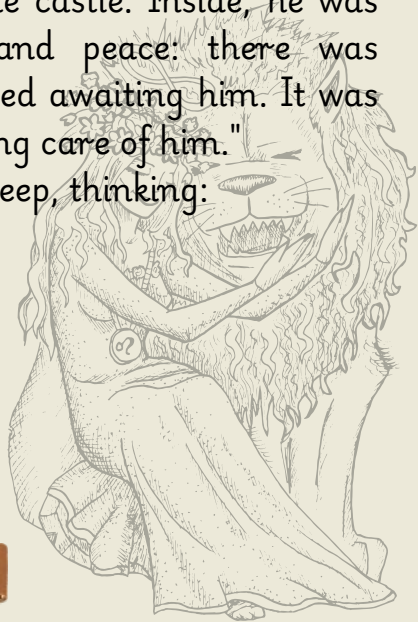
Bobbi and the two siblings were relieved. The parents were very satisfied that their children managed to make new friends and unite the aliens. Aliens decided to leave back to the space after thanking Garifalia, Dimitris and his parents for their kindness.



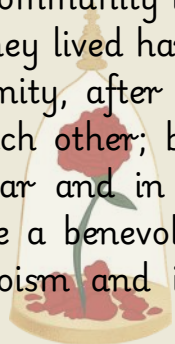
"Beauty and the Beast"

Once there was a merchant who had lost his whole fortune. No matter what tribulations he had had to face, he always remained very honest and kind. One day, he had to go on a long journey and asked his daughters what they wished to receive as gifts after he returned. His two eldest daughters, accustomed to luxury, asked for jewelry and fine gowns, without considering the financial situation of their father. Bella, the youngest and always modest and caring, said: "Father, I ask only for one thing: Bring me a rose with red petals."

On his way back to his town, the merchant was taken through a dense forest. It was dark, and he was looking for a place to sleep. When, all of a sudden, he saw a majestic castle and made his way toward it. As he approached the door opened by itself, and, not hearing any response, he stepped into the castle. Inside, he was warmly welcomed in silence and peace: there was delicious food to eat and a soft bed awaiting him. It was as if the castle's owners were taking care of him." He had dinner and lay down to sleep, thinking:



"The owners of this house must surely come soon." In the morning, just before he was about to leave, the merchant saw a marvelous rosebush, and he picked one of its blooms for Bella. At that instant, an enormous, terrifying yet elegantly clothed Beast jumped out from behind the bush: "You, I fed and welcomed into my house, and now you steal my roses!" roared the Beast. The merchant, shamefaced and scared, trembled voicing out his apologies. The Beast had decided to spare him, but he had to promise to send one of his daughters to the castle. The merchant consented to this and hied home, feeling very bitter inside. He told his daughters about the Beast and the promise he had made, which sealed the Beast's fate: "This would have not happened if you only asked a clothing or jewelry gift," they said. Feeling guilty, Bella decided to confront her father in the castle. Once she got there, the Beast treated her with great kindness despite his frightening appearance. She got to enjoy the castle's vast libraries and could stroll through beautiful gardens filled with natural inspiration. In the evenings, they would meet and discuss very important issues: how each can change the world, how to work as a team, and help one another. One day, the Beast revealed to Bella how the castle had once been a great community in a time of calamity. In mutual agreement, they lived harmoniously until their people got under calamity, after which they would always stay away from each other; but because they lived alone, they lived in fear and in great loss. Hence, the Beast, who used to be a benevolent prince, became entrapped within the egoism and isolation of theirs.



"What happened to the people?" Bella inquired.

"They lost their sense of community," the Beast observed regretfully. "Therefore, they were cursed as well. They had lost interest in one another. Both the land and the people are cursed.

Understanding that the Beast's predicament was similar to that of a split society, Bella concluded that mending the community as a whole, rather than merely focusing on her love for the Beast, was the key to lifting the curse. Bella and the Beast collaborated to bring the castle's spirit of community back. As supernatural creatures confined to the castle, she urged the servants to tell tales of cooperation and generosity. She gradually united them and taught them of working together.

The Beast started to feel compassion for the guests and servants. He extended hospitality and care to residents of neighboring villages, inviting them to partake in the castle's wealth. The castle eventually came to represent social inclusivity and solidarity. Bella found out one day that her father was seriously ill. She requested permission to approach the Beast. The Beast offered her a magical mirror after recognizing her emotions and demonstrating empathy by saying:

"You can see your family when you look in the mirror. You'll never be by alone"

Bella went back home, and with her help, her father quickly healed. She forgot about the Beast and the castle, though, because she had stayed longer than she had promised. She had a horrible nightmare one night in which she saw the Beast in a very bad state. Bella hurried back to the castle after realizing that her feelings for the Beast had become stronger.

She spotted the Beast, frail and sick, as she got to the castle. She went up to him and said:

"I will stay with you forever, despite your appearance."

The Beast transformed into a prince and uttered these words:

"True love is the only thing that could lift the curse I've been under for so long. However, love was insufficient on its own. I was able to overcome my loneliness through unity, kindness, and community, social inclusion. We broke the curse together.

After getting married and taking power, the prince and Bella established a society in which everyone was respected regardless of their background or appearance. They started constructing an inclusive kingdom where they learned to cooperate for the benefit of everyone and assisted those in need. People from many walks of life came to the castle to learn about active citizenship, compassion, social inclusion.

As a result, their story became not just one of love but also one of community healing, the value of active citizenship, and the strength of social inclusion.

“Beppo the street sweeper”

The old man's name was Beppo the Street Sweeper. In reality, he probably had a different name, but since he was a street sweeper by profession and everyone called him that, he called himself by that name as well.

Beppo the Street Sweeper lived near the amphitheater in a hut he had built himself from bricks, corrugated iron, and roofing felt. He was unusually small and always walked a little hunched over. His large head, crowned with a short tuft of white hair standing up, was always tilted slightly, and he wore a small pair of glasses perched on his nose.

Some people thought Beppo the Street Sweeper wasn't quite right in the head. This was because he would only smile kindly when asked a question and wouldn't answer right away. He would think. And if he didn't find an answer necessary, he would remain silent. But when he thought an answer was needed, he would consider it carefully. Sometimes it took him two hours, and occasionally even an entire day, before he responded.

Only his friend Momo could wait that long and understand what he meant. She knew that he took so much time because he never wanted to say anything untrue.

Beppo the Street Sweeper enjoyed his work and did it thoroughly. He knew it was a very necessary job.

When he swept the streets, he did it slowly but steadily: with each step a breath, and with each breath a sweep of the broom.

Step – breath – sweep. Step – breath – sweep.

In between, he would sometimes stand still for a while, gazing thoughtfully ahead. Then he would continue: step – breath – sweep.

As he moved along, with the dirty street ahead of him and the clean street behind him, great thoughts often came to him. But these were thoughts without words, thoughts as difficult to express as a certain scent you can just barely remember or like a color you've dreamed about. After his work, when he sat with Momo, he would explain these great thoughts to her. And because she listened in her special way, his tongue loosened, and he found the right words.

"You see, Momo," he said to her one day, "it's like this: Sometimes you have a very long street ahead of you. You think it's so terribly long that you'll never be able to finish it."

He looked ahead silently for a while, then continued, "And then you start to hurry. And you hurry more and more. Every time you look up, you see that there's still a long way to go. And you push yourself even harder, and you start to get scared, and in the end, you're out of breath and can't go on. And the street still lies ahead of you. That's not how you should do it."

He thought for a while. Then he spoke again: "You must never think of the whole street all at once, do you understand? You must only think of the next step, the next breath, the next sweep of the broom. And always just the next."

Once again, he paused before adding, "Then it brings joy; that's important. Then you do your work well. And that's how it should be."

And after another long pause, he continued, "All at once, you notice that step by step, you've swept the whole street. You didn't even notice how, and you're not out of breath." He nodded to himself and concluded, "That's important."

Momo shared Beppo's advice with her friends, and little by little, other people started to take the time to listen to Beppo's wisdom. More and more people came to the amphitheater to enjoy the calmness and the slowness of Beppo and to use his advice about being present in the moment for themselves. Some even suggested the idea of electing Beppo as mayor, but he politely declined. Instead, every evening, he sat with Momo and all those who sought peace. Sometimes, after they had sat in silence for a while, he would share the thoughts he had had during his work, and people began to call them the "thoughts of the day."



“Boomerang”

Suddenly, one day, Mr Remo began to hate his dog. He was not a bad man. But something had broken inside him when he became a widower. He had lost his wife and was left with his dog, a fat, blackish, bat-eared, salty botolo. He was called Bum, or Boomerang, because he would bring back anything they threw at him, with readiness and perseverance. Mr Remo and Bum had once taken long walks together and conversed about the human and canine world, about Descartes and Rin Tin Tin. There was great understanding between them. But now they no longer spoke to each other. The gentleman sat in an armchair staring into space and Bum crouched at his feet, looking at him with boundless affection. It was that look of absolute devotion and total trust that Mr Remo especially detested. The world was nothing but loss, loneliness and pain. What sense did that incongruous creature, who wagged his tail and howled with joy, and filled a desolate house with his furry, superabundant love, have in this horrible planet?

- Boom, I'm sorry. I can't take care of you any more. In fact, but you can't understand that, I hate you. I will take you to a place where you will be better off and they will treat you well.

The next day, Mr Remo loaded Bum into the car and took him to a kennel in town, where the dog received a joyful welcome, both from the people working there and from his fellow dogs. On leaving the kennel, Remo felt a sense of liberation and lightness at the idea that he would finally no longer have to be around Bum, as well as feeling somewhat relieved of guilt, having seen that the dog would be much better off there than with him.

As the days passed, Remo began to take care of himself again, starting by resuming doing the things he had not done since his wife was missing: going to the bar with friends to play cards, cooking with care, reading the newspaper at breakfast. Taking his life back in his hands allowed him, slowly, to metabolise the grief over his wife's death, letting the anger and suffering fade away.

However, when months had passed, Remo realised that something was missing: coming home and feeling the emptiness left by his missing Bum became more painful every day.

So he decided to go back to the kennel to try to get his furry friend back, in the hope that Bum would forgive him for his abandonment. Once back at the kennel, he headed for Bum's cage. The dog seemed wary of his old master who did everything he could to gain his trust again. Finally, Bum began to wag his tail and let Remo pet him, showing him the powerful force of forgiveness. From that day on, Remo and Bum became inseparable friends again as before.

“Henriqueta’s Reflections”

The forgotten reflexes

Once upon a time there was an abandoned zoo where various animal reflexes lived.

These animals, once bright and happy, with their shiny fur and sharp claws, were now sad, grey, consigned to the oblivion of the world.

Nobody in the world remembered them. Their names had been forgotten, their characteristics devalued. The animals' sadness was such that they themselves couldn't even remember who they were, what their identity was, their history, their family. They lived in constant doubt, hoping to live happy days in that zoo again.

One day, the head lion of the zoo decided that he would no longer live in that sadness.

- I can't live like this any longer - thought the head lion - I have to find a solution. I deserve to be happy.

His plan began by gathering all the animals in the zoo to find a solution. He prepared a communiqué that read:

The head lion of this zoo is summoning animals of all colours, shapes, sizes and cultures to a lunchtime meeting in the garden pond. The main theme will be: happiness is sought! There will be snacks for the hungry.

The lion, even though he was the head lion, was very nervous. He had never done anything like this before. He didn't know if he could organise a meeting with so many different animals, or how he was going to convince them to find a solution to happiness. The head lion was struggling with this conundrum while he prepared some herb rolls to serve as snacks for the meeting. He filled up on snacks and started his way to the garden pond. As soon as he arrived at the small pond, he saw his reflection.

- Look, it's me! - exclaimed the lion.

His reflection reminded him of his bravery and courage, characteristics worthy of a lion chief. Of his brilliant mane and his thunderous roar, capable of stopping an entire crowd. As he watched his reflection, he said to himself: Chief lion, don't doubt yourself, you can do it!

At lunchtime, the animals began to arrive. Some were visibly nervous, others enthusiastic.

- Let's get this meeting started, I've still got a nap to take! - shouted Sloth.

- And me some trees to jump over! - said the monkey.

- Be patient and let's listen to the head lion. - exclaimed the zebra.

The lion was nervous, but he took courage to face the crowd.

- Animal friends, our zoo is abandoned. We've been consigned to oblivion. I don't recognise you like this, sad and grey. We have to regain our individual joy, remember who we are and I have a plan.

The animals were enthusiastic, they had understood the task and they all started shouting out the features they saw.

- I can see big, shiny eyes! - exclaimed the owl.
- I'm a bit lazy to look.... I see sleepy eyes! - said the sloth.

The animals laughed and the chief lion became increasingly nervous. He wanted to control the crowd, but he didn't know how, without letting out his terrifying roar. The monkey, the wisest of the animals, seeing his friend in such despair, decided to intervene.

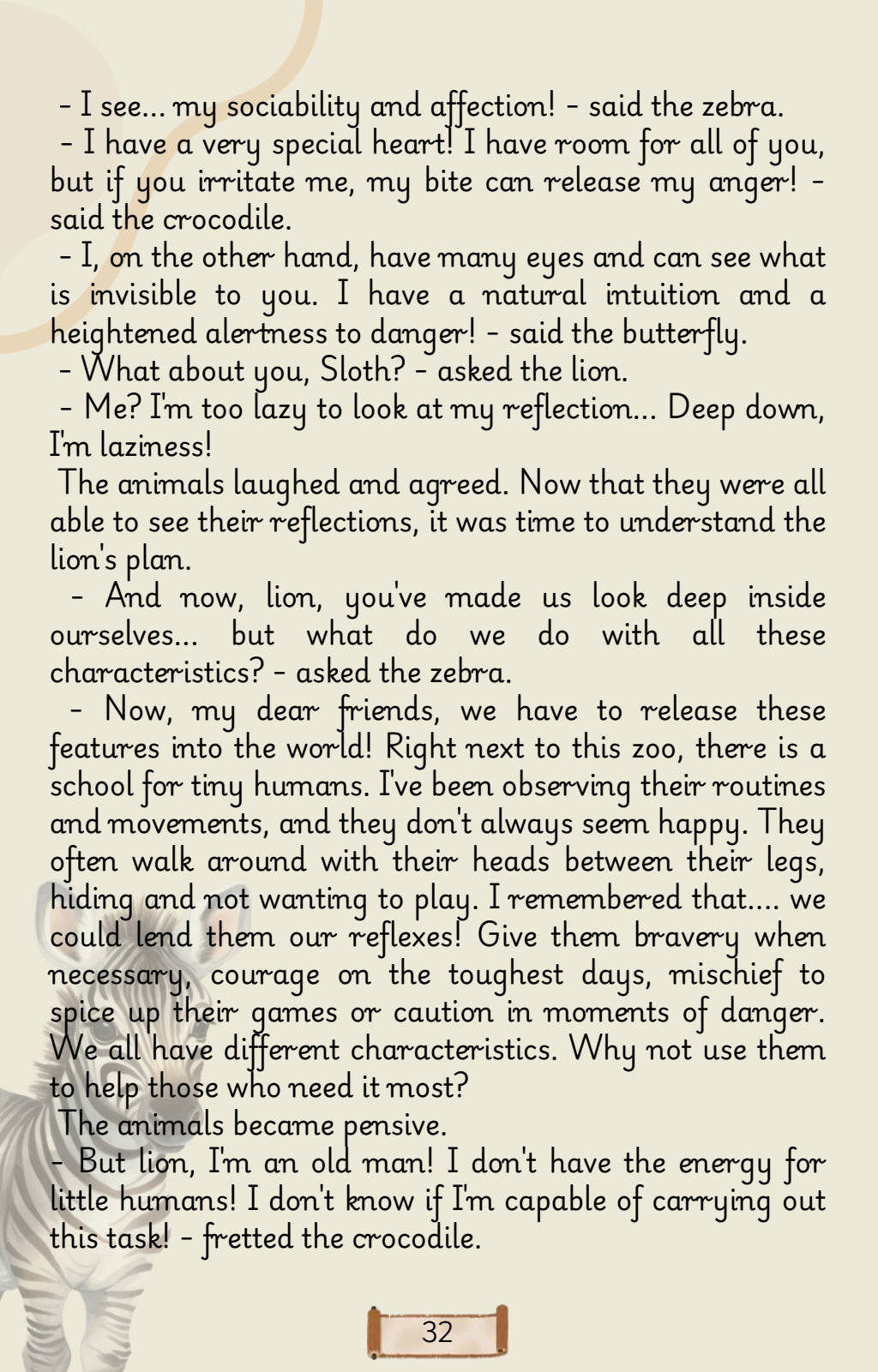
- My dear friends, you are all right. What you say you observe are things that are part of your characteristics. But I think our lion friend has made a deeper proposal. He wants you to say what you see deep inside your soul.

- Our soul? - asked the butterfly.

- Yes, from your soul. - I, for example, look at my reflection and see audacity, but also caution. I see the wisdom involved in jumping from tree to tree. And I recognise my intelligence in understanding you, but also in my ability to play tricks.

The animals remained silent. They realised that what the head lion was proposing was deeper than a simple joke.

The owl, still thinking, decided to take a chance: I see my courage in launching myself into high flights, my speed and my highly refined vision that allows me to see enemies and friends!

- 
- I see... my sociability and affection! - said the zebra.
 - I have a very special heart! I have room for all of you, but if you irritate me, my bite can release my anger! - said the crocodile.
 - I, on the other hand, have many eyes and can see what is invisible to you. I have a natural intuition and a heightened alertness to danger! - said the butterfly.
 - What about you, Sloth? - asked the lion.
 - Me? I'm too lazy to look at my reflection... Deep down, I'm laziness!

The animals laughed and agreed. Now that they were all able to see their reflections, it was time to understand the lion's plan.

- And now, lion, you've made us look deep inside ourselves... but what do we do with all these characteristics? - asked the zebra.

- Now, my dear friends, we have to release these features into the world! Right next to this zoo, there is a school for tiny humans. I've been observing their routines and movements, and they don't always seem happy. They often walk around with their heads between their legs, hiding and not wanting to play. I remembered that.... we could lend them our reflexes! Give them bravery when necessary, courage on the toughest days, mischief to spice up their games or caution in moments of danger. We all have different characteristics. Why not use them to help those who need it most?

The animals became pensive.

- But lion, I'm an old man! I don't have the energy for little humans! I don't know if I'm capable of carrying out this task! - fretted the crocodile.

- I've thought of that too! We don't all have to go to the little humans. We can help the big ones too! And help them see the reflections of the little ones, and help the little ones see the reflections of the big ones.

And the plan was hatched. The animals seemed to agree with the lion's plan to seek happiness outside that abandoned zoo. After all, they too deserved to find happiness.

- So where do we start? - asked the monkey.

The lion looked at all those animals and knew he had convinced them. Together, they would be happy again.

- Now we have to set out into the unknown and find the person who needs it most and who will bring our reflection to life. I've already found mine. Henriqueta.

- Henriqueta? - asked the monkey.

- Yes," he continued, "I will be the reflection of this girl who seems to be calling out to me, Henriqueta. And together we will learn to live together.

The animals set out into the unknown in search of someone who could bring their reflection to life. Because that's how they would find their happiness again.

“*Little tiny*”

There was once a woman who wished very much to have a little child, but she could not obtain her wish. At last she went to a fairy, and said, I would like to have a little child; can you tell me where I can find one?

Oh, that can be done easily, said the fairy. Here is a barleycorn of a different kind to those which grow in the farmers' fields, and which the chickens eat; put it into a flower-pot, and see what will happen.

Thank you, said the woman, and she gave the fairy twelve shillings, which was the price of the barleycorn. Then she went home and planted it, and immediately there grew up a large handsome flower, something like a tulip in appearance, but with its leaves tightly closed as if it were still a bud.

It is a beautiful flower, said the woman, and she kissed the red and golden-colored leaves, and while she did so the flower opened, and she could see that it was a real tulip. Within the flower, upon the green velvet stamens, sat a very delicate and graceful little maiden. She was scarcely half as long as a thumb, and she gave her the name of Thumbelina, or Tiny, because she was so small. A walnut-shell, elegantly polished, served her for a cradle; her bed was formed of blue violet-leaves, with a rose-leaf for a counterpane.

There she slept at night, but during the day she amused herself on a table, where the woman had placed a plate full of water. Upon it floated a large tulip-leaf, which served Tiny for a boat. Here the little maiden sat and rowed herself from side to side, with two oars made of white horse-hair. It really was a very pretty sight.

One night, while the little girl was sleeping in the walnut shell, a frog entered the house through the broken glass of the window. As soon as he saw Tiny he muttered: "This beautiful little girl will be an ideal wife for my son." So she grabbed the nut shell with Tiny, jumped into the garden and set off for the river where she lived with her son who was as ugly as she was.

"Quax, quax." said the young frog, pleased to see the little girl inside the nut shell. "Don't shout and wake her up." His mother scolded him. "I'll put her in the farthest water lily so she can't escape." When Tiny woke up and saw where she was, she began to cry. And worst of all, at that moment a frog appeared with her disgusting little frog. "This is my son who will soon be your husband. We are going to prepare your house." He said to the little girl. Then the two left and Tiny was left alone and desperate. At that time a white butterfly went and stood on the water lily. Then Tiny found the opportunity to escape. She took off her belt and tied one end around the butterfly's body and the other on the water lily. So he began to swim swiftly through the river. At that very moment, a large baboon flew over her.

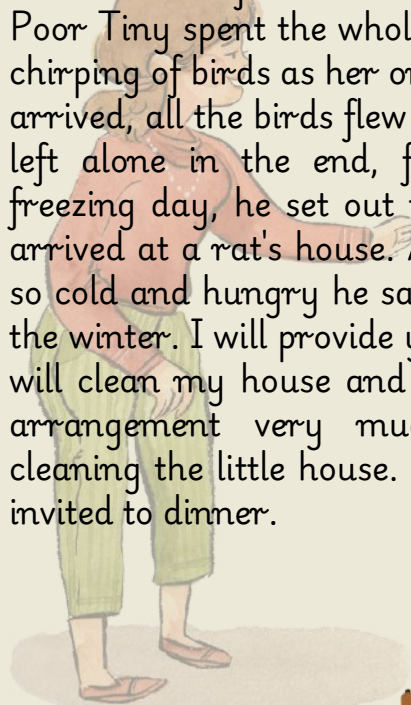


Fascinated by her beauty, he grabbed her and lifted her up. The butterfly tied with the belt continued to drag the water lily. "What a pity!" Tiny exclaimed. "What saddens me most is that the poor butterfly will not be able to free herself from the water lily." But the baboon didn't seem to be moved. He left Tiny on a branch of the tree where she lived and sat down next to her.

In a little while other baboons who lived there arrived. The females, mad with jealousy, looked at her with contempt. Some commented: "Mmmm take it easy beautiful one!"

"Look it has no antennae or wings. She can't fly!" Although the baboon was still in love with the beautiful Tiny, he thought that he could not live with a woman who was despised by all his peers. So he took her down from the tree and left her on a rose.

Poor Tiny spent the whole summer in the forest with the chirping of birds as her only company. But when autumn arrived, all the birds flew to warmer places and Tiny was left alone in the end, freezing from the cold! On a freezing day, he set out to find shelter. At one point he arrived at a rat's house. As soon as he saw the poor girl so cold and hungry he said to her: "You can stay here in the winter. I will provide you with food and in return you will clean my house and tell me stories." Tiny liked this arrangement very much and immediately started cleaning the little house. That same night Mr. Mole was invited to dinner.



After the meal, Tiny began to tell beautiful stories in her hoarse voice. As soon as the mole heard her, he fell in love with her. Wanting to see that majestic creature again as soon as possible, he invited them to visit him to repay their hospitality. Visits to the mole's burrow became more and more frequent. The two houses communicated with each other through a long narrow corridor. There one day Tiny saw a lifeless swallow. Saddened, she caressed it and kissed it. Then the little bird came back to life from the warmth of her embrace and her hot breath. All the nights of that cold winter, Tiny cared for the swallow, taking him warm food and blankets. He treated him with such affection and love that when spring arrived the little bird wanted to repay Tiny for the good she had done him. So he said to her: "Come with me. I will take you to a wonderful place where you will be truly happy."

"I can't. I don't want to upset the rat and the mole. They are so good to me." Tiny answered and the swallow said goodbye to her and flew away. Spring came and filled the plains with flowers and fragrances. One day when Tiny was sunbathing outside the little house, the rat came up to her and said: "Tiny, the mole asked me for your hand in marriage, and I thought he would be a good husband for you. Now in the spring and summer when the days are long you can make your dowries. When you have them ready, we will have the wedding." Tiny smiled politely but inside she felt terrible. She didn't want to marry the mole at all, but she obeyed and started knitting, weaving and sewing her dowries.

As soon as autumn came, the rat set the date of their wedding. Tiny, with tears in her eyes, went outside to say goodbye to the sun. In a few days she would never see the sun again since she would live with her husband under the earth forever. Amidst her sobs, however, she heard a familiar sound:

"Quit Quit!" It was the swallow. As soon as he saw his friend crying, he flew to her and asked: "What's the matter, Tiny, why are you sad?"

"I am unhappy, because tomorrow I'm going to marry the mole and never see the light of day again..."

"So why don't you come with me?" He offered her the swallow. "Winter is coming and I will leave for warmer places. Come on!" Tiny didn't have to think about it. She immediately accepted his friend's proposal and immediately climbed on his back.

They traveled for days and days until they came to a place where the sun shone brightly. The swallow flew to the beautiful forest beside a blue lake. There he got down and left Tiny on the calyx of a flower.

Then what a surprise! In the same spot, a little man with skin as clear as crystal was sitting comfortably, wearing a golden crown on his head. It was no bigger than Tiny and she felt it was the most beautiful creature she had ever laid eyes on. This little creature was a princeling. But he too was so fascinated by Tiny that he fell in love with her at once. "I am the prince of flowers," he told her.

"Do you want to be my wife?" Hearing these words, Tiny wonders if there is more to her life than simply becoming a queen. During the evening, while wandering through a glowing meadow, she meets an ancient butterfly with shimmering wings. The butterfly tells her a secret: she is not just a tiny human, but a child of the earth, with the power to grow when she truly understands her purpose.

Curious, Tiny decides to return to the kind woman who once cared for her. With the help of her fairy friends, she rides on the butterfly's back until she reaches her old home. The woman, now older but still kind, bursts into tears of joy at seeing her again.

As Tiny steps into the garden, she feels a warmth spreading through her body. Slowly, she begins to grow—not too big, but just the right size to live comfortably in both the human and fairy worlds. The fairies gift her enchanted seeds, which she plants, creating a beautiful garden where lost animals and creatures in need can find shelter. Birds, mice, and even a lonely beetle find a place where they are safe and accepted.

Instead of marrying, Tiny chooses a life of adventure. She travels across the world, healing wounded birds, helping flowers bloom in barren lands, and teaching kindness to all who cross her path.

And so, Tiny is no longer just a tiny girl longing for a home—she becomes a legend, a guardian of nature and a friend to all living things.

“Peter and the Wolf (Portuguese Version)”

Once upon a time there was a shepherd named Pedro who lived in a small village.

Pedro wasn't very happy, because he had earned the nickname 'Pedro the Liar'.

- There goes Pedro the Liar! - someone would say when Pedro walked down the street.

- So, liar, will it be fish or meat today? Think carefully, Pedro won't tell a lie - the lady at the market would say to him when he was shopping.

Pedro had earned this nickname because he had lied a lot in the past. Pedro's job was to guard the village flock. Pedro would stare at the flock for hours, bored. We mustn't forget that Pedro was a young man who craved fun.

- This job is boring! - thought Pedro.

So, in order to get round his boredom, Pedro decided to play tricks on the villagers. And these pranks consisted of lies. Pedro shouted for help and cried out in fear, telling the villagers that there was a wolf on the loose. Pedro repeated this prank once, twice. The villagers didn't like Pedro's attitude at all and warned him not to lie. And from then on, Peter became known as 'Peter the Liar'.

- Your job is to look after the flock, not to go around telling lies! - his mum would tell him.

- But my job is boring, Mum! Nothing new ever happens! The sheep are always fine, I bet there aren't even any wolves in the area! Now that's a well-told lie! - replied Pedro, whining.

- Pedro, watch what you say. Wolves do exist, and they're dangerous for our sheep. We need to protect them. Your work is very important. Who could do this job better than you?

The next day, Pedro thought about the words his mum had said to him.

- Who could do this job better than me?

And it was in that moment of great reflection that Pedro had an excellent idea. What if, in addition to him, the whole village contributed to watching over the flock?

- I've got a brilliant idea! - But I need your help.

Pedro explained that he needed his mum to call an urgent assembly of all the villagers to explain his brilliant idea to them.

- Why don't you? - his mum asked.

- If I call it, nobody will believe me. But everyone trusts you. Please Mum, I need you to do this for me.

Mum agreed, warning him:

- This had better be a really brilliant idea! I don't want any lies here.

Pedro promised her he wouldn't regret it and Mum decided to call an urgent assembly.

The next day, everyone was waiting to hear this brilliant idea. It was when they saw Pedro that they started shouting:

- Look, here comes the Liar!
- What lie are you going to tell now?
- Have I come here to waste my time listening to a Liar?

The villagers gasped for air and were upset. Faced with this situation, Pedro became very anxious and wanted to give up everything.

- Mum, I'm giving up, nobody wants to listen to me. Everyone thinks I'm a liar and nothing more.

His mum hugged him tenderly, telling him:

- My love, you thought you had a brilliant idea. Trust yourself and throw yourself to the wolves!

Pedro looked at her in confusion.

- What wolves, Mum?

- It's a form of expression! Wolves are all those people who doubt you! They're like wolves, they want to eat you alive. But you won't allow it and you'll present your brilliant idea with pride. If it goes wrong, I'll be here to hug you.

Pedro wiped away his tears, opened his chest and addressed the crowd.

- Dear villagers, thank you for being here today. I've called you together because I want to present you with an idea. As you know, I've been looking after our flock. But I'm young and sometimes I get bored. And it was this boredom that led me to lie to you, not because I wanted to hurt you, but because I wanted to have fun.

I know it wasn't right and that I scared you, so you chastised me by calling me 'Peter the Liar'. But I don't just want to be known as 'the liar'. I want to be known as 'the cheerful one', 'the reliable one', 'the dreamer'. I want to have more to my story than that unfortunate event. My mum asked me the other day who could do the job of guarding the flock better than me and my answer was, what if we all did it?

- All of us? - someone from the audience asked - But how could we all do it?

- That's where my brilliant idea comes in. Basically, it would be a collective surveillance system. Instead of me doing all the work on my own, we'd work in shifts.

- And who's to say we want that job Pedro?

The crowd agreed. Nobody wanted to do that job, and Pedro did it so well that they didn't need any more people.

- Protecting our village is important, I know. It's very important to me. But there are other things that are important to me, like pursuing my dreams. If we took it in turns, I'd have time to do other things.

- What things? - he was asked.

- For example, I could organise safe walks through the forest, where people would be taught how to preserve nature and the ecosystem. Or design a system that would protect us, but also the wolves. We mustn't forget that they are also living beings, they don't deserve to be killed just because they approach our sheep. They approach the flock because they want to eat. What means can we humans invent so that they can survive as long as we do?

The crowd was moved by Peter's words. They had never thought of wolves as living beings, only as predators. From that day on, the collective surveillance system began, where the whole community worked together, always maintaining a balance between nature and their human lives. When they wanted to scare the wolves away, instead of killing them they used other methods, such as producing loud sounds or lights. But during the night, while they slept, they let them explore the village, leaving them scraps of food in specific places so that they could feed themselves without eating the whole herd. They realised that they could work differently, together, in a more sustainable way.

- Pedro the Community! Pedro, the sustainable one! Pedro, the friend of animals and nature! - they said. And never again was Pedro known as "the Liar".



“Stone Soup”

Once upon a time, long ago, there was a great famine. People were greedily hoarding every bit of food they could find and even hiding it from their friends and neighbors. One day, a peddler arrived in a village with his cart, sold some of his wares, and started asking the villagers questions, giving the impression that he intended to stay the night.

“There isn’t a bite of food in the whole area,” he was told. “You’d better move on.”

“Oh, I have everything I need,” the old man said. “In fact, I was thinking of making some stone soup and inviting you all to share.” With that, he took an iron pot off his cart, filled it with water, and lit a fire underneath. Then, he ceremoniously pulled a simple stone out of his velvet pouch and placed it into the water.

By now, most of the villagers had gathered in the square or were peering out of their windows, as they had heard that food was being discussed. When the peddler sniffed the “soup” and licked his lips in eager anticipation, the villagers’ hunger began to overcome their mistrust.

“Ah,” the old man said rather loudly to himself, “I do love a tasty stone soup. Of course, stone soup tastes best when everyone contributes something and we all eat together.”

Soon after, a villager hurried over, holding a cabbage he had been hiding, and added it to the pot. "Wonderful," cried the old man. "The soup needs to cook for another hour, and then everyone is invited to eat together."

When the people of the village heard this, they became excited about the idea of sitting together and sharing a meal.

An elderly woman brought some carrots to the old man and said, "Look, I found these. Do you think they would make the stone soup even tastier?" The old man happily added them to the soup.

The village butcher, seeing this, didn't want to be left out, so he brought a piece of beef for the soup. And so it went on with potatoes, onions, mushrooms, and many other ingredients until they truly had a delicious meal for everyone.

The villagers offered the peddler a lot of money for his magical stone, but he refused and continued on his way the next day.

From that time on, whenever there was great need in the village, it became a tradition for everyone to come together and cook a soup. With each shared meal, the hardship always seemed a little less.



“The Chinese mirror”

One day, the Chinese farmer was preparing himself to leave for the city with his wife, to sell rice they harvested. Life had not been on their side — a recent drought had almost ruined all of their harvest, and it was just through determination and hard work that they had managed to survive it all. Before he left, his wife said: — Bring me a comb, if you can; I broke mine, and I want to look nice. The farmer nodded and set off. Down the road, he was filled with anxious thoughts: Will the rice sell? Will I weigh my family down with my failure? In the city, he sold the rice for a fair price. Tired but relieved, he passed by a small shop with a very strange object — a mirror. He had never seen it before. Looking at himself from the other side, he saw a weary but strong man staring back at him. In that single moment, all the weight of the journey he had made, with all its insistence behind it, resided at this thought. Perhaps my wife ought to see herself too: not someone tired or old, but a woman who has endured, who has survived — and who is still beautiful. He bought the mirror and went home.

When it was given to her by her husband, she was surprised but grateful. Alone, she gazed in it for the first time. She was scared at first. The face in the glass — was it younger? Pretty? Not hers? Had he brought another woman home?

She closed the mirror but didn't throw it away. Days passed. Every night she would dream of her teenage self—laughing, strong, bathed with light—and every morning, she'd look again, little by little, that face mirrored back became familiar. She began to see herself — not as a stranger, really, but a woman shaped by time, love, and hardship. Her mother noticed and gently said:

"I had watched you struggle. But whole standing before your own self with valor is real strength," said the wife. "I thought that the mirror would show me another person. But it showed me who I am. Not perfect, not young, but alive and, oh yes, strong." She turned toward him that evening, saying: "Thank you; you didn't just give me a gift, you gave me a new way to see myself. Did you see yourself while looking in it?" "Yes," he said, nodding in affirmation, "at first I didn't like it much either. But then I realized that face had survived so much; I am proud of him. I am proud of us." And since that day, the mirror stood in their home a quiet symbol of resilience—a reminder that strength is not about perfection. For it is about how one looks at oneself with honesty and dignity after much hardship, and faces the world again with hope.

“The donkey and his shadow”

Once upon a time, a traveler hired a donkey and his master to help him cross a long desert.

They started very early in the morning, the traveler on the donkey and the master of the donkey beside him, on foot.

At noon when the heat had become unbearable they made a stop.

-Let's have a little water and rest to donkey's shade said the traveler

-Yes great idea! But we should all share the water because the donkey is also exhausted! replied the boss

-Of course said the the traveler and after drinking the water both the traveler and the boss rested to the monkey's shade.





“The emperor’s new clothes”

(Version 1)

Once upon a time there was an emperor who loved fashion so much that he spent all his money just on dressing elegantly. He had no care for his soldiers nor for the theatre, unless it was to show off his new clothes: he owned a suit of clothes for every hour of the day. In the great city that was the capital of his kingdom, everyday strangers came, and once two swindlers also came: they said they were two weavers and that they knew how to weave the most incredible cloth ever seen. Not only were the designs and colours of the clothes marvelous, but the clothes made from that cloth had a curious power: they became invisible to the eyes of men who were very stupid. ‘Those would be wonderful clothes,’ thought the emperor. ‘With them on, I would be able to recognise the fools working in my empire, and I would be able to distinguish the stupid from the clever! I must have that cloth immediately!’ And he paid the two swindlers, so that they would get to work. Those two set up two looms and pretended to start their work. They asked for the finest silk and the brightest gold, put them in their bags, and continued like this, with empty looms, until late at night.

The emperor was impatient to see how the work was progressing so he thought 'I will send to the weavers my old and trusted minister. No one can see what that cloth looks like better than he can, since he is intelligent and no one is more up to the task'.

So that old and trusted minister went to the room where the two weavers were weaving on the looms empty looms. 'Good heavens!' he thought, opening his eyes wide, 'I see absolutely nothing!' But he did not say this out loud. The two weavers asked him to come closer, and asked him if the design and colours were to his liking, always pointing to the empty loom: the poor minister kept making a lot of eye contact, but without being able to see anything, also because there was nothing at all.

However, the minister, being a wise man, became suspicious of the two swindlers and decided to ask them a few questions about the other cities they had visited and the other kings they had sold their clothes to, but their answers were not convncent at all. 'I believe gentlemen that you are deceiving the emperor! I see nothing even though I am a worthy man and you do not answer my questions with conviction: I will go and reveal your deception to the emperor!'

'Have you minister proofs of what you say? Is it not that you are not as clever a man as you think you are?' - insinuated the two men. Be careful what you say to the emperor, for we would not want him to think you are no longer up to your task, since as an intelligent man you should be able to see our magical fabrics. Faced with these words, the minister was frightened and fearing that he might be removed from his post, he reported to the emperor that the work was progressing and that the fabrics had beautiful, glittering colours. After a while, the emperor sent another officer to see how the work was progressing. But the same thing happened to him as to the old minister. Nevertheless, seized by the same doubts, he also decided to lie in front of the swindlers. However, once back at court, he decided to confront the prime minister. At first, afraid of being taken for a fool, he tried to ask him a few questions, but in the end he decided to make his doubts clear to the other man: they both realised that the two weavers were indeed swindlers and decided to tell the emperor everything, who would certainly believe them given the trust he placed in both of them.

Once the emperor heard their experience, he decided to test the two swindlers to confirm the doubts of his loyal officials. Without telling his young son, who had just been a child, about the magical powers of clothes, he took him with him to the two swindling tailors.



When the latter began to extol the beauty of the fabrics, the dazzling colours and the exquisite embroidery they could see on the clothes they were weaving, the son exclaimed: 'Father what do these men say? Their looms are empty!' So the emperor realised that he had been swindled and that because of his vanity he had risked squandering the riches of his kingdom for his own selfishness. He had the two swindlers arrested and gave a reward to the two officials who had not been faithful and had revealed the truth to him. From that day on, the emperor became a ruler far more attentive to the needs of his people than to his own.



“The Emperor’s New Clothes”

(Version 2)

In a modern city, there was a leader who loved being admired. He saw himself as the smartest and most innovative person around. Almost no one dared to challenge him. Many were too afraid of looking foolish or losing their positions.

One day, two consultants arrived in the city. They claimed to be experts in democracy and innovation. They promised the leader a unique project: a policy so advanced that only truly intelligent people could understand it. According to them, it was perfect – but invisible to anyone who wasn’t capable of appreciating its value.

The leader was thrilled and hired them immediately. The two locked themselves in an office and “worked” for days. They showed empty charts and used fancy words without saying anything real. The advisors, too scared to admit they didn’t understand, pretended to be impressed. “This is amazing!” some said. “What a brilliant idea!” others agreed.

The big day came. The leader stepped onto the stage, full of pride. He began talking about transparency, participation, and democracy.

He smiled, gestured, and spoke with confidence. But no one in the crowd could make sense of what he was saying.

Even so, nobody dared to admit it. After all, if they didn't understand, surely it was their fault, wasn't it?

Then, a young woman raised her hand. Her voice cut through the silence:

"Excuse me, but... I don't understand. Could you explain it again? Where are the results? How does this help us?"

A hush fell over the crowd. Slowly, people started glancing at each other. "I don't understand either," someone said. "Me neither!" added another. And suddenly, everyone started speaking at once. The young woman had said what everyone was thinking but too afraid to say.

The leader froze. His face turned red as he realised he'd been fooled. No one really understood the project. Meanwhile, the consultants quietly slipped away, leaving him to face the crowd.

"I'm sorry," he said, clearly embarrassed. "I let my pride and fear of looking foolish get the better of me. But I've learnt my lesson. From now on, I want to hear you. I'll work with you, clearly and honestly. I promise."

From that day on, everything changed. The city became a true example of democracy. People's voices were heard, and they took part in decisions. And no one ever felt afraid to ask questions or speak the truth again.

“The encounter”

I had the train compartment to myself. Then a girl got on,’ said a young blind Indian. The man and woman who came to accompany her must have been her parents. They made many recommendations to her. Since I was already blind then, I could not know what the girl looked like, but I liked the sound of her voice.

‘Excuse me,’ I asked then, ‘I wanted to tell you that the sound of your voice is very pleasant. It arouses beautiful emotions in me. If it doesn't bother you, I would like you to describe her face to me. I am blind and would like to be able to tie your voice to a face’.

‘Thank you, I don't mind your question at all. Unfortunately I also lost my sight at the age of 17 and I know how it feels. I will gladly describe my face to you as long as I remember it’.

After hearing the girl's description, the young man was even more enthusiastic and decided, in turn, to describe his own appearance to her and tell her the story of how he had lost his sight due to an accident.



Driven by mutual interest and curiosity, it was spontaneous for both of them to bring each other's hands to their faces and caress each other's features. In the meantime, the train was approaching the stop where the girl was supposed to get off, but, driven by the intensity of that moment and the intimacy of that contact, they decided to continue the journey, in order to discover more about each other.

Often the fear of judgement and rejection can block us and push us to live in the shadows. But trusting ourselves and others and not being afraid to show ourselves for who we are allows us to enjoy exciting experiences and encounters. Some trains only pass once.



“The fisherman and his wife”

Once upon a time there was a fisherman, who lived with his wife Ilsebill in a small, crooked fisherman's hut close to the sea.

One day, a large halibut wriggled on the fisherman's fishing rod and said to him: ‘Fisherman, I'm not a real halibut, I'm an enchanted prince. Please - drop me back and do not kill me!’

‘Well,’ said the fisherman, ‘a halibut that can talk, surely I'll allow to swim.’

So he put it back into the clear water and returned empty-handed to his wife in the little hut.

‘Didn't you catch anything today?’ Ilsebill asked him.

‘No,’ the man said. ‘I only caught a halibut. It said it was an enchanted prince though. I put him back into the water.’

‘Didn't you make a wish?’ his wife asked.

‘No,’ the man said. ‘What should I wish for?’

‘Oh,’ Ilsebill said, ‘our hut is so small. And it stinks and is old and ramshackle. You should have wished for a little house. Go and call him again! Tell him we want a little house. I'm sure he'll give one to us.’

‘Oh,’ the fisherman said, ‘I don't want to call him again.’

‘But you let him swim. Now, off you go!’

The fisherman didn't like his wife's persistence, but he didn't want to disappoint her either - so he went off to the sea and said:

'Timpy, timpy, timpy tee,
Buttje, buttje in the sea,
My dear wife, the Ilsebill,
Doesn't want what I want - still.'

The halibut swam up and asked: 'Well, what does she want?'

'Oh,' the man said, 'I set you free again and now my wife says I should have made a wish. She doesn't want to live in the hut any more, she wants a proper house,' the fisherman explained.

'Go on,' the halibut said, 'she's got it already'.

The man went back and saw his wife sitting on a bench in front of a pretty cottage. Together they went inside and looked around happily. Everything was in place, even a small yard with chickens and a small garden with fruit and vegetables.

'Look,' the woman said, 'isn't this nice?'

'Yes!' the fisherman said. 'Let's keep it that way. Now we want to live contentedly.'

'I'll think about that,' Ilsebill said strangely. A few days later, Ilsebill said to the fisherman: 'The little house is getting too cramped for me and the courtyard and garden are so small. I want to live in a big castle. Go to the halibut, tell him to give us a castle!'

'Oh Ilsebill,' the man said, 'the cottage is just right for us! Why do we want to live in a castle?'

'Go to the halibut! He will do that!'

'No, Ilsebill,' the fisherman said unhappily. 'The halibut gave us the cottage. I don't want to ask him for more. It might upset him.'

But his wife wouldn't stop, so the fisherman said angrily: 'That's not right!' but he went to sea anyway. The ocean now was murky and stirred up, just like the fisherman himself. He walked up and down the shore and pondered what he should do. Slowly, he came to a decision and finally called the butt:

'Timpy, timpy, timpy tee,
Buttje, buttje in the sea,
My dear wife, the Ilsebill,
Doesn't want what I want - still.'

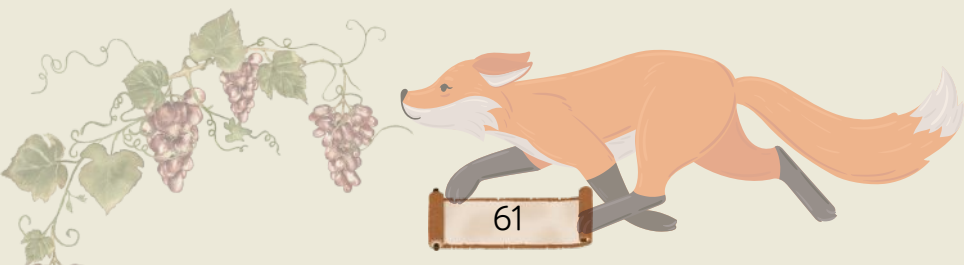
The halibut swam up and asked: 'Well, what does she want?'

'Dear halibut, my wife Ilsebill is behaving terribly and I don't want to live with her like this any more! Could I live in the sea with you? I can swim and dive and we'll certainly have a lot of fun!'



“The fox and the grapes”

Once upon a time there was a hungry fox wandering through the fields in search of food when, at one point, he saw some large and beautiful bunches of grapes hanging from an arbour. He decided that they would be his meal but no matter how hard he tried to reach them by jumping up, he just could not catch them. The fox then wondered: 'What do I do? Do I go look for food in another field or do I wait for someone to pass by who can help me?' But tired of jumping and seeing that no one was coming, he decided to go elsewhere to look for food. After all, she had tried and tried again to get grapes but had failed: she had to give up. Maybe,' she thought to herself, 'it's because I'm still a pup. As I grow up, I will learn to jump higher...'. In reality, however, she knew very well that it was not the first time she had failed and it would not be the last: she was sure that in any case, giving up would not help. As much as she had longed for those grapes, she knew, thanks to experience and her instincts, that something to eat had to be found, and giving up those beautiful grapes was the right thing to do. 'Over there is a village,' he thought, 'I'll go and see if I can find something outside a shop.



“The fox and the lion”

One morning a lion, while roaring while yawning (he had just woken up in a good mood), saw a fox coming in his direction and as soon as it noticed him, it ran away. The lion was astonished, wondering why she had run away: perhaps one of his roars had frightened her off? ‘Well, I didn't do anything,’ he thought to himself. In any case, the fox had run away and he could no longer ask her. He hoped to meet her again because he was sorry for that reaction but realised that the fox had only followed his instincts in the face of fear.

A couple of days later, the lion found the fox in front of him, trembling like a leaf. ‘Why are you shaking like a leaf?’ he asked her.



“The fox and the stork”

Our ancestors tell us that in a distant era, when animals still had the gift of speech and were not ashamed to be seen by humans, a fox wanted to organise a dinner party at home and invited his friend the stork. Foxes, it is known, are cunning animals by nature and often manage to get out of trouble thanks to their cunning. Few people know, however, that this animal with the beautiful reddish coat can also be mischievous and a little ill-tempered. We would all have expected the fox to prepare a delicious dinner for its guest and, above all, to take the stork's tastes into account. Instead, the fox merely prepared a slop that was served at the table on a simple tray, without even a slice of bread to better enjoy the main dish, nor drinks to refresh himself. The stork, although hungry and eager to try out his fox friend's culinary talents, in no way managed to taste the soup; the beaks of these birds, as is well known, are long and narrow, so attempting to taste the broth proved an impossible task. The sly fox, seeing his guest in difficulty, simply finished his portion in peace; then, he greedily brushed the stork's plate as well, making ironic comments about the poor bird's lack of appetite, which returned home hungrier than before and very hurt and humiliated by his friend's behaviour.

After reflecting for a few days on what had happened, the stork decided to invite her fox friend to dinner. Ahead of the evening, she did her best to prepare the warmest welcome and avoid making the fox feel any discomfort. She consulted her friends to find out what food she liked and they advised her to prepare a chicken stew with a side of baked potatoes.

On the day of the dinner, the fox arrived at her friend's house to find the table laid with every good thing: the main dish was in the middle of the table, served on a beautiful silver tray, and emanated a pleasant aroma of well-cooked food.

The fox, surprised by that welcome, said to the hostess 'You must have worked so hard to prepare such a dinner!'. Faced with her astonishment, the stork replied: 'You see dear friend, I was so hurt by the way you welcomed me into your home that I tried my best so that you would not have to experience the same pain as I did'. Realising how deeply her behaviour had hurt her stork friend, the fox apologised and vowed to pay more attention to the feelings and needs of others.

How often our selfishness prevents us from seeing other people and their needs, risking hurting and harming them, because of our carelessness. The fable teaches us: do not do to others what you do not want done to you.



“The Girl from the Sea”

The Girl on the Beach

In a small coastal town, where the houses always seemed to be by the sea, lived Marta. She was a 16-year-old girl, full of curiosity about the world, but also with a certain sense of isolation. Marta loved the beach, where she spent hours watching the waves and collecting shells. She felt at home there, but at the same time something seemed to be missing from her life.

One day, after a violent storm, Marta found something strange in the sand: a piece of plastic wrapped in seaweed. As she was holding it, she heard a movement in the water. It was a girl, about her age, with eyes as clear as the sea. The girl called out to her, but her voice seemed to come from the waves themselves.

‘Help me,’ the girl asked, and Marta immediately called Marina. ‘My house is disappearing.’

Marta was confused, ‘What do you mean? Where do you live?’

Marina pointed to the ocean. ‘Here. But the rubbish, the boats and the pollution are destroying everything. If you don't do something, I won't be able to stay.’

Intrigued and a little scared, Marta took Marina home. For days, her new friend showed her things she'd never noticed before: plastic bags wedged between the rocks, abandoned nets choking the fish, bottles floating in the waves. Marta began to see the beach - and the sea - with new eyes.

Marina told her that the sea was dying and that she needed help. Marta knew she couldn't ignore it. It wasn't enough just to collect the rubbish; she had to do more. She started by setting up a group at school to clean up the beach. She spoke to local fishermen about alternatives to disposable nets. She organised awareness campaigns on social media and even convinced the town council to put recycling bins in the village.

With each passing day, Marta felt stronger and more capable. People began to listen to her. The town, which had previously seemed indifferent, began to change. Children joined in the beach clean-ups. Holidaymakers brought back less plastic. Fishermen began to adopt more sustainable practices.

Marina, meanwhile, seemed happier and happier. Her visits became less frequent, but every time Marta looked at the horizon, she felt that she was there, smiling and grateful.

One day, Marina appeared for the last time. 'Thank you, Marta. Not just for me, but for everything you've done. The sea is starting to breathe again, and you've taught your community how to look after it.'

Marta felt emotional, but also determined. She knew the work wasn't finished, but she was no longer alone. Her village now believed in the power to change. And thanks to Marina, Marta discovered that being an active citizen is much more than seeing problems - it's being part of the solution.



“The golden goose”

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons. The youngest was called Silly and everyone despised and made fun of him.

One day the eldest son wanted to go to the forest to cut wood. Before he started, his mother gave him a nice pie and a bottle of wine so he wouldn't be hungry or thirsty. When he reached the forest, he met an old gray man. The little man, after wishing him good morning, said to him: "Give me a piece of your pie and let me have a sip of your wine as I am very hungry and thirsty!".

But the clever son replied: "If I give you my pie and my wine, then there will be nothing left for me. So go your way and don't delay me." So he left the little man and went on. When he found a tree suitable for firewood, he began to cut it, he did not have time to continue for long. After only a few blows to the tree, his ax missed and hit his own hand. So he was forced to return home to have his wound bandaged. But in reality his injury was caused by the little gray man.

After the first son returned home without wood and injured, the second son started for the forest. The mother also gave him a pie and a bottle of wine. When he reached the forest he met the same little gray man who asked him for a piece of pie and a sip of wine.

But the second son also refused, saying: "If I give you to eat and drink, these will be lacking from me, so go your way and don't waste my time!" So he left the little man and continued towards the forest. The punishment was not long in coming for him either. After a few ax blows on a tree, the ax came loose and hit him in the leg, so he was went to his house.

Then the youngest son, Silly, says: "Father, let me go chop wood."

"Your brothers were hurt when they went," replied the father, "never mind, you don't know about these things."

But Silly persisted and begged his father until he answered him: "Go, from the damage you will suffer but you will at most become smarter."

His mother gave him a pie she had made with ashes and water and a bottle of beer which had already turned sour.

When he reached the forest he also met the little gray man who greeted him and said: "Give me a piece of your pie and a sip from your bottle, I am very hungry and thirsty!"

Silly then replied: "All I have is ash pie and sour beer, if you are satisfied with that then let us sit down and eat."

The little man accepted, but when they sat down and Silly took out the ash pie it had become a great egg pie and the sour beer had become good wine.

So they sat down and after eating and drinking the little man said: "Because you have a good heart and share what belongs to you I will give you luck. Opposite us is an old tree, cut it down and in its roots you will find something." With these words the little man said goodbye and left.

When Silly went and cut down the tree he found at its roots a goose that had wings of pure gold. He took the goose out, took it with him and went to an inn to spend the night. The owner of the inn had three daughters who were greatly intrigued by this strange bird. But out of curiosity, the daughters wanted to steal one of the goose's golden feathers. The older one thought, "There will be some opportunity to take a wing out of her!" and when Silly came out, he seized the goose's wing, but her fingers stuck to it. After a while the second one came and she also wanted to take something from the goose. But as soon as she touched her sister she clung to her. When the third sister also came, the other two started shouting at her: "Get out of here, for God's sake, get out!" However, the third one did not understand why she should leave and ran towards the goose. But as soon as she touched her middle sister, she got stuck too. So the three spent the night together with the goose.

The next morning, Silly took his goose in his arms and started on his way, paying no attention to the girls clinging to it. The girls ran after him, one left and one right as they could find a pace without falling.

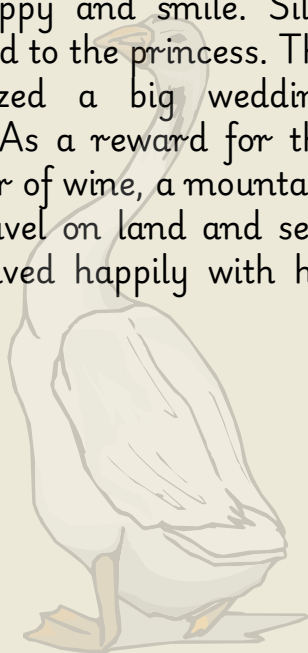
On the way they met a priest, who as soon as he saw their course became enraged: "You are not ashamed to run after the young man, this is not right at all!" Finishing the sentence he grabbed the smaller one by the hand to pull her, but as soon as he touched her it stuck and he was forced to run after them.

After a while they crossed paths with the church commissioner who saw the priest running after the three girls. He was amazed at the sight and cried out: "Where are you going so quickly, papa? Don't forget we have a baptism today!" He ran up to him and pulled him by the sleeve but he got stuck too.

So as the five followed the golden goose, they met two farmers who were coming from their fields with pitchforks on their shoulders. The priest shouted at them to release him and the commissioner. But as soon as they touched the commissioner they also got stuck and now there were seven of them running after Silly and the goose.

Finally they all arrived together in a city. In this city there was a king whose daughter was so serious that no one could make her laugh. The young princess when she saw all them together burst into laughter.

The king was so happy that he finally found someone that could make his daughter happy and smile. Silly asked king's approval to get married to the princess. The king was delighted and organized a big wedding celebration for the young couple. As a reward for the Silly he offered to the guests a cellar of wine, a mountain of bread and a ship that could travel on land and sea. Silly inherited the kingdom and lived happily with his wife for many years.



“The greedy mouse”

Once upon a time there was a very greedy mouse. He ate, ate, until his belly swelled so much that he could not move from his seat!

- Why do you eat so much? the other mice called him.
- Why shouldn't I eat? answered the gluttonous mouse. I like food.
- One day you will be damaged by too much food, they advised him.
- Why should I take damage? I have a very strong stomach and easily digest whatever I eat.

One day the greedy mouse left his nest, which was in the basement of a house, cautiously went up to the ground floor, lest a cat see him and pounce on him, he found a hole in a wall, he entered with difficulty because it was narrow, he stepped forward and, suddenly, what did his eyes see!

He found in a cellar, a cellar full of food! Cheeses, salamis, smoked meats, nuts and a bunch of other things. The mouse could never imagine such luck!

But what about the other mice? The greedy mouse had second thoughts and considered that the cheese and the salami in the cellar is plenty and other mice can eat also. They were interesting on his health and his wellbeing.

"I should take into consideration their words" said and the mouse immediately called other mice to eat together all the goods he found. The gluttonous mouse decided that he should care not only for himself but for others too. So all mice together had a rich meal sharing the salami and the cheese existing in the cellar.

Gluttony is a bad thing, both for humans and animals. And whoever is gluttonous will surely regret sooner or later...



“The hare and the tortoise”

Once upon a time there was a very vain hare, with his speed he was able to get anywhere. The hare spent the whole day bragging about how fast he was to his neighbours in the forest. One of the forest dwellers, the tortoise, tired of the boastful hare, challenged him to a race. The free one, laughing loudly, said:

- How funny you are, tortoise, do you really think you can beat me? No doubt, you are the slowest animal in the whole forest.

- Don't underestimate me, hare,' said the tortoise calmly, 'My steadfastness and determination are very powerful against your bravado.

All the animals in the forest, laughing at the underestimation of the tortoise, came to watch the race.

The bear shouted:

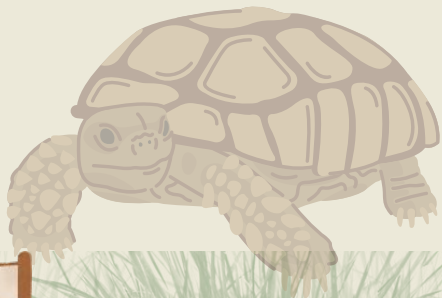
- Ready, set, go!

And so the race began. As was to be expected, within a few seconds the hare was already well ahead of the tortoise, who advanced slowly but with iron determination.

- How slow and clumsy this tortoise is, how could he imagine that he could beat me- said the free hare to himself- I'll take a nap under that shadow and still win.

The tortoise did not stop for a moment. Her slow, steady pace brought her closer and closer to the goal. She knew that her constant effort would pay off. When the hare woke up, agitated, he realised that the tortoise was about to cross the finish line and no matter how hard he ran he could not catch up.

The tortoise crossed the finish line and was cheered by all the animals in the forest, teaching the hare a great lesson: he may not have been the fastest, but he was the most consistent and resilient.



“The Hare and the Hedgehog”

One Sunday morning in autumn, a hedgehog was strolling toward a field full of turnips when he met a hare. The hedgehog greeted the hare politely, but the hare was very arrogant and made fun of the hedgehog's short legs.

The hedgehog, however, didn't take kindly to jokes about his legs and challenged the hare to a race. They made a bet: whoever reached the finish line first would win a feast. The hare wanted to start immediately, but the hedgehog insisted on having breakfast at home first and agreed to meet again in half an hour.

At home, the hedgehog told his wife about the bet with the hare and asked her to come with him. Mrs. Hedgehog thought her husband had lost his mind for agreeing to race the hare, but she followed him.

On the way, the hedgehog explained his plan to win with her help. While he started the race with the hare, Mrs. Hedgehog would wait at the finish line. When the hare approached the finish line, she would shout, “I'm already here.”

So, Mrs. Hedgehog took her position at the finish line while her husband went to meet the hare.

A large crowd had already gathered to see how the race would unfold. Bets were made, and many posts were prepared for Animal Media.

The hare counted to three and then dashed off as fast as he could. The hedgehog, however, took only three steps before ducking into a furrow in the field. As the hare arrived at the finish line, running at full speed, Mrs. Hedgehog called out as planned, "I'm already here!"

The hare didn't recognize the trick because Mrs. Hedgehog looked exactly like her husband. Instead, he was angry about his defeat and demanded a rematch. Like a whirlwind, he raced back to the starting point. But when he arrived, this time the hedgehog himself called out, "I'm already here."

They ran again, and once more, the same thing happened. And again, the frustrated hare demanded to race again.

This happened 10 times. Each time the hare reached the finish line, Mrs. Hedgehog would shout, "I'm already here!" And when he returned to the start, the hedgehog would call out, "I'm already here!"

The crowd, made up of all the animals from the fields and woods, watched the whole thing. Some began to figure out the hedgehog's trick and demanded an explanation. Five rabbits blocked the finish line and called for an animal meeting!

The owl chaired the meeting. The crows, who had been observing the race, gave their testimony. The hare was outraged that the hedgehog had tricked him.

Then Mrs. Hedgehog stepped forward and said, "Yes, it was a sneaky trick. But my husband was upset that the hare made fun of his short legs. It wounded his pride, and he wanted to show the hare that you can still win, even with short legs."

The owl spoke: "It's unfair if we hold competitions where the winner is always the one with the best natural advantages, like long legs. From now on, let's hold an annual race with homemade vehicles. Everyone can participate. The vehicles will have wheels and be built by teams. The winner will be decided not only by speed but also by creativity and fun. And afterward, we will all celebrate together with a big feast."

Since then, the annual race has been held. Months in advance, everyone starts building their vehicles, and each year brings new, fun, and interesting ideas.

“The Hedgehog and the Fox”

Once upon a time in a forest, well hidden in order to find out about its existence you had to walk kilometers outside the city, lived Marcos, the hedgehog. Mark was 4 years old. Old man, of course since hedgehogs live up to 5 years. Whoever you asked in the forest, however, said that he was seven-hearted, like a cat. They said that every three or so times he went out into the street, he didn't care about cars and bad people and at the risk of losing his life he crossed the road and went into the opposite forest. No other hedgehog had ventured to explore that forest, as everyone now knew that those who had gone there never returned.

The foxes that dominated the neighboring forest made sure to exterminate any small hedgehog that came near their nests. But none of them bothered Marko and everyone was surprised when he came back. But he didn't know either. He was so old that he did not care to die. He was living the moment. And everyone envied him for it, but no one did the same.

One morning, Markos decided to cross the road once more, go to the opposite forest and calmly bathe in the river.

From a young age he loved to dip his thorns in the river of the opposite forest, he spent countless hours playing there with his brothers.

His small legs prevented him from reaching his destination quickly, so he always started early in the morning to save time. He thought that at that time there would not be many cars passing by, so his route would be safer.

That's what he did that morning, so he started early to cross the road. He couldn't hear well anymore, but he could hear those loud sirens coming towards him just before he reached the opposite forest. He turned his gaze to see a large, white vehicle speeding toward him. Unable to save himself, he wrapped himself around his thorns and realized that his life was over. The wheels of the white vehicle touched his back and he screamed in pain. The white vehicle continued to run and Marcos was left on the road, in pain, screaming but knowing that he was still alive.

- "I will fight!" he said and continued to shout for help.

After a while, Sifis, the brown bear, Melina, the leader of the wild boars and all the rest of the hedgehogs who heard Mark's call appeared from behind the tall grass. They looked at him and when they realized what had happened to him they started thinking of solutions but without taking action.

A beautiful, reddish-brown fox, with a proud bushy tail appeared and said to all:

-Come on, let's help Marcos! He has done so many things for us! Stop envying him and let's help him

Elli, the fox queen in collaboration with the other animals helped and moved the old hedgehog. They treated him with love and reciprocate for all help that the hedgehog offered for so many years. Marcos after some days got well and thanked all his friends - We can all cross the road! If we stay united and loved, we can help each other and have a beautiful life!

“The Hole in My Wallet”

Last month, I received a text from my bank: “Someone has accessed your account. Click here to verify.”

I clicked, entered my login details, saw no unauthorized access, and logged out.

Shortly after, €2,000 was withdrawn from my account. I was angry and desperate, spoke to my bank, but the money was gone. The bank added that they would never request login details through a text message and a link.

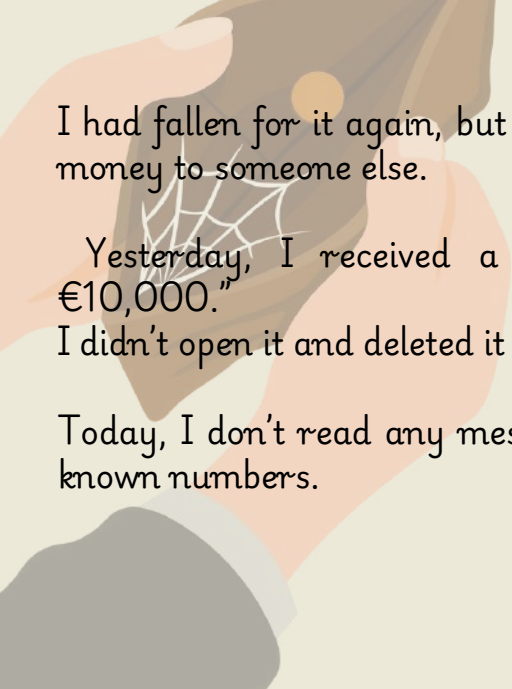
Last week, I received a message that I’d won a year’s supply of pasta. I entered my information. The notification about the win came via a call to my mobile. I could choose my prize, so I opted for the cash amount. Of course, they needed my account number for that. Instead of the prize, €1,000 was withdrawn from my account. I was desperate.

Three days ago, I received a message:

“Mom, I have a new phone number. You won’t be able to reach me on the old one. I urgently need €1,000 because I have to pay a fine. Please transfer it directly to the law firm; here is the account info...”

I was extremely worried and saved the new number. But I couldn’t reach my daughter on it. I transferred €1,000 to her account.

That evening, she called me from her old number: “Mom, why did you send me €1,000?”



I had fallen for it again, but at least I didn't transfer the money to someone else.

Yesterday, I received a message: "You have won €10,000."

I didn't open it and deleted it immediately.

Today, I don't read any messages that don't come from known numbers.

“The legend of the Ombu fairy tale from Argentina”

In Central Argentina, members of an indigenous tribe relied on corn for their food. But that year a terrible drought came, and the rains failed. The corn crop, so important for the survival of the tribe, began to wither and die. The elders of the tribe met in despair, unable to find a solution. But among the young people of the tribe there was one brave girl called Inka. She had always tended to the corn, and she would not simply give in to despair. Instead of waiting for a miracle, she told them that they should build a series of small canals to take water from the nearby river to the cornfields. Since this was something the elders had never thought about, they were skeptical.

Nevertheless, they decided to try her plan. Working hard in conjunction with her own people, Inka began to channel the water into the canals. Step by step, the corn plants began to grow strong and healthy again. The tribe was amazed at how they turned things around through cooperation and problem-solving.

When the tribe returned, corn was thriving, and Inka stood proud among her harvest. Because of her determination and wisdom, the people decided to mark the place where the solution was found with something special: an Ombu tree, a majestic tree, stood there now, a symbol that creative thinking, teamwork, and commitment can achieve even the hardest situations. Henceforth, the Ombu tree would remind the tribe that when in trouble, it is the ability to gather and think outside the box that has the potential to provide solutions, even under the direst situations.

“The liar shepherd”

There was once a shepherd who had a herd with quite a few problems and a fold outside his village. Every morning he led the sheep to a green hill near the fold and let them help themselves in peace. He usually spent his time playing his flute, but one day he forgot it in the fold. Having nothing to do, he thought of playing a prank on his fellow villagers. So he climbed a rock and started shouting in the direction of the village: Help fellow villagers. Wolves eat my sheep. Run. Help! The men of the village grabbed what they found in front of them and ran to help the shepherd, who as soon as he saw them started laughing at their plight. The shepherd, it seems, found what he was doing very funny, since he repeated it a couple more times and each time his fellow villagers ran to help him.

Then, one night, the shepherd noticed shadows moving near the flock. He heard low growls but, remembering his past lies, he hesitated. Instead of running to the village, he decided to observe quietly. Hidden in the bushes, he saw not one, but three wolves sneaking toward the sheep.

Realizing the real danger, he grabbed the horn and blew a long, deep note. The villagers, hearing this new signal, knew something was truly wrong. Armed with torches and sticks, they hurried to the pasture. The wolves, startled by the sudden lights and noise, fled into the woods. The sheep were saved, and the shepherd, instead of being scorned, was praised for his quick thinking.

From that day forward, the shepherd no longer sought attention through lies but became a trusted protector of the flock. The villagers, too, learned that even those who make mistakes can change and do great things.



“The little red riding hood”

Once upon a time there was a dear little girl; just to see her everyone loved her, and especially her grandmother, who no longer knew what to give her. Once she gave her a little red velvet cap, and because it suited her so well that she did not want to wear anything else, they always called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother said to her:

- Come, Little Red Riding Hood, here is a piece of bread and a bottle of wine, take them to grandmother; she is weak and sick and will be refreshed. When you are out, be a good girl, and don't go out of the way; if you don't, you will fall and break the bottle, and grandmother will be left empty-handed.

-I'll do everything right,' Little Red Riding Hood told Mummy and shook hands with her.

But Grandma lived outside, in the woods, about half an hour from the village. And in the wood, Little Red Riding Hood met the wolf. But she did not know that he was such an evil beast, and she was not afraid.

- Good morning, Little Red Riding Hood,' he said.





- Good Morning, wolf.
- Where are you going so early, Little Red Riding Hood?
- To visit my grandmother. And you?
- I take a walk in search of food because I am very hungry. What do you have in your basket?
- Wine and bread; so my grandmother, who is weak and ill, will enjoy it a while and get stronger.
- Ah what good things! Aren't you afraid of wandering around the forest alone? If you want, I can accompany you. I know the forest very well.
- Actually wolf I have heard some bad stories about you. Many say you are cruel. But I don't believe everything I hear, and I want to try and give you credit. My hunter uncle is out in the woods, if he doesn't see me coming to Granny he will come looking for me.

The wolf and Little Red Riding Hood then set off towards Grandma's house talking about many things and picking flowers and mushrooms to take to Grandma. Once at the house they knocked. Opening the door, the grandmother screamed in fright

- What are you doing with the big bad wolf? Run fast
- Grandma don't worry, the wolf accompanied me on my way and treated me with kindness. Many of the stories you hear are not true

The grandmother, convinced by her granddaughter's words, let them both in and offered the wolf a snack of bread and wine. At one point someone knocked at the door: it was the hunter who was passing by, having heard the voices, and had decided to stop and say hello.

Once inside, realising the presence of the wolf, he took up his rifle in fright.

- What are you doing? Don't shoot! - cried Little Red Riding Hood frightened by the hunter's reaction - the wolf has been very kind to me, unlike what everyone thinks. If you join us, surely talking to the wolf will change your mind too.

- All right, let's see if this wolf is really as good as you claim, replied the hunter as he sat down at the table.

- All right, let's see if this wolf is really as good as you claim, replied the hunter as he sat down at the table.

The story teaches us that it is a mistake to judge a person by his appearance or what others say about him because only by knowing him can we form our own opinion.



“The little tin soldier”

Once upon a time twenty-five little tin soldiers, twenty-five brothers because they were born from one old lead spoon. The weapon on their arm, their gaze fixed, their uniform glittering red and blue, how good they all looked together! The first sentence they heard when the lid of the box containing them was opened was: ‘Little tin soldiers!’ shouted by a child full of joy. It was his birthday present and he started to put them on the table, all neatly lined up. All the toy soldiers were identical to each other, all except one who was missing a leg. It had been the last toy soldier to be melted down and there was not enough lead left.

On the table, there were many other toys including a splendid paper castle. It was very beautiful but there was something even more beautiful: a pretty girl in front of the castle door, also made of paper wearing a delicate tutu. The girl had her arms outstretched because she was a dancer! And she held her leg up so high that the lead soldier thought she had none, just like him.

'Here is the perfect girl for me,' he thought, 'but she is too distinguished, she lives in a castle while I live in a box with 24 other soldiers. I still have to get to know her.' He decided to visit her as soon as evening came. The soldier hid himself so that the child would not put him back in the box with the other soldiers. As evening came, silence invaded the house. All the inhabitants slept peacefully, except for the toys. In the half-light, the party began: the balloons played the four corners, the stuffed animals did some pirouettes and the tin soldiers paraded to the sound of a colourful clown's drum. In all this excitement, only the paper dances and the tin soldier remained quiet, who could not stop looking at her, hopelessly in love.

The next morning the child noticed that the lead soldier was hidden behind the box; he took it and placed it on the windowsill. Immediately, an unfortunate gust of wind, or perhaps the vengeful breath of his rival, made it fall into the void! The child rushed out into the street to look for it, but unable to find it, he returned home in despair.

A violent summer rain began to fall. Two idlers saw the lead soldier and had the curious idea of putting it in a paper boat they were building. They then placed the boat on the water. The fragile boat was quickly at the mercy of the current and disappeared in a whirlpool. The little soldier lived interminable moments in the darkness, wet from the spray of the agitated water and navigating in the sewers... Finally he saw the sunlight in the distance. The light grew brighter and brighter and opened onto the countryside and freedom.

"Thank goodness I'm safe and sound..." he thought. Unfortunately, it wasn't over yet... A huge, ferocious-looking sewer rat was blocking the exit, but luckily he couldn't catch it and it moved away. The paper boat continued its journey across the meadows and fields until it couldn't hold on and capsized! The tin soldier sank. "Goodbye, pretty dancer!" A huge, wandering fish mistook it for a prey it was very fond of, and swallowed it whole. Shortly after, the fish was caught in a fisherman's net and sold at the market. As luck would have it, the fish was bought by the cook who worked for the boy's parents. When he dug into the animal's belly to clean it, what did he find? The lost tin soldier! He put it on the table, next to the cardboard castle.

The pretty dancer looked at him smiling, happy that she had not lost him forever. The little soldier told her about the terrible adventures he had experienced and all the toys began to listen. They were all very touched by the little soldier's return: they had always considered him not very brave and capable because of his missing leg but he had shown great courage and ability to face difficulties. They had a great respect for him. Only the bad gnome burned with anger to see that everyone was celebrating the little soldier's return, especially his beloved dancer. So he tried to convince the child to throw him into the fire by telling him that he was ruining his beautiful collection of toy soldiers because of his missing leg. However, when the child approached the little soldier to take him, his brother soldiers told him to stop and lined up like an army to defend him.

They told the child about the many adventures the little soldier had faced and showed him how his uniqueness had been a value. The child, proud of the little soldier, decided to appoint him leader of his army.



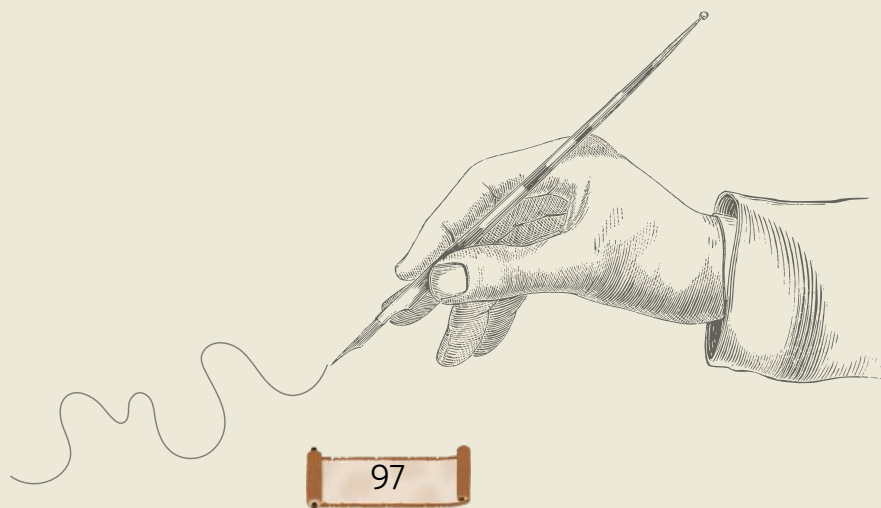
“The man who told stories”

In a small village set deep within the forest and looking out to the sea, there lived a man with a gift of storytelling. Every morning, he would walk out of the village to find inspiration for his tales. At dusk, all those villagers would gather to be enchanted by his stories. Every time they asked him: Do let us know, what did you see today? And he would say with a sweet, cool smile: Today I saw a luxury garden with trees of every shape. Every leaf was like a small painting. From every flower, there sprung all the colors I can imagine. I saw an artist who stood in the midst of the trees with a palate, creating new patterns and shapes on his canvas, influenced by all he saw around him. The villagers were astonished. How could sand be turned into a canvas? How could an old woman make art only with her hands? Filled with inspiration, the villagers began to explore their own ways of being creative. This is what happened. Soon the youngsters began to collect wonderful stones, leaves, and sticks, right in the streets creating their own art. The elders began to weave grass and string into beautiful creations; the children were painting murals on the village walls, making it the most colorful gallery. Everyone found himself or herself in some way of creativity, and the village began to shine in new colors. But one day, the storyteller came back with a completely new story. I strolled along the beach today and saw a group of people building a huge sculpture with sand and

stones. It was not just a work of art. Every stone, every piece was carefully chosen to create harmony and balance. They were not just building—they were telling. A story about their village, their lives, and their experiences. It was in that act of creation that I understood how fundamental it is not only to create but to come together to create something greater than ourselves.

The villagers, now completely in love with the idea of creativity, realized that creativity was not just about self-expression, but about the power it has to unite people and to create something that belongs to everyone.

From that day on, the man never again spoke of mythical creatures or far-off lands. Instead, he urged his fellow villagers to see the world with creative eyes, to make them understand that creativity is not only what you yourself can create, but how your imagination can bring people together and transform the world around you.



“The Monkey and the Camel”

That was a particularly important day. In fact, an invitation had gone out from the forest for delegates of every animal species to gather in an assembly during which a very serious topic would be discussed. No one was absent. The first to speak was the lion, undisputed king of the animals. In respectful general silence, he said: ‘Dearly beloved subjects, we have gathered today with the aim of establishing a lasting peace between us, eliminating all quarrels and envy, so that together we may be able to face any dangers caused by man to nature. The speech continued at length, underscored by applause.

Everyone was therefore in agreement: it was necessary to unite to overcome any problems. At the end of the assembly, each animal took part in the large lunch organised for the occasion. There was plenty of food and drink. When everyone was satiated and satisfied, someone asked the monkey, who was notoriously cheerful and lively, to cheer up the ceremony with some entertaining entertainment. The monkey, without being asked, climbed onto the platform and, with agility and friendliness, began a hilarious number full of acrobatic jumps, somersaults and dances. Enraptured, the spectators applauded like never before, amused by the skill of this unusual comedian.

A camel stood aside, admiring the monkey's success and applauding loudly. He was happy about his success, but at the same time he felt a little sad: no one would have expected it, but the camel loved to dance so much. He often did it when he was alone because he knew very well that he was not an agile and expert dancer like the monkey and he was partly afraid of the judgment of the other animals. However, he told himself that he had nothing to be ashamed of: what harm was there if he was happy when he danced even if he wasn't very good at it? So he decided that he would try: as soon as the monkey had finished his show, he took his place on the platform and began to move to the rhythm of the music. Of course, it was an awkward and ungainly dance, but he continued serenely, smiling. At first, the other animals remained silent and taken aback: they didn't expect that a camel that swayed continuously even when he walked could be interested in dancing. Yet seeing him move happily was contagious: after all, what did it matter if it wasn't a perfect dance, the beauty of that assembly was that everyone was different and it was precisely their differences that made them a strong group, capable of facing difficulties together. They all started applauding and shouting compliments to the camel.



“The mouse, the bird and the sausage”

Once upon a time, a mouse, a bird and a sausage lived together in their house. They all maintained it together, since they were very beloved, and peace and happiness reigned in their little house, since everyone did his job.

The bird's job was to fly to the forest every day and bring home wood. The mouse had to carry water from the well, light the fire and prepare the table. And the sausage had taken over the cooking. One day the little bird happened to meet another bird in the forest, who taunted him about what a nice life he had and mocked him for working hard in the forest while his other two friends were enjoying the warmth of the house.

- You get so tired and carry the wood from the forest. The other two do easy jobs around the house, she told him.

When the little mouse lighted the fire and drew water from the well, she sat in the living room until the time she had to prepare the table. And the sausage, who was the cooker, only had to stand near the pot to watch the food being cooked. When it was time for them to dine, the sausage would go into the pot, give it a little twirl among the vegetables, and so the food would become delicious and ready for them to enjoy. Then came the little bird from the wood forest.

They all sat at the table to eat and then went to their beds where they slept contentedly until the next morning. They lived a truly beautiful life! But the next day, because he believed what his friend told him, the little bird refused to go to the forest to carry wood. He had become the servant of others for a long time, he said. It's time things to change, for everyone to do a different job for a change.

The mouse and the sausage agreed and the bird was surprised! The sausage took on the duty of going to the forest for wood, the little mouse to cook and the little bird to draw water from the well, light the fire and set the table.

When the sausage started going to the forest for wood. The little bird light a fire and the little mouse put the food pot on the fire. Then they both waited for the sausage to come home, with the wood for the next day. But the sausage met companion in the forest, a dog. The dog was alone and hungry and sausage decided to accompany them and help them with all the works that had to be done.

They decided to stay all together and do the best they could. When it was time for them to eat they prepared the food and separated the works. They changed works in turns so as to feel all equal



“The Old Box and the Beautiful Moor”

The Old Box and the Enchanted Hill

In a small valley, surrounded by green hills, lived Tomás, a 15-year-old boy. He loved exploring the world around him, but lately he had been feeling discouraged. School seemed difficult, his friends were busy and everything was routine at home.

One day, while walking along a path by the highest hill in the region, he stumbled over something hard, half buried in the ground. It was an old wooden box, worn by time, with strange drawings engraved on the lid. Curious, Tomás took it home.

When he opened it, he found a folded sheet of paper inside. When he unfolded it, he saw that it was a map! There was a route drawn that crossed the entire valley and ended at the top of the hill. Next to the map, a message read:

‘Follow the path and discover your own challenge.’

Tomás felt his heart race. This was the kind of adventure he needed.

The next day, equipped with a rucksack and the map, he set off along the trail. But he soon realised that the journey wouldn't be easy.

The first challenge came at a small stream he had to cross. The bridge was broken. For a few minutes, he felt frustrated and thought about going home. But then he remembered that he had seen large stones further back. He went back, brought them to the stream and built an improvised crossing. He felt enormous satisfaction when he made it across.

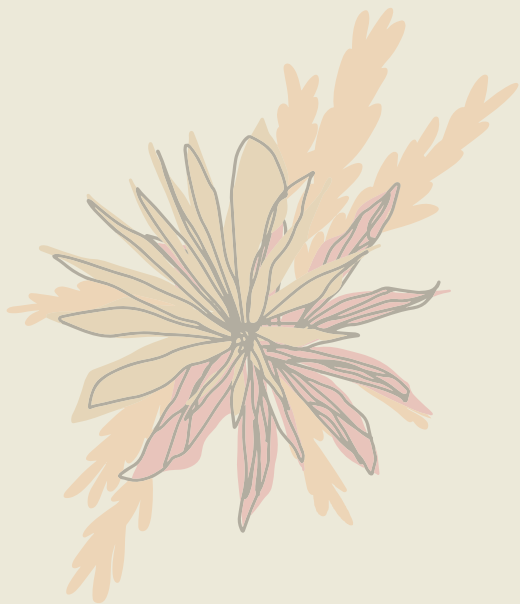
Further on, the path became confusing. The markings on the map no longer matched the track in front of him. He sat down, took a deep breath and analysed the terrain. He observed the trees, the sun and the flow of the wind. Little by little, he managed to find the right path. The map was teaching him to think for himself.

The route continued with more challenges. Climbing steep slopes, avoiding small landslides and finally facing his fear of heights as he climbed the final part of the hill. Each obstacle seemed bigger than the last, but Tomás solved them one by one, with patience and creativity.

When he finally reached the top, he was dazzled. The view was magnificent - he could see the whole valley, the houses, the fields and the horizon in the distance. But at the top there was something else: another message, engraved on a stone.

"Problems are just challenges in disguise. The way you solve them defines who you are. Keep challenging yourself."

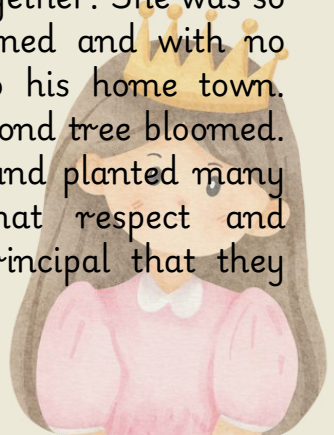
Tomás felt immense pride. He realised that the journey was not about the destination, but about the lessons he had learned along the way. He returned home different - more confident, more aware and prepared to face life's problems with a new perspective.



“The princess who became an almond tree”

Once upon a time there was a princess called Phyllis who once fell in love with a young man from Athens, Demophon, who was the son of the hero Theseus. The two young met when the young Demophon's ship was returning from Troy. They got married but after a while the young Athenian became sick because he was missing his home town. The enamored princess, unable to see him sad, she let him go back believing that if he really loved her he would come back and then he would truly be hers.

So it happened and the enamored Phyllis was left alone to wait for her chosen one. Demophon stayed at his home town for a while but his thought was in his lovely princess. One day he decided to plant an almond tree in his garden and he promised to the gods of Olympus that when it will bloom, he will be with his wife. And so he did. He went back to find his wife and thank her for her devotion and the respect that she showed to his needs. He proposed her to visit his home town together. She was so happy that her loved husband returned and with no second thoughts she followed him to his home town. When they arrived in Athens, the almond tree bloomed. The young couple lived in happiness and planted many almond trees to remind them that respect and recognition of people's needs is a principal that they should never forget.



“The Princess and the Pea”

The young man and the key

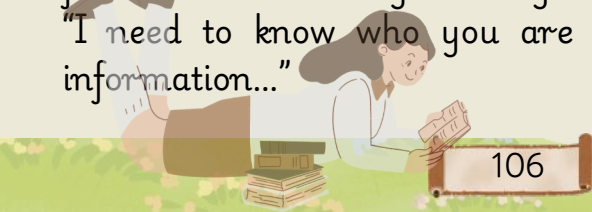
Having lost hope of finding someone to spend her life with and start a family, young Gabriela, weary of travelling through all the kingdoms, decided to return home. Her father, overjoyed to see her again after months of absence, immediately noticed the sadness and disappointment in her eyes. He comforted her as best he could, assuring her that love often appears where we least expect it—not in the young men she had tirelessly sought in every corner of the world.

One sunny day, as Gabriela was in the garden reading, completely engrossed in the unfolding story, a young man walked by, looking somewhat lost, and called out to her:

- “Excuse me... Good afternoon... Could you help me? I’m looking for Mr Martins’ house. I used to live around here as a child and would love to see him again...”

The house he was searching for was her own! But who was this stranger? Gabriela wasn’t about to give her father’s address away so easily.

“I need to know who you are before I give you any information...”



"If I could come in and explain... I've travelled far and... I'm tired and... hungry," he admitted, blushing.

Gabriela agreed, and they talked until nightfall. They discovered that they had grown up together until the age of six and shared similar likes and quirks. But could it really be true? Was this young man actually Gabriel, the son of the caretakers who had once lived there?

Her father was out hunting and wouldn't return until the next morning... So Gabriela came up with an idea.

Late that night, Gabriela prepared the guest room and offered it to the (un)known young man. Beneath the pillow, she placed a key. If Gabriel was who he claimed to be, he would know what the key unlocked.

The next morning, Gabriela found a chest in the kitchen. An old chest, filled with childhood treasures—priceless to a six-year-old but mere rubbish to adults.

"As soon as I saw the key, I remembered our secret chest... hidden in the barn..."

Gabriela was overjoyed—she had found the love of her life!

They lived happily ever after in the same house where they had first met as children, with the key proudly displayed in a frame above the fireplace in their living room.



"The queen and the salt"

Once upon a time, there was a great king who he had three sons and loved them very much. One day he decided to see how much they loved him too. So he called each one and asked him how much he loved him. "I love you as much as I love gold and jewels," said the first son, and the king was very pleased.

"I love you as much as I love money," said the second son, and again the king was greatly pleased.

"I love you as much as I love salt," said the third son. The king then became very angry and wanted to expel the third son from the palace.

All siblings wanted unity and love in their family and they decided to show to their father that salt is also significant as money and gold. So the next day they prepared three different meals, one from each son and invited their son to taste them and choose the best meal. The table had all kinds of food but the food that the two brothers prepared was unsalted. When everyone sat down at the table, they told their father to taste the meals they prepared. The father took the fork and began to eat from the meal that the first son prepared. But with the first forkfuls he complained that the food had no salt at all. Then he tasted the meal that the second son had prepared. It was also unsalted and he stopped eating. Then the siblings looked at each other. The first son told "Father, why are you so sad because you cannot eat your unsalted food?"

The old king, tasted the third meal and was overwhelmed by the delicious taste it had. At that time, he realized his mistake and embraced all his sons.

Words sometimes are used in a way that do not show the significance and the importance of the emotions. Love was compared to salt in this story. Such an important value that was thought by the the father as an insignificant mean to compare it with salt

But when the queen (father) realized the importance of salt in taste he also realized the importance and the value of the love that his son was trying to express.



The halibut's eyes widened and he bit his upper lip in astonishment. But then he took a happy leap.

He flew out of the water and called out: 'I'd love to, fisherman! Jump on and hold on to my fin! We'll discover the world together!'

So the fisherman jumped and held on tight and they dashed off to discover the world.

And they lived happily ever after, travelling the world's oceans together. While Ilsebill, green with greed, sits on the bench in front of the pretty little house wondering why the Butt is taking so long to give her a big castle.



“The Rooster of Barcelos”

Presumed Innocent?

The courtroom waiting area was unbearably hot... With a dry throat, John felt a tightness in his chest... Anxiety was causing symptoms he could hardly endure... Trapped in a web of bureaucracy, misunderstandings, and cases that seemed to belong to everyone and no one, he felt lost.

One afternoon changed everything. As an ex-convict, he knew he had been blamed again, and this time, it wasn't his fault. He took a deep breath and resolved not to back down. He was innocent. This time, he was truly innocent. What had happened? Even John couldn't explain.

A name? A photo? Was someone setting him up?

For years, he had distanced himself from the shady groups in his neighbourhood. Since serving his sentence, something inside him had changed. Prison was something he couldn't face again. The routine of incarceration chains any sense of intellectual freedom, turning people into zombies. That was John's view. And he had managed to get out; he wasn't going back.



Now he found himself caught up in a mess he could barely believe. He had started a new job in a different part of the city, where no one knew him. How had his name ended up on the list of suspects in a series of thefts from the office garage?

Suddenly, in that waiting room, John stopped hearing the chatter of the group sitting beside him. He no longer noticed the sound of water dripping from the cooler's leaky tap, nor the court officer emerging from behind the heavy, solid wooden door, calling names from a list clipped to a worn board with a detached, emotionless voice.

In fact, he stopped hearing anything external altogether. Then, a spark lit up in his mind!

That's it! His name was on the list because he was the new guy at work! Because he had a criminal record! Because it was easier to blame "the outsider"!

Aware of the situation, he suddenly felt confident. He knew he was innocent and was determined to face any challenge, whether it came from the judge or the lawyers. He felt he could prove his innocence with words alone.

Going back to that fateful afternoon in his mind, John went over every detail, every person he had encountered. Then he remembered! On the very afternoon of the thefts, he had been helping an elderly woman who had difficulty walking. She needed assistance reaching the office of her daughter-in-law, a lawyer in the same building.

It had taken quite some time, and although the woman had been very grateful and had given him a card, John hadn't thought about it since.

"My dear young man," she had said, "you're the only one who noticed I was struggling. For your kindness, I'll give you my husband's card—Judge Mendonça. Don't hesitate to contact him if you ever need help."

He didn't even need to search for the card, which was probably lost forever anyway.

In the courtroom, John humbly requested permission to speak. He declared:

- "I am not the suspect you are looking for. I have an alibi - your wife was with me at the time of the crime! Punish me if it isn't true!"

After the expected commotion and thorough verification, John was released. The gracious lady later invited him for lunch.



“The sorcerer’s apprentice”

‘Finally, the time has come!’ Otto rubs his hands together and runs back and forth excitedly. It’s the first time the sorcerer’s apprentice has been home alone. ‘Today I’m going to try out the spell from last week!’ He already starts muttering magically.

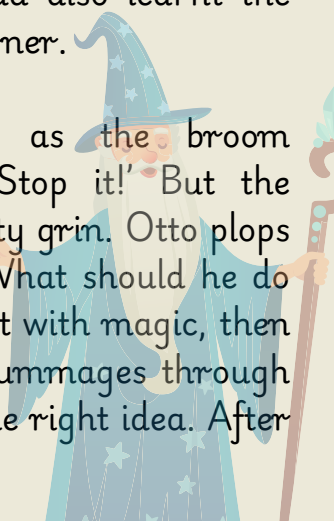
The cat next to him makes a horrible hump as a broom slowly gets up from the corner and marches off. He grabs two buckets and runs determinedly down to the river. Otto follows him and claps his hands happily: ‘It’s working! It’s working!’ The broom fills the buckets with water and marches back to the magic school. Content, the boy watches as the broom fetches bucket after bucket of water.

Suddenly he realises that the tub should be full by now. He jumps up and runs off. ‘Stop, stop!’ he calls after the broom. ‘That’s enough now!’ But the broom is already on its way back to the river.

Otto is getting hot. Last week, he had also learnt the saying to put the broom back in the corner.

But he can’t remember it!

‘That’s enough!’ he shouts again as the broom approaches again. ‘That’s enough! Stop it!’ But the broom just looks at the boy with a nasty grin. Otto plops down on the stone floor in despair. What should he do now? He doesn’t want to give up. If not with magic, then with wits! He runs to the shed and rummages through the tools in the hope that he will get the right idea. After a while, Otto gives up.



On his way back into the house, the boy steps in a puddle that has already crept from the bathtub into the front garden. That's when he gets the idea. 'That's it!' The boy quickly grabs a spade and starts digging. He digs and works non-stop until he ends up standing happily in front of a construction.

At that moment, the mischievous broom runs past the tub again and shortly afterwards the construction floods. 'What a bummer,' thinks Otto. 'It just won't work without the spell.' He takes a deep breath and reaches for the phone.

'Lena? I've made a mess. And then I had a good idea, but it doesn't work and now I'm so nervous because the whole house is under water - and the master is coming home soon - and I just can't think of the spell!'

On the other end, Otto hears the familiar voice of his friend: 'If I've understood you correctly, Otto, you learnt the spell last week. Didn't you?'

'Yes, that's right,' Otto sniffs in a low voice.

'Then you'll remember it if you think carefully,' Lena encourages him.

'But I've already tried,' Otto replies quietly.

'Watch out. If you sit down now and take a deep breath. And close your eyes. And believe in yourself, then I'm sure you'll remember that spell!'

'Do you really think so?' Otto asks timidly, but he has already decided to give it a try. They hang up and he looks for a cosy corner where he can concentrate. As he sits there quietly, breathing and thinking, the floor slowly continues to flood.



After a short time, he jumps up: 'That's it!' Otto immediately starts mumbling again and the broom immediately lies lifeless in the corner from which it came - as if nothing had happened.

'Now dry the floor quickly!' Otto commands himself, relieved, and starts to mop up the water with a sponge. Just then, the front door opens and the boss comes in. The sorcerer's apprentice kneels next to the bucket and looks over at her uncertainly.

'I see you've been practising your magic?' she asks in a voice that Otto can't quite recognise. Is she angry? She continues: 'You've done very well, Otto. Practice makes perfect.'

'You're not angry, mistress?'

'Oh no!' she waves it off. 'After all, you built that helpful irrigation system for the front garden! And mopped the whole house! Who could be mad about that?' smiles the sorceress. The boy tears up with relief. He hurries to dry the floor and then enthusiastically explains his construction to the mistress. From now on, the used bath water always flows directly into the front garden of the magic school to water the flowers and it doesn't take long before there is a similar construction in every front garden in the neighborhood.



“The Stork and the Fox”

Stubbornness doesn't pay...

It wasn't enough to endure[”] the cold, the wind, and the lack of food – it was Christmas as well! Mrs Stork and Mrs Fox, with their long lives, few friends, and no family, lived isolated from the world. Stubborn and grumpy, they spent every Christmas Eve alone...

But this year would be different.

Mrs Fox invited Mrs Stork for dinner on Christmas Eve, and Mrs Stork invited Mrs Fox for Christmas Day lunch. However, this wasn't their idea... It was a sort of challenge set by Mrs Owl, an old and wise soul. Tired of seeing her friends alone out of sheer stubbornness, she had shared a little tip during a woodland gathering: no one should be alone on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. What's more, they should prepare a wonderful meal for their neighbour!

And so, the two old grumps fell for the trap.

The trouble began on the evening of the dinner, when Mrs Stork decided to serve the meal in fine porcelain jars with narrow necks, claiming it was her best tableware and perfectly suited for the festive night. Of course, Mrs Fox couldn't eat a thing, as her muzzle made it impossible to reach the food inside the jars.

The next day, at lunch, Mrs Fox – who had already prepared her plan – didn't miss the chance for a small revenge.

They were in the midst of this silly rivalry when Mrs Owl arrived with a delightful bag of the forest's finest delicacies, simply wrapped in plain paper.

The three of them relished the unexpected treat and soon realised how ridiculous they had been, letting their physical differences dictate their actions. In truth, there was far more that united them than set them apart. As Mrs Owl wisely remarked: "It's not the wrapping that matters, but the contents – and the friendship!"

“The Story of the Apparent Giant”

Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver embarked on a long journey and eventually found themselves in a desert. Suddenly, Jim spotted something in the distance. “There!” he could only whisper. Luke turned around. What he saw surpassed everything he had ever laid eyes on.

On the horizon stood a giant of such enormous size that even the sky-high mountains beside him looked like small hills. “Oh!” Jim gasped. “That’s no mirage, no fata..., fata...! Quick, let’s get away, Luke! Maybe he hasn’t seen us yet!”

Luke, too, felt uneasy, but instead of letting fear overwhelm him, he suggested they take a deep breath. The two decided to face the situation, no matter what awaited them.

“Let’s stay calm,” said Luke. He watched the giant closely. “I think, apart from his size, the giant looks rather friendly.” “W-w-what?!” Jim stuttered in horror. “Well,” Luke replied, “just because he’s big doesn’t mean he’s a monster, right? We’ve faced many challenges before, Jim. We can handle this one too.” His voice was steady, full of confidence in their shared strength.

As they continued to observe the giant, they felt their fear growing. But they reminded themselves of the many difficult situations they had already overcome.

The giant stretched out his hand longingly, only to let it fall hopelessly, and a deep sigh lifted his chest. Suddenly, the giant raised both hands, clasped them together, fell to his knees, and called out in a thin, pitiful voice, "Please, please, strangers, don't run away! I won't harm you!"

Jim watched in horror as Luke politely took off his cap and waved his handkerchief. Now the disaster would surely strike! The giant rose slowly. He seemed uncertain and confused. He asked, "Does that mean I may come closer?" "Yes, indeed!" shouted Luke. He knew that the greatest danger was often fear itself, and so he pushed aside his own uncertainty and walked toward the giant, waving resolutely. Jim was paralyzed with fear, his vision blurring. In any case, he couldn't let his friend Luke face such a danger alone, so he ran after Luke, even though his knees were trembling.

As the giant saw the man and the small boy waving at him, his sad face brightened. "Ah, friends!" he cried in his thin voice, "then I'll come now!" He began to move, striding toward Luke and Jim.

What happened next was quite astonishing. With every step the giant took, he grew a little smaller. When he was about a hundred meters away, he seemed no taller than a high church tower. Jim furrowed his brow. "That's strange, Luke. He's getting smaller." Luke nodded thoughtfully. "It seems this giant is only an apparent giant. Perhaps things aren't always as they seem at first glance."

After another fifty meters, he was no taller than a house, and by the time he reached the two friends, he was the same height as Luke the Engine Driver – in fact, he was even a head shorter!

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Jim watched in horror as Luke politely took off his cap and waved his handkerchief. Now the disaster would surely strike! The giant rose slowly. He seemed uncertain and confused. He asked, "Does that mean I may come closer?" "Yes, indeed!" shouted Luke. He knew that the greatest danger was often fear itself, and so he pushed aside his own uncertainty and walked toward the giant, waving resolutely. Jim was paralyzed with fear, his vision blurring. In any case, he couldn't let his friend Luke face such a danger alone, so he ran after Luke, even though his knees were trembling.

As the giant saw the man and the small boy waving at him, his sad face brightened. "Ah, friends!" he cried in his thin voice, "then I'll come now!" He began to move, striding toward Luke and Jim.

What happened next was quite astonishing. With every step the giant took, he grew a little smaller. When he was about a hundred meters away, he seemed no taller than a high church tower. Jim furrowed his brow. "That's strange, Luke. He's getting smaller." Luke nodded thoughtfully. "It seems this giant is only an apparent giant. Perhaps things aren't always as they seem at first glance."

After another fifty meters, he was no taller than a house, and by the time he reached the two friends, he was the same height as Luke the Engine Driver – in fact, he was even a head shorter!

"Good day, I am Mr. Tur Tur, and I am an apparent giant. The farther away I am, the bigger I look. And the closer I come, the more you can see my true size. In reality, I'm no different from you." "You mean," Luke asked, "you don't actually get smaller as you come closer? And you're not really that huge when you're far away, it just looks that way?" "Exactly," said Mr. Tur Tur, "that's why I'm an apparent giant." "You see, Jim," said Luke, "that's exactly what I meant about fear."

Jim nodded, and in that moment, he realized how important it was to face challenges with courage and an open heart.

Mr. Tur Tur told them about his life in solitude. "Most people are afraid of me," he said sadly. "They run away before they even get a chance to know me." Jim looked at the apparent giant sympathetically. "That must be hard for you," he said. "Yes," replied Mr. Tur Tur. "It's not easy living in a world where people misunderstand you. But I've learned to cope with the loneliness." Luke nodded in admiration. "That's true strength. Not giving up, even when you feel alone and misunderstood."

Jim, Luke, and Mr. Tur Tur became good friends and helped others overcome their fear of apparent giants.



“The stone Soup”

The empty box

That afternoon was particularly gray and Zé, a writer for a large publishing group, was completely blocked. In front of his computer, he looked at his watch and felt time flying by. It was now three hours before he had to hand his boss the six page manuscript for his section in the Saturday edition.

He looked around and saw his coworkers typing furiously. He thought about asking them for help and gently approached each of them.

Nothing! Nobody even paid him any attention or gave him any importance. Even though he was one of the main writers for the Saturday magazine.

Then Zé had a brilliant idea. He took an empty cardboard box with a cover, slit it open and approached his colleagues again, saying:

- “Here are my best ideas for Saturday's publication. If you write an idea, a sentence, a short text and put it inside this box, I'll include it and publish it too.”

People, curious to know how Zé was going to do such a feat and add their ideas to everyone's sentences, did as he said. After a short time and a few laps around the publishing offices, Zé had a box full of sentences and ideas for his text.

He got it published on time.
That Saturday's magazine was the best seller of the
trimester!



“The Suspicion”

Once upon a time there was a woodcutter who discovered day after day that his axe was being used by someone else. The first few weeks it appeared with a more worn blade and the hilt was increasingly marked with a hand on the handle that was not his own. All this made him more and more suspicious. One day he discovered that his axe had disappeared. With tears in his eyes and a knot in his stomach, he met his neighbour near his house. The neighbour, always polite, greeted him with a friendly smile before entering his home.

The woodcutter, very saddened by the loss of his work tool, became suspicious. He himself wondered: could it be that my neighbour had been responsible for stealing his axe? Each and every encounter, that is, each gesture, each word of his neighbour increased all the woodcutter's expectations that he had found the guilty. However, as he continued his thoughts, he realised that his footsteps had led him back to the forest where he had been working the night before. He could not explain the whole situation, but his intuition led him there.

Suddenly, he stumbled and fell to the ground. At that moment, when he looked up, there it was: his axe. The woodcutter returned home with his tool in hand, feeling the weight of regret for his unfounded suspicions.

There was no explanation for what had just happened. When he saw his neighbour again, he realised that his expression, his gait and his manner of speaking were the same as ever. His malice had played a dirty trick on him and in this "alien" situation he somehow needed to find a guilty.

Repentant, he reflected and apologised to his neighbour for mistrusting him. After this episode, they became friends and continued to live together, supporting and learning from each other.



“The Three Little Pigs”

The Three Wolves and the Pig

Once upon a time, three wolves lived on a beautiful island. They had recently left their parents' home and were living on their own. The three brothers lived together in a lovely wooden house.

On the same island, there were also three pigs. Each family lived on opposite sides of the island, and they rarely crossed paths. But one day, something happened, and it was up to one of the pig brothers to solve the situation.

For a long time, the pig had been planning to rescue his brothers, who had been captured by the wolf brothers. Because their houses were made of straw and wood, the pigs had been caught by one of the wolves, who now lived in the wooden house with his two brothers. The pig who had managed to escape, thanks to his brick house, knew that his brothers were locked in the basement, almost always trapped inside a chest.

One afternoon, disguised as a salesman, the pig knocked on the wolves' door with a small bag of apples to sell. The apples smelled so good that the wolves opened the door, grabbed the bag, and without thinking twice, ate all the apples.

The apples were so juicy that the wolves didn't even notice they were laced with a high dose of sleeping pills.

Within minutes, they fell asleep, almost collapsing on the kitchen floor.

The pig managed to enter the house without any problems, rescue his brothers, and take them safely back to his brick house on the other side of the island, where they lived happily ever after.



“The Town Musicians of Bremen”

Once upon a time, a donkey was travelling to Bremen when he saw a crying dog lying by the side of the road. ‘Why are you crying like that?’ the donkey asked empathically and the dog replied:

‘My master wanted to shoot me because I’m too old and can no longer help him on the hunt. That’s why I ran away - and now I don’t know where to go...’

‘Come with me to Bremen! I had a similar experience, but now I’m going to be a musician!’ the grey donkey beamed at the dog.

‘That sounds great!’ the dog jumped up and followed the donkey.

A short time later, a grim cat was sitting by the side of the path and the donkey spoke to it:

‘What’s got in your way, good old furry nose?’

‘Because I’m old and useless, my missus wanted to drown me. So I ran away, but where am I supposed to go now?’

‘Come with us to Bremen!’ the dog suggested happily.

‘We felt the same way and now we’re going to set up a jazz band in Bremen! The cat joined in and began to sing a little song in relief.

Soon they passed a farmyard. The house rooster was sitting on the gate and was screeching so loudly that the three of them had to cover their ears. ‘What are you shrieking about?’ asked the donkey.

'Tomorrow the farmer wants to eat me in the soup. I'm so frightened!'

'Oh dear,' said the donkey, 'you'd better move to Bremen with us! We're going to be musicians.'

You have a great voice!' The rooster liked the idea and so they continued their journey together.

'Donkey?' asked the dog as they walked along.

'Yes, what's up?'

'I was just thinking about what our band will look like.'

'Awesome. So?'

'I thought maybe Cat, Rooster and I could be the singers.'

'I like that,' the cat said and the rooster nodded eagerly.

'Wonderful,' replied the donkey.

'Yes, but... If you were the bass...'

'Exactly!' the donkey hurried to agree.

'Well,' the dog said. 'Then the guitar is still missing.'

Now the cat and rooster understood and added nervously: 'And the drums!' 'And the saxophone!'

'And the piano!' 'And the trumpet!'

'Hm..., you're right,' grumbled the donkey. 'That really is a bit daft'. He looked annoyed and trotted on thoughtfully. Shortly afterwards, he said: 'Now let's find somewhere to spend the night. It's already getting dark.'

The donkey and the dog laid down under a large tree, the cat climbed a branch and the cockerel flew up to the top of the tree from where he could see far and wide. The mood was somber because it was cold and uncomfortable and because everyone was thinking about how they could still realize the dream of their band.

Just before they fell asleep, the rooster noticed a glimmer of light and whispered to his mates:

'Guys, there must be a house. I see a light!' The donkey replied: "Let's go there then. It's really hard to sleep here. Shortly after, they stood in front of a brightly lit robbers' house from which they could hear loud chatter. The donkey went on and peeked in by the window.

'What do you see, grey?' the rooster asked.

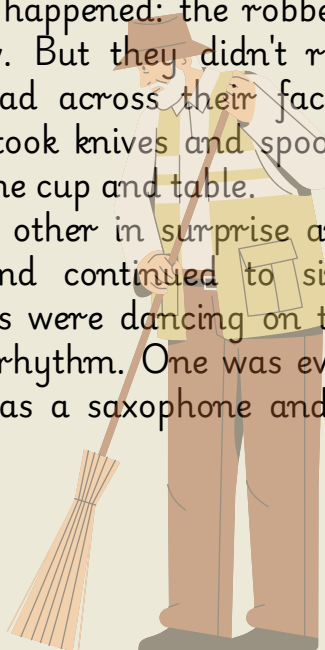
'A table laid out with good food and drink, and around it sit jeering robbers enjoying themselves!'

'Mmmm! That would be something for us!' the cock said and they thought about how they could possibly chase the robbers out.

Soon they had an idea. They would scare the robbers so much that they would run away.

So the donkey stood with his front feet on the the windowsill and the dog jumped on his back. The cat climbed onto the dog and the rooster flew onto the cat's head. On a signal, they began to make music very loudly. Unexpectedly something strange happened: the robbers froze and looked at the window. But they didn't run away. No! Instead, a grin spread across their faces, revealing their gold teeth. They took knives and spoons and tapped them in beat against the cup and table.

The four animals looked at each other in surprise and delight at the same time - and continued to sing passionately. Soon the scoundrels were dancing on the table and stomping around it in rhythm. One was even sitting at the piano and there was a saxophone and a guitar, too!



When finally everybody needed a break, the robbers gave the animals a warm welcome and offered them food and drink. While they ate and drank, they planned their mutual future together - as a jazz band in Bremen. Afterwards, everyone looked for a cosy place to sleep. Tired from the day's events and cheerful about their joint plans, they soon fell asleep.



“The ugly duckling”

There was a great commotion on the farm: Mama Paw's chicks were hatching.

One by one, they began to hatch. Mama Paw was so excited about her adorable ducklings that she didn't notice that one of her eggs, the biggest of them all, remained intact.

A few hours later, the last egg began to break. Mummy Paw, all the chicks and the animals on the farm were waiting to meet the little one who had not yet hatched. Suddenly, out of the shell came a duckling with a peculiar appearance, its appearance was not as expected. When they all saw it they were surprised, this duckling was big, grey and its quacking sounded different. Although his appearance was not what they expected, Mama Paw took him in, along with her other chicks.

Although no one said anything, everyone thought the same thing: ‘This duckling is too ugly’.

Days went by and all the animals on the farm made fun of him. The ugly duckling could not stand the cruelty of the others, so he decided to leave the farm in search of a place where he could be accepted as he is.



The ugly duckling wandered deep into the forest and just as he was about to give up, he found the home of a humble old woman who lived with a cat and a hen. The duckling stayed with them for a while, but as he was not happy, he soon left. When winter came, the poor ugly duckling almost froze to death. Fortunately, a farmer took him home to live with his wife and children. But the duckling was terrified of the children, who were screaming and jumping all the time, and again escaped, spending the winter in a swampy pond. It was at the arrival of spring that the ugly duckling found a family of swans swimming in the pond and wanted to approach them. But he remembered how they all made fun of him and he ducked his head in shame. When he looked at his reflection in the water he was astonished. He was not an ugly duckling, but a handsome young swan. Now he knew why he looked so different from his brothers and sisters - they were ducklings, but he was a swan! Happy, he swam towards his family. He realised that true beauty lies in diversity and inclusion, and that everyone deserves to be treated with equality and respect, regardless of their differences. And so, the ugly duckling found his true home, where he was loved and valued for exactly who he was.



“The ungrateful lion”

Once upon a time there was a ferocious lion, who sowed terror throughout the savannah. To prevent it from continuing to cause trouble, the hunters agreed to get rid of it. They tricked the beast into a hut and sealed the door. One day, a man, moved to pity by the lion's pleas to free him, opened the door and the animal did not hesitate to attack him. He was saved and immediately the humans of the village intervened, who set up a kind of trial to find out what had happened.

The trial took a different turn, however, as a wise wolf began to question the lion's motives for attacking the one who had saved him. The central question throughout the trial was "What did we do to contribute to the re-education of the lion?". This reasoning made the village realise how useless it was to lock an animal in a cell without helping it understand its mistakes. The lion was then invited back into the cage with the promise of a path that would reintegrate him into society. After only two years, the lion became free, establishing a great complicity with humans and animals, loving everyone and being loved.

“The Zanj rebellion”

In AD 869, at a time when slavery was prevalent, the Zanj people, representing the slaves from East Africa and thus referred to with the Arabic term Zanj, were among the ones who rose up against the official authority of the Abbasid caliphate. Inspired by lofty ideals of justice and equality, they cross paths with an Arab revolutionary, Ali bin Muhammad, who brought forth not only a general desire to be free but also ideas about deciding for oneself and casting one's vote for the governing authority. Rather than carrying out clandestine military raids on settled community lands, attacks on Arabian palaces or abysmal ambushes, gradually, the rebels started active involvement with localities and planning their actions with the approval of all involved parties. They chose their own representative bodies in which every slave, every Bedouin, and every serf had the right to vote; they were genuinely members of the gathering. Over time, the revolt grew into a large-scale campaign, reaching entire cities and settlements, greatly populated by resistant locals.

In the confidence of doing so, they seized supplies and freed slaves, creating their own new social structures based on popular sovereignty. Instead of traditional military campaigns, they sought to create strong democratic communities, based on mutual aid and a role for everybody, including the slaves. In the assumption of exceeding fighters around 500,000, they established their own parliament, everybody presenting their interests and propositions. This new regime resisted the Abbasid caliphate and also augmented an even brighter future where no one loses his voice. To that end, they established self-ruling cities and formed an army to fight for the principles of democracy, equality, and justice.

Instead of using violence to suppress dissent, the rebels set forth peaceful negotiations with the Abbasid Caliphate. They announced their agreeability for peace upon parameters of equality and cooperation, meaning any person should have rights to participate in governance. They offered to establish a system of governance where their rights as people and those of all residents would be an integral part of it. This proposal shocked the leadership of the Caliphate.

However, after lengthy negotiations, rather than putting out of action the rebellion using the Abbasid army, a historic agreement was reached. The Caliphate agreed to permit the Zanj and their allies to represent the authority in government regarding the regions they controlled. Many of the Zanj adults gained permission to serve in local governments and in army commands. They became complete citizens, and their strife for equality became some kind of example of how democracy can replace oppression.

Though upon ending the last battle Ali bin Muhammad was killed, the legacy of his thought lived on through the new democratic institutions created by the rebels. These changes formed the basis for the new political framework where the ownership of the power came from the people and everyone was entitled to take part in governance.



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