



***WRITING IN CIRCLE:  
citizenship against  
inequality***

***By the 1<sup>a</sup>A***

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# ***WRITING IN CIRCLE:***

## ***la cittadinanza contro la disuguaglianza***



## **Preface**

This project "Reading in circle", has been carried out by Class IA of the high school " Scientifico Cannizzaro" of Vittoria.

What led us to create this collection of stories/ personal reflections, is the Civis course we did during the second term of this school year 2022/2023.

The main theme, covered throughout the book, is the fight against inequality, as well as the quest for inclusion. In addition, other topics are also present which have inspired us in writing these small works.

Lastly, we have been supported by three esteemed teachers in our work: Mrs Belfiore, Miss Mandarà and Mrs Allegria, who have been very helpful at all times. Nonetheless, we would like to wish you happy reading and a pleasant summer vacation!

By the 1<sup>st</sup>A

## **Prefazione**

Questo progetto è stato realizzato dalla 1ªA del liceo “Scientifico Cannizzaro” di Vittoria. Ciò che ci ha spinti a creare questa raccolta di racconti/ riflessioni personali è il percorso di Educazione Civica che abbiamo intrapreso durante il secondo quadrimestre di quest’anno scolastico 2022/2023. Il tema principale, trattato all’interno del libro, è la lotta contro le disuguaglianze, come anche la ricerca dell’inclusione. Sono in più presenti altre tematiche che hanno ispirato alcuni di noi nella scrittura di queste piccole opere. Nel nostro lavoro siamo poi stati assistiti da tre nostre care professoresse: la prof.ssa Belfiore, la prof.ssa Mandarà e la prof.ssa Allegria, le quali sono sempre state molto disponibili. Detto ciò, non ci rimane che augurarvi una buona lettura e delle serene vacanze estive!

Dalla 1ªA

## **The girl who wanted to play soccer**

Once upon a time there was a little girl who wanted to be a soccer player. Everyone told her that she could never realize her dream because she was a girl, and, besides, girls don't play soccer. Her parents had forced their daughter to enroll in a dance school, not realizing how much it hurt the little girl. When someone asked her what her dream was, she would reply “ I want to become a soccer player. “

Everyone laughed and made fun of her by saying “ football is a boy's sport. Girls are weaker than boys and they wouldn't be able to run so much.”

Despite everything and everyone, the girl didn't lose hope and secretly trained to improve herself more and more. One day, without anyone knowing anything, she went for a competition to join a famous football team; the coaches were amazed by her enormous talent and potentials thus, she joined the team. However, the girl began to think she was not good enough, she was not like the other players on the team, so she confided herself in her coach who said:” you mustn't think that, you're a fantastic player, don't allow gender inequality to question your talent and ability, even if you are not a boy like the other team members, you are a very good player.”

These words entered the girl's mind and made her feel more confident, making her understand that nothing can stop her from achieving her goals, for which she has always fought.

By: Naormi

## **The pumpkins of Pumpkinween**

Once upon a time, in the country of Pumpkinween, there was a little pumpkin named Monkey. As you can imagine, this one resembled a monkey; indeed she had small ears on its head and a long tail. In her village everyone made fun of her for her physical aspect, so she never left her home, except to go to school with all the other pumpkins of her age. However, these spit seeds on her and always made her feel alone and different. Actually, the other pumpkins weren't special; one of them was called Little Witch, because she wore a witch hat on her head and could send spells whenever she wanted to. The other pumpkin was called Baby ghost, because she wore a white cloth over her; she disappeared and often reappeared. The last was Spider, the scariest pumpkin of all; this one attacked you with lots of spiders.

One day the teacher, the witch Frog, asked her pupils to become the scariest pumpkins in history on Halloween night . So, liittle Witch, Baby Ghost and Spider began to laugh. They were happy for what the witch frog had said. Instead, Monkey was very worried because she knew she didn' have that scary aspect as the others. Therefore, she decided to walk through the Pumpkinween cemetery to go visit her parents' grave. These had died during their transfer to a Mexican city on Halloween. From that day, Monkey had decided not to celebrate October 31st anymore. Hence, that year the witch Frog obliged her to celebrate it.

“How can I become like other pumpkins? What can make me as special as they are?” Monkey wondered in a loud voice. Suddenly a crow appeared in front of her, and she started running frighteningly. But the crow appeared again. “I'm Morgan, the crow. I makes wishes come true. While I was flying, I heard a pumpkin talking to herself about how to scare others. So I here I am...do you want to be helped by Morgan?» asked the crow.



"Mmm... okay! But I want to be the scariest pumpkin everyone will talk about for years!" said Monkey. So Morgan began the magic. Suddenly a big purple cloud rose in the sky and Monkey started floating. After that, she fell and when she got up she was totally different. Instead of a monkey's tail, she now had a crocodile's tail. Instead of monkey ears, she now had monster ears and her mouth was large with sharp teeth. Still Monkey had also changed inside. She wasn't the sweet and shy pumpkin that everyone knew, but the most evil.

After thanking the crow, Monkey went back to her home and tried to sleep, but she felt strange.

The next day was Halloween and, after some hours, night came. All the pumpkins were dressed up in their costume. But none could be scarier than Monkey's new version. Seeing her coming, all the pumpkins ran away screaming and crying (even Little Witch, Baby Ghost and Spider). However, Monkey didn't want to be like this, so she decided to return to the Pumpkinween cemetery. There she found the crow again. "What have you done to me?" Monkey asked.

"I made you look scary, just like you wanted!" Morgan replied.

"Well, I don't want to be like this anymore. Turn me back into the old me!"

"I am sorry, I can't. I don't do reverse spells", said the crow and left. Monkey went to her parents' grave and started crying. One of her tears fell on the grave and suddenly Monkey was transformed back into the old Monkey. Shocked, she thanked her parents many times for this miracle and went back to her ordinary life. After this experience, Monkey understood that you should never try to become like others just for envy, because everyone is special just the way they are.

By:aurora\_boreale.4

## **A special gift**

Mirko was a child who lived with his mum, dad and two sisters. All the family lived in a small house, with a bathroom, a very small kitchen and two bedrooms.

Mirko's parents worked hard in a grocery store which, however, did not produce much income.

Every morning Mirko woke up with the sound of the train passing near the house. He always wore the same pair of shoes, which were a bit tight and worn out. He left the house with a red backpack and headed for school.

When at school, he sat at his desk and waited for his classmates. One day, after class, Clara, a classmate of his, invited everyone to her birthday party, telling her classmates to bring a present.

As soon as Mirko got home, he asked his mother for some money to buy a present for Clara, but his mother told him that the money is needed to buy food for the family. Mirko sadly, decided to go out into the courtyard, where he saw a beautiful red rose. He picked it for Clara as a present.

That evening, as soon as he arrived at the party, he showed the gift to his friends, who started laughing and making fun of him; because it wasn't an expensive gift.

Mirko felt embarrassed and began to cry, thinking that Clara would get angry at him and kick him out of the party.

Instead Clara, on the other hand, as soon as she saw Mirko's red rose, took it from him and thanked him, then said: "What a beautiful rose! I love it! You know Mirko, small gestures are often worth much more than an expensive gift."

By: violam.9

## **An unexpected exchange**

I'm about to tell you a story that really happened  
It all happened in September 2017, when my family and I left for the big apple, New York, fascinating city full of surprises and stunts.

The United States, in general, is known for the customs strict controls, after what had happened with the terrorist attacks, airport customs were reinforced with increasingly strict controls. So, before going through the control customs, you have to have the Esta( Electronic System for Travel) . Therefore, my father and I applied for it online and it was immediately granted to us, instead my mother's request came by email: REJECTED.

So we hurried to the American embassy in Rome, where they finally gave my mother the Esta.

A month later, we were ready for departure, so we drove to Catania's airport took the plane to Rome where we changed plane and ; ventured on a nine and a half hours journey .

When we arrive at the airport in New York, we got off the plane through the giant corridors and got to the exit customs; a little before the famous sign "Welcome to the USA."

Again we got to the customs, we found the controller, who checked the documents; My father and I passed right away, but my mother was taken to a room with dark glass and armoured door.

We waited half an hour, one hour, two hours, at the third hour, we saw my mother leave the room crying out of joy and fear at the same time.

As soon as she came to us, in tears, she explained why the officials kept her so long:

“ After entering the room, two gigantic men were bound with two equally enormous submachine guns. They started asking me

thousands of questions about South America , in the end the officials realized there had been a huge misunderstanding, they had exchanged me for a Venezuelan drug dealer, with the same first name, last name and year of birth.

Fortunately, it was just an unexpected exchange.”

*By: Granchiopeloso20*

## **Social inequalities (the story of a friend of mine)**

Regarding inequality, treatment and consideration of black people in Italy, for once I would like to speak in a positive way in fact I would like to talk about the story of my friend and her parents. His mother, Roberta, is 100% Italian, while his father, Alu, is 100% African; they met after Alu arrived in Italy and started teaching dance to Roberta, so they fell in love. Fortunately, Roberta's family had an open mind , (something rare at that time), so they welcomed him with love. They managed to create a nice family. They each found jobs they both liked, so they managed to get the most of it. Now, however we talk about their daughters, even if it seems obvious almost never the kids born and raised in Italy with a parent of different nationality can obtain Italian citizenship. Fortunately, however, there are also people who can get it and among these people there is my friend. She lives a happy life: she has many friends, she goes to school, she attends a music course, she plays volleyball and, like us, she has her complexes, still , she is happy with her life, she could not ask for a better one.

Unfortunately, however, not everyone manages to have this life nowadays. That's why I wanted to tell this story, because, yes, there is still a lot of racism, but compared to years ago, society has made a lot of progress. We now understand that people from different races in particular Africans are not monsters, they are just different from us. We talked about this topic in class with my teacher Mrs Belfiore and we also read 2 books, including "The Pearl". This novel deals with inequality, but in a different way compared to other stories as it does not speak of racism, but of the difference between the poor and the rich.

Alas, there are many kinds of inequality: we have racism, the distinction between the poor and the rich, between famous

people and "normal" people or, even among classmates: for example, bullying.

In conclusion: inequality still exists, even if in a very small percentage compared to the past years. For this reason, I suggest to continue this way: that is, we must continue to accept people other than ourselves, whatever kind of diversity we have. We can, For example, listen to their voices rather than hide them.

By: user1234

## **Quinglong and the party at villa Draghidea**

Once upon a time in Dragolandia there was a dragon of Qinglong none that, unlike his friends dragons, spat water and did not enjoy as others did, that is drinking, he was a dragon affixed. Precisely for this reason he was a denigrated and excluded dragon. One day came the announcement of a mega party of Dralloween at Villa Draghidea with BTDS (trap band fire-breathing dragons) then asked his parents to go which they answered no the dragon begged them a million times and finally convinced them. Very happy bought the ticket and asked some of his classmates to go together who also refused to make the way with him to not make him go alone. Then, to go to the party, he decided to fly alone to Villa Draghidea, when he arrived he saw many dragons, some who enjoyed joking with their hands, others who, feeling bigger, smoked trunks of dracero. Outside it was freezing and none of them had vests and they would warm up by spitting fire at each other, and of course everyone would refuse to heat Qinlong because he couldn't heat them in return. About half an hour later the dragon thrower began to collect the tickets and once inside there began to be an unimaginable heat even for dragons, so the party began. BTDS had not arrived yet, but in the meantime there was another DRJ that put songs to warm them up and prepare them for the arrival of special guests until then everything went all right except some dragon who had drunk too much elixir and was drunk but easy to handle. Finally they came of BTDS that began to sing but after half an hour they had already finished and then many dragons protested because they had been on stage too little time and insisting until exhaustion the group became angry and began to spit flames igniting all the dragon disco the dragons without a second thought blew trying to put out the flames but being drunk they only spit more fire that fueled the fire, then they all asked for

help to the Qinglong who refused and left, then all the desperate dragons used every means to try to extinguish the flames, unfortunately in vain. From far away the dragons saw then return Qinlong with 8 barrels of elixir, the latter drank them all in one sip and now drunk soaked began to spit water without stopping extinguishing the fire and transforming what little was left of the dragon disco in a pool that a few months later was inaugurated as a national pool and to which other attractions were added. Finally the dragon was given a medal of honor and became the symbol of peace and salvation. If I may say so, never mock diversity because they could prove better than us.

By: Scrumbler\_Arestia



## **Today's society**

Today there are many inequalities in the world and in the society in which we live.

Very often we don't talk about this, but for me it's important to talk about this topic. There are many social distinctions and by reading books like "Mafatu, the boy who was afraid", "The pearl", "Rich man, Poor man" and watching the movie "The chocolate factory" I was able to understand them better.

One of the distinctions; for example, is the economic one. Unfortunately today not everyone is able to find work and consequently not everyone is able to lead a life without missing out on anything. There are many families who do not have enough money to give their children an education, or even worse, to be able to feed themselves and maintain themselves. Unluckily, instead of finding comfort, these people are misjudged by society in which we live, and unable to find a job and, not only that, often because of their cultural ignorance they are deceived by people who take advantage of this. Another type of social difference is discrimination based on skin color. A lot of people come here from countries like Africa looking for a better life, whereas, their hopes are dashed for the color of their skin. More often they are taken for bad, heartless people when, in reality they are even better than those who are judging them. Another similar distinction is based on one's religion. In some countries one is no longer free to profess one's religion without fear of being looked down at, judged or even worse "punished" and excluded from society. Religion should be something you feel inside, that everyone feels the need to freely profess instead of hiding.

Another distinction that is made in society is discrimination against women. Alas, now more and more women are being raped and violently attacked. There are many unpleasant situations so it is

important to ask for help in time of need. Furthermore, today's society makes a big difference between men and women. In fact, women find difficulties in finding work in private companies and are judged for everything they do. It is important to eliminate this machismo and move forward because only by overcoming these discriminations will we be able to build a better society in which to live in peace.

It is sad to say that today many women are also victims of violence of any kind such as being abused by their husbands for example.

Furthermore, in modern society there are many stereotypes about what women are born to do: from taking care of the children to clean the house, cook or according to nations like Arabs, a woman is considered an inferior being, an object and must be submitted to man. Both these stereotypes and these differences must be overcome. By talking about them is very important. Society will never be perfect, but starting to spread more just actions can definitely improve the situation.

By: Anna.08

## **Social inequalities, experiences and commentary**

Nowadays there is a lot of talk about social inequalities. It is a topic that we have been dealing with in class for the last few months. We also read two novels about this theme. That's why I want to talk about two kids I met in middle school about 3 years ago. They came from Albania and had moved to Italy because of their parents' work. They also said that their life in their country was not easy, there was poverty, caused by lack of work. Initially they settled very well with all my classmates and me. We welcomed them well. But then there began to be some problems; my classmates started behaving inappropriately towards them. For example, when it came to group work the class never asked the two Albanian boys to participate with us, or during the physical education hour we did not include them in the teams. The kids felt ignored so they started talking and interacting less and less with the class, to the point of seeming absent in class.

Gradually the teachers realized this problem and intervened. They talked about it with the rest of the class and started to see some positive results.

In my new high school classroom we luckily have neither seen nor experienced behaviors that point back to inequality, at least until now.

I believe inequalities arising from income, geographic location, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, social class and religion continue to exist within and between countries, affecting equal access and opportunities .It's up to our attitude to reduce it.

By: Saretta.56

## **Away from you**

Giulia is a seventeen-year-old girl who suffers from a disease called "cystic fibrosis" and this does not allow her to be close to a boy, Samu, who, like her, suffers from the same disease. Both are hospitalized, their state of health and their physical conditions force them to always stay at a distance of one and a half meters from each other. The two are in love but have to deal with the strict rules of the hospital where they are recovered. They want to live their love story and adolescence like all other boys and girls of their age, however, due to this bad disease, this is not possible at all. They try to spend as much time together as possible, for example doing therapy together, but always keeping at a distance, or also thanks to technology, thus making video calls from one room to another, they also send each other drawings or letters to make themselves feel closer to each other. Still, their mood begins to change: they feel more and more optimistic, despite the conditions in which they are forced to live, they feel more IN LOVE, but there is also a lot of suffering from this situation, they can't neither touch each other, nor hug or, kiss and live like any other lovers. They can't have new lungs and therefore be able to have a better life. They live surrounded by their immense love that no distance can hinder. After all that life has taken from them, they have the right to take something back, they need to get, only a meter closer.

One evening, the two kids got too close and Giulia's condition got worse...she was about to die. So for their goodness, even if they were immersed in a magnificent love, it was better for them to move away and never see each other again.

I believe we should live our life to the fullest, not doing extraordinary things but just living it normally.

By: Clara.cigno

## **My passion and I**

My name is Viola, I have been keen on theater for some time now. Actually I think I've always had this passion but I never realized it before. I love doing theater. Impersonations, discussions, drama, love stories, change voice based on the character that I wanted to imitate. I always acted, introduced the play, I danced, sang, I said funny jokes, things that today I do, but only when I am on stage. I'm one of the many introvert people I know, before I felt free only in front of people I knew very well. My mother, who loves theater and all of the arts, could never convince me to study acting, until this year.

One year ago I thought this hobby was "old fashioned", like other guys in my generation think it too. My friends said to me " Let it go! You're just wasting your time. It's so out of fashion!"

Instead it is the most beautiful thing in the world. Since the first lesson, I felt free, and now every week I anxiously wait for Tuesday to come so I can go acting, meet show people, creative and positively out of mind. However conventional acting may be, it is actually full of flair, there aren't real directors to tell you what or how you have to do it, there are no scripts to memorize, we write the script. We get in a circle, we talk for 2 hours and just for that time being we go out of the world, we forget any problems we may have and improvise by identifying ourselves through the lives of characters- fruit of our imagination. There aren't any judgments from others, everyone can imagine and think what they want, that is precisely what we are asked: to give the public different opinions on a subject, so they can too have one after having considered different ones, or have none...It doesn't matter , there's no right and no wrong, there' no exclusion. It feels like being in another World. when I'm at lessons, I don't feel judged, I open up, I feel free, without any prejudices to think of . It's a wonderful place full

of wonderful people, a pure world that I would like to bring in everyone's heart. What I love mostly is the end of the acting lessons, when my teacher says he has all the good of all the world in his hands and he pours some to the next one etc. When the tour ends , we all throw it in the air and take a shower of goodness and joy that makes us feel all better and happier. I think cultivating this passion is one of the best things in my life, this experience has changed me for the better. I can't wait for Tuesday to come.

By: Vio\_21

## **Sparkle jones' double revenge**

Sparkle was the typical wealthy young lady from New York City, whose future was already established by fate. At the age of twenty-three she already knew what she would do in her life: that is, marry her boyfriend, Mark, who was also as wealthy as her.

Sparkle loved her uncle, Tatcher who, however, involved her and her family in a billionaire scam. So, one day all her family's possessions were confiscated and from one day to the next she found herself without a home, completely broke and without friends. Yes, because once the news spread out, her friends and her boyfriend abandoned her, so Sparkle understood they were not real friends. She was emotionally strong. So one day ,she decided to go to a detective's house, the very one who confiscated her assets, his name Eric. Once she discovered he lived in Red Hook, a neighborhood unknown to Sparkle since it doesn't suit her standards, she took courage and went to Eric's house. At her arrival, he obviously got upset. As Sparkle obliged him to host her. Eric, being "gentleman" , offered her the closet next to the kitchen .Although she used to live in a Penthouse on the Upper East Side, she decided to accept, otherwise she would have ended up on the street.

The next day, she went to work while he tried to find information about this scam. This situation went on for several weeks until Sparkle got a well-paying job which allowed her to find a place of her own . Before she left Eric's house, he asked her for more information about the scam case.

One day, while she was shopping, she met a girl, Bonnie, who understood that Sparkle was going through a rather awkward situation . The two became friends. When Sparkle talked to her about Eric, Bonnie was amazed: the most handsome young man in New York City hosted Sparkle. Incredible!

Thus, one evening, Bonnie invited Sparkle and Eric for dinner and she immediately realized there was a certain feeling between the two, in fact they ended up falling in love.

Unluckily, a problem came up: coincidentally, Sparkle's employer was Eric's mum. However, Sparkle didn't know. When Eric found out about it, he got very annoyed at Sparkle for not telling him who she was working for. Therefore, he disappears for more than two months.

In the meantime, Eric continued to investigate on the scam scandal. In the end the truth came out thanks to Sparkle's help. Eric, felt increasingly regretful for his reaction therefore, one night he decided to go to Sparkle's house and brought her flowers to show her his love. When he confessed his love to her, Sparkle kissed him and they got back together. This is Sparkle's story, a whimsical young lady who, suddenly found herself alone and broke. Her financial condition led her to work on herself to find a balance, but while she was looking for this, she also found the love of her life.

By: mara.467



## **The blind dog**

Hi, I'm Emma and today I'm going to tell you about how my family and I chose our current dog. At the time I was about eight years old when my family and I went to the animal shelter to pick up our new family member. We were more inclined to take a female dog with us. As soon we arrived at the kennel, the employers let us in. There were many cages with many dogs of different breeds inside of them. Some were large, others were small, still others with very long fur, while others with short fur. In short, there was so much to choose from. We kept looking at all the dogs there until I saw the cage of a small dog with a very thick coat. This dog, however, had a particularity: his eyes were white so when I got home, I asked my family to go see it so we could all choose together.

We all fell in love with it; we discovered that she was a girl puppy and had been there for more than two years because she was blind; my family didn't care though. So Lucy came home with us. Now she is six years old and when I think back on it I realize that it hasn't been very easy for her to learn to trust us, to recognize our voices and memorize the structure of our house.

In fact , since the first few days she has been with us, she always bumped into walls, doors and furniture and she always tried to move very little . Now my family and I love her because , after gaining confidence , Lucy has become very affectionate and playful. Though she is very demanding , we do not regret our choice at all.

By: emma.rossi\_94

## **The magic circle**

In an ordinary neighborhood of a city like many others, there was a boy named Leo who loved playing football. Every afternoon he went to the football field to play with his friends. Nevertheless, one day a new boy arrived , his name was Tom, he had a new mobile phone ,so everyone started playing with him. Every day Tom brought a new game at the football field. Slowly no one played football with Leo anymore.

One day Leo decided not to play football alone but tried to play with the others, but realized the other children had created "the magic circle", a group from which he was excluded. Everyone had entered in the magic circle except for him. The days went by but he couldn't take part to play with the others; until one day he saw Tom who no longer posed as a leader. He was sad, so Leo asked him:

“What’s the matter? Though you have many friends and everything you wish for , you don’t seem too satisfied.”

Tom answered him:

“ Actually all I have doesn’t make me really happy”

“ So you wear a mask,” at this point Leo asked him :”if you aren't really happy then why do you continue going with other kids who take advantage of you and exploit you?”

Tom could not answer this question, but invited Leo to play with him. The two children spent the rest of the afternoon playing football, and from that day on the magic circle dissolved. It became a group open to everyone ,from then on all the children played football together.

By: fede.rica\_65

## **Hiwot's story**

Hello everyone, I'm Hiwot, a guy from Ethiopia, and I'm here to tell you my story. This story began when I was twelve years old. I lived in Gondar, a city in northern Ethiopia. I was very good at school and I always took good marks. When I was young, my dream was to become a doctor to save lives. In my village a lot of people died because there wasn't a doctor to cure them. So I wanted to help them. One day, the mayor of the village came to my house. He said to my parents that he spoke to every householder of the village, and with them he decided to send me to Europe to study medicine. They gave me this chance because I was really good at school and because after my graduation, I would have come back to my village. The mayor had collected the money to send me in Europe, and gave them to my family.

I was really honored, because I knew how much important it was for my village.

We were a poor community. We lived in poor huts made of waste materials. The most important things of our village was the school. My father started to plan my trip so he found a trip that started with a ship from Misurata, in Libya.

"This is the only solution"- my father said to me. He knew I suffered seasickness.

It was the most economic solution he found. We couldn't afford a normal trip. Therefore I started my trip from Gondar to Misurata. On 30th November 2013, I arrive to Misurata, hence it was a nine days trip. I slept in the port, on a bench. The day after, on first October 2013, at 5:00 am we embarked on a fishing boat. We were very crowded, we were over 500 people on that boat. After we all got on the boat, we left the port for Lampedusa.

We sailed for two days. They were horrible days for me, I suffered seasickness. But the worst had to come. When we were just one mile off the coast, the engine stopped. So the captain started to

wave a burned cloth to make a smoke signal, but a lot of people didn't know that was the captain. So they ended on one side of the boat, so that it overturned and after it sank. We were shipwrecked. We were all in the sea. I started to swim. I swam a lot until a fisherman found me and saved me. He took me to the port of Lampedusa. Then the Red Cross transferred me to the hospital of Lampedusa. We all ended up on the Television news. The boat that sank was the one I was on. In that shipwreck 368 died and 155 survived. I was one of the survivors. I stayed for one month in the hotspot.

The police listened to my story about the shipwreck, so in the end they gave me my identity card. They also encouraged me to go to school as soon as possible. But one night, one of the men that organized the trip contacted me. He said that I had to go with him to Sicily. He forced me to follow him. So that night, me and 20 others men started a trip to Ragusa, where we had to work. The next day we arrived to Passo Marinaro Beach. Here we found a man waiting for us. He loaded us into a van, and then he took us to a tomato field. He shouted we had to work for him, because he paid the trip for us. We were like slaves for him. I ended up working like a slave for two years. He paid us with some food and some clothes. And all of that because we didn't have enough money to make a legal trip!

Two years later, my slavery ended. On my birthday the police came to the field where they found us. They discovered that we were kept as slaves, so they came to arrest him and, moreover, freed us. Afterwards, at the police station, the police spoke to me. I was fourteen years old and I had to go to school. So, one week after I finally went to school. Finally, I started a new life. Obviously the first months were difficult. However, later on I began to understand Italian and all went well. I started getting good marks, and I didn't do any absences. I was promoted every year.

Now, I'm 22 years old and I'm studying medicine, like I wanted. Thanks to the scholarship and to my high marks, I found the money to attend university.

I'm studying for my graduation so I can go back to my village. So now, in the end I only have to say thanks to one thing: the school. You always underestimated it, without thinking about the children who can't go to school for economic reasons. So every time you hate school, remember: school is the most important equity builder.

By: Hiwot

## **Kevin's story**

Kevin was a poor kid in a big city. His life has always been difficult because of the limited financial resources of his family. Anyway, his parents never made him want for anything. Kevin always went to school and never missed a lesson. He really liked school, in fact he had excellent grades. He dreamed of becoming a successful business man. To guarantee him a good future, his parents worked all day: in fact they saw their son only in the mornings and in the evenings. His parents didn't like this situation, but they knew it was the only way to help him through school.

Kevin was a diligent boy: he never asked his parents for unnecessary things because he couldn't stand making them spend money on futile things so he avoided causing problems, since his parents were always busy working for their living. His life wasn't very easy: at school he was bullied by the richest children, for his poverty and his good grades. The situation weighed heavily on him, still, he tried to ignore it. The only ones not to insult him were his friends Alex and Taylor.

Time passes and Kevin reached the last year of high school, from which he graduated with honors. He wanted to go to university but, unfortunately for him, it was too expensive, so he had to look for a job. Thus, he began working at one of the many McDonald's in the city for a few years, so that he could pay for his college fees. A few years later, he put aside the amount of money he needed, also thanks to his parents' efforts. Hence, he started the faculty of medicine, which he loved. He actively attended lessons and got very high grades in his exams. Kevin graduated with the highest marks. He started working as a doctor and earned a lot of money. With the money he earned he paid his expenses, his parents' ones, and, part of it, he donated it to charity for the poor.

By: lore.32

## **A young lark**

Once upon a time there was a young lark with white wings and iridescent dark purple eyes, named Sofia. It was born without wings, crippled and unsteadily, awkward in her posture. She was stubborn. She had never lost heart, and even if limping it lived only on seeds and lots and lots of water, it never stopped chirping, on the low branches of the trees– the only ones she could reach by leaping with her paws – as her condition required. It felt proud of her beautiful notes.

“Cripple!” someone cried.

"She was born without wings!" the second voice echoed back around her

"Why was she born without wings?, She can't face the flight!" the third voice said.

"She lives among the rocks!"The first voice continued.

"Can she feed herself? And in lean periods, how does she manage, if seeds are scarce on the stone?" The second voice asked. "Can't it be cured?"

"No, never !" The third voice answered

“Does it ever sing along with her sisters?” The first voice kept asking curiously

“How could she?” The second voice answered.

“she can’t fly .” Continued the third voice.

“It seems to me she has never been invited to the spring festival ” The first voice said with contempt.

"It's obvious!" Replied the second voice.

"But I have two wings, though!" the beautiful robin Tobia stopped all those voices.

One day, puffing out his chest "Tell you what. I could share them with you!" he smiled pulling up his beak.

"But doing so you'd be forced to live crippled! And fly on the low branches!" she whipped pecking at him, struck.

He knew the lark ever since they were very young. He has always been, in love with her, her beautiful violet eyes and her way of moving without wings so awkwardly, but particular and special to him.

Even though he had always grappled with that sour and grumpy character of hers, knowing her soul, he had never let his dreams be destroyed "But I want it! I want it! I want it with all my heart! Sofia, I have two wings!"

"Don't you see, this would force you to live only half of that sky, which you can now cross completely free and happily! And to feed on leaves and lots of water!" she pricked up her tail feathers in annoyance. "He's crazy!", "Unbelievable!", "Out of his mind!", "Someone make him think!", "You're joking. Aren't you?"

And she seeing in him the clarity of his feelings, ran away, reiterating her flat no.

That night, Tobia chose to sleep on a low branch next to her, crouching softly, to give himself warmth, on that shrub still covered with an icy patina, the last frost before summer, and she, seeing him there chilled, while smiling, at her. She woke up at dawn, Sofia had one wing, Tobias the other.

And together they began to fly in two, slowly, slowly, shouting their joy all the way in a marvelous song: a melody of love, of incomparable beauty.

By: M.E.G.



## **A surprise party for Alice**

Alice is a girl who lives in America, precisely in Yellow Springs, a small town in Ohio, where everyone knows each other. She's a very shy girl thus for her it's extremely difficult to make friends. Her problems got bigger when she moved to a new school where nobody seemed to care about her. Her classmates weren't friendly with her, so she felt alone.

Alice found reading wonderful because she could daydream to be in other places or even one of the characters in the story.

One day while she sat on a bench, reading her favorite book, suddenly, a girl came up to her and started talking to Alice. The girl wasn't very kind to her. The girl's sharp words, made her sad: the new girl laughed mockingly at Alice for her physical aspect, the way she dressed, her book and also calling her "lonely ugly". Then, the girl went away and Alice felt abandoned to herself and miserable. So, she closed the book and she ran away crying. She wanted to go home, where nobody could bully her and where she could feel better. When her mother saw her sad face, she asked concernly: "What's wrong, honey?"

But Alice just wanted to cry and ran to her bedroom. Thus, her mum decided to cook her favorite meal for lunch and when it was ready, she called to Alice to have lunch together. "Mum, I feel so lonely". Her mum understood her feelings.

The day after Alice went to school. She felt anxious and couldn't wait to get back home.

Her Mum thought Alice needed something that could make her happy, so she called some of Alice's good friends to organize a surprise party for her. In fact, when Alice came back home she found a big surprise party for her with colored balloons all over the living room, sweets, cookies, sandwiches, chips and beverages and

many friends from her childhood. Suddenly she realized that she's not alone, there are many people who love her after all!

By: ccarll23

## **Breaking down discrimination**

When I was young I used to play basketball and I remember there was a dark skinned boy, his name Karim. This boy worked very hard, he didn't miss any training sessions and he always gave his best on the pitch; despite this, he couldn't find his place in the quintet of matches ,but after a few games we all started asking ourselves if all this was possible? From a long discussion that all of us boys secretly listened to, we practically eaves dropped, we understood that all depended on the coach. It was he who didn't want Karim in the team, just because his skin was of different colour from what is defined as normal.

After this event none of us showed up for the next training session so the coach angrily asked us:

“Why didn't you all show up for the training?”

Thus, we all answered:

“We're protesting for Karim!”

At this point, the coach understood he was being discriminative towards Karim, as a result, he allowed Karim to join the team and we all went back training for the match. Karim continued to give his best and showed the coach he deserved a place in the team. Seeing Karim's training commitment, the coach had Karim join the team, thus having him play in the first match.

Everyone witnessed Karim's first competitive performance which proved his worth to everyone and above all taught the coach that one shouldn't judge a book by its cover and you don't have to stick to stereotypes.

From this story I was able to learn two lessons: as I said before we mustn't stick to stereotypes and we must reflect before acting.

As regards the solution that we have come up with as a team, I think this is a sign of group cohesion and that teamwork can often radically change very serious situations, as in this case.

At any rate, I think we should not convince a person not to discriminate against others. I believe each of us should develop a feeling of common sense and , also behave mannerly better in relationships with others.

By: Lel

## **My school friend**

When I was in primary school, there was a boy in my classroom who kept to himself for almost a year. At first I didn't notice him because during recess time I played with my classmates out in the school yard, so I ignored him due to the fact I preferred staying with cool boys who attended my school for this reason I didn't think about other people.

I've always been a friendly person, but when I was with my friend I just didn't care about anyone else-let's say I estranged myself from others.

One day, while I was playing football with my classmates, I saw him sitting alone on a chair rolling a ball in his hands. Just then, I felt sorry for him so I asked my friends :”why don't we invite him to play with us?”

However, my friends didn't want him in our group. “He's never said a word to us since school started”

I didn't agree with their excuse so I went up to him and invited him to play with us. He immediately accepted so we played all day even after school.

As I was playing with him, I realized he was actually a very nice guy. He even told me he kept to himself because his father had died recently so my friends and I helped him get through his sorrow by keeping him company. This made him happy. Today he is one of my best friends.

By: diego\_45