





# GE(R)MS INSIDE



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## Editorial

This is the third edition of Ge(r)ms. You can read about students' views on various topics, from putting too much emphasis on blue eyes, the importance of one's home, family and friends, to gloomier themes like anxiety, addiction, animal testing and unethical shopping. The At Home and Abroad section gives accounts of students' travel to parts of Slovenia and Europe. Tareq went even farther – he wrote about Palestine. In Leisure and Pleasure you can read about music and sport. In the Beauty and Health Corner practical advice on how to get rid of dry lips is provided. Language lovers can test their knowledge of German in *Deutsche Seiten*, while bookworms can enjoy stories, three of which are from last year's literary competition *Bodi pisatelj*. Finally, I should not forget to thank our artistic students who contributed wonderful illustrations.

I hope you will enjoy browsing through the magazine and perhaps get inspired to write something that has long been waiting inside you to be put into words.

Helena Doberšek



# STUDENTS' OPINIONS

## BEAUTIFUL BLUE EYES

It always seems that people are the most attracted by blue eyes. Ocean blue eyes, light blue eyes, dark blue eyes, etc. As long as it's blue eyes, it's undeniably beautiful. But not in my opinion.

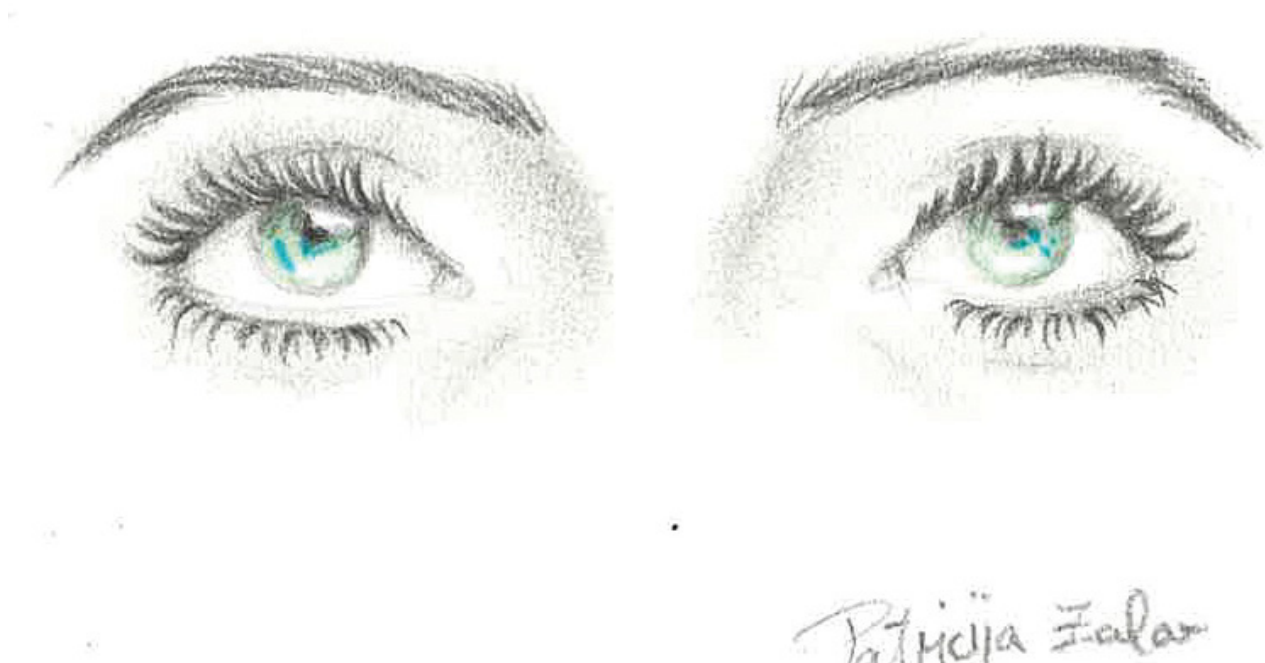
Sure, blue eyes really are very beautiful, but people are too obsessed with blue eyes, and fashion agencies turn too much attention to blue-eyed people. What about grey eyes? And hazel eyes?

I, personally, have multiple-coloured eyes. A drop of brown and green-blue-grey around. When I'm tired, my eyes become greener, or when the sun is shining right into my face, they shine a bit brown. I have heard many compliments about my eyes, and I find them special and beautiful.

When it comes to brown eyes, they are very warm and I feel relaxed with this kind of people, because they give me a feeling of warmth and love. While blue eyes make me uncomfortable; they seem cold and arrogant, and also selfish.

When it comes to blue-eyed men, they are interesting and fun, but unreliable and unpredictable. Most blue-eyed people I have met are the ones with energy, the ambitious ones, they always want to make the most of the day, and they live in the moment. But when it comes to others, they are rather selfish and only care about their well-being. Many blue-eyed people are arrogant, because they know blue eyes are considered as very attractive. They are often dishonest, too. Sometimes I even feel uncomfortable talking to someone with especially blue eyes. Why? Because it seems like their eyes are digging a hole inside my soul, and like they can read my mind and notice every move I make, or every breath I take.

Teja Kovačević, 4. Za



## LEARNING LIFE LESSONS

What was the first life lesson you learned? Never trust a stranger, right? And you had stuck to that rule until you grew up. When you made your first friends and someone betrayed you for the first time, you learned the second most important life lesson - don't trust **anyone**.

As we grow up, and become smarter and more mature, we figure many things out by ourselves, without any help. We choose our friends more easily, as we know what type of people we want in our company.

But this doesn't mean we won't get hurt again. With experiences we get through years of meeting all kinds of people, we can sometimes predict what a person is like, but it doesn't mean they can't surprise us. That is why we shouldn't let people too close to us. No matter how much you appreciate and value a person, and how long you've known each other, you never know what might happen to their personality as they, for example, meet someone who's bad influence. Things can change overnight.

What about other life lessons, like how your personality should be, or how you must behave towards other people?

I don't think gold-diggers are very popular. Personally, I hate them. I don't see any value in money, except for survival. But many, way too many people are in love with the idea of being rich, having everything and being able to afford anything their heart wants. They are greedy, selfish and will turn their back on you as soon as they can't take any advantage of you.

In my opinion, the most important lessons in life are the ones that hurt you the most, like betrayal, lies and heartbreak. You must learn to be patient, polite, honest, modest and warm-hearted, but also secure and confident. And you surely should know what you deserve, who's not good for you and how to value yourself properly.

Teja Kovačević, 4. Za

## LIFE IS SHORT, ENJOY THE COFFEE

Let's just say that coffee is a hug, a metaphor for little things in life that make it big. If you're a caffeine addict, like I am, then the first coffee in the morning makes you feel better. After I finish my first coffee, I feel more energetic and my mood rises from bad and tired to good and positive about the forthcoming events of the day. Then I'm ready to face everything my day brings me.

If I turn my attention to little things that are meant by coffee, a simple smile can make a day. When I see the people I love, such as my parents, my friends and my two sisters, my day brightens the moment I see them smiling. Seeing your loved ones happy and in a good mood is one of the most beautiful things you can experience in life.

Have you ever considered that money and material, expensive things can make you happy? Or would you rather give something small to someone you value a lot? Most of you will probably say that you love getting expensive things and show off with them. But do they really make you happy? Or are you just happy about having material things?

My thought would be that those things only bring joy and make you happy for a short period of time. Greed will never make you happy, because you'll never be truly satisfied, you'll always want more. So, be modest, love people around you - give them love and don't demand things from them. Enjoy the happiness you see in their eyes when you give them something simple, or simply pay for a cup of coffee.

Teja Kovačević, 4. Za





J. Gatica, 1.1.2018

## WHAT DOES MY HOME MEAN TO ME?

What does my home mean to me? I think it is enough if I say that I want to move out. Still, I want to define what a home really is.

There are three different definitions of a home and with the three definitions come three groups of people, depending on what a home means to them. The first group of people say that a home means a house or a flat, a place where you eat, sleep and take showers. The second group of people say that a home is where your family is, or any place, as long as their mother, brothers and sisters stay with them. And there is the third group of people, the group where I belong. Those people say that a home is where your heart is. It can be in the hug of a person, on a road, in a small room with a small bed and a lamp next to it. A home can be in a big city or a small village. It is important that your heart is with you.

A home as a house or a flat does not mean much to me. If this is a true definition of a home, I have it just because I need it, because I need a roof over my head, a bed to sleep in, a wardrobe for my clothes, a shower and a bathroom. I have this kind of a home. I have more than just one. I have one in Ljubljana, which is actually a hall of

residence, one in my birth town, and one where I stay when I am with my boyfriend. I like the last one the most.

The second definition is said to be too sweet and romantic. I think I do not have a home like this. I mean, I have a family and I live with them, but I just do not feel like part of it. I have always felt like I am the one in this family who is there just to clean up, iron and do most of the household chores. Maybe I will have my own family in the future, but for now I take my boyfriend as my family. You can define a family in a thousand different ways. But let's just leave it.

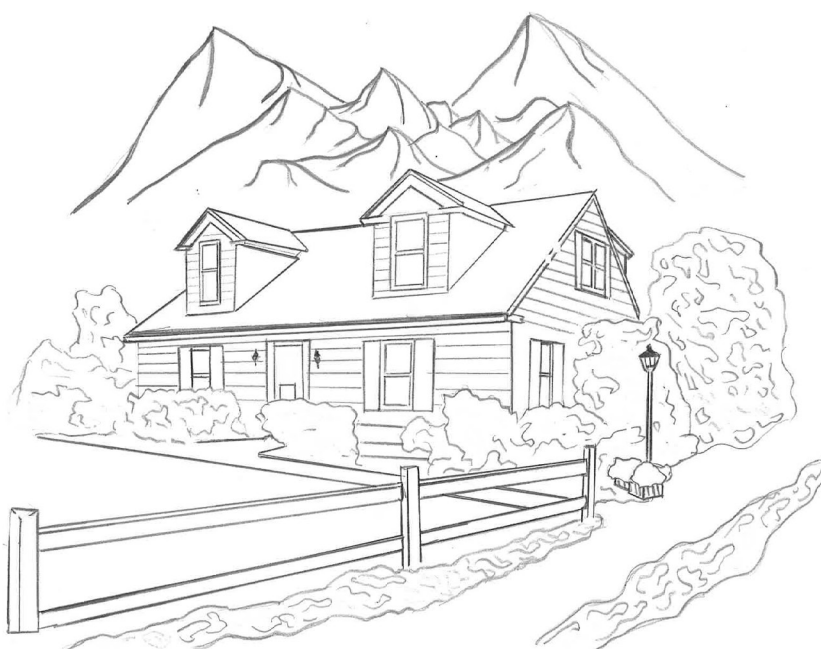
And lastly, the third, my favourite definition of a home: a place or a person, a road or a small room, the whole city or just a small village, a special place or just a small corner in a park. I found a home in a lot of things, places and corners. I found my home in the old town of Krakow, beside that bush in Stožice, on a road to nowhere, in a truck, in a barn, but my favourite place is in the hug of my boyfriend, where I feel complete and secure, where nothing can hurt me.

You may wonder why the old town of Krakow, why beside that bush in Stožice, why on a road to

nowhere, why in a truck, why in a barn, and why on the earth in a hug? I will tell you why. I fell in love with Krakow when I was there. It is so magical, and I forgot all the things that were happening at home at the time. I was far away from home and it felt so good. I often went to Stožice with my boyfriend and we always sat next to that bush. I love trips to nowhere, I love an open road, so I found my heart on the road, but travelling in a truck is my favourite. I am looking forward to driving one. A barn is a place where horses, the animals which I adore, are.

And finally, I found the one and only home that I love the most in my boyfriend's hug when we first met. It was 6<sup>th</sup> March 2016, when he hugged me and held me for so long that we forgot about the time. The hug was warm and it just felt like home. Even now, after more than a year, I still run in his arms and he holds me tight and I forget about the whole world. It is just me and him. Sometimes I cry, sometimes we laugh, or we talk nonsense, or we watch a football game, a film maybe. No matter where we are, if he hugs me, it always feels like home to me.

K.



## SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN MY FAMILY

I live in a family of six – father Ivan, mother Mojca, two sisters – one older and one younger – a younger brother and me. Some will say my family is big, but if you ask me, our extended family is the one that is big – I have approximately 30 cousins.

Now, try to imagine our birthdays; there is always quite a party. Such events are actually more an excuse for the family to gather at our place. Normally, we invite 25-30 relatives, so everybody can find somebody they haven't talked to in a while. This is just an example of an average family party. The big parties occur for bigger special occasions, like weddings, baptisms, confirmations, anniversaries and graduations.

When planning a celebration at home, food is the number one priority. It's always planned way in advance by my mum, who also distributes the work among everybody. On the other hand, we don't really pay much attention to what we are going to wear, except for weddings and exceptionally important occasions. In these cases, my sister takes the reins and plans out a matching outfit for everybody.

Above, I was focused on special occasions we celebrate with the extended family. Let's see how our immediate-family celebrations look like. Examples of such occasions are Christmas and New Year's.

At Christmas, the six of us gather at the nativity scene, go to church and have a delicious Christmas dinner. We

used to listen to Christmas songs and sing along, but for a few years now we have agreed to watch a movie instead.

On New Year's, we play board games, watch a movie and eat a lot. At a quarter to midnight, we climb the nearby hill with a great view of the valley and watch fireworks. As we return home, our neighbours come and we open a champagne. Whoever wants stays awake until sunrise, but most of us are in bed before 4 a.m.

That was a short overview of the special occasions my family celebrates. From my perspective, the best and the most important part of such occasions is the family gathering around the same table and chatting about more and less important topics.

Neža Mavri, 3. Fb

## LIVING IN A LARGE FAMILY IS MUCH MORE FUN THAN BEING AN ONLY CHILD

For centuries, the ideal standard was to have as many children as a married couple could have. But nowadays the number is decreasing. The following question is which is better for the children.

Firstly, in a large family a child can play with their siblings and develop social skills. They learn how to share and care for each other. Secondly, the children are never lonely, and because they have to adapt to sharing a living space and their belongings, this benefits later in life, as people are less likely to become greedy and they are usually more compassionate. Lastly, children with a lot of siblings learn to take care of themselves sooner than an only child would. They become more independent as they grow up.

On the other hand, a child who has no siblings gets full attention from their parents. As a result, they can be more confident and successful. What is more, they have to learn how to make friends outside their home, which also benefits them in the social skill area.

In conclusion, while having a lot of sisters and brothers can be quite fun, children with no siblings can also learn how to adapt and have fun in their own special way. I believe that siblings in larger families have more fun. Yes, an only child has everything all to himself, but that doesn't mean he can't get lonely.

Karin Kapelj, 4. Fc



## **F**RRIENDS HAVE MORE INFLUENCE THAN FAMILY ON TEENAGERS

When we are young, family members have the biggest influence on us, because we spend most of the time with them. But as we grow, we meet a lot of people of our age, especially in teenage years. We get to see new things from a different perspective, which may attract us.

The word family is used for something safe and filled with love. For example, when you have emotional or other problems, you know that you can confide to your family members and they will not turn their backs on you. That is very important when you are a teenager, because you do not have as thick a skin as you do when you are older and you are not that experienced with life itself. If your family treats you well, it is more likely that you will be like that with other people. For instance, teenagers will know how to listen to their peers' problems and help to overcome them.

But on the other hand, if you trust your family so much that you do not need friends, this can cause loneliness and lower self-esteem. Teenagers will not learn how to deal with people, and when some of the family members are gone, they will not know how to cope with life in order to be happy.

If you have real friends with whom you can set yourself free and get crazy, you will get to know yourself and things that you like when you do not have to act 'decently'. For example, when you dance at parties or all the way through the city laughing out loud and you do not mind what others think of you, even though they do not care about teenage behavior that much.

But even in friendships like that, there are some dark sides, such as peer pressure. Teenagers want to act like their friends do, and if their friends do drugs or binge drink, they can follow them and consequently lose the connection with reality.

It is also known that friends understand our problems better than our parents, like when teenagers get their hearts broken, or they have problems at school. We all have some issues which are more appropriate to be talked about with our friends than our family.

Friends are important right to that point when they disappoint us and we lose trust, at least some of it.

In conclusion, I think that friends and family are equally important. With family we have trust and a secure place, but with friends we do things in life that makes it richer and more fun.

Polona Majdič, 4. Ka

## **F**RRIENDS HAVE MORE INFLUENCE THAN FAMILY ON TEENAGERS

I completely disagree with the statement that friends have more influence on teenagers than family. I think there are just different kinds of influence. For example, friends can help us gain some confidence and self-esteem, whereas parents can help us make some important decisions, like which university to choose.

Friends are for us, teenagers, really important, especially in these years when we feel like no one understands us. We need some close friends, who are our peers and are trustworthy, because they are going through similar problems as we are. That is why we trust them and we can discuss various issues with them. We see the world from the same perspective.

However, at this stage of life we still need our parents to lead us and give us valuable advice. They are still the ones who have more experience and have resolved more problems in their life. It is good to turn to them in situations in which our friends could not be of much help.

I confide more of my problems to my friends, especially when I want to hear an opinion from the person who is not related to the problem directly. And, of course, I always tell my friends about all the other teenage troubles and secrets, like things about boys, and the like. On the other hand, I reveal and talk about many issues with my parents and siblings, as well as with my cousins. Most of the time I love to discuss everything with my cousin Jan, but then again, this is probably because he is just one year older than me, and he has been like one of my best friends since the time we were little.

To sum up, I am as glad I can discuss my troubles with my friends as I am to be able to talk about them with my family, thus always having someone to rely on. I appreciate the bond I have with all the people I love, because both, family and friends, are very important in our lives.



## FRIENDS HAVE MORE INFLUENCE THAN FAMILY ON TEENAGERS

But that is not so far from the truth. If I tell a bit of my story: I remember when I was around 13, I did not want to be seen with my mum, or when I told her to wait for me in the car and she could not come into the school to get me.



same age group, have the same interests as you. Friends are not nagging you about grades or what you are going to do in the future.

On the other hand, parent love you despite you sometimes behaving badly. They put food on the table, and work their socks off trying to give you everything you want.

In conclusion, luckily that horrible phase fades away. And when it is over, you feel terrible because of the way you acted. You realize that friends come and go, but family always stays.

Klara Tacar, 4. Ka

## YOU CAN FACE THE FUTURE IF YOU CAN FACE THE PAST

Facing the future can be really stressful. As children, we all had goals for the future. They often asked us what we would like to become when we grew up. We wanted to be rock stars, famous athletes, astronauts ... What about now? Do we still have the same thoughts? As we are getting older, the goals seem to be less and less attainable. Not getting accepted into a particular 'dream' school could be really painful for someone. Their dreams could be broken and they might lose their motivation. I think we shouldn't set our goals too high.

While being in school, we are constantly worrying about the grades and our future. But we need to understand that the future depends on what we are doing today.

Looking to the past is not always a good decision. Of course, we should keep the good memories but leave the bad ones behind us. We often feel that some memories are holding us back, they are making us insecure. We should be more confident, no matter what happened in the past. We should live life to the fullest and try new things.

Just because the past didn't turn out like you wanted it to, it doesn't mean your future can't be better than you have ever imagined.

Ajda Lozar, 2. Za



## ANXIETY

Today it was a little stressful for me, so I decided to write something, as it helps calm me down. I was searching for a topic and finally settled for anxiety. So, what is anxiety? I looked it up and the definition is, 'an uncomfortable feeling of nervousness or worry about something that is happening or might happen in the future'.

Most people have experienced anxiety at some point in their lives, maybe before a test in school or at work, and that is perfectly normal. The problem is when you feel it more often than you should, when you feel anxious almost all the time. When normal tasks become hard and you don't know what to do.

The reason for anxiety is fear. It can be the fear of having to meet new people, or maybe you fear certain situations. Or it might be the fear of embarrassing yourself in front of people, so you attempt to avoid it altogether. This is called social anxiety. For me this means that whenever you are surrounded by a large group of people, or you have to try something new, or when you meet new people, you feel your heart rate escalating, your hands begin to shake and your palms get sweaty. You feel really uncomfortable. Sometimes you reach the point when you can't think straight and you have trouble breathing. It can lead to an anxiety attack which can have serious consequences. If that is the case, you should get help, which is not always the easiest thing to do.

This started to happen to me recently. At first, I did not think much of it, as I have always been more on the shy side. But it just began getting worse and worse. It reached the point when it was really hard for me to go out of the house. Even to school. If I had to go somewhere, I had to literally force myself to go. Sometimes I would cry and worry about an event that was going to happen in a few days or even a week.

One day my mum saw what was happening and decided to get me help. But I didn't want that. I was too embarrassed and was perfectly fine, pretending everything was okay. But soon it became too difficult to handle it, and I agreed to see the school counsellor. I didn't think it would help much, but it actually did. My mum also didn't like it that I was at home all the time, so I started going to Pilates twice a week. I really like it, and I feel a lot better

than I did before when I stayed at home most of the time. I still have moments when everything seems too hard, but I think it has gotten much better. I'm still working on it.

If you have similar problems, don't feel embarrassed, because you are certainly not the only one with that problem. I suggest talking to somebody about your problems. It doesn't have to be a psychologist or a counsellor, you can talk to a friend or maybe a family member. You will feel a lot better after that.

...

## ADDICTIONS – IT'S NOT JUST DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

When people think of the word addiction, they usually first think of the most common types of addiction, such as drugs and alcohol, but often dismiss or forget about some other, maybe less familiar types of addictions that are addictions just the same. That is why people need to be aware and look at other signs of addiction, so that an addict can be understood and helped.

Some other types of addictions, beside drugs and alcohol, are addictions to computer and other electronic devices, gambling and taking risky bets, as well as addiction to sexual activities. People who are not addicted to these kinds of activities probably do not even understand how they could become addicted. The addicts are often misunderstood.

If they get addicted, that is a sign that something in their life is not going the way they want it to. Maybe they have lost their job, been expelled from school, lost their loved one, or some other tragic event has occurred that made them believe that their life is from then on totally meaningless.

One of the biggest signs of addiction is probably depression. People need to recognize this sign in addicts and try to help them. The first and most important step to end addiction is that the person who is addicted confesses to themselves that they have a problem. The next step is going to a professional, a psychiatrist with whom they can share their problems in a safe space. With enough time and determination, an addict can be 'cured' and become healthy again.

To sum up, less common types of addictions are not well known to the general public, but everyone should get educated about them and learn to identify signs of an addicted person, so that they can be treated properly.

Denis Petek, 4. Zb



## ADVERTISING IS ALL AROUND

When it comes to advertising, it all comes down to convincing people to buy something they do not really need. At least that is what people suspect. These days, ads are literally everywhere and surround us constantly. Needless to say, they are very successful, and I think the main reason for that is because, more often than not, they try to sell us happiness disguised as material goods and services.

Advertising really is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it brings money to somebody's bank account and a temporary illusion of happiness to the customer. That temporary illusion is a problem, especially for the customer, because people use products to fill up their internal gap, instead of seeking for real satisfaction. People that (ab)use this kind of behaviour are advertisers. They use people's emotions to make a profit.

Ads are getting more and more personalized. With the common use of Internet services the providers of the latter use people's information to tailor the ads especially for you. I personally think personalized ads are not the problem, but rather the source of personal information for the ads. These ads are usually present on devices with internet connection, which are usually our mobile phones.

I get most of the information about a desired product through my own research, but subconsciously also from the ads I see on my mobile phone or TV and billboards around the town.

To conclude, the ads are a great way for someone to discover the market. Furthermore, I am sure personalized ads are the future of advertising. With that said, we must be aware of the value of our personal data used for these ads and at the same time of the vulnerability of personal information that is used by advertisers. Consequently, we should be cautious about giving our personal data away.

Gašper Medved

## BUYING CHEAP CLOTHES PRODUCED IN INHUMANE CONDITIONS IS UNETHICAL

In developing countries like India, Taiwan, Indonesia and Bangladesh, there is poverty. People are starving and because of this they have to take any job, no matter how hard or badly paid it is.

Many people work in sweatshops making clothes sold at a cheap price in the west. Very often people who make these clothes are paid a few pennies a day. They work there because they have to feed their families. Some must even move away and are separated from their families, so they can send them money every month. Their own children hardly know them because they see them only a few times a year. Their families live in bad conditions too, since they cannot afford anything better.

Furthermore, these people work in terrible conditions. It is mostly dirty everywhere, there is no hygiene.

They even sleep in that mess at night because there is not enough space. They sleep on the floor between all the machines if they do not finish all of the work. And it is not only adults who work in sweatshops, but also children who are usually terribly underpaid or not paid at all. What is more, they are badly treated - they are beaten, abused, even raped.

In conclusion, buying cheap clothes is not ethical, so we should stop buying them. If we stop buying cheap clothes that are produced in inhumane way, they will have to shut the sweatshops down. Consequently, these people will lose their jobs. But if we start buying clothes in Fairtrade shops, they could get better jobs and be paid fairly.

Eva Turk, 3. Zb

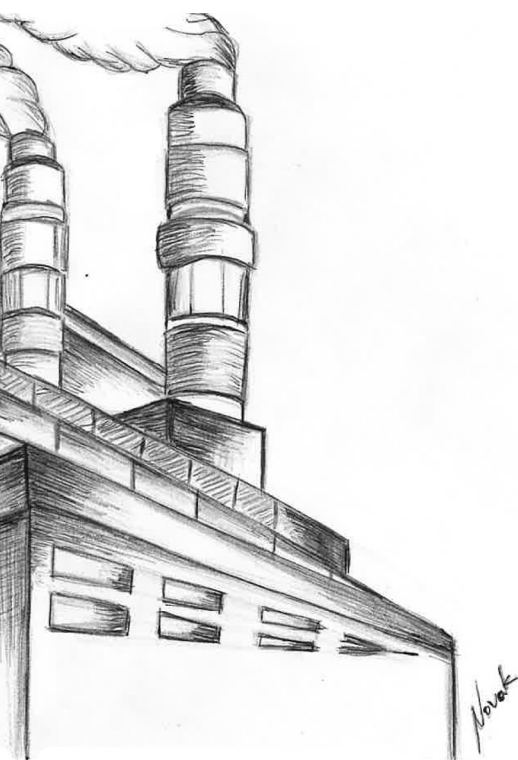


## TESTING ON ANIMALS IS ESSENTIAL FOR PROGRESS IN MEDICINE

Mankind has always been intrigued by their surroundings. As time went on, they tried to understand how human body works. And so, if they wanted to learn, they had to begin testing their hypotheses in practical life. Unfortunately, the first who were subjected to medical testing, often without their consent, were prisoners, orphans and the poor. Later it was suggested by Charles Darwin that animals would be fitting alternatives to carry out experiments on them. Consequently, the long period of cruel animal testing began.

Many people, myself among them, are very fond of animals and feel strongly against animal cruelty. Though I was raised in an animal-loving home, my family and I have never really thought about animal cruelty that is behind the products we have bought.

Many times I have found myself



thinking about starting to buy only cruelty-free products, but then I have also realized just how much time I would have to spend researching and looking for merchandise that is animal friendly. Such goods could be very hard to find in Slovenia, since we are such a small country and are also quite expensive. On top of that, I started wondering if buying them would even make a difference, because firstly, I am only one person, and even if I were to start buying them, the majority of people would still stick to their favourite items, which would in a way mean I would be spending money in vain. Secondly, even if I were successful in convincing, for example, my family to adopt the new perspective, after having been buying the same products for years, there might still be occasions when I would have to remind them about it.

I think one should stand up for their beliefs and actions no matter the cost, ignoring other people's opinions. But maybe, like in my case, when, despite my love of animals, I am doing nothing to prevent the spite that is being done to them, this just proves that a lot of us are too afraid of believing in something if it is not believed in by the majority of our society.

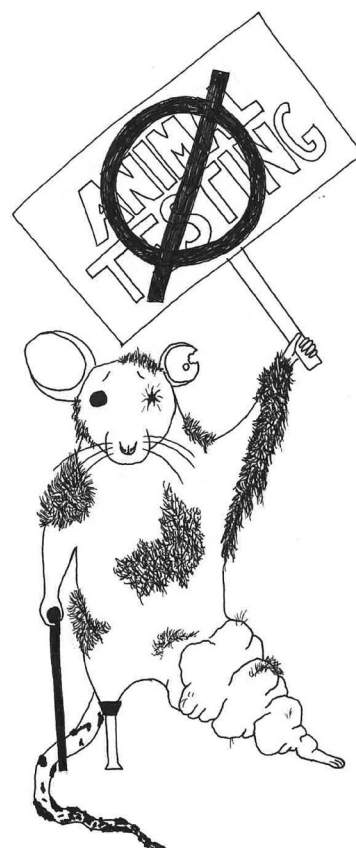
What fills me with hope is an article I have recently read about alternative methods of testing various drugs and cosmetics. An American doctor has proclaimed animal testing to have been a fair step back in understanding disease biology in humans. He believes that trying to determine consequences of human disease on animals has been wrong. As a result, the world's most forward thinking scientists have presented several new, non-animal methods,

such as testing drugs on in vitro human cells and tissues, testing on very precise computer models that simulate human biology and the reaction of the organism to specific diseases, and human volunteering.

I do not think animal testing will be completely eliminated and not nearly as fast as I would like it to be, but these new techniques could contribute to it.

In conclusion, I disagree with the title of this essay, and I think we all could and should do more to prevent animal cruelty. However, in today's fast moving society it could be quite tiring and time-consuming for some people to pay attention to what products they buy after a long and exhausting day at work when the last thing they want is to spend three hours in a shopping centre, searching for a cruelty-free brand that would suit their tastes.

Jana Colja, 3. Zb



# DEUTSCHE SEITEN

## INTERNATIONALER STUDENTENAUSTAUSCH



Am 19. 10. 2017, sind 4 Schülerinnen (2 Kosmetikerinnen und 2 Biochemikerinnen) und eine Lehrerin um 4.00 Uhr nach Venedig gefahren. Wir sind nach Barcelona geflogen und dann weiter nach Oviedo gefahren. Da hat uns der spanische Lehrer abgeholt und uns mit dem Auto nach Gijon gebracht. In dieser Stadt sind wir dann vier Wochen geblieben.

Den ersten Tag haben wir in der Wohnung verbracht und unsere Koffer ausgepackt. Am Freitag haben wir die Schule und den Kosmetiksalon Talasoponiente besucht. Die Stadt haben wir am Wochenende näher kennengelernt.

Am Montag haben ich und Patricija in dem Krankenhaus Hospital de Cabueñes mit dem Praktikum begonnen. Wir haben in dem biochemischen, dem mikrobiologischen und dem hematologischen Labor gearbeitet. Da haben wir Proben und Dokumente geordnet. Unsere Fachbetreuer haben uns einige neue Methoden, Techniken und Apparate gezeigt. Wir haben auch Aspiration aus Knochenmark gesehen. Die Laborarbeiter waren sehr freundlich.

In der Freizeit sind wir an den Strand oder in die Stadt gegangen. Wir haben viel heiße Schokolade mit dem traditionellen Churros gegessen. In Gijon gibt es viele Sehenswürdigkeiten, die wir besichtigt haben, z.B. die Skulptur Elogio del Horizont, den botanischen

Garten, das Aquarium mit einem Hai und noch viele andere Sachen. Einmal sind wir nach Oviedo gefahren und haben diese Stadt besichtigt.

Wir sind am 17. 11. 2017 mit dem Flugzeug über Madrid nach Venedig geflogen und dann wieder mit dem Kombi nach Ljubljana gefahren.

Der Austausch hat mir sehr gefallen. Die Stadt ist sehr schön. Ich habe sehr viel gelernt und mehr Erfahrungen für meinen Beruf bekommen. Ich habe auch meine Spanischkenntnisse verbessern. Jetzt habe ich ein paar spanische Freunde. Sie sind ganz nett. Hoffentlich bleiben wir in Kontakt und sie kommen bald nach Slowenien.



*Ich und meine Fachbetreuerinnen*



*Im Labour*





Die Stadt Gijon

Nuša Gjerkeš, 4. L

## MEINE FAMILIE

Meine Familie ist am wichtigsten in meinem Leben. Unsere Familie heißt Familie Šikovec. In der Familie sind 5 Mitglieder: ich, mein Vater, meine Mutter, mein Bruder und mein Großvater. Wir leben in einem Haus in einem Dorf. Wir haben auch einen Bauernhof. So beschäftigen wir uns mit Tierhaltung und Holz.

Unser Tag beginnt um 5.30 Uhr, wenn ich und meine Mutter aufstehen. Sie bringt mich zum Bahnhof. Ich fahre dann mit dem Zug zur Schule. Mein Vater steht um 7 Uhr auf und geht in den Stall. Er ist schon im Ruhestand. Mein Bruder arbeitet in Schichten und steht nicht jeden Tag früh auf. Mein Großvater ist schon 83 Jahre alt, aber er hilft uns noch immer bei der Arbeit. Meine Mutter kocht das Mittagessen und putzt die Wohnung. Am Abend treffen wir uns in dem Wohnzimmer, wo wir fernsehen und diskutieren.

Wenn wir Freizeit haben, treiben wir oft Sport und reisen. Wir reisen in Slowenien hin und her und treffen unsere Freunde.

In unserem Haus lebt auch mein Großvater. Er versteht uns oft nicht und spricht vom Leben vor 50 Jahren und will immer Recht haben. Aber wir versuchen unser eigenes Leben in Ruhe zu leben. Ich meine, dass das Leben unter einem Dach mit älteren Leuten nicht so gut ist.

Ich wünsche mir, dass unsere Familie viel Zeit miteinander verbringen würde und dass wir alle gesund wären.

Klemen Šikovec, 4. Fa

## MEINE FAMILIE

Meine Familie hat sechs Mitglieder. Wir leben im eigenen Haus, das meine Eltern vor dreißig Jahren im kleinen Dorf Srednja Bistrica gebaut haben.

Mein Vater heißt Stanko. Er hat ein Steinmetzgewerbe, deswegen haben ich und mein älterer Bruder schon als kleine Jungen mit ihm gearbeitet und ihm bei der Arbeit geholfen. Mein Bruder heißt Dominik und er ist vor kurzem in sein eigenes Haus umgezogen. Er ist jetzt unser Nachbar. Wir essen noch oft zusammen. Unser Mittagessen ist immer um 12 Uhr. Das Mittagessen bereiten immer unsere Mädchen vor, meine Mutter Marija und meine Schwester Jasmina. Meine Mutter ist schon seit sieben Jahren arbeitslos. Sie kümmert sich jetzt nur um den Haushalt. Meine Schwester Jasmina ist noch zu Hause. Sie baut ein Haus in Jerusalem. Ich helfe ihr sehr oft bei verschiedenen Hausarbeiten. Sie möchte so schnell wie möglich in ihr eigenes Haus umziehen. Das sechste Familienmitglied ist unser Hund Leno. Er ist wie ein Polarbär. Er hat langes, weißes Haar und kuschelt am liebsten.

Meine Eltern sind von Montag bis Freitag meistens alleine und wenn wir alle am Wochenende nach Hause kommen, sind sie sehr froh.

Kevin Vučko, 4. Za

# LEISURE AND PLEASURE

## INTERVIEW: ZITHER AND SCHOOL

I want to introduce my schoolmate Brina Gabrovec to you. She is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of the Pharmacy program in our school and she is enrolled in a parallel course at Music High School in Celje. I think it is incredible how she manages to keep good grades in both programmes and is not too exhausted because she has to study a lot. In this interview, I am going to ask her a few questions about her and her zither, so let me start with the first question.

**Q:** Brina, can you please tell me at what age you started playing the zither and what inspired you to play?

**A:** When I was 5 years old, I saw a toy called zither in the kindergarten. I used to play on that toy all the time, and when I got some money for my birthday, I bought it. As a child I always sang and played on everything, so when I was 8 years old, my parents decided to enrol me at Music School in Žalec. Now I can tell you that that toy was not a good copy of a real zither at all.

**Q:** With such a great musical talent, have you ever wanted to play any other instrument? If yes, which one and why?

**A:** Certainly. I remember that I really wanted to play the flute or violin, but my father was against it. Then I wanted to play the cello, because it is a very nice instrument and I still love listening to it. But when I heard the zither, it was the right instrument for me because it is quiet, hard to play, really special and less common.

**Q:** Back to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school. You had to decide to study at two schools - Secondary School for Pharmacy and Music High School. Was that a hard decision, and did you have to think a lot about it, or were you absolutely sure that you wanted to study both?



**A:** In fact, I was fully convinced that I wanted to study Pharmacy, so I decided to go to Ljubljana. In the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, I attended private zither lessons, but entering competitions and paying for the lessons was a much too big financial problem for my family. We were thinking a lot how to solve it, but the only way to study zither in high school is still only in Celje. I did the tests, and when I passed them, I knew that it would be hard, but I could do it.

**Q:** I understand that having good grades in both programmes is hard. What motivates you to stay good in school?

**A:** There are many days when I ask myself why I am doing this, because the hardest thing in my opinion is not having so much time for my family, boyfriend or friends. I often realise I am different than most of the other youngsters, and I want to develop all my talents and everything has to be perfect. But when I don't have any motivation, there are the people for me that love me and believe in me even though I don't have a lot time for them.



*Brina and her zither*

**Q:** Do you have any other hobby besides playing the zither, and what do you like to do in your free time?

**A:** It's hard to have another hobby besides two schools, but when I have free time I read good books or take our dog for a walk. I also like to go swimming and skiing, or I just play cards or watch a movie with my family.

**Me:** Ok, Brina, thank you for answering all my questions and sharing your story. I wish you good luck in both schools.

Anita Golob, 3. Fb

## MY LIFE AS A DISCUS THROWER

Everyone has a free time activity they love doing. In my free time, I dedicate myself to training discus throwing. Discus throwing isn't a very popular sport. In fact, many people don't even know it is a sport in athletics. When people hear the word athletics, they only think about running and jumping.



*Discus throwing*

My beginning in this sport is an interesting story to tell. It all started when my PE teacher trained me to do the shot put for the school competition and she was sure that I would win. However, on the day of the competition, I didn't win. I made a lot of trespasses, but at the last throw I didn't. With the last throw I came second. The referee wanted us to train this sport, but I didn't really like it and I also trained volleyball at the time. The school athletic competition was twice a year. We were there again and I made it on the winner's podium once more. Our school had great scores and we had to go to the best schools' athletic championship in Slovenia. There were a lot of athletes. It was my lucky day - I threw the shot put farther than usual and came third. My PE teachers supported me in every competition and wanted me to start training this sport, because I had great scores without training – I had always won a medal. They finally convinced me, so I started with training sessions and catching up on it.

My training starts after I finish school and it lasts three hours. I train four times per week and also do training at home or outside when we don't have training sessions. A typical indoor training session begins with warming up. First, we run for about 10-15 minutes, then we stretch and do running exercises, the so-called athletic alphabet. After that, the real training, which is very different each day, starts. We usually take a 5kg medicine ball, which is a weight ball, and we do different exercises, and also a 1kg one for the discus throw. We also train discus throwing moves, and the coach always corrects us to make the moves better. We are often in the so-called weight room where the weights are and we do different exercises for muscles, and we also use the fitness studio. At the start, I only threw the shot put, but the coach taught me how to throw the discus and later on also the hammer. At the beginning, everything was hard, but I gradually got used to it. Now, on a typical sunny day, we are outdoors and we throw the discus while our coach watches and corrects our moves. You need to be very careful and do it right and not throw the discus in the net, because if you do, you get 50 squats or something else as a punishment. Our trainer calls this a 'reward', but it does make us work harder. After throwing the discus, we also do exercises outside. The training session finishes after three hours with a run. During holidays we train every day except Sunday, which is a free day. After training sessions I actually feel better, but sometimes we are so tired, we end up lying on the floor. When training is particularly hard, we usually have muscle fever.

In the end all of the hard work pays off when the day of the competition comes. The stadium is filled with athletes ready to compete but who are also stressed, and there are also the supporting coaches cheering for their competitors. Athletic competitions last long, because every event starts at a different hour. In the end, they announce the winners and distribute the medals.

My best score for the shot put was in Slovenj Gradec, where I also improved my discus throwing result, but my best score was in Nova Gorica. The best score for the hammer throw was in Ptuj. In 2016, there was an important championship in Ptuj for the best ones to represent Slovenia at the pentathlon which was held in Slovakia. I was lucky because me and my friend were good enough to go. We were so happy to go there and compete. It was a long journey, and we were all so excited that we couldn't even sleep. We

also made some friends with the competitors from other countries. Our coaches gathered us, gave us some motivational words and said that we were fighting for the third or fourth place and they wouldn't accept the fifth. The next day was the competition and we were ready to compete, but we weren't very lucky. Slovenia came fourth, but at least we weren't the fifth. It was a really good journey and we were proud to be in the group of people who represented Slovenia in the competition.

In this sport there aren't just great things, like good achievements and a lot of support. Throwers have a lot of injuries and I have had my share too. I have had my ankle twisted many times, my fingers damaged and I have also had a muscle injury on my back, which made me stay in hospital for a week because of a severe pain. Everyone thinks that throwing is easy because you just throw, but it's harder than it seems. We train for the straight and right moves, they don't just happen like that, and with a small mistake you can cause damage to your body. My family and friends were there through the injuries, and they have always asked me why I still stick at this sport. I have been asked to stop, but I have never done it. I really like this sport, I feel stronger after every training session, and the enthusiasm to make a good achievement grows bigger and you work for it. And most of all, in those three hours of training, I clear my mind. I don't think about anything else, just about the moves and exercises. It's actually a kind of escape from the world and stress. I can't really describe it, but the feeling when you do the sport is just right. When it comes to good things, the best one is when you have the biggest support and them believing in you more than you do yourself.

This sport wasn't important for me in the beginning, but by sticking to it, it gradually got a special place in my life. No matter what comes in between, when you want it, you stick to it. When a sport becomes part of your life and you are absent for a day, you miss every second of it.

Endrita Bajraktari, 2. Ka



*Kronos competitors at the Pentathlon in Slovakia*





# AT HOME AND ABROAD

## THE FOURTH RESEARCH CAMP 2017/18 - SALT

In September 2017, more precisely from Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 16 invited students from different programs and classes attended the fourth Research Camp.

This year, we were exploring different sides and uses of salt, so the coast was the perfect destination for us to go. Our teachers, Ms. Dimnik, Ms. Kopčavar, Mr. Lušina and Ms. Povhe Lenart, took us to the idyllic village of Korte, where we were staying in a pleasant hostel. We got there by bus, and from there on, our main means of transport were bicycles. We cycled to a shellfish farm, Škocjanski zatok, Sečovlje salt-pans and other destinations on the Slovenian coast. Sea vegetation, ornithology, salt panning and a few other topics were the centre of our interest. And it wouldn't be us if we hadn't wasted any possibility we had for swimming and jumping in the not-so-warm sea. The three days of pure happiness passed way too rapidly, and we didn't even arrive yet when we had to go back to Ljubljana.

On our return home, in our school hall we set up a lovely exhibition about what we had learned in these magnificent three days, and you wouldn't believe me if I said that we had a blast doing that too - but it is true. And we were really proud of what we had made!

There is just no better way of learning than in nature with a group of amazing people, and I truly hope I will be able to attend more events like this one.

Neža Mavri, 3. Fb



*On the top of the hill Beli Križ*



*In Strunjan*

## OUR REWARD TRIP FOR BEING THE BEST CLASS OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 2016/2017

25 October 2017

The principal came in the classroom in the middle of the lesson to trick us into thinking that we had done something bad. But in reality, she just came to tell us that 4. Fc class was the best class of last year. We were both relieved and very proud of ourselves. Our class with our form teacher, Ms. Horzelenberg, decided that we and a couple of other really brilliant students from other classes were going to the spa Terme 3000 in Moravske Toplice.

We set off at eight o'clock in the morning, and started our three-hour bus ride with happy faces and an overall positive atmosphere. When we arrived, we got our bracelets, left our clothes in the lockers and changed into swimsuits, so we were ready to enjoy our day.

First we ate lunch, which was in the pool complex, and then the fun began. The water was great and we really had a lot of fun and laughs with our classmates and other students. Even the teachers were laughing at us and how we were coming out of the pool slide all together. Yes, we had got in a little bit of trouble for that, but it was worth it. Other than that, we spent the day relaxing in the hot water. There was a special black thermal mineral water that smelled a bit like oil and so did our swimsuits after bathing in it. The time went by fast and it was time to dry up and head back home.

On the way, we decided to stop in Trojane, because we didn't want to miss the opportunity of getting the famous Trojane doughnuts. We got to Ljubljana at six o'clock, said our goodbyes and went home.

In conclusion, our day relaxing and having fun in Terme 3000 was a day well spent and the perfect reward for a hard-working year. On behalf of 4. Fc class and other friends we thank the school and our principal for making it all possible.

Karin Kapelj, 4. Fc



*In front of the spa*

## LONDON

On 22nd June 2017, late in the evening, we set off for London from Brnik. Our flight was delayed since the plane failed to make an appearance. So after an hour and a half of waiting, we finally boarded the plane and made our way to London.

Complications didn't end there, unfortunately. We had quite a few problems when we arrived at the airport in London. We spent 20 minutes just to get through the gates, because some machines didn't work as they should. And don't even get me started on trying to locate our taxi driver, who decided to disappear into thin air. But finally seated in the car, fastened and tired, for it was in the middle of the night, we drove off for a one-hour drive to the center of the city. It was very strange, because even though you know they have the steering wheel on the right-hand side and they drive on the **WRONG** side of the road, it's quite another story to actually experience that.

Let me tell you that driving in the dark through the outskirts of London wasn't very pleasant. The scenery quickly changed though, as we were approaching the center. We saw big, old houses and even glimpsed the **Tower of London**. But of course, you can't expect to see much in the dark.



When we finally arrived at our flat, it turned out to be fairly small for the six of us, but newly renovated, so thank God there were no mould or old mattresses. Because that is a deal breaker for me.

Our first day consisted of getting to know a bit about

London. We had a great location in the very center, about 5 minutes from Buckingham Palace. That day we walked through St. James' Park and saw the Palace. What surprised me was how many squirrels there were. They weren't the least bit afraid of humans. One actually took part of a cookie out of my cousin's hand (I have it on tape).



*St James' Park*

Back to the sightseeing story. We went (on foot) through the streets of London to Big Ben and towards the London Eye. But first we made a stop at the Aquarium next to the big wheel. I know what you're thinking. *Seriously? You're in London for a few days and you go to an aquarium!?* Let me tell you ... It was huge. So huge you got lost in it (literally).

It wasn't anything like the one in Piran, if that is what you are picturing. There were a lot of tanks. One had 1 million liters of water in it, and there were different themes. Depends on what species of fish were in that tank. For example, the outside of the one with sharks was made to look like a ship wreck.

Alright, enough about the Aquarium.

The next stop: the London Eye. You can see nearly everything from up there. I'm surprised I couldn't see Šmarna gora (that is a bit of an exaggeration), but actually it is gigantic. And you could barely feel it moving. The view is spectacular! The only thing keeping you from taking an amazing photo is the frame of the Eye. Don't get me wrong, I mean, it's a good thing it's there, I wouldn't want to fall off that thing.

On the same day we tried fish and chips. It wasn't half bad, pretty good actually. We decided we had enough for one day and headed slowly (my feet were killing me) back to our flat.

On the menu for the second day was a hop-on hop-off bus, so we could see further parts of London. But because none of us is good at reading maps, we got lost on the way to the bus station (don't even get me started on that). Fortunately, everything turned out fine, so the first thing on our list was St Paul's Cathedral. It was beautiful inside and out. We didn't make it to the top, though (too many stairs). But we went to the tomb, and it was fascinating to be in the same place where a lot of important people in English history are buried. The same thing with the Tower of London. I confess, I'm a bit of a fan of monarch history, so it was amazing to see where Anne Boleyn was brought through the traitor's gate, imprisoned and later executed for her alleged crimes against the crown.

After seeing probably one of the most fascinating buildings in London, we hopped on a boat and set sail to Greenwich. When you arrive there, you can see a big ship, made in 1865, if my memory serves me correctly. It was like the one straight out of the Pirates of the Caribbean movies (with white sails).

On our last day we went to Hyde Park and had a little picnic on the grass. We also saw the Museum of Natural History. But we saved the best for last: we went to Hatchards book store. Since I'm a bookworm, it was like heaven on earth. Everything was quaint and it had four floors. It's been there since 1797. I could visit London again just for that.



*The gardens in front of Buckingham Palace*

Here are a few things I found a little bit odd. The people working in restaurants or taxi drivers or people with similar jobs were mostly foreigners. And what's with people calling you *love, darling, sweetheart*?



*Cutty Sark in Greenwich*

I mean, hello, I don't know you! There were also a lot of safety precautions, which is understandable because of the recent terrorist attacks.



*Prince of Wales – the pub opposite our flat*

In conclusion, I think I have never walked so much in my entire life.

Klara Tacar, 4. Ka





*Casa Batlló, Barcelona*



## BARCELONA

I am going to write about my trip to Barcelona. Yes, you heard it right. I have been to Barcelona! I bet you want to know what was happening there. Well, you're going to find out soon.

First of all, I haven't been just to Barcelona. I've also been to Arles, which is in France, and we have also driven through Monaco.

We started our journey early on Thursday morning, 27<sup>th</sup> April last year. We drove from Ljubljana across Italy to France and had the first stop in the perfumery Galimard, which is in the French town Grasse. We needed 11 hours to get there! Well, it was worth it because the perfumery was absolutely stunning. It smelled so good in there. There was a guide who told us a lot of new and interesting things about perfumes and how they are made. At first I thought that listening to the guide would be boring, but actually it was alluring and impressive. The most bizarre thing that I found out was that smelling clear coffee seeds, after smelling a perfume, would actually cleanse your nostrils, so you could smell another perfume without mixing the smell of the previous one. My favourite part was the end of the tour, when we tried certain perfumes and we could also buy them. I decided not to buy any. However, I did buy some sort of a soap that smelled really nice and it was not that expensive.

Our next stop was in the French town Arles, where we stayed overnight. Before going there, we had our dinner in a restaurant called Buffalo Grill. Oh, let me just not start on how terrible that dinner was! We got French fries and the so-called medium steak which looked awful, and when I tried to cut it, it was raw inside, even the blood started to flow. I was disgusted. I said to myself, "Well, there goes my appetite." and I didn't eat anything that night.

After dinner we took our suitcases and went to the hotel, where we got the keys to our rooms. I really liked the hotel, although it was pretty small and had three stars. The rooms were nice. Everything in there was in the shade of purple and there was a big purple picture of flamingos above the bed. There was also a small TV, but all the programs were in French,



so I didn't understand anything. The bed was so comfortable, and it was such a shame we didn't stay there for more than just one night. The next morning we got up early to eat our breakfast, a croissant and baguette, and continued our journey.

We drove to Spain, and as always, the ride was very tiring. We didn't go directly to the hotel that was waiting for us in Calella, because we had to make a stop in Figueres, the birthplace of the famous painter Salvador Dali. We visited his museum of art, which was fascinating. All those pictures and sculptures were truly remarkable. Despite not being a big fan of art, I really liked his work. Even the museum itself, its outside, looked really unusual and exotic. After the visit we had some free time, so we could explore a little bit. But we were afraid to go far away, as we were sure we would get lost. So I basically just went around the shops with my friends, we took some pictures and we even met some new people. That's why that day was one of the best ones and it stayed in my memory.

It was getting late and we still had one or two hours to get to the hotel. This was our second and last hotel we stayed in because we spent three nights there. We got there, got the keys to our rooms and went to the dining room to have dinner which was not as awful as the one in France. After dinner we went to our rooms, unpacked and soon went to sleep since we were all very tired. Let me just tell you what the hotel was like. On the outside, it looked awesome. It was enormous, and there were two swimming pools on each side of the hotel. When you got inside, it was still okay, the dining room was big and rich with food and tables, but when you saw what the rooms were like, it made you think, "Is this really a three-star hotel?" The rooms were small and there were three separate beds covered with such thin duvets that we thought we were going to freeze at night. Luckily, we had the heating. The bathroom was a mess. All in all, it was okay, as we only slept in that hotel because we were out all days long.

The next day we headed for Barcelona, the capital of the Spanish province Catalonia. We were in that beautiful city all day, and I was absolutely exhausted at the end, but it was worth it. First we drove to the center of Barcelona. We visited another museum, the museum of Gaudi, called Casa Batllo. Before we started the tour, we got some kind of an old phone

and we had to listen to what it was playing, it was the information about the museum. I found it really dull and I couldn't wait to get out of the place. We continued our day in Barcelona on foot. We walked a long way to get to a square, and when we stopped, our guide told us that we had free time and informed us where to meet. Me and my friends went around the shops and bought some things. We also went somewhere to eat and we took a lot of photos. It was almost the end of the day. We had the last stop in a big department store, and then we went back to the hotel to get some sleep.

The following morning we got up even earlier, because we had a lot of sights to see. First we went to Gaudi Park, where we could see the most famous thing in Barcelona - the lizard or the so-called 'dragon', although it actually looks like a lizard. Our next stop was Basilica de la Sagrada Familia, which is an enormous church, still being built and it is going to be completed in year 2026. Again, we got some information to listen to and it was pretty boring. After the tour of the church, we had just enough free time to eat somewhere. Then the most important sight was waiting for us, the one that almost everyone was so excited about - the official stadium of the Football Club Barcelona, called Camp Nou Stadium. We viewed the whole stadium, which took us a long time. After that we were able to go to the official Football Club Barcelona Shop, and a lot of people spent great amounts of money there. Soon we had to return to our hotel, and that was our last night there. I had an early night, because the next day we had to wake up even earlier due to the long ride home.



*Museum of Salvador Dali, Figueres*



*Gaudi Park, Barcelona*

Now the saddest part came - saying goodbye to Barcelona, Spain and all the fun. There was just a long bus ride ahead of us. The good thing was that we went to Monaco, but the bad thing was that we didn't make a stop there because we didn't have enough time. We just drove through this rich, small country. And everything there looked so perfect, so beautiful. It seems everyone there is rich, life is easy and calm.



*Streets of Barcelona*



*Camp Nou Stadium, Barcelona*

The ride was very exhausting. We were driving for twenty hours, and when we reached Slovenia, Ljubljana, to be exact, it was past midnight.



*Basilica de la Sagrada Família, Barcelona*



*Monaco*

This trip was really an amazing experience for me, and I became a big fan of Spain and everything connected to it. I love their culture, I love their music, I love the people, and I am sure I would have loved their food as well if I had had the opportunity to try it. I would like to and will visit Spain again. Maybe even several times, who knows?

K. L., 2. Ka



# ROAD TRIP

Who would've thought that me and my family would be spending our summer vacation on a road trip in Southern Europe. We traveled well over 5,000 km in 18 days. We mostly slept in tents, under the stars. Exploring Transylvania was the main part of the trip. Armed with garlic, no crosses and a few knives, we hit the road.



Our first stop was in Budapest, where we checked out all the famous

landmarks, but me, Pia and my dad were mostly interested in shopping. By noon, we were back on the road.



The first landmark we visited in Romania was a salt mine in the town Turda, where salt was mined over 250 years ago. The special thing about this mine is that there are an amusement park and a lake at the bottom - 160 meters under the ground. The lake contains 24% salt, which is eight times more than the sea! The temperature in the mine is only 12°C, which is quite cold, compared to the 40°C outside.

The road took us through the Pannonian countryside of Romania, full of poor villages, houses, fields of sunflowers and storks – I had never seen so many storks before. We soon reached one of the most beautiful country roads in the world - the Transfagarasan Pass and because it is 2,087 meters high, the pass is only open in the summer, and we could still

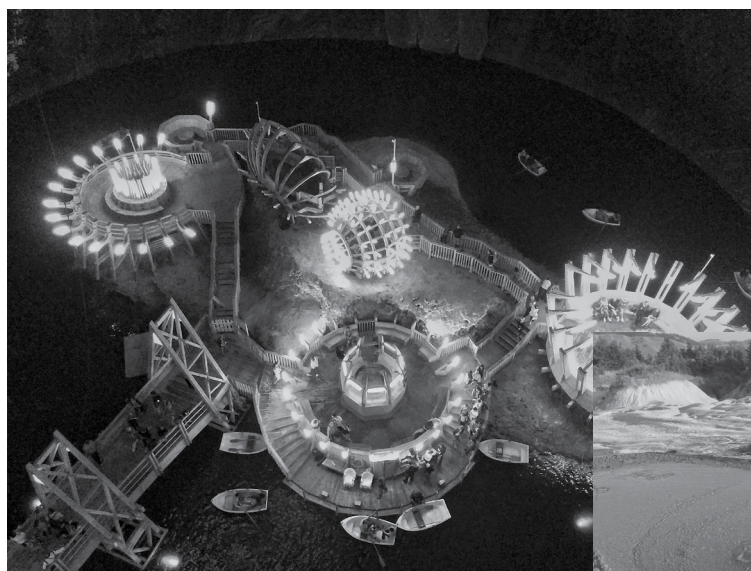
see snow on the top.

The locals have a little market where they sell homemade honey, sausages and other traditional Romanian foods.

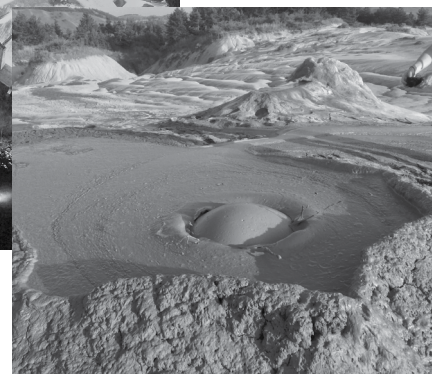


We stopped and had a picnic and then continued the long ride, which was a bit more bearable because of our full bellies. Our next stop was at the giant dam, built on the river Arges. The dam is 166 meters high, and walking across it was quite scary.

We reached our campsite in the evening, set up our tents and went for a walk through the town. We went inside the castle Bran, where Count Dracula supposedly lived. In the evening we reached a small village called Berca,

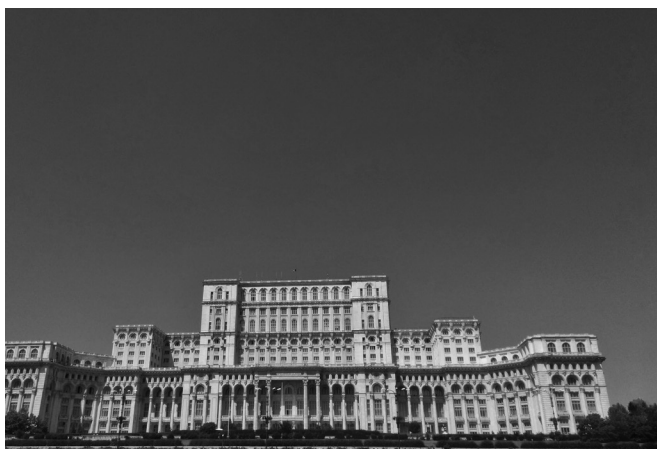


which is known for its mud volcanoes. The volcanoes are a natural phenomenon and can also be found in other countries.



The mud that erupts from the ground forms large volcanoes and muddy rivers. After we took some great photos, we went for some traditional

Romanian food and then to our campsite.



The next day we finally reached the capital city of Romania, Bucharest. We devoted two whole days to shopping, because they have some really, really big shopping malls that put the ones in Slovenia to shame. When our legs were aching because of all the walking and our bags were full, we drove off to Constanta, a big touristic city by the Black Sea. We went to a water park the following day and then drove through Bulgaria, all the way to Turkey. We spent four long hours at the border, waiting to get into Turkey, and then another four hours in a traffic jam right before Istanbul. When we got to our hotel, all we could do was sleep.

In the morning, we were awoken by the loud sounds coming through the mosque speakers. Even though this was my third time there, I still couldn't sleep through it. We shopped at their huge bazaars and shopping malls, so by the end of our four-day stay in Istanbul, our car was so full, we could barely sit in it.



We decided to leave Istanbul ... for our wallets' sake and set our sights on Greece. We were welcomed back to Europe by large wildfires next to the road, which were caused by the extremely hot weather. The next city on our little to-do list was Meteora, which is famous for its monastery topped hills, where one of the James Bond movies was filmed.

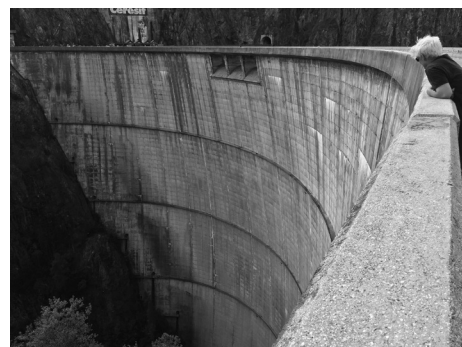
Albania was our next stop. We did



go and have a swim in the crazy cold water spring called Syri i Kaltër or Blue Eye. We spent a few days slacking off in the tourist-packed Ksamil and then another day in a campsite near Tirana, where we were awoken by frogs, chickens and cows.



The Adriatic Highway took us straight home, and with a few stops on the way, we returned home full of new impressions. All good things must come to an end and so did this trip.



*Giant dam, built on the river Arges*



Luka Kastelic, 3. Za



# PALESTINE

My name is Tareq Hussein and I am a 2nd grade student. Some of you may be wondering where this name comes from. My mum is Slovenian and my dad Palestinian. There are a few things about Palestine I would like to share with you.

Palestine is located in the Middle East next to the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea and the borders with Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Sinai. It is known as the Holy Land for three main religions, Islamic, Jewish and Christian. The capital city is Jerusalem, which is the sanctuary for these three religions. Some of the best-known cities are Bethlehem, the place where Jesus was born, and Jericho, which is said to be the oldest city in the world with culture which is likely to be 10,000 years old. It is not only the oldest city, but also the lowest since it is 274m below sea level. Palestine has many archaeological and historical sites, such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, the Wall of Jerusalem, the Wall of Akka, Galilee, David's Source, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Bethlehem and many more.



Jerusalem

(Source: [https://www.hdwallpapers.in/walls/old\\_city\\_jerusalem-normal.jpg](https://www.hdwallpapers.in/walls/old_city_jerusalem-normal.jpg))

One of the world's widely-known tourist attractions is the Dead Sea. It is famous for its saltiest water and healing mud, which is used for mud baths and in some cosmetics. The sea is called like this because there is no life in it.

Palestine is well known as a country of olives. Some olive trees are 5,000 years old. Besides olives, it is famous for figs, grapes and oranges, which are known as Jaffa oranges. When they harvest grapes, they have a festival of grapes. This takes place in September.

Palestinians have a variety of foods and they are all tasty. The main ingredients are vegetables, rice and meat. Usually they use lamb or mutton, but sometimes also veal or chicken. All food is moderately seasoned, because they use a lot of different spices, but in small quantities. In the area of Gaza, they use a lot of spices, which is why their food is so hot. The most popular dishes are *falafel*, *maklubi*, *laban imu*, *mah busa* and *msahan*. *Falafel* is made of chickpea, parsley and onions, and it is fried in oil. *Maklubi* is similar to risotto with a lot of different vegetables and chicken. When it is cooked, you turn it upside down on a big plate and it looks like a cake. *Laban imu* is a sauce whose main ingredients are yogurt, chickpea and onion with pieces of beef, and you can eat it with rice or bread. *Mah busa* is made of rice, lentil and onion. *Msahan* is made with special bread that is baked on a stone, then we add *summa*, which is a spice with a sour taste, roasted onion and grilled chicken. Apart from bread that is baked on a stone, we know many different types of bread. There is a special type of bread for almost every dish.



Palestinian lunch

The best-known Palestinian dessert is *knafe*, which is made of two layers of fried cornmeal and a layer of homemade cooked mozzarella. The dessert is drizzled with sugar water. But everyone knows *baklava*, made of strudel dough and pistachio and pineapple filling.



*Knafe*

(Source: <https://data.whicdn.com/images/54131979/original.jpg>)

Palestinian breakfast consists of coffee with cardamom or black tea. Children drink black tea with milk. They eat bread, black or green olives, olive oil and cheese spread, sheep cheese and *zaatar*, which tastes like oregano. Dinner is almost the same as breakfast but without coffee. After dinner the whole family sits together in the same room, talks and eats fruit or desserts.

Palestinian traditional clothing is meant for women. It is decorated with hand-woven patterns in different colours and shapes.



*Traditional Palestinian clothing*

(Source: <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/CtNvFmRWcAAAdtPS.jpg>)

Every shape represents a part of Palestine. *Qombaz* is for men, and it can be in one colour or striped, but it is not as colourful as women's clothing.

Palestinian people are a very sociable and simple nation. When you walk in the street, everyone says hi to you even if they do not know you. In the summer the whole family sits in front of the house and drinks coffee or tea. People are very social and they invite you to come over for coffee. Young people respect older and experienced people and are quiet when they speak. Youngsters play football and other sports or swim in the sea.

Everyone should go to an Arabic country to see that the media is not always right. There are not just violence and terrorism everywhere. There are many nice, polite and hard-working people. In every nation there are laughter and joy.

Tareq Hussein, 2. Za

# THIS AND THAT

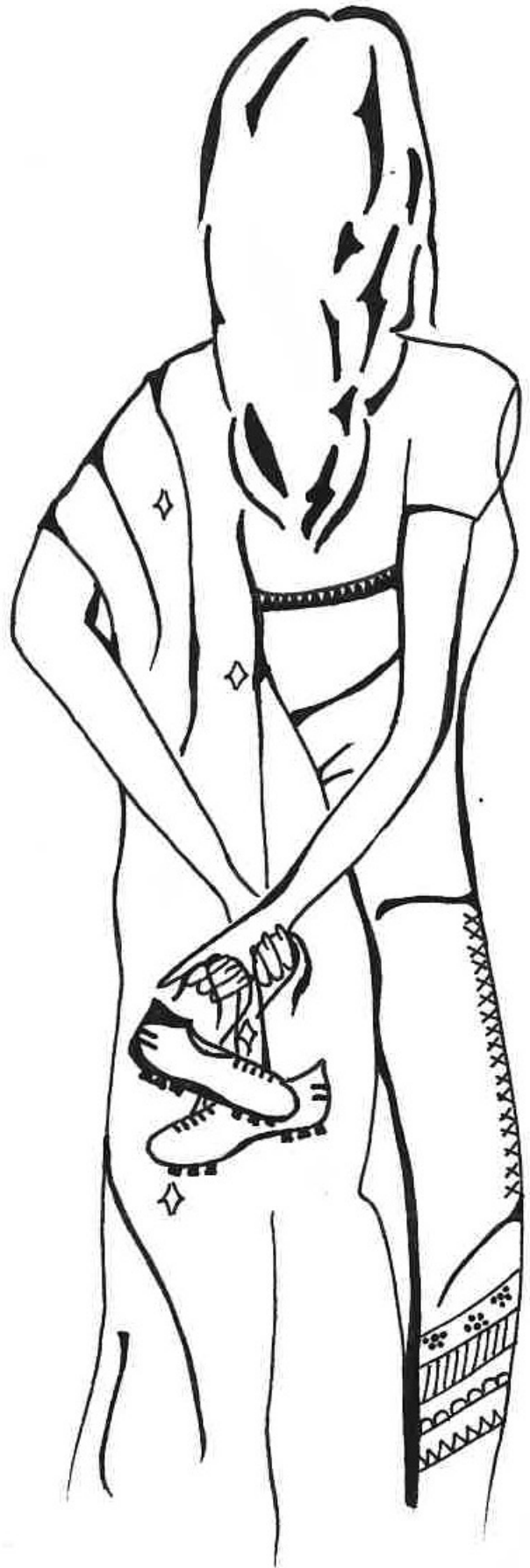
## FILM REVIEW: **B**END IT LIKE BECKHAM

Jess is a young Indian girl. Everything about her life is pretty normal. There's only one thing that makes her unhappy. Her parents are strict because of their religion, so she can't do what she loves, that is play football. Indian girls should be covered, so their skin doesn't get dark. Girls should get married at a young age. Their husband should be a rich Indian boy. Jess' parents want her to be a lawyer, so she is studying hard for the exams she has to pass to be accepted at the law university. She respects her parents, so she only plays football with her Indian friends (boys) in the park.

There is an ordinary day and Jess is playing football with her friends in the park when a girl runs past. She stops running and watches Jess playing. She is impressed. She runs towards Jess and introduces herself. Her name is Jules and she is a footballer in a girl's football team. She asks Jess if she would like to join the team and Jess says yes. But Jess has a big problem. Her sister Pinky is getting married and her parents don't allow her to play football. However, this is her life opportunity, so she goes to her first training session without anyone knowing. She has to show how good she really is. At first, Joe, the coach of the girl's team, isn't very happy about the idea of Jess playing, but in the end he lets her.

Jules and Jess become really good friends. They buy football boots together. Jules secretly 'borrows' her mom's shoes, so Jess can have them at her sister's wedding. One day, Jess and Jules are laughing at the bus stop while the parents of Pinky's fiancé are driving past. They mistake Jules for a boy and think Jess and Jules are kissing, so they go to Jess' parents' house and cancel the wedding. Pinky is devastated.

The football team in which Jess plays becomes very good and is invited to compete in Germany. Pinky covers for Jess, so nobody will know that she goes to Germany. In Germany the team loses the match. Jess and Jules fight because they both fancy Joe, and Jules sees how he and Jess almost kiss. They come from Germany and Jess' parents find out where she has been.





Now all Jess is doing is listening to her parents, cooking and studying. Soon Pinky's wedding is back on, which makes her very happy. But on the day of the wedding, there's also the final match with an American scout coming to see Jules and Jess playing. Joe can't stand that Jess isn't playing at the finals, so he visits the Bhamra family and asks Jess' father to let her play, but he won't.

On the wedding day, Jess is in a bad mood and her father says that she looks as if she was at a funeral. In the middle of the wedding, Tony persuades Jess' father to let her go to the final match. Father tells Jess that she can go if she will act normally then. Jess quickly changes and goes to the match. At the end her team wins when she scores a penalty. The American scout offers Jess and Jules a scholarship at a university in America where they can play football professionally.

Jules' and Jess' parents finally agree and allow them to go to America. They pack their suitcases and go to the airport. Joe also comes to say goodbye. He tells Jess that he is going to coach the girl's team and he kisses her.

The film ends with Pinky being pregnant, Jess and Jules in America, Joe and Jess' father playing cricket and everybody getting along well.

I really love the film because Jess wanted to achieve her dreams and with her stubbornness she did it. Because of her will to become a football player she is my favourite character. She just worked so hard to become what she wanted to be in her life that in the end everything paid off. I like her because she is almost like me: strong-willed, she never gives up and she loves sports. I saw myself in her and that's why the film was something special for me. There is another not such a noticeable character trait about her that I admire. She respects her parents - not only does she want to make herself happy but also her family.

Kaja Hotujec, 1. Zb

## LONGING

My name is Minela Mulalić. If you look at my last name, you will know that I am not from Slovenia. I am from a beautiful country, small but the best, and full of natural wealth, Bosnia and Herzegovina. I came to Slovenia for a better future. It's not easy to leave your home, mum and brother, but life goes on.



*Velika Kladuša Castle*



*Baščaršija, Sarajevo*

I am 15 years old, but many people tell me I look older. Maybe they say that because of my seriousness, I'm not sure. I was a great pupil whose dream was to become a professional artist, but my hopes have changed. I hope I will be a very good student at this school. In Bosnia I trained volleyball. I like to draw and write. I prefer to choose peace and quiet and a good book. I don't like parties. I love to spend time with my family at weekends. I have some good and positive sides, for example, I'm kind and really like to help others when they need help. My negative side is that sometimes I get too angry. This might be because I come from Krajina in north western Bosnia. You might have heard that people in Krajina are proud and angry, but also good and hospitable.

My life is interesting, but it would be better if I were together with my dear people, my mum, my brother and my best friend. My life is called waiting - every day I wait for something or someone. That is not good. Time passes quickly. I love Fridays most, not because it's the end of school, but because I go to Bosnia. It's hard to say that you don't like your homeland. My homeland is in my heart. Homeland is a word that can't be wiped out by rain or time.

Minela Mulalić, 1. Kb (with the help of her friend)

## ANGELS CAN FLY BECAUSE THEY TAKE LIFE LIGHTLY

Angels are beings who have greater power and ability than humans. I believe that they are the spirits of our ancestors. They guide us and look after us.

Angels can fly so high because they carry no baggage. It means they're not burdened by their worries. Angels tend to be this way because they have faith beyond measure. They don't worry, because things like worrying are human emotions and angels don't experience emotions the way that we do. They exist in a state of eternal love.

Angels feel free because they finished their job on Earth, and now they are God's servants. They are saved from all the pain and negative emotions.

I hope we will all meet again in afterlife remembering the good times and look after our descendants.

Although we may not immediately know or see that angels are around us, they are there at God's direction and work to protect us.

Humans also should take themselves lightly – we shouldn't take everything so seriously. We should laugh every once in a while, enjoy life and not worry all the time.

Ajda Lozar, 2. Za



# IMAGINARY PLACES

## TEAM TOWN

Team Town is an eco-town where team work is necessary. The town is a very small place with lots of forests and parks, which is why people use bikes and eco-buses for transport. Pollution is very rare here because people live a very healthy life style.

In this town you can find lots of special cafes where you make everything by yourself, you only need to pay for the ingredients. There aren't many cinemas because people usually spend their time outside. Every day people prepare fun activities in the central park, like team building, art projects, sometimes even carnivals or dog shows. These kinds of activities help people to stay active and make them appreciate the idea of working together and helping each other. In this way everything is easier and more fun.

Young people also have a great time living here, because if you want to party, you can just go to some nightclubs. Actually, every week a random group of people is chosen to prepare a theme party where they organize everything together and even create their special cocktail or a drink that is served only that night.

This place is perfect for people who are looking for more fun in their lives and it's also a very great place to meet new people.

Jure Vuzem and his team, 1. Zb

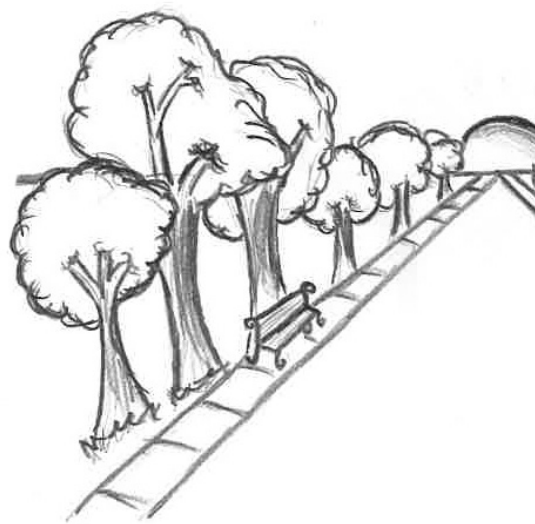
## GREEN TOWN

Welcome to Green Town!

In our town we have a lot of nature, so it is pretty unpolluted. We have some buildings, for example a shopping centre which is really large and popular. There are also a cinema, a few small cafes and a lot of flats with nightclubs on their rooftops. There are many parks that our town is known for. Near one of our most popular parks, Flower Park, there is also a ZOO. In the ZOO, there are a few elephants, some monkeys, which like to steal food from people, and a lion. You can also see many exotic birds. It attracts a lot of tourists. We also have a very old library with many historical books. You can also find some fantasy books there. Our town doesn't have much traffic. People usually ride their bikes or walk.

If you're an eco-friendly person and you like nature, fresh air and animals, you're welcome to Green Town anytime.

Špela Ovčak and her team, 1. Za



## SOLA TOWN

In Sola Town you can relax and enjoy in our cafes, or you can party in our best night clubs. If you want to be active, you can go for a walk in one of the many parks we have. In Sola Town we have a lot shops and a big shopping centre in the centre of the town. For your kids we have a lot of football pitches and playgrounds. People in Sola Town mainly use public transport because we are trying to become a green town. Come and visit us. You won't regret it.

Mehyar Eslami, Alem Halibašić, Anže Korošec and Nike Markovič Šoster, 1. Za

## LARA TOWN

In Lara Town there are a lot of women called Lara. There are a lot of night clubs. You can find some cinemas and shops too. There are a few parks called Lara's Park where they have planted a few trees called Lara's trees. There aren't any schools and not many children.

Lara Jenko, Nikolina Markić, Kristina Milenkov and Barbara Pejovnik, 1. Kb

## UNICORN TOWN

In Unicorn Town you can see many different kinds of unicorns. In the town there is not much pollution because people ride unicorns. Here you can also have a lot of fun by going to nightclubs with friends or going shopping, to cafes or to the cinema. You can also go to Unicorn Park to relax by the river or play with unicorns.

If you do not believe us, come and visit the town.

Pia Kuhar, Maša Lužar Tošeski, Tanja Merlak and Klara Pečnik, 1. Kb

## SHATLCOKE VILLAGE

You can find some tennis courts in *Shatlcake*, but there are no badminton courts. The word badminton is forbidden. There are a few charity organisations for sick *narwhals* and *manatees*. The houses are roofless because it never rains here. The current population of this village is 60.7 people. *Shatlcake* is a very green village. All the people go around on their scooters and they don't like dogs. The national animal is a worm. *Shatlcake's* currency is *bakugan*. The village specialty food is *burek*.

Sara Feher, Ana Hrovatin, Alja Jesenovec, Ana Povše, Patricija Zalar and Sara Žerovnik, 1. Kb



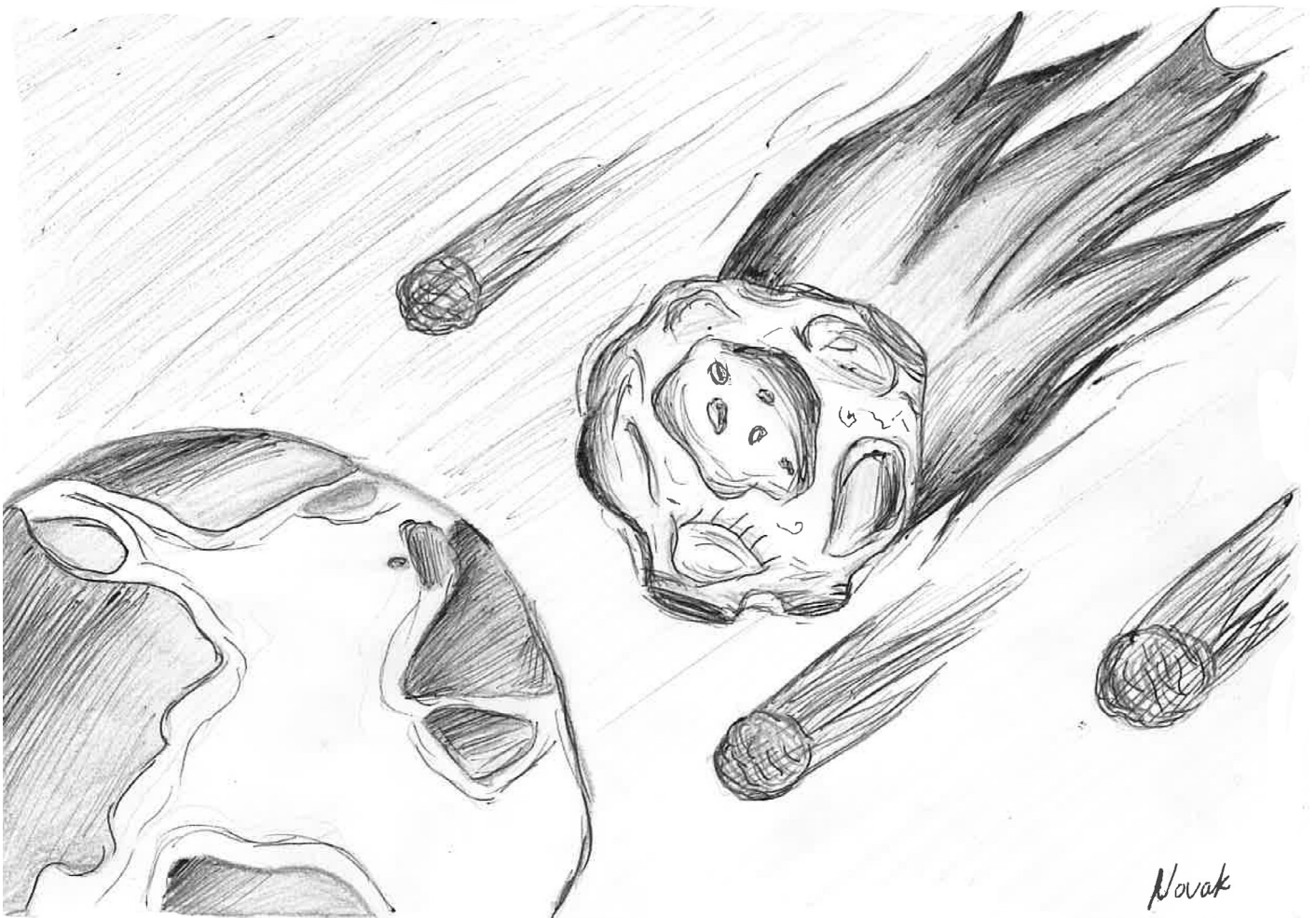
# STORIES AND MORE

## IT IS 2036

It's 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Dear Diary, I know I haven't written for months, but I just don't have time. Just like everybody in our society I have to work from sunset to sunrise. Today I finally have some time to write again because it's a national holiday, the Day of the Great Discovery

the Russian government were the only ones who knew what was coming. They developed the technology to make the asteroid change its way not to hit the Earth. When the world heard the disaster was coming, they would give just anything to the person with a solution, so Russia became number one force on Earth.

Russians did what they had promised and used their new technology to change the asteroid's way, but they miscalculated some details, if I am allowed to say so. They used an unimaginable amount of energy and they missed the fact that it could affect



I was thinking I could write about the improvement of life since the day of the great discovery that today is named after. First, let me brief the whole story.

On this day in 2030, the public was informed that a massive asteroid was heading towards Earth and would collide with it on 18<sup>th</sup> June the same year. I believe you are surprised scientists hadn't noticed it before, but today we know what happened. Russians were jamming all the signals, so a few politicians in

our planet too. I can imagine what you are expecting: global warming, sea level rising ... That is not really what happened. As Newton's Third Law says, 'If one body exerts a force  $F$  on a second body, the first body also undergoes a force of the same strength but in opposite direction,' this is exactly the plot. As the asteroid changed its way, the Earth changed its position. Simply said, it was pushed a few light seconds closer to the Sun. Yes, a few seconds, you can't imagine what an unbelievably enormous distance it is.

This happened on 28<sup>th</sup> April, the Day When Everything Went Wrong, as we like to say when nobody is listening. On that day, evolution slipped ages back. The atmosphere is so hot we only dare to go out of our holes at night, as I said in the beginning, from sunset to sunrise. Life in equatorial areas is not possible, kids nowadays only know about snow and ice from bedtime stories, and sea levels rose. And I forgot to mention that when the Earth moved, we lost the Moon somewhere. We got a new one, in fact three of them, but it's not the same.

As life conditions have changed, so has the lifestyle. We spend most of our time in darkness and minimal lightning because sun light is too dangerous. More progressive parts of the world, for example northern parts of America, developed cooling cells for storing food, growing plants and also for living. In Europe, where I live, we are happy to have a version of public lightning, but only in richer parts of settlements they can afford to have it on all night. Not all animal species were capable of readjusting to new conditions, so the cute beasts like penguins, polar bears, pandas and other fluffy or coolness liking animals got extinct. African animals didn't stand a chance when the heat took place. Birds and a lot of sea animals were so confused when the Moon lost its effect that there wasn't much hope for them either. The few animals that survived the first shock passed away in the first few days when the weather got insane: ice cups were melting, water in equatorial areas was evaporating, hurricanes were devastating all over the Earth's surface. Just like the animals, people didn't take it well either. As much as I know, there are a few more than 500,000 of us out there, but we wouldn't survive without strict controls and unyielding rules of our government.

Everybody has to fulfil the certain quota of work. The amount of food and water we can use is strictly limited. Compared to the first year after the disaster, life conditions have improved a lot, but this is still not really how we want to live. I could write about it for ages, but this is how much time I have. I will try to write again as soon as possible, but as you have noticed, it might take a while.

Neža Mavri, 3. Fb

## THE STAG



Winter was slowly but surely beginning to fade and nature was slowly waking up from its slumber. It was a rather gloomy day as the clouds were gathering, the promise of rain in the air. But even so the birds were singing happily and flying around, as if nothing could dampen their mood.

In the middle of the forest there was a girl perched on a tree stump. Harsh wind was blowing her long dark locks away from her face. Her eyelashes were wet with tears that were slowly making their way down her pale cheeks. She was staring into the distance, seemingly unaware of her surroundings. She was oblivious of the cold wind blowing around her and neither did she notice raindrops that were starting to



fall from the sky. Thoughts were swirling around in her mind. She didn't know how to get rid of them, or how to distract herself. She had tried everything, but they just wouldn't go away.

Suddenly, she snapped out of her thoughts, as she heard a branch snap not far away from her. She quickly looked up and saw a pair of chocolate brown eyes staring into her own. A majestic stag was standing not even three meters away. She didn't move nor did she make a sound. She wasn't afraid, but she didn't want to scare him off. They were still as statues, not moving a muscle, just staring at each other. Suddenly, he tilted his head to the right as if asking what was wrong. But that wasn't possible, right? An animal couldn't possibly understand what she was feeling ... Right? Right.

She slowly stood up, careful not to frighten the stag. She slowly, inch by inch, made her way towards him. He didn't make a move and continued to stare at her. She raised her hand and touched his soft warm brown fur. He smelled of earth and rain. He still didn't move, but then suddenly his ears perked up and he lifted his head. She looked in the direction he was looking, but didn't see anything. She slowly stepped away from him, him still staring at her. Then he inclined his head as if he was bowing to her, and the next moment, she was standing alone again. She kept her eyes on the spot where he had been standing just a few moments ago. Had that really happened?

As she got home soaking wet from the rain, she ran into her room. She pulled out her sketch pad and her charcoal and started drawing. Soon she finished a beautiful drawing of the stag. Now she would never forget him.

Klara Tacar, 4. Ka

## DAMAGED

*The story follows a girl whose brother becomes abusive under the circumstances in their family. She is beaten by him on a daily basis, feeling hopeless, her trust betrayed and self-esteem shattered. At last, she gets humiliated in public ...*

*The inspiration was drawn mostly from the action novels I've read in the past years, mainly in English. I also have many internet stories to thank, as funny as that may sound.*

*I believe we all know someone who gets either verbally or physically abused at home, but we do not know about it, for they never admit it. They lose trust in others due to being betrayed by their own relatives, and feel like they must be guilty for being treated this way.*

It was a busy, sunny day, and my boyfriend and I decided it was the perfect time to go for a walk in the city, capturing the essence of city life. We held hands and laughed, pushing past the people while walking towards the end of the street, thinking how absolutely beautiful life is.

"What's going on over there?" I asked upon noticing a group of people standing in a circle at the very end of the street, with many more joining and pushing past rather violently.

"Perhaps just another street performer... Want to check it out?"

We pushed past the crowd, stepping onto our tiptoes to see what was going on. The masses gathered in a circle in the middle of a busy street, and from the sounds coming from the ring they have formed, we could tell they have encircled a girl who seemed to be rather upset about something, but kept her voice down while a boy was heard shouting at her, calling her various names. I pushed all the way to the front row while my boyfriend stayed somewhere in the back, shouting for me to wait for him. But I couldn't, for I heard the girl shout out: "I did nothing wrong, leave me alone!" and in a matter of milliseconds, the boy's face transformed from angry to furious.

He drew in a sharp breath and almost ran towards her, while she backed away in fear, realizing she had made a mistake in raising her voice. Her eyes widened in fear as he raised his hand and moments later, a loud smack echoed through the street. She gave out a loud shriek as the boy's hand forcefully landed on her cheek, throwing her off balance and causing her to fall to the ground, her legs hitting the concrete and bending at an unnatural angle. She collapsed into herself upon landing, pulling her knees into her chest and covering her tear-stained, swollen cheek as he stepped closer, towering over her in an intimidating manner. He bent down, grabbing her arm in an attempt to pull her up, perhaps to drag her away from the masses and finish what he had started. She screamed in terror, yanking her hand away from his grip and crawling away from him to the other side of the ring, her legs seemingly weak and aching from the fall. He laughed as if he were a villain in a horror movie, and looked at her as if she were a piece of trash he was about to take out and burn. By this time, my boyfriend had reached my side, and we stared at the scene in front of us, frozen in place, neither of us knowing what to do.

"What on earth ... OH GOD!" he screamed out as two adult men suddenly burst from the crowd, reaching for the attacker's arms and tackling him. They pinned him to the ground, each of them shouting incoherent threats and insults as he struggled to break free.

"Let go of me, you bastards! She deserved what she received!" he yelled, his shouting piercing the ears of bystanders, attempting to escape the strong hold of the saviors.

As much as I wanted to see what they'd do to him, see the beating he was bound to receive, my attention was diverted to the other side of the ring - to the victim.

"We have to help her," I spoke quietly, and made a step forward towards the girl, who was now curled into a ball on the concrete ground, sobbing and shaking violently while covering her face with her hands in an attempt to hide an already forming bruise on her cheek. Her mouth was moving, and she was speaking quietly and incoherently, but there were certain words I caught: "I didn't mean to ... I'm sorry ... Forgive me ..." I moved quickly, but was stopped in my tracks as an arm was stretched out before me, creating a fence. I stood still and watched as a boy around my age stepped out of the crowd and said: "You have nothing else to see here, unless you want



to help. All you did so far was watch ... How dare you?" And on that note, everyone seemed to slowly move away, as one might after the curtain falls at the theater. As if the show was over, and they only came here for free entertainment, with no desire to offer her a hand.

We saw the helper go over to the girl, bend over and ask: "Why does it mean so much to you?" The girl wanted to say that she did not wish for a fight. She believed that trust and mistrust can spread like a swarm of locusts; she wanted to make room for trust. "Don't cover your face, and give me your hand instead. You'll worry about your looks later, it should be the least of your worries." Her head remained bowed down as he took hold of her hand, slowly helping her get back up. She winced in pain as she put her whole weight on her aching feet, and grabbed onto her helper's arm to prevent herself from falling. Her mind racing, she wanted to run away from the world, to hide and never resurface. She knew no one would understand her reasons, let alone sympathize with her. She was better off keeping quiet and trying to forget the cause for her attacker's outbreak.

She was suddenly dragged away from prying eyes through the suffocating crowd, the helper supporting her while she walked.

"We have to get you out of here, and call an ambulance," he spoke, and his words seemed to alarm her.

"NO! Call no one, please," she shouted, knowing what would follow if he did. She didn't want to explain herself to anyone, let alone the police.

Her head pounding, she thought back to the sweet old times when her life was normal, when she was able to call her attacker a brother, standing proudly by his side. They did everything together, and never quarreled. Their parents seemed happy together as well, constantly showing affection and giving their children everything they wished for. But things changed as one day when she was sitting in her room by her desk, her mother pushed the door open and ran in, tears streaming down her face and blood gushing out of her nose, which seemed to be broken. She slammed the door shut and ran towards her daughter, embracing her while whispering: "I'm sorry ... I didn't mean to ... Forgive me ..."

Months later, their father was sent to jail for abuse, and while their mother seemed to be doing alright, her brother was far away from that. He started drinking, smoking, skipping school, staying out late and coming home with fresh cuts and bruises all over his body. He became abusive towards his own sister, convincing her that the divorce was her fault, giving her a reason to lie about the causes for her swollen cheeks and split lips each time she denied it.

"It was just one wrong word ..." she whispered, and let the tears roll down her cheeks once more. "One word, and he said I deserved it."

"But you didn't."

"I KNOW THAT!" she shouted through the tears, her voice cracking. "I'm sorry ... I shouldn't have ..." she hid her face behind her hands again, feeling his shocked gaze on her.

"It's okay. You're still in shock, I get it," his soft voice soothed her. They have reached a rather remote place near the river, and he helped her sit down on the bench before sitting beside her as well.

"Do me a favor," she spoke quietly, yet sternly.

"Of course," he said in anticipation, eager to help this broken little girl.

"Trust no one," she said, and his features formed a confused expression. "Trust no one, not even those closest to you. Do not be like me."

A.

## JACK'S STORY

*My story is a free-minded escape from reality, but it also captures real problems of real people in the real world. Jack, Jane and their parents are random characters who can resemble lots of people in real life.*

*I think with situations people are facing we all need some kind of escape. I spend time imagining stories and discovering there are persons with much worse life than me. I like the idea of unreal, untouchable and made-up things – they light up your day just by imagining them. And that's hard to put into words, so that was my challenge, and the result is this story.*

I'm Jack and this story is real. I never believed in magic or miracles or things like karma or superstition. In fact, I loved black cats, but I hated superheroes and wizards, I found them too unreal. I changed that night, and now I believe pretty much anything. Let me explain.

Summer starts with the longest day and the shortest night. It is called the midsummer night, the night of the big fire, which has a special charm and special power. You can find a treasure, you can be invisible, even a grandpa can turn into a child ... Let me tell you what happened this year.

It all started with my best friend Jane, who convinced me to go to a big midsummer night party, which was the best, the biggest and awesome, and that everybody was going to. After a few days of constant



asking, I gave in and we went to the party, which was not even that great. It was somewhere deep in the woods, there were plenty of drinks and snacks, and in the centre, there was a wishing well. Well, it looked more like a big barrel full of dirty water, and there was a rubber duck floating on it. I guess the idea of making a wish was more important. I gave Jane a coin, took mine and we both wished for something impossible – that was what the sign next to us said we were supposed to do. The coins hit the surface of the water with a small splash, then they sank to the bottom with other pennies. Our looks met and Jane smiled. I knew what she had wished for. Her mother had been ill for a long time and had been in hospital for months. Jane would give anything for her to come home. I hugged her and wanted to get us something to drink, but she stopped me and asked to go home. She grabbed my hand before I could answer and stormed through the crowd. We saw the bonfire light up in front of us and we stopped. Our eyes met for a moment and I saw her barely holding back the tears. She sat down in the grass, watched the flames burning down a pile of wood and fell asleep on my shoulder while talking about the meaning of life.

I don't know when I fell asleep too, but we woke up when the bonfire had burned down completely. There were cups and plastic waste everywhere. It looked like there were still some people left, a bit drunk and loud. We took a long walk home, talking about the party, friends and basically everything we thought of. Our paths separated and she promised to call me the next day. The second I came home I fell asleep.

I woke up in the middle of the night feeling extremely thirsty, so I went downstairs to get a glass of water. When I was refilling the cup for the third time, I heard some sounds coming from outside, so I checked the backyard. I couldn't believe my eyes! There was a whole ocean behind my house! I was so shocked that I couldn't breathe. And as if this wasn't weird enough, a mermaid jumped out of the water and waved at me. A mermaid! I ran back into the house and upstairs to wake my mom. I opened the bedroom door and uncovered the blanket, but neither my mom nor dad was there. Instead I found an egg. A giant egg covered in strange purple circles. It started cracking and I saw a small lizard's head. I suddenly realised I had a dragon in my house. A real dragon! I was so excited! I took it outside where it grew into a majestic creature. My mind couldn't have been working properly, because all of the sudden I sat on its back and we were flying!

It was amazing how my fear slowly turned into a joyful adventure. I totally forgot about everything that was happening at home, in my country, in this world. All I wanted was to fly on the dragon and be free. Our flight was light and short, at least I thought so. It landed softly on the beach behind my house and disappeared in a cloud of beautiful green smoke.

And then I woke up. You should have seen the look on my face when that happened. I should have known it wasn't true. I mean, dragons aren't real even if I wanted them to be. While my brain tried to process what had happened, I heard a baby crying, which really sent shivers down my spine. I was an only child, but I knew my parents wanted another kid and I would love to have a baby sister. She would be the most spoiled little princess if she was my little sis. My parents had tried multiple times and something just wasn't right. I checked the whole house, and when I gave up, I saw a cute little girl standing in my room. Her hair was blond just like my mother's and her eyes were green like mine. She smiled like an angel and she only said three words: "I'm Lilly." That was all she said and then disappeared with the same smile on her face. All I could think about was that that had been my wish. That had been my wish! When Jane had thought of her mother, I had started thinking about mine and wished for her to get pregnant.

I woke up and ran down into the kitchen, hugged my mom and told her about the dream. She was shocked! She just wanted to tell me that her morning pregnancy test was finally positive. We were both so happy! I couldn't wait to tell Jane about everything. I called her and we agreed to meet at the playground, where we often played when we were younger.

I had to go change, so I went into my room. While I was making the bed, I found a scale. I had a real dragon's scale! I just knew it was genuine - it was like a tiny galaxy, full of colours, whirl and light. At that moment I believed everything had really happened. I was so excited that I forgot to put my shoes on before leaving the house. I had to go back, and while I was putting on my sandals, I grabbed a piece of thread to make a necklace for my scale. When I got to the park, Jane was already there. She was sitting on a swing, and she was pretty excited too.

I waved at her and sat on the other swing. She seemed happier than the day before. I wanted to tell her about everything, when she said: "I had a dream last night." I looked at her surprised, but she kept staring at the

grass and continued. "I saw fairies. My house was surrounded with magical trees. I rode a unicorn." She looked at me. "A unicorn! With wings! But then I woke up. I heard keys jingling as someone was opening the door, and I went to check. It was Mom." Her eyes were filling up with tears. "She was okay. She was fine. Happy. Smiling. I haven't seen her smiling for a long time. She was home, Jack. Healthy. I didn't want to let her go, and I was hugging her until she turned into smoke. When I woke up again, I cried for a good hour until I got a call from the hospital. Then I cried for another hour, but now because of happiness. She's coming home tomorrow."

We hugged and I realised I was crying too. I told her everything that had happened to me, showed her the dragon's scale, which now faded in dark blue and purple colours. She showed me a feather full of beautiful shades of blue and pink, and we agreed it had been one special night full of magic and that some wishes could come true on midsummer night.

Then I woke up ...

Miša Šala, 3. Zb

## SUMMER ROMANCE

*This story is all about romance. It is about one girl who goes on holidays with her family and meets a guy. She immediately falls in love with him and he falls in love with her. There are a lot of kisses, hugs and laughing. In the end, they both leave back home unexpectedly on the same day. She becomes his girlfriend and everything ends happily for them.*

*My inspiration for this story came partly from my parents' love at first sight. Everything else didn't actually happen. This story is dedicated to all the couples that have found their true love, or have fallen in love at first sight, and are still together. I expressed my belief in true love, and how you mustn't look for it because it will find you.*

Summer starts with the longest day and the shortest night. It is called the midsummer night, the night of the big fire, which has a special charm and special

power. You can find a treasure, you can be invisible, even a grandpa can turn into a child ... Let me tell you what happened this year...

I'm Layla and I'm 17 years old. My family and I were on holidays in Hawaii this year.

One day, we were heading towards our hotel, and my sister Lizz saw a notice saying there was going to be a party at the club near the sea that night. We, of course, had to go, so we asked our parents if they would let us. They said yes and gave us a curfew.

As soon as we ate dinner, me and Lizz started trying on some outfits. I chose a black crop top and white shorts, and Lizz chose a black dress with white roses on it. After we decided what to wear, we went to the bathroom. I quickly dried my hair and curled them a bit. I also put some make-up on, just to look more interesting. I was done in about 15 minutes.

Finally it was 7 p.m. and the party had just begun. We had less than 10 minutes to the club if we ran. But we walked slowly, because we weren't in a hurry. We came there in 20 minutes and it was already fully packed. We saw an empty table right in the corner of the club. It looked as if it was waiting for us. I pulled Lizz by her hand and we hurried toward the table. As soon as we sat down, the waiter came. We ordered some coke and talked for a while.

"Hi. Want to dance?" A guy came to me and held out his hand. "Sure," I answered and took his hand.

We danced for a really long time, got to know each other and laughed a lot. After what felt like three hours, Lizz came to me and pulled me aside. "We have to go. It's already twenty to ten and we have to be home by ten," she said and I nodded.

"I have to go, Jack," I said. "Can I walk you out at least?" he asked. "Um, sure," I said and smiled.

He walked me out and we exchanged our phone numbers. He hugged me. Since me and Lizz had only 10 minutes left, we ran back. The second we stepped into our parents' hotel room, the clock struck 10 p.m.

"You're right on time, girls," Dad said as we were



trying to catch our breath.

"What? Have you been running a marathon or something?" Mom wanted to know.

"Almost. Because of Layla," Lizz said and started explaining what had happened.

I was just standing there, my arms crossed on the chest, and rolling my eyes from time to time. After 15 minutes she finally finished. I don't know why she had to explain every single detail. I mean, nothing had actually happened. Dad wasn't even paying attention to her because he was watching a football game, and Mom was just staring at Lizz with her mouth open.

"Wow, Layla. You haven't been here for a week, and guys are already drooling all over you," she laughed.

"Ugh, you didn't get the point mom!" Lizz said and stormed into her room.

I gave my parents a kiss on the cheek for goodnight and went into my room. I quickly showered my make-up and sweat off, and when I came back to check my phone, I saw a message from Jack. He thanked me for the wonderful evening and asked me if we could go for breakfast together the following morning. *Sure. And I'd love to get to know you better,* I replied. It wasn't even a minute before I got his reply. *I'm looking forward to seeing you again. Actually, I'm already at your hotel,* he wrote.

I called him and asked what he was doing there and how he knew I was staying at that hotel. He answered he had been following me, but the receptionist wouldn't let him in. He also added if we could meet right then. After some hesitation I went to ask Mom. She agreed and I changed into a white dress with pockets. I grabbed my phone and went out.

He took me to the beach near that club where we had met, and I can say we had a really good time. While we were walking, I got a text from my best friend Tasha. She asked me about the party and if I had met someone new. Of course I had had to tell her about the party before dinner. I answered her that I had had a great time and that I had met a really cute guy.

"Who are you texting?" Jack asked.

"Oh, just my bestie. She asked me about the party and if I'd met someone new," I told him.

"Cool. And what did you say?" he asked.

"That it'd been fun and that I'd met you," I said and blushed immediately.

"You're hiding something, aren't you?" he said.

"N- no," I stuttered.

He smiled and said that I should show him the text and I agreed. But as soon as I took the phone out of my pocket, I started running. He ran behind me and almost caught me, but I was slightly faster. Unfortunately, I tripped, and he fell over me. He was leaning in for what seemed like a kiss, but then he snatched my phone from me. He ran away and I tried to follow him, but couldn't, so I sat down. He slowed down and started walking back towards me.

*"I've met a really cute guy.* Wait, are you talking about me?" he smirked.

"Um, yes?" I more asked than stated.

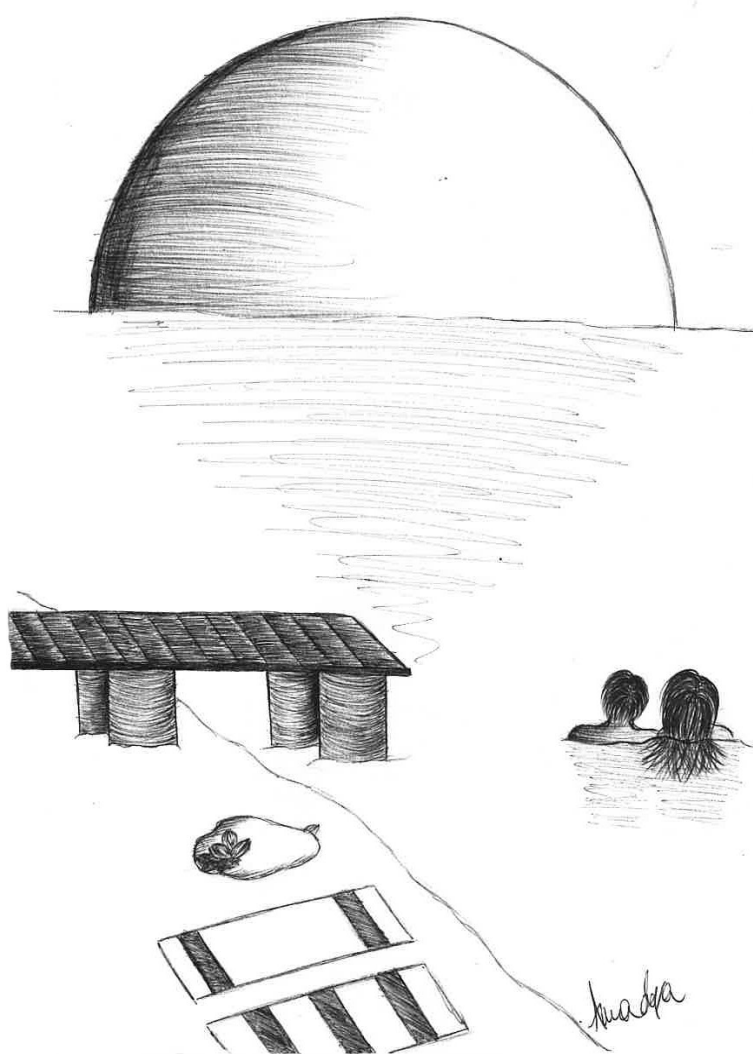
"Wow. Nobody but my mom says I'm cute," he said and sat down beside me.

"Can I get my phone back now?" I asked and he finally gave it back to me.

I told him I had felt a spark when we had been dancing and he admitted he had felt it too. He leaned in for a kiss. At that moment my phone rang. I sighed. It was Lizz. She wanted to know what I was doing and when I was coming back. She said she had had some bad dreams and was a bit scared. I told her I was on my way to the hotel.

When I finished talking to Lizz, I got on my feet and said to Jack that I had to go back to the hotel.

"I'll go with you," he said, "but first I'd like to finish



When I got there, Jack was waiting for me. He hugged me tightly and walked me to our table. It was very romantic. There were red rose petals all over the table and a strawberry smelling candle was lit in the middle. I knew he had done that. We ordered some pancakes and orange juice.

After breakfast he took me to a beautiful beach. As soon as we arrived, he jumped into the water and told me to get in. I took off my dress and joined him in the sea. We had a lot of fun. We jumped some cannonballs, dunked each other in and he threw me in a couple of times. And we kissed a lot, of course.

We spent the afternoon together and the next few days. We talked a lot, got to know each other better and just hung out. I got so used to it I didn't want it to end.

One day, while we were sitting on the shore, his dad called him and told him some bad news, at least it was for me. He told me that he and his family were leaving the following morning. I was devastated! *Is it already over?* He tried to cheer me up. We arranged to see again in the evening to say goodbye.

I wasn't in the mood for conversation at dinner and was only half listening when Dad told us we would have to finish our holiday prematurely, because he had been unexpectedly called from his office and had to return immediately.

"We're leaving tomorrow morning. Our flight is at 4 a.m." Dad said.

"Girls, you'd better start packing straight away," Mum said.

"What?!" I asked completely shocked. Lizz had to repeat what Dad had said. *Are we going to be on the same plane as Jack and his family?*

The news and expectations made me happy again, and I quickly packed all my stuff. I was hardly waiting to see Jack in the evening.

When I told him the news, he was excited too. "That's amazing! Maybe we'll be on the same plane! Ours also leaves at 4 a.m.!" he said. We went for a short walk along the beach, reluctantly said goodbye and

what was interrupted." He stood up too. "So, where were we?" he asked and leaned in for a kiss. I smiled and we finally kissed. It was magical. Then he walked me to the hotel.

The next morning I was awoken by my annoying alarm clock. I quickly washed my face, brushed my teeth and hair and got dressed. I put on my white bikini and a summer dress over it. I didn't bother to put on any make-up since we were going to bathe. When I checked the time, it was already 8:40, so I set off to the club we had met the night before.

went to our hotels.

The next morning we got up really early. At the airport I saw Jack waving to us. He was going to be on the same plane as me! I was thrilled. Dad went to pick up our tickets and I ran up to Jack. I jumped into his hug and he swung me around just like a little girl. When he put me down, he kissed me.

"I can't believe you're on the same plane as we are," he said excitedly.

"I know. But right now, all I want to do is sleep," I said and he laughed.

"You will. On the plane, sitting right next to me. And I have a question for you," he said smiling.

"Yes?" I asked, half asleep.

"Will you be my girlfriend? I know we haven't known each other for a very long time, but I really like you. I think I actually love you. What do you say?" he asked.

"Yes! Of course I will be your girlfriend. And I love you too," I answered and he kissed me again.

After that we were called to board our plane. I sat down next to Jack, and as soon as we were in the air, I fell asleep.

Amadeja Stanojević, 3. Zb

## BLIND

*\*Charlotte's POV\**

"Walk this way, please," the hospital lady says. From this day onwards, I am going to help a blind person. I will have to help them with everything and live in the same house as them. Suddenly I get a text message from my boyfriend. *Have fun helping a blind person! It's going to look great on your resume. Call me when you have time. I love you.* I text him back. *Thank you, I miss you a lot. I'll call you later.* We have a long distance relationship, but he is coming back in two months.

"Come this way," another lady holding a clipboard gestures me. I walk into a room and see a few nurses and also my patient. "His name is Samuel Kim and he is 21 years old. And here are the papers," the lady hands me a folder. I read his information and take a glance at him. His features are really sharp and his eyes are big. *How can such a good looking guy be blind?*

The nurse helps him stand up from the bed he was sitting on. I put the folder into my bag and walk out with other nurses. Unlike other blind people, he walks fine, without tripping or walking too slowly. They lead him out and into my car. He gets into the passenger's seat and the nurse closes the door. "Please take good care of him. He can be a little cold sometimes," the nurse tells me. I nod, get into the driver's seat and start the car. I turn to look at him. His features are incredible. "Stop staring at me and drive the car," a voice says. "Oh my God, you've really scared me!" I answer and start driving. I follow the directions on the GPS and we arrive at his place half an hour later. I stop the car and open the door for him. As he steps out, I grab his arm to lead him. "I don't need your help," he says pulling his arm away from me. I just let him walk away and go back to the car to take my things.

I come through the door and all I can say is, 'Wow.' The house is so modern and everything is so white. I walk up the stairs and there are three rooms. One is the office, the other is probably Samuel's bedroom and the third is the guest room.

I open the door and the furniture is beautiful. There is a king-sized bed and a fireplace near the window. The bathroom is a few steps away and it has a large hot tub, a shower and a sink. I notice that the light switches and doors are all automatic. I go downstairs and make dinner for him. As soon as I finish, I run upstairs and take a look inside his bedroom. He is changing his clothes and only has a towel on. I turn around and wait for a few minutes. When I turn back, he is sitting on his bed. "I know you have been there the whole time. What do you want?" he asks. "I ... uhh have made dinner for you, come down and eat," I say and quickly leave his bedroom.

I go downstairs and sit down to eat. I'm checking my phone for a while until he comes. He sits down. I stare at him as he picks up the food and puts it in his mouth. "Do you like it?" I ask. "It's pretty good," he says, and I smile knowing that he likes it. "I'm glad that you like it," I say to keep the conversation going. "So, how old are you?" he asks while still chewing. "Well, I'm 18, turning 19 soon," I tell him. "Oh, do you have a boyfriend?" he asks. I'm a little shocked at his question. "Yeah, his name is Alex," I tell him. He seems to be interested mostly in my personal life. "So, why are you helping a blind person if you have a boyfriend?" he asks. "That's because it's a long distance relationship, but he is coming back in two months," I say. "Well, that should keep you busy. I'll call you when I need help, otherwise don't bother me," he says sipping some water and then he leaves. I sit there thinking why he dislikes me so much.

I go upstairs to my room and take a shower. I get a text from Alex saying, *You didn't call me*. I reply, *Sorry, I was busy*. I get a text saying, *Want to talk now?* I reply, *Okay*. My phone vibrates and I pick up. We talk about our day for a bit, and then he asks about Samuel. "How old is he?" he asks. "21. And he is also pretty handsome," I say. "Hey, don't fall for him!" he says jokingly. And I just laugh.

#### *\*Samuel's POV\**

I hear laughing from across the hall disturbing my peace. I stand up and walk over to her room and poke my head in. "Can you keep it down? I'm trying to study," I tell her. She apologizes.

#### *\*Charlotte's POV\**

As Samuel leaves, I'm quiet for a few moments until my boyfriend breaks the silence. "Hey, listen. Don't worry. He'll warm up to you soon," he says in a soothing tone. "Yeah, I hope so. He is kind of blunt," I reply. "Okay, I have to go because I have a long day tomorrow," Alex says. I answer: "Alright, goodnight." And he ends the call. For the rest of the evening I lie awake in my bed thinking why Samuel is acting this way towards me.

#### *\*Samuel's POV\**

I hear loud snoring from the next room while I'm still studying. I get up and go to her room and turn off the lights, then leave. *What does she look like?* Is she pretty? I sit down in my room and continue studying Morse code. I think again. *What do I look like?* I'm thinking about these things until I finally fall asleep.

#### *A FEW WEEKS LATER*

#### *\*Charlotte's POV\**

I've been staying in his house for almost a month now. The routine is the same every day. I make him breakfast, lunch and dinner. I occasionally chat with him. When he needs something, I get it for him. But otherwise we do separate things. I usually study for my college exams, read or text my boyfriend.

*8:20 p.m.*

I text the location of Samuel's house to Alex since he wants to know if his girlfriend is 'safe'. After texting him, I go online for a while. A few moments later I receive a text from the hospital. *We are contacting you on behalf of Samuel. He will be getting glasses for his vision. Could you please bring him here on Monday? Thank you.* I stare at my phone for a while, analyzing the message. *He is going to get glasses? Will he be able to see?*

I rush downstairs into the living room to look for him.

He's not there, nor is he in his room, bathroom or anywhere. Where is he? In the corner of my eye I see that the balcony door is open. I go outside, and he is leaning on the railing looking at the city. "Samuel?" I say and go stand next to him. "When did you get here?" he asks. "I've just got a text from the hospital. They told me to take you there on Monday. It's for your glasses," I tell him. He turns to me and asks: "Glasses? Will I be able to see again?" "I think so," I say in an unsure tone. "I will see again! Finally I will be able to do things on my own!" he says excitedly. This is the first time I've seen him happy. He suddenly grabs me and pulls me into a tight hug. "Samuel ... " I barely say. "Thank you for helping me out. I'm sorry that I have been mean to you," he says. "Oh sure, it's my job," I answer. He lets go of me and I stare into his eyes. I hear his heart beating. "Why is your heart beating so loudly?" I ask. "I- I don't know. Uhhh ... I ... um, goodnight, see you tomorrow," he says and quickly leaves. "Um, okay. Goodnight," I say. *What was that all about? Why was he so flustered? Did I do anything wrong?*

*\*Samuel's POV\**

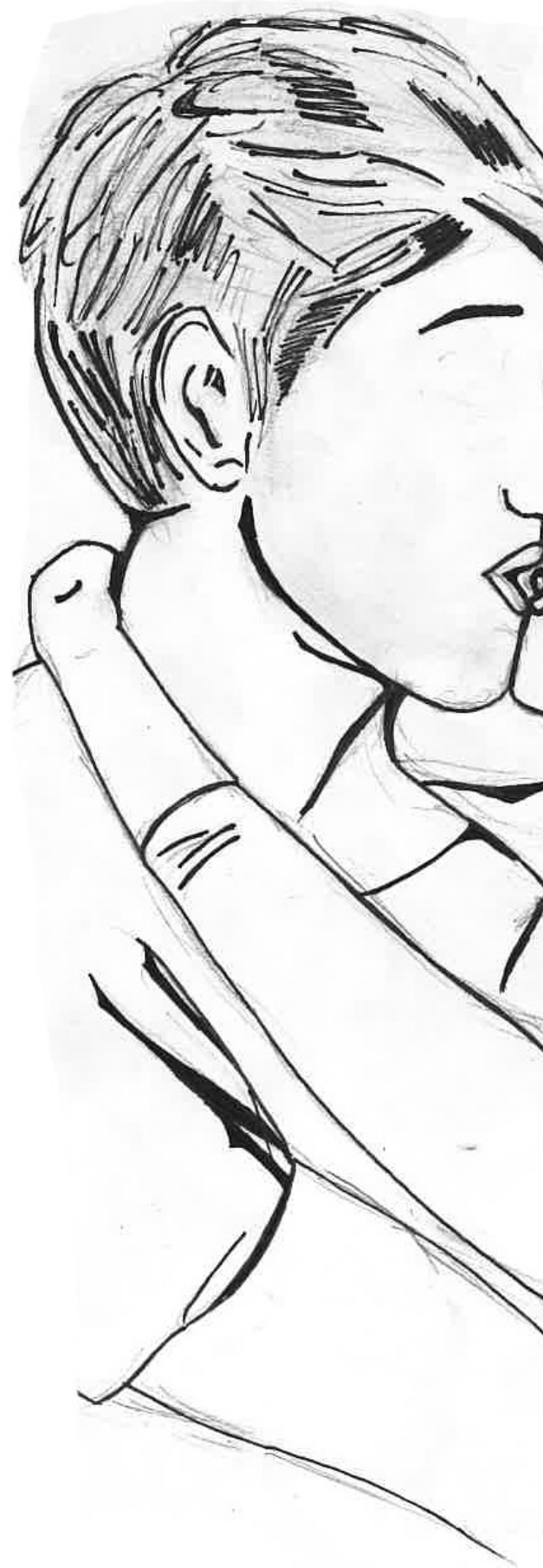
I rush into my room, shut the door and lie on the bed. I'm breathing really hard, but I regain my breath eventually. *Why am I stumbling over my own words in front of Charlotte? Am I? No ... Feelings? No way! I've only known her for a month or so. How can this be possible? Was it love at first sight? Oh right, I can't see anything. Forget it.* I lie in my bed thinking about her and what might happen tomorrow.

*A FEW DAYS LATER*

It's a few days after Charlotte told me that I was going to get glasses. I'm so excited. "Samuel?" she peeps into my room. "Get ready. We are going to hospital," she says. *Today? I am going to see today already?! I get dressed.*

She is driving to the hospital more quickly than she should. It even feels as if she was speeding. I hear her get up and I unbuckle my seatbelt. She swings the door open and helps me get out of the car.

I step out and she holds onto my arm as we walk. "This is the first time you let me hold onto your arm







like this," she says. I blush and just laugh awkwardly. As soon as we step into the hospital, the smell of antibiotics and medicine goes into my head. I shake it off. "This way," I hear a nurse say. Charlotte leads me into a room and sits me on the bed. "So, you are his nurse, correct?" the nurse asks Charlotte. "Yes, I am," she replies. "The doctor will be with you shortly," the nurse says.

"Hello, Samuel. It's been a while," the doctor says and pats my shoulder. I just nod. "Anyway, how is he doing?" he asks Charlotte. "He is doing great, in my opinion," Charlotte answers. The doctor does a check-up of my eyes and I hear him take out a box. "His eyes look healthy. I truly hope this new technology will work on him. These glasses work on light. The light helps reflect images onto the lenses to help blind people see," the doctor says.

I'm really desperate to try on the glasses. I haven't been able to see since I was 2. "Will you do the honors?" the doctor asks Charlotte. She agrees.

I hear her open the box and stepping towards me. Other nurses are in the room too. She comes close and bends down, then places the glasses on my face. I open my eyes and see just white for a few seconds. Then everything becomes clear. I stand up immediately. The room is beautiful. I touch the objects and start crying. I can finally see! "Congratulations, Samuel," the doctor says. I thank him. This is way too emotional. The people start to leave one by one. I keep looking around and I feel somebody wipe tears from my face. I turn to the left and see her. "What's it like seeing again?" Charlotte says with a smile. "It's ... too much to explain," I say. I keep staring at her. Her features. *Is this what it feels like to be in love?*

"Whoa, you're ... I'm sorry for insulting you for the past month," I say, still staring at her. "Those insults meant nothing to me," she says calmly while putting her things in her bag.

I keep looking at her. Every move she makes. So elegant. It's unimaginable. "Why are you looking at me like that?" she asks. "Um, well..." "I know I'm gorgeous. Okay, let's go," she cuts me off and winks. My face heats up again. *No wonder she has a boyfriend!*

She clings onto my arm, leading me out again. She opens the car door and I sit down. She shuts the door and goes around to the other side. My eyes follow her every move. When she sits down in the driver's seat, I stare at her again.

"Will you stop looking at me like that?" she says. "I ... um ... I'm sorry, you're just the most beautiful girl I've ever seen," I say. Then I quickly cover my mouth, realizing what I have said. She chuckles and says: "Samuel, I'm the *only* girl you have ever seen. And I have a boyfriend." "Right, sorry," I say shyly. I can feel my heart beating loudly against my ribcage. *Why do I feel this way towards her?* I've never had feelings. I guess it's different when you see people.

"Well, now that you can finally see, what do you want to do?" she asks. "Uh ... I don't know. Explore my house? I haven't seen it, only felt it," I say, still staring at her. "Samuel, this is like the seventh time. I've told you to stop staring at me," she says still driving. "Sorry, but I haven't seen a human in a long time," I say. "Maybe you should look at yourself first. You're pretty handsome," she tells me. I look at myself in the mirror. It's nothing like I expected. Puberty must have hit me hard. "You're pretty good looking, don't you think?" she asks laughing. "Y- yeah, I guess. I don't really know. I haven't seen myself in a while," I say. "Will you stop being so nervous around me? We have been living together for a while now," she says. "Look, I really like you. You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen," I confess. "Samuel, I know you like me, but I do have a boyfriend," she says while getting out of the car and opening the door for me. "I'm sorry about that. But I really like you, okay? Please, stop saying that you have a boyfriend, because he is not here now," I repeat a line I've heard in an audio book before. "Okay then," she says and walks inside. "Wow, is it this big?" I murmur, but then I hear a loud yell. "Surprise!" A few people scream.

It's my mom, dad, older sister and my friends Jackson, Rocky and MJ. "How are you, my son?" my father asks me. I immediately break down into tears, finally being able to see my family and friends. "Samuel, Charlotte has set all this up for you," I hear my mother say. I turn to Charlotte with wide eyes and run towards her. I pull her into a bear hug. "Samuel ..." "Thank you so much," I whisper into her ear.

#### *\*Charlotte's POV\**

A few weeks later my boyfriend comes back to visit me. I haven't seen him for so long and I have missed him a lot. I hear a knock on the door and rush down. It's Alex. But he hasn't come alone. He's with a girl. He greets me with a poker face and a quick hug. "Um ... this is hard to explain, but I have found somebody else," he says. I can't believe my ears. I can hear her little laugh from behind his back. "I'm sorry Charlotte, but she is the right one for me. I hope that we can still be friends," Alex says. I just stare at him in disbelief, hoping that this is all a joke. But he turns around, grabs the girl's hand, walks to his car and drives off. I just close the door and break down on the floor, crying uncontrollably.

Samuel comes running from the kitchen, checking if I'm okay. He is shocked when he sees me crying my soul out. "What's wrong Charlotte!? What has happened? Has Alex caused this? Please, tell me," Samuel attacks me with questions. He hugs me tightly and I bury my head in the crook of his neck. After some time, I finally stop crying and tell him what has happened. He's furious. "He is really mean, he doesn't deserve you at all. You deserve all the best in this world, Charlotte. If you need emotional support, I am here for you, always," he tells me in a soothing voice. I thank him and go upstairs in my room.

For a few days I cry a lot and I hardly go out of my room. Samuel has been here for me all these days, telling me nice things and that everything is going to be okay. I think I'm starting to fall for this boy.

One day he comes into my room again. "Do you maybe want to go eat?" he asks me. I decline. "Please Charlotte, you haven't gone out for days, it's bad for your health." He seems really worried about me. "I don't feel like going out yet," I say. "Is it fine if I just make food for you, and you come downstairs when you're ready?" Samuel asks. I nod. He smiles and leaves my room.

An hour later I start to get hungry and go downstairs. It smells really good. I come into the kitchen and the food is already served on the table, but Samuel is nowhere to be seen. A few moments later he comes into the kitchen looking really handsome, with his hair done and nice clothes. I blush because I have never

seen him look this fine. I look at the table and the food looks delicious. "Have you made all this by yourself, Samuel?" I ask him. He nods. "Yeah, I've checked a few recipes." I sit down, pick up a spoon and start to eat. "Oh my, this is really tasty," I say while still chewing. He is sitting across from me and is staring at me. "Will you stop staring at me like that?" I say with my mouth full of food. "You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen. Have I already mentioned that?" he says and puts a lock of my hair behind my ear. "Stop saying that because I have a boy ... Never mind," I stop talking. "Well, you're single now. That means I can flirt with you anytime," he says and winks at me. My heart skips a beat and I drop my spoon on the table. *How can somebody be that handsome?* "Aren't you taken aback by my good looks?" he says and pretends to flip his hair. "Nooo. What are you saying?" I say and try to distract myself with food. "You are a pretty bad liar, you know?" he says and smiles. I keep eating without looking at him. "Will you look at me?" he says while playing with my hair. "I ... uhh ... I'm really tired, so I'd better go to sleep. I'll see you in the morning!" I say and stand up. I run upstairs and hop on the bed. *What is it with me today? Why do I keep thinking about him? Why do I feel this way towards him? Why did he have to confess so fast?*

#### A FEW DAYS LATER

It's a few days later after my heart skipped a beat because of Samuel. I've been long over Alex, and surprisingly, I'm kind of glad that I got all of this off my shoulders. Even though I put a lot of effort into our relationship, I have never regretted it. But I hope Samuel will make me regret it. *Ha, what am I saying?!*

I walk downstairs to grab some food. I go into the kitchen and open the fridge. I take out the milk, then I put some cereal in a bowl and put it in the microwave. I'm eating my cereal when I suddenly see a sticky note from Samuel. *I'll be back at around 5. Wear nice clothes,* is all it says.

5:20 p.m.

"Charlotte!" I hear Samuel call my name while I'm still putting on mascara. "I'll be down in a minute!" I yell. I grab my purse and walk out of my room. I walk down the stairs and see him at the end of the hall with

his hands in his pockets, waiting. "Sammy, what are we doing today?" I ask in a sweet voice. He looks at me admiringly. "You look beautiful," he says. "Um ... what ... well, thank you," I say embarrassed. We step out of the house and walk to the car. He opens the passenger door for me and pushes me inside. "No! Wait, Samuel. I need to drive you! What are you doing?" I say as he gets into the driver's seat. "Guess who got their license?" he says while he holds up his license. "How long have you been driving?" I ask. "I got it like three weeks ago," he smiles. "But without me knowing?" I ask with a straight face. "Well, you were too busy getting over your ex, so I decided to do something that will be useful someday," he answers. He starts the engine and drives out of the parking lot. I start to get really nervous. "Stop being so nervous because I'm driving," he says. "Are you really sure? I mean, I can drive instead," I say quickly. "But would this be a surprise then?" he asks while grinning. I shake my head. "Exactly."

After twenty minutes of driving, we finally make it to the destination. I get out of the car to see that we are at a small market with a lot of lights. "Today is the day of the Lantern Festival. They are doing different light decorations, so I thought it would be fun to bring you here," he says. "Hey, you don't have to be so stiff around me, because this is a date after all, right?" I say with a smile. He nods and smiles back at me. After a few seconds he grabs my hand and we go inside the market. As soon as we step inside the market, Samuel runs off to heart shaped lights and begs me to take pictures with him. We do a couple of selfies. Then we go and buy a big lantern. He draws the initials 'C+S' inside a heart on the lantern. "Let's go outside and light it, then let it fly into the sky," he says while carrying the lantern outside to the lake. I take a candle, light it and put it inside the lantern. Samuel lets go of the lantern and it flies up to the sky. We watch the yellow dot becoming smaller and smaller. Samuel wraps his arms around my waist and places his chin on my shoulders. "You know I really like you," he says. "This is the millionth time you have told me this, Sammy," I respond. "Well, I just want you to know that I like you a lot more than you think," he says. "Also, have I mentioned that you are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen?" "I'm the *only* girl you have ever seen," I say while smiling.

He lets go of my waist and says: "I want to show you something. Just follow me, okay?" I'm super confused, but I go with the flow. He puts his hands

on my cheeks and starts to lean in a little too close, and it starts to make me feel uncomfortable. "Hey, remember. Follow me and do what I do," he says. I nod. He leans in again and kisses me. He stops after a minute or two. "You're good at following orders," he laughs. "Oh, Samuel, my heart has almost stopped for a second," I say. "What? Are you okay?" he asks concerned, not understanding my joke. "I'm only kidding. Just tell me next time, so I don't get a heart attack," I laugh. He playfully hugs me. "Hey, can I ask you something?" Samuel says. "Yeah, sure," I nod. "Since I like you a lot, will you go out with me?" he asks nervously. I look at him surprised. "Wait, are you seriously asking me to go out with you?" I am shocked. "Yes, I am," he says with a chuckle. "Yes! Of course, I'll go out with you!" I almost scream. "Whoa, really? Charlotte ... I really love you." He pulls me into a bear hug and kisses me again. "I love you too, Sammy." "I have loved you for a while now, you know?" he says. "Oh, so you haven't just liked me?" I ask him with a smile. "It's more that the word love can express," he says while looking up at the sky.

P.

## BEAUTY AND HEALTH CORNER

### DIY LIP SCRUB

Are you suffering from dry lips? No worries, that is completely normal, especially in the winter time!

One way to cure lip dryness is by moisturising. I suggest using moisturisers in a cream formula, because lip balms are made only to create a protective film on your lips. They don't actually fix the problem.

The perfect solution are lip scrubs! They exfoliate dead skin off your dry lips and make your lips smooth and soft. They are even used for plumping. And the best thing about lip scrubs is that they are easy to make at home with everyday ingredients.

Materials / Ingredients:

1 tablespoon of organic coconut oil

2 tablespoons of brown sugar

1 tablespoon of organic honey

a small glass container with a lid (try an old pot of lip gloss or a baby food jar)

a bowl and a spoon to mix the ingredients

Brown Sugar = Exfoliator

Organic Honey = Natural Healing Properties (Antiseptic)

Organic Coconut Oil = Nourishing/Moisturizing

Step 1: Making the Base

In your bowl, combine 1 tablespoon of coconut oil with 1 tablespoon of honey. Mix until you get rich, thick and smooth consistency.

## Step 2: Creating the Sugar Scrub

Add two firmly packed tablespoons of brown sugar to your base, and mix until it is completely integrated and coated, forming a paste. Adjust the sugar-to-base ratio to achieve your desired scrub consistency. If you prefer a really silky scrub, add 1 teaspoon of olive oil to the mix. This will smooth out the scrub and make it extra moisturizing.

## Step 3: Storing your Natural Lip Scrub

Transfer your delicious lip scrub into your glass container with a lid. Make sure to label the jar and add the date, so you can keep track of how long you have had it. Also, consider making it in small batches, because homemade cosmetics lack the preservatives and do not last as long. This lip scrub should last for approximately two weeks if you keep it refrigerated.

## Step 4: Using the Lip Scrub

Before each use, let the scrub sit out and adjust to room temperature to soften up before applying to your pout. Using a generous amount, apply the scrub to your lips in a circular motion. Let it sit for 1-2 minutes and then remove it with a warm washcloth. Apply Honest Organic Lip Balm or your favourite moisturizing lip treatment after each use to maximize the results of your freshly scrubbed lips.

Source: <https://blog.honest.com/dity-lip-scrub-a-natural-beauty-treatment/>

Karin Kapelj, 4. Fc







# HUMOUR IN THE CLASSROOM

Teacher: What does the expression *Sunday best* mean?

Student: Pyjamas.

Teacher: Why pyjamas?

Student: Because they are the best garment to wear on Sunday.

Student: Excuse me, can I visit the toilet?

Teacher: What would you do if you had an extra day in a week?

Student: I would sleep for 24 hours.

Teacher: What is the strong equivalent of the adjective hungry?

Student: Hungrier.

The expected answer is starving or ravenous.



# Ge(r)ms – Student Magazine

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**Srednja šola za farmacijo, kozmetiko in zdravstvo**  
**Secondary School for Pharmacy, Cosmetics and Health Care**

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