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Finland * Lithuania * Netherlands * Portugal * Spain * Romania

Project Our Forests Our Future 2014/17

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Walking in The Forests in Europe



MYSTERIOUS FOREST:

Collaborative Story

PART 1

Written by Heidi Savikuja Tornio

Pictures by Teemu Collin

Finland

I feel the air cold on my face while I'm walking in a beautiful forest. My mother, my grandmother and very many others have walked here before me but the forest hasn't changed. It still looks the same as it did in the 1950s when my grandmother was a little girl.



This is a typical and beautiful Finnish forest full of tall trees and big bushes. Well, it's winter so they have dropped their leaves and they have only branches so it's really not that beautiful that I first described. But let's not forget the snow, the pure white snow on the ground and on the trees which brings a whole new perspective on the forest. The forest is lovely in the summer but in the winter it's mysterious because it gets dark early and the snow covers many things. The quietness is the best thing. It's calm no matter if it's summer, autumn, winter or spring.

I can get my thoughts easily together. Now and then a bird sings and I remember that there is life around me even when it's quiet. In the winter it can be hard to see any animals. For example, rabbits

are white and bears are asleep. I look on the ground and I remember the berries in summer. Strawberries, blueberries... The clean, fresh berries which are really good to eat. I sigh and I keep on walking on the snow. It's really thick so it carries me. It starts to get really cold and the sky darkens and I can see the stars shining bright high above. I tighten my scarf when the cold pinches my cheeks.



I hear an owl nearby and I realize how late it is. A pair of yellow eyes stares at me, then another and another. It doesn't make me uncomfortable, it's okay for animals to be curious and stare at a strange human being walking in their forest. I can't fight the temptation to still keep on walking even when it's late and dark. Only the northern lights lit the surrounding nature and the light helps me to distinguish an old cottage in the middle of the forest.



Suddenly I hear another pair of steps coming closer and closer. Actually there are more than one pair of steps on the snow. I hear a group of foreign people talking in their own languages and when they come to sight I say hello to them. "Funny to see foreign people here in such a late hour!" I say. They are very kind to me even though they have never seen me before. "We are just ordinary people from different countries wanting to see some forests", says one from Lithuania. The ski tracks over there brought us here.



PART 2

Written by Gabrielė Černauskaitė, Ieva Išganaitytė,
Pictures found by Vakarė Gudelytė

Lithuania

'I think my parents are worried' I thought and politely asked the way out of the forest. I was a bit hungry, sleepy and confused.

'So exactly who are you? And why are you here?' they asked me.

'I am here every day, I love going out in the forests. Maybe you know what time is it?' 'It's 1:30a.m, I think' the Lithuanian man told me.



'How could it be so late? How long have I been wandering in the forest?' I told to myself. Then I politely excused and went home.

The path was bright and wide but there were huge piles of snow. Suddenly I heard a bird song. It was quite strange as it was winter. I turned around and a wonderful view appeared in front of me.



I couldn't believe my eyes. There was a deep winter but in front of me there was a big valley full of green grass, amazing flowers and a small stream was chattering. On the nearest branch I saw a robin. It was looking at me with its round eyes.

I heard somebody behind me and turned to look. There was nobody and when I turned back I found only white snow around me. No grass or flowers!

I started to run violently. Somebody was near me but I could see only the dark. When I was next to my house, I saw those people behind me as they were chasing me.



'Excuse me' I said. 'Why are you still here? I really need to go home.'

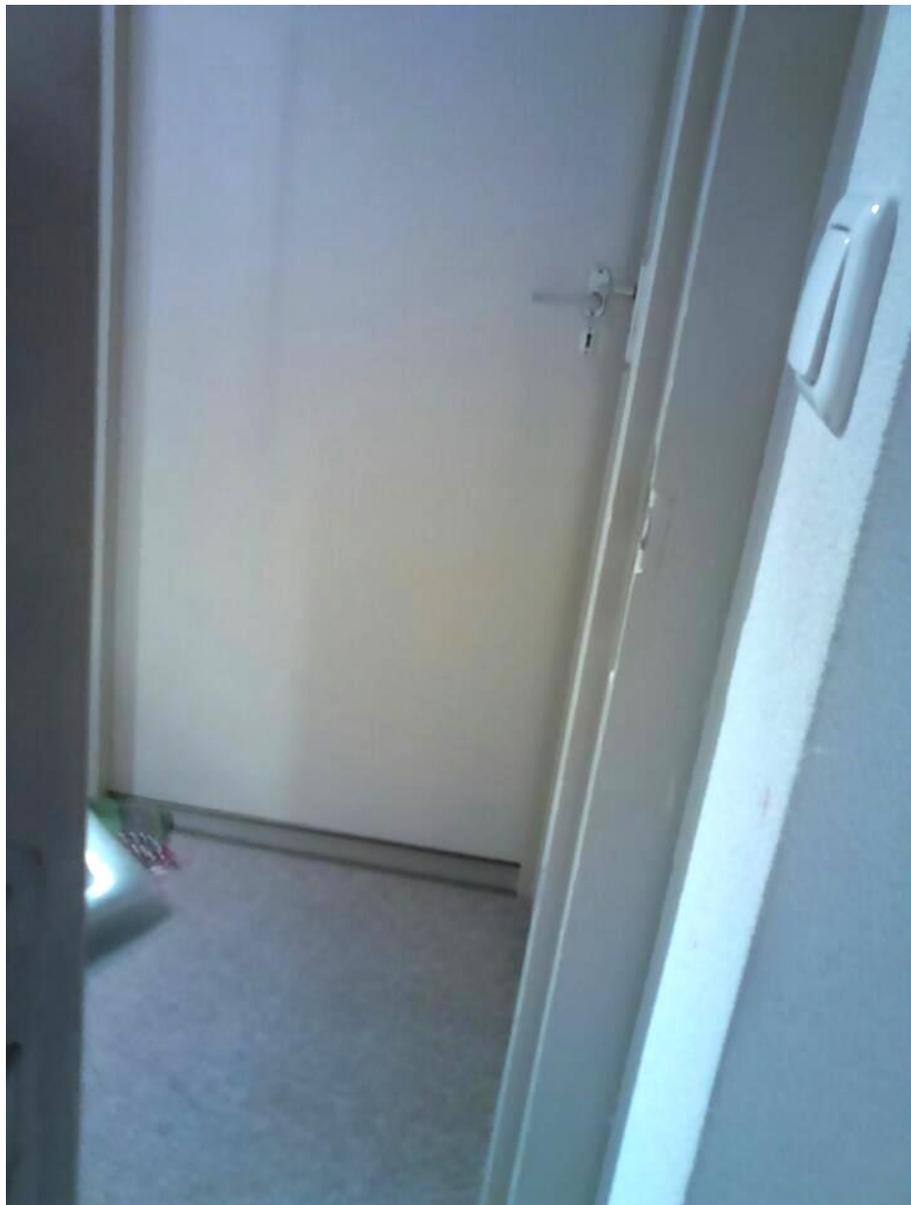
One man said 'Good bye' and they paced to the forest. I was a bit scared out but then I went into my house and forgot everything.

But then...

PART 3

Written and Pictures by Elena van Bunnik,
Netherlands

I woke up. Was it a dream? If it was a dream why was it so realistic then. Why... Someone knocked on my door. I opened my door but nobody was standing on the other side.



I had so many questions but I couldn't answer them. I decided to go to the forest from my dream. I went into the forest and just looked around. Everything was covered in a layer snow. It was very mysterious. It was already late and an owl shouted. I tried to find a way out of the forest but I forgot how I went in. Maybe someone from my dream was here. I looked around and I saw the beautiful view I also saw in my dream. Why did I see those things, why did I see things that weren't there. A twig snapped and when I turned around I saw a shadow disappearing behind a tree. I walked in the direction of the tree where I saw the shadow the last. Actually it was sneaking because I was quite scared for what I would see. I was very close to the tree, I slowly walked to the other side of the tree and... Nothing! It was like someone looked at me but I knew nobody was here. Very annoying! I ran in the direction I thought I came from. Of course I wasn't sure. In fact after a few minutes running I started to doubt. I saw the group of people from my dream and I asked them in which direction I had to go. Luckily for me I had ran in the correct direction. The next day I went back to the forest. This time in a different direction. Maybe I could get the information about my dream in that part of the forest. I walked for a few hours and looked around. Yesterday I saw things from my dream but till now I didn't. Could I get the answers I wanted or was this just a waste of time. OW! I fell over a tree branch.



I didn't see the branch because it was kind of buried in the snow. Nothing happened with me. I got up and again I saw a shadow behind a tree. I went to the tree and again nothing! It was exactly the same as yesterday. I stood close to the tree for a while and tried to see the shadow. That was very hard because it started to get dark.



Right now the forest was beautiful. The sun was almost below the horizon and had a red or orange heat. The sun gave the snow and the trees also an orange heat. I went on and I came to an open place in the forest.

And what I saw was...

PART 4

Written by João Canais, Cristiana Silva, Luís Teixeira e Pedro Oliveira

Pictures found by Cristiana Silva, Luís Teixeira e Pedro Oliveira

Portugal

And what I saw was a white path full of mud and plants. And this silvery path was as white as white novas in the universe. I kept walking and found myself before a crossroads: on the left side, there was a natural forest; on the right side, there was a forest of planted trees.



As I went ahead, I saw a frozen river. I looked around and got a wonderful vision: a landscape full of white, with a slope plenty of small pieces of ice.

I went through that slope to have a better view over the landscape. It was amazing!

Along the path, I had seen frozen footprints of foxes on the ground. Fortunately, none appeared on my way. I was glad about that. Almost at the end of the path, I saw a huge pine tree. It was so big! I thought of climbing it, but, on second thoughts, it might not be a good idea.

Then I saw a huge light. What could it be? I had no idea, but I wouldn't rest until I knew. So, I started walking on its way, going faster and faster. I stopped to take a breath, but the weather was so cold that I couldn't even breathe.

After a short break, I continued running through the light I had seen. When I got closer, I saw that it was indeed a very bright white light, but so powerful that I could not see for a while. I waited a bit until it got weaker. Only then did I understand it was a crystal, a transparent crystal. I grabbed it and I found out that it had the *Power of Mathematics*, which means this crystal can solve any math problem and maybe even find the division of the PI number, one of the most mysterious numbers ever known by the Humanity.



But it has some other great powers...

PART 5

Written by Elena Sabio, Iván Saez, Carlos Vicente, Aitana Rousseau and Adrián Orozco

Pictures found by Lara Fresnedo

Spain

I could feel it. I had the rock in my hand and I threw it to the grass. When it reached the floor, a flower started growing up. Just at that moment, I was surprised and I observed the rock thoroughly. Then I threw it again to a big and marvellous tree, after a few seconds, I heard loudly noises which came from the branches and some oranges started growing up. I realized that it also had the power of creation.

The stoned had proved to possess astonishing powers indeed. Although I was marvelled, I could not help to feel slightly scared as I saw what the rock was able to create. The fear took control of me. I picked up the rock and ran away with the intention to throw it to the ocean. I didn't want to see the rock any longer. After long hours following the river's course, I arrived to the Mediterranean Sea and I decided to throw the rock.



I felt the sun in my skin and a cool breeze. The landscape was marvelous. The sea and the sky

melting in the horizon, the grass full of wild flowers and the sound of the waves. I was exhausted because of the long walk, so I sat on the shore to relax and I fall asleep inadvertently.

The next morning I woke up because of the noise of seagulls and I quickly stood up, I couldn't believe my eyes. Posidonia had grown in the sea. Posidonia is a natural reef, with lot of biodiversity, and because of that huge number of algae and plants, there were food for all the marine species, as the sea bass, the gilt-head breams, the red mullets... But this wasn't the most surprising thing that I could see! Because suddenly, a crab left the water, and he could talk to me! The only explanation I could think of, was that the rock had fallen in the shell of the crab making him intelligent and when the rock bounced, fell in the water and created the Posidonia, so, indeed, this rock had more powers.



I was exhausted and frightened while I saw the steps of the crab that advanced towards me. When he reached my feet, he thanked me for giving him that power. Then, he asked if I could help him to find the magic rock and discover the rest of the powers it had. Then, I thought that it could be useful to get the rock back and return home. The crab used his intelligence to read my mind and discovered that I wanted the rock too. At that very moment, we knew that we both wanted the rock and only one could get it. Then, both of us run to the water and started swimming to get the precious rock.

A few minutes later, both found the rock that was hidden between the coral reef and in an attempt

to take it, something strange started happening. When we touched the rock the ground began shaking, the sky turned grey and a giant whirlpool appeared in the middle of the ocean.

Consequently, we were scared and quickly swam back to the seashore; although only I could manage, as the whirlpool had swallowed the crab. Without having second thoughts I plunged in again to take the rock and stop the disaster created. It was at that moment that...

PART 6

Written by Cosmina Brezovean, Onisim Tif, Beatrice Draganescu, Miruna Togeroni

Pictures tracked by Onisim Tif via Pinterest

Romania

...I heard a beautiful voice coming from the bottom of the sea. I was amazed by the beautiful sound and I wished that my friends would be there with me. And suddenly, they were! All of the friends I have imagined, have appeared here, near me. I thought I was dreaming but everything seemed so real.

"Listen"- I said "Can you hear the song??" And turned towards my friends. Posidonia was behind us and in the clear sea, we were turning to listen to the sound coming from somewhere close. And then we saw her...



It was a beautiful mermaid and we instantly knew she was Ariel. Ariel, the most famous mermaid, lived in Posidonia and she was there, looking at us and singing for us.

"Ariel" we said- " you have a beautiful voice. Do you think of participating at The Voice?? I bet you would win the prize!"



But she laughed at us and said : " Do not be silly, my father, Poseidon, will not allow this! I am not allowed to get out of these waters and these reefs. But I want you to have this pearl. As long as you keep it with you, I can see what you see and I will feel like you, a normal child,not a mermaid".

We looked at her and wished to asked her more, but she said we do not have time, because we are not born for life under the water. We needed to go. Sad, we took the wonderful pearl and started swimming to the surface.

We are safe, on the shore. I wish I was in the forest, where everything begun. The forest is the same from my grandma's time. Majestic. Full of life. Green. Perennial. But where are my friends? They are all gone again, I am alone in the middle of the forest. I am very tired. I lay down in the moss, it is so cozy here.



Suddely I open my eyes. A nice morning light comes over my face. Where am I? Still in the majestic forest, on a green,thick moss, near a very big tree. Was it all a dream? Was it??

I am not sure anymore..... but I open my hand. Here is the big beautiful pearl that Ariel gave me..... was it a dream? Was it all real? It is all a matter of perspective... and we all can believe in Magic!