

Juvenes Translatores

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Your translation

The Year 3000

The rocks gleamed in the sunlight and his hands smelled like ground thyme. Dew drops glistened on the grass. Anton sat on a log and sunk his feet into the warm soil which was mixed with volcanic ash. He admired the forest of oak trees which grew from Addolorata all the way to Żejtun. A herd of hippos rose to the surface of a large pool and some distance away, two bear cubs and their mother crept closer to the bank. A light blue dragonfly lingered in front of him for a while, its wings flapping in a frenzy, before flying away. Anton kept his eyes trained on it until he could not see it any longer.

The year was 3000 and finally his project was completed. Malta had become a garden. They had unravelled the blocks of concrete. Entire forests were planted. They had dug large dams and ample canals to allow freshwater streams to pass to the southern part of the island. They had replaced streets and buildings with valleys lined with trees.

They had cleaned the polluted sea surrounding the island. The garbage which had been there for ages was collected and ships operating on solar panels extracted oil from the surface of the water. They had removed rusty nets from fish farms which were no longer used. The sea water in bays reclaimed its blue hue after excessive nutrient contamination had given it a green tinge.

It was not an easy project. They did not have much information about the way the island used to be before the environmental disaster. Apart from the remains of several animals which were found in Għar Dalam, they did not know exactly what kind of animals lived on the islands. After entire years of demolishing buildings which from outer space looked like mushrooms infesting every nook, they had to wait until plants and trees started to grow. The first batch of vegetation did not bloom and died. As soon as they started to grow, they would become infected and die. They would break off a branch and send it to him in the laboratory aboard the space station, where under the lenses of his microscopes Anton would investigate why the trees and plants were dying.

In the station, they had seeds of all sorts. They would head down to Malta, plant them and wait. Anton kept persisting and sending seeds to be planted until finally, atop one tree, there grew a fruit which did not rot. They snapped off the branch and took it on board the spaceship to Anton who planted it in one of the greenhouses and checked it daily to see if it would die.

Until... A tiny leaf, smaller than the nail of his little finger, sprouted from the branch, weighted down by a drop of water which had dribbled onto it from the irrigation pipes in the greenhouse. He touched the leaf ever so slightly with his finger and the drop slid down into the soil. He could not believe his eyes yet at the same time, he was happy that his patience had paid off.

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Text to translate

Sena 3000

Il-ġebel xegħel bid-dawl tax-xemx u jdejh kellhom riħa ta' sagħtar mithun. Għenieqed ta' nida kienu mqabbda mal-ħaxix. Anton poġġa fuq zokk u għaġen saqajh ġol-ħamrija shuna mħallta bl-irmied tal-vulkani. Qagħad iħares lejn il-foresta tal-ballut li titla' mill-Addolorata u tibqa' sejra saż-Żejtun. Merħla ippopotami telgħu f'wiċċ għadira kbira u aktar 'il fuq żewġ orsijiet żgħar resqu lejn it-tarf m'ommhom. Mazzarell ikħal waqaf għal ftit quddiemu, ġwinħajh għaddejnin f'ferneżija qabel tar 'il fuq. Anton baqa' jsegwih sakemm ma rahx aktar.

Is-sena kienet 3000 u fl-aħħar il-proġett tiegħu kien lest. Malta għamluha ġnien. Il-blokok tal-konkrit żarmawhom. Żergħu foresti sħaħ. Ħaffru ġibjuni kbar u għadd ta' trinek biex jgħaddu n-nixxigħat tal-ilma ġieri lejn in-naħa t'isfel tal-gżira. Neħħew it-toroq u l-bini u minflok bnew widien bis-siġar fuq kull naha.

Naddfu l-baħar imniġġes ta' madwar il-gżira. Tellgħu ż-żibel li kien ilu hemm u vapuri jaħdmu bil-pannelli solari neħħew iż-żjut ta' mal-wiċċ. Neħħew il-gaġeġ imsadda tal-ħut li ma baqgħux jintużaw. Il-baħar fil-bajjiet reġa' ħa lewn blu wara li ħdar b'eċċess ta' nutrijenti.

Ma kienx proġett faċli. Ftit kellhom traċċi ta' kif kienet il-gżira qabel dan l-isfregġu ambjentali. Għajr għal fdalijiet tal-annimali li sabu f'Għar Dalam ma kinux jafu eżatt x'tip ta' annimali kienu jgħixu fil-gzejjer. Wara snin sħaħ biex ħattew il-bini li mill-ispazju deher bħall-faqqiegh joħnoq kull roqgħa, kellhom jistennew sakemm il-pjanti u s-siġar jibdew jikbru. L-ewwel pjanti ma ħadux u mietu. Meta bdew jikbru kienu jimirdu wara xi żmien u jmutu. Il-frott kien jithassar wara ftit. Kienu jaqtgħu fergħa u jtellgħuhielu fil-laboratorju abbord l-istazzjon spazjali fejn taħt il-mikroskopji Anton kien jara għaliex is-siġar u l-pjanti kienu mietu.

Fl-istazzjon kellhom żrieragħ ta' kull xorta. Kienu jinzlu Malta, jizirgħu u jistennew. Anton baqa' jistinka u jibgħat iż-żrieragħ sakemm fl-aħħar, fuq siġra kibret frotta li ma tħassritx. Qatgħu fergħa u telgħu biha abbord vettura spazjali fejn żeragħha f'waħda mis-serer li kellu, jicċekkja kuljum jekk il-fergħa kinitx se tmut jew le.

Sakemm... Werqa ċkejnkna, iżgħar mid-difer ta' sebgħu ż-żgħir, bdiet tispona fuq il-fergħa, tqila b'qatra ilma fuqha mill-bexxiexi ta' ġewwa s-serra. Mess il-werqa kemm kemm b'subgħajh u l-qatra waqgħet fil-ħamrija. Ma setax jemmen lil għajnejh imma fl-istess ħin kien kuntent li l-paċenzja tiegħu ħalliet il-frott.