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HISTORY AND STORIES
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B.P.HASDEU NATIONAL COLLEGE
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Miriam 7

CREATIVITY SEEMS TO BE AN ENIGMATIC ASPECT OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE...WHETHER IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY WHAT IT IS THAT DRIVES THIS IMPULSE AND THE ELEMENT THAT INSPIRES AN ARTIST'S WORK, AS FAR AS STUDENTS ARE CONCERNED, THEY SHOULD ALWAYS START BY TRAINING TO BECOME IMAGINATIVE.

WRITTEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HISTORY AND LITERATURE LOVERS, THIS MAGAZINE BRINGS TOGETHER TWO AREAS THAT ARE SOURCES FOR ARTISTIC INSPIRATION: MYTHS AND LEGENDS...

ALL IN ALL, "HISTORY AND STORIES" HAS BEEN LAUNCHED WITH THE AIM TO GET STUDENTS MORE ENGAGED IN CULTURE, STARTING FROM WHAT RUMI ONCE SAID: 'DON'T BE SATISFIED WITH STORIES, HOW THINGS HAVE GONE WITH OTHERS, UNFOLD YOUR OWN MYTH'

Teachers:

Rocsana Marinescu and Liliana Caloian

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Cover by Ioana Mocanu, grade 12 H

Once in a lifetime

Student: Alex Cringasu

10th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

It was like a nightmare here. I couldn't move my legs or arms, I was just sitting there praying that I would be home someday with my family, like I was before. The sky was red, flashing cause of the bombs or arm shooting, I didn't know exactly what was happening at that moment. I looked around and saw my arms embracing the shotgun that killed so many people there before.

"Ensign! We are so dead, Ensign! Tell me that we need to stop before everyone gets killed."

"Move on and don't give up! It's our duty to fight!"

And we did. We gave our souls to win, but we didn't obviously. I tried to move my legs over the dead bodies and I succeeded. I couldn't look at them, they were disgusting. I decided to hide my feelings and do what it was supposed to do at that moment. I moved on and I didn't return. I didn't know what would be happening to me, but my heart said so. I was a cruel, barbaric, vicious man looking like a monster. I didn't care for anybody. Just for me. I knew that God would help me somehow. And He did.

I didn't realize that I was in danger until dirt covered all my body. I couldn't breathe. I has seen the darkness before, but there I could turn on my light. Here I couldn't. I praised that God would have helped me. I was about to die then; I saw the Grimm smiling at me waiting my last minutes of life. George helped me. He saw the impact and managed to get me out of there. I was sleepy and dreamy about the future that I couldn't concentrate on the present. I needed to be strong. Helped by my forces, I found myself, the old me. Grimm ran away and let me find myself my death. I just got up and moved on like I did before. But that wasn't the final surprise. It was a long way to get to the final point. Finally, I realized that I wasn't alone.

A little girl starred at me when I was getting up with dirt on my hands and on my face. I could be associated with a monster, but that girl wasn't scared by my horrible face, but by the landscape that circled us everywhere we went. She came at me and yelled. I couldn't understand what she said, but I could feel the power of her words. She was crying, bombs exploded everywhere. I was hungry at that moment, but I couldn't think about any food. I just wanted be with my wife and my little boys that were waiting for me then. Alice was her name, she managed to speak before she died in my arms. All the soldiers shot at her and I wasn't able to do something to save her. I was just looking at her and saw the pretty face that became bloodier and more hurt. I let her down, and I was sorry for that, but no one could do anything for her. I went on my duty and started to fight light the others did. I walked through the dead corpses, I saw heads moving forward from their bodies, blood and death. That was all what I saw. Blood, a massacre, an undesired event that I couldn't stop until the general told us to.

“Come on, buddy, make them suffer for what that girl had to face. Don’t let them ruin the people that you care about.”

You could see piece of meat left there like a trash. It was smelling so bad, you wouldn’t have the courage to go at that point. Our purpose was to get to the highest point, in the mountains, where we could easily kill the enemies. We did it, but on the path that led us to our purpose, many things had happened. Trees falling down on the grass, wild animals trying to scare us, old man and women with knives in their hands through the forest. It was a difficult road, but we had had did it. We captured the territory with our hands. I was a Jew, disguised into a German, in the army. They didn’t know. Just me and my family. I saw my race dying, but I didn’t do anything. They would have discovered me, so I couldn’t assume that I was there, at the highest point of the mountain, happy that I could go home, and I did.

I ran away from the army, I let my “friends” there and I managed to get to my family, disguised into a German. I was a Romanian Jew, by the way, but they were successful in getting me above the death. But I escaped and showed them the abilities that were undiscovered, all with my new identity. I went into a village where my wife waited all the time I was suffering.

And there we are, kids, that’s the end of my story. I escaped from the evil and I hope that you will do it again in the future, in case of something or someone gets over our world again, making us suffer.

December evening

Student: Toma Dinu

10th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

It was a quiet December evening...

It was the day before Christmas. All day long the sun did not let gray skies watch the land covered by cold winter duvet. Toxic substances in the air fiercely playing with the heavy snow clouds, outlined them into funny shapes. As snow -flakes were rotating in a stunningly beautiful silver dance, they called us outside to join them in their dance, in all their beauty. A cold white blanket covered the black earth eventually.

In our house, big fuss, fancy cakes my mother was making and I along with my dad, were adorning the fir-tree with thousands of lights of different colors and beautiful forms. Suddenly I hear a bell ring and voices of happy children... They are carol singers who came every year with Christmas carols, to proclaim the birth of our Redeemer...

Looking through the windows outside, tonight, the moon rises over the homes elegant as a queen of fluffy snow covered in only bedding and throw like a breath from a mirror of crystal pieces, making the snow quite glittering. Then the sky is full of bright stars that seem to be also waiting for Santa Claus...

Then night to morning loses its charm, and a curtain of fog appears. Soon, the wonderful sun rays are shining from behind the mountain. In my house all is quiet, just the fire burning in the fireplace could be heard, I am thinking about Santa... What could he have brought it to me? Then I hear mother's voice shouting to me to go and look at the presents.

Before long I hear the door open, it is mother again... I ask her whether Santa came over. She replies 'yes' and I jump at the tree happy and I enjoy the family gifts.

In the afternoon we went out together with my father and I made a big snowman... We called it Snowflakes King because it was made of thousands of glittering flakes. We had such a great time. After that, in the evening I dined with relatives in the family and I celebrated Christmas.

It was a memorable family holiday.

A smile in your creation

Student: Alex Cringasu

10th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P Hasdeu' National College**

I listened to your thoughts
Your smile lit up the room like wildfire,
They sit down on your spots
I consider you a masterpiece, not a liar.

I can see a smile in your creation
Masterpieces are the thoughts of an artist
You can see just their obsession.
Believe in your love, your love for creation.

They spread a lot of bad feelings all over the world
You have to believe in your story like I do
Just smile looking and your haters and say "boom",
If you consider it a masterpiece, it is.

Their glance

Student: Alexandra Mirica

10th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

I see again now
Their serene glance,
One with the appearance of a forest,
green,
full of movie reels, music, car rides... memories
Who knows? Maybe stained by the worries of life;
And one... as a mirror
reflecting a blue velvet
in the snow light
ceaselessly;
until it becomes a puddle
...no, a lake decorated with water lilies
near a field with big grass
and bent by the wind
Where a worn bike tries to move forward
See? managed to continue!
Your smile is still here
Do Not stop! and do not forget that.

Unknown places

Student: Alexandra Mirica

10th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

And yet the explanations were delayed. The headaches seemed real... the image began to blur; nothing made sense.

When everything seemed clearer, they were already in another place: a forest- completely covered with snow. *They* were meaning... Sarah, a girl who a few hours ago was on the streets of New York, on her way to work (in 1999), then without any explanation she arrived near the Grand Canyon where she met with Nick. A boy who a few dozen hours ago was in London, on his way to college where he was studying (in 2009); then he realized that he had arrived, like Sarah, near the Grand Canyon and they had something in common... the headaches and the constant feeling that their reality was sinking in.

Sarah recognized the place, remembering that she had once seen the view in a photograph- a forest in Siberia. However, for Nick it still does not represent anything yet.

Does not the place seem familiar to you? Sarah asks.

Not here. Now I realize... that the canyon where we met was described in a novel discussed in literature class.

As they had spoken, Sarah stopped... feeling something under her foot: an old compass. But not an ordinary one, it has strange signs- similar to the astral ones; and the girl deciphers a message: *Time is a memory*. Nick, jokingly, tells her to take care of what she wants when there is a lunar eclipse in the sky.

Then Sarah murmured: *I remembered it was a similar one in 1999... do you know anything about that?* Then, he realises the news he had seen that morning about an eclipse that would take place that day- cyclically every 10 years. Suddenly, Nick stared blankly and said: *Time is a memory! Yes, that is what my grandfather used to tell me always after he lost the chain from his special compass*. Wanting to observe the object in detail, he reaches out to the moon's rays of light and thus he catches a glimpse of the chain Sarah is wearing.

Soon, he thought that the object found had a connection between them; so, Nick suggested completing them and together they spread a white light. In an instant, the two returned to reality, each enjoying a miraculous lunar eclipse.

The strangest experience at the museum

Student: Diana Laudatu

10th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

It is said that the history of a nation is found only at the museum and I have a passion for science, a healthy life and the chance made me arrive last year in the summer vacation, at the biggest museum of sciences in the country, The Antipa museum.

Visiting my relatives, they showed me over to me the capital of Romania, Bucharest and promised me that each day we were going to visit interesting places in the city. On the first day in this city we decided to visit a park for a walk and maybe take some photos. The heat that overwhelmed us made us search a cool place and as there was no such thing outside we went into a museum. It was The Antipa museum we had discussed at school. I entered the museum with my younger cousin, David who was passionate about dinosaurs and with my aunt. At the entrance of the museum we were welcomed by a giant dinosaur, which was put on a high platform. He could move and make terrifying sounds that my cousin was fascinated by.

After walking around, we found an exhibition that showed how people lived in prehistory. We walked through that exhibition until we got hungry and we thought of going down to the first floor where we could eat. As we descended the stairs we heard a very loud noise and David immediately realized it was the roar of a dinosaur. Suddenly one appeared in front of us. It was an out-of-control robot running towards us. We ran back up the stairs but the dinosaur was still behind, chasing us. We ran as fast as we could and hid in a room where the dinosaur could not enter because it was too big. When he arrived in front of the room we were in, we saw that he had a red button from where we realized that he could be stopped. David said he could stop him if he jumped high enough to reach the button. In the meantime, we tried to distract the dinosaur and after many failed attempts, my cousin finally managed to press the button and stop the robot. Everyone in the museum congratulated David on his courage and the fact that he saved all of us. Its management offered us free admission to the museum for a year, as a reward for our help.

How it feels like to be different

Student: Teodora Coman

10th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

"Nothing is what it seems." That's what I've been told since I was a kid. I never knew what it meant though. Probably because the world behind the wall surrounding the castle was foreign to me. I spent my whole childhood in the yard reading, picking flowers, or hiding from Mrs. Farrington when I knew a test of Lothuria's history awaited me.

Maddison and Kriss had always been better than me when it came to royalty. Life at the castle has always seemed fascinating to them from every point of view. We also had protection and people who work for us, and the fact that we didn't go to a public school in Lothurian delights my sisters even more. But even though I was born and raised in a castle, I never felt like I belonged in the place. I had manners, but not as special as Maddison's; I knew things, but not half as many as Kriss. I have always been different in my family. Even in appearance. My father, better known as King Anthony Brittingham, had in his youth the most beautiful blond hair the people of Lothuria had ever seen. He wasn't a platinum or washed-out blonde. No ... It was as golden as the ear of wheat; and his green eyes perfectly complemented his image. I can proudly say that my father was a beautiful man. Even now it doesn't look too different. To be sure, his blond hair often became pure silver, and his once smooth face was now wrinkled more than ever ... probably because of his royal duties; although the fact that he lives in a family of four women I can't say helps him much. Dad grew old, but one thing remained the same. Those green eyes that made the world dependent on their purity only after a few seconds. Those eyes that have become addicted in turn to the sweetness of another look. My mother's gentleness and gentleness made my father believe that he could not live without her. He was always lost in her brown eyes as she spoke. Her small, delicate hand fit snugly in his big palm, and Dad loved to run his fingers through her silky black hair. They loved each other; and they loved each other so much that becoming parents made them even happier. Maddison was the first princess of the Brittingham family. She was like a "mini-Brooklyn" as people at the castle called her when she was little. Brooklyn is my mother's name, and because Maddison looks like her perfectly, people often used that nickname. Even if she looks like her mother, her

behavior is exactly like her father's. They are both equally ambitious and dedicated to the things they do. They have in them that flame of ambition, sister to death. They care about the family and the Lothurian people, but they would do anything to see their goals fulfilled. They have a beautiful stubbornness that makes them stand out. Kriss, however, is much calmer and delicate. She has the same gentleness in her voice as her mother, but the same burning look as her father's. Her brown hair highlights her emerald eyes as beautifully as she can, and her gentle face and crystal -clear laugh always delight anyone. Even though she's the youngest in the family, Kriss is very smart. She always enjoyed reading, especially books about plants. She loved flowers madly. On the other hand, I have always been attracted to the stars. Astronomy is one of the only subjects where I completely forget about Mrs. Farrington's annoying accent. I am the middle daughter of the Brittingham family. I've always been different from them. I have always wanted to be able to go beyond the walls of the palace and see the world as it really is. I don't want to be misunderstood; I like life at the castle. Everyone knows me here and helps me. I'm not complaining about that. But I always wanted to see what it's like for the people I talk to not to be intimidated by me, to be open to me. I can only say that I have conversations like this with Marie and her children. Otherwise, people seem to be scared of my voice, of my glance. They're scared of me in a nutshell ... and I don't think there's any show to scare them. I have no fangs and no claws; I have no evil eyes or fur like a werewolf. Not. I'm just, well, just plain. I sit and look in the mirror and I don't see anything special. I looked in the mirror once more until I left the room. My brown hair was nicely pinned to my back, leaving only the bangs to cover my forehead. I sighed briefly and left the room, heading for the dining room.

Love letter

Student: Teodora Coman

10th grade

Teacher: Roczana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

Dear Will,

I've been staring at your name for almost an hour, and I still don't know how to start this letter. I have so many things to say, but there is some kind of voice in my head that tells me to go to sleep. But even if I listened to it, I would still be awake. My thoughts are keeping me

awake and I hate it. I hate that my head feels like is going to explode because of these waves of memories. But do you know what I don't hate? You. The fact that every thought of mine has something to do with you is the only thing that brings me joy in these sleepless nights. You are the reason why I am awake every night, looking at the sky. (I just wanted to specify that the sky is very beautiful tonight.) I think the moon is the only connection between us at this moment. That might sound crazy and I can already hear you laugh at this, but just let me explain. The moon is only one. This means that wherever we are we see the same source of silver rays. Right now, I'm looking at it, hoping that you're doing the same thing. I can't even say how much I miss you, and I won't even try, because words are useless in that kind of situation. But I do have something to confess. I hope you'll forgive me for hiding it, but I just can't do that anymore. I love you! I always did; I will always do. I love you in a really big way that I can't even sleep or eat without hearing your voice. And even if you aren't here with me anymore, I imagine that I hear you, and that you are happy. Thank God I barely saw you crying, because I don't know if I could stop my own tears at that view.

I don't even know how I'm going to live without your laugh, without your voice...without you by my side. I'm mad at you because you left me here, but I'm even angrier with myself. I should have told you everything. Maybe you were going to stay, maybe we could have been happy together. If only I had said something... Please come back! Please don't leave me! God, I feel so dumb for not telling you all of this (if there are traces of tears on paper please forgive me)

I will stop here with this letter. I don't know why you did run away, but I hope that you will come back to me. You are so much-loved Will. Please don't forget that.

With love,

Nora

Living in the afterlife

Student: Catalina Neacsu

10th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

What's the point of always taking it from the beginning? And I'm not talking about moving, carrying boxes, making new friends, I'm talking about when you restart your feelings. When you have to give up everything you have felt in the past, with whom you have felt and why you have felt.

I also stepped through a white door, from which steam came out, and next to... it you could only see the fog ... that's all.

What I saw after that was completely different from what I was used to before ... moving out.

People were no longer human, that is, they were, but they were no more. They only had the shape of people, and that one wasn't whole either, it was like this: they didn't have legs, they were somewhere up to their knees, more or less, after they were wiped out. Ahh, that'd it! It was as if they were flying, that's what they looked like. Afterwards, their body was ... gray, somewhat erased and a cloud came out of everyone's head, which was always changing color, and it took me a long time to figure out what was wrong with those clouds. The clouds were always changing color, depending on how they felt. I began to walk the streets of the place where I was; place, because I still didn't know where I was. Was I on another planet, another universe, a galaxy?

Going forward, I realized that the person in charge of arranging the place was a master, because the place was..wow from all points of view. Each house was white, the finest details were made of a white that had very little glitter, all white, and statues of angels everywhere had the lines between the features made of silver, but not an ugly silver, but a fine one. The houses were grand, they had tall windows like Thrushcross Grange from "Wuthering Heights" and the carriages resembled those in the cartoons.

Lost in my thoughts, I came to a place where the creatures were dressed like the people of ancient Greece and settled somewhere, as in Twin Falls their settlement looked, only bigger. The people here were different, they could master the water and dance through it with the creatures of the sea; they were free people, who were not afraid to follow their dreams regardless of the hard things that came their way or the people who like nature.

Easily, after that I was transported to a place where the people here were very different, I guess they were people who all their lives had a different purpose but they always did what they didn't like being too scared to follow their dreams, and this could be seen because they had a weight tied to their "legs", but, I would soon find out, that weight belonged to people who had

suffered because of love. Crossing a river I saw myself reflected in him, I now had a white dress, pink on my cheeks and my shoes were gone.

What amazed me was when I got to the wildest place on ... I still have no idea what or where I am, the wildest place I was from was horrible, I felt loneliness and pain in their souls , if they had one. They were not screaming, but their souls were screaming. Loneliness hurt as much as when you were hurt by love.

I was sorry for those creatures until I found out that they were the selfish ones and that they always only did harm.

Over the next two weeks I learned all about this world and made new friends until one day I was at the home of one of my friends and he went to another room and I was struck by a book from his library. I went and picked it up, after which I realized that it was not an ordinary book, it was an album with pictures and on the first page it was written "Pictures from the time when I was alive".

At that moment I understood, I looked in the mirror and I realized what had happened to me, I was no longer living in the life you live in, I had been living in the afterlife for two weeks. I had changed physically, now I had no legs and my feelings were the same as the others. I would never see my friends again for the rest of my eternity, all the people I love would become a memory and so would I for them. I hope I have a beautiful memory for everyone I love and I hope they love me, too.

From today I was going to live in the afterlife ...

The key

Student: Alexandra Mirica

1 0th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

It is often said that we never forget the events and *discoveries* made in the first years of our lives. I remember how I used to go, every summer, to my grandparents' house in a city located in the Carpathian mountains, Busteni, a place full of mystery for me, from where I have many memories, generally related to books. Grandpa was a great collector of adventure books and detective novels, which attracted me over time.

On a rainy day, at the beginning of September, when the wind and the cold seemed to enter everything, I decided to pay a visit to the library, located next to my room. You never knew what you might find there... On an oak shelf was a red book, unusually thick for me at the age of seven. After some time in which I planned in detail the *assault* against the shelf, one meter higher than me, I came out victorious.

Something was unusual about this book... there was a red lipstick in it, the same as my grandmother's, two strangely shaped keys, a carved wooden comb, a copper coin, a small book and... two cake numbers (3 and 0). Curious to find out the truth, I ran as fast as I could to my grandfather, so that he could tell me that we had to go back to the library to explain. I never expected such a thing, I did not believe he could do it.

All these were symbols that were related to my grandparents' expedition forty years ago to France, where it seemed that my grandfather worked as a soldier in the French army. To prove to me that everything was true, he took the two keys and with one of them, setting aside the heavy curtain green-forest near the window he opened a door where the photos and the military uniform, decorated with three stars that now shone in the long view of the sun.

And so the mystery of my grandfather's past was discovered, only with the help of a key and a little girl in constant search of unwritten stories.

Sometime back home "

Student: Maria Cotiga

10th grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

'M. Eminescu' National College

my mother would always tell me to be careful when outside
I always brushed it off as some sort of motherly agenda
but it never crossed my mind
it also addresses me and my action
and how I should be more careful
because sometimes your mannerism and words
can hurt people
yet it is also their duty
to sort out why your words hurt them so badly
that now skies and people are blue and boring
ever stagnant.

Yummy town

Student: Maria Cotiga

10th grade

Teacher: Liliana Caloian

'M. Eminescu' National College

to find your own
you need to climb mountains
and find an abandoned town
and harvest all there can be

all that was found on your way up here
all your pride and feeling of accomplishment
as now they have grown to be green demigods of the skies and earth
greedy for meaning and victory
after all that you realize there is nothing left around you
but you little patch
and everyone around left
the hill is so small the only thought that comes to mind is that they hated you and your crops
you leave in hopes of finding a place where people like you better
but so often you come back to see how your campaign of brave soldiers is doing

Rudolf's sister

Student: Carmen Iosif

11th grade

**Teacher: Roczana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

It was a beautiful September morning. Even if the Summer had just ended, the sun was still shining powerful and bright. I was so excited, my heart literally pounded so hard I was almost unable to talk. I went downstairs and I quickly ate what my mom prepared for me. I took my bag and rushed to the car. It was such a strange feeling, I felt that my parents were as tense as I was.

When we arrived, we quickly entered the school yard and started looking for my new mates. I was lucky because my mom knew a few of them. When we finally found them, my mom did the last touch-ups, handed me the bouquet and told me to be polite and wait for the moment they would call my name. I waited and I waited and when the boredom became unbearable I started playing with the flowers. What happened next was so humiliating that I begged my mom to leave as fast as possible. While I was listening to the headmaster, a bee flew on my nose and stung me. I had never felt such a deep pain until that moment and the fact that everybody was watching me was not comforting at all. My nose was so huge and red, I could be hired as a clown. Luckily, my mom accepted to go home in order to hide my funny appearance. My nose went back to normal after a couple of days, but most of the photos from that day still remind me how everybody laughed at me. I don't blame them though, my nose almost doubled its size and I looked like Rudolph's sister.

First school day - being anxious

Student:Stefania Badea

11th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

It was a beautiful September morning..my first school day, one of the important days you must say. I don't believe that because I know that college or graduation day are more important days.

My grandma dropped me at the school main gate, my mom couldn't miss work because she had a crucial project for her boss that she needed to present to him. She was really upset because she believes life's unfair and God doesn't want for her to see me on my first school day. I tried to convince her that it was no good for her if she keeps being stressed about things that really don't matter. She looked at me really scared because she knew that I didn't care about my first school day and that I was far from being excited for it. I guess she just wanted a normal teenager who is most likely to be happy about highschool, but as I think more about it I realize I'm becoming anxious and my outgoing, talkative personality will vanish.

After sometime of just walking down the corridors, I found my class and found two of the teachers that were giving me a glare. They immediately intimidated me and I sat on a random chair to avoid the eye contact. The teachers, surprinsingly, impressed me. I didn't think anyone in the whole school would impress me. The teacher introduced me as a new student to the class and showed me my seat (and obviously I had to move because I was standing on one of the most popular girl's chair). I was feeling like a science model and they were going to do experiment on me. But at the same time, I felt important, powerful, I knew they were going to appreciate me because I knew I would work really hard to get better grades and to assure a bright future to me and my family.

However, as time slowly passed, I got used to to this new school routine. Also, I made new friends, I met a girl who likes to read as much as me and a boy that I might like but that's another story to tell. I have learned that I have courage and strength and I will succeed this year ever though it will be hard to keep up with all the homework.

My first day of school

.Student: Ioana Olreanu

.11th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

When reflecting and thinking back to my first day of school I realise that I don't quite remember every detail about that day as I assumed I'd always do.

It was the beautiful morning of September 13th of 2010, I got up at around 7 o'clock in the morning and put my uniform on. It was a strange feeling because I had never been confronted with such a task before, which was wearing a uniform every single day. As I got out the door, I believe I was shivering both from the thrill of entering a new stage of my life and also because of the chill breeze of wind that struck the naked and dry autumn trees. Even if my parents were there with me and I wasn't completely alone, seeing myself, a small 6-year-old, drowned in such a big crowd of people made me feel lost and confused. Thinking back on how I viewed the school that day I can't believe how big, twisted and marvellous I felt its construction was, but as I got to grow up in between its walls for 8 years it seemed as if it was shrinking every year because my perception of what school should be was changing and getting much further than being just a building.

As I took my first steps into the classroom, I am sure I was overwhelmed by seeing all these different kids that I had never seen in my life. The room was pretty big, we all entered through a huge wooden door and were truly mesmerized by the big blackboards in front of us. Sitting down I remember we could barely reach the top of the desks and we were all just barely looking over them with confusion. At the same time there was a sense of joy and excitement thinking of what was going to happen in that classroom, all the lessons that were waiting for us to be learned, all the stories we were about to read and many other things that I was surely not expecting.

The walk back home was calming after that day of emotional chaos, I was no longer shivering and I felt excited for the days to come.

First school day story

Student: Florin Tataranu

11th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

It was a beautiful September morning and also the start of my first school day. I decided to enrol in the Monster Slayer High School, mostly because it was my mother's dream to follow in my grandma's footsteps. Up until now I'd studied in my local high school where we studied Math, English and the usual subjects, but now everything will be new to me.

On the outside, my new high school looked like your usual building, but when I went through the front gate, everything changed. A spell was cast upon it making the yard impossible to view from outside. There was a big garden welcoming me with purple trees and green flowers, some ghosts were floating around with lamps in their hands and everyone acted normal, but I couldn't believe my eyes. It felt like a mixture of Harry Potter and a Tolkien book come to life. I was given a map and a timetable at the front gate so I used them to get to my new class. Even though it was December, it was so hot inside the school yard so that I had to take off my jacket. The first class, Monster Studies, was held outside, near the track field. It was confusing at first, but I found my way around. Everyone welcomed me with a smile, I introduced myself and everyone laughed at my name because it was a "muggle" name. Our teacher, Irma Pince, introduced herself too and told us that this year was going to be easy if we studied hard and well. I was having fun with my new classmates when I heard a noise. It sounded as if a mad dog was barking. Everyone got scared. The teacher looked a bit uneasy and told us to hurry and go into the main building, but it was too late. A big grey dog, jumped out of a bush behind us and attacked one of the students. We were helpless. I lost track of time, thinking about my family and the way I was going to die here. Suddenly I heard a man shouting. I looked behind me and saw the front gate guardian slicing the grey hound with a sword. I had already peed myself and started crying. I just sat down and started crying harder. It was a traumatic experience, but that didn't stop me from becoming what I intended back then.

A Beautiful September Morning

Student: Riana Cutas

11th grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

It was a beautiful September morning... my first school day. It's been almost 12 years since then and I still remember it like it was yesterday.

The night before I was so excited I couldn't sleep, although my grandma gave me warm milk before bed and tried to make me take a medicine that would help me relax (for kids, of course). Nothing worked, I was too thrilled and I spent all night thinking about the following day. Without even realizing how fast the time passed, looking through my window I saw the sky beginning to light up slowly. My grandma woke up first and made breakfast at what I think was 5 or 6am, then my mom got out of bed and made coffee for the both of them. I got dressed up in a school uniform that my mom bought for me which was pink and black. It even had a tie! I didn't know much about what was going to happen, only that I would be part of a "step-by-step" class and that I would spend 8 hours a day at school with my 2 teachers (male and female) and my classmates. At 7:30 we left the house, waving goodbye to my grandma who was nostalgic and sad that his little doll (as he used to call me) grew up so fast.

I remember hugging my Miss and thinking that she smelled like beach breeze, my mom handing flowers to give to her and a lot of noise made by the kids who were there. We were taken to our classroom and I remember being amazed by it and loving it from the first moment. Our teachers told us that they would be our mom and dad at school (and to this day they remain my "parents" and role models) and that the mates would be our brothers and sisters. Many kids knew each other from kindergarten and I felt a bit left out but after class we all went to McDonald's and began to know each other.

And that's how my happiest, carefree period of life started: with that day of 13th September 2010.

A normal first school day

Student: Cîlțu-Coman Filofteia

11th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

It started out with a dream. Everything about it is in a haze at this point. I remember it felt like I was patiently waiting on a bench while gazing around at all the people that were passing by in a hurry. Suddenly a familiar face caught my attention...it was me! I was wearing some kind of school uniform with a bag on my back, heading towards some place, lost in thought. I held out my hand and tried to scream out my name, but nothing came out. Utter silence. I kept watching as this figure that bore my face got lost in the crowd.

I was awakened by my father's voice telling me that we'll be late. I hazily got out of bed still shaken by my dream. Without even questioning why I had to wake up at that hour I started getting ready. Just like a robot that is programmed to follow orders, I went to the bathroom and washed my face, went to the kitchen and took a few bites of toast, went back to my room and changed from my PJs into the clothes that were laid on my bed. It wasn't until my father rushed me to the car that I woke up from this fever dream like state I was in and realized. My first day of primary school! It was today!

When we arrived, everybody was already there. I pushed my way through the crowd of anxious kids and tried my best to focus on the principal's speech. Everything went on just like any other first school day: we gathered in one of those empty classes, introduced each other, made small talk-still scared to actually have a conversation-, got our timetable and parted ways. I honestly can't, to this day, remember much about the experience. I still haven't figured out the meaning of that strange and hideous dream. However, I don't think I will ever be able to forget that uneasy feeling. Me, no! Not me. Someone else, a figure. Yes! Lost in thought...walking silently.

Memories

Student: Clementina Ichim

11^h grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

It was a beautiful September morning... my first school day. The general noise of the overcrowded schoolyard made it impossible to comprehend anything. I made my way forward through the sea of people, wanting to reach the laboratory building, where I was to meet my dear friend. Slowly and carefully, I threaded through the crowd of overjoyed teenagers. To understand why getting to the lab building was such a difficult task, one must first understand the layout of our school's campus. Our school has 5 main buildings, the two largest ones are the buildings in which classes are normally being held, and each one stands at the lateral extremities of the campus' reach. The epicenter of the campus is the park. The park stretched far and wide, and it was one of the school's characteristic element, for the school was most famous for having such a big and beautiful park. South of the park, was the infirmary building, the smallest of all the main buildings, and north of it was the gym building. The laboratory building sat at the north extremity of the campus, far behind the gym, and isolated from the rest of the campus with a row of weeping willows that formed a semicircle around the building with only one opening, that through which a path was made. A couple yards behind the laboratory stood the forest. This was by far the most secluded area in the entire campus. All of these buildings were linked with confusing crisscross paths, making the campus' paths very alike to those of a labyrinth. So, still slowly and still carefully, I continued to make my way to the laboratory building, being cautious so as to not get lost, for it was easy to do so even after four years of walking these paths, and classes here have often been delayed because of this particular problem. The only person who truly knew how to get around this place was the head janitor, a grumpy old man who had worked there for about 40 years. Managing to escape the agitation of the crowd, I was now walking up the path to the laboratory, a linear path that led straight to it. I was not surprised when upon my arrival my friend was not yet there, because, as I mentioned before, this is a matter of the most ordinary at this school, so I sat down on one of the benches that were placed along the path and waited. And waited. And waited. And then, as custom around here requests, waited some more. But she never showed up. Two days later, I had my raincoat on, as it was dreadfully pouring down, and I was trying not to slip on the swampy ground of the forest, as, along with the other members of the search party, I was frantically shouting her name.

Glimpses into a parrot's life

Student: Nistor Alexandra, 11th grade

Teacher : Caloian Liliana

“M. Eminescu” National College

Hiii, I'm Snow, the energetic and funny parrot. Nice to meet you again, dear readers and, as promised, I'll tell you about another red-letter day in my life.

Today is a special day for all humans or I think it is. I've been here for about two years and, even though I'm all settled in, things keep surprising me. Like Thanksgiving, which is, apparently, one of the days called “holidays”.

Last year I was left alone at home because my family went on a short trip to their relatives. Does it sound sad? It was at first, in my head there were only troubling questions like: “Why am I not a dog or a cat? Are they coming back? Do they want to punish me?” but after this I started playing with my bell and forgot the fact they had left me alone at home. At the end of the day, they were back home, with a new toy and treats for me and full of love. I was so thankful!

This year, though, we're all home together. Dad is at home this week and he has wanted to eat roast turkey for a couple of days so they have just decided to do things differently. It smells really good! Mom says it doesn't matter how you celebrate Thanksgiving Day. It just matters that you're together and say “Thank you” and remember that there are people — and parrots — who don't have as much as you do. I do understand that!

Before I came to live here I was in a huge gloomy cage with many other sad parrots. I was tormented and beaten up, until Alexandra saw me and wanted me, and thus I escaped the merciless, greedy parrot breeders.

I don't really understand why, but Mom says there are also people who don't have enough to eat. And lots who don't have clean water. And something called “health care”, which I think is like when our Auntie comes to visit us. That makes Mom sad. Sometimes it makes her mad, too. She types a lot of letters on some days, and calls people on the phone. Yesterday I heard her say that we'll all be safer if everyone has enough money to live on and the bare necessities.

I'm only a parrot, but I agree with that. It's hard not to get mad, or mean, when you don't have enough and others have too much.

Here are some more things I have learned about Thanksgiving this year... There have been lots and lots of things that smelt green in our fridge. You know, like leaves. Mom says that's a new Thanksgiving tradition. The turkey came from our friend, Marian. I think, maybe, other

families celebrate the Thanksgiving Day differently. My family says being different is OK, and it's true, because I'm not an ordinary parrot either.

Maybe Thanksgiving is about each of us finding our own way. Showing gratitude is one of the simplest, yet most powerful things humans and all the other beings can do for each other. Thanksgiving is a time of togetherness and gratitude., shared by humans and their dear pets.

Thank you for listening to me, Snow, a parrot now enjoying love and comfort, together with its family. I've told you only a short part of my tale, sorry, tale !! now, but we'll surely keep in touch.

Resurrection

Student Dobre Maria-Daniela, Xth grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

“M.Eminescu” National College

Life is fraught with suffering,

hatred, losing, bleeding

even dying.

But you've got to stay strong,

because your resurrection is yet to come.

I once died, long time ago,

when I let them bury me alive
under their absurd norms
because of society, I was messed up and
even now, everything's faded;
I'm wondering if I only dreamt about it.

Years later, still underground,
while I was looking at the blackness
above my very eyes
I noticed a little light
I trembled, not knowing what it was
nor whether it was meant for me to see
I couldn't help, but hope a little bit
that I would escape the nightmare
I'd been living in for the past years.

My view was getting clearer and clearer,
the light was becoming bigger and bigger.
I could see a pair of hands
throwing away the mess
that had been holding me down
for what felt like a lifetime.

I was regaining my ability to breathe
little by little,
but didn't know what to feel -
what if I was about to be thrown somewhere else?

cursed to be alone for eternity?

One of the hands reached out
and I grabbed it hungrily,
desperate as I was to be saved
even for the slightest second.

A shiver went down my spine
as soon as I touched the hand,
I felt a strong connection
as if it were someone I'd known forever...

An insane energy was fulfilling me,
I hadn't even seen who that person was
but as long as I felt the warmth of their hand
I felt reborn.

I had been pulled out of the grave
and I could breathe normally again.
There, still holding my hand,
was who I call today my savior.
I'd never seen him before,
but I knew him somehow,
our souls were bound with magical strings.

He smiled at me and warmly said:

"Welcome to your new life."

Thank you, God

Student: Piticar Roxana, 11th grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

'M. Eminescu' National College

It is a common thing to thank somebody for helping you and making your work easier. That's what this word says and it is often considered a formality. I for one, I take it to a completely different level, to the level of soul-thanking if I might say so... I will prove this with an example, thanking God.

First of all, I thank Him from the bottom of my heart for strengthening me in a hard way, but this is how I was sadly prepared for life before everyone else. At the age of 13 I lost my father, a handsome man, who lost the fight with cancer and 6 months later I lost my mother, in a way that is too utterly painful to mention, I can only say that I lost her 5 days before Christmas, and that Christmas was different from everything. I thank God because I know how much they loved each other, and I understand that they could not stay without each other, and He brought them together, two angels who take care of us. My life has changed since then, and for that I thank Him again, I got a restart, a new family, I moved in with my sisters and my brother. My elder sister, my heroine, decided to become my and my brother's legal guardian - my brother was 7 years old at the time. Besides, like a pillar was then my brother-in-law ... who, showing great determination and unwavering love, took over my father's responsibilities sooner than I would have imagined.

Secondly, I thank Him for the wonderful woman, my sister, who has given my second father to me. Despite the huge loss, she didn't leave me alone, but she helped me to share my life with a person who would make me really strong, who would make me never forget who I am, who will guide me, and, if I should fall down, will be there to pick me up.

We often hear an ordinary-sounding "thank you", being eternally grateful to God means having faith and hope forever.

The Moon and I

Student: Dobre Maria Daniela, 10th grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

“M. Eminescu” National College

All of us are hiding scars
that we'd rather not talk about
but we always choose to smile
for the Sun to hopefully rise
for others, if not for us.
But do we truly need the Sun?

Every time I lost myself
in the darkness of my own mind,
every time I felt numb
watching the pale moonlight
in the middle of the lonely night,
I knew I wouldn't be alone
for someone would be there for me,
at least the Moon, or perhaps the stars,
which for a reason are aligned?

My voice wasn't so silent, after all,
for the Moon loved my sobbing stories.
I'd cry and pray in front of her;

Who would've thought?

A faithful glory!

Ultimately, I saved myself

from the claws of duskiness,

I still am a lonely soul roaming at night

but this time, I'm with the Moon.

A hopeless romantic

and an art seeker,

I made best friends with the stars

and Moon's emptiness at once.

The song of autumn

Puşca Emilia, Xth grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

"M. Eminescu" National College

From behind the hills the light's flying
In tiny yellow rays like a treasure.
The night over meadows is creeping again
Softly swallowing the golden sun.

A light wind is breezing in small puffs
Smoothly rumours spread in the fields,
One can hear whispers on the ground
The echo of autumn. Now it's a ghost.

From the coast comes the smell of hay.
Clad in grapes and disheveled chrysanthemums ,
On the expanse of the meadow, like a garment,

The story of a year's daughter is penciled.

The chandeliers of the sky light up.
The moon, the sky's bride, appears.
Her clothes, looking like a silver forest,
Are carried by the wave-like grass.

My unforgettable trip to Vienna

Student: Pavel Traian Lucian, 11th grade

Teacher : Caloian Liliana

"M. Eminescu" National College

One day, I was daydreaming of what could I do if I had plenty of money and if I could travel anywhere, in all the four corners of the world. Several destinations sprang up in my mind and suddenly, a bright idea flashed: "What about going to Vienna?" I said to myself and, amazed at this thought as anticipatory joy filled my mind, I closed my eyes, picturing the trip to this wonderful city packed with history.

After persuading my parents to visit this unique city, we settled down in my dad's car, which had broken down a couple of weeks before but had miraculously started working again, knowing that so as to reach our destination, we had to go through three countries: Romania, Hungary and Austria.

On the Romanian part of the route, things went smoothly, except for some traffic problems on DN1 (near Braşov) and A1 (near Nădlac). After entering Hungary through Nădlac we had some language problems overcome by my knowledge of English and the roadworks started on M1 and E75 delayed us a little, which gave me stress and anger because I felt as if Vienna itself were impatiently waiting for me and I had to get there as soon as possible.

But, despite all these events, we entered Austria through Hegyeshalom and from there the things started looking good again. Finally, after an about 12- hour road trip, we finally reached Vienna, which is one of the cities that I have fallen in love with. All that driving was worth it as I could have a first hand experience of life in a new, exciting country, in the most liveable city in the world.

Vienna is steeped in culture and history, due to its tumultuous past and places such as Rathaus, where the most known Viennese Christmas Market is located, the Schönbrunn Palace, which was the summer residence of the Habsburg rulers, the Hofburg Palace and many other historical buildings. I soaked in art at the Museums Quartier and the visit to the Art Museum will be a

landmark in my life. The city also has a highly original culinary tradition, another reason for which this city is known being the recipes such as of Wiener schnitzel and Sachertorte, and for products such as Manner wafers or Mozartkugeln, chocolate-covered balls with a pistachio marzipan core which I devoured. We strolled for hours in the centre of Vienna as there is one main road encapsulating the city centre, making it difficult to get lost and we also went on a Danube short cruise and throughout our stay there we felt like touching history.

After one week, we returned to Romania overwhelmed by the beauty of the City of Music, grateful for the chance to visit such a beautiful place, hoping to see it again.

A world with NO rules

Student: Stoica Alexandra, XIth grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

"M. Eminescu" National College

A world with no rules sounds really amazing, but people invented rules because of the difficulties they encountered in trying to build up a civilisation at the dawn of the world.

Long time ago there was a world without rules and people had heaps of money so they could buy everything. It is rightfully said that money does not bring happiness, but back then people started to replace what happiness truly means with happiness brought by money that was earned through devious, evil ways and not through hard work. Little by little the world became a total chaos and that awoke most of the humans to reality. Everywhere you were most likely to see wickedness, theft, rudeness, but unfortunately just a little humanity and kindness. Those that had that humanity in themselves were the founders of decency in the world by imposing rules. I think that after something bad happening people start to change things and that also happened with that "perfect" world devoid of rules. Although nowadays rules are a normality, every human being may have thought just once that it would be better if we could do everything we want but it isn't as good as it sounds so don't judge a book by its cover, nor a man by his innermost selfish wishes.

In conclusion, I consider that rules are a benefit for this world not just for living in peace but for keeping the grain of humanity in our souls.

Our changing world

Student: Păscoci Petruța, XIth grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

”M. Eminescu” National College

The world is changing, as you can see:
The way it has been is not as it will be.
What is old passes away, giving birth to the new,
A surprise transformation co-created by few.
Life flow is stronger, empowering souls,
Bringing an end to slavery, and all ego goals.
A heavenly host listens and responds to all cries,
Shifting the pattern, to mankind's surprise:
This paradigm is here: a new world has begun.

The lessons of a difficult year

Student: Negustoru Antonia;

Xth grade

Teacher: Caloian Liliana

“M. Eminescu” National College

The year 2020 was a year I will never forget as it had tremendous impact on me as a teenager. My outlook on life has drastically changed since the pandemic began. Last year I was

overwhelmed by emotions, made bad decisions, my anxiety reached a climax and I hardly could maintain it without starting to cry. I felt alone, pointless. Not being able to see my beloved ones destroyed my soul. I need to go outside constantly and being locked between some walls for a long while makes me lose my mind, I felt so helpless and desperate but little by little I became resilient and made the best of the virtual forms of communication.

When some restrictions were lifted it felt like a dream, as if I was being released from a death cage. But, as every cloud has a silver lining, last year was somehow a character-building experience. It brought on the realisation of how important apparent trifles are - little strolls , tiny details we had been unable to see before became enormous. This led to my fully enjoying life, while fixing my mistakes and appreciating more the valuable seen and unseen things around me.

Other lessons I learnt in 2020 revolve around the meanings of life, friendship and care. Life means embracing every opportunity and challenge that show up in our lives and turning them into assets, making the best use of unpleasant experiences as well. This demanding year also taught me to share more love and kindness and pay more attention to my words and deeds, to care more for people and for nature.

Despite sometimes feeling dead inside, I am thankful as the most important lesson of 2020 was discovering a new, better version of myself - emotionally peaceful and more balanced.

Let me give you a hug

Student Denisa Andreea Ștefan

10th grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

Have you ever been into a Romanian family when they celebrate something? If you have't, then let me explain you some traditions and features of the Romanian people.

First of all, when someone celebrates his or her birthday, they invite all their closest friends and his family. In our country, people are friendly and they love to party. But let me give you a specific example: a baby's baptism. When the baby is around 40 days after his birth, in a Christian Orthodox family, the baby is ready for baptism. The godparents come to the baby's house and they make the baby ready: they give him some clothes as a gift and other things, and then they go to church, where the baby is immersed three times into the sanctified water. That's the moment when the new born becomes an Ortodox, a child of God. After that they go back home, the baby is washed in water with gold, rose petals, honey, coins and others, because that symbolises the child will be a lucky one. The party starts: the family, siblings and friends celebrate the newly christened baby.

In the end, probably you'll ask why I chose this title... It's because the Romanian people are friendly with everyone and they love to give hugs to people, as a sign of respect and friendship, and also because the babies are the sweetest and you always want them to give you a hug.

Christmas in my country

Student: Alexandra Mirica

10^h grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College**

Let's talk about the most joyous moments of the year...the holidays. Whether we recognize it or not, they bring us at least a smile when we pass at the end of each year by the lights in the city, when we see at least one sequence from a Christmas movie or when we hear carolers.

Christmas in Romania, my country, is an important celebration greeted by Christians with joy and hope. It is a day when we celebrate the soul, faith, love and understanding but most importantly, the united family. In my country, a few days before the holiday, in the homes everyone's preparations are being made for this special day. A week before, Romanians start last arrangements; they kill pigs, then cook traditional food: cabbage rolls, sausages and trotters, also dessert. We most usually bake sponge cakes with walnuts and cocoa.

In terms of decorations, in every house is decorated a Christmas tree with globes, lights and tinsel; where towards the top, there are the well-known glass globes painted in various colors (inherited from generation to generation). And under the tree are placed the gifts for kids.

The Christmas carols are filled with wishes for wealth and health; examples of these are: "Today Christ was Born"; "Oh, what Wonderful News!" but, every year, the most famous Christmas songs of all times are listened to on the radio.

On Christmas morning the whole family go to the church, where the holy moment of the Birth of the Jesus Christ is truly revived.

Christmas is the holiday when we have to show that we are good, understanding, generous. To enjoy the spirit of Christmas, to give gifts to the loved ones and even to tell stories with Santa to children.

Wedding traditions

Student AnaMaria Grosoiu

10^h grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

Depending on the geographical area of the country, we meet a multitude of customs, traditions and wedding superstitions that are held mainly for the luck and success of the path that young married people begin to travel together. In other words, these wedding customs, traditions and superstitions mainly refer to the good life of young married people, abundance, happiness, understanding and luck.

On the wedding's day, the groom leaves alone, if he is charming and has words with him or accompanied by family or friends, to support him. Usually, the parents accompanied the groom if they knew that the bride liked him. When the girl's parents did not agree and the young people ran away together, they were released for a while, then someone from the boy's family went to reconciliation, to the girl's family. They went with a bottle full of alcohol and if they reconciled, they were honored, if not, they would return with a full bottle.

The bride's preparation is the most emotional moment of the whole ceremony. Preparation is usually done by the godmother and the bridesmaids. This moment involves the dressing and arranging the veil by the godmother. When the groom arrives at the bride, he gives her the bouquet of flowers.

The bride's waltz is the first special moment that marks the opening of the party. After that, the godparents enter the dance floor followed by the rest of the guests. In some parts, there is a father-bride and a mother – groom dance as well.

Stealing the bride is perhaps the most waited and humorous moment of the evening. The groom has to complete a few tasks for getting back the bride.

Throwing the bouquet is another fun tradition. The bride will call all the unmarried girls in the ring, and with her back to them, she will throw the bouquet over their heads.

Removing the bride's veil falls into the duties of the godmother, who will replace the veil with a scarf which means the transition of the bride from the girl to the married woman. The veil will be caught in the hair of an unmarried girl, most often the one who caught the bouquet.

There are a lot more transition, depending on where you are. The ones I presented can be observed in each Romanian wedding.

Sorrow and Tradition

Student: Andreea Stroe

10^h grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

'B.P. Hasdeu' National College

Today I would like to tell about the many traditions and superstitions we, the Romanians have and follow (more or less) regarding funerals. For some this subject may be a little sensitive or triggering and I completely understand, but funerals happen every day and in my opinion we should not shy away from discussing this topic. So if you are interested and want to learn more about a traditional Romanian funeral keep reading. Oh, and one more thing, this article will not cover dark topics and that I shall try to keep it as light hearted as I possibly can.

If you have ever participated before in a Romanian funeral, you might have noticed that usually these are fairly big events, with lots of people. The family, relatives, friends, neighbours and co-workers of the deceased person are present. Sometimes there can be around a hundred people or more. Even so, many parents hesitate to bring their kids to such events, even if the deceased is a family member or close friend. I know my mother did not bring me to my grandmother's funeral, or to my grandfather's. I wish I could have participated though, because I feel as if I had missed my chance to say my goodbyes. Just this important are funerals. But besides the number of people, which may be considered a general characteristic, something totally unique about Romanian funerals is the food.

When someone passes away we hold some kind of 'parties' but much sadder, with lots of food and beverage. These can be held at the deceased's personal house or at church. The food can vary from one region of the country to another, but a constant 'must' at a Romanian funeral is a traditional and very tasty dish, called 'colivă'. Now for your better understanding, think of this as a funeral cake, this is the easiest way to describe it. It's usually made from boiled grain and crushed/chopped walnuts, and it commonly contains sugar, lemon peel, and rum or vanilla essence as well. It is decorated with vanilla sugar or coconut flakes and there is usually a cross

on top of it made out of candy. There are many more traditions that I can describe when it comes to someone's death, but I feel like those are considered to be, even from a Romanian's point of view, somewhat dreary so I will not talk about them now.

I hope you enjoyed this article and found it quite interesting. I personally feel like when it comes to our country's funerals, the food at the funeral and our way to deal with the death of a loved one are our most redeeming and unique habits.

A magic trip

Student: Alex Cringasu

10^h grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

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Ali was expecting Thursday to be a really bad day. It was summer and it was burning outside. Ali's parents were at home. They had planned a trip long time ago. They needed to tell her the surprise. Today was the day. Ali was in her room, listening to music, when she heard a strong noise from the window.

She opened the window to see what was going on. On the windowsill she found a letter. She smiled seeing the Hogwarts sign on it. How did they know that Ali likes Harry Potter? It was a secret that we are not going to find it out. It was important for Ali at that moment. She read all the books and saw all the films. It was magic. She started crying. It was a difficult moment for all of us, pandemic threw us all into this world, but her parents were trying to make her happy, dressing like wizards.

“What are you waiting for? Get dressed! You are going to Hogwarts with us today!”

Yes, she was going to Hogwarts, a magic place from London, where all the persons could go, any time.

“Don't forget your face mask, darling. “

It was 2020 and in her city and many cities from all over the world were protected from Coronavirus disease by some laws. And it was ok for her. She expected to be a really bad day, but it wasn't. She went to Hogwarts and met a lot of Harry Potter's fans. Ali was happy, even if the rest of the world wasn't. She had hope and she knew that all was going to end for good. The virus would be killed. Anyway, she felt happy. When she got there she saw a lot of magical

things. Ali even practiced some spells with her wand from Ollivanders. She went there a lot of times, but she never went with her parents. People couldn't see the people's happy faces to be at Hogwarts. Ali bought a lot of things like clothing, candies, even an owl. She was happy to be with her parents there.

“Why did you bring me here?”

“Dear Ali, we wanted to spend some time with you. We know that you can't see your friends at school, you can't go to school and you are feeling alone, but you have us, your parents. We are not going to let you spend your time alone. We are here for you.”

Being with your family in the difficult moments can bring your smile back. A smile can defeat this virus. Let's smile all of us. Smile with Ali and her parents. Stay strong.

A lake of feelings

Student: Alex Cringasu

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I opened my eyes and saw nothing. I was closing them, it was nothing. I woke up, nothing. It was just a dream? Never. I was alone at home and I had a lake of feelings. I got out of bed, but still nothing. Who am I? Why me? I tried to walk, I couldn't. I was trying again, I broke the lamp. I was trying over and over again until I would succeed. And I would.

I broke myself into pieces and I couldn't find them. I was trying again. I found one, but I lost it. My heart laughed at me and I could do nothing because I couldn't see it. I was alone, I needed to walk and eat, but something stopped me from doing that. Why? I didn't know. I tried to touch it, but my heart was dancing. I couldn't stop it. I would never stop it. It was a lake of feelings; I couldn't control all of them. I tried to kill sadness and bring happiness and I kind of succeeded in doing that. But there was only uncertainty, the anger and the mother of them, anxiety.

I received a message 20 minutes ago. My best friend told me to stay strong, and I did that. But why didn't they tell me to be happy? I would probably be a different person, a happy one. But I was just strong. They said “Don't cry” and I did. I lived in the past, not in the present, but that was ok. My mom told me to eat and I ate. Why didn't she tell me to see? I couldn't do

that alone. I needed someone to open my eyes. No one could do that. I was just myself with my broken pieces. After I ate, I returned to my bed and I saw nothing. I felt nothing. I was alone and I couldn't change that.

I heard something in my room. "Meow". And I knew that I needed to be happy and I did. Now I can be happy, I can see. I can see me cat who told me to be happy. I played with her all the morning. It was all I had. Now, children, remember: "Be happy!". I did it and now I am with you. Be happy and don't miss any chance to do your best. I was just a kid. I was just your kid and now I am your father. Remember that and don't forget: "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light."

Strange landings

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10^h grade

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He was about to run from that place, but something stopped him. He was looking at her when he felt a very strange sensation.. a bad sensation.

"Can you tell me who you are exactly? I think I know you, but I don't know from where. Could you help me?"

"I think I know you too and you also know me. Don't you recognize your sister, Julian?"

"What sister? What are you talking about? I don't have any sister..."

Even if Julian couldn't recognize Mary, cause that was her name, he hugged the unknown. He didn't know what was happening. It seemed to be hell or something like that. A different world where he has a sister. Where is the another Julian? In 2010? He knew that it wasn't a dream . It was a different reality. A strange reality. All the others that were surrounding them were looking at the sky murmuring in other language that the two siblings couldn't understand.

They looked at each other and said “Let’s run” and they did. Mary and Julian couldn’t feel their legs, couldn’t breathe or think clearly. They were just running around as they had to escape quickly. They passed through all the angry faces. Their mouths and eyes were stitched. The strange people had their eyes closed, but they could feel someone running from them. The sadness and anger were anywhere. All the happiness in their world disappeared. Finally, they stopped. They escaped from the bad people. Seeing that, Julian fell off on the grass admiring the sky and smiling.

“I don’t know where I am right now, but obviously it is not a dream. It’s a different reality, or hell. Have you seen that tall tree? It seems to be a house. Maybe someone can help us. Let’s get us there.”

While they were walking, Julian looked at her. He couldn’t explain the fact that he was walking with a stranger. Unfortunately, after all the peacefulness something had to break the line. Julian felt a headache when he arrived, facing the tree. It seemed to be something special. It was the only tree that they could have seen. They walked up and knocked, but nobody answered.

“There has to be a key” Mary said.

But there was no need of any key. The door opened itself like someone else had opened it. It was a simple room, they could see the sky and the birds, but at the moment they walked in, they fell asleep and disappeared. If a person would enter the house they couldn’t be seen. Julian opened his eyes after 10 minutes slowly. It was freezing. It was winter. Where was his jacket? He remembered how he got in the tree, remembered Mary, who was with him, sleeping, but he couldn’t explain the cold that was there. It was summer and now winter? It was impossible. Time passed out, the white moon could be seen on the sky. It was snowing. Maybe it was Christmas?

“How could be possible a thing like that?” Julian asked himself. When he looked out of the window there was a sign that he knew where he was. In his city, of course. In London. And the tree was situated in the middle of the road, but no one could observe it.

“Who are you? Where am I? I need to get back now! He will punish me!”

“Who?”

“You know who, darling, it’s right here, inside of me, in my soul. Say hello to the devil himself in person.”

“You’re joking, right? There’s no such thing like d...”

He couldn’t finish his words. Julian was petrified and couldn’t move or talk. But he could see the creature who was facing him. It was scary, but incredible. Her face turned into red and the hair into white. “You know who I am, Julian. You know that I have been dead to you since you were a child. You can’t escape.” Julian was shocked. His dead sister? His mom told him that he was supposed to have a sister many years ago, but why him?

Her voice thickened. Her eyes turned red. It was all red and a black sky. The house disappeared. They were floating. Down there, the time passed normally, nobody could see the devil.

“You’re a special child, Julian. You are the same. There is your jacket.” And the devil gave him a jacket made of snakes’ skin.

“Oh, that is not yours, isn’t it?”

Julian screamed even if he couldn’t be heard, but at that moment all the persons looked at the sky at the same time. Time stopped. The devil didn’t disappear. He was right there, looking for revenge. “You have to fight with him even it is your sister. Fight with love! That will destroy him!” a voice in his head said.

“I love you, Mary. I believe in you. You have to believe in yourself. You are not dead, just sleeping. I know you can believe that. The devil has feelings too.”

“What have you said? Nobody loves me, I can swear that.”

“Oh, I love you!”

“No!” The devil was vulnerable, like us, humans. He left the corpse and floated around to the white moon. The devil had feelings. But why did he choose Julian? He couldn’t believe in celestial things, like God or devil.

“Am I dead?” Mary woke up and talked to him.

“No, you were just sleeping. I couldn’t wait to have finally meet you, Mary.”

They slowly fell on the ground like a quill and went home. This is my story and I hoped you have liked it.

Children, it’s time for bed now. It’s too late and you need to sleep. Also, I want to say that the story is real because Mary was my grandma.

“Grandma, I believe you like you believed in your grandma” said them.

BEFORE

Student: Teodora Coman

10^h grade

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Stars. The sky is full of them. Their shine is never missing in the cold night, and even if their light isn't as powerful as the moon's, they are still there. Little holes on the heaven's floor who show us that when we feel ourself collapsing, life isn't over yet. There is when it begins all over again. We all fell and came back stronger than before, just like them. The stars show us heavenly love when they organize themselves beautifully in constellations. They team up and create different kinds of cosmic drawings on the sky and let us to look at them freely, without asking for any price.

Many years before, that was the only faith in Limerencia: the stars. The legends said that there were people born with a strange but yet fascinating birthmark. A birthmark that looked exactly like one of the cosmic drawings. Those people who were born with a constellation mark on their wrists were considered immortals and were destined to be part of The Stellar Order. They led the country good and everyone lived in peace back then.

When one leader took wrong decisions, everything changed for the worst. Thral Dreslorn was the one who, blinded by the power and becoming hungry for control, decided that only him and his relatives deserved the power. From then every single person born with a constellation mark was took away from their families and killed, so that The Order will never form again. And the ones who were already born with that birthmark were tortured until they begged for the leader to end their lives.

Now, after several years, nothing had changed, except for the leader. Andrew Ferucci seemed to be even worse than Dreslorn, he decided that everyone should consider himself a God and thank him every day for such a great country that Limerencia became. He commanded that in every house there should be at least one picture of him and that people should mention his name in the prayers.

Some of the families considered a child born with a constellation mark as a shame and were more than happy to get rid of them. But that wasn't the case with the Ashdown family. Being afraid that their first born might have the mark, Sarah and Oliver Ashdown swore that they would do everything to keep their child alive. And that is what they did. After months of searching for information, they found out the solution was right under their noses. Or, rather said, above their heads. It was a rainy autumn day when Oliver went to clean the attic. He was looking in all cartoon boxes to see what could they keep. The last box was smaller than the others. Oliver hesitated to open it, but his curiosity made him do it. There it was in all its

splendor a book which was about to solve their problems: “The great history of The Stellar Order”. After reading it they found out that there was an abandoned village in The Infinity Forest, where it is rumored that all those who escaped the cruelty of power-hungry leaders live there.

The feeling was bittersweet for them. As Sarah’s stomach grew every day, they couldn’t help feeling that they are running out of time. If their baby really was a part of The Stellar Order, their first they together would also be their last. But they wanted at least to know how the place where their child will grow will be like. Oliver was getting ready to leave in search of Elinthy-the abandoned village.

Sarah was sitting in front of the window, admiring the beauty of the night. She didn’t care it was late in night, her sleep was gone and it didn’t seem like it was going to come back soon. Sarah caressed her stomach, feeling every little kick the baby made. They found they were expecting a girl. A sweet little baby girl who is probably going to grow without her. This thought was enough to bring tears in her beautiful brown eyes. She was so lost in her head that she didn’t hear the sound of her husband steps.

“I thought you would be there” Oliver said. “Now tell me what’s wrong.” At that moment his face was buried in the crook of her neck, planting gentle kisses here and there, trying to comfort her.

“What if this place is place is not like we think? What if she will hate us? Oh, God, what if she didn’t even remember us? I... she...” Sarah was sobbing. Her cheeks were shining in the silver light of the moon. Oliver turned her, so she was facing him. He could see the hurt in her eyes.

“Tomorrow, after my trip, will know everything about Elinthy; she will never hate her parents and I will make sure that she is going to remember us. Everything will be good. We’ll do this together.” Oliver smiled at her and wiped her tears with his thumb. “Now we need our beauty sleep. Come on.” He took her hand in his and started to guide her towards their bedroom.



It had been months since Oliver came back from his trip. Elinthy wasn’t a bad place at all. Even if The Infinity Forest wasn’t the most welcoming, as he got closer to the village, he got that feeling that he was home. And that was going to be home for his daughter. Even though it hurt him to know that his baby girl was probably going to grow far away from him, he knew that it was for the best. Oliver couldn’t forgive himself if his child was killed. He knew that it was hard for his wife to get through this, but he remembered her that this was for the best. As he stood there, his thoughts were interrupted by a scream. He knew what that meant. Oliver started running to the room where the scream came from.

Sarah was on the floor, crying and holding her stomach. The moment has come. They were so close to find out what the destiny had prepared for them. Oliver came and gently lifted her from the floor. Sarah grabbed his arm and, breathing slowly, whispered in his ear:

“Our baby girl is ready to meet the world.” Her voice was trembling and hot tears were running down her face. She didn't even know if they were tears of happiness or sadness.

Oliver laid her in the bed. He had to help his wife to give birth to a baby, their baby. Smiling, he said: “Alright...Let’s have a baby.”

The next few hours were ingrained in Sarah’s mind. She couldn't remember anything, but that didn't matter at the time. She was holding her beautiful baby. After admiring every feature of the little girl face, she turned and looked at her husband.

“Well...? Does she...does she have the mark?”

Oliver nodded. He saw his daughter mark when he was cleaning her. A beautiful Orion constellation it could be seen on her little hand, near her wrist.

“Let’s not talk about that now. How are we going to name this little angel?” said Oliver, reaching out to take the baby in his arms.

“I was thinking about names all the time.” Said Sarah. That was the only thing who could bring her some joy in those sleepless nights. “I had a lot of ideas like Ava, Allison, Nova, Olivia. But then I found this name and I just couldn’t stop thinking about it. So, how about Asterin?”

“Asrterin Ashwood...” he said “I love it! Tell me again how are you so brilliant?” Oliver asked, kissing her head. Sarah laughed and look at the baby in his arms. She knew that was the last time she saw her daughter. Their first night together was also their last. So, they decided to make the most of Asterin's company.

The day after, Oliver woke up early. It was still dark outside. Asterin was sleeping in his arms when he got out of the house. He and Sarah decided that he needed to take their daughter in Elinthy, since she was still tired after giving birth. He took a big breath and, without hesitation started his trip. He stopped just when in front of him it was a big big house. “The Sunheart Cottage” was the place where orphan children of the stars were raised. On the porch of the huge building was a woman, about middle age, who seemed to be waiting for him. Her skin was so light, that even the snow would seem dark next to her. Blonde hair was running down her back, wild and long. Her barely covered wrist showed a mark that could not be confused, the Ursa Minor mark. Her ocean eyes spotted Oliver waiting figure and started walking towards him.

“I thought you wouldn't show up” the woman whispered.

“I wouldn’t let you here waiting, Mrs. Anderson. Not after how much you helped me and my wife”

“Is this her?” Mrs. Anderson asked, looking at Asterin’s sleeping figure.

“Yes... this is Asterin Ashwood, my daughter. She has the Orion mark on her right wrist.” Oliver said, looking at the baby.

“Alright...I will let you take your good bye now, but don't go on too long with it. The sun started to rise.”

Oliver looked up. She was right. The dark sky changed to a sea of warm colors. “Well, my little star, I think this is the moment when our roads part. Me and your mother love you so much; don’t you ever forget that” his eyes were glistening with tears. “I am not really good at words, but I know I don’t want to say good bye. It just sounds so permanent. So, I will just say: see you soon, my little star.”

Oliver kissed the baby’s forehead and handed her to Mrs. Anderson before leaving back to his house.

Mrs. Anderson enter the burrow with Asterin in her arms. “Welcome home, Asterin Ashwood!” she said, climbing the stairs towards the baby’s new bedroom.

What no one knows is that the story is just beginning.

CHAPTER 1

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10^h grade

Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu

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ASTERIN

The sun was shining brightly, too bright for an autumn day. Its rays found their way to the roof of the building, shamelessly stroking the metal tile.

The building was strange, and yet fascinating. It was big, so big that you could believe it was a hotel. But no one really confuse it with one of those, because it is in a small abandoned village, probably even erased from the maps of Limerencia. But even if no one suspected that such a building was there, they had to be careful. The Sunheart Cottage, because this is how

they call it, was built of a thick oak wood, covered with a varnish that gave it a dark color, like the trunks of trees in The Infinity Forest. The building was like a magnet for sunlight, hence the name.

The porch of the house was usually empty at this hour of the morning. The children slept late at the end of the week, and the staff was too busy to go outside. And yet there she was. Her hair flying everywhere because of the wind, her eyes getting an amber color from the sunlight. Asterin always came here in the early hours. It was the only moment when she could enjoy the peace. Her nightgown hid the curves of her body as she hugged her knees as close to her chest as possible. She stared blankly at the so-called village where she lived. There were some houses who looked so ruined that it was hard to believe someone lived there. It was hard, even for her. Asterin knew the truth about Elinthy. She knew everything about the power of the constellation marks and how people thought it would free them. Maybe that was why they agreed to live in such conditions, to risk their lives every day, even if they did or did not have the mark. Because they still believed in better.

Asterin was so lost in her head, that she didn't notice the person who sat down beside her until they spoke.

“It looks pretty ruined that village of ours, doesn't it Ast?”

“Yea it does” Asterin giggles “But it still our home.” Her gaze shifted from analyzing the view to the face of the girl next to her. “How are you up so early, Teddy? There could be a zombie apocalypse and you will still be asleep.”

“I will not!”

“Oh, yeah? Last Monday I had to literally drag you out of the bed, so you can get ready for school. Or last year, I poured cold water on you because your lazy ass didn't want to get out of the blankets.”

“Ok, maybe I'm a little sleep addicted. By the way, I have had a bruise since that Monday, thanks to you.” Said Teddy, gently stroking her elbow, indicating to Asterin that this was the place where the bruise had formed.

“Oh, shut it. That is nothing compare to all scratches and injuries caused by training”

She was right. Even though they had powers, everyone needed to know how to fight without it. The training was rough, and all of the stellar kids had a collection of bruises and scratches. But no one complained about it. They were so used to the pain that it didn't bother them anymore.

Asterin was playing with a stand of curly hair, spinning it around her finger countless times. She and Teddy had been friends for God knows how long. At first, they were roommates, and then found out that they had been blessed with the same power, so they had all the training classes together. And this is how their friendship started.



The two-year old girl looked through the window. The night was beautiful and peaceful. Stars sparkling like diamonds on the black cloak of the night sky. Taking in the beauty of the night, she turned her gaze to the baby crib in the corner of the room. A smile found its way to her face. The girl always wanted a little sibling, and a baby roommate was the closest to that. She was a little kid herself, but the thought that in ten years she would be the oldest in that room made her happy. The kid would need to listen to her and in response she will protect them.

The silence in the room was shattered by a knock on the door. The little girl came out of the dream state and ran to the door as if her life depended on it. She didn't know if she was rather happy or nervous, but that really didn't matter right now.

In front of the now opened door was a middle-aged woman with hair almost as white as the snow. She was holding a baby in her arms.

A miraculous story

Student: Diana Laudatu

10^h grade

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A few years ago my school organized a visit to another school in a small village far away, on the other side of the country. Only a few students were selected and I was among them. We were told that it was a charity and each child had to donate three books to that school.

My enthusiasm led me to make a package containing my favorite books, on which I wrote some thoughts for the children there. The road was long but the experience I was going to live was unique. Along the way we thought about conversation topics to discuss with the children there.

When we finally got to that school, we were amazed by the modesty of the students and how small the school was. A group of children was waiting for us in the school hallway, accompanied by a few teachers students who welcomed us warmly. A little boy with a sad look

on his face caught my eye a boy but whose brilliance made him different from the rest, in a way I could not explain. I went to him and gave him my package that contained the book "Miracle". After opening the package, a few tears ran down his rosy cheeks, telling me that he had always wanted to read this book, because he identified a lot with the main character. We sat down on a couch and opened the book together. Suddenly his tear fell on the black ink of the first page and in front of us appeared all the characters of the book. Amazed, I grabbed the little boy's hand, who seemed to know them long before this extremely strange event and the characters showed us the whole story of the book.

The crystal clear sound of the bell announcing the start of classes woke me up to reality and I realized that the little boy was no longer with me. It seemed like a miracle. When I left I saw through the window, the silhouette of a little boy reading captivated from a book, sitting alone in the middle of an area full of flowers. I turned for a few seconds, but when I looked out the window, he was gone. Again.

The Song of the Convoy

Student: Alexandra Mirica

10^h grade

**Teacher: Rocsana Marinescu
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The Story becomes known to everyone, in a form or another. From ancient times some have heard it in the sound of the water when they went fishing, others in the song of birds when they picked mushrooms from the forest or walked but, each understood only a certain part of The Story, which thus become unique for each...part of their life.

It is true that The Story crossed waters, forests, communities of people close to nature, but no one could imagine how it could reach the great and new settlements of people, unknown to ordinary people, called cities.

These places were in the beginning, for everyone who came here a new world, but especially a place where you could admire inventions, such as the new means of transport that will be represented only by its name, the beginning of a new era...the car.

Slowly they began to multiply; such as the number of birds singing in the forest during the hot summer days after a cold rain. No one thought of such an assemblage of sounds made by cars with the voices of the little creatures of the forest.

But you could find The Story anywhere and by anyone. Like a twelve-year-old girl, the only child, who lived in a new city...unknown to her. Thus, her only relief was music; Rosie knew how to play the piano and guitar, dreaming of one day becoming a composer.

One August day, but agitated like any other, Rosie sat on the porch humming a few verses. To remember them, she began to write them. Then, looking at the line of cars passing by her house, she began to hear a song full of emotion. Excited, and remembered the Story, a forgotten memory of her childhood, passed down from her grandmother, who lived near the city and told her everything she had heard one day in the woods, but she was worried that as the years passed she would forget this incident.

So, Rosie decided to continue listening to the sound coming from the convoy of cars, now representing the most important sound for the little listener who now understood his grandmother's words. This is not a simple song, heard only by those who know how to listen... but an inheritance, which we cannot touch or see, and yet something that opens our souls.

For Rosie, The Story is a song that keeps all the feelings, memories, hopes and thoughts of the people who had listened to Her until then and who will continue to travel until She finds a person who can give to The Story a little rest...in his heart. So She chose Rosie.

After the song ended, Rosie wrote it, sang it and published it as *The Song of the Convoy*, hoping that the next messenger of The Story would continue.

