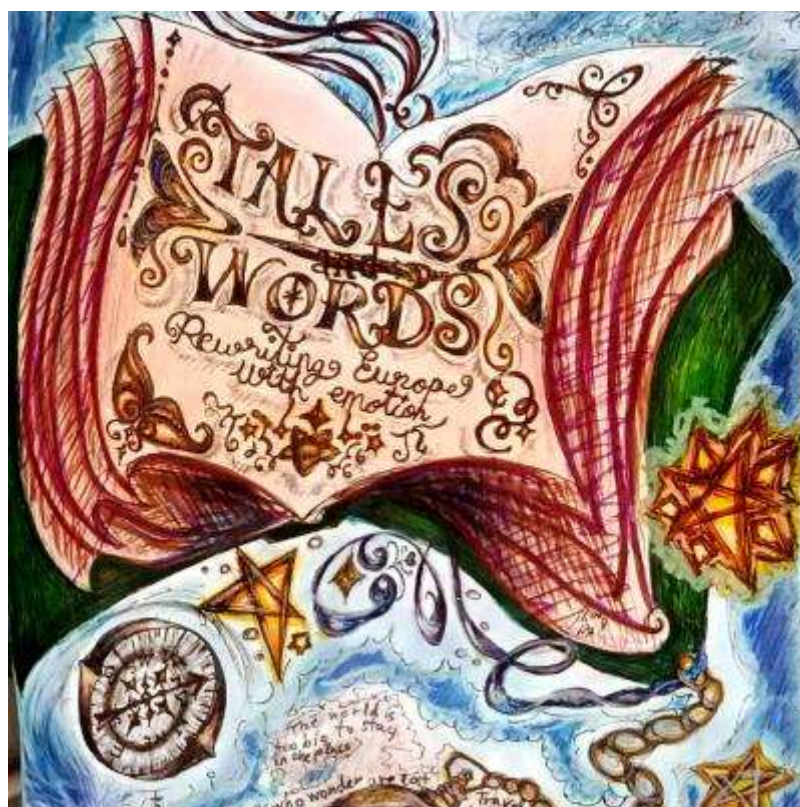




Tales and words: rewriting Europe with emotion

**European tales rewritten by students from France, Greece,
Romania, Spain and Turkey**



Greuceanu

**Original Romanian tale proposed by Liceul theoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania):
*Greuceanu***

**Participating countries in the writing: Collège La Xaviere (France) and Mehmet Örucü
Secondary School (Turkey)**

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Gabin. He was 16 years old and lived in France. He attended a school called La Xavière.

One day, Gabin argued with the leader of his former group of friends, known as the Moonlight Team. They were a group of cruel teenagers who enjoyed mocking and intimidating other students. Gabin could no longer tolerate their behavior. Because of this, the leader began to doubt his loyalty. To test him, he asked Gabin to steal something from a girl who had rejected him. Gabin obeyed, but he was caught. After that, the leader humiliated him in front of everyone. Eventually, Gabin refused to follow him anymore, and the Moonlight Team turned against him.

Soon, Gabin became their new target. Every day, he was bullied at school and on social media. Little by little, he noticed that the same thing was happening to many other students. Fear was spreading through the school. Students were afraid to speak, to answer questions in class, or even to sit alone in the cafeteria.

One afternoon, while sitting by himself, Gabin spoke to an older student about what was happening. The student listened carefully and then said:

“The Moonlight Team has stolen something from this school.”

“What do you mean?” asked Gabin.

“They have stolen its light. People are afraid, and when fear grows, the light disappears.”

Gabin thought about those words for a long time. At that moment, he decided that his mission would not be to defeat the Moonlight Team in a fight. His mission would be to bring the light back to school.

He started by helping students who were suffering just like him.

The first was Lucas, who was always sitting alone because others laughed at him. Gabin sat beside him and asked, “Can I sit with you?” Day after day, they talked, and Lucas slowly regained his confidence.

Then Gabin helped Laura, a shy girl in his class. Many students ignored her because she rarely spoke. When they worked together on a project, Gabin encouraged her by saying, “Your ideas are important.” During the presentation, Laura shared her thoughts with the class and felt proud of herself.

Little by little, more students joined them. They supported one another, listened to one another, and stood together whenever someone was being bullied. As their group grew, they decided to call themselves the Sunlight Team.

Soon, Gabin had around a dozen friends by his side. They all shared the same goal: to bring back the light that fear had taken away.

When the Moonlight Team heard about the new group, they laughed at them.

“You think kindness can stop us?” their leader mocked.

Gabin answered calmly, “We are not trying to stop you with fear. We are trying to stop you with courage.”

The leader challenged Gabin to meet him after school near the gym. Many students heard about the meeting. They expected a fight.

On the evening of the meeting, the air was cold and tense. The Sunlight Team walked together toward the gym. Some students were nervous, but Gabin remained calm.

When the Moonlight Team arrived, their leader smiled arrogantly.

“So, where are your weapons?” he asked.

Gabin looked around and replied, “We don't need weapons.”

The leader laughed.

“Then how do you plan to win?”

Before Gabin could answer, students began to appear from all corners of the schoolyard. They came from behind the gym, from the sports field, and from the school entrance. They were students who had suffered in silence for months.

One by one, they stepped forward and spoke.

A younger student described how he had been pushed around. Another explained how he had been mocked online. Laura spoke about being laughed at because she was shy. Lucas spoke about eating alone every day.

The crowd grew larger and larger. For the first time, the members of the Moonlight Team looked uncomfortable. They realized how many people they had hurt.

Then Gabin stepped forward.

“Look around you,” he said to the leader. “You thought fear made you powerful. But fear never creates respect. It only creates loneliness.”

The schoolyard fell silent.

The leader looked around. Nobody was cheering for him anymore. Nobody admired him. People were simply tired of being afraid.

At that moment, several teachers arrived. They had been informed about the meeting by students from the Sunlight Team. Instead of finding a fight, they found dozens of students courageously telling the truth.

The teachers listened carefully. They organized meetings, support groups, and new anti-bullying initiatives. Students were encouraged to speak up whenever they witnessed harassment.

In the weeks that followed, the Moonlight Team lost its influence. Some members apologized for their actions. Others decided to change their behavior.

Meanwhile, the Sunlight Team continued to grow. The school became a friendlier place. More students joined activities, spoke openly in class, and supported one another.

One afternoon, Lucas smiled at Gabin and said:

“You know, you didn't just stop the bullying.”

Gabin looked around at his friends laughing together under the warm sunlight.

“What do you mean?” he asked.

Lucas pointed toward the busy schoolyard, full of students talking and smiling.

“You brought the light back.”

Gabin smiled.

And for the first time in a long while, the whole school seemed brighter.

The favored girl and the forgotten girl

Original Romanian tale proposed by Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania):

Fata babei și fata moșneagului

**Participating countries in the writing: IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain) and Collège La
Xaviere (France)**

In the same house, in the Spanish city of Valladolid, lived two very different twin sisters. Clara was responsible, hardworking and discreet. She did not need to stand out or seek attention. She did things well without expecting recognition, helped at home, and at school (IES Ribera de Castilla) always fulfilled what was asked of her. Lucía, on the other hand, lived focused on her image, on social media, and on the opinions of others. She avoided effort whenever she could and preferred to appear to be doing things rather than truly getting involved.

At home, responsibilities were never balanced.

—Clara, take care of this —their mother would say again and again.

And Clara obeyed without complaining.

Lucía, in contrast, would respond with excuses or simply postpone everything.

—I can't right now —she would say, without taking her eyes off her phone.

Over time, Lucía got used to others solving her responsibilities. Moreover, she was bothered by the fact that Clara stood out without apparent effort. At school, teachers valued Clara's consistency, which made Lucía feel pushed aside.

They sometimes said, "You don't seem like sisters."

Little by little, Lucía began to act more strategically. At times, she tried to take credit for her sister's ideas; other times, she exaggerated Clara's mistakes in front of others or put her in a bad light to make herself look better. It was not constant, but enough to create discomfort.

Clara noticed it but preferred not to enter conflict. After all, it was her sister and she loved her.

One day, at school, an international scholarship program was announced for students participating in a team project. To apply, they had to get involved, collaborate, and present a joint project before a jury.

The sisters decided to take part. From the beginning, Clara truly committed herself. She attended meetings, organized tasks and listened to her teammates. Lucía, however, only showed up at key moments, avoided the most demanding work, and focused mainly on the image of the project.

The work was not easy. There were organizational problems, lack of time, and disagreements within the group. Clara held the team together. Despite her tiredness, she kept working and helping others. She often stayed after school to support her teammates, explained difficult tasks to students who were struggling, and made sure that everyone could contribute to the project. She never expected recognition; she simply believed that success was something to be shared.

Lucía, little by little, disconnected from the real effort, while still maintaining a good image on the surface.

The day of the presentation arrived. The classroom was full of teachers and members of the jury. Clara explained the project clearly, detailing the process, the difficulties, and how they had overcome them. Lucía presented a more visually polished part, but when she was asked specific questions, she was unable to answer with confidence. Her real contribution had been limited.

The jury carefully evaluated not only the result, but also the commitment, teamwork and dedication shown throughout the project.

Clara received the main international scholarship. Her effort, generosity, honesty and perseverance had made a difference not only to the project, but also to the people around her.

However, the jury also recognized that Lucía had qualities that could be developed. They offered her the opportunity to join a mentoring and personal development program.

“You have potential,” they told her, “but real success requires commitment, responsibility and perseverance.”

For a moment, Lucía remained silent. Looking at her sister, she realized how much work and dedication had been behind Clara’s achievement.

After the ceremony, she approached Clara and quietly said:

“Congratulations. You really deserved it.”

It was the first time she had openly acknowledged her sister’s effort.

Clara smiled warmly.

“Thank you,” she replied.

Lucía did not change overnight. But little by little, she began to participate more actively, take responsibility for her own tasks and value the effort that success requires. For the first time, she started building something of her own instead of relying only on appearances.

And so, while Clara was rewarded for her kindness and hard work, Lucía was given the opportunity to learn an important lesson: true recognition comes not from what others see, but from what we genuinely do.



Author: Alicia, IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain)

The bridge of Arta

Original Greek tale proposed by 6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece):

The bridge of Arta

Participating countries in the writing: Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania) and IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain)

In a busy city where construction sites never sleep, a team of engineers were working on an ultramodern bridge over a river that separated two major neighborhoods. The project was ambitious: smart sensors, new materials, spectacular design. But day after day, problems arose. What they built by day, gave way by night: inexplicable cracks, systems that stopped working, calculations that no longer “held up.”

No matter how many technical corrections were made, a new failure appeared every morning, as if the bridge itself were rejecting the way it was being built.

The project coordinator, Andrei, was exhausted. The pressure was immense, the press, the investors, the city hall. The team was starting to lose confidence.

Late one evening, as he was reanalyzing the data, an older colleague, Mara, said to him in a serious tone:

“It’s not just technical. It’s about what we’re sacrificing to get this done.”

Andrei laughed, thinking it was a metaphor. But in the days that followed, it became clear that someone had to be “sacrificed”—not literally, but professionally. The project needed someone to blame for the delays, someone to take responsibility for the safety system’s failures, even though they stemmed from decisions made at a higher level.

The board quietly suggested that Andrei’s wife, Irina, who also worked on the project as a software specialist, could be “moved” and made responsible. It was easier to justify.

Andrei received the official message: “We urgently need final approval on your module. Come to the construction site tomorrow morning.”

Irina arrived early, excited, thinking that they were going to close the project. She knew nothing of the plan.

When Andrei told her the truth, the silence between them was heavier than any accusation.

“Are you going to sacrifice me to save the bridge?” she asked calmly.

“Not me... the system,” he replied, but without conviction.

Irina looked at the unfinished structure, then at the people who were avoiding her eyes.

“If I accept, the bridge will be finished.” But it will remain built on a lie.

A long silence followed. Then she said:

“No. We don’t build like this anymore.”

Instead of accepting, Irina published all the project data: errors, pressures, compromised decisions. It triggered a public scandal. The work was stopped. Andrei lost his position. Many on the team were investigated.

For a while, all seemed lost. But a few months later, the project was resumed—from scratch, transparently, with a new team and clear rules. Irina was invited back, this time as technical leader.

The bridge was finally completed. It wasn't the fastest project, nor the most spectacular. But it was safe.

On the day of the inauguration, Andrei came as a simple visitor. He crossed the bridge slowly. In the middle, he stopped.

He didn't feel triumphant. But, for the first time, he didn't feel like something was about to collapse either.



Author: Daniela, Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania)

Karagoz and Hacivat in a modern classroom

Original Turkish tale proposed by Şehit Onur Kılıç Imam Hatip (Turkey):

Karagoz and Hacivat

**Participating countries in the writing: Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania)
and IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain)**

If Karagöz and Hacivat were alive today, they would definitely have smartphones and argue every day on WhatsApp.

Hacivat would be the model student: organised, responsible, and always speaking in a very formal and correct way. He would probably be the one who raises his hand in class even before the teacher finishes the question.

Karagöz, on the other hand, would be completely different. He would arrive late, forget his materials, and turn everything into a joke. He would misunderstand instructions constantly—but somehow always find a funny way to fix things.

One day, Hacivat sent him a message: "Please arrive at 8:00 a.m. to participate in an important educational project."

Karagöz replied immediately:

"8:00 a.m.? That should be illegal."

In reality, it was a school project designed to help students improve their teamwork and communication skills.

The next day, Hacivat arrived fully prepared: laptop, notes, slides, and a clear plan. Karagöz arrived with a juice box and a relaxed attitude.

"Did you bring your materials?" Hacivat asked seriously.

"Yes," Karagöz replied. "I brought energy." (He lifted the juice box proudly.)

Hacivat sighed but started the presentation: the topic was "The impact of technology on our daily lives."

Karagöz immediately misunderstood and said:

"So basically, technology is great because we can spend ten hours on our phones without anyone complaining!"

Hacivat covered his face with his hand.

During the final presentation in front of the class, Hacivat spoke clearly and confidently, explaining ideas and arguments in detail. Then Karagöz stepped forward.

"I am here to confirm," he said, "that technology is very important... especially when you want to avoid doing homework."

The whole class burst into laughter, including the teacher.

Instead of being annoyed, the teacher looked thoughtful.

"You know what?" he said. "This was actually a very interesting presentation."

Hacivat looked surprised.

"You combined two very different styles: structure and humour. And that made your work complete."

He paused and added:

"You both get a 10."

In the hallway afterwards, Hacivat said quietly:

"I suppose your humour also helped..."

Karagöz smiled:

"Of course. I am in the entertainment department."

For the first time, Hacivat laughed openly.

And from that day on, they learned that working together—seriousness and humour—could create something better than working alone.



Author: Narcisa, Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania)

Blue beard – a modern retelling

Original French tale proposed by Collège La Xaviere (France):

Barbe bleue

**Participating countries in the writing: Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania)
and Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania)**

He was a very wealthy man, known online as “BlueBeard”. He lived in a luxurious house and was always seen with expensive cars, designer clothes, and perfect photos on social media. To the outside world, he looked like a success story.

But there was something strange about him. People noticed that none of his past girlfriends ever stayed in his life for long. They simply disappeared without explanation, and nobody ever talked about them again.

Despite the rumors, he soon started dating a younger girl. At first, everything seemed like a dream. He gave her expensive gifts, took her on trips, and showed her a life full of luxury and attention. It felt perfect.

One day, he had to travel for a few days. Before leaving, he gave her a tour of the house and said:

"You can stay anywhere you want... but do NOT go into the basement room."

She nodded and smiled. "Of course."

But as soon as he left, the warning stayed in her mind. The more she thought about it, the more she wondered why one room was forbidden. Curiosity slowly grew stronger.

Eventually, she found the key.

The door to the basement was heavy and old. Her hands were shaking as she unlocked it and stepped inside.

What she saw changed everything.

Inside were objects, photos, and hidden evidence that revealed the truth: his previous girlfriends had simply not left. Something terrible had happened to them there.

Before she could process everything, she heard a sound upstairs.

The front door had just opened.

He was back.

For a moment, everything went silent.

Then his voice came from above.

"I told you not to go in there."

He came down the stairs slowly. He was calm, but his presence filled the house with tension.

"You came in, didn't you?" he said.

"Yes," she replied, holding her phone tightly. "And I recorded everything."

She showed him the screen. The entire basement had been filmed. Every detail. Every proof.

For the first time, his confidence cracked.

He moved forward to grab the phone, but she reacted instantly and ran out of the house.

Outside, she didn't stop running until she reached the street. With shaking hands, she sent the video to a friend and said:

"If anything happens to me, publish this."

That night, the video began to spread.

By morning, it had gone viral.

People recognized the house, the luxury lifestyle, the perfect image he had built online. In a matter of hours, that image collapsed completely.

But the story did not end there.

More women came forward.

Some had dated him briefly. Others had worked with him or been close to him. One by one, they shared similar stories: manipulation, control, fear, and silence.

The investigation grew rapidly. What had begun with a single forbidden room became a case involving years of hidden behavior and unanswered questions.

The house was sealed off by the police.

During the trial, he sat in his expensive suit, trying to remain calm. But this time, no one believed the image he projected.

When the sentence was finally announced, the courtroom fell completely silent.

Outside, the girl stood with her family. For the first time, she felt safe.

Reporters surrounded her and asked if she regretted opening the basement door.

She looked at them and answered:

"No. The truth was already there. I just refused to pretend I didn't see it."

She walked away with her family beside her, changed but stronger.
And from that day on, whenever people asked her about courage, she always gave the same answer:

"Curiosity isn't always dangerous... sometimes, it's what saves your life."

Doña Truhana – A modern school story

Original Spanish tale proposed by IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain):

Doña Truhana

Participating countries in the writing: Şehit Onur Kılıç Kız İmam Hatip Lisesi (Turkey) and Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania)

Doña Truhana was a creative middle school student who loved baking more than anything. Whenever she had free time, she went to the kitchen and tried new recipes. Baking made her feel happy and full of ideas.

One morning, her school announced a special event called Entrepreneurship Day. Students could prepare something at home and sell it at school. The goal was to encourage creativity, teamwork, and small business ideas.

Doña Truhana immediately felt excited.

"I will bake cookies!" she said happily. "Everyone loves chocolate cookies!"

Her mother smiled. "That's a wonderful idea. Let's do it together."

That evening, they baked carefully. They mixed flour, sugar, eggs, butter, and chocolate chips. The smell filled the kitchen, warm and sweet. Soon, dozens of golden cookies were ready.

Doña Truhana placed them carefully in a box and decorated it with ribbons.

"These cookies will make everyone happy," she thought proudly.

The next morning, she walked to school carrying the box.

As she walked, her imagination began to grow.

"If I sell all my cookies, I could bake more next time... maybe cakes, maybe cupcakes... maybe even open my own bakery," she thought.

Her dreams became bigger and bigger. She imagined a shop full of customers, interviews, success, and fame. She smiled, lost in her thoughts.

But she stopped paying attention to the street.

A small stone was on the ground.

She stepped on it.

The box slipped from her hands.

Crash.

The cookies fell and broke into pieces.

Doña Truhana froze. In a second, all her dreams seemed to collapse with them.

An elderly neighbor who had seen everything approached her gently.

"It is good to dream," he said, "but you must always watch your steps while you dream."

Doña Truhana looked at the broken cookies and took a deep breath. She understood something important: dreams need attention, care, and action.

For a moment, she felt sad. She even thought about giving up.

But then she remembered why she loved baking in the first place.

She went back home and told her mother what had happened. Her mother listened and smiled.

"Mistakes are part of learning. Let's try again," she said.

That afternoon, they baked a new batch together. This time, Doña Truhana focused on every step, without rushing her thoughts.

The next day at school, she arrived early. Many students visited her table, and her cookies were a success.

By the end of the event, everything was sold.

Doña Truhana smiled. She had learned that success does not come from dreams alone, but from effort, patience, and attention to reality.





The pearl sister

Original Turkish tale proposed by Şehit Onur Kılıç (Turkey):

Sedef Baci

**Participating countries in the writing: 6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece) and
Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania)**

Once upon a time, there was a president who had four children: three boys and one girl. They lived a peaceful and happy life in a beautiful house full of light and harmony.

One day, the president married a scientist. At first, she seemed intelligent and elegant, but behind her calm appearance, she hid dark intentions. She became jealous of the family life she saw around her. She wanted the president only for herself—without children, without distractions, without anyone else.

Her jealousy slowly turned into cruelty.

Using her secret knowledge, she created a strange experiment. One night, she transformed the three boys into robots. By day, they were machines with cold movements and empty eyes. By night, they returned to being human—but they could not remember what had happened.

Only the daughter, Sedef, remained untouched.

She noticed strange things: her brothers behaving differently during the day, strange noises from the laboratory, and her stepmother locking a mysterious room.

The stepmother kept a special key. It controlled the transformation.

Sedef understood that something terrible was happening.

Sedef decided not to act alone. She told her father everything she had observed. At first, he did not believe it, but the more clues he saw, the clearer the truth became.

Together, they searched for the house until they discovered a hidden laboratory beneath the building.

Inside, they found the machines used to control the transformation, and a strange formula based on energy extraction and emotional manipulation.

The scientist tried to stop them, but it was too late.

Sedef and her father activated a counterprogram using something the scientist had never considered: emotional connection, trust, and family memory.

At sunset, the system began to collapse. The boys slowly regained their human form permanently, as artificial control over them disappeared.

The scientist, seeing her experiment destroyed, tried to activate a final override. But the system reacted against her own design.

The machine collapsed and shut down completely, leaving her trapped in her own creation—cold, emotionless, and disconnected from the life she had tried to control.

In the end, there was no celebration of revenge, but a return to balance.

The family reunited, stronger than before.

Sedef looked at her father and said:

“Even the strongest machines cannot replace human love.”





What happened to a good man and his son

Original Spanish tale proposed by IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain):

Lo que le pasó a un hombre bueno y a su hijo

Participating countries in the writing: Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania) and
6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece)

In a small Romanian town, George and his son Mihai lived together. George was a hardworking, calm man who was well respected by his neighbors. He had always tried to educate his son wisely, teaching him to act honestly and not to let himself be carried away by what others said.

Mihai was sixteen years old and, like many teenagers, he cared a lot about other people's opinions. He worried about fitting in, being liked, and not becoming the target of jokes at school.

One summer, father and son decided to sell an old electric bicycle they barely used. They wanted to use the money to buy a new computer that Mihai needed for his studies. Since the repair shop where they were going to sell it was on the other side of town, they decided to walk there with their bicycles.

As they passed through the first street, some people saw them and commented:

"Look how silly they are, having an electric bike and walking beside it."

Mihai looked at his father, uncomfortable.

"Dad, I think they're right. I should ride it."

George did not argue. His son got on the bike and they continued. Further along, some women sitting on a terrace watched them.

"How embarrassing," said one of them. "The boy rides comfortably while his father walks."

Mihai quickly got off the bike, embarrassed.

"Then you should ride it, Dad."

George agreed and they continued. A little later, some boys from school passed by and started laughing.

"What an example. The father rides peacefully while the son walks carrying his backpack."

Mihai felt uncomfortable again.

"Maybe we should both ride."

So, the two of them got on the bicycle as best they could, moving slowly. It did not take long before they heard more criticism.

"That's definitely wrong. Two people on one bicycle—they'll break it before selling it."

Mihai sighed, frustrated.

"No matter what we do, someone always has something to say."

Then George stopped. He looked at him calmly and said:

"That is exactly what I want you to understand. If you try to please everyone, you will never know what decision to make. There will always be someone ready to criticize."

Mihai stayed silent. They continued walking, one on each side of the bicycle, just like at the beginning. This time, not because of doubt, but because of their own decision. When they arrived at the repair shop, Mihai was smiling. Not because they had sold the bicycle yet, but because he had understood something more important: living according to other people's opinions is the fastest way to lose your own direction.

When they arrived at the shop, Mihai suggested something different.

"Dad, I think we could still fix it ourselves and sell it later for a better price."

George smiled. He had understood not only the lesson, but also the importance of thinking for himself. For weeks, they worked together on the bicycle. And although it took longer to get the money, Mihai felt that this decision was truly his own.



Author: Alina, Programul cu Liceu Sportiv (Romania)

Bamsi Beyrek

Original Turkish tale proposed by Mehmet Örücü Secondary School (Turkey):
Bamsi Beyrek

Participating countries in the writing: Collège La Xaviere (France) and Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania)

Noémie and Rayane are two 17-year-old teenagers who live in Lyon. One day, Noémie discovers Rayane's profile on Instagram and decides to follow him. He follows her back and they start talking every day. Little by little, they get to know each other and become very close. After a few weeks, they decide to meet for the first time.

When they see each other, they get along very well. They fall in love and spend more time together. Their relationship becomes serious. After three months, Noémie decides to tell her parents about Rayane and wants to introduce him to them.

But her parents totally refuse because they do not have the same origin or the same religion. Noémie, a French Christian, loves Rayane, an Algerian Muslim. She is in tears, very sad, and decides to talk to Rayane to find a solution together.

Her parents announced some news to her:

"Noémie! We have great news!"

"What is it?"

"We are going to move out!"

"Oh no..."

"Are you not happy?"

"Ah yes... I am."

"Announce it to your friends and start to pack your things."

"Ok... I will..."

But Noémie does not look happy about this news.

She meets Rayane in the street.

"Rayane, I have bad news!"

"What's the problem?"

"I'm going to move out..."

"Oh no! That's sad!"

"We need to find a solution!"

"Yes, I hope we will find it!"

"Me too!"

But Noémie already knows their relationship is at a dead end.

She is very sad and depressed because she is not with Rayane. She feels lonely in her new school because she has no friends. She no longer goes out and prefers calling Rayane in the evening. At the end of each call, she cries alone.

One day, she decides to rebel against her parents. During that week, she argues several times with them, and her grades drop at school.

That night, she decides to run away to find Rayane because she can no longer stay alone.

Three days later, at night, she goes out through the window with a big suitcase. At the same time, Rayane is thinking: my parents would never accept Noémie, and her family feels the same about me. It's not just us; it's everything around us.

So, he texts her: "Meet me outside."

And she is already there.

They do not talk much. They just look at each other, knowing this could change everything. She takes his hand, shaking a little, but she does not let go.

"We can't live like this," she says.

"I know. So, let's leave."

They don't have a real plan, just a desire to find a place far away where no one knows them. Maybe it is crazy, maybe it won't work. But staying means losing each other.

Finally, they get on the first train without really thinking. Their hearts are beating fast, but they do not change their minds. The night is calm and the lights of the city slowly disappear behind them.

Sitting next to each other, they watch the landscape outside the window. They do not talk much, but their hands stay together, safe. As time passes, fear turns into a new feeling: freedom. They are choosing their own life, far from rules and restrictions.

When they arrive in a new city early in the morning, everything feels unknown. They do not have a real plan, only the desire to stay together.

The beginning is difficult. They have to learn how to live on their own, find a place to sleep, and manage their money. Sometimes they doubt, sometimes they are afraid. But despite everything, they stay strong. Their love becomes stronger through the difficulties.

With time, they build something new, something that belongs to them. They understand that their choice is risky, but it helps them grow... together.

However, they encounter too many difficulties. The pressure becomes too strong, and they slowly realize they are not ready for such a life. Their loyalty to each other is not strong enough, and their families' vision of life remains too important for them to fully break away.

So, they decide to go back home, each on their own.

Cinderella Modern edition

Original French tale proposed by Collège La Xaviere (France):

Cendrillon

Participating countries in the writing: 6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece) and Şehit Onur Kılıç Kız İmam Hatip Lisesi (Turkey)

Back in my day, there was a girl named Ariadni living in a city of Athens called Sepolia with her stepmother, her two influencer sisters, and her father.

She was 15 years old and in 9th grade. One day, one of her classmates, Andrew, invited the whole school to his birthday party, which would take place in his modern, fancy house.

Ariadni was very excited, but her stepmother told her she could not go because it was her turn to clean the house. Meanwhile, her two sisters were allowed to go, as they only cared about taking photos and posting stories online.

When Ariadni's father heard this, he disagreed and decided she should also be allowed to go.

On the day of the party, he took her there in his Lamborghini and told her:

"You must be back at 1 o'clock."

The party was lively and full of music, dancing, and laughter. For a few hours, Ariadni felt free and happy.

But time passed quickly, and she had to leave. On her way back to the car, she accidentally lost her phone in the garden.

She did not notice and left the house worried about being late.

When the party ended, the gardener found the phone and handed it to Andrew.
The next morning, Andrew tried to find the owner of the phone by checking its locked screen and searching among the guests.
After some time, he discovered that the phone belonged to Ariadni.
He returned it to her and said:
"I think this belongs to you. I found it in the garden."
Ariadni smiled, relieved, and thanked him.
Andrew hesitated for a moment, then asked:
"Would you like to go out with me sometime?"
Ariadni, touched by his kindness and honesty, accepted.
From that day on, they started getting to know each other better, and what began as a lost phone turned into the beginning of something special.



CINDERELLA Modern edition ♡

Back in my day, there was a girl with the name Ariadne living in a city of Athens called Sapien with her stepmother, her 2 influencer sisters, and her dad. She was 15 years old, and she was in 9th grade.

One day, one of her classmates, whose name was Andrew, invited his whole school to his birthday party, which would take place in his modern, fancy house.

Her stepmother, on the other hand, told her she wouldn't let her go to the party that day because that day was Ariadne's turn to clean the house.

However, her two sisters would definitely go there to gain likes for the stories they would upload.

The father, having heard what his wife said, disagreed. And that's what happened.

On the day of the party, Ariadne's father went with her to his Lamborghini and told her to return at 1 o'clock.

The party was really cool, with many drinks and much dancing.

Ariadne had to return at 1 o'clock, so her dad arrived to pick her up. Then Ariadne lost her phone in the back garden on the way to the car.

After the party ended, the house gardener found the phone and gave it to Andrew.

The next morning, Andrew tried to find out the name of the girl, based on the Instagram that was required to unlock the cell phone.

After some time, he reached Ariadne, who was getting to be the phone's owner. Andrew gave it to her.

and because he had a crush on her, he asked her out. (Will she go out with me?)

Ariadne appreciated the fact that he tried to find the phone's owner and decided to go out with him.

Later on, her two influencer sisters found the phone. They realized it was Ariadne's phone and threw it away.

Ariadne returned on foot to the garden to find the phone in vain.

But luckily, she met Andrew in the garden, and that allowed them to get closer to each other.

They spent the whole night talking.

Andrew asked her out and promised her a new phone (!)

Will they be mine?



Modern Harap Alb

Original Romanian tale proposed by Liceul cu Program Sportiv (Romania):

Harap Alb

Participating countries in the writing: Şehit Onur Kılıç Kız İmam Hatip Lisesi (Turkey) and 6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece)

In a region of Turkey, a young student is the son of the director of a large international educational center. Although he has access to many opportunities, he is insecure and feels that he never fully lives up to what is expected of him.

One day, the director announces a special international training program between several European schools. The project is highly prestigious, and only one student will be selected to represent the school in a journey of learning experiences and challenges across different countries.

Under pressure from his family and environment, the young student decides to apply.

During the selection process, he faces a series of tests designed not only to assess academic knowledge, but also personal skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability.

At an early stage of the program, he meets someone who seems to support him from the very beginning: a mentor who offers guidance, advice, and quick solutions. Thanks to this help, the student manages to overcome several initial challenges with ease.

However, as time passes, he begins to notice that the decisions he makes are not entirely his own. The mentor guides him too closely, tells him what to do at every step, and sometimes even makes decisions for him without full explanation. Still, the student continues, believing he cannot succeed without this support.

Throughout the international journey, he participates in different challenges: teamwork with students from other countries, high-pressure situations, ethical dilemmas, and leadership tasks. In each stage, the mentor provides solutions that seem effective, but that prevent him from developing his own independence.

Gradually, the young student becomes dependent and starts to doubt his own abilities.

In one of the final challenges, he discovers the truth: the mentor was not who he claimed to be. He was secretly manipulating the process to influence the outcome and control the selection of the program.

Feeling betrayed, the student is forced to act on his own. For the first time, he must make independent decisions: organizing his team, solving a critical conflict, and presenting his ideas before the international jury.

He struggles, makes mistakes, but also learns quickly to trust his own judgment.

In the end, he not only completes the program but also exposes the mentor's manipulation to the organizers. The system investigates the case and acknowledges what has happened.

As a result, the program is restructured to promote autonomy, transparency, and critical thinking.

The student returns to his school transformed—not because he avoided failure, but because he learned to make his own decisions.

And from that moment on, he understood that true growth does not come from being guided at every step, but from having the courage to think independently, even when the path is uncertain.

Youth without age and life without death

A modern adaptation

Original Romanian tale proposed by Liceul Teoretic Petre Pandrea (Romania):

Tinerete fără bătrânețe și viață fără de moarte

**Participating countries in the writing: Mehmet Örücü Secondary School (Turkey)
and Şehit Onur Kılıç Kız İmam Hatip Lisesi (Turkey)**

In a modern city, there lived a young man named Adrian. Since childhood, he had always been curious about life and time. While other children played games, Adrian often asked deep questions.

“Why do people grow old?” he would ask his parents.

His parents usually smiled and told him not to worry about such things. But Adrian could never stop thinking about it.

As he grew older, his curiosity became stronger. He read books about science, medicine, and philosophy. He watched documentaries about the human body and the future of technology.

Adrian became especially interested in one idea: living without aging.

“Imagine a life without growing old,” he often thought. “What if people could live forever?”

This dream stayed with him for many years.

When Adrian became a university student, he decided to study biotechnology. His goal was to understand aging and maybe even find a way to stop it.

During his studies, he joined a research program where scientists were studying how cells age over time.

For the first time, Adrian felt he was close to discovering the secret he had been searching for since childhood.

The laboratory was full of advanced technology. Scientists studied DNA and the way cells change during life.

Adrian worked day and night, hoping to discover something extraordinary.

After many years of research, the team made an incredible discovery. They found a way to slow down the aging process dramatically. People could stay young much longer than before.

At first, Adrian was extremely happy. It seemed that his dream was finally coming true.

However, during the research, he began to notice something unexpected. Some scientists started asking difficult questions.

“If humans never age, what will happen to the world?”

“Will life still have meaning if it never ends?”

Adrian began to think deeply about these questions.

He remembered his childhood, his family, and all the moments that made life special.

Those moments were precious because they were temporary.

Slowly, Adrian understood something important:

Life does not become meaningful because it lasts forever. Life becomes meaningful because time is limited.

After completing the research, Adrian and his team presented their discovery to the scientific community.

The results were revolutionary, but also controversial.

Many people saw technology as a breakthrough that could change humanity. Others warned about its risks and ethical consequences.

During conferences and discussions, Adrian realized something important: his discovery was not just a scientific achievement, but a responsibility.

Instead of promoting the idea of eternal youth, he decided to change the direction of his work.

Together with his team, he focused on applying their findings to improve health, prevent diseases, and extend quality of life—not to eliminate aging completely.

The research was accepted and redirected by international institutions, and new ethical rules were created to guide its use.

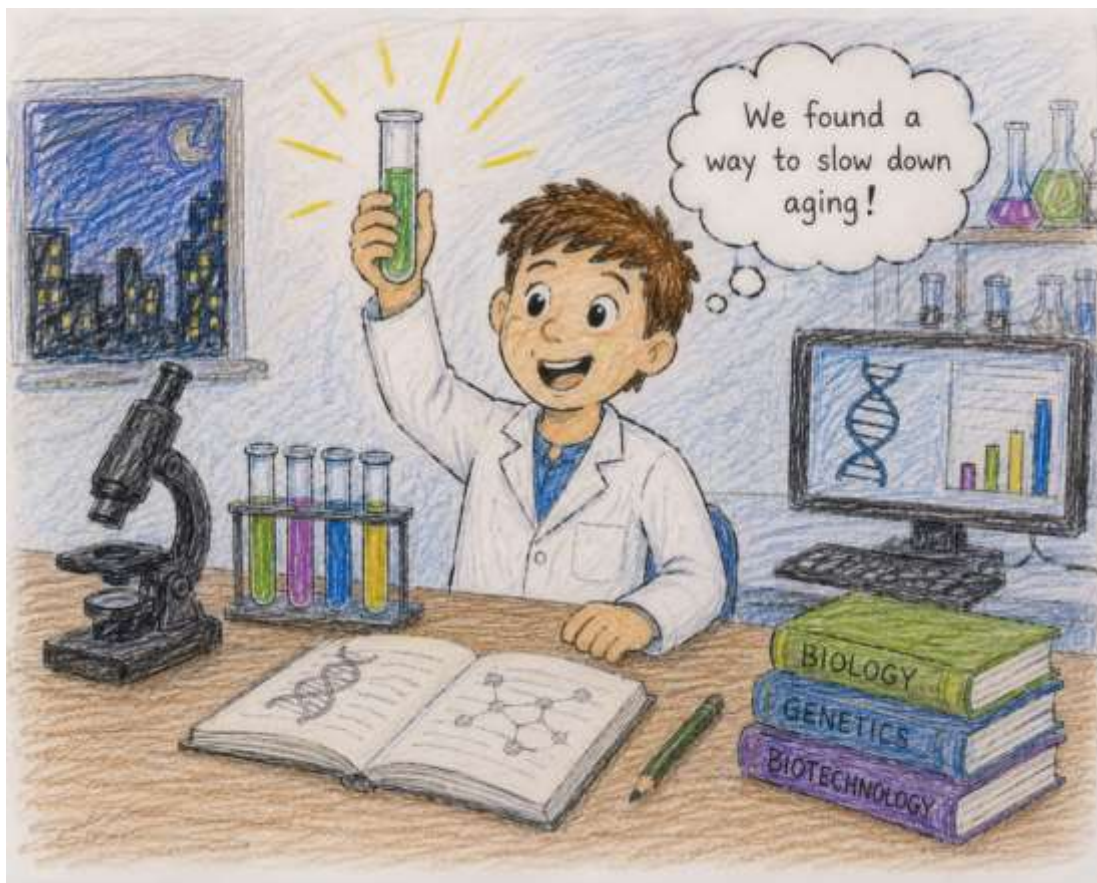
Adrian continued working in science, but with a different perspective.

He no longer believed that immortality was the goal.

He believed that improving life was.

And for the first time, he felt at peace with the idea that time, with all its limits, gives life its true value.





The fox and the grapes

Original Greek tale proposed by 6th Junior School Petroupolis (Greece):

The fox and the grapes

Participating countries in the writing: Şehit Onur Kılıç Kız İmam Hatip Lisesi (Turkey) and Collège La Xaviere (France)

In a school in Istanbul, Emir is in 9th grade and has always said he loves football. He enjoys talking about matches, following professional players, and discussing plays with his friends. However, he has never trained consistently or taken the sport seriously.

One day, the school announced tryouts to form the school football team. Many students sign up. Emir does too.

"This year I'll definitely make it," he says confidently.

The tryouts lasted several days. On the first day, Emir arrives motivated, but he quickly realizes it is not as easy as he thought. Some classmates control the ball well, run without getting tired, and understand teamwork.

Emir misses pass, loses the ball, and gets tired quickly. When the coach corrects him, he nods, but he struggles to apply the advice. Instead of focusing on improving, he starts watching others and comparing himself to them.

"They've already been training," he mutters.

The following days, his attitude did not change much. He does not train outside the tryouts, does not ask questions, and when something goes wrong, he gets frustrated and loses motivation. Still, he remains convinced he has a chance.

The final day arrives. The coach gathers everyone in the gym and reads the list of selected players. Emir's name is not on it. Some classmates celebrate, others feel disappointed, but most accept it calmly.

Emir stays silent for a few seconds, then shrugs.

"Whatever, I didn't really want to join anyway," he says. "It's just training and obligations... I'll pass."

His friends do not respond. They know he does not really mean it.

That afternoon, Emir goes home and cannot stop thinking about what happened. He remembers the training sessions, the mistakes, the times he gave up too easily. For the first time, he admits it to himself honestly:

"It's not that I didn't want it... I just didn't try hard enough."

The next day, he returns to the local football pitch.

He starts little by little: practicing control, improving his stamina, training passes, and learning to play as part of a team. It is not easy, but he keeps going.

Weeks turn into months. Slowly, Emir becomes more disciplined, more focused, and more patient with himself.

When the next tryouts are announced, he signs up again.

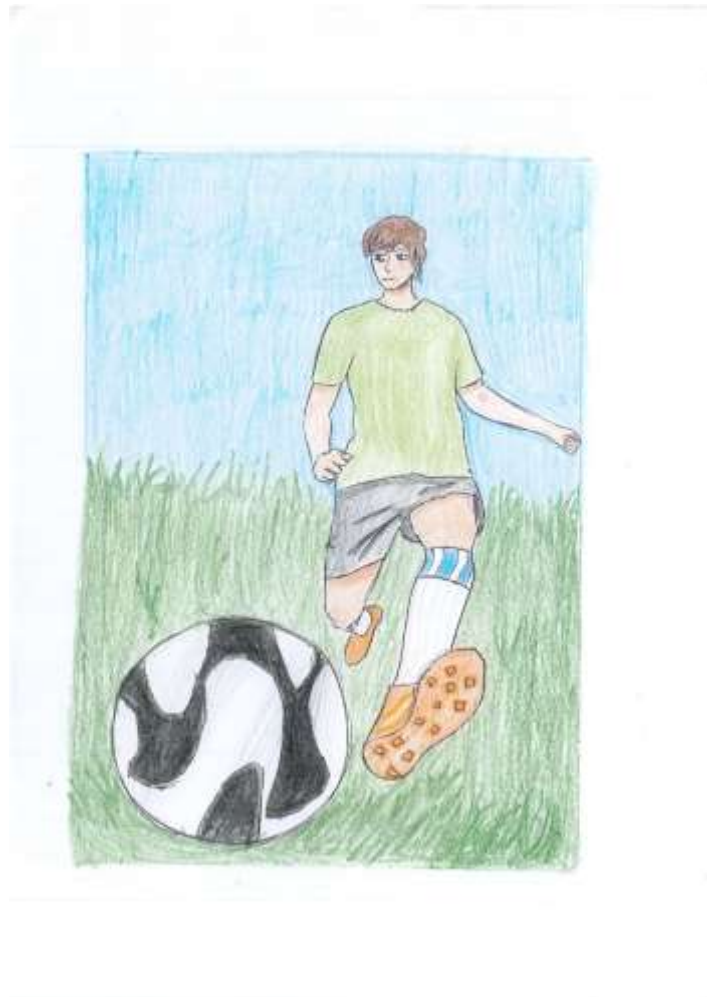
This time, he does not talk as much.

He plays.

And above all, he puts in the effort.



Author: Azra Temel, Şehit Onur Kılıç (Turkey)



Author: Lucía, IES Ribera de Castilla (Spain)