

The Mythical Tree – Skylar, Year 4, NSW

One by one, trees were cut down, leaving old stumps behind. As each tree was cut, the air slowly grew thicker, making it harder to breathe.

Humans did not realise that until they cut down the MAGIC TREE... Guardian of the forests, with magic golden vines dangling down the branches like rain toppling off a tree. It was found when people were sent by a helicopter to find more trees, as everything in view were all fat stumps. Because of this, many birds, bees and bugs lost their home.

The tragic disaster was devastating to wildlife, but people did not care a single bit for the forests. That was until plants started to turn brown, their leaves and stems leaning to touch the dirt. The world has turned to brown and blue now, barely any green. It felt dark without flora, especially with trees slowly disappearing.

Everything felt like nothing.

Now people wear oxygen masks to breath, and people are trying to recycle everything. Many people lost their jobs, plus fruits and vegetable shortages made it harder for survival. Anything made from trees or plants were more valuable than anything else on the planet. Everyone, especially those that cut the trees down, regretted their mistakes. They all prayed and wished that they could get all the trees back.

Right at that moment in the factory, where the magic tree was transferred to, it was being prepared to be made into a book. No one knew that from the magic tree, a magic book was made. Laying on the conveyor belt, the magic book was ready to be packed away. Suddenly, the magic book flew up in the air, quietly. Without anyone noticing it, it flew out of the window and disappeared into the forest where the magic tree stump was left behind. It floated on top of the stump for a few seconds, as if it was watching its past life, then dropped on the stump, closed.

After what felt like hours, the book heard footsteps. The footsteps of several people still scurrying to search for plants. The book now showed its magic by spitting glitter all over its surroundings and in addition, making small plants grow in a circle around the tree stump. This would be the perfect trap waiting for its prey. It now looked ancient and rare, with glitter shooting out of it.

Finally, someone spotted out a trail of greenery that was hidden between all the brown stumps.

“Oh my goshhhh! What did I find? Green!” the woman screamed excitedly as she took her phone out and started recording. She immediately sent the video clip to her husband. Her mind now was full of excitement with so many plans about what to do with it in her head. Thoughts flashing here but then answers flashing there.

Suddenly, she heard whispering ahead of her: “*cru...nch, cru...nch.*”

She was startled at first, so she quickly ran over the dried leaves that had fallen off the trees that were now stumps. Then, there it was, glittering in the sunlight, at the end of the green trail, a rough brown book covered with a bark-like texture. It looked exactly like a piece of tree that had just been cut down, and inside the book, thousands of pages were neatly laid on top of each other. It still carried a fresh sap smell, reminding people about the day it got killed.

As soon as the woman flipped to the first page of the magical book, her last reaction was captured there, in colour. It was a picture of her standing there looking slightly confused but also excited. She did not know that was the magical book’s doing to get its revenge on humans. The only thing that really alarmed people was when more people were disappearing, and more trees grew out of nothing. The woman was now a young tree with smooth bark and fresh green leaves growing off thin and long branches, as beautiful as her slim body was, just like how she looked like when she was a human. Finally, her signature was carved on a branch that curved downwards, allowing anyone to read it, only if they could find it.

Day by day, more people went missing including teens, mothers and fathers, women, and men.

Detectives and police could track down traces of footsteps, but that just made even more trees appear. The magic book was now loaded with colourful pictures of people. The forests were recovering. Human life was in danger. The only thing that could save humans now was if someone with a pure heart for nature came.

Not long after, stars twinkled as bright as the moon. In the night, the new forest faded away as it got darker and darker. The sound of a baby crying was heard in the hospital.

Finally, someone that could help the world was born. Someone who could change exactly everything. Just how...?

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Ten years later...

Giggles flew in the forest. A little girl ran around as she left a trail of plants. She loved playing near the forest every day, helping animals and keeping them company.

Shhhh... As the wisp of light air blew in the sky, a little girl named Fiona ran deeper into the forest than she’d ever done before. She had to get a little hurt rabbit, but it ran away. She nearly caught up with the rabbit, but Fiona stumbled on a loose rock.

Then it caught her eyes. A green trail! *Did someone come here? Who did this? How could this happen here? Do they leave plants everywhere they go?*

All of the questions zoomed in her head like a spaceship. Then, just like any other person, she followed the trail.

That's where she met the book.

It looked worn out now, its bark- like cover no longer brown, but tan. The cover also had scratches and it was slightly shredded too. Fiona opened the book and flipped over the pages. Fiona saw a picture of a familiar lady. That lady... She had matching necklace with Fiona.

Suddenly, Fiona realised something. That was Fiona's mother. Fiona's mother had gone missing when Fiona was only two years old.

"Fiona!"

Someone was calling her. Fiona looked around, but there was no one to be seen.

"Grow more trees to help your people. You have a most pure heart for nature and I can feel it," said the magical tree. "Grow more trees. Try to help nature like you have always wanted. Now, you have a choice to save your people."

Fiona shivered in disbelief. She always wanted to help. She replied back to the voice.

"I will help save nature and humans, but how?" Fiona replied confidently.

"Now you will follow my instructions, exactly: One tree planted to exchange a person back to human form. After planting one tree, one human from the book will reappear, and the pages will slowly become blank. Remember to call their names which are written on the book. Good luck Fiona." The voice stopped completely. It was gone.

It took Fiona several months to plant trees to save that many people who got captured in the book. Before a blink of an eye, a woman in her early thirties appeared. The woman looked frozen in a pose at first, but finally moved her arms and legs. She looked confused, but walked out of the forest after that.

Fiona closed her eyes and imagined a tree in front of her. She opened her eyes again. There, the tree stood, just as she imagined it to be. Fiona repeated the steps carefully until 4 o'clock when she had to go home.

Fiona got up every day at 8 o'clock to plant more and more trees until 9000 trees were grown. Suddenly, her mother stood there in shock after she was freed. Fiona hugged her mother tightly, as tears of happiness ran down their cheeks.

Fiona did one last thing: planted the last tree. The stump where the book sat disappeared and a new tree grew in front of it. Fresh pink leaves blushing out like cotton candy. Golden vines dangling down the branches.

“So beautiful and majestic,” Fiona and her mother said.

People now cut tree less often and recycled more. They didn't want a second version of that tree incident again, and now everyone started to respect nature. Humans also realised that all life relies on each other. Just how we can keep balance between lives on earth. Do not use things for your own benefit and forget the whole human race benefit in front of you.