

TRIZHA ACORDA, LUCA BRUNZU, ALESSIA DON, SEIF HAMADA, NEMA IBRAHIM, THOMAS POSA

FALLEN LEAVES



As soon as they arrived at the old village, the Old Tree was surrounded by an aura of sadness. Its vitality had greatly diminished, and the duo realised that the mission to restore Nature's balance required more effort than they thought.

<<When the Old Tree died, the natural elements started to implode, destroying every form of beauty on Earth. Since then, this place has lost its soul, that's why I call it "Heartless place">>

Anmer was silent for a while and Irkae, trying to be optimistic, announced <<Surely you had time to find a solution, didn't you?>>

The spirit replied: <<During my travels I discovered the existence of four magic fireflies which can make the Old Tree return: the earth firefly, the water firefly, the fire firefly and the air firefly. They have to join together, but...>>

<<But... what?>>, asked Irkae impatiently.

<<They are not here>>

<<Huh?>> Irkae was confused



<<They can be found on different planets, but I can't look for them alone: once found, I can't catch them physically, I'm a spirit!>>

<<And how am I supposed to help you? I mean, you said "planets" but I can't even reach them!>>

<<You have to know that my curse has caused me several problems... However, I can share my power with other people. Many years ago, another boy like you accepted the assignment, but he gave up right after we had obtained the fire-firefly -he almost burnt his fingers! Here it is, look>>

Through the glass of the bottle, Irkae could see a little, and at the same time furious, insect with a red flame as a tail. It clearly wanted to escape.

<<Poor firefly, it has been a prisoner for too long! Let's go to find its friends>>

After these words, Amner took Irkae's hand and they started to fly in the sky so high that they were in space in a few seconds. Irkae, surprised he was able to breathe normally, asked <<Is this because of you?>>. The girl replied with a smile and Irkae, relieved and sure he could trust her, fell asleep.



A wide-angle, cinematic shot of a rugged, rocky landscape. The scene is dominated by dark, jagged rock formations in the foreground and middle ground, set against a backdrop of a vast, hazy mountain range. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall atmosphere is one of desolation and grandeur. A semi-transparent rectangular box is centered over the middle of the image, containing the text "First Planet: ROCK" in a dark blue, serif font.

First Planet: ROCK



The duo set off on the planet and Irkae woke up instantly, even if it wasn't daylight yet. In front of them a desolate landscape provoked fear mixed with peace: not a human, not a plant, not a building. Mountains of rock everywhere, lit only by moonlight and stars, while deep gullies remained shrouded in darkness. Despite the quiet of the night outside, Irkae was in a state of excitement inside. Since walking on the surface would have been too difficult for them, Anmer suggested using tunnels.

After a very long time in the dark- only Anmer spread its spiritual aura floating slightly in front of him- Irkae started to be preoccupied, thinking they might have been lost. As if the spirit had read his friend's mind, it turned with an encouraging smile:

<<We are on the right path. We will arrive at the crater soon.>>

Finally they rose and Irkae, looking up at the sky, saw with wonder what he thought were shooting stars, but he soon realised it was a dangerous steroid rain instead. The two adventurers were forced to stop in a cave, waiting for the storm to calm down. At this point, Amner, who wanted to be sure of Irkae's sensibility, asked him:

<<Do you know what a flower is?>>

<<Do you mean that kind of colourful plant which is so fragrant?>>

The ghost-like girl was shocked: she didn't expect someone, especially a child, from the new urbanised world could still remember wonderful details belonging to Nature!



Curious, she kept investigating:

<<It wasn't my intention to offend you with obvious questions, little genius! Where did you learn about flowers?>>

Irkae took out from his backpack the drawing book and started flipping through the pages: <<My father always told me that, very long ago, there was a plant capable of turning its face towards the sun, following the star's path in the sky. Since then I like to paint its petals yellow>>

Amner smiled in silence: she had found the right one.

The next morning the weather was better and the crater could be seen from a distance. Exactly in the centre, a huge stone creature - a winged lion with the face of a woman- made a curious riddle:

“What is that animal that in the morning has four legs, at noon has only two and in the evening three?”

<<I think I know the right answer!>> exclaimed Irkae.

<<Say it, I believe in you!>> Anmer really trusted her friend and exhorted him.

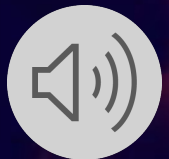
<<It's the MAN! As a child he proceeds using both hands and feet; then he walks on two feet only; when he becomes old, he needs a walking stick...>>

Irkae did not need to wait if what he had said was correct: the earth-firefly was already in his hands.





Second Planet: AIR



<<What happens now?>>, asked Irkae

<<Now, pay attention and listen to the wind, it will transport us to a completely different world>> announced the spirit.

Floating in the air was a very pleasant sensation for Irkae. He asked himself if Anmer would have agreed or if she was tired of being a ghost in the atmosphere.

<<We have almost arrived, I just need to find the right cloud in order to land. Do you see it?>>said Anmer

<<Emhh.. I-I only see a white spot over there, t-truly>> Irkae's voice was a little stuttering

<<Well done dude! Is everything okay?>>. Anmer noticed something was wrong with the boy.

<<Yeah, I mean... where will we land precisely?>>

<<On a cloud>>

<<So...>>

Anmer got the point and exclaimed <<OMG! You have never seen one! I'm sorry, I forgot that you were born under the grey sky...>>



<<Was it different in the past?>>

<<Let's see... Imagine some blue colour, the brightest one you can think of. Then, add something fluffy and white in the middle: that's a cloud>>

<<Are you saying that a cloud is the same as candyfloss?!>>

<<Ahahah! That was very funny, but no, clouds don't have any taste, unfortunately>>

Still in the air, the duo met flocks of different creatures -angels and devils, birds and dinosaurs, insects and drones- appearing and disappearing among the clouds, which introduced different skies: one was orange/red- <<That's a sunset!>> said Anmer-, the other was yellow/pink - <<Here's a sunrise instead!>>-, another one was light blue - <<The old sky on Earth!>> exclaimed Irkae, charmed by all those shades.

Time passed and the wind had increased so much that it started to whistle and blow violently, making the creatures go round in circles: it was a tornado. In the chaos that followed, Irkae barely distinguished a little light in front of him: <<The air-firefly!>>. As soon as he caught it thanks to a big unicorn, the whirlwind stopped and the boy could finally lie down and rest in the softness of a cloud.



A vibrant, futuristic cityscape under a bright sky. The city features tall, spire-like buildings with greenery growing on their sides. Several large, white, spherical structures float in the sky. In the foreground, a large body of water is crossed by a bridge with a prominent circular structure. The overall scene is lush and technologically advanced.

Third Planet: WATER



<<Get up sleepyhead! There's only one firefly left and yet a very big problem>> said Anmer.

<<And you tell me this NOW?>>. After all the effort, Irkae was a little upset by the possibility of failure.

<<The truth is that the water-firefly is... on Earth!>>

<<What? Are you 100% sure about that? How do you know? Tell me!>>

<<Calm down first! Very long ago our planet was mostly covered by water, so much that its second name was "blue planet">>. Irkae was listening with extreme attention.

<<Today>> continued the spirit <<Water is polluted everywhere, rivers, seas, lakes, even the rain, are dirty." Irkae, who was very smart, suggested: <<Have you ever searched deeper?>>

<<What do you mean?>> Anmer seemed confused.

<<It's time for you to follow me from now on>>



Once they arrived on Earth, they started to walk near the city boundary.

<<An old well near an old cemetery?>> said Anmer

<<My father told me people used to leave flowers on graves as a gift. Unfortunately, he didn't find anything to bring to my mom when she died.>> explained the boy

<<I'm sorry>> replied Anmer, and the two remained silent, while the sun was rising. Suddenly, a tear from Irkae's cheek fell into the well and a female voice from the bottom surprised him: "I'm very proud of you, my child." The well chain started to move very fast until the bucket came to the surface. Inside, the water-firefly was shining. "Thanks mom", said Irkae, smiling gently.



ENDING:

<<Here it is, it's the Old Tree>> exclaimed Amner

<<We have finally returned, what should I do now?>> asked Irkae

<<It's simple: you have to approach the Old Tree with the four fireflies and....>> Amner stopped talking when she saw a black animal coming out of the tree

<< I thought you were satisfied with the new world that you wanted so much >> the cat said, laughing

<<I made a mistake and therefore I have to remedy>> Amner replied

<<And how did you plan to bring nature back, you, a ghost>> said the black cat looking at Amner with superiority. Then, the animal began to laugh thinking about Amner's useless efforts of the past. In the meantime, the spirit whispered to Irkae: <<Let the fireflies go and close your eyes, then imagine a large green grassland, with rivers of clear water, wild animals that freely inhabit these lands, all covered from a wonderful blue sky...>>

Suddenly, the cat seemed shocked by the changing of the environment <<It's not possible, no human should be able to imagine something that doesn't exist>>.

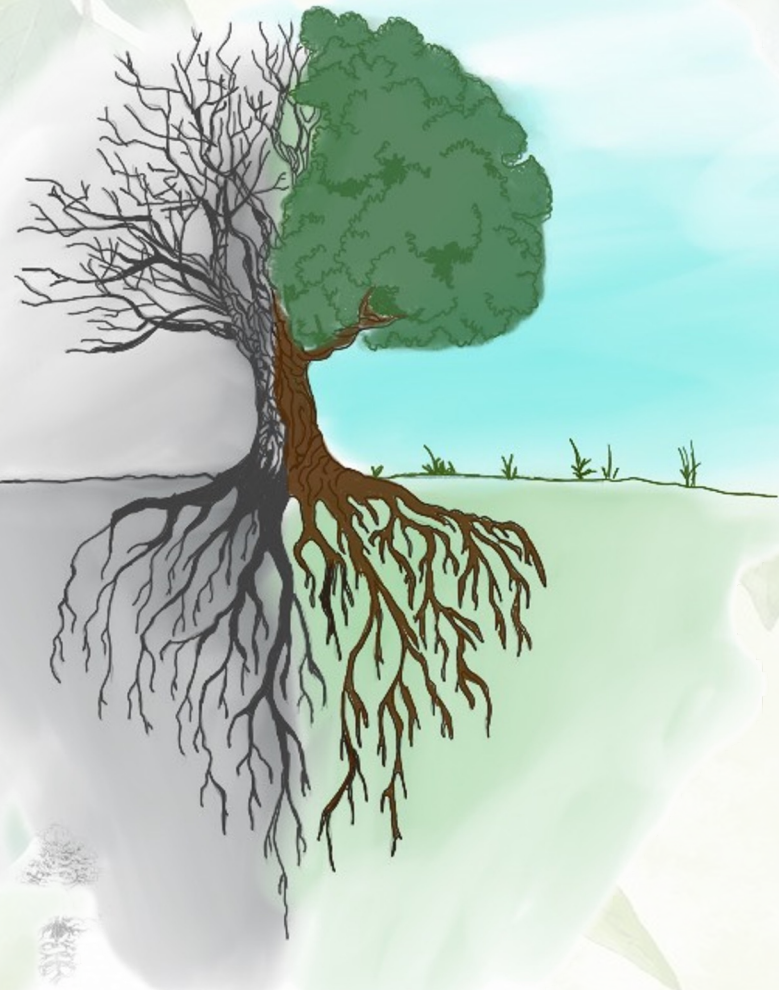


After a moment of amazement, the cat tried to stop Irkae by corrupting his mind, but this did not stop the boy's concentration. When Irkae opened his eyes all the previous dead earth was now covered with the bright green of grass and trees, the blue sky was cleared and enormous rivers appeared. A cave also emerged from underground, and an unknown force trapped the evil-cat inside. Amner lost its immortality as a spirit, but she regained her humanity.

<<Thank you so much for what you did>> said Amner. Irkae did not know what to say -he was totally astonished- then he exclaimed: <<It's all so brilliant, I didn't believe such a panorama could exist!>>

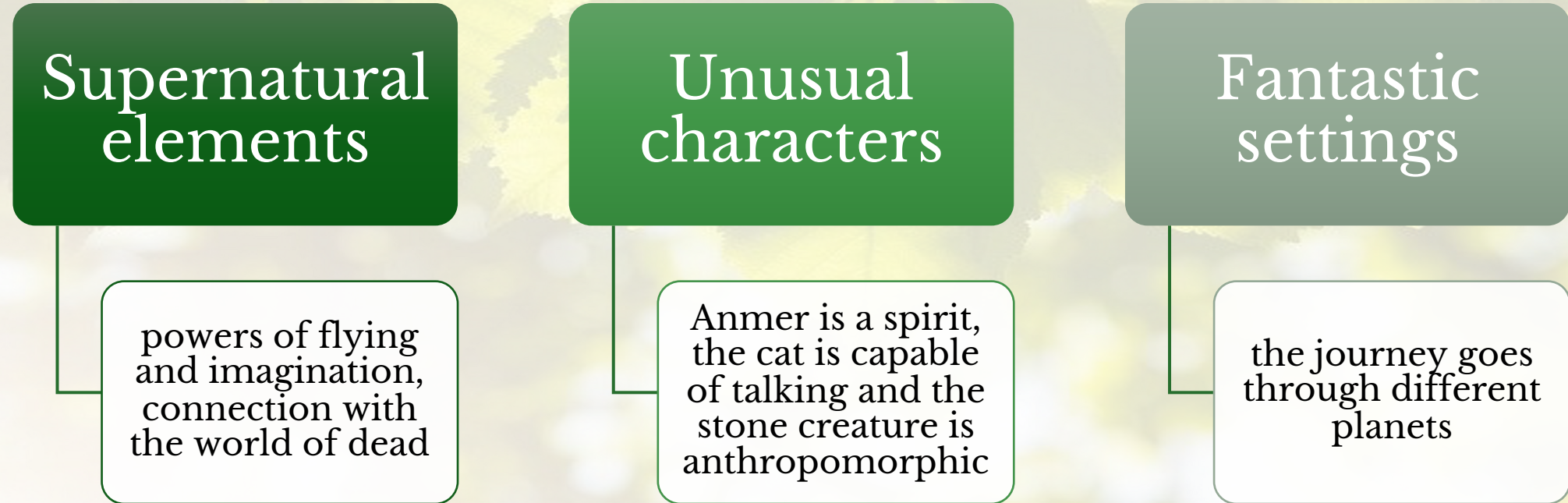
<<Would you like to stay here?>> asked Amner

<<That would be wonderful>>.



GENRE AND STYLE

This is a fantasy novel:



The story is a mixture of dialogues, descriptions and action, with surprising events.

THEMES

Nature: through the progressive recovery of the 4 original elements (water, air, earth, fire), the protagonist gets closer to it and discovers the phenomena involved.

Pollution: the water-planet identifies with Earth, where dirty and rubbish contaminate the environment. This situation has to make us think about how much humans are damaging not only the landscape but also their own health.

Friendship: during the story there's always more affection between the spirit and the boy. The happy ending allows them to be friends forever, since Anmer becomes a human girl.

Life opposed to death: in the story there are some elements which symbolise these two aspects of reality. Moreover, it is possible to compare earth with death (because of the darkness in the underground) and air with life (because of the senses of vitality and freedom which this element suggests).

Sublime: even if Nature offers wonderful manifestations of herself, it is also capable of scaring humans, who have to remember how small and weak they are.

AIM OF THE AUTHORS

Point out the beauty
and the dangers of
Nature

Remember that
humans are part of
Nature, they were
born from it, so they
will never be capable
of killing it
completely: it reveals
itself in different
forms and places
around the universe

Denounce pollution
around the world

SYMBOLS

OLD TREE = Nature

FIREFLIGHT= Life

CAT= Death (until it is alive, the Old Tree can't return back to life)

ANMER= Humans' conscious of being responsible for the ruin of the planet provoked by industrial activities, urbanisation and consumerism

TEAR: Purity

