

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW CHAPTER

By F. Genazzini, S. Laiacona, L. Meringolo, K. Reci, S. Pollini, G. Visentin



INTRODUCTION

You are about to start reading the ending of the story of Amner and Irkae, *The Beginning of a New Chapter*, by Filippo Genazzini, Ludovico Meringolo, Sofia Laiacona, Sofia Pollini, Giorgio Visentin and Kristel Reci.

The author of the story left us with many questions: What will happen now? Which places will Amner and Irkae visit? Will they reach the Tree? Will someone try to stop them? And what will happen when they reach the Old Tree?

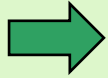
But before we slip back between the pages together we should impart a warning truth. Though this story is doubtless inked indubitably on your psyche, we all know that memory is a traitor and a liar.

So, perhaps a refresher is in order?



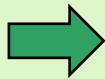
CHARACTERS

Amner



She is a girl who lived in a small village in the middle of a forest without electricity or any advanced technology. The survival of nature in this village depended on the **Old Tree**. Desiring to explore the world beyond the forest, one day, Amner followed a firefly, which led her to a cave. There, a mysterious **black cat** promised her **freedom** if she brought the firefly to the Old Tree. Amner, eager for adventure, accepted the cat's proposition. However, this act caused the death of the Tree and the surrounding nature. As if that wasn't enough, the freedom the cat had promised her consisted in turning her into a ghost. Tragic, isn't it?

Irkae



A boy who lives in a world without nature, dominated by **technology**. He likes drawing, writing and using his imagination, which are all things unfit for a society where everything is prefabricated. So, like Amner, he too seeks freedom. One day, Amner, now a ghost, reaches Irkae and reveals that he is the one who can help her in reviving the Old Tree. Thus, the two set out on an adventure...



GRAY HORIZONS, GREEN HOPES

Amner and Irkae, driven by their desire to save the Old Tree, set off on an **adventure**.

They embark on a journey through technological landscapes: cities are the same, gray and dull; people are hostile, each of them focused only on their own interests, and kindness and altruism seem to have disappeared. What was once a living and peaceful world is now reduced to **lifeless circuits** and synthetic imitations of nature.

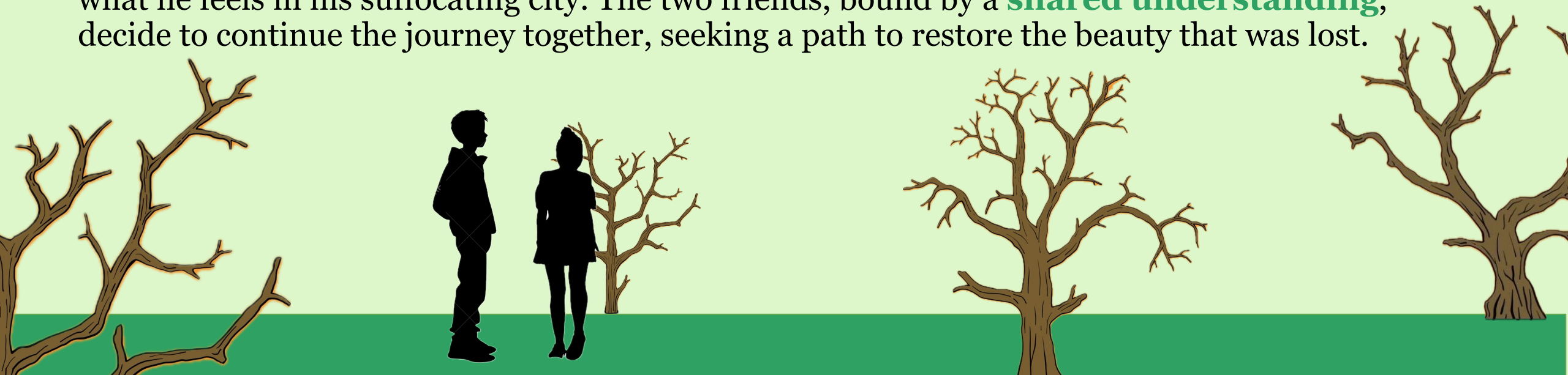
The journey is long, full of dangers and wonderful at the same time: they walk for miles and miles, barely resting; Amner, to avoid scaring people, has to watch Irkae from above, flying over the clouds; Irkae lives in hardship, stealing a loaf of bread or an apple in the markets of the cities. Despite that, Amner and Irkae are full of **hope** and nothing can stop their souls eager for **freedom**.



ECHOES OF RUIN

They finally reach Amner's old village: now a deserted place, dominated by **death** and **desolation**. Here Amner, tormented by a sense of guilt, admits to Irkae her faults: a long time ago her village was alive, nature was lush and everything was colorful. However, her selfish desire for **freedom** and curiosity had led to the ruin of the natural world, now reduced to a ghost of its former splendor.

Amner fears that Irkae may no longer want to continue the adventure, horrified by the consequences of her actions. She anxiously reveals the extent of her guilt, worried that her past mistakes will drive Irkae away. To her surprise, Irkae understands. Rather than turning away, he empathizes with Amner's pain and understands her desire to achieve freedom, similar to what he feels in his suffocating city. The two friends, bound by a **shared understanding**, decide to continue the journey together, seeking a path to restore the beauty that was lost.



TEST OF DREAMS



"The black cat": drawing by Ludovico Meringolo

Suddenly, a **firefly** appears, a symbol of **life** in a kingdom dominated by death. Following its gentle glow, Amner and Irkae arrive in the old cave where the **cat**, death itself, emerges from the shadows.

What had been subjected to Amner centuries ago was a test: would her **dream** be so great as to risk destroying the Old Tree? The cat, guilty and aware of the darkness existing in the world, just couldn't understand how anyone could want to escape from a perfect and peaceful world and wanted to punish Amner's selfish desire to observe the world outside of her own.

“The price for freedom is pain. Have you finally understood that dreams are nothing but a world of illusions, my poor girl?”

DISRUPTED HARMONY



"The dead Old Tree": drawing by Ludovico Meringolo

The cat explains to them that, since the birth of human beings, Good and Evil have existed in the world in the form of a firefly and a black cat. Therefore, the source of life is not the Old Tree, but the firefly—the **true light** in the darkness of the world—while the tree is nothing more than the guardian of good and evil.

However, for the **balance between good and evil** to be maintained, it is necessary for the two animals to stay away from the tree. Amner, by carrying the firefly towards it, has altered the natural order of things, imprisoning the good.

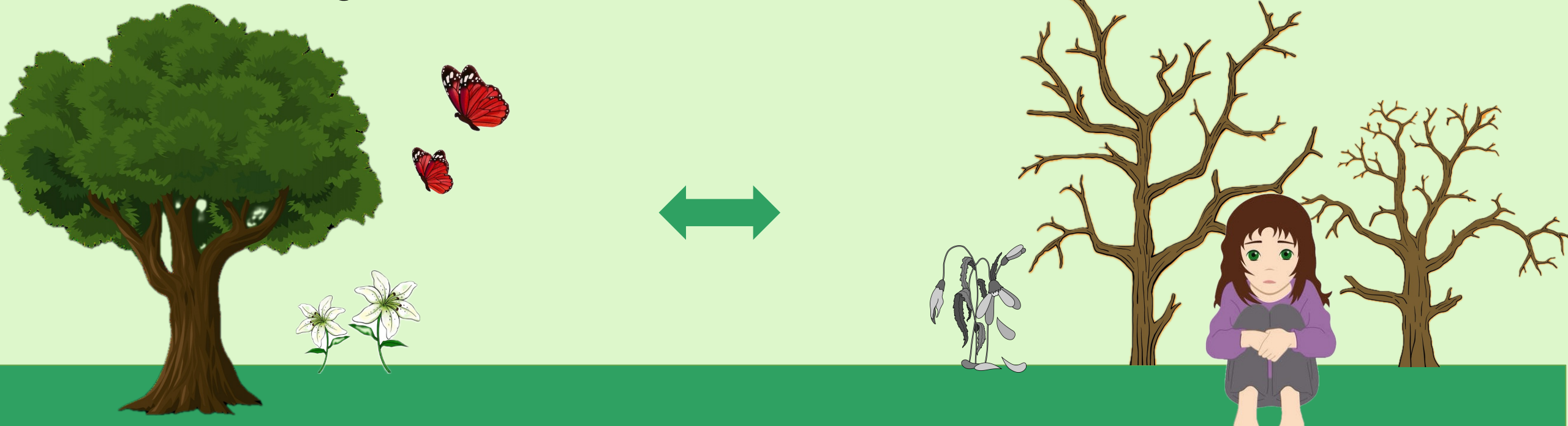


ONE LIFE IN EXCHANGE FOR ANOTHER

After centuries of punishment, however, the cat decides to subject Amner to another test. The cat explains to Amner and Irkae that by bringing another firefly to the Old Tree, the heart of the natural kingdom, they would have the chance to reverse the course of events.

To revive the Old Tree and free the original firefly, however, a **sacrifice** is necessary: the one who snatched life from nature, also causing the ruin of her own people, would have to give up her "life" and her "freedom" to give it to **nature**.

"One life in exchange for another" the evil cat tells the two.



GUIDED BY DREAMS

At this point, Amner and Irkae, accompanied by the firefly, exit the cave.



"Amner and the firefly" drawing by Ludovico Meringolo

"But, what is my role in this story?" asks Irkae.

"In all these years, I have often tried to approach the tree to try to save it, but it's as if it rejects my presence. However, when I first saw you, I felt that you would be the right person to save it," replies Amner.

At this point, the firefly puts an end to all their doubts:

"Even though the tree is now dead, it senses Amner's presence. Despite your only seeking freedom, girl, in trying to reach it, you took it away from your entire people, and the harm you caused prevents you from approaching the tree," says the firefly. "You, boy, who continue to use **imagination** and **hope** for a better future in a world where everyone has now stopped dreaming, are the only one who can lead me to the tree. As you can see, my friends, the cat is wrong: this world will be saved and remade by **dreamers**".

ROOTS OF REBIRTH

The time has now come to address the issue they have been avoiding for too long: Amner's fate. Irkae, aware of what it means to live a life in constant pursuit of a **freedom** that seems too distant, refuses to see Amner die forever without being able to reach it. But Amner, painfully aware that her sacrifice is necessary, has already accepted her destiny.



"You can't do it, I won't let you" says Irkae.

"It's not for you that I do it. It's not a favor, it's the cruelest thing I could do." She is serious. Dying is easy. Living is much more difficult, all these years observing the world have taught her that.

At this point, Irkae approaches the Tree with the firefly. Before inserting it into the small hole in the trunk of the tree, he turns towards Amner, who follows the scene from afar with a melancholic gaze.

"So here we are" says Amner.

"The end of the road" Irkae replies.

"No. **The beginning of the next**"

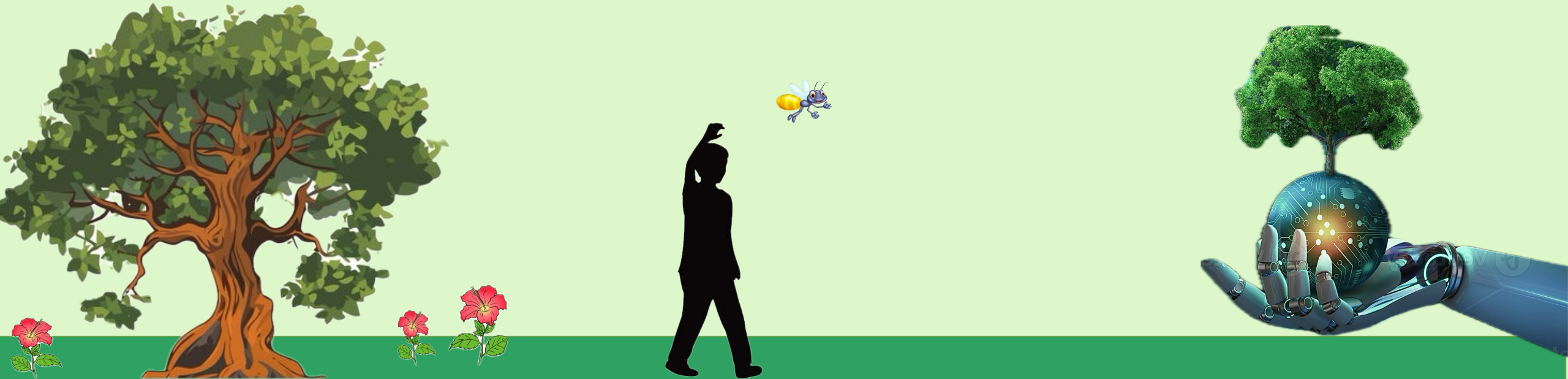
Thus, once the firefly reaches the tree, its roots absorb the spirit of Amner and **life** slowly spreads within it. The firefly, symbol of life now freed from its prison, and the black cat, guardian of death, observe the renewal of the Old Tree.

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW CHAPTER

Irkae is devastated by the loss of his friend, but with a heavy heart, he turns toward the world: he observes nature reborn, rivers flowing again, the sky brightening.

The task Amner has entrusted him with is monumental: she has revived nature, and now it is up to him to inform humanity of its meaning, to make organic life and technology coexist. As he walks away from the village, the **firefly** follows him, a luminescent guide on his path. Irkae carries the weight of **responsibility**, honoring Amner's sacrifice: the world, now pulsating with renewed life, awaits his guidance.

It is **the beginning of a new chapter**, written with the pen of hope on the trunk of the Old Tree.



THEMES

Individual actions and nature



The story narrates the consequences of Amner's past actions, highlighting the impact of human behavior on the natural world and the fact that our desires must be tempered by **moral responsibility**

Contrast between good and evil



The firefly symbolizes life and good, while the cat represents death and evil. These symbols underscore the contrast between good and evil, emphasizing the delicate **balance** required for harmony in the world

Technological World vs Natural Beauty



The contrast between the gray, dull cities and the colorful natural landscapes emphasizes the loss of beauty in a world dominated by technology. It raises questions about the **price of progress** and the value of preserving the **authenticity of nature**

Importance of Dreams and imagination



Irkae's imaginative spirit not only distinguishes him as the chosen one for the Old Tree but also becomes the key to restoring balance in the world. The theme underscores the **power of dreams**, that offer hope for a harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature