

THE ETHIC DISCRIMINATION

This morning I left the house, just after giving my mother's favorite chocolate to Patrick. Fun fact I found Patrick in the garbage 3 years ago, he smelled like rotten eggs and was dressed in banana peels, but I felt the need to take him. Everyone hates him in the family, to start with my mom and my brother. As a member of the army Ben likes to act seriously ; he always says that Patrick should live outside but I know that he lets him sleep in his bed. Oh I forgot to mention ! Patrick is my pig, and don't be surprised by his name. I think everyone needs to have a real name, even animals. I hate the fact that people call their pets cute and affectionate names, as if their beauty or cuteness was their only characteristic. That is just a way of feeling superior, as my mom wanted to call him the « eco piggy ». Such a non-sens, because first Patrick is not a baby we don't need to call him piggy and second he's not ecological at all, except eating the inedible rice flour cereals of my mother, he's doing nothing for the ecology. Anyway it's not surprising for a member of the government, for Karen everything has to be so eco-friendly. Even thought of my mother exasperates me she is so obsessed with her work and her fu**ing duty that sometime I have the impression that she forgot that the government was the cause of dad's death. I know she hates Patrick because of his name but that's not a problem because now he is eating her favorite chocolate, and I'm so excited to see her reaction. But this will wait because today I have plans.

Leaving the house I feel again, the sun dazzles my eyes when I hear birds singing. Spring is coming in the eco-village, everyone seems joyful, even Mrs Stilberg, my grumpy neighbor, who waters his tulips in his garden.

« -Hi, Mrs Stilberg ! Have a great day !

-Hello, Hamber, a beautiful day, isn't it ? »

Suddenly I stopped and screamed, I was not watching the path when I crossed the road and a water car was now at my feet. I exclaimed quickly that I was sorry and started running to finish crossing the path. When I arrived at the cemetery, I felt a warm drop of water on my nose, then I raised my head to see the sky get darker, and a second arrived on my forehead. I'm walking towards my father's grave when the light spring rain turns into a downpour. In the silence we can only hear the song of the drops crashing to the ground and my feet running on the gravel. When I succely arrive at my dad's grave, a black silhouette is already here.

« -Take my umbrella, I don't need it and you are ridiculously soaked.

-Thanks Albert ! »

Albert is like a second father to me, he was one of my dad's best friends and his first acolyte during his last mission... Now Albert is a farmer even if he doesn't have the attire of. With his white blouse and his huge and heavy black coat, he seems to be a fake detective. We are standing in front of the grave,

-Mattieu Murphy 2103-

My dad died at 7 years old now , when I was nine, but I miss him so much. Albert seems to guess my

thought because he says : « Mattieu was a wonderful friend, and a fearless friend. Of course none of the members of the government wanted him to succeed. He was right when he said that the ecological project are meaningless when it's not for everyone. « The Underground also needs to have fresh air and edible vegetables, it's completely unfair. »

I stay silent. I recognize I'm lucky to be here and not under the earth. Contrary to Albert and my dad I have never lived Underground, it's hard to say it but it's thanks to my mom who work at the government that we have enough money to buy us this healthy life. On the way home the rain stopped but I can still smell wet grass passing through my nostrils. But this moment of contemplation and pure calm stop suddenly when I heard from my house :

« -HAMBERRR !!! »

That's my mom, I think she discovered the surprise. I walk through the door while I

answer : « -YES KAREN »

I love to call her by her first name because she hates that.

« -You have 5 min to explain the reason why your stupid pig is eating MY eco-responsible chocolate. No, you know what I have a better idea, the pig will be the dinner for tonight, such a beneficial recycling for all.

-No Mom, you can't do that, Patrick is in the family now, we can't eat him.

-You're right, eating pig is for the scruffy Underground, this meat is not real pure, we will take him to the slaughterhouse tomorrow morning. And for now I don't want to hear your voice anymore, go to your room ! »

I don't feel the soft rain anymore, it's now rivers of tears flowing down my cheeks. In my room, Patrick is in my arms. « I promise you I will find a solution Patrick, I promise. » 30 min later I was at Albert's farm. « Pleaseee Albert, take him, Karen wants to kill him. I promise I will do everything you want, pleaseee »

Well that sucks here, what wouldn't I do for Patrick anyway. The atmosphere seems humid to me and I don't see any light, Patrick would have hated that. If my mother knew I hung out in the Underground she would kill me. Ahhh.... I must remind you that Karen loves the eco-village more than her children and has a hatred toward the people below. In reality, I feel bad for having disobeyed her, the knot in my stomach mixed with the musty smell that this place gave off. But something disturbed me. This place seemed very lively ; at the gallery n°2, there was a music group singing country with a smile (by the way the guitarist had the longest hair I have ever seen LOL).

« -Pssst.... Come here. » said a girl. She seemed to be my age ; she had much prettier eyes than me, and certainly a more trendy look. Well I think I'm keeping her waiting, maybe she can help me find this dawn plant for Albert.

« -Excuse me, did you talk to me ?

-Yes, you and your eco-friendly outfit better get out of here before I get you out. Miss privileged wants to venture into the Underground ? I thought the people on the surface didn't even pay attention to us. »

Well... I was expecting a warmer welcome. This cheeky girl is called Max. She was aggressive but

when I admitted to her that I hated the eco-system too she started to calm down. She even asked me to come to her house. Her « HOUSE », if we can call it that, looks more like a burrow. It's funny how we eco-friends didn't realize the living conditions here. How awful ! No natural light, just torches that they call « glow worms ». On the other hand, Max's family Mrs and Miss Evans were very happy to meet me, and immediately offered me weird foods like potatoes garnished with other potatoes. These poor people have nothing but give everything, it's unfair. Max offered to host me during my stay in the Underground. I think we can become good friends.

I've been living with Ma's family for 4 days now, it's funny how I feel about myself compared to home. It's like I need to be here. I was able to observe the differences with eco-friends, the only one is that there are fewer assholes ! We are not so different, we are even similar. Ma advises me to change my appearance so that I look like a real girl from here. I'm going to do dreadlocks !!! So exciting ! I've never liked my hair, I always wanted to shave it, change color or something, but Karen is too attached to my long blond hair (Well, it was only for her image among people) I enjoy my new look, I've been missing a change for so long, I feel better. Now that I have this new appearance, this world seems to suit me. I've never had a friend like Max, she understands me more than anyone in three days only. The boredom of my life before is seen to be completely transformed by the universe below.

Sitting on a large cushion serving as a sofa, Max and I are watching TV like children. I call it « TV » but here in the underground it's called « vision » and it's less sophisticated than ours. It looks like an old microwave but strangely I like it. We were watching the news when Mrs Evans started singing in the kitchen. « Let's goo girls tonight it's French fries », Max and her mom laughed next to me on the couch and I suddenly felt at home. The smell of the fried potatoes invaded the room when his dad joins us on the sofa with the hot French fries on his hands.

« An important piece of information is going to be sent to you in a few seconds. », we stopped talking and Max's mom increased the sound.

« A disturbing disappearance took place last night, a child of 16 has been kidnapped and all the eco village is sorry for the mom Karen and worried about their safety. The mother being a member of the government makes the authorities wonder if the disappearance of her child is a random kidnapping or an act considered by a group. Who is responsible ? Is it a declaration of war ? »

Max looks at me insistently and I know she knows just to look at her eyes. They were wide open and she was waiting for an explanation or something, but I chose not to. I think she is already certain that it is me, cause she's now going to bed without asking me.

Next morning Max's dad wake me up to tell me that I have a letter for me. I was surprised contrary to him because no one know that i'm in the Underground, except one person.

« Hi sis, I don't know if you will receive this letter one day, but if you do please come back home. I'm really concerned, and for Karen... I laughed about the fact that he calls her that way cause I used to and he knows it « ...for Karen it's something else, she thinks the undergrounds kidnapped you to bother her and the government, she even said to the governor that it might be a declaration of war. Personally I know you're here by yourself, you are not stupid as she thinks to get kidnapped. But she is

right at one point, going in the underground is dangerous for you as an eco-village citizen... »If he could see me right now with my long dread and my torn clothes he wouldn't say the same thing. « Anyway, it sucks here, the government is going to send the army to the Underground to scare the population. I think a war is coming, Hamber...be safe. »

I'm stuck on these words « the war is coming », I stay for a long time staring at the letter and stop when I realize my entire body is stiff, my neck and my trapezius is highly contracted and my hands are sweaty. I realized the impact of my action, a war... I have to go back home quickly ! Before I had time to plan my return, the bedroom door opened quickly.

« -Let's go, Hamber ! Come with me ! » I don't have the time to answer, she's already taking my arms to take me with her.

« -Where do we... ?

-I'm going to show you around the city !! »

She looked so excited when she said that, that I almost forgot what I was planning for. Anyway I can't tell her that I can't. She will be so upset, in any case it's not really different if I stay one more afternoon here , nothing could happen !

After dragging me by the arm to the outside of her burrow, Max finally stopped holding my arm. The conduits of the Underground were definitely different from what I knew in the eco-village but were beautiful in their own way. In reality the streets were dirty and gave off an unpleasant smell, it was as if I were in the middle of a swamp and flies were emanating from it. I'm starting to get used to it, but I think it's just very similar to the smell of my brother before he served the government's army, when he would lock himself in his room without taking a shower and play his console argh. Okay, that doesn't sound like it would be pleasant. I didn't know why, but this place had a charm that touched me. When I twist my head I discover that the earth walls welcomed all kinds of disgusting insect in the holes. Ma explain to me that these insects are called « trilliums », she adds that they are awful but not aggressive and that they have even their function within the Underground.

« -AWW ! " a scream escapes my mouth when one of them falls on my dread. It made Max burst out laughing.

The trilliums autoclean the walls and eat the parasites. Before I can even express my amazement, Max is already leading me into an alley where the « YoloSpace » is located. This place serves as the teenager's headquarters. At this moment my heart sinks and the feeling of having missed my childhood takes over my body. My mother wouldn't even let me go to my friend's birthday party until I was an adult. This place is really cool, peoples are already there skateboarding and drinking . The atmosphere is more related than upstairs. But something disturb me during our walk, because when I twist my head I saw a poster with a strange inscription « WANTED dead OR alive 1 million dollars ». I instantly asked Max who's this mysterious clandestine « -Don't pay attention to that, it's an old legend that children tell each other to thrill. It said that mister « M » is the biggest gangster ever know and that he would still be roaming around. »

The Underground is more extensive than I thought, there is a doctor (who looks more like a wizard), a grocery store which only sells potatoes and sometimes beets or dried vegetables which are very expensive. The shops were placed in the street like stands and the traders unfolded a sort of umbrella when the ground became too wet. When it rains in the eco-village, the ceiling of the Underground Begins to sag, and earthworms come out. « Hamber, I think it's time to come back home ! » said Max while i'm observing her city. On the way back home, we suddenly heard many strident screams. Max

and I look at each other with fear in the eyes. Something is happening, and we both know that it doesn't bode well. We started running toward the burrow as quickly as we could. I have never run so fast. Arriving at home, Max's dad was laying on the floor crying in his hands. When I look at the rest of the room, I just see disaster. The home has been vandalized. When we walk toward her dad, our feet crushed broken mirror mud on the floor.

« -Dad, What's going on ? Where is mom ?

-They took her...,said her dad sobbing.

-Who ?! I'm going to find her !

-NO Max you won't. I don't want to lose you either.

All of this is my fault, if I wasn't here nothing would happened. I knew I had to go before something wrong happened. I ran forward to my room to pack my bag and get out of her. I hear Max running behind me :

« -Hamber, where are you going ?

-Everything is my fault Max...it me the child who's researched, I need to...

-I know this ! And it's not a reason to go, we need you here...I need you...I never had a friend like you before, please stay !

-I can't ! My presence makes you and your family in danger. »

On those words I slam the door and leave. I feel a tear running down my cheek to reach my lips. And then I can't control my sorrow. Leaving Max is like leaving a sister, I know I'm going to miss her, but my reason is stronger than that. I don't want her to live the same thing that her mother lived. I need to hide me absolutely :

« -Excuse me sir ! Could you help me ?

-Hi pretty princess...Anything for you...I'm your humble servant.

-O.....K...,I suddenly felt super uncomfortable.

-Tell me baby.

-I need to go somewhere nobody is going to find me.

-I see...I have two options for you...first at my house, second in the Under-Underground.

-Thank you but I declined the first proposal. Tell me about the second, how could I go there ?

That's how I find myself here, in the darkest place I ever seen. The humidity was such that drops ran down the walls. I don't know what I'm doing here ...At first I need to find a plant. But I doubt a plant will enjoy this environment. Once I arrived in the darkest place of the Underground, I thought I could distinguished a silhouette of an animal or something else. But when I approached I felt my heart leaving me. It wasn't an animal at all, it was a man. A man sitting here, with torn and filthy clothes that's reminds me of homeless peoples. He didn't see me yet hopefully. « Oh shit ! », these words escapes my mouth when my phone fall off my pocket. The man suddenly turns around. He had a long beard, and the same kind of coats which can be wear by a detective. He's eyes were so blue that my

gaze plunged into them. I also noticed a birthmark next to his right eye, it was small but it attracted me because I wore a similar one on my arms. But his face looks familiar to me. It sound like an evidence, it's « M », the man from the poster ! I guess, I should be afraid, and i don't know why ,i'm not at all I even feel good.

« -Hello sweetie ! I miss you little sunshine.

-Who are you ? Don't call me sweetie or child stuffy like this.

-Oh calm down, I waited for a visit for 7 years, let me smile a little. What's brought you here ? »

I think I shouldn't tell him the whole story but something pushing me to tell him the truth. After relating my adventures and my goals of giving the plant to Albert, M seemed disturbed.

« -Are you okay ?

-Yes, but I'm just nostalgic. Albert was one of my best friends before I left the eco-village. Oh my god, this man is coming from the surface. I can't believe it. It has just been one hour that we are talking and he just asked me my name. When I told him Hamber, I saw his head fall apart, it was like he stopped breathing. And then I realized. How could I not notice it ; his blue eyes, the birthmark and every sign, except his beard which has grown a lot. It's obvious : I just found my father. I saw his eyes light up when he noticed that I understood. Our first instinct was to hug. This moment seemed like an eternity . My father is alive. I can not be more excited, I knew it !The connection between us can't even be express with words. However, we need to quickly find the plant to come to the surface and sort it all out. But before that, I had a few question to ask him. How did he get here and why did I think he was dead ?

« When the eco-village started to take hold in 2103, I couldn't stay stoic,I had to act, so I stole the eco plant in order to stop this discrimination. I was accused of crimes against the state and was on the run for almost 3 years, and now I have lived here for 4 years ! And frankly we're getting used to it, the potatoes are finally good ahahah ! »

After his announcement, I was angry and upset with him for making me believe in his death, but it's not the moment to think about that, we have to go back as quickly as possible with the eco-plant that my father has stolen. I didn't think I would say that one day but it's practical to have a criminal father ! We brought up everything I had taken down in 3 hours in just a few minutes (my dad knows by heart faster ways). Once in the way to the surface I felt indebted to go say goodbye ton Max and her father and above all to say thank you for all their trust and kindness. So we take a detour. I arrive at Max's burrow but only her father is there standing alone and in shock.

« -Where is Max ??

-They took her too...They accused us of keeping you prisoner here after seeing you hanging out with Max last day. Your mother had sent spies. »

He burst into tears, it's all my fault, I suddenly felt very bad. Despite his sadness Mrs Evans put me on the sofa in front of their « vision »(TV) and I heard « FLASH NEWS : we know that you are holding Hamberand the plant, if you want to recover the hostage give them back to us. Otherwise : THE WAR WILL BEGIN . » There is no doubt, I had to go back. I then hugged Max'father, telling him that I would do everything possible to find his wife and daughter. And I went back up with my father. I had only been in the Underground for a month, I can't even imagine how my father had to deal with it, it had been 7 years since he was supposedly dead. This moment seemed so strange to me that I had the

impression of being out of time. I finally saw the sun again, my eyes were burning, the vision of the strict white walls of the eco-village made me happy for the first time, the vegetation, the sound of the birds, the eco-cars, ... I'M HOME.

The moment we set our first foot outside the underground : cameras, journalists and civilians surrounded us, spreading the news. Max and her mother were immediately released to their family. That is what the building screen displays :

« FLASH INFO, Good afternoon everyone, new information has just been communicated to our teams, about the suspicious disappearance of Hamber, 16 years old. She would have been seen not far from recycling city, accompanied by a man appearing to be a man from below. Our journalists are on site to interview her relatives ; Hello Sahra, do you have any news on the situation ? « Hello Steve, I'm currently with the mom of the child and she seems really affected and relieved about the come back

of her daughter ? Good afternoon Mss the Governor. What do you feel right now ? Oh you can't imagine how grateful and how reassured I am. I can't wait to see her, she missed me so much !!!! have no doubt about it, thank you for giving us your time" As you can see Steve , everyone, including the mother, seems excited and happy to come back. But there are still questions we don't have the answer to...Who is that man with her ? and where is he from ? Is he dangerous ? And about the eco plant the government announced it's now in their hands for an healthiest planete and a better future !Thank you Sahra, it was the sustainable TV, with Sahra Jhonson and myself, Steve Mclay, thank you for watching and have a good evening ! »

It's weird to say it but it feels good to be home again. Everything is back to normal now. For the moment da dis at Albert's, I think mom is not ready yet to let him live with us. It's a shock for her to saw him come back from death. By the way about my mother, I'm not angry anymore against her. I think to see her on TV, saying that she missed me makes me feel loved, almost for the first time. So everything changes. But for now I'm waiting an important letter from Albert. So when my mother start screaming : « HAMMMBERR THERE IS A LETTER FOR YOU AND... »; I jump out of my bed to read it ----COMING !!!

I run to the mailbox and catch the envelope in it. At the same time I smell a delicious taste in my nostril, even if I was 10 meters away from the house, I was so excited about my future meal. I hurried back into the house. Once I get home I opened the envelope quickly and ask :

« What are we eating tonight ? »

Then I start reading the letter saying :

« The real eco-plant is safe at home, your father and I, keep it carefully. »

PS : sorry for Patrick

« -Tonight sweaty, we are eating caramelized bacon ! »