

Old World

The skies are a deep grey, filled with nothing but pollution and smoke. I look around, hoping that it is one of the good days where I can see 20 feet in front of me. I feel the crunching beneath my feet, I've heard some stories from my Gran about a time when there was something that would stick out of the ground and also be firmly rooted in the ground beneath you. It would make a swaying sound, majestic compared to these plastic strips that lay on the ground.

The mountain is as beautiful as ever, It is the most amazing thing. Nowadays they call it species 1XC56, however, I call them what my Gran calls them, trees. Trees - it has a nice ring to it and it's what they used to call them. It changes colours as the years go by. In the cold season, it loses its leaves and later starts to grow some green leaves and later the leaves become gold. At the moment, the trees are not gold. Most of the trees are dead, black and lifeless.

Sadness spreads through me as they chop down another lot of trees. I need to go to home to Gran.

I cough as I inhale the pollution too fast while running. Gran is sitting in her rocking chair on the verandah. She still has her house from when she was a girl and she refuses to give it up.

“Gran” I say panting and coughing. “They're chopping down another.”

Gran just blinks and a tear slowly runs down her cheek stopping where her wrinkles are.

“Autumn, I need to show you something” Gran says. I nod hearing the urgency in her voice.

We stumble along the plastic, still not decomposed - just like scientists warned. Gran stops at something sticking out of the plastic. There is an odd tiny bump of yellow granulated substance. Gran smiles at it like it's an old friend. I see her remembering things. I wonder what she is thinking. Gran scoops some of the stuff off the mound and lets it run through her fingers. She walks ten steps to the left of the tiny mound and starts digging through the plastic. Gran starts to tell me about the weird substance that they called 'sand'. As she gets deeper and deeper we find dead turtles, dolphins, sharks and jellyfish.

Gran hates that no one cares about the animals any more.

Finally Gran found what she was looking for and a tear runs down her cheek again. I can see the grief in her tears.

Beneath the plastic, I can see some **footprints in the sand**. These footprints aren't just a few, we dig where the footprints go. The journey gets more exciting with each discovery. We stop at a cave as we consider what we should do next.

Gran turns to me and says “Let's go.”

The walls of the caves are bumpy and then smooth. The footprints lead us as we place our own feet in them and continue. The brittle rocks fall apart like crumbs of a cake. I feel an icy drop splat onto my scalp, it makes me shiver.

I startle as I see the blinding light streaming in between the emerald green plants hanging down.

“Vines” I hear Gran whisper, as if she had read my thoughts. She pulls the vines aside to reveal the most indescribable thing, filled with nothing but beauty and everything that my Gran has taught me about.

My hand clasps Gran's. I recognize the entire area around me, this looks like the photos that Gran showed me of her old plants.

“M- my backyard!” My Gran exclaims in shock.

A small white picket fence surrounds the garden. A pond with gorgeous purple water lilies ripples when a green and golden bell frog hops into the murky water. Gran limps over to a white swing hanging from a beautiful cherry tree. She rocks back and forth glancing at the beautiful orchids enclosing the gardens with beauty.

“This is how it was, before we ruined it”, Gran says in a hushed voice.

“All that's left of it are **footprints in the sand**”, I say.