



Story Changers: Enhancing Pupils' Social Skills and Enriching Teaching Methods Through Storytelling and Virtual Reality

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Title of the Story

“The brightest firefly” - A story about the value of respect

Basic information on the Story

Primary Topic

The value of respect

Secondary Topic

The value of friendship, the importance of collaboration and self-awareness

Learning Outcomes

Students are expected to:

- Understand the value of self-respect.
- Make choices that promote self-respect.
- Realize if they have made a wrong choice and try to fix their actions.
- Understand that diversity isn't something that must frightens us but it should be welcomed and respected.

Target Group (Pupils)

- 1st-2nd Grade of Primary School
- 3rd-4th Grade of Primary School
- 5th-6th Grade of Primary School

Other relevant information

Reference (if the story refers to real facts, historical events etc.)

The story is completely fictional.



Story's Main Elements

Main heroes

- Fani (from the Greek word fos, which means light). Fani is a firefly who lives in a settlement of fireflies. She is different than others, she is unnaturally strong and cannot control her light, she has such a strong light that can cause fires. She hasn't made any friends in the Glowing Forest.
- Mavromatis (Black eyed in Greek) is a fly who came to the Glowing Forest from the city. He is well traveled, wise, and kind. After they meet he befriends Fani, supports and advises her.
- Kokinia (Red) is a beautiful and kind firefly from a settlement close to Fani's. She takes a like to Fani.
- The Mayor of the settlement who distrusts Fani.
- Asteris (from the word star), the fastest and most famous firefly who bullies Fani.

Setting

The story takes place in the Glowing Forest, a huge forest with colorful trees. Around the forest is the Orange Plain. The plain is surrounded by the Area of the Giants. It is called so, because there dominate huge trees that protect the Forest from severe winters by preventing snow, rain, and strong winds. A huge river, the Snake River, surrounds the area of the Giants. There is also the Dragon Stone, a huge rock in the shape of a dragon that protects this magical place from the prying eyes of people.

Summary

Fani is a firefly different from others, who hasn't made any friends. She meets a fly named Mavromatis, a wise and kind fly. They become friends and together face many challenges. Throughout these challenges Fani learns how important is to respect others and mostly, how important it is to respect ourselves.

Story's Text

Far away from cities and people there is a magical place, taken from fairy tales. No one can find it easily.

In the heart of this place is the Glowing Forest, a huge forest with colorful trees. Around the forest is the Orange Plain. A plain with beautiful orange, small red and yellow flowers.

The plain is surrounded by the Area of the Giants. It is called so, because there dominate huge trees, high up to where the eye reaches. Giant trees protect from severe winters by preventing snow, rain, and strong winds from entering the forest.

A huge river, the Snake River, surrounds the area of the Giants with its rapid waters and no human can cross it.

There is also the Dragon Stone, a huge rock in the shape of a dragon that protects this magical place from the prying eyes of people.



Of all the areas of the magical place, the most beautiful was the Glowing Forest. There, all the animals live quietly and happily. Some in houses made of branches, others in trees or mushrooms, others under stones, others in water lilies on lakes and others in caves.

Although many different animals live in the Glowing Forest, one species has stood out, the fireflies. Fireflies are small insects that glow a faint light from behind. The light is very discreet, so as not to disturb other animals.

Fireflies are found from beginning to end of the Brilliant Forest in many small settlements and thanks to the light they emit they make the whole forest shine a sweet, warm, yellow-green color. At night the view is spectacular.

Fireflies help other animals with their light. They shine in the ants' nests, help the owls to read, illuminate the squirrels' houses, illuminate the beehives helping bees to produce honey. And in return the other animals help the fireflies by giving them food, honey, acorns, teaching them.

But for one firefly, things are a little different. Fani is not like the other fireflies. She is much larger in size resembling of a small sparrow rather than an insect. Her large size makes her slower than other fireflies. And it's not just that. Her shine is too strong. It is so powerful that it annoys others, especially at night. Even worse, sometimes the glow becomes so strong that she can even set fire.

In a place where everything is quiet and peaceful like the Glowing Forest, life is not at all easy for a firefly like Fani at the size of a small bird that can set fires.

"Look out! Fani is coming! Attention!" shouted Asteris, a very popular firefly, as Fani was walking carefree. Immediately all the fireflies burst out laughing.

"She will do some damage again!" a voice was heard from the crowd. "It's only natural, just look at her! She's like a balloon" they continued laughing.

"Hey Fani, will you set us on fire again like the day before?" Asteris asked her ironically.

"But I did it by mistake", Fani thought, "why don't they understand it? They know that I cannot control my glow."

"Why are you looking at me? Will you answer me, or will you stand there looking like a huge balloon?".

1st Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

- a) She should react.
- b) She shouldn't react.

If you answered a, please move to page 6

If you answered b, please move to page 7



Fani reacts

"I may be a balloon, as you say, but at least I have a mind! I'm not as brainless as you!" Fani answered angrily.

"How did you call me?" said Asteris infuriated. Everyone had stopped and looked at them.

"Fani what are you saying?" the Mayor replied from afar "I do not allow you to speak like that in our settlement!".

"Mayor, why don't you say anything to Asteris who keeps telling me bad things?"

"I only heard you Fani."

"But ..."

"No "but" Fani", the Mayor interrupted her, "You provoke with your actions and now you provoke with your words. I will not allow... »

"You got in a fight again?", shouted a beautiful firefly that shone a bright red light. "I distribute honey to all the settlements and only you argue so much!" Her name was Kokkinia, a firefly from the neighboring settlement, responsible for distributing the honey to the other fireflies.

"It makes no sense to try," Fani thought and turned her back on the Mayor and the others. "Nobody understands me". She continued to walk away from the others, until she came out of the settlement.

Please move to page 8.



Fani doesn't react

Fani put her head down in shame and turned to leave.

"That's more like it! "Don't cause us any more problems, you have lit several fires already you big burning balloon!"

Everyone burst out laughing. Even the Mayor of the fireflies, who was walking next to them had a discreet smile, which he tried to hide with his antennas.

"You did well not to pay attention to him," a firefly with a beautiful red soft light told her. "He is a fool, and it makes no sense talking to him," the beautiful firefly continued, as she offered her a jar of honey. Her name was Kokkinia, she came from a neighboring settlement. She was responsible for distributing the honey to the other fireflies.

"Thank you very much," Fani told her. She nodded and flew away to distribute the other jars.

Please move to page 8.



Fani, saddened and immersed in her thoughts, moved so far from the settlement that she flew away from the Glowing Forest and reached the Orange Plain. She sat on the petal of a flower and watched for hours the Giants. The huge trees stood imposing as if they wanted to say something to her. And indeed, as if she heard something but could not understand what it was... It sounded like "ZzzZZzz" She closed her eyes and tried to hear better.

"HELLO!"

Fani suddelny turned around and saw two huge eyes looking at her. "Help! What are you?" she began to flutter in panic, her belly flashing with terror, she tangled her legs and wings in the flowers and suddenly found herself on the ground.

"Sorry I did not want to scare you, are you okay? I am Mavromatis ".

With a clearer mind, Fani looked at the creature again and realized that it was just a fly.

"You are just a fly ..." she said in relief.

"That's true, I am just a fly," Mavromatis replied.

"Wait a minute," Fani asked, "what is a fly doing in the Glowing Forest?" "You do not belong here."

"Indeed, I lived in a city quite far from here and I was looking for food. You know Fani, people do not like us very much. So, I was moving away, more and more, to avoid people. I found a huge red boat with plenty of food and sat down to eat. Without realizing it, the boat set sail. It was not long before people discovered me eating their food. They started waving nervously their arms and legs and throwing objects at me. They even took out saws! "How easy it is to catch a fly with a saw is rather questionable!"

"Saws?" Fani asked.

"Yes! Three huge saws! "

"What are saws?"

"They are tools that look like swords. Anyway, I flew as far as I could from the boat, to be saved. But the farther I got from the boat, the more chaotic the blue of the sea became. I flew for days without finding land until my wings were tired. As if that were not enough, a terrible storm broke out. The wind was taking me where it wanted. I stopped petting because it didn't make sense. And yesterday I woke up on this huge Giant ". Mavromatis turned and showed one of the huge trees of the Giants Area.

"What are you doing here alone?" "Where are your friends?", he asked Fani.

"I do get along very well with the other fireflies... You see, I am bigger and sometimes I do damage, without wanting to. I shine more light than normal, light that creates fires, and that's why I have no friends," Fani replied.

"Indeed, you are much bigger than the fireflies I know. How did this happen?"



"A swarm of bees looking for food found me when I was a newborn and confused me for their own. Thinking I was sick, they fed me royal jelly for days. By the time they realized I was not a bee, I was already much bigger and brighter than the other fireflies."

"My God, I hope these bees do not take any cockroaches with them!"

"This poor fly has gone through a lot!", Fani thought, "Nevertheless, he is still in a good mood". It was the first time she had seen a fly up close, only at school had she heard of them in the biology class. The book said that they are dirty insects that live in the garbage of cities and offer absolutely nothing to nature.

"Do you want to be friends?" the fly suddenly interrupted Fani's thoughts.

"Should I befriend a fly? The truth is that I have no friends, but if they see me in the woods hanging out with a dirty fly, then they will make fun of me even more. On the other hand, this fly looks very kind and has gone through a lot... but what can a fly have in common with a clean and shiny firefly like me?"

2nd Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

- a) She should accept to be his friend.
- b) She shouldn't accept to be his friend.

If you answered a, please move to page 10

If you answered b, please move to page 12



Fani accepts to be his friend

"And why not?", Fani thought, "We cannot become friends, just because he does not come from the Glowing Forest and is a little different from us fireflies? I am also different anyway!"

"Yes, I would like it!", she replied to Mavromatis, "My name is Fani, pleased to meet you!"

"Perfect! I'm pleased to meet you, too! So Fani, how do you spend your time here? "

"Well here everything is perfect, for the others that is. When it gets dark, we help other animals and, in the morning, the other animals help us. We have enough free time to play. But I am not allowed to help with chores or play games."

"Fine, let's play a game together," Mavromatis suggested, "what about speed racing? Whoever reaches that red flower first, wins!"

"Yes, let's try it," Fani said hesitantly.

"Ready...get set...go!"

They both spread their wings, but Mavromatis disappeared within seconds, while Fani followed in a much slower pace.

"Incredible, he is faster than Asteris! I am too cumbersome to reach him."

"I won!" Mavromatis shouted and turned to see where Fani was. "It does not matter Fani, you did well too. We can try another game that has nothing to do with speed. How about we play pebbles? Whoever throws farther this pebble, is the winner!"

Fani's belly immediately shone with joy. Mavromatis not only did not brag about his victory but suggested that they play something different.

"Yes sure! I really like pebbles! "

They each grabbed a pebble and Mavromatis was the first to throw. The pebble made a small curve and almost fell in front of them. Fani's turn was next. She threw the pebble with all her strength, and it went so far that they could hardly see it anymore.

"You are awesome! This is the first time I see such strength!" Mavromatis told her.

"Thank you very much!", replied Fani who hadn't heard kind words for a long time. "But this is not right, you are better in speed games, and I am better in games that require strength. What should we play to be fair to both of us?"

"Well, we can play chess."

"Chess? I do not know this game", Fani wondered.

"I learned it from the humans," said Mavromatis, "but first we have to make the pieces. Let's gather some pebbles and wood."



For a long time, they were looking for the right materials to make the pieces they wanted. Mavromatis explained the rules to Fani, who did not take long to understand them.

"Great, let's play!", Fani suggested.

"Yes, but it's dark now."

"No problem," she replied and immediately Fani shone her yellow-green light. She realized that after a long time she could control the light coming out of her.

"Thank you Fani, it is much better now!"

They started playing the first game, then continued to the second, third and played all night. In the beginning, Mavromatis won. As soon as Fani practiced, she also started winning several games. They did not keep score anymore, one was winning, then the other, but they did not care at all, because they found a game they could play together.

"It's a fantastic game! We have so many nice things in our village, but we've never had chess."

"I look forward to visiting your settlement, it must be beautiful!"

"We can go there for a walk, if you want!"

Please move to page 14.



Fani doesn't accept to be his friend

"This is unheard! A firefly to befriend a fly, a foreigner that does not even belong to the Glowing Forest!

" Fani monologued, "No, no, I belong with the fireflies, they may make me their friend at some point. After all, I may be to blame for my behavior. I will try again today to join Asteris' group!

"I'm sorry Mavromatis, but I'm in a hurry to return to my settlement. Some other time... » and before Mavromatis could answer her, Fani had already spread her wings and was flying away from him.

"I do not even want to imagine it, if the other fireflies saw me hanging out with a fly, then they would make fun of me even more", Fani thought as she moved further and further away from Mavromatis.

After a long time Fani arrived in her settlement. Many fireflies went to help other animals.

"Shall I come with you?" she asked some.

"I'm sorry Fani, there are already enough of us." Fani wasn't disappointed, she went on asking another group of fireflies.

"Do you want me to help somewhere?"

"No Fani, you don't have to." From a distance she saw the Mayor and ran towards him.

"Mayor, could I help somehow?"

"Fani, we've talked about this! You shine too bright a light, no one wants such a bright light. Also, we do not want to risk a fire again! You better not participate."

Fani feeling sad, sat on a rock and watched from a distance the other fireflies that were happy.

"Let's go for water lily races!" someone shouted from afar. It was Asteris. For a moment Fani thought he was telling her, but she was wrong. Other fireflies quickly gathered, and the water lily races began.

"I will ask them to join the races and I hope they let me", Fani said to herself. She gathered all her courage and asked Asteris:

"Hello Asteris, can I play with you?"

Laughter started immediately.

"Yes, why not!" said Asteris, while he was forcing himself not to laugh.

Fani was full of joy! "Finally," she thought, "I will play with them too!"

"Go to the big rock and when we whistle, start the route with the water lilies", Asteris told her and she did it. As soon as she heard the whistle, she started jumping from water lily to water lily and as soon as she reached the last one, she turned to the others, to see what they would say to her.... but no one was there. They run away and they were all gone. The only thing that could be heard was their laughter from afar.

Then she thought of Mavromatis. How wrong she had been denying to be his friend. By now they would be playing, they would be talking. She did not waste time, she took the road again to the Orange Plain.



She found Mavromatis sitting alone. "Mavromatis, please forgive me, I was in a bad mood before. Do you still want to be friends? My name is Fani."

"Of course, Fani! "You seem kind but also sad," the cheerful fly replied. "So, what do you say... do you want to show me your settlement?"

Please move to page 14.



Fani and Mavromatis were walking for an hour in the settlement.

"I have never seen such a beautiful place Fani, you are very lucky to live here!"

"Once you get to know the other fireflies, you will find out that this is not the case," Fani replied disappointed.

As they walked, some fireflies looked at them and whispered:

"A fly! But what is he doing here? "

Mavromatis did not seem to be intimidated though.

"But I do not understand", Fani asked angrily "how is it possible that everything you hear does not bother you?" and her glow was becoming more intense.

"I will not be bothered by the words that strangers say! Do not forget that things are worse in the city. I'm sure that there are fireflies who we can be friends with, you just haven't found them yet."

"Oh look! Here is Asteris and his gang, they are preparing for a big water lilies race."

"Hey! You big lightbulb, catch this!" a voice was heard from above. It was Billias, a friend of Asteris. A ball of honey was thrown at Fani and she did not even manage to see anything. Mavromatis, with the incredible reflexes of a fly, immediately grabbed a leaf and placed it as a shield in front of Fani.

"Oh!" All the fireflies shouted at the same time, and they started talking about how fast Mavromatis's movement was.

At that moment Fani saw a ball of honey right in front of a house. At the same time, she was listening to Bilia's laughter on the tree.

3rd Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

- a) She should attack Biliias.
- b) She shouldn't attack Biliias.

If you answered a, please move to page 15

If you answered b, please move to page 16



Fani attacks Biliias

Without a second thought, Fani grabs the honey ball and prepares to throw it at Biliias.

"Fani no!" shouted Mavromatis, but it was too late. Fani hurled the honey ball, which hit Biliias hard on the head. He did not have time to react, he felt dizzy and fell helplessly to the ground.

"Oh, my wing!" whispered Biliias holding his broken wing.

"You should not have done this, Fani, it will take days for his wing to heal again," Mavromatis told her.

Fani immediately regretted her act. She ran to Biliias, who had not stopped crying. "I'm so sorry Biliias, I overreacted. It is just that no one respects me over here! I did not want to...".

"You should both be ashamed!" a firefly shouted at them from a distance. "With your actions, you prove that you do not respect yourself nor the bees that offer us their honey!" Some fireflies spread their wings and left disappointed.

Please move to page 17.



Fani doesn't attack Bilias

The thought of attacking Bilias immediately left her mind.

"They are all mean to me in this place! I told you so, Mavromatis! Thank you for protecting me! "

"You should all be ashamed!" a firefly was heard from the depths. "You do not respect Fani, nor the bees that offer us their honey." Some fireflies spread their wings and left disappointed.

"You see? I told you Fani. Not everyone agrees with the actions of Asteris and his group."

Please move to page 17.



"Well then", said Asteris "if you want to gain our respect, take part in the big water lily race, to prove your worth!"

"This is my chance," Fani told Mavromatis, "I will participate and if I do well, they will respect me."

"But Fani, you do not need to win in a match, to gain the respect of others. They should respect you for who you are."

4rth Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

- a) She should participate in the race.
- b) She shouldn't participate in the race.

If you answered a, please move to page 18

If you answered b, please move to page 19



Fani participates in the race

All fireflies are positioned next to each other. The countdown starts... 3, 2, 1 and go!

"I have to give my best," Fani thought, "this is my chance!"

All the fireflies started almost at the same time. From the first moments, two stood out, Asteris who had already taken a considerable lead and Fani who was last in line. In the first two water lilies, Asteris was ahead with the other fireflies behind him. Last but not least, Fani followed. There were three more water lilies left. Everything seemed predetermined, then a huge gust of wind hit the Glowing Forest. All the fireflies were surprised, it had never blown so much in the Forest again.

All the fireflies at once fell on the first water lily after the wind carried them with terrible rage. Fani, however, continued fearlessly, the wind was not able to affect her. Now she was first and had only two water lilies in front of her to finish. Asteris, not believing what had happened, fluttered his wings as fast as he could to catch up the lost ground, but he only managed to stay in the same place. His wings were wet and he could not fly yet. He saw the other fireflies passing him. A water lily was still left for Fani to finish first, but a firefly had already caught up with her, faster than Fani. Fani was quite tired, she could not go any faster. Shortly before the finish, a second firefly passed her.

"Well done Fani!" Mavromatis cheered "Excellent race! You finished third. "

"Yes, but I could be first"

"The other fireflies were quite fast, and you beat Asteris too"

"This is unfair!" Asteris shouted "The race must be repeated" but no one paid attention to him.

"Well Mavromatis, now I'm sure they will respect me! Did you see how I resisted the wind? "

However, no firefly had come to congratulate Fani.

"It does not matter Fani, do not pay attention to them. You did just fine. "

Please move to page 20.



Fani doesn't participate in the race

"You're right! "Competing in a race is not going to change anything, even if I beat Asteris".

"Good decision," Mavromatis replied.

"Fine then, what would you like us to do now?"

"How about we find those fireflies that defended you? They look friendly and different from everyone else here."

"Let's give it a try."

"Well Fani, what you did was great," an unfamiliar voice came from behind her.

Fani and Mavromatis turned and saw a firefly with a crimson light looking at them. It was Kokinia.

"But what do you mean?" Fani asked in astonishment "I did nothing".

"You said no to Asteris in front of all his friends, he certainly would not expect anyone to deny him anything. But he needed it!"

The beautiful firefly looked at Mavromatis and introduced herself to him.

"I heard that you want to meet Galazia, Bizelis and Petra," she continued, "I will meet them shortly to take the honey given to us by the bees and distribute it to the other fireflies. You can help us if you want. "

Fani shone, she could not believe her ears. So someone was asking her for help. The three of them were walking together to the place where they were collecting honey. Stacked small jars that belonged to each firefly. They were so many.

"Here they are! Galazia, Bizeli, Petra! Meet Fani and Mavromatis. They will help us with the distribution of the honey ".

Before Kokinia could finish her sentence, a huge strong wind blew with such force that it threw everyone to the other side. The only one who remained still was Fani.

"Oh no!" Petra shouted "the honey will fall".

The stack of honey had started to tilt ready to fall and all the effort made by the bees would be wasted. Without a second thought, Fani fell on the stack and at the last moment kept it upright.

"Well done Fani! You saved us from great damage "

They distributed all together the honey to the fireflies and then they sat and ate. They discussed various topics, but Mavromatis' stories stood out. They listened in awe to his wanderings from the city.

Please move to page 20.



Fani and Mavromatis were going to the Lake Dawn, she wanted her new friend to see another attraction.

"Strange day today, what do you say Mavromatis?"

"Really, even for me. So, what else are you going to show me today? "

"I was thinking first a trip to Lake Dawn ..." Fani felt something falling on her from the sky "... But what is this?"

"I'm afraid that we will not be able to see something else today, my sweet Fani, it is drizzling."

"But, but it cannot!"

"We can go tomorrow, do not be upset!"

"But it doesn't drizzle in the Glowing Forest. The Giants, the magnificent trees, protect us, it has not rained for many years ".

"Where I come from, it is constantly raining, it is not so bad," Mavromatis replied in astonishment.

"It's pretty bad for the Glowing Forest! We must notify others! "

Fani tried to flutter her wings but they were wet from the crumbs, as was Mavromatis'.

"We have to walk to the settlement, I know a path that will take us faster." Fani started walking towards the path, when she suddenly heard the voice of Mavromatis:

"Be careful!"

Fani stopped. "What happened?" she replied in astonishment.

"A line of ants, we cannot cross it because then they will lose their orientation and get lost out here, let's take the long road."

"But we will be too late," Fani said apologetically.

"Oh disaster!" shouted Mr. Ant "Our path is ruined!"

Fani looked at the frustrated ant and realized what was bothering him. A huge drop of water had blocked their path.

The path is damaged anyway, Fani thought, if we cross over, nothing will happen. We will arrive in time in the settlement. On the other hand, we can help them with the drop and take the long road. But we will be late to inform the other fireflies.

5th Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

a) She should help the ants. *If you answered a, please move to page 21*

b) She shouldn't help the ants. *If you answered b, please move to page 22*



Fani helps the ants

"You are right, we must respect the effort they made, we will help them with the drop and we will go from the long road"

And so they did. With a branch they drilled the big drop and rebuilt the path.

"I will not forget what you did today!" Mr. Ant told them.

Please move to page 23.



Fani doesn't help the ants

Fani decided she could not waste time. With a quick movement she passed over the already damaged path of the ants.

"No! You completely destroyed our path! The rest of the ants will lose their way. And the food... the food will be lost!" shouted Mr. Ant.

"Fani, you should not have done that," Mavromatis told her. "Whatever problems we have, we must not solve them at the expense of others."

Fani stood motionless for a long time, full of guilt and looking at the damaged path.

"Leave us at once!", shouted Mr. Ant, "I do not even want to see you, go!"

"Come on Fani, let's go" Mavromatis told her "We did a lot of damage today".

Please move to page 23.



After a while they had reached the settlement. No one there had understood the raindrops that were falling. Fani immediately went to the Mayor.

"Mayor! I have some terrible news to tell you!" said Fani frightened.

"What news Fani? What happened now?"

"We were with Mavromatis..."

"Not again with this filthy fly..." whispered the Mayor, but Fani continued fearlessly.

"... And we were walking in the Orange Plain..."

"What were they doing in the Orange Plain, they have gone completely crazy!" a voice was heard through the crowd, which had slowly gathered.

"When raindrops suddenly started falling from the sky."

The whispers along with laughter from the crowd grew louder. Fani was trying to tell them something extremely important and they did not even listen to her.

6th Decision Point:

What should Fani do?

- a) She should continue talking calmly.
- b) She should yell at them.

If you answered a, please move to page 24

If you answered b, please move to page 25



Fani decides to continue talking calmly

Fani, despite the laughter and whispers of the others, continued to speak in a calm and determined voice:

"You heard right, raindrops were falling from the sky. We have to do something!"

The Mayor may not have been particularly convinced, but many began to discuss it anxiously.

"Look," said Mavromatis, "I may not know much about your forest, but rain is quite common in cities. If you have never lived one, you must be prepared. You need to strengthen your homes and collect supplies."

Many left anxiously to prepare.

"These are nonsense, young man," the Mayor interrupted. "I've lived in this forest much more than anyone and I know that there is no rain."

"Did you come here to terrorize us?" Asteris told him.

"Unless you brought us the rain," someone else continued.

"Yes, it is not accidental that now that you came it started to rain," said Asteris.

"That's it!" said the Mayor "I can not risk our safety, you are a foreigner and you have no place either in our settlement or in the Glowing Forest!"

"What are you saying, Mayor?" said Fani surprised.

"Exactly what you heard Fani, the fly must leave!"

"Then I will go with him!"

"Good, don't forget to write" Asteris answered with a smile and his words filled with laughter those who had remained there.

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Fani decides to yell at them

"STOP AT LAST !!" Fani shouted with all her might. "You aren't listening to what I tell you! Raindrops are falling just outside our settlement! "

The fireflies started screaming in panic and running backwards. But what happened that scared them so much? Fani wondered, but it was not long before she realized what happened. Because she got so angry, she shone so much that she set fire to the grass. Within a few seconds the fire became more intense.

"Look what you did again!", the Mayor shouted at her.

Without a second thought, Fani took a leaf from the ground and wrapped it in the shape of a ball. She filled it with water from the lake and threw it on the fire. She did it a second time and the fire became smaller. After several throws the fire was completely extinguished.

"I just wanted you to listen to me," Fani apologized.

" We should listen to what Fani? That it is raining in the Glowing Forest? Next time you will tell us that it will snow", the Mayor answered angrily. "We are in danger from you, Fani! Understand that, you are dangerous for our settlement".

"Leave!" the crowd was heard.

"But we wanted to warn you," Mavromatis defended her.

"You should both leave! Immediately now, we do not want you here anymore," the Mayor continued.

The voices from the crowd became louder and louder with first and best voice of Asteris: "Leave immediately, leave immediately"

"Let's go Fani, it is dangerous here," said Mavromatis.

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"And what are we going to do now? How will we sleep away from the settlement? If it rains again we will drown! "

"We can hide in the Giants, the rain will not catch us there."

"I have never been there before!" Fani replied scared, "and a trip there would take us days. "Even the settlement of Kokinia, which is the closest, is quite far away and we are very tired."

"Ok leave it to me, I have had a much harder time in the city. We have to find a huge leaf, a branch and some grass. "

Fani gathered the materials and Mavromatis started the construction. He placed the branch perpendicular to the ground and began to wrap the leaf around it starting from a wide base which shrank as it approached the top creating a green cone. Then he tied the leaf to the grass and made a hole in the door.

"Awesome tent Mavromatis, where did you learn that?"

"From the humans! They have some good qualities you know. We will spend the night here and tomorrow we will ask for help from Kokinia in the neighboring settlement. Let's play a little chess to forget our worries, what do you say Fani?"

"Yes sure!"

After a few chess games they were both quite tired. They picked up the chess and lay down to sleep. Only the rustling of leaves could be heard from outside. For the first time, Fani was sleeping outside her settlement.

"Did you hear that, Mavromatis?"

"I heard nothing Fani but the leaves."

And yet it was as if he had heard a noise just outside their tent. He was looking at the leaf of their tent as if he was trying to see through it. And indeed, something was discernible. A reddish figure with large arms and legs approaching their tent. It had almost reached the door of the tent.

"Look Mavromatis..." Fani could not form other words from her fear. Mavromatis could not believe his eyes. The figure reached just outside the door.

"Oh what a relief! Fani and Mavromatis, how glad I am to find you! "

"Kokinia!" Fani and Mavromatis shouted with relief and joy. As it turned out the light of Kokinia made strange shapes with the shadows from the branches. Imagination at night can make the simplest spectacle look like a monster.

"It seems at night you fireflies can become very scary!" Mavromatis told them laughing.

"Kokinia, what are you doing at such an hour away from your settlement? You look very upset."

"Something terrible is happening in my settlement, and I'm very afraid it will happen to others."



Fani and Mavromatis came out of the tent and listened to what Kokkinia was telling them.

"Suddenly it started to get cold, very cold. So much that many fireflies could not keep their light on. "

Fani looked towards the Forest. Indeed today the lights of the Bright Forest were very dim.

"And as if that were not enough, something white began to fall from the sky like pollen but fluffier and heavier!"

"Snow!" Mavromatis interrupted it "it snowed".

"Snow?" said Fani and Kokkinia at the same time.

"But it never snows in the Bright Forest, we only heard it in fairy tales," said Kokkinia.

"I knew it, the raindrops were a bad sign," Fani said almost from inside, "we have to see what is happening."

"We do not have time to lose now. This white thing, the snow, has fallen over our houses and warehouses and is about to level them by the weight. "

"But this is terrible, we have to ask for help from the bigger animals," Fani monologued.

"Everyone is gone. Other animals hid in the ground, others are running to save their own possessions. We are alone, that's why I was looking to find you Fani ".

"Me? But what could I do? The last time I went to help, I almost set fire to my settlement."

"That's exactly what you need to do now!" Mavromatis said "with your strong light you will melt the snow and you will warm the other fireflies".

"Are you sure it is going to work?" Fani asked him.

"We just have to try," Kokkinia replied.

They left their tent and started quickly going to the settlement of Kokkinia.

"First the strong wind, then the raindrops and now the snow," said Fani. "Normally the Giants should protect us. Something bad has happened."

"I am afraid that people will be hiding behind this," Mavromatis said.

"We will find out later" said Kokkinia "now it is important to save the settlement".

As soon as they reached the settlement, they were out of breath. The beautiful, lush landscape was covered under a large layer of white snow. The houses were still standing by force. The fireflies were trembling from the cold, motionless and helpless.

"Quickly Fani" Mavromatis told her "shine as much as you can and we will help the fireflies".

Immediately Fani's glow became dazzling. Everyone was impressed by how much she shone and looked at her. The glow became so strong that they could no longer look at it. Within a few seconds a sweet wave of heat spread throughout the settlement. The heat soon evaporated and the snow melted.



Mavromatis and Kokkinia went to all the fireflies to offer help. The settlement was restored to the beautiful green place it always was. One firefly after another looked at the sky, where Fani was standing.

"We thank you! You saved us," the fireflies said.

"It's great what you did Fani" Mavromatis told her "Asteris and the rest of your settlement should have seen all this".

"My settlement!" Fani said "we have to see if the snow fell there too!"

"Correct! "We have to check all the settlements but also the food warehouses," said Kokkinia.

Without wasting time they ran to the settlement of Fani where things were not good there either. Fani now knew what to do. With her strong, warm glow but also with the valuable help of the fireflies from the settlement of Kokkinia, they managed to melt the snow much faster. Asteris looked at Fani in awe, as did the Mayor. Everyone was stunned, as if trying to say something but the words did not come out of them.

"Fani ..." Asteris started talking but a loud noise from afar interrupted him.

"Oh no" shouted Kokkinia "the food warehouses are demolished! All our food is lost."

"We must hurry to go to the other settlements," said Fani.

After much effort they managed to melt all the snow and save all the fireflies.

"You were really great Fani," Mavromatis told her.

"You saved us all! No one will forget this day," Kokinia continued.

"Yes but our food is ruined, what are we going to do now what are we going to eat?"

Absolute silence fell, no one was talking.

If you chose earlier to help the ants, please move to page 29.

If you chose earlier not to help the ants, please move to page 30.



"Now it's our turn to reciprocate," a familiar voice came from behind them.

"Mr. Avt? You?" said Fani happily.

"You helped us not to lose our path. We secured a lot of food thanks to your help. We will offer you half as a token of gratitude," he told them and pointed to the hill. A long line of ants approached them. Each one was carrying something. Seeds, honey balls, flowers, nectar.

"This is more than enough food for all of us. Thank you very much Mr. Ant! " Fani shouted loudly.

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"If only you had not broken that path...", a voice came from behind them.

"Mr. Ant?" said Fani in surprise.

"If you had not damaged that path, we would have gathered a lot of food. Food that would be enough for all of us Fani" said Mr. Ant sadly. "We had discovered a huge puddle full of food".

"We have to go to that puddle and collect the food, it is our only hope," Kokinia said. She looked quite disappointed with her. As if she had been hurt that Fani did not respect the ants.

"I will come with you," Fani told her.

"It is not necessary Fani, you stay here to see if they need help. I will collect as many fireflies as I can to carry the food".

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The Mayor, Asteris and his company approached Fani with hesitation.

"Fani we would like to..." cried the Mayor "after what happened we wanted to..."

"Let us apologize to you, Fani" Asteris continued the sentence "We treated you very badly for so long. We did not let you help us, play with us and all this because you were different. We did not respect you at all because you were just bigger and brighter than us and in the end that was what saved us. Accept our apologies."

"I forgive you. "We have all made mistakes and I am the first of all."

"Well done Fani" Mavromatis whispered to her.

"Thank you for everything, Fani," Asteris said and went to hug her, when suddenly darkness fell over them.

"Hooo" was heard from the sky and then two huge rolling eyes appeared.

"Oh dear, what is this!" Mavromatis shouted in fear.

"Do not be afraid" Fani told him "It is Athena, the owl, she always likes to make an impressive entrance".

"I bring you bad news from afar, for nights I flew over the Giants, one has fallen on the Snake River and two more will follow ..."

"What is she saying? Why does she speak like that? Maybe because the poor thing froze from the cold?" Mavromatis asked.

"She always speaks with verses and riddles," Fani replied.

"Look Athena, as you can see things are a bit difficult. Do you want to tell us clearly what is happening?" Fani told her.

The owl looked at them arrogantly. "So be it. I flew to the area of the Giants and saw people with three huge saws."

"People!" murmured the crowd.

"They cut a Giant and are preparing to cut two more. They have come in a huge red boat that not even the River of the Snake could repel."

"The boat I traveled on! They came to cut down the huge trees," said Mavromatis frightened.

"That's why it's raining and snowing in the Glowing Forest, because a Giant has fallen," Fani said, "we have to stop them."

"How do we do that?" the Mayor asked "If the Dragon Rock, the Snake River did not stop them, nothing will stop them".

"They will cut down all the Giants and then they will destroy the Glowing Forest," Asteris continued.

"I know what we have to do" said Fani whose mind was constantly thinking "we will scare them".



"But Fani, no animal in the Glowing Forest is so big as to scare people," the Mayor told her.

"No, but in the dark you fireflies can become very scary," said Mavromatis with a smile, who had understood Fani's thought.

"Call all the fireflies" said Fani "we will be divided into groups and we will form with our lights a furious dragon, a huge snake and many giants. The giants will take small steps forward, the snake will go diagonally confusing them and at the last moment the dragon will appear that will move everywhere".

"Like chess," said Mavromatis.

Within a few minutes all the fireflies of the Glowing Forest had gathered in the Orange Plain and began to take shape. Huge bright giants. From a distance the sight was terrifying. People sharpening their huge chainsaws and preparing to cut down the next tree saw a glow appear through the dense trees. Slowly the glow took shape. Great giants were moving towards them. Unspoken and imposing. People started going backwards shouting. They dropped the saws and started running towards their boat.

"We have come to cut down these trees, no one is leaving," their leader shouted.

Mavromatis, who was the fastest, ran to warn of the next move. The fireflies formed a terrifying snake, which moved diagonally.

And now Checkmate! " said Mavromatis and a huge crimson dragon appeared behind him. He flew high enough in the sky and stopped, looked at the man intently and flew upwards. The mouth of the bright dragon opened and there Fani acted. With all her power she shone so brightly that the dragon's mouth was filled with flames. Without a second thought, the leader dropped the saw and started running.

"Let's get out of here! There are monsters! "

The humans got into the boat and left as fast as they could.

"Humans will never bother you again," said Mavromatis. "They learned their lesson and from now on they will respect the environment."

The cheers that were heard covered the night in the Glowing Forest. It seemed that tonight the fireflies' light was brighter than ever. All the animals had set up a huge feast to celebrate their great victory. Among them was Fani and Mavromatis, who remained inseparable friends forever.

THE END