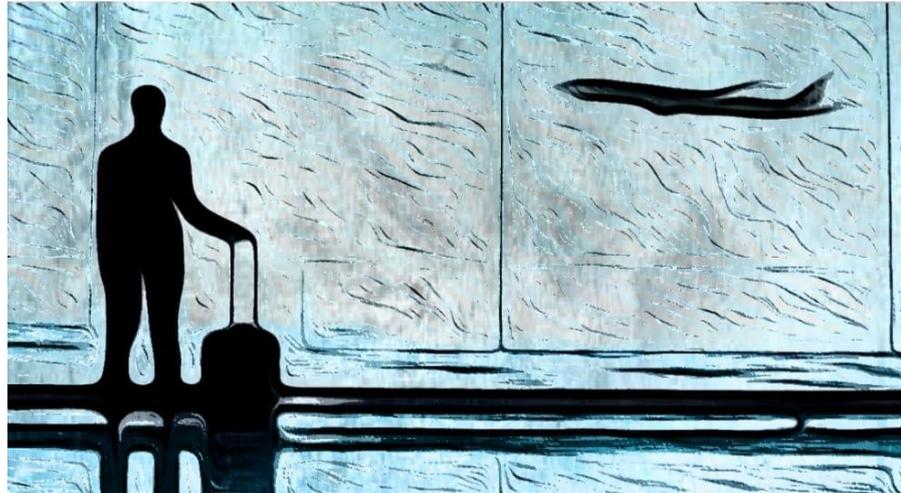


EYES CAN'T SEE THE TRUTH

Last week, I got so excited about the e-mail which I received from my childhood friend, Ali. He was a very successful Biology Professor on his field in America. In his e-mail, he was inviting me to America. Then very spontaneously I bought a flight ticket to America and I found myself on the plane.



I took some books with me to read for this long flight. One of them was The Little Prince book, which I can always make different meanings no matter what age I read. I was holding a very old edition in my hand because this book was our favourite book which we presented to each other. When I was turning over the pages, a well-thumbed black-and-white photo dropped on my lap. In the photo, 16 children lined up in front of tall trees were looking at the camera. I was the blonde haired kid smiling on the far left in the back. Ali, on the other hand, was the short, frail boy wearing glasses. White hair, eyelashes and eyebrows; He stood out even in the black and white photo with his blue-gray eyes. This photograph must have been taken during the class picnic trip which we went in primary school. That moment I realized how much that trip had changed my life because in this trip we had become real friends with Ali. Let me tell you the story from the beginning.



" I was a pretty naughty boy when I was small. There were no impishness that I hadn't done: I was stealing fruits from neighbour's garden, cutting ball which belonged to the boys that I didn't like, ridiculing on different children in my class...I was so excited for that day just because I could play hob with anything. Our teacher took out some wrapped papers from her bag when we arrived at the picnic area by busses. We were all trying to understand what these papers mean. She started to tell:

- "Children, it's time to explain you why we came here early. These are treasure maps which I am holding in my hands, these maps will lead you to treasure." All children started to whisper to each other. What was that treasure? Teacher continued:

- " Of course you wonder what is that treasure but the only thing I can tell is to start as soon as possible. Then, let's start to make matching! " Our teacher was telling two names and giving them a treasure map.

I thought she matched me with my best friend Hakan when she said my name but instead of Hakan she matched me with short, weak, spectacled nerd who has white hair. When I was about to tell: "But teacher...":

- " I paired you this way so that you mingle with each other. Let's get started as soon as possible," she said. I walked towards Ali and said:

- " You know that I am not going to do anything with you. I got the map ; when I am looking for the treasure, you will follow me," I said and ran through the forest. I realized that Ali was trying to catch me when I reached the first clue but I kept going. I stopped when I reached the last clue, I didn't know the answer. Clue was saying:

" A green lives in the north, treasure lives under it." Ali caught me when I was thinking about answer. He took the clue from my hand:

- "I know the answer," he said.



- "How ?" I asked surprisedly.

- "The answer is clear but I have a condition."

- " Tell me what is that?"

- "I wonder just one thing. Why are you looking at me like I am an alien or I will transmit a disease to you? What have I done to you?"



- " Because, because, because...I didn't know the reason, either. You are different. You don't look like other normal people maybe that is the reason." Ali sat down and started to cry sobbingly:

- "What have I done to born like this, I mean, and what did I do to be born an albino? Like everyone else, I want to go out into the sun as much as I wish, without drawing attention to me and without being ridiculed. Do I want so many things?"

I was looking at Ali differently after these words. Then I said:

- " Please, don't act like this; actually I didn't mean to hurt you. Actually I didn't want to hurt anybody Ali"

- "Then, don't. Believe me this way it is much easier," answered Ali. He was right I couldn't find a word to say , but seeing him cry like that made me feel weird. It was a feeling my little heart had never tasted before: It was sadness. I gently shook him and said:

- "Sorry, It's the first time that I felt so sad in my life. Please stand up ! We can't find this treasure without your help. Come on..." I said. He stood up, wiped his tears with his arms and read the clue once again:

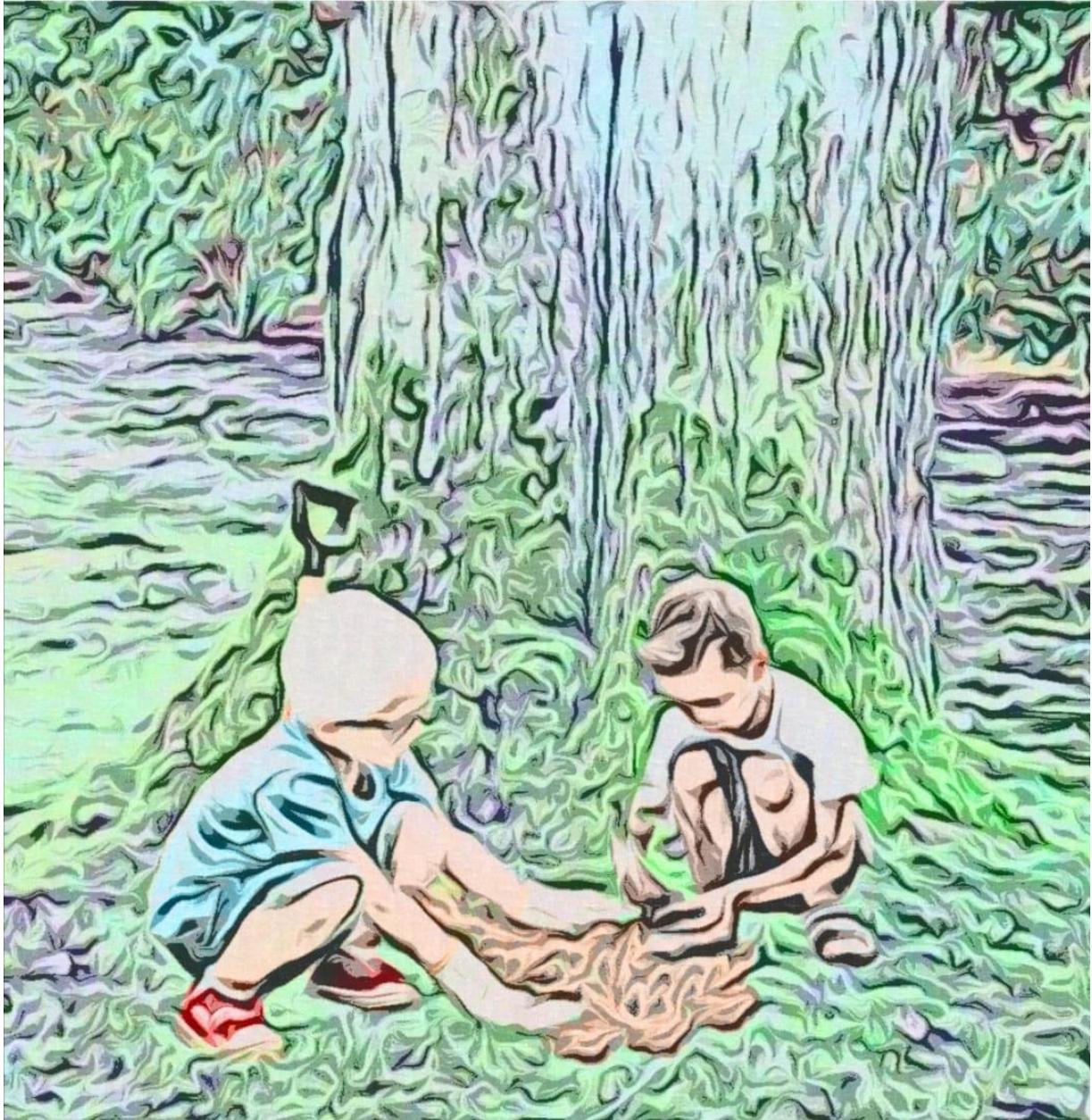
- "In the north lives a green, underneath is a treasure. Very simple, the north side of the trees holds moss. Look! Look at the back of this tree with moss. "He

was indeed right, one side of the tree was covered in lush moss, and he continued:



He said, "Come there is a box under the mossy side of the tree," and called me. He opened the box slowly. Inside the box was a square chocolate bar and a small note. On the note:

" The most important thing is friendship and this chocolate is for you to share" wrote our teacher. We arrived at the picnic area and ate chocolate during the road."



Everything happened like that. Ali's interest to living things and Biology was certain even at that time. When I was thinking of them a stewardess came and:-
-" What would you like to have? " asked she. I had tea and continued to read. In our book Little Prince was saying" But the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart." At that moment I realized how important these words are.