

Saving Humanity

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Aged 12

Chapter I: The Healing Plant

Acknowledgment:

A great thanks to my parents, who always encouraged and motivated me and gave me the opportunity to publish my own book.



“The healing plant, The Hippoglamandia, has a magical power to cure any disease in a nano-second. Only one drop of the oil is enough to produce three hundred tons of medicine!” exclaimed a famous botanical scientist on the news, which was broadcast around the world.

July is the most beautiful month in Stockholm, Sweden.

It was an astounding and beautiful morning, as the vibrant golden rays of the sun heated up the entire Skogen (forest) cutting through the long oak trees and waking up all the splendid and magnificent creatures. The word Hippoglamandia echoed in my head. I was sure that I had heard it before as it sounded extremely familiar.

I ran through the long forest faster than the wind, to get back home.

Swiftly passing through the streets, while bystanders looked at me strangely and cautiously took their distance, I finally arrived home. In my study, I searched through all my encyclopaedias but what I was looking for was not there. Finally, I found it in my grandad's endless precious lab notes. It was there - sketch and full description, the unique ancient plant, the magical plant used by Ancient Romans to heal their soldiers - in my granddad's hand notes; he was a great and dedicated scientist.

I could hardly concentrate on my daily work and my head was full of images of the plant. I explained everything to Mum and Dad and the next day, my Dad, my brother Nick and I were off on a mission to find the ancient healing plant, the Hippoglamandia.

Chapter II: South Italy

We took a plane to Italy early in the morning and before we knew it, we were in some dark, scary, haunted woods in the southeast of Italy.

Further ahead, everything seemed different. It was as if everything were happening in a book or a movie. The whole place was covered in volcanic ash, but this volcano hadn't been active for many, many years. We were standing on a volcanic mountain.

I checked grandad's notes again and his map marking our location and we were in the exact place he documented in his precise notes. He had been here many years ago. His drawings were very accurate. "I am sure we are in the right place," said Dad. I was convinced that we were in the exact location too. Surprisingly, it didn't feel good here.

I started running up and down, right and left, desperate to find any sign of the plant when I accidentally tripped over some giant leaves. "How can these leaves be so big?" I thought.

All of a sudden everything made sense to me, it was like all the pieces of the puzzle were fitting together. The soil in this place is extremely rich and fertile because of the volcanic activity.

Why? I tried to remember what I had learned in my geography lesson. The volcanic ash is rich in certain key nutrients, such as iron, calcium, magnesium, sodium, potassium, phosphorous, sulphur, silicon, and many other trace elements; a rich combination that can act as a stimulant for plant growth. The magma brings up all the minerals from the centre of the earth to the surface, which then fertilise the soil.

So, that's why the plants in this location are powerful, magical, and enormous. Normally, this soil is commercial and imported to other countries, but the magical plant can only grow in this location and nowhere else. How interesting!!

Chapter III: The Cave



I fell down a camouflaged hole, screaming, into an extremely long tunnel.

BANGGGG!!! I fell on the rock-hard floor, “Dad! Nick! Help!” I shouted in the pitch black.

Breathing deeply to calm myself down, I looked around me. The whole surrounding was dark, but after a few minutes my eyes were adapting, and then I managed to see where I was.

“Wow,” I thought in pain, “this cave is gorgeous.”

The monumental cave was filled, rather unusually, with green grass and dainty, sweet-smelling flowers and in the middle, stood one incredibly beautiful plant with many small tiny flowers.

Dad and Nick had fallen down too, landing with a bump, as confused and scared as I had been.

“Hey Dad, I think I found the healing plant!” I announced, staring at the beautiful gigantic plant in front of us, as their jaws dropped,

“That's so gorgeous,” Dad said.

“We can use it to heal us after that long and painful fall,” my brother said, as we laughed our heads off.

Soon, echoing noises disturbed our enjoyment and fun, and filled the whole space. We quickly tried to find someplace to hide and save ourselves, while the noises were getting louder and much more intense, putting us on alert.

Chapter IV: The Chase

Trying to camouflage in-between the plants and greenery, in the silence - so thick we could hear a pin drop - we suddenly heard thundering footsteps getting closer and closer, THUD THUD THUD!!!

Then silence again.

With my senses on full alert, I glimpsed a light flickering off the cave walls and I saw what seemed to be cavemen or maybe Roman soldiers. I couldn't see clearly in the dark.

"Ugga bugga, ugga bugga, UGGA BUGGA!!!!!!!" they chanted.

"RUUUNNNNN!!!!!" I shouted to my family. The gruesome, Roman soldiers were everywhere, they were following us as if they were lions and we were prey.

I ran and just glanced back to see the bloodthirsty look on their eyes, while they ran at us with their thick wooden clubs. I took a chunky book out of my bag and slammed it into the nearest man's face and knocked him out.

When we stopped running, I wondered why there were still Roman soldiers here in a volcanic cave. I thought they belonged to the ancient times. What are they doing here? I also realised that a second ago it was morning, but now it felt like the night was already falling. It seemed that time stopped inside the cave. Perhaps one second in the cave is a whole day in normal life!

Chapter V: The Eruption

The earth beneath us was shaking badly.

We were rolling down a slimy tunnel, too slippery to find anything or anywhere to grip.

It was a long, never-ending journey, terrifying and exciting like the scariest roller-coaster in the world.

There was no sign of Dad. The earth was getting hotter and hotter. I was boiling. "What is going on?" shouted Nick.

Suddenly we were expelled out of the wide tunnel through the air, as though the earth was emptying its stomach; up we shot, through the air like small tiny bugs.

Flying through the air without a parachute to slow our descent, we finally landed on the wet sand with a THUMP.

Nick and I started desperately looking for Dad, shouting and walking around. My heart was pounding like a brass band in my chest.

I was confused and speechless. I could not explain anything: nothing about anything we experienced made sense.

“Dad, Dad!”, cried Nick. I turned my head and there he was standing in front of us.

“Dad” we both shouted happily at the same time, running over to him.

“Thank God you are safe,” exclaimed my Dad.

Apparently, he had been expelled out of the tunnel through a different passage, which is why we couldn’t find him anywhere.

Suddenly, we all remembered the plant. I took my backpack and looked inside it impatiently. The beautiful plant was still there, undamaged with lots of small flowers filling my

backpack. “Enough to make medicine for the whole world,” I thought.

“We did it, we did it,” I announced, dancing happily.



Chapter VI: Getting Back

But my good mood didn't last for long. I started to feel uneasy. A big dark cloud and the smell of ash filled the air around us.

"It is a volcanic eruption!" cried Nick.

"It is a volcanic eruption and we have been in that volcano, but amazingly we are far away from the eruption. I just don't know how. Now we better go back home," decided Dad.

On the way back home, I was reflecting on everything that happened.

I needed someone to explain how all these strange things had occurred:

How did we end up in the cave? And in the long wide, slimy tunnel, inside a volcano? How could we end up such a long

distance away from the volcano? And most importantly: how come such a beautiful plant can grow in a volcanic cave?

"The world is full of wonders and every day in life we may discover one of them!" exclaimed my dad.

The most wonderful news is that we retrieved the amazing **Hippoglamandia** in my bag, ready to save the world.

Chapter VII: The Cure

Finally, we arrived home. I am not sure how long the whole journey took. Maybe a week or maybe much more. The **Hippoglamandia** plant was copied in the national government laboratory and the oil was extracted to use as an antidote to the most deadly virus after COVID-19.

This time the cure was found much quicker than the first vaccination against COVID-19. A big thanks to our scientists for their dedication and hard work as always!

We received a reward from the government for quick thinking, bravery, and dedication, but we decided to donate the money to the children's hospital. After all, the whole experience for the three of us would be an unforgettable adventure, with lots of unanswered questions.

“I am sure that Granddad is very proud of us, as much as we are proud of him.” I thought. The truth is without his contribution we would never have been able to find the plant.

Above all, the most important thing is that we prevented another pandemic and we saved many lives. Yes, we made it.

Together with care, ambition, and perseverance, we managed to find the plant and find the cure.

We did it.

We saved humanity!

We hope that you and your family and friends enjoy the book that you have created.

This project was co-ordinated and facilitated by Clare Ford, Founder of Switched ON! the global online academy which is re-defining education beyond academic success.

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SWITCHED ON!

Join Sebastian and his family in their adventures to find the magic plant that is needed to save humanity.

Will they come home unscathed?

Or will they be forever changed by the mysterious creatures they meet on their travels?