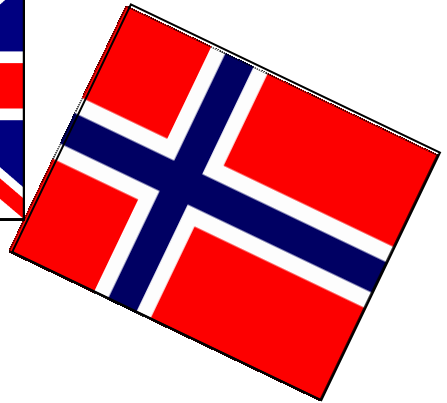
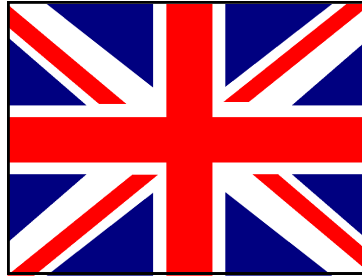


Many stories  
Many countries



CARAMBA TARAMBO

A Comenius Project...



## Foreword

### Taffy Thomas MBE, Storyteller Laureate

The Comenius Storytelling Project linked Springwood School, Bradford, with schools in Sicily and Norway. I arrived to be (as they generously put it) the "icing on the cake" for the last two days of the project, and my first impression was one of fun and excitement. Teachers and pupils alike had dipped their toes in an ocean of stories and legends, enriching their imaginations, literacy and social skills.

This confirms my beliefs that:

"People remember their history as stories" and more importantly that "the stories we choose to tell, indeed the stories we choose to listen to, are a restatement of our cultural identity - indeed of who we are."

### Sicily

Children from 3 different countries and cultures have succeeded in working together to produce these stories. That they have done it using traditional motifs to make them create and celebrate new "common ground" is both unique and worthy of celebration.

"C'era una volta un gruppo di bambini che inventava storie...". L'esperienza compiuta da docenti e bambini nel progetto "Many Stories, Many Countries One Europe" può essere raccontata come una fiaba, nella quale ogni scuola si trasforma in uno luogo incantato. Le distanze si accorciano, si fa esperienza del potere aggregante delle lingue, si crea uno scambio virtuoso fra culture diverse. Ogni classe è una fucina. Le idee si tramutano in parole. Le parole rimbalzano di bocca in bocca, prendono forma e consistenza e si dispongono in narrazione compiuta. I bambini, veri protagonisti di rilievo, confrontano dialetticamente le proprie ipotesi, rispettano i vincoli posti da altri compagni, comprendono la parzialità di ogni punto di vista, scelgono soluzioni condivise. Tutti danno un contributo all'invenzione collettiva della storia e l'intreccio si fa sempre più fitto. Si discute, si sceglie e, a volte, si critica, ma il lavoro di invenzione procede e porta l'impronta di ciascuno. Quasi magicamente si arriva al lieto fine. La fiaba, alchimia di idee, parole, emozioni e relazioni..., è pronta e può essere narrata letta e mille volte ripetuta. Vibra nell'aria "c'era una volta..."

e la fiaba si tramuta in strada maestra per l'incontro di lingue e di culture.

Maria Antonietta Marchese (segretario nazionale GISCEL).

**State Secretary**

**Lubna Jaffery**

**Fjell**

**Norwegian Ministry of Culture**

We need to meet children as competent individuals who want to share their opinions with us. Children are colour blind. They will say that discrimination is unfair and not right. Don't bully my friend. Children's participation is very important in all areas of life, in schools, at local events, in leisure organizations and international organizations.

The project "Many stories, Many countries, One Europe" is a wonderful example of how this can be done. Children from three countries coming together, making friends, learning from each other and learning about the similarities and differences in the communities of Europe, whilst making this unique and funny storybook for us to read.

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## INTRODUCTION

This publication is the final product of a European Project within the Lifelong Learning Programme. It is the result of a Comenius school partnership lasting two years. The partners were Alcide De Gasperi Primary School in Palermo, Italy, **Ulveset School in Sotra** Norway, and Springwood Community Primary School in Bradford, U.K.

The title of the project ("**Many Stories, Many Countries, One Europe**") gives an idea of its main purpose: to make young people aware of the richness and variety of each country in the Union, and of common roots established through centuries of history .

Stories are the means we have used to guide the children in that journey: from traditional stories to mixed ones, to story-salads, and to the last one - a joint story, "**Caramba Tarambol!**"

*"Stories are a window opened to the world":* (Gianni Rodari, Italian writer for children) is a notion that is accepted by all the teachers who have worked at the project. The children have studied traditional stories from the three countries and recognised similarities in their structures.

Techniques such as story cards (Karl Popper) and the story salad technique (Rodari) have been used to create new stories by mixing some elements and characters of the traditional ones and involving the pupils in an enjoyable learning process. Three models were invented to mix and create new stories: the Norwegian "Fish", the English "Mountain", the Italian "Salad Bowl", based in different theoretical approaches.

The culmination was the last phase, when the pupils created a joint story. The pupils shared a website to communicate and vote for their favourite characters and elements. These were created by the pupils and were placed on the voting website. The pupils of each school contributed to the development of the story by creating a part of it and by sending it to another school to be continued.

Beyond its fantastic plot and characters, **Caramba Tarambo!** reveals the world of today's children: their real world with current problems and the world of imagination, reflecting the influence of cartoons and computer games.

The task given required special skills and sensitivity. The pupils of each school had to continue the story written by the pupils of another country adding a new section. They had to take into account what had already been written. They had to include new elements whilst being respectful of the ideas of others, their feelings, their world; trusting they would do the same with theirs!

*"Stories have legs"*, says Taffy Thomas O.B.E the English storyteller Laureate, who visited us to help us with our project.

This story has travelled through Europe, and while travelling it has packed its luggage with treasure: cultures, languages, ideas, habits, feelings...a treasure which reflects the heritage of Europe.

Enjoy our story!      Pass it on!

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the following people who helped us in our project:

All the staff and pupils at Springwood Community Primary School, Bradford  
Alcide de Gasperi School, Palermo  
Ulveset School, Bergen  
Baldo Barone, ICT support  
Ala Ullah, ICT support  
Gacko and Tacko, Poppets Puppets  
Taffy Thomas, Storyteller Laureate  
Prom-Prom productions

# Why a comenius project...?

*The children involved in the project were falling over themselves to tell us why and what they loved about our shared story writing project, here are just a few things they said;*

'It was fun mixing up all the different stories from other countries and making a massive book!'

'I loved making the puppets to perform the Ashlad story, it was a great way of learning how to make our writing better.'

'I am proud of the other countries who had the difficult job of writing and translating the stories- they did it really well.'

'We were glad that the online voting part of the project made it fair.'

'I really enjoyed hearing other stories from Norway and Sicily, knowing that although they seem really different, some important parts are very much the same.'

I think it is fun to do the work in the Comenius Project. I liked to learn about England and Italy. I have improved my English in an interesting and fun way. I liked to write the last story together with England and Italy. That was the best part I think '

'I most liked drawing the elements of the story, because we were able to use our imagination to create fancy characters.'

'Thanks to the Comenius project I understood the meaning of words such as cooperation, imagination and thoughtlessness. It was great.'

## George and the Dragon

Far, far away in the high, high mountains in a deep, deep valley in a dark, dark cave...there lived a mighty dragon.

He could fly higher than the clouds and faster than all the birds.

He could burn down a forest with a blast of his fiery breath.

He could smash a castle wall with a flick of his mighty tail.

And he could brush away an army with a sweep of his monstrous wing.

There was nothing so fierce and so terrible as the mighty dragon.

But he had a secret. A big secret, well, actually, a very small secret...

He was terrified of mice!

Which was a pity, because that very day a mouse moved into the cave just next door.

His name was George.

Now George didn't much care for the cave next door. It was cold and dark and draughty.

The previous owner had been a bat, so the fixtures and furnishings were most inconvenient.

And the nearest cheese shop was miles and miles away.

George was feeling rather miserable. And to make matters worse...

He had NO SUGAR for his tea!

"I know" said George, "I'll just pop next door and see if I can borrow some."

So he did.

"I say, you couldn't loan me a couple of lumps of sugar, could you?" asked George.

"AAAAAAAAGH!" screamed the dragon.

And fled.

"Oh blow," groaned George. "No tea, then."

And fled.



"Oh blow," groaned George. "No tea, then."

But George did get his tea after all, with two lumps of sugar. And he got cheese, too. And nuts and berries and biscuits and crackers and cream cheese sandwiches and jelly and ice cream and fairy cakes with pink icing and...a cosy little hole in the castle wall.

## Tredicino

A man died leaving his wife and thirteen children to support. The poor woman worked hard from morning to night, but sometimes bread and polenta (corn meal mush) were lacking. One day the woman sent for her children and told them:

'I did all that I could, but I'm old now: from now on you will have to support me.'

'What should we do mother?'

'Here are some rucksacks for you and some bread. Go seek luck.'

So the thirteen children put the rucksacks on their shoulders and went away following one another.

After a long walk, they came to the King's palace and since they were starving, they knocked on his door. The King leaned out of the window, looked at them and said:

'If you want to eat you must deserve it'.

'What do we have to do you majesty?'

'A man eating wolf lives in the woods. If anyone is able to steal his blanket and bring it to me, I will give everyone something to eat'.

The children sighed, but the youngest, whose name was Thirteenth, and was small, thin and smart, said:

'I'll go to the wolf your majesty but I need something'.

'Weapons?', asked the King.

'No, just a pin as long as an arm.'

The King gave it to him and Thirteenth went in the woods. He got to the wolf's hut, climbed onto the roof, went down the chimney and hid silently and still.

After sunset the wolf came back and, since he was very tired, he soon fell asleep in his bed. Thirteenth pricked his legs and his back with the pin, so that the wolf started waving and turning while sleeping. As the wolf's blanket fell down Thirteenth grabbed it and ran away up the chimney.

You must know, the wolf had a talking parrot, which answered every question and counted the hours. The morning after the wolf woke up and asked: 'what time is it?'

'It's five o'clock and Thirteenth did it to you!'

'Thirteenth? Who is he? What did he do to me? Thirteenth is a small cunning fellow, and tonight he stole your blanket!'

'Ah, when I see him I will swallow him!'

Meanwhile, Thirteenth arrived at the palace.

'Here is the blanket, your majesty: now give something to eat to my brothers and me'.

'You will have it. But if you want to stay at my palace, you have to bring me another wolf's blanket, but be careful because it's covered with little bells'.

'Give me some cotton wool and strings you majesty.'

The King let him have what he had asked for.

Thirteenth went back into the woods and on the roof again and then down the chimney, but this time he hid under the bed.

At sunset the wolf came back and, as he was very tired for all his misdeeds, laid down and began to snore. Thirteenth, silently, filled up all the bells with cotton wool and tied them together with the string so that they couldn't make any noise. Then he grabbed the blanket and ran away. The morning after the wolf asked:

'What time is it?'

'It's four o'clock and Thirteenth did it to you again'.

'Ah that rascal! When I grab him I will suck him like a strawberry'.

Meanwhile, Thirteenth had arrived at the palace.

'Here is the blanket with the bells. Are you satisfied now?'

'I will be as soon as you bring me something I really long for'.

'What is it?'

'The wolf's parrot. The clocks in this palace are always late, but that bird is never wrong.'

'Well majesty, give me a basket full of sweets', said Thirteenth.

As soon as he had said it he went into the woods, entered the wolf's house and gave the parrot the sweets. The parrot ate so

much that it wasn't able to move, so Thirteenth put it in a bag and brought it to the palace. Then he went back into the woods. He stopped at the wolf's door and started screaming:  
'Thirteenth is dead! Thirteenth is dead!'

The wolf, who was still sleeping since he didn't have the parrot to wake him up in the morning, got up and leaned out of the window.  
'Is Thirteenth really dead? What great news! When is his funeral?'  
'As soon as I have his coffin made. I have got all the supplies, but I don't have an assistant.'  
'I'll be your assistant. This is a job I really like!'

He went out and started helping thirteenth who was sewing up boards, hammering nails and picking up shavings. And the wolf said:  
Let's hurry, we have to do a funeral.'

But the King wasn't satisfied yet.  
'I still want another thing!'  
'What is it?'  
'The wolf himself.'  
'But the wolf is very dangerous, your majesty'

'Bring him to me or I will have you hanged', the King said for he couldn't accept any disobedience.

Thirteenth was desperate. The wolf would have surely eaten him. How could his brothers go on without him? What about his old mother, who was waiting for them? He cried all night and fell asleep with the tears still on his cheeks: but he had a dream.

The morning after, he wasn't crying anymore. He went to the King and said:

'Give me a cart, some boards and nails'.

When the coffin was ready, Thirteenth said:

'I don't know if it is the right size. What if we have made it too tight or too short?'

'Right', the wolf said.

'Please, my assistant, lay down in it a moment, so I can be sure. Thirteenth is just a little shorter than you are'.

The wolf laid down in the coffin and Thirteenth, fast as the wind, shut and nailed it. The wolf asked:

'Is it good? Now please open it because I can't breathe!'

'And you will breathe worse and worse. I'm Thirteenth. I'm not dead and I shut in the coffin he who wanted my funeral!'

Then he loaded the coffin onto the cart and carried it to the palace.

## The Ashlad who had an eating match with a troll

Once upon a time, there was a farmer who had three sons; his means were small, and he was old and weak, and his sons would take to nothing. A fine large wood belonged to the farm, and one day the father told his sons to go and hew wood, and try to pay off some of his debts.

Well, after a long talk, he got them to set off, and the eldest was to go first. But when he had got well into the wood, and began to hew at a mossy old fir, what should he see coming up to him but a great sturdy troll.

"If you hew in this wood of mine," said the troll, "I'll kill you!"

When the lad heard that, he threw the axe down and ran off home as fast as he could lay legs to the ground; so he came in quite out of breath, and told them what had happened, but his father called him "hare-heart"—no troll would ever have scared him from hewing when he was young, he said.

Next day the second son's turn came, and he fared just the same. He had scarce hewn three strokes at the fir, before the troll came to him too, and said:

"If you hew in this wood of mine, I'll kill you."

The lad dared not so much as look at him, but threw down the axe, took to his heels, and came scampering home just like his brother. So when he got home, his father was angry again and said no troll had ever scared him when he was young.

The third day the Ashlad wanted to set off.

"You, indeed!" said the two elder brothers; "you'll do it bravely, no doubt! You, who have scarce ever set your foot out of the door."

The Ashlad said nothing to this, but only begged them to give him a good store of food. His mother had no cheese, so she set the pot on the fire to make him a little and he put it into a *scrip* and set off. So when he had hewn a bit, the troll came to him too, and said:

"If you hew in this wood of mine, I'll kill you."

But the lad was not slow; he pulled his cheese out of the scrip in a trice, and squeezed it till the whey spurted out.

"Hold your tongue!" he cried to the troll, "or I'll squeeze you as I squeeze the water out of this white stone."

"Nay, dear friend!" said the troll, "only spare me, and I'll help you to hew."

Well, on those terms the lad was willing to spare him, and the troll hewed so bravely, that they felled and cut up many, many fathoms in the day.

"Hold your tongue!" he cried to the troll, "or I'll squeeze you as I squeeze the water out of this white stone."

"Nay, dear friend!" said the troll, "only spare me, and I'll help you to hew."

Well, on those terms the lad was willing to spare him and the troll hewed so bravely, that they felled and cut up many, many **fathoms** in the day.

But when evening drew near, the troll said:

"Now you'd better come home with me, for my house is nearer than yours."

So the lad was willing enough; and when they reached the troll's house, the troll was to make up the fire, while the lad went to fetch water for their porridge and there stood two iron pails, so big and heavy, that he couldn't so much as lift them from the ground.

"Pooh!" said the lad, "it isn't worth while to touch these finger-basins. I'll just go and fetch the spring itself."

"Nay, nay, dear friend!" said the troll; "I can't afford to lose my spring; just you make up the fire and I'll go and fetch the water."

So when he came back with the water, they set to and boiled up a great pot of porridge.

"It's all the same to me," said the lad; "but if you're of my mind, we'll eat a match!"

"With all my heart," said the troll, for he thought he could surely hold his own in eating. So they sat down; but the lad took his **scrip** unawares to the troll and hung it before him and so he spooned more into the **scrip** than he ate himself; and when the **scrip** was full, he took up his knife and made a slit in the **scrip**. The troll looked on all the while, but said never a word. So when they had eaten a good bit longer, the troll laid down his spoon, saying, "Nay! but I can't eat a morsel more."

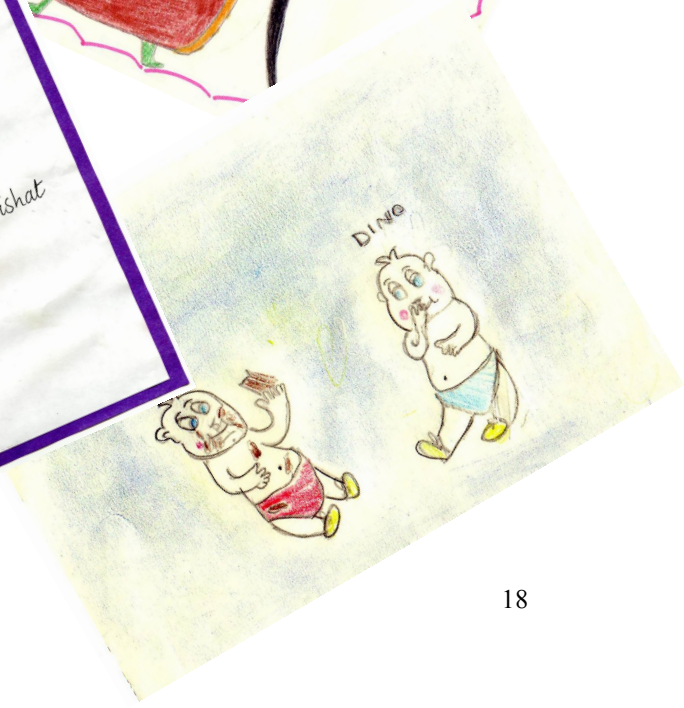
"But you shall eat," said the youth; "I'm only half done; why don't you do as I did, and cut a hole in your paunch? You'll be able to eat then as much as you please."



"But doesn't it hurt one cruelly?" asked the troll.

"Oh," said the youth, "nothing to speak of."

So the troll did as the lad said, and then you must know very well that he lost his life; but the lad took all the silver and gold that he found in the hill-side, and went home with it, and you may fancy it went a great way to pay off the debt.









DO You Know the tale of the Ashlad  
Who could never stop talking and ended  
up tricking in to a coffin... Dirty old  
objects



THE  
Princess  
Would never  
stop speaking  
And eventually mamed  
someone who played a  
trick using dirty old  
objects



## **"Caramba Tarambo! "**

### **The story of Mirko and his amazing talking lizard**

Long, long ago there lived a rich and proud family. They had a marvellous life together, until...their father disappeared one night in a mysterious, unexplained way.

There was only one choice - to look for him. The family searched high and low, but they had to conclude he must have been murdered! His wife could not bear it so she asked her eldest and bravest son to venture into the creepy eerie woods to find his dear father. Before he left, she told Mirko;

"Take this lizard, so that you are not alone and have company during your journey"

Mirko replied;

"Thank you for giving me this chance to prove myself, I will not return until I find Dad, dead or alive"

They were interrupted by a voice from below;

"Hey good looking...what's cooking?" said Tarambo, the talking lizard. Mirko was shocked,

"I didn't realise Tarambo could talk!" he said to his Mum "but I am happy I have someone to talk with on my quest"

So, Mirko began his dangerous journey. In order to leave the village where he had lived his whole life, he headed through the mist and towards the creepy eerie woods. The haunted hotel at the heart of the woods was in his sight.

As he entered, he knew there was no turning back.

Progressing into the terrifying woods, his imagination began to run away with him. He heard a twig snap and swung round abruptly. A shadow moved in front of him.

"Is anyone there?" he gasped.

Selvaggus Malvaggus appeared from behind the darkness of a tree. Mirko saw his evil red eyes and sharp long nails .

"Halloween's over, take off that mask, man!" Tarambo screeched, with a grin on his face and a wink. ...

Selvaggus Malvaggus didn't have time to answer, the cunning lizard had already climbed up the tree and tried to pull off his face.

Tarambo tried to take that greenish, dirty mask off, pulling hard at his spotty nose.

Selvaggus Malvaggus gave a cry and Tarambo realized that it was not a mask but the face of that horrible creature!

Selvaggus Malvaggus with a terrifying hiss started swelling and swelling and a slimy, green web spurted from his hands.



"Ah, ah ah!! This is not a mask! I am really the sticky, horrible, scary and perfidious Selvaggus Malvaggus!!!" The monster said.

"Oh no! What do we do now, Tarambo?" Mirko asked.

"Easy! Let's get away!!!" said the cunning animal. So they ran off.

Meanwhile, at Mirko's house, everybody was worried...

"Oh my dear Pino, Oh my dear Dino, I'm wondering what your brother is doing and who knows if he is well!" said their mother over and over.

The young Dino cheered her up: "Don't worry mum, Mirko is good and brave!"

Mirko and Tarambo ran long through the creepy, eerie woods and didn't stop until they suddenly spotted something....

"Look, at that hotel! I'm a little scared" Tarambo said.

It was a strange, haunted hotel, covered by thick vegetation and it looked abandoned.

"Let's get in and explore" said Mirko, who was curious.

They climbed the stairs and saw lots of numbered rooms.

The two saw the number 234 written in red on a wall.

Mirko, intrigued, decided to look for room 234 and while they were approaching the room they met a strange man wearing a large brown hat and a long purple cloak who begged them to come in.

Mirko said: "Yes! I can't wait!"

Tarambo shook his head, but he didn't have the time to open his mouth before he found himself inside the room with Mirko.

The strange man's name was Nebrus, Doctor Nebrus: part magician part scientist. Mirko and Tarambo were speechless as he started speaking meaningless words: "Tiperis ulucum seffirid vonung". At the end of the strange formula, a door opened....

"Dad, Dad, it's you!!" cried Mirko, surprised and incredulous, as he saw his father standing in the middle of the room.

"Are you all right? Come on hurry, let's go away, let's go home!", but his father said he couldn't. He had borrowed some money from a sticky, horrible scary fellow. Selvaggus Malvaggus was his name. He had threatened him and wanted his money back. He would kill him if he found him!

Mirko tried to think of a way to free him and was about to ask Nebrus for advice, when he realized he had disappeared. Suddenly the hotel started shaking and they heard a loud noise. The noise became louder and louder and everything in the room was shaking. Mirko looked at Tarambo and his father and said, "What is it?" Then Nebrus came in, his eyes were opened wide as he said: "He is here, he has arrived and knows about you two...."

"Who knows?" asked Mirko.

"He" answered Dr. Nebrus.

"Who is he?"

"He is the most scary and evil monster of all time" cried the father.

"Don't let him in!"

"Ooooh a scary monster," said Tarambo. "I am sooo afraid."

"Stop being funny," said Dr. Nebrus. "We are really in great danger here."

Selvaggius Malvaggius was already pounding at the door. They could hear him breaking through. Mirko and the others were really frightened.

"I'll kill you!" said Selvaggius Malvaggius. "You owe me money!"

"I'm broke," said the father with panic in his voice.

"And I'll kill the rest of you as well just for the fun of it" said Selvaggius Malvaggius.

He had broken through the door and was standing in the middle of the room. His evil eyes were glowing redder than ever and his nails were sharp and ready to cut them open and kill them.

"Ready to fight monster boy?" asked Tarambo. "Let's dance!"

"Don't annoy him" said the father. "He'll make us pay!"

"What shall we do?" asked Mirko.

"We need to hide," Dr. Nebrus said. "Everybody in the cupboard."

"The CUPBOARD? He broke down the door, why do you think the cupboard will help?" cried the father.

"Just do it," said Dr. Nebrus.

Everyone went inside the cupboard. Mirko's father leaned against the wall. On the wall there was a button.

"Push it," Dr. Nebrus said.

"This is a time machine I made 20 years ago!"

"The button says 85 years back in time" cried Mirko's father and pushed the button.

After a few seconds, they carefully opened the cupboard door and looked outside. They were still at the hotel and in the same room, but it was all different. It looked new.

"What happened?" asked Mirko

"We are 85 years back in time" answered the father.

"The hotel is all new" replied Dr. Nebrus. "My family owned it back then," he said.

They went out in the hall. From the room next door they could hear yelling and someone being hit very hard repeatedly. Suddenly the door opened and a small boy came into the hall. He looked down and didn't see them....

"Poor boy" the father said

"SELVAGGIUS MALVAGGIUS!" A voice cried from inside the room.

"Come back here, I'm not done with you yet!"

Selvaggius Malvaggius, they all wondered. Just a little boy, not a monster. What happened to him?

"So what are we going to do now?" Mirko asked. "We are 85 years back in time and have a monster knocking on the cupboard door trying to kill us in our time....."

"Houston, we have a problem!" Tarambo said.

Just at that moment, the man who had been hitting the young Selvaggius Malvaggius, walked past Tarambo, Mirko, Dr Nebrus & the Father. The man had a blank face, he was emotionless.

Tarambo whispered, "He looks like his heart is as cold as a robot's."

As the old man swivelled abruptly, the four time travellers gasped...

Astonished, the Father turned to Dr Nebrus and spluttered, "He's got the same scar as my Grandfather...the man who beat young Selvaggius Malvaggius was my very own Grandfather..."

There was no time for Mirko's Father to consider his realisation, because Tarambo was trying to impress a beautiful lady lizard, by posing next to the time machine. Then he accidentally pressed the button on the outside of the closet door.

Suddenly, the four time travellers saw the closet shake into life and in a puff of smoke, they had disappeared.

"Is this heaven...?" Tarambo enquired, puzzled.

Mirko responded "You fool! You pressed the button again, where have we ended up this time?"

Dr Nebrus turned to the machine and read "75 years ago. We've travelled forwards ten years."

There was no time to consider what this meant. At that moment, the young Selvaggius Malvaggius, still a boy, rounded the corner, tripped on a branch and slipped into a deep lake of green, bubbling slime. He screamed as the time travellers looked on in horror, Mirko's Father ran over to pull him out, but his hand passed straight through Selvaggius, and he didn't appear to notice that he was being offered a helping hand. Selvaggius slid below the bubbling slime with a 'plop', as the others watched, powerless to help. It was then the time travellers realised they were invisible to the people who they saw back in time...

"They can't see us or hear us!" exclaimed Mirko.



Selvaggius Malvaggius emerged from the heaving slime...no longer a young boy, but the quivering, beastly monster they all knew.

"The quick-slime must have turned Selvaggius into an evil monster!" concluded Tarambo.

"But how and why?" questioned Mirko.

"There is no time to explain," the Dr responded, "later it will become clear."

Meanwhile, back in the present day, Selvaggius Malvaggius was beginning to break down the door screeching "Open the door or I'll break it down and bury you alive!"

"My psychic powers are telling me we must return to the present day and face Selvaggius, but to give us a head start, I will use the power of the mind to hypnotise him ...." Dr Nebrus said.

Selvaggius Malvaggius moved away from the door and felt a tingling through his whole body...he suddenly began to flap his arms up and down and squawk like a chicken, he moved away from the door.

Mirko, his Father, Dr Nebrus & Tarambo burst through the cupboard door, to be met by Selvaggius Malvaggius hopping around and "buck, buck bucking" like a chicken...

"We have just an hour and then the effect of the hypnosis will run out. Go and have a rest in the room next door. I still have something important to do," Dr Nebrus said to his companions. So they settled in the room next-door trying not to think of the horrible monster.

In the meantime, Mirko's father wanted to tell his son everything about the debt, and so he began, "My father, your grandfather, died when I was very young and he left me all the riches his family had accumulated through the years. When you were born, I decided to take it and keep it with me to use it in times of need. A few days ago, while I was coming back home, I passed through the forest and that horrible, deceitful Selvaggius Malvaggius appeared. He accused me of stealing his treasure and he said he wanted it back. When I told him my father had donated it to me, Selvaggius got more and more angry and gave a yell which shook the whole forest: 'YOU LIE! I lent that money to your father, so it belongs to me!' Then he trapped me into a slimy, green web and took me away!"

Mirko listened to his father's story and understood how frightened and worried he was, so he said in a reassuring and firm tone, "I know it's terrible, Dad, but we can save ourselves. Now go back home, so everyone will know you are safe"

"But how will you deal with Selvaggius Malvaggius?" his father asked.

"Nebrus and I will get out of this. We will defeat him" Mirko said, while his Father left the hotel. "We could feed him on Tarambo... ih ih!" he said laughing and giving his father a wink.

"WHAT??!! You won't sacrifice a brilliant, efficient, brave and unique lizard such as me!" Tarambo said.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nebrus went back to Selvaggus Malvaggus. The monster was still hopping around and, thanks to his power, Dr Nebrus succeeded in entering into the deepest of the monster's mind and discovered his most hidden memories. What he saw was astonishing and he ran to his friends in the room next door.

"I have extraordinary news!" he said.

"Spit it out! (or 'let the lizard out of the bag!')" Tarambo cried impatiently.

Nebrus got closer to Mirko and told him; "Selvaggus Malvaggus.... is your grandfather!"

"My Grandfather is still alive? Oh no! My Grandfather is Selvaggus!"

"Yes and I'm David Beckham!" Tarambo sniggered.

"Wait Nebrus, you mean that muddy, slimy monster, that horrible creature is really my grandfather?" Mirko asked, incredulous.

But there was no time for an answer, because they heard a roar coming from room 234. Doors and windows were locked and boiling, green slime started filling the room.

In a few moments they would be submerged...and transformed! Suddenly they heard a voice coming from above, "Hey, we're here! Mirko, Tarambo up here, come on!"

Tarambo climbed along the wall following that voice, "Mirko, its Dino and Pino your younger brothers! Quick! They've found a way out. You wanted to sacrifice Super-Tarambo, did you?"

The lizard had extended his tail so as to create a bridge to the air vent. Mirko and Nebrus climbed up along Tarambo's tail and they were about to reach the end when Selvaggus emerged from the green slime and started throwing sticky webs at them.....

They were all hoping to find a way out. Mirko looked behind and saw the Lady Lizard. She had followed them into the room.

"Hurry up! Get in here or you will become a monster", Mirko said.

He saw a rope hanging from the roof and threw it to the Lady Lizard. She grabbed on to it and Mirko pulled her into the vent.

The others were already on their way to freedom. Mirko knew he

was fast so he picked up both Tarambo and the Lady Lizard and crawled as fast as he could to catch the others. He could feel the green sticky slime coming closer and closer. If he didn't hurry up, he would be submerged. The vent led to the roof. He was finally free!

"We have to stop the sticky green mud from coming up here", he said. Mirko picked up a piece of metal and blocked the green slime from emerging from the vent.

"The metal won't hold long" Mirko said.

"I know of a way down" said Dr. Nebrus. "Underneath these bricks over here is a ladder. The ladder can unfold and we can climb it all the way down."

They all started their way towards the ground. As Dr Nebrus sat his feet on the ground he fell and hurt his foot. He was unable to walk properly, so Mirko picked him up on his shoulders and they all ran into the eerie wood. Dino and Pino clapped their hands and said "Big brother, very strong!"

"I've got an idea" said Mirko, "let's make a trap for Selvaggus Malvaggus. I need all of you to help me build it". They started digging a deep hole in the ground using Tarambo's tail and branches. They covered the hole with leaves and branches. They found a mirror and placed it so they were reflected in it, but they were actually hiding behind a tree. They were ready to stop Selvaggus Malvaggus.....

The ugly green Selvaggus could be seen in the distance, just coming over the faraway hills.

"Positions everybody, brace yourselves, I can see him"

A few moments later, he was so close, they could hear his breathing...

"Pheew! I can smell his eggy breath from here" whispered Tarambo. At that moment, Mirko gave the first signal..."I'm over heeeeeere...." He called in a singsong voice.

"Where are you, I want to tear your guts out..." Selvaggus snapped. They all ran out from behind the tree, and stood just in front of the trap. They began to tease and torment Selvaggus, until he was furious. The veins were sticking out of his forehead, his face was bright red and his whole body was shaking. He ran towards his tormentors. They moved away from the trap. Selvaggus stepped into a loop of rope, which was attached to the nearby tree and he was flipped upside down by his ankle.

"Let me go this instant!" he demanded, as he dangled upside down.

"Hola! Hola!" they sang, as they whacked Selvaggus with a stick.  
"Your momma's gonna feel this one, I hear she's so ugly that she turned Medusa to stone..."

"Ouch ouch, stop hitting me"

"I'm waiting for the sweets to fall out."

"Hey, I'm not a piñata," replied Selvaggus.

At that moment, a huge storm arose. Tarambo and the others dived for cover, as lightning filled the skies above. The lightning struck the tree and the branch snapped. Selvaggus fell into the trap ....

They all ran and looked into the hole. "Right in the centre! You've won a goldfish!" Tarambo said.

"Looook! The monster is sleeping!!" Dino and Pino said.

"Well done! It's your turn now, Nebrus" Mirko said "I can't introduce my grandfather to my parents like that. He could eat them!"

"You're right Mirko", Nebrus said pulling out a test tube full of a red and purple liquid. "When we were still in the past and I saw Selvaggus emerging from the green quick-slime lake, I took a sample of it with my powerful *Instantaneumanalizatorislimus*. When I discovered who Selvaggus really was, I created the SLOW-SLIME. Thanks to it everything will be fixed. You'll have your grandfather back and your family will finally meet him!"

"What a great thing! I can't wait...but how can we give him the antidote? He is waking up!" Tarambo climbed on Mirko's shoulder and said: "Listen friend! Do you remember when I jumped on Selvaggus' head when we first met him in the forest? He begged me not to tickle him. He looked terrified!"

"Good!" Mirko said "I know what to do! I'm going down the hole with you two" he said to Tarambo and the Lady Lizard "and while you are tickling him with your tails I'll have him to drink the antidote....."

"NOOOO!" Nebrus cried "He mustn't drink it. You have to use it as nasal drops. But be careful, just eight drops in each nostril!"

And so they did. Dino and Pino looked into the hole and said: "They are all dancing! There is a party down the hole!"

As the "dance" finished, Mirko and the two lizards climbed up again and they all waited for the monster to transform. A few minutes after, there was an explosion and bright pink smoke came from the hole. Mirko's heart was beating fast, while Pino and Dino were screaming "Grandpa! Grandpa!" but...the same monster emerged from the hole. His face, however, was different. He had a sweet look and he was smiling.

"Oh no!" They all screamed. "Something didn't work! He is good again, but he still looks like a monster!" Nebrus said, "let's see.... snail slime, caterpillar poo, ox earwax, uranium, a small part of quick



slime, lizard tail...."

"What?" Tarambo said looking at his back "Pheew! Mine is still here!"

"The *Ruscus aculeatus*!!!!" I've forgot it!!!" Nebrus cried "Rus-what?" Everybody asked. "It's a very rare berry. It's green with purple dots. It can be found only in this forest but it grows only among brambles and big shrubs!" Nebrus said.

"Here it is!!" Dino and Pino said, handing the berries to him. Nebrus gave the berry to Selvaggus who swallowed it...

"Oh nooo..... that berry was all wrong....." said Dr. Nebrus. Selvaggus Malvaggus had stepped out of the hole, but he had turned into a girl.

"Oh nooo" Tarambo said, "we're all gonna get girly lice."

"Stop kidding around" Dr Nebrus said. "We need the blue berries, hurry up and find some before he becomes a girl forever".

They all ran looking for blue berries.

"We found some!" Dino and Pino said. Dr Nebrus fed the berries to their grandfather. He started coughing and started to stink.

"What is happening"?

"Dino pooped on the berries" Pino said. "You can't poop on the job," Tarambo said.

Green smoke came from the grandfather this time. They were all waiting, anxious to see what would happen to the grandfather this time around.

"He is back" Tarambo cried. "Who? Selvaggus?" Mirko asked. "I did it" cried Dr. Nebrus as they all saw the grandfather standing in front of them. " I did it, I did it, I did it" Dr. Nebrus was jumping up and down and hugging everyone.

"Hello" grandfather said. "Is it really you?" Mirko asked. "Yes, and thank you all so much for finally saving me" the grandfather said.

"Please take me home to meet my son and the rest of your family Mirko".

As they all were leaving the eerie wood something happened. The wood became the nicest place with beautiful flowers and green hills.

"Oh look at the hotel!" Mirko said. The hotel looked as good as new.

"I'd better get back" Dr. Nebrus said.

The rest of them went back to Mirko's family. It was a happy reunion. A few weeks later, Tarambo and the lady Lizard got married in the hotel and everybody lived happily ever after.





