

I AM A BOY

Once upon a time...

Once upon a time...

Once upon a time...

A BOY!

When he was born, the boy was little, very little. He was so little that he didn't know anything.

He only knew how to breathe.

He also knew how to cry,
and laugh.

And he also knew how to watch.

The boy had a tongue.

With his tongue he discovered the world.

And he slept, he slept a lot. And he dreamt.

The boy was so little, that where they left him, there he stayed.

He learned to sit. From up there the world was very big.

The beings of the world called him out: the stones, the ants, and the river.

The river was like an animal that would never stay still.

In the middle of the meadow of sweet, soft grass there was a TREE.

And there the boy spent his life, playing.

From the top of the tree, the boy could see, behind the mountains, the sea.

"I am the king!"

"I am the king..."

When it was hot, the boy dressed with the shadows of all the leaves, and then he was happy.

And when it was cold, the tree wrapped the boy up with its branches, and then he was happy.

Kisses and laughter: that was his world.

He felt as if his Tree sometimes sang lullabies for him, so that he would dream among the branches...

Time did not seem to pass, but it did pass.

The Tree, with its fruits, grew and grew looking at the sun, just as boys grow.

And the boy grew just as trees grow: stronger every day, every day taller; until he became A YOUNGSTER.

From the top of the top of his beloved Tree, the youngster who had once been a boy saw the world: the meadow, the river, the wheat field, the forest and beyond,

"the city."

The city called him out.

Then the youngster learned to think. And he thought and thought. And one day, after thinking for a long time looking at the city, he came down his Tree.

"There, I will be happy. For sure."

And he left.

He ran through the meadow of sweet, soft grass,
crossed the river,

he advanced through the wheat field hardly touching the ground,
went into the fantastic and mysterious forest,
he came to a fence.

“(What are fences for?)”

Then he took the path that led him away and away to the city.

The city was full of things: of houses, of clocks, of washing machines, of traffic lights, of cars, sidewalks, shops, buses, ice creams, statues, streetlamps, dustbins, dogs, people, noises, bags, lights, lights, lights, and screens that called him out.

The city was wonderful.

But it was so full...; nothing to do with the branches of his Tree.

In the city there were such tall buildings that the sun was almost never seen.

One had to learn how to live there.

And so he did.

The youngster who had once been a boy became A MAN.

He put on a pair of men's shoes.

Those shoes were fabulous: they went where they wanted.

He learned to walk like a man, to greet like a man, to speak like a man, to laugh like a man.

And he learned to work.

Now he could earn money, like a real man.

He had to work in order to earn money; earn money to have things; have things to live; live to work; work to earn money; earn money to have things, things, things; earn money, have money, money...

“...money, money, money... Money!”

The shoes wanted to go to work.

The man, who had been a youngster who had been a boy, was not very happy, to tell the truth: he felt cold in that city where the sun was almost never seen.

Then one night at home, when he was in bed,
just before falling asleep,
he dreamt of a boy climbing trees.

"I am the king!"

And he felt the warmth among the branches...

"I am the king."

Then he fell asleep.
When the man woke up, he did not go to work.
He walked through the city, full of things, houses, shops, cars,
to the path that led him away and away to the fence.

"(What are fences for?)"

He went into the cold dark forest,
he advanced through the wheat field unable to see his feet,
he crossed the river.
He felt the sweet, soft grass under his feet.

"I am a man."

Men do not climb trees.

**"My fruits... If I sold them in the city, I would have a lot, a lot of money.
Then I will be happy. For sure."**

He took all of them.
He took all... but one.
And with his fruits, he went to the city.

There he sold them and made a lot of money.

Thus, the boy who later became a youngster and then a man became A GENTLEMAN.

And he learned to do as gentlemen do.

He was always busy now.

At night, when he was at home, he was cold and felt alone. Cold at night and cold in the morning. And alone. Cold and alone, cold and alone, cold, cold, cold....

One night, just before falling asleep,
he dreamt of a boy climbing trees.

"I am the king!"

And he felt the warmth among the branches...

"I am the king..."

Then he fell asleep.

The next morning, the gentleman did not go to work. He went through the city full of buses and people,
to the path that led him away and away...

"(What are fences for?)"

the forest

the wheat field

the river

"I am quite a gentleman, but I've been very cold.

In your branches it's really warm."

He didn't cut the last one because he thought his Tree would remain too naked. Besides, he had enough branches and with them, and their warmth, he would be happy. For sure.

Branches become wood, and wood burns and provides warmth. So, with them, the gentleman who had once been a man, a youngster and a boy, lit a fire at the foot of his bed. And then he wasn't cold anymore. And the smoke brought him the perfume of his Tree. And he wasn't lonely anymore.

He dreamt of a boy climbing trees.

"I am the king!"

And he dreamt of some little boats dancing down the river....

"I am the king..."

But one by one, the branches burnt until there was no one left.

"Oh, it's so cold.

I can't take it anymore.

I'm sick of this city.

I am leaving."

"(But what are fences for?)"

He got to his Tree. His Tree...

Then, looking far beyond the mountains, he felt

"the sea:"

salt, fish... and sun.

"I'm going to the other side of the world.

There I will not be cold.

There, I will be happy.

For sure."

He kept very carefully that last fruit his Tree gave him.

Now, the Tree had only his feet left, holding on firmly to the earth.

He built himself a little boat and threw it into the river

(the wood of his Tree knew how to float!).

He felt that the shoes were too heavy (they were not so fabulous).

And thought it would be better to travel lighter.

And the little boat made out from his tree led him to the sea.

And the sea led him to the other side of the world.

"The other side of the world!"

There he learned to be happy. He learned to live with women and men quite different from him. He learned other languages; he ate other fruits and danced other dances.

And he, who had once had many things in his life, knew that now he needed nothing else but kisses and laughter.

And kisses and laughter he had.

And thus, he was happy, so far from everything.

But now, his body did not obey the boy: some bones listened to him, but others laughed at him. One hand trembled when it wanted. And many teeth had escaped his mouth. One ear was good for hearing, the other for not hearing. The eyes saw just what they liked. And his tongue often said words that the boy did not mean. It was quite funny. The knees, when they got bored, would bend....

Where he fell, there he stayed.

Yes, it is true: now the boy's body did not work very well. Now the boy was an OLD MAN.

He slept a lot. And dreamt.

He dreamt of a boy climbing trees.

One morning, when he managed to stand up, he realized that, no, no, he would not climb trees anymore.

He decided he wanted to come back.

He spent days and weeks walking across the world until he felt the sweet, soft grass of the meadow caressing his feet.

"I am a boy!"

"I am a boy."

"I am a boy..."

Then, of that last fruit that one day his Tree gave him, he took out the seed and sowed it.

He covered it well with soil so that it could also dream of becoming a big, strong tree.

There, with his tree, was the boy, who had once been a youngster, a man, quite a gentleman, and finally an old man.

"Now, I just want to rest with you."