

'Dear Diary' by Gabriella Petrillo

2nd November 2273

Dear Diary,

Everything is abolished. Conventional civilization has ceased to exist.

Fields have been poisoned by infrastructure and what was a careless community. Trees have shrivelled into weak stick figures; waving with cracked fingers at the toxic wind that billowed across this dystopian wasteland. Pollution and destruction dominated, leaving those with the hearts to remain to suffer in this annihilation. This time, many years ago, was the day Oldham was turned upside down for the benefit of evil. It has since then become a lost location, erased from society.

Yesterday I returned to my solitary hut upon the Northern Roots grounds. Morale was low. Rations were lower. The deep grumble of my stomach reminded me of the fresh fruits that once thrived in glistening sunlight- in this very spot. How I longed to undergo the sensation of satisfaction whilst walking in a beautiful field surrounded by blossoms falling like rain; reflecting sunlight causing a rainbow of pastel to cascade through the air. Before me stood the bench, the only remaining memory of what was a perfect town. I ignored its carvings and crevices and one missing leg (which I replaced with a rock) as its rustic sign still read 'Nature is a beauty,

don't take it for granted, enjoy it!' This quote was written anonymously, by one who saw the world before the enemy of pollution struck. To this day I still ponder about who could have written such an uplifting quote.

There is a vigorous wind building, I shall return with my writing when I have obtained warmth and shelter.

The sun has just lowered beyond the horizon, dragging away a blanket of mixed grey. An evening chill is running up and down my spine and a winter tingle has reached my fingertips. I have the most extraordinary thing to share...

A strengthening wind carried leaves and feather-light twigs through the Northern Roots park. Each billow caused me to lose balance and almost topple to the muddy ground. At one point, a powerful gust of wind blew me into the bench, displacing the "rocky" leg. A cold gasp escaped my mouth. Desperately, I tried to dig a deep hole to replace the rock in a sturdier position; soil blackening my nails with every scrape.

Then I stopped...

I had found a small container. My breath suddenly became fast and heavy. I cautiously opened the lid and a warm feeling spread around my body. Various seeds tumbled around inside. The fate of my home lay between my palms. I carried the container as if it were a new-born baby, considering it a sin if I dropped it. Reluctantly, I searched for a suitable growing location, but before planting I wrote in the ground, 'Nature is a beauty, don't take it for granted, enjoy it!', finishing with many hearts in which I planted the



precious seeds in the middle of. This is the start of a new
Oldham. A new life.