



THE BROCKWOOD

OBSERVER

The newsletter of
Brockwood Park School
Founded by J.Krishnamurti
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Editorial.

By Ruby Rose & Ayla Czimmek

To give a sense of why we wanted to edit the Observer, we could give the obvious answers. We like to make things look nice, we are attracted to the challenge of it, we used to make little magazines for our families when we were growing up. All of this is true and operating on some level. But, as third year returners we are just getting to grips with our multi-year project of how to be here. This gave rise to a deeper reason for editing this issue and we hope these few paragraphs can give you a sense of it.

For many returning Brockwood students 2021 to 22 has been the first complete year since we arrived at the school. We, like the rest of the world, really went through something during Covid-19. We had seen things together. We were literally stuck but in another way the student body really moved.

We realised certain simple things were, just... well...really nice when at Brockwood. All spending time together as a community. Not being glued to our phones. Not splintering off into groups. These things became very real for us; something other than just rules we choose to follow or rally against. This naturally brought us closer to our teachers, as we dropped that inclination to reduce them to symbols of authority.

On the first day of this school year we gathered on the south lawn chattering awkwardly over cakes, with the year stretched out in front of us like the uninterrupted view of the South

Downs National Park. The returners worried about how to convey all this to the new students. How to navigate our teenage lives, relate to words like responsibility, freedom and perhaps, on occasion, catch a little glimpse of something real beyond all anxieties of day to day living.

Reflecting back, I think we were successful. Now the world is turning again; the masks off and the energy flowing. The school and the student body feel simpler, closer and calmer than at any other time since we joined. A special atmosphere, so hard to quantify or measure, is here. We wanted the Observer to give a sense of this. Less about what Brockwood, or humanity should be and more about how cool it actually is.

It's Saturday morning in early May. Many in our community are working to complete another multi-year project; The raising of a barn. (see page 20) Dozens of people gather in the dusty sunlight. Hours pass with everyone problem solving, working and smiling together. All focussed on a shared intent. This beautiful day, earned over many months will be gone in an instant and soon become a tiny input in a lifetime of memories

But that feeling, that atmosphere between us may, like the timber structure that frames it, leave a legacy for generations to come. It might make an intangible contribution the next time the new students gather on the south lawn. Or not...in which case at least we got a nice Observer out of it!•







When we are very young it is a delight to be alive, to hear the birds of the morning, to see the hills after rain, to see those rocks shining in the sun, the leaves sparkling, to see the clouds go by and to rejoice on a clear morning with a full heart and a clear mind.

We lose this feeling when we grow up, with worries, anxieties, quarrels, hatreds, fears and the everlasting struggle to earn a livelihood.

We spend our days in battle with each other, disliking and liking, with a little pleasure now and then. We never hear the birds, see the trees as we once saw them, see the dew on the grass and the bird on the wing and the shiny rock on a mountainside glistening in the morning light. We never see all that when we are grown up.

Why? I do not know if you have ever asked that question. I think it necessary to ask it. If you do not ask it now, you will soon be caught. You will go to college, get married, have children, husbands, wives, responsibilities, earn a livelihood, and then you will grow old and die. That is what happens to people. We have to ask now, why we have lost this extraordinary feeling for beauty, when we see flowers, when we hear birds? Why do we lose the sense of the beautiful? I think we lose it primarily because we are so concerned with ourselves. We have an image of ourselves•

~ Jiddu Krishnamurti

From 'Krishnamurti On Education',
Talks to students. ch. 8

A World Re-turning.

By Tom Power

Thank God that's over? Covid-19 Leads across the country find happiness in no longer being needed.

The pandemic has shone a new light on the human condition and made us face some interesting questions. What would you do if everything stopped? What did you do? What's really important? There have also been a range of quite unexpected outcomes. Whilst the pandemic remains an event that no-one would deliberately instigate, there are some other stories you may not have heard of.

In South Africa, an unprecedented truce broke out in April 2020 in the notorious, gang-infested townships around Cape Town, as rival gang leaders stop their endless turf wars and instead brought food to struggling households. Applications to degree programs hosted by the Harvard Chan School of Public Health increased over 40%, and applications to the Epidemiology program for doctors increased 177%. The health inequality endemics in many countries have been pulled into focus and dialogues are now taking place, and, while mental health has worsened for many, especially young people, the status of mental health has risen to sit on par with that of physical health.

“A job i'm glad is no longer needed”

Statistics and science have become sought after in new ways and 'rockstar statisticians' have emerged such as Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter who highlighted one such outcome concerning young people. “If you look at people between 15 and 30 in 2020, 300 fewer died than would normally have died, and that includes the 100 that died from Covid-19, sadly. So that's 300 fewer families mourning the death of a young person because young people were essentially locked up. They couldn't go out driving fast, they couldn't go out and get drunk, and they couldn't get into fights and whatever,

and so all these lives were saved.” “We've also learned something about the role of women in politics,” points out Stephen Walt, the Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Affairs, “In particular, we've discovered a very intriguing phenomenon; countries that were led by women seem to have done better on average than countries led by men. To be sure, there are some countries with male leaders that have done quite well and not every country with a female leader has handled it perfectly. I could also point to some states in the United States with female governors that haven't done particularly well. Nonetheless, it's intriguing that Taiwan, New Zealand, Denmark, Germany, Finland — all countries with female executives — are at the high end of performance in responding to this crisis. We don't know if this a direct causal relationship — is there something about these female leaders that made them more effective, more empathetic, or more convincing?”

I sometimes think of the other, now increasingly defunct, Covid-Leads in staff rooms and offices across the country as the pandemic fades away and countries begin to remove the restrictions that have held sway for the last few years. This is a job I'm quite glad is no longer needed! As individuals and organisations, we have a great capacity to adapt to new challenges and 'find a way through' but I wonder what we are maintaining. Krishnamurti often spoke about challenge and how we often try to meet it with thought. In his Commentaries on Living he asks, “Challenge is always new, fresh; and can thought, idea, ever be new? When thought meets the challenge, which is ever new, is not that response the outcome of the old, the past? When the old meets the new, inevitably the meeting is incomplete; and this incompleteness is thought in its restless search for completeness.”

So what is it to meet a challenge without thought? Perhaps we'll find out when we face Influenza 2025•



Changing the World, One Dish at a Time.

By Rowan Davies

Let's face it, the food industry is a complete shambles. I doubt you need an explanation, but I'll give you one anyway. You go out for lunch - not to a health food restaurant, or a fast food place - to an average restaurant. You pay £10-15 for a meal that they made for £3. It didn't taste amazing, and neither you nor the earth benefited at all, apart from the fact that you're full.

“I want this revolution to happen”

The food industry has been corrupted by money and become something that only cares about profit lines, sales and tax evasion. It needs to change, and it will. I want to help this revolution happen.

My mission is to start my own food truck providing vegan, sustainable, zero waste, seasonal and tasty food to my community so that my customers know exactly what goes into their mouths, and why I have selected each ingredients. Unlike the current food industry, I want to be transparent with my financial processes by creating a live website where people can see what their money is going towards.





All ingredients I buy will be sustainable, organic and sourced by local fairtrade farmer friends. Leftover food will go to homeless shelters or Buddhist monasteries.

I will ensure that the ingredients I use are of the highest quality, and balance flavour with nutrition and sustainability in mind.

“Seaweed in an aloo gobi”

As an example, try wakame seaweed as a spinach replacement in an aloo gobi. Spinach absorbs toxins and chemicals from the soil, whereas wakame is much healthier, tastes the same and is naturally organic. Or, use rice that has been grown using the SRI method, where rice gets spaced out evenly in the ground, so the plant’s energy goes to the rice and not the roots. The average dry kilo of rice grown normally takes 4,000-5,000 litres of water - excluding that for cleaning and cooking - while the SRI method takes half as much water and doubles the yield of rice.

If I become successful enough I will help other vegan waste-conscious food trucks to get started. I want to be a leader and a follower in the conscious food industry and support fellow chefs.

The principles I have explained can be shared by all people, if they become financially and practically possible for them. So, through hard work, loyalty and a smile, I believe I have what it takes to help turn over a new leaf for the food industry•



In Ponds We Trust!

By Aman Sabhlok, Oscar Hayes & Lachlan Richardson

In October 2020, a group of students and a staff member came together in a momentous moment. In Human Ecology, the Brockwood class where the whole school congregates to work in the garden and grounds, Chris the staff member (adventurous and curious person that he is) chose to pursue a topic he had absolutely no expertise in.

At this moment, Ponds was born.

The original team have names that are etched in ponding history: Chris, Rowan, Harsh, Tala, Luzie and Louis. Their first task was to create a new pond in the centre of the vegetable garden. Legend has it, the work was so filthy that one of them intentionally got expelled to avoid it. The

others persevered and stuck together through thick and thin (or at least for the rest of term). They dug out a large mass of gunky matter and installed a recycled, sturdy lining, making that part of the garden great again. Rowan later commented, “The refreshing feeling when you refurbish a pond is unrivaled in the realm of Human Ecology.” That was the origin story of one of the most popular human ecologies in Brockwood.

We don't rely on nostalgia, the enjoyment is reborn every week. There is a certain comradery that appears before and engulfs us when knee-deep in pond water, scooping out algae and pond scum.





Something about experiencing the most abhorrent and repulsive circumstances brings us together. We re-enter the house, caked in mud and stupid grins; a mystery to the rest of the school.

“caked in mud and stupid grins”

We have seen with our own eyes the direct effect our work has had. We have seen frogs mating in the water that we provided, a toad resting under a stone we placed for that purpose. We have seen cats take our fish, ducks make their babies and lotus flowers bloom in the very ponds we have birthed and sustained. We will no doubt continue to see such breathtaking effects throughout our time at Brockwood and we hope to leave a ponding legacy of care to the students who follow in our muddy footsteps.

Much like ponds themselves, the ponding community looks clean and pleasant on the outer layer, beneath we are dirty, gritty and real. We are the scum under the surface.

As a collective, we have found a certain beauty in the sludgy, dank, commendable endeavor that is ponding. Activities range from feeding the fish in the corner pond to clearing out a nice bank next to the pond behind the school accommodation known as the Pavillions. Ponds provide shelter, food and a place to reproduce for a large number of organisms that all play a role in Brockwood's own circle of life. In a world where human activity is devastating habitats around the world, we pond-ers only want to care for and expand them.

Human Ecology helps bring the school together and take us into the outdoors. It teaches us more about ourselves by growing a connection with the environment we exist in•

The Factory.

By Aurelia Jones

The walls screamed history. Rubble, mould and unidentified bacteria filled the vast and unwinding factory. Did it once have a beating heart? How could you tell? What was its purpose? The dead machines were covered in orange rust, peeling at the edges, falling to the ground as if it were autumn. The walls towered high, creating shadow. Protocols and torn-up notes lay crumpled and damp - some in puddles, some still within the walls or pinned up on cork boards. The offices stank of slowly decaying food. The odour of rats would distract you from everything but the weight of your own sanity.

“Machines lay like roadkill”

Inch by inch the ivy grew like a green sea, intertwining, looping across the walls. But it was different. The green enlightened what was once unbearable to look at. The colour transformed the dead into the living. The ceilings that had fallen in created passages for birds. Rain created growth for even more plants. It was now a rich home for all life. The weather played a big role. The sun shone directly upon the symmetrical leaves, feeding them to their heart's content. Nests rounded the decaying corners of the factory, mending the building.

Oxygen prevailed. The decaying air was replaced with the sweet taste of life. The factory could breathe again. The electricity and technology had no power, no strength to fight. The machines lay like roadkill, still as a rock and as

heavy as the world. But when they glistened under the sun, they became monuments in a living museum. Presenting themselves; communicating their lives, their history.

If you closed your eyes, you could almost smell the old pollution, palpitating and pumping. Hear it travelling from machine to machine, circulating, flying up to the sky with freedom. But no. All that there was was a humming jungle. The graffiti and smashed windows showed signs of other life. Destructive life. Animals nestled into their homes as Homo Sapiens stomped on the living museum. The rattling of spray cans echoed in every corner of the factory, artwork stuck to the empty walls, dripping slowly onto the ivy. The graffiti added tranquility to the walls. And in time the ivy grew and created a frame around the art, as if a painting were placed in the Amazon rainforest. And in time, life accepted the modern world and evolved its beauty around it.

“Seasons come and go like guests”

The walls screamed history. Rubble, mould and unidentified bacteria held hands with the life that once couldn't control the modern world. The seasons came and went like guests, taking and leaving what they wanted. Life and death filled the air. And as the world kept turning like a machine, the factory lay silent, at ease in the comfort of nature's tranquility•



Letting Go.

By Elizabeth Brunner

We didn't get to say goodbye.

Maybe that's why she sat on the same seat on the bus, the one by the aisle. (I preferred the one by the window.) Maybe that's why she always kept her hair down, hoping my fingers would run through it again, like they used to. Maybe that's why she's still looking for me, searching for me in our favourite song as she hummed it, in all the places where our laughter had bloomed like spring after a long and cold winter.

Sometimes she forgot herself and would call out my name, only to be met by silence, by the emptiness that had moved in.

Let me go

I would implore when she drowned in her tears that fell like rain.

Let me go

I would demand when she burned in the anger she tried so hard to contain.

Let me go

I would whisper to her when she sat by my grave and gave me daffodils in the winter, dandelions in the summer.

(Yellow was my favourite colour.)





Slowly, her sadness crept in. It grew. It latched onto her and ate away her desire, her yearning to live. Making her a stranger to happiness, making her forget what it felt like to be held by it.

A man was sitting on the bus by the window. She sat by the aisle. An exchange of words chased away the silence that perched between the two, even the weather was invited into the conversation. As time fluttered away, so did the space between them. Words that had been exchanged by strangers sprouted into something more, something I recognised. She cut her hair short, started humming a new song, letting it fill the empty spaces I left behind.

And then she introduced him to me on a rainy day in autumn. She brushed the fallen leaves off my grave stone. He brushed the tears off her cheeks.

And then she put our photos away.

It's ok

I urged her as she placed them in a box, along with our memories, our laughter, our joy. She closed the box and sat by it for a while, her hand resting on it, holding it.

And we finally said goodbye •

For Cooper.

By Grace Harper

From my Brockwood wall you peer
into my room from five angles,
Not at me. The more I gaze back, the
more I see

That the warm, brown anxiety of your
eyes,

The question behind your furry brow,
the meaning in your wag

Can't be captured in two dimensions
alone.

In these dimensions it's clear we do not
live together now.

I've gone, you Stay. You're still cute,
though I'm not there to dote.

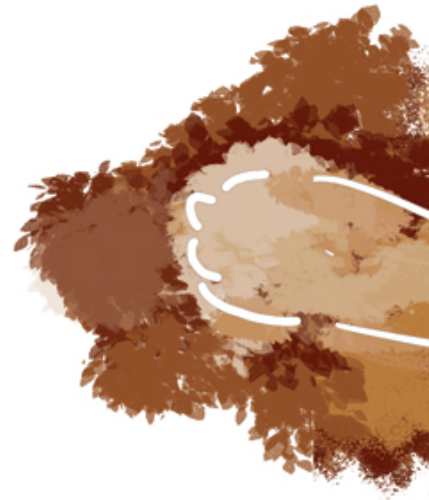
It's been a while, and counting, though
longer by your watch than mine,

Who can say how long. Time
seems to be subjective - we are both sub-
ject

To its erratic bearing.

I don't know how real I am to you now,
But I can feel your glossy black form, and
in my mind I'm there

In yours.





Think Big Go Tiny.

By Gaia Lavers

Tiny houses are my absolute obsession. An average tiny house has a square footage of between 100-400ft² and is normally built to be sustainable and environmentally conscious. Bigger is not always better, which is how the tiny house movement was born...

Does my obsession derive from a natural progression from pillow forts? Is it a rejection of the expectations put on me by society, the rejection of consumerism? Or does the answer lie more with my mental state? Ever since I was 12, I have been captivated these small structures that I hope to one day build.

There is a little child in every adult, a little voice that urges you to buy those water balloons in the supermarket when all you need is toilet paper. I grew up reading about castles, hobbit holes and witch huts. My tiny house will be my hobbit hole; you may cave and buy water balloons in the store but I caved by promising my inner child a tiny house, built to my every need, whim and will.

“There is a little child in everyone”

Tiny houses captivate me due to their embodiment of rebellion. Living in a mobile, self-constructed tiny home is, to me, a very physical reaction against the capitalist preoccupation with class and consumerism. I have never understood the concept of attaining a large mass of space and that translating into a sum of value to others. A house is equated to debt in a lot of countries; in the USA the





average person spends 1/3 of their income on their house. This is a huge amount when considering 66% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. Perhaps we should start to question this contrived expectation. Why are we pushed to have a large house containing an accumulation of various stuff? Is it only a scheme to encourage debt to the state? Part of me wants to rebel for the sake of rebelling.

The roots of my passion were undeniably fuelled by the many documentaries I turned to when I wanted to learn more about the tiny house lifestyle. I turned to the internet and social media to find communities with similar interests. The Netflix series *Tiny House Nation* and *Expedition Happiness* consumed many of my waking hours. My Brockwood woodwork classes helped kindle my obsession by inspiring and teaching me how to physically engage with building.

“My rebellion is also my safety net”

While I have an undeniable addiction to tiny houses, I have started to question why. I have always been someone who cringes at disorder, at chaos and unpredictability, and recently I have begun to realise that perhaps this aspect of my life has manifested itself as an obsession with tiny houses. I believe that tiny houses may represent a deeper psychological preoccupation with safety and security; after all, what is more safe and secure than a small house, built by my own hands, in which I can see all four corners at any given moment. However, I am contradicting myself. Do I want security or do I wish to rebel? Perhaps my tiny house aspirations are all of them. It is the physical manifestation of my inner child, my rebellion, but also my safety net. This is my obsession, my topic, idea and concept which consumes me and excites me and has me counting down until construction day: my tiny house, teaching me to think big, and go tiny•

Raising Day.

The school came together to raise a traditional timber frame barn.





The Clearing.

By Rosa Waschke

Mud splashes on my bare legs. I need to be there on time. Wet leaves graze my face. Hair sticks to my sweaty neck. There's just enough light from the setting sun for me to see where to step. The world is rushing past me. Leaping over moss covered rocks, sticks cracking under my calloused feet. I can't be late. I duck to avoid low hanging branches. Through the foliage, I catch a glimpse of centaurs on the hunt. Their hooves hit the forest floor like drums. The rhythm is soothing. I'm tempted to stop, close my eyes and sing. Keep running.

I can see all the way to Crystalwell. It's mountains reach high into the orange sky. The sound came from the Harridans flying over Mount Hillerware. I'm safe here, but their daunting noises still send shivers down my spine. Run faster. At an almost imperceptibly slow pace, mists start to roll over the forest bed. I focus my attention on where I step, my feet sink deeper into the mud, which squirts through my toes and into my face. My laughter echoes through the woods. Winds sweep through my hair, pleasantly cooling my neck. I catch a few last glimpses at the navy sky before the trees take over.

“The night spreads its thick
blanket across the
woodland”

The forest is denser here, light is scarce. The sun has set; I have only a few minutes before the night spreads its thick blanket across the woodland. Quick! My breath is heavy. I swiftly meander around fallen branches and overgrown trees. Vines hang off ancient trees, dangling towards me like dead arms. My legs are scratched from rocks and brambles cutting my skin. Just keep going. The earth solidifies. I try to look as far as I can but even through the tiniest gaps between the thickly grown forest, there are only more trees. I'm starting to lose hope. Fluorescent green. A small gap between





the trunks, now it's gone. The colour pops back into my sight. I can see more now. Purple and different hues of yellow. I speed up, and though it jumps in and out of sight, I steer towards the gap. Energy erupts through me, as the little curling path leads me through the forest. The trees separate and the glow spreads over the forest ground, through the leaves, past the trunks.

“Water pools at the root of the willow”



There it is: the clearing. I stop running and fall to my knees at the edge. There are other creatures here. The clapping of hooves, wings fluttering, tails wagging, snouts sniffing, but whether fur or feathers there is only harmony here. I step out of the forest and into the glade, I'm circled by mushrooms, flowers, mosses and ferns glowing through the mist. A fiddlehead tickles my legs and just behind is a red bush, its firey leaves threatening to scorch the plants around it. And just beside the bush is the willow tree I came to see. Her majestic branches arching over the clearing. Insects and animals find shelter amongst her leaves, bark and roots. Providing nutrients for all plants and fungi around her. The willow is the mother. Once a century, she wakes up to illuminate the night and provide all beings with her sap. It's glow bringing balance to the forest.

Water pools at the roots of the willow, fluorescing with microscopic algae. I cup my hands and submerge them into the pool. As they resurface, the liquid continues to glow. I drink and relief rushes through my body. I take a deep breath in and sigh with pure contentment. A mushroom large enough for me to sit on is protruding through the roots of the willow and greets me with its deep purple hue and light green freckles. There are hundreds of smaller mushrooms scattered around it like the pearls of a broken necklace. I feel the wet grass between my toes. I shuffle my feet around, to clean off the mud they collected in the forest. I fall back, my heartbeat synchronises with the rhythm of the forest, the rhythm of the plants and mushrooms. The rhythm of the willow. Life pulsing through me. Everything slows down. I grin at the starless night and she grins back •

When Enough isn't Enough.

A research essay compiled by this years Humanites Class



Overconsumption is a phenomenon that affects humanity on every scale. It manifests as the root of major geo-political issues around the world, resulting in a lack of crucial resources for countless people. Most of all, it is not a lifestyle we can sustain for much longer.

Over the years, our desire to acquire more has enormously increased. Wants turn into needs, excess has been adopted as a symbol of success, and the economic system we live in has become a system fuelled by greed. Should we worry about the heart of our humanity that has taken a sharp turn towards a life dominated by overconsumption?

“The system we live in is fuelled by greed”

Overconsumption is a situation in which a resource is consumed faster than it can regenerate, leading to the loss of the resource base, and eventually to environmental degradation. As the world population grows and materialism becomes more common, an increasing amount of resources are required for extraction and the issue of overconsumption becomes more prominent. Nowadays, we know of many cases in which overconsumption led to environmental degradation. Two of the most addressed examples would be climate change and biodiversity loss.

Economic growth tends to be seen as the leading cause of overconsumption, as more resources are required to keep up with the growth, in terms of the economy and the population, as well as the supply and demand of the people. If there is a high demand for a certain product, then the supply will need to catch up to the demand, and therefore production will increase and inevitably cause more waste. If you take a country such as the United States, they represent less than 5% of the world's population, but at the same time, consume 17% of the world's energy and account for 15% of the world's GDP.

The industries that have the most disastrous effects/outcomes of overconsumption are those of fashion, agriculture, automobility, and manufacturing.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, our quality of life is expected to significantly decline by 2030 if immediate action isn't taken. As of now, natural resources are consumed at 20% more than can be replenished. It seems so ironic that in a cyclical routine of behaviour rooted in self-interest, no one seems to care about how detrimental the consequences of needless overconsumption are to our health. It is estimated by the World Health Organisation that 9 in 10 people globally are constantly exposed to highly polluted air. In addition, 7 million people die because of poor air quality yearly.

Throughout recent years, many major geo-political conflicts have emerged from the primal instinct of continuously wanting more. These actions are considered by some to be the result of base level overconsumption. The endless struggle to selfishly grasp at the dwindling reserves of natural oil in the polar regions is a clear example of how the will of the human race has, over time, adapted to manifest into an evolving feeling of malice towards others. On a similar note, today's European issues are another reflection on how ignorance to the wider world can have devastating effects on many people's lives. For example, currently the Ukraine-Russia conflict has squandered a great deal of energy, resources, innocent lives and money on a futile battle.

After our exploration, it is safe to say that overconsumption is a problem that affects the majority of the world. We were interested in the perspectives of people living at Brockwood, so we interviewed a few of them. Javier (staff) made the point that the problem was multi-layered and that the first level was psychological, that the greedy mindset of humans was the source of this excess. He suggested, "Greed as a

mindset and a thought system is very destructive, you can compare it to a bonfire. When you put more wood in the fire it becomes more destructive. When you feed the greed inside you, you become more greedy." Open questions that arose from these views were: "Where does that greed come from? Why can't we be satisfied? Everyone had noticed careless consumption around them and, emotionally, it had an impact on all of them. Uma (student) said: "I notice all the time when we over consume and I feel really helpless as if there is absolutely no hope for humanity left." We tackled the subject of our willpower to consume responsibly and the steps we could take towards a more conscious lifestyle. Leafryn (student) and Javier shared with us that they believed it wasn't necessarily related to willpower but more to "awareness about one's needs". While Uma admitted that it would be a hard task because desires always get the best of you. Everyone thought that the task would be more complicated because of the society we live in; a society where profit is made through overconsumption.

"Ideas seem to take us nowhere"

In conclusion, it seems obvious that the fate of the world only looks more bleak as time passes. At the rate we are going, it will take us two and a half Earths to sustain the human race by 2050. We need to observe our patterns of behaviour and think about our effect on the bigger picture. Often it is easier to see the problem as outside of ourselves where we are the onlookers, the problem-solvers, where things are "being done to us". It is very difficult to comprehend that we make up society, with our thoughts which then become action. Divisions and conflict within us are more than often the source of problems "outside". Ideas, opinions from which action comes seem to be taking us nowhere. The question we leave you with is: Is it possible for us to unite as one human race rather than turn against each other?•

An Early Morning in Spring.

By Elizabeth Brunner

She smelled like apples and an early morning in spring.

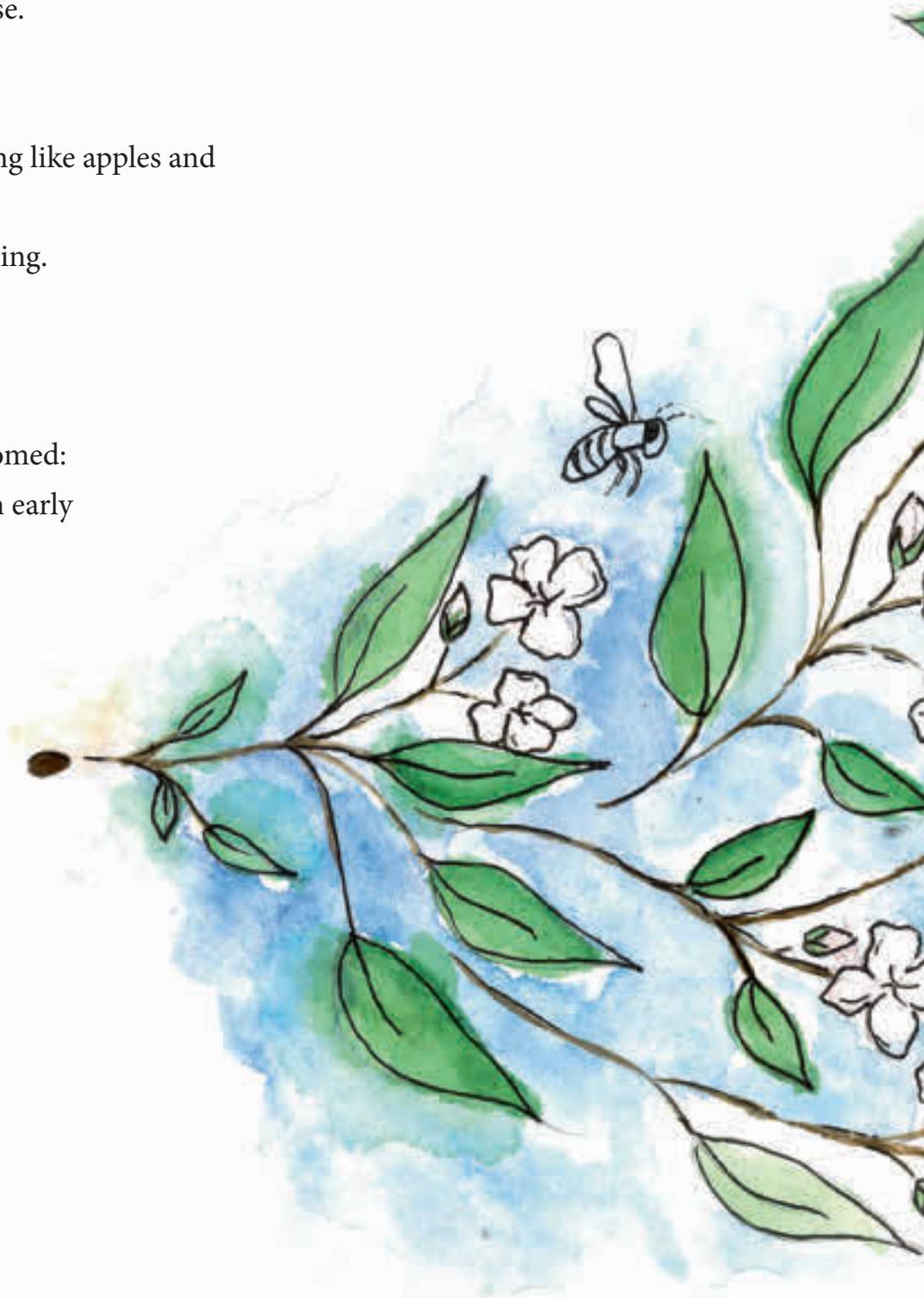
She had little fingers and toes
and a button-like nose.

She had big brown eyes
and a grip so strong, so wise.

But then she was blue,
and then she was gone.

And I found myself smelling like apples and
gin
on an early morning in spring.

Until
a tree grew
from an apple I threw;
in my garden she now bloomed:
a beautiful apple tree on an early
morning in spring.





Brick in the Wall.

By Juna Bovier

I wouldn't wish the education I had before coming to Brockwood upon anyone. The life lessons my parents gave me were very rich and open but my schooling was, on the contrary, dull and limiting. I had the opportunity to experience many different types of schools including traditional ones, home-schooling, Steiner schools and now Brockwood.

The big adventure of home-schooling started when I was eight. After moving twice in the span of four months, my parents went through the very difficult process of requesting permission to homeschool my four year old sister and I. Once the confirmation from the authorities was given, we flew to Sri-Lanka, the small island to the south of India, for a quarter of a year.

“Written on the beach, erased
by the ocean”

My experiences there were unique: mathematical calculations over freshly squeezed juice, negotiating the cost of a ride on the tuk-tuks, conjugated verbs written on the beach and erased by the ocean. New languages: English and a little bit of Sinhala... Travelling whilst being homeschooled gave me time to reflect and let my creativity express itself. This taught me so much more than sitting silently, one among 30, listening to a monotonous teacher.

The following year, I returned to Switzerland where I went to a small traditional village school and later a bigger one in the valleys. I was forced to go to learn something, no doubt, but it was certainly without the same enthusiasm. As a child in the process of becoming a teenager, these seven years disorientated rather than supported me. Even though the content of the classes was relatively easily understood, the pressure placed on me by expectations from society became too much.

In my last compulsory school year (2019-2020,





the start of Covid-19) I had to make a very difficult decision that most teenagers struggle with: what to do next.

One day, stuck inside with a cold, my mum told me to check out the link she had just sent me. I opened it and stumbled upon the Brockwood website, exploring it for about an hour. I said, “That’s it, mom! I know what I would like to do next year. I want to go and meet those amazing people! Why didn’t you tell me a school like this existed?” And so the application process started and the exciting adventure of leaving my family for the first time and finding myself in an unknown place commenced.

Here at Brockwood, I am invited to look at what is happening inside and around me, to inquire, to be sceptical, to find out for myself, to explore, fail and find my feet again. This place gives me space to challenge myself, time for social interactions and the opportunity to learn how to live together. Here I learn about emotional intelligence and how to reconnect with nature. I also have the chance to dream big ideas, expressing them and bringing them to life. The classes are my choice, with the teachers believing in my own ability to know what feels right to me. That means that every single pupil has a unique and personal timetable.

The word *Inwoods* sits proudly no less than three times on my timetable. In my second year here, I have the opportunity to support the teachers at Inwoods, Brockwood’s primary school. Experiencing teaching on a practical level helps me obtain a bigger picture and is a great example of an alternative, non fear-based schooling system. Going there brings me so much joy!



This year I also had the opportunity to spend time at Inwoods, the small school at Brockwood. I supported two inspirational teachers in a beautiful environment. It was both fascinating and rewarding.

Through my experiences as a student, then reading different pedagogies and now spending a good amount of time at Inwoods, some things have become clear to me.

“Mechanical teaching leads to empty repetition”

We confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, certificates with competence and this causes a big discombobulation. Sadly, nowadays, people only value the left hemisphere of the brain, the part which is responsible for logic and handles reading, writing and calculations. But what about the right hemisphere, the one that manages creativity, rhythms and intuition? What about our amazingly complex and beautiful bodies?

The big issue that we have is that we are taught what to learn and not how to learn! The very word *education* comes from the Latin word *educere* which means ‘to bring out’ learning and knowledge, but regrettably all we do is ‘put in’ an excess of information to human brains.

“We are not trained to be intelligent, we are trained to be clever. You cannot be intelligent knowing things or reading books and reciting their content. The beginning of intelligence is to see everything without any distortion”

-J. Krishnamurti, ‘Does life prepare you for life?’

My biggest learning of all was that children have plenty to teach the teacher.

The old-fashioned way of teaching is not appropriate anymore. We have to understand that every single child is unique and therefore everyone has different needs and ways of learning which require a serious adaptation of the entire education system.

Of course, it is easier to have the content known by heart and to recite it mechanically in front of little naive, scared and miserable human beings. This short term learning to please the teacher and pass examinations will inevitably cause unimaginable pressure on children. It leads to empty repetition, cheating and corruption. Evidently society (we) and the government has expectations about conformity, expectations about what education should look like. We need to understand that the prevalent model of education was invented during the Industrial Revolution when the focus was mass production. We have moved on: schools should no longer exist as chain factories teaching students to be slaves.

Let’s remember that it starts with you, me and our children: by believing in innovative schools and maximising support for them, you can optimise a child’s development and growth. There are already amazing schools in place but most of them are private and inaccessible to the middle and working class. How can humanity live with that on its conscience? We have all touched mainstream schooling; we all hated it, yet we keep our eyes and ears shut as we kiss our children goodbye with a big smile every single morning•





Inside...

History of Philosophy and Religion is a class where we learn about philosophers and scientists from the past, their discoveries and how they have changed the world.

We worked our way from the past to the present. We discover the best way to research and develop critical thinking. Our teacher asks us mind-blowing questions that cause silence in the classroom. Those questions sometimes even make us think over the whole meaning of existence. There are even questions which we never find the answer to.

A really interesting part is when we put our-selves into the mindsets of the philosophers to understand them better. Our teacher doesn't offer answers because he wants us to use our brains properly.

I am sitting in the depths of the library at a long table between bookshelves. Two windows peeking out between bushes to the South Lawn where the symbol of the school, the timeless cedar tree stands. I think this is the perfect place for my favourite class, somehow I feel safe and at peace in this room. The atmosphere allows one's thoughts to become as deep as the soft cushions on the couches. Perfect to sink into...





By Sofiya Luther



Out.

Glimpses of my Brockwood year

We went to a historical place, a marshland where many myths hide in the foggy landscape. We saw wild animals, like horses, cows and sheep.

Friendships formed, as the hikes were very challenging and we only had each other to hold onto. Conversations came up by coincidence and life stories were shared.

After the long hikes during the day, we met by the fireplace in the camp to warm up and dry all our clothes. With hot chocolate and warm blankets we listened to stories which were written by people who had visited in the past.

In a few days, the group will return to our school and the time we had together will become a very special memory for each of us •



Kishu Busshin.

By Javier Jurado

I consider it vitally important to investigate violence, discover where it is born, as well as all its implications, in addition to exploring the concepts of consensual and non-consensual violence. It is not possible for me to reflect on such an investigation in an article, even so I will attempt to start some conversation with the reader so that we can continue later on by ourselves, if we are interested.

It is evident that physical violence is a very present quality in nature, in the universe, and we can appreciate this conflictive quality in the creation of galaxies, in the clash of tectonic plates, in the waves of the sea, in the hunt for predators, in the clash of horns of the mountain goats, in the shot of a football player, the plucking of a flower. In short, within everything that requires the exercise of pressing forces.

“The clashing of horns, the plucking of a flower”

Throughout history, human beings have been physically and psychologically violent, not only against nature, but against themselves as a species despite not being the main determining factor, violence has given human beings the possibility of prevailing in their race for survival on earth for millions of years, which is why this stands out as one of its most present characteristics in history. Be it with bones and branches, spears and swords, or nuclear missiles, throughout history, violence in the form of wars, tribal and personal conflicts, have been a daily part of the existence of the human being on earth. But what causes it? What moves that hand? Evidently, an intention moved by an emotional state. As in all social behavior, actions are based on the psyche. Consequently, we can affirm that a mental state of psychological violence can be the origin of an action of physical violence, although physical violence will not always be the result of psychological violence. Take, for example, the fencers who





meet to practice their sport. They exercise certain mutual physically violent acts, typical of training, although in this situation there is not necessarily a situation of psychological violence. This fact clarifies that the action per se does not determine the quality, rather it will be the mental state of the executor, which establishes the violent or non-violent quality of the phenomenon. Note that a human being can look at another person, write a text or even speak violently.

“The baggage of millennia”

However each and every one of the actions exposed previously can also be carried out without violence in the same way that the fencer makes a blow without the need to feel internal violence of any kind. Still, naturally and regardless of the activity, this quality of psychological violence can surface during any activity, given the baggage of millennia of psychological violence present in our genetics.

All that has been previously stated regarding psychological violence is brilliantly reflected in a Japanese proverb linked to medicine: Kishu Busshin “Devil’s hands, Buddha’s heart”

Although this expression may seem contradictory and could be argued saying “Buddha’s heart, Buddha’s hands”, that is “mind in peace, action in peace”, the real meaning of the aphorism becomes evident in the specific area in which that was created: surgery. During surgery, surgeons cut open a patient’s body. But even though the surgeon’s hands do seemingly horrible and cruel things, he does it with a compassionate heart to save the patient. In other words, from its outward expression it seems that brutal means (the devil’s hand) are being taken. Inside, however, he is full of benevolence and mercy (the Buddha mind). “Means as severe as the devil’s, but Buddha’s mind at peace.”

Thus, the proverb makes it clear that the appearance of an action can deceive and not clearly show its intention or motivation, while, as mentioned above, the action per se does not determine its quality, but rather the mental state of the executor •

Holding Back the Tide.

By *Luzie Raysz*

Once upon a time there was a king governing a small island. On this island there was a tower with three floors. It was built right next to the sea, allowing the one standing on top of the tower an amazing view.

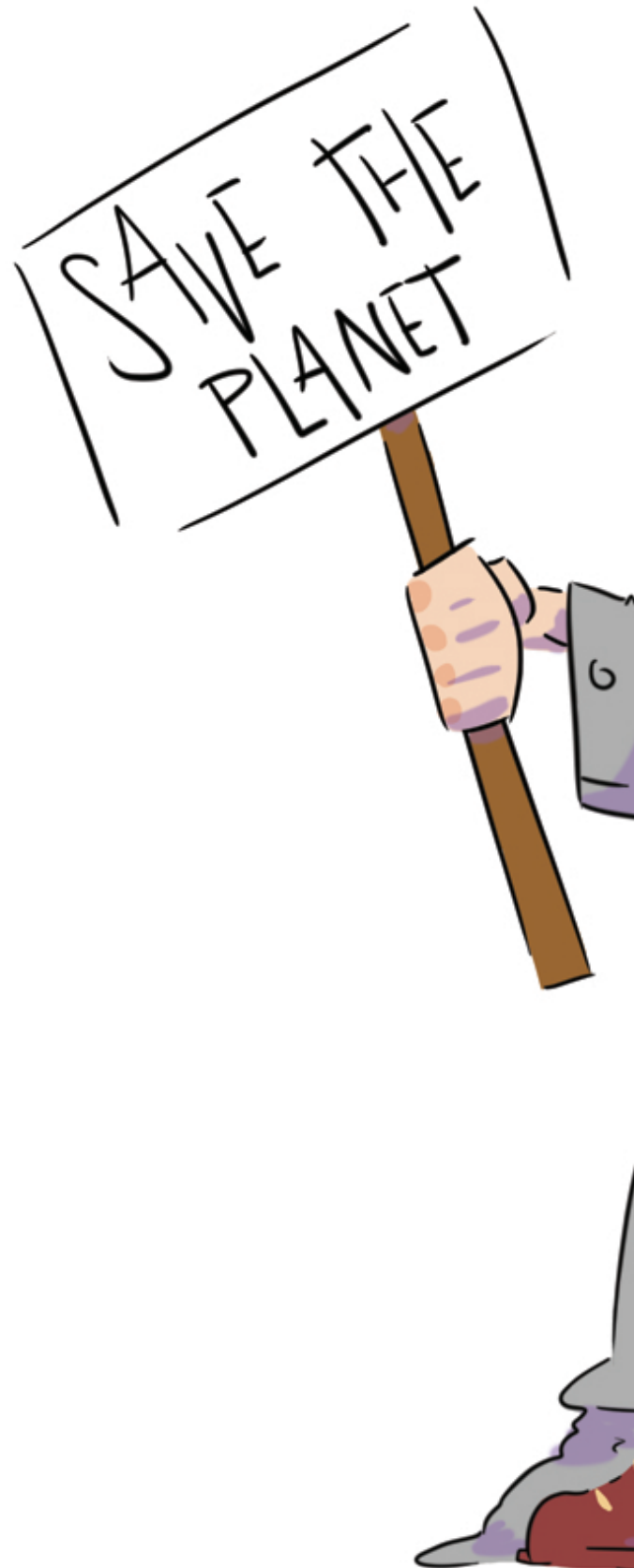
On the lowest floor lived all the servants of the king. Down there, the sun barely reached and it was dark, wet and cold. One floor above, the living standards improved. Here, the friends and the family of the king lived comfortably. The so-called middle class would find a place to sleep here. And then, on the upper floor, there was the most beautiful apartment with the biggest windows, the best view in the world and lots of food that the servants brought up.

This was the king's dwelling. He lived a lavish life. He had great food and the best wine in the country, company from his friends and entertainment from his women. Everything he demanded was brought straight up to him, so he never had to leave his floor. The king loved his life. The king was fully dependent on his servants. They would joke about him and his inadequate regime, knowing well that they were the main cogs in the wheel.

“The rumbling cloud rolled towards them”

Then, one day, the civilians looked up and saw a dark, rumbling cloud slowly rolling towards them. Everyone saw it except the king, who was busy drinking wine, eating food and having fun with his women, not paying any attention to the outside world.

As the sun painted beautiful colours onto the darkening sky, the first small but strong waves started to hit the shore. They became bigger and bigger, reaching higher and higher, until the first drops of the cold, salty water found their way through the tiny, battered windows of the servants.



Sooner than one would think, the waves had crept into the rooms, destroying their doors and beds. That was when the king first heard something unusual. Screams and shouts were dragged up to his floor by the wind, but he did not care about what was going on, because he was safe in his cosy dormitory, high above the sea level. Why should he help the lower class?

“Screams dragged up by the wind”



The howling wind caused the fireplace to hiss maddeningly. As he went to pour himself another glass of wine to soothe his temper, the strongest wave so far hit the tower with a boom, wrenching the glass from his hand.

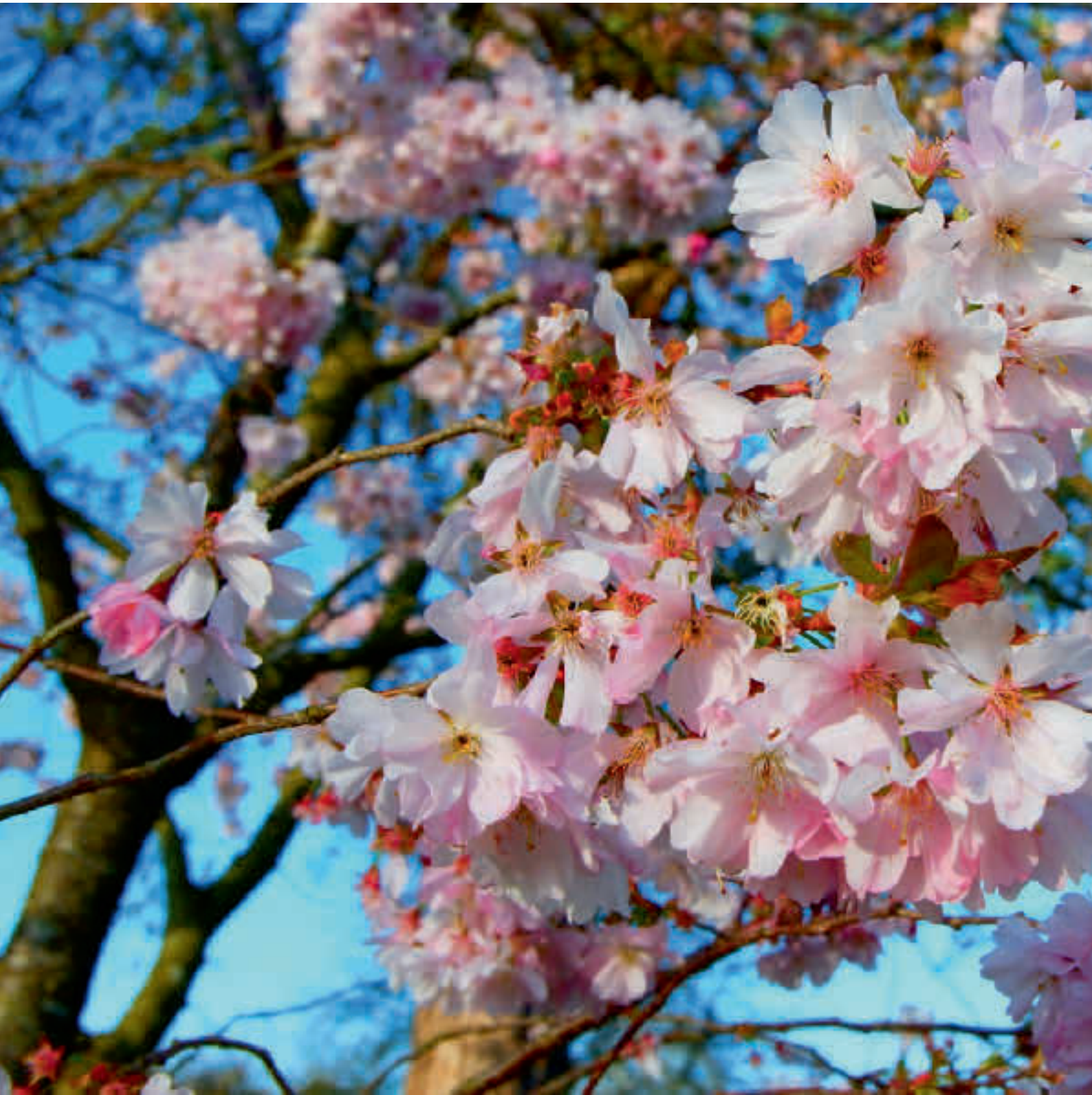
This time, the waves reached the second floor. Now, the king started to be slightly concerned for his safety, but he told himself that the storm would be over soon, and so stayed put at his table with all the fruits and sweets piled upon it. But it did not stop. One wave after another pounded the tower, which continued to sway. Most of the servants had turned silent, lost in the cold darkness of the rough sea.

Only as his friends hammered against his door did the king realise that he actually should help. He opened the door and gasped with relief, all his friends and family stumbled into his flat.

The King shuddered as he watched the wet, sweaty people invade his living room, eating his food and drinking his wine, making themselves comfortable on his couch. However, he knew he could not just send them back, so he decided to wait until the storm was over.

Soon, all the food was eaten and all the wine was drunk. Outraged, he turned to seek his servants, but he realised that none of them were left. All of them had either perished or left in an attempt to help their own friends and family.

The King was left alone, with his desires, the cold and the consistent howling of the strengthening winds•





And then my heart with pleasure fills...

Yes, it is daffodil time. They are everywhere and they bring so much joy and beauty. But what also brings cheer to my mind at this time of the year is the cherry blossom.

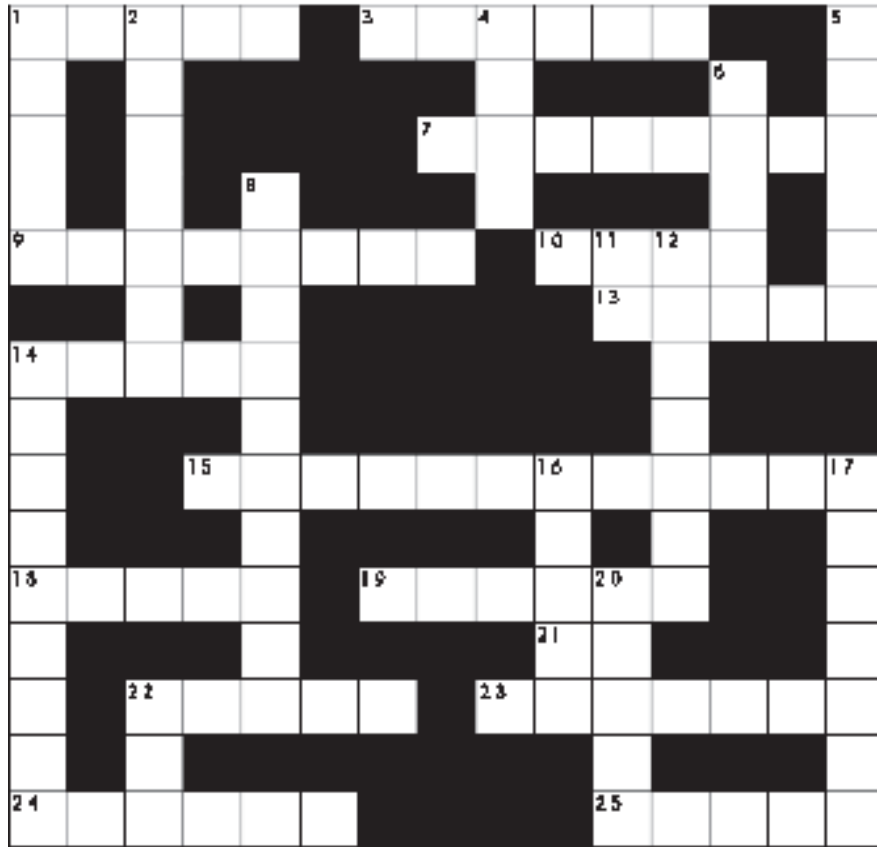
Known in Japan as *sakura* and intricately woven into Japanese culture, cherry blossom symbolizes beauty and fragility at the same time. Japanese people celebrate its arrival with a whole lot of partying and revelry under the trees.

However, cherry blossom is truly valued because it also signifies transience and the fleeting nature of existence. You will find them in subtle shades of pink and white all around Brockwood. Don't miss watching them with the backdrop of the blue sky on a bright sunny day. It brings pure joy. Krishna-murti once asked, "Sir, what will you do if you had just one hour to live?"

The cherry blossom is more generous, it gives you two weeks•

~Abhijit Padte

CROSSWORD.



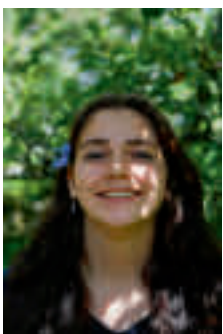
Across

- 1 - People who might bug others (5)
- 3 - Worldwide (6)
- 7 - Shape (8)
- 9 - Pardoned (8)
- 10 - Cigarette alternative (4)
- 13 - Shabby or in poor condition (5)
- 14 - Network connection box (5)
- 15 - Pop and sizzle, for example (12)
- 18 - Arrive (5)
- 19 - Gwen Stefani's favourite fruit? (6)
- 21 - Negative (2)
- 22 - Ancient Greek poet (5)
- 23 - Layered Ottoman pastry (7)
- 24 - William Shakespeare's only son (6)
- 25 - Many family's storage spaces (5)

Down

- 1 - Inhale through nose
- 2 - Hurt (7)
- 4 - Rowing necessities (4)
- 5 - Impertinent (6)
- 6 - You may find one on the end of a shoelace (5)
- 8 - English city - Harming IBM (anag) (10)
- 11 - @ (2)
- 12 - Woman with a box (7)
- 14 - Indian king (9)
- 16 - Hawaiian term for family (5)
- 17 - Very old (7)
- 20 - Makers of notoriously bricklike phones (5)
- 22 - Cured meat (3)

CONTRIBUTORS.





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Contact information:
Brockwood.org.uk
Enquiry@brockwood.org.uk

Brockwood Park School
Bramdean, Alresford
SO24 0LQ United Kingdom

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*Designed by
Ruby Rose*

