

A Path to  
**Life**

by  
**Ying-Xuan Lai**

Illustrated by Kasia Nieżywińska





A  
Path to Life

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A  
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by  
Ying-Xuan Lai



# foreword



At first glance this is a lovely story about friendship between children and young leopard cats who happen to be in the same situation, showing how children can understand animals and become their friends because they do not threaten them. But the story also raises major environmental issues. Through the account of the leopard cats we are alerted to the way in which human exploitation of nature puts species in danger and leads to loss of biological diversity. In a natural and moving way, Ying-Xuan Lai manages to bring together the environmental challenges and the idea of children as agents of change. Faced with the situation of the young leopard cats, the children's contact with the animals and connectedness to nature motivate them to find a solution. Combining their knowledge with their creativity, and with some support from adults, they manage to find a way out. Wise adults, like these, contribute what they can but stay in the background, and do not take over where children want to explore possibilities on their own. The story describes beautifully how change is feasible in environmental issues and how children can play an active role.

***-Professor Kirsten Sandberg***

University of Oslo, Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

# preface



**After reading the story, I found a path to follow. It was a new path and one that would guide me and give me direction in life.**

At my grandmother's funeral, while everyone was grieving, we were astonished when a Taiwan blue pheasant unexpectedly flew through the front door and into the living room.

"Look, a 'Sky chicken!'" exclaimed one of the elders who had gathered to mourn grandmother.

I starred at the unperturbed bird with its royal blue feathers and shining coat as it calmly strolled around the house, greeting everyone as if they were all old friends. It remained at the house, hanging out on the front porch for nearly two weeks. I grew attached to the beautiful animal and we became friends. Then one day a wild cat frightened it away. I ran after it into the

wood, and called out, "come back sky chicken, please stay with me for a bit longer."

As an adult, I often thought about that blue pheasant. I realized that one the most beautiful things in life and something to cherish is the love that can come from an unexpected meeting of another life.

**After I reread the story, I realized the seriousness of what one's path in life is.**

The problem of leopard cats being killed on the roads of Taiwan is only a small matter when we consider the need to protect wildlife throughout the world. Unlimited expansions of highways, and the over-usage of plastics, are examples of human activities that are jeopardizing earth's natural resources. These actions will surely impact the health of future generations.

Unawareness, ignorance and inaction towards the protection of our environment continue to hurt all creatures of the world. People cannot stop to ask "what is the mankind's relationship with nature?" The truth is that mankind *is* nature. We all live on the same mother ship. If we lose the life forms that have evolved with us for billions of years, then what will we have in the future?

**Recalling the moral of the story, I realized that it deeply shows the true meaning of education.**

"Child creators" need more than support and inspiration from their parents and teachers, the action of the creation also needs persistence from the children themselves. To cherish life is a skill. It is not a romantic notion or whim, nor a twinkling feeling. We as the readers may discover philosophical beliefs, explore a personal viewpoint and collect evidence of life from the story and drawings.

When you read the story, you will learn about the meaning of life and the purpose of education. The final purpose of education is just simple: let students enjoy the journey of life on the earth.

Ying-Xuan has the honor of writing a story with the pure voice and vision of a child.

Taiwan has the honor to conserve biodiversity through the protection of the leopard cat.

The world has the honor to have creative children who speak out for the future generation, but also for the creatures in the world.

— *Houng Ling Chiou*

Director of Project ECO (Project Ecosystems), Gifted and Talented Program,  
Taipei Xi-Hu elementary school. 2015 SUPER teacher award.

# preface



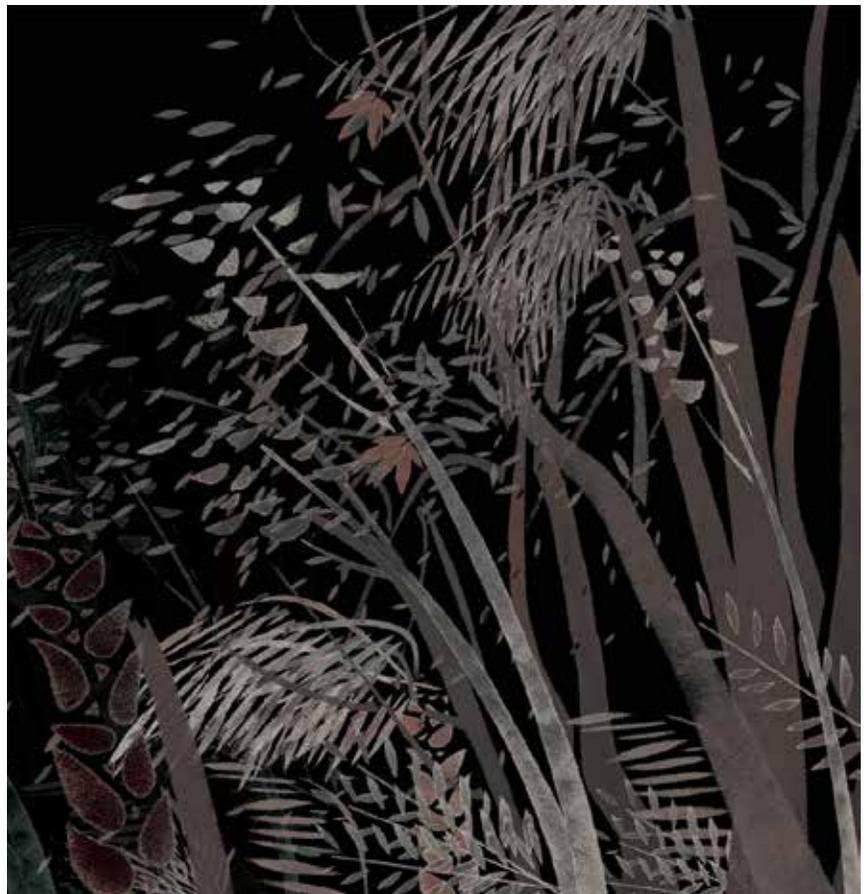
This is a story about a “road”. Taiwan has one of the most intense networks of roads in the world. Even the high mountains over 3,000 meters or higher can be easily reached by roads. The intensive road network brings convenience to people’s lives, but also becomes the cause of an ecological crisis.

Leopard cat, the main character of the story, is the only surviving wild cat in Taiwan. They were seen very often 80 years ago, but now they are very rare due to the roads development in the mountain areas.

Perhaps reading Ying-Xuan’s story is a bit sad, but she reminds us that overdevelopment is detrimental to both humans and non-humans, especially in the mountain areas. We should focus less on developing more kilometers of roads and more on conserving space to breathe for all.

*-Ying-Shih Hsieh*

Chairman, Environmental Quality Protection Foundation, Taiwan





# chapter 1

## Little Siblings

The strong storm outside the window nearly uprooted the trees as it blew about their branches and leaves. Billboards and litter bins blew past, lifted by the winds. A little girl, Lucia, leaned next to the window quivering in the cold, heavy air.

As the storm raged outside, Lucia and her brother received the unexpected news that their parents needed to go on a long voyage overseas. There would be no time to say a proper goodbye.

Lucia wondered about her parents and their grand journey. What exciting things would they be seeing and doing? What wonderful stories and gifts would they bring back for her and her brother, Lucius?



But something also felt wrong. Worried by heavy typhoon, she thought that her parents must be desperate to come home and be with their kids. She wondered whether they were caught up in the typhoon, and if they were in danger. She tried to put her concerns to one side. At least she and her brother were safe and sound with their grandparents through the long, frightening night. They could play games and comfort each other, safe in a warm home as the winds blew outside.



# chapter 2

## Another Pair of Siblings

A few kilometers away, two small pairs of golden eyes flashed in the lightning near a massive asphalt highway.

They belonged to another brother and sister. Their parents had gone out to forage. The terrible thunder of lorries ripped through the night alongside other speeding vehicles on the dark and dangerous road. The little siblings rushed to the side of the highway to look for their parents, but heavy traffic blocked their way.



After their parents disappeared, only their instincts helped them survive. The young cubs crept through farms and fruitful grasslands, crossing rushing rivers, sometimes sheltering in nooks small enough for a masked civet. They climbed mountains and hills to escape being hunted or caught.

They had to stay alert, so as to avoid the dangers that threatened them on their journey. They might become dinner for hunting dogs, or be trapped for ladies' luxury furs. Without the protection of their parents, they learned to be extra cautious as they searched the dark forest for a place to settle down. After each failed attempt, they returned tired and frustrated to the edge of the stormy, busy road. The rumbling traffic reminded them of the typhoon that they could not control - the one that had taken their parents away. At the big asphalt barrier, the little ones could only see countless vehicles, streaking past



like lightning, hurtling down the road with thundering noise. The furious, racing cars and trucks denied all their attempts to cross. Eventually, they were exhausted and lay down to rest in a culvert.

These creatures were not the only ones to be trapped, frightened and isolated, with cities and roads blocking their way to the forests and mountains. Along the way, they met Swinhoe's pheasants, pittas, pangolins, crab-eating mongoose, and bamboo partridges, who were all also frustrated. Where in this big, modern world could they call their home?



# chapter 3

## A Moment of Fate

There was more than one typhoon that summer. At summer's end, Lucius and Lucia stayed on with their grandparents in Jiji, Nantou. They tried hard to adapt to their new school, new environment and new life. They never guessed that moving would present them with a chance to meet another pair of lonely little ones.

On a sunny Sunday, Lucius and Lucia walked through the underpass beneath the highway to pick up red leaves and fall fruit. Suddenly, Lucia spotted two pairs of shining eyes in a hollow of a liquidambar tree. Lucia was surprised and swiftly hid behind Lucius. The owners of the eyes also curled into the darkest corner, equally startled by the human children's intrusion.



Lucius held Lucia's hand and they stepped closer to the hollow. Lucia peered into the corner. "Are they kittens?" Lucia asked. The wild creatures said nothing, but rolled their eyes.

"Don't worry," Lucia said. "We won't hurt you," said Lucius. Maybe they sensed the children's harmlessness and honesty, as they let down their guard. The larger one whispered, "We are not kittens, we are leopard cubs."

Lucia looked around to see abundant moso bamboo and forked fern. The sunlight shone through the spaces in between the foliage, illuminating the cub's glamorous spots amongst the shadows.

"Are you alone here? Where are your parents?" asked Lucius. This innocent question revealed the shared coincidence in their lives. "Our parents may be gone," the small one said. She fell into silent reflection. The word "gone," struck Lucia's heart. Lucia did not wish to upset them, but asked, "What happened?"





The sister leopard cat remained quiet, but her brother woefully replied, “They went hunting for food, but they had to cross the humans’ speeding cars. There was so much thunder and lightening that it was hard for them to find their way.”

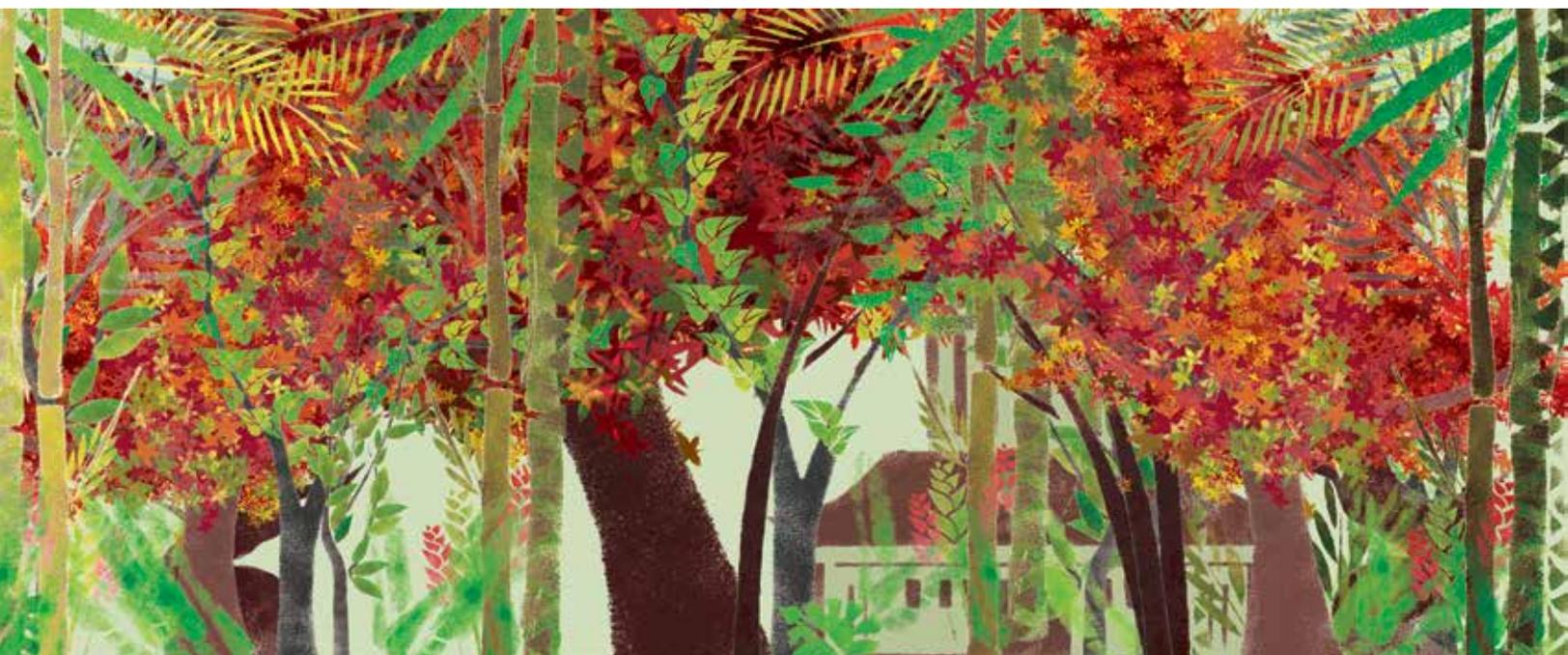
Lucia realized that the same thing had happened to all of them. Animals display the same profound grief as humans in the absence of their loved ones. Lucia’s heart was fraught with sorrow, but she didn’t know whether it was for them or herself.

“Did it happen nearby?” asked Lucius.

“No. It happened during our move,” the brother cat answered.

“Moving? Have you done that too?” Lucia asked.





“We seem to be always moving! A long time ago we lived happily, anywhere we wanted in Taiwan’s low altitude mountain regions. Our ancestors roamed all over the other side of the Central Mountains, at a place called Walami in Hualian. But everything is asphalt and concrete now, and our families were forced to leave and cross over mountains,” said the brother leopard cat.

Lucius was astonished, and exclaimed:

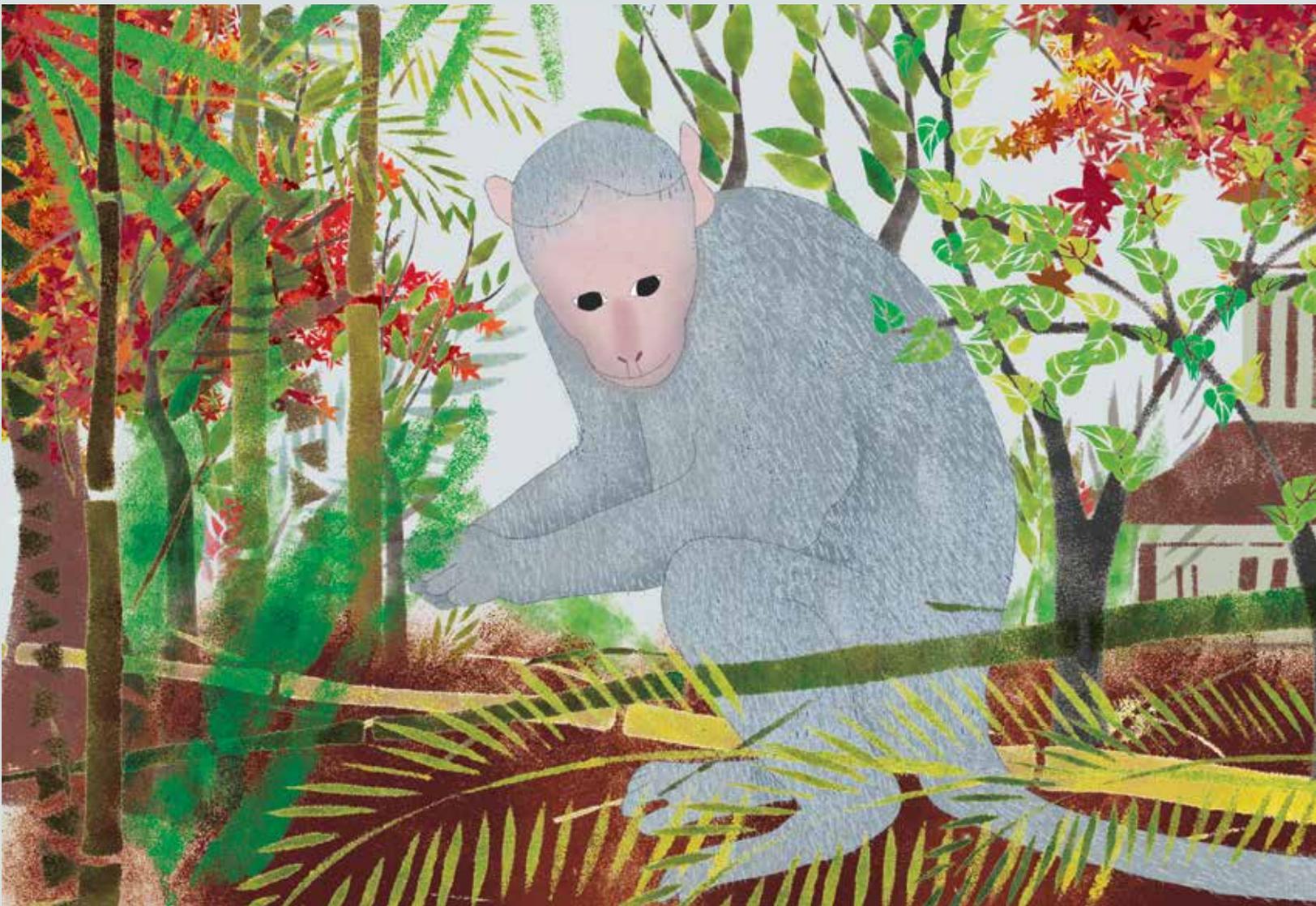
“That is such a long journey for you to walk on four feet!”

The brother sighed, “Yes, it was a risky journey to move, and our stories are filled with blood and tears. My grandfather, for instance, had his right leg broken by a hunter’s trap, but he was lucky enough that someone kindly sent him to an Animal Care Centre in Pingtung.”

“Animal Care Centre? What is that place?” Lucius asked.

“There are many beautiful trees and I heard that loads of animals live there, including gibbons, orangutans, patterslesses, iguanas, leopard tortoises, African spurred tortoises, and cynomolgus monkeys,” answered the brother.

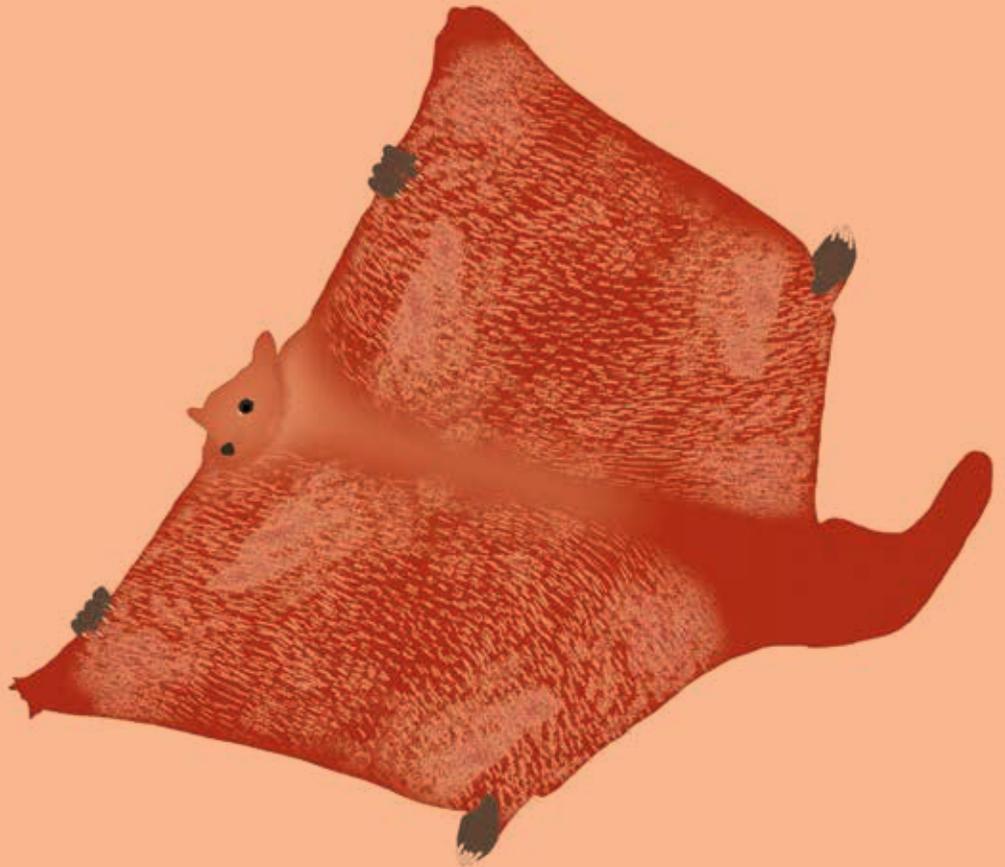
“Do you mean that it is a zoo?” asked Lucius.



The brother cat shook his head. “Totally different,” he replied. “The animals there are abandoned pets, and wild ones who are wounded, like my grandfather. They were all free once, but had been captured and later abandoned for humans’ selfish reasons. That’s why many of them have frightened eyes.”

The children looked up at the green and yellow leaves on the liquidambar tree with sadness and tears. It was hard to imagine that little creatures like these cats experienced a fate more bitter and tough than their own. Lucia was speechless even though her heart was filled with emotion.





Her talkative brother was silent for a while and then he asked, “Why was your grandfather caught by the trap? Was the hunter hunting him or was it an accident?”

“It was an accident,” the brother cat answered, “But the traps are installed by hunters on purpose. Us leopard cats, and nearly all animals living in low-altitude regions, have been seriously threatened for more than one hundred years.

“How can humans do such things?” Lucia hastily asked.

The brother cat answered. “Our parents told us that low-altitude regions are easily accessible and subject to hunting by humans. Flying squirrels, rabbits and muntjacs are all considered high-class supper for humans. Not to mention how precious leopard cats are to hunters. We are number one on their killing list, since our teeth, hair, flesh and bones always get the highest bids.”

The little sister cat finally spoke with deep doubt, “Why are humans hunting us down? What did we do to deserve their hatred?”





# chapter 4

## Crisis in Low-Altitude Ecology

The little leopard cat's question lingered in Lucia's heart, urging her to think more deeply about the cubs' story. Lucia recalled how her grandparents would often tell her and her brother intriguing stories of mysterious cats in the mountains.

After their first meeting, and throughout the whole of autumn, Lucius and Lucia would visit the cubs at Jiji Mountain. The underpass beneath the highway served as an access point to the lives and views of the leopard cats, and the little ones all became good friends.

The first cold winds of winter changed the leaves to coppery red. The children were not allowed to go to the mountains alone because of the rainy and freezing weather. They could only stay in the library, reading ecological books.

Lucia learned that leopard cats have been living in Taiwan for 10,000 years. Their Atayal name is Niau, which sounds like Ge-na-si, and means “cats in mountains”. They have been free to forage, run and enjoy life in the forest since ancient times. They are the true aboriginals, compared to human beings.

*Pl. XXXV*

*J. P. 248*



*H. J. N.*



Leopard cats roamed across Taiwan and the whole of Asia, including India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia. They were everywhere: from tropical islands to high-latitude areas in Japan, China, Mongolia and Korea. Interestingly, they have only been spotted in Asia, with no case of their existence in other regions of the world. Even more intriguing, Taiwan's leopard cats are a native species, while many others in Asia are subspecies. However, Taiwan's leopard cats are endangered while the others are not.



Why? From the tales of the cat siblings, Lucia had learned that their grandparents were killed by hunters for their precious fur and pelts, their parents may have died from highway traffic, and the cubs themselves were often blocked from foraging by buildings and barriers.

Even after many generations of co-habitation, humans still failed to get along well with the cats. Lucia hoped to understand why Taiwan's leopard cats were endangered, so Lucius and Lucia went to the "Endemic Species Research Institute" to inquire.

The kind staff told Lucia that leopard cats are high-end consumers in low-altitude ecology and also a keystone species. If someone were to draw the food chain as an arch, the leopard cat would fall in the middle. If the leopard cat were to disappear, the entire arch would collapse. Thus, leopard cats are critical in a low-altitude ecology. Protecting just one leopard cat simultaneously protects all the species that live within a two kilometer range of its habitat. A stable leopard population can also support the control of birds and rodents, which will protect crops.



The staff said that Taiwan already has one extinct species: the clouded leopard, and four critically endangered species: the Sambar deer, otter, fruit bat and Formosan black bear, which all exist only in tiny numbers. Although leopard cats now number less than 500, they still stand a chance to be saved. As long as people are willing to care more about them, their numbers can increase.



Yet how can people solve the problems of hunting and blockage by the highways?



# chapter 5

## Action

Amid Lucia's desperation to find solutions to protect her friends, the New Year arrived.

Lucia saw people taking high speed trains, airplanes or cars to quickly cross vast distances to reunite with their friends and families. She knew that the leopard cats and their animal brethren were not so lucky, having to travel every kilometer on foot.

Everywhere she spotted new roads, sub-division and bridges. More farms and forests were replaced with skyscrapers, while the habitats and pathways of the animals were destroyed. Lucia felt heart-broken, as it seemed humans only thought of their own convenience, even if it was built on the agony of animals.

One day during the New Year holidays, Lucia was making collages with neighborhood kids from the fallen leaves and fruits. Lucia used needle-like pine leaves, egg-like Pittosporum leaves, round Kiwi tree leaves, long stick-like Willow leaves, and Ginkgo leaves, all piled up to create a beautiful collage of nature. The surrounding stalks, seeds and stems helped to weave together a perfect image of the countryside.





As they enjoyed each other's masterpieces, Lucia had a flash of inspiration: if the people of Taiwan treated their lands like an artistic collage, maybe they would learn to give many precious habitats back to the animals.

Leopard cats have been close neighbours of humans since a long time ago. How can humans block their lovely forest paths and lush habitats with ugly concrete roads and buildings? Imagine no skyscrapers on their land, but instead preserved farmlands, fruit gardens, trenches, villages and forests. Perhaps the forests could be combined with grasslands and wetlands to protect the habitats of endangered species and prevent flooding and natural disasters.

Lucia told Lucius about these ideas and he immediately grabbed Lucia's hand, sprinting to the ESRI center to share them with the staff.

The staff concluded, "These ideas are really clever. They also match the concepts of the 'Satoyama Initiative' from the Conference of Biological Diversity in 2010."

"The Satoyama Initiative? What's that about?" Lucia asked.

The staff replied, "It's a complex biological model where habitats and human lands are woven together like a mosaic that balances biological diversity and human demand."



Lucius and Lucia were impressed, “Wow! No wonder! Isn’t a mosaic a kind of collage? If human beings try not to monopolise but to ‘share and collage’ the usage of lands, it might be more sustainable, right?”

“Exactly,” the staff said, “there is a saying that ‘Man is the measure of all things’. Human beings are the leaders of the ecological chain and our choices can define the fate of all kinds of beings.”

Lucius and Lucia decided to gather all of their friends to work together and use GIS (Geographic Information System) techniques to superimpose road maps upon habitat maps of low-altitude animals. This meant that they could see how fractured those habitats were and how to apply the Satoyama Initiative plan to ensure that future land projects respect the needs of the animals.



# chapter 6

When spring returned, Lucius and Lucia found their leopard friends happy and healthy. They could finally cross through the underpass to the woods ahead where they belonged. Lucia brought them the latest news of their work to make the Satoyama Initiative real on the ground. Their projects, maps and educational booklets had successfully made people aware that animal habitats have been deteriorating due to illegal hunting, badly planned urbanisation, and the highways. They called upon adults and children to contribute funds to buy the forests as safe homes for low-altitude animals.

More and more children joined the project, and they volunteered at Jiji conservation during holiday and weekends. With the help of the local communities, small pieces of conservation area gradually formed. One day, when Lucius and Lucia went to visit their friends, they were surprised to find four leopard cats instead of two.

The little cats' mother had been injured by a car while crossing the road on the night of the great thunder and lightning. Both the mother and father leopard cat were kept in a friendly person's home until she had recovered, and the parents were finally returned to their children. The little cats told their parents about the kindness they had received from Lucius and Lucia, and the children's efforts to protect their habitat. But Lucia explained, "You don't need to thank us. The selfish behaviour of humans was not right from the beginning. We will never be able to fully understand what you have been through. We are just trying to make amends for the mistakes that humans have made."

The leopards were so happy and thankful as they could finally go home to





their low-altitude woods without fear of human cars.

As Lucia and Lucius were visiting the leopards, they heard their grandparents calling, along with two other very welcome voices. Their own parents had finally returned safely home after their long journey overseas. They had walked all the way out to the overpass to greet their children. Both sets of parents were very proud and happy to hear about all the efforts that Lucia and Lucius had made to ensure that future land development would respect nature. Together, the human and animal families celebrated their path to life.

*The End*

# about the author



*Ying-Xuan Lai* (12) is a student at BTS school. She loves reading, natural science, art and music. She is a member of the Taipei Century Juvenile Symphony Orchestra.

Four years ago, Ying-Xuan began attending a training course (Project ECO) about the environment and species protection. She is now a member of an environmental action team which performs ecological surveys and field reconnaissance throughout Taiwan and Japan. She records her observations and turns them into stories and art. Her other recognised work has addressed marine extinction, indigenous communities

and conservation, and the rights of children.

Her first pictorial artwork, “Meet the White Dolphin”, won the Excellence Award in the 2013 Nationwide Students’ Picture Book Creation Award. It is an adventure story about a white dolphin and Ama, a traditional girl diver who collects seafood for a living. Ying-Xuan also won the Bronze prize in the 2015 Voices of Future Generations International Writing Contest with a story titled “Tales of the Waves at Lanyu”, which describes how the Taiwan indigenous people manage the conservation of marine resources.

Ying-Xuan continues to create more stories and artworks with her unique viewpoint concerning environmental issues. In her latest Voices of Future Generations Gold Award winning story “A Path to Life”, she superbly deals with the issue of mutual dependence between animals and humans, and demonstrates how all exist in the same bio-community.

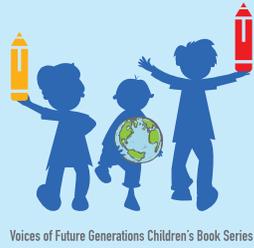
Ying-Xuan is not only concerned with environmental issues, but also concerns herself greatly with human rights issues. She lead teams with school classmates to investigate children’s rights and the rights of disadvantaged people in her country of Taiwan. Her theses “Let’s Play a Song Together with Black Keys and White Keys” and “The Missing Pieces” won the Excellence Award from the 2014 and 2016 Thesis Writing Competition of the Northern County of Taiwan, respectively. She did a speech in the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biodiversity in Mexico in 2016, a TEED talk for the Taiwanese “Children, Environment and Sustainable Development” forum, and joined “The Dialogues of Climate Generations” forum during the Taipei International Book Exhibition in 2017.

She is now working on her second book for the Voices of Future Generations Children’s Book Series.

# about the illustrator



**Kasia Nieżywińska** was born in Poland and moved to the UK some 25 years ago. Her background is in mathematics. She has worked as a teacher, a computer programmer and recently as a freelance illustrator. Her special interest is in creating images for children's books. She qualified with a MA Degree in Children's Book Illustration from Ruskin University in Cambridge. The ideas for her work come predominantly from her childhood memories, through which she recalls and sometimes her own imaginary adventures. She loves telling stories and illustrating them.



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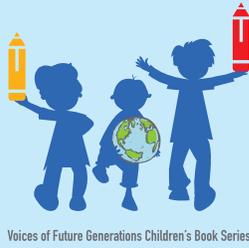
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## **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

All children are holders of important human rights. Twenty-five years ago in 1989, over a hundred countries agreed on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the most important human rights treaty in history, they promised to protect and promote all children's equal rights, which are connected and equally important.

In the 54 Articles of the Convention, countries make solemn promises to defend children's needs and dreams. They recognize the role of children in realizing their rights, which requires that children be heard and involved in decision-making. In particular, Article 24 and Article 27 defend children's rights to safe drinking water, good food, a clean and safe environment, health, and quality of life. Article 29 recognizes children's rights to education that develops personality, talents and potential, respecting human rights and the natural environment.

— *Dr. Alexandra Wandel*  
World Future Council



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## The UN Sustainable Development Goals

At the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, governments and people came together to find pathways for a safer, more fair, and greener world for all. Everyone agreed to take new action to end poverty, stop environmental problems, and build bridges to a more just future. In 283 paragraphs of *The Future We Want* Declaration, countries committed to defend human rights, steward resources, fight climate change and pollution, protect animals, plants and biodiversity, and look after oceans, mountains, wetlands and other special places.

In the United Nations, countries are committing to 17 new Sustainable Development Goals for the whole world, with targets for real actions on the ground. Clubs, governments, firms, schools and children have started over a thousand partnerships, and mobilized billions, to deliver. The future we want exists in the hearts and minds of our generation, and in the hands of us all.

— *Vuyelwa Kuuya*

Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL)



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## Thanks and Inspiring Resources

### **'Voices of Future Generations' International Commission**

Warmest thanks to the International Commission, launched in 2014 by His Excellency Judge CG Weeramantry, UNESCO Peace Education Research Award Laureate, which supports, guides and profiles this new series of Children's Books Series, including Ms Alexandra Wandel (WFC), Dr Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (CISDL), Dr Kristiann Allen (New Zealand), Ms Irina Bokova (UNESCO), Mr Karl Hansen (Trust for Sustainable Living), Ms Emma Hopkin (UK), Dr Ying-Shih Hsieh (EQPF), Dr Maria Leichner-Reynal (Uruguay), Ms Melinda Manuel (PNG), Ms Julia Marton-Lefevre (IUCN), Dr James Moody (Australia), Ms Anna Oposa (The Philippines), Professor Kirsten Sandberg (UN CRC Chair), Ms Patricia Chaves (UN DSD), Dr Marcel Szabo (Hungary), Dr Christina Voigt (Norway), Ms Gabrielle Sacconaghi-Bacon (Moore Foundation), Ms Marcela Orvañanos de Rovzar (UNICEF Mexico) and others.

**The World Future Council** consists of 50 eminent global changemakers from across the globe. Together, they work to pass on a healthy planet and just societies to our children and grandchildren. ([www.worldfuturecouncil.org](http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org))

**United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO)** which celebrates its 70th Anniversary throughout 2015, strives to build networks among nations that enable humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity by mobilizing for education, building intercultural understanding, pursuing scientific cooperation, and protecting freedom of expression. ([en.unesco.org](http://en.unesco.org))

The **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its three Optional Protocols, by its State parties. ([www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org))

**United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. ([www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org))

**International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** envisions a just world that values and conserves nature, working to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. ([www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org))

**Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL)** supports understanding, development and implementation of law for sustainable development by leading legal research through scholarship and dialogue, and facilitating legal education through teaching and capacity-building. ([www.cisd.org](http://www.cisd.org))

**Trust for Sustainable Living** and its Living Rainforest Centre exist to further the understanding of sustainable living in the United Kingdom and abroad through high-quality education. ([www.livingrainforest.org](http://www.livingrainforest.org))

**Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF)** established in 1984 is the premier ENGO in Taiwan. Implementing environmental education, tree plantation, and international participation through coordinating transdisciplinary resources to push forward environmental and sustainable development in our time.



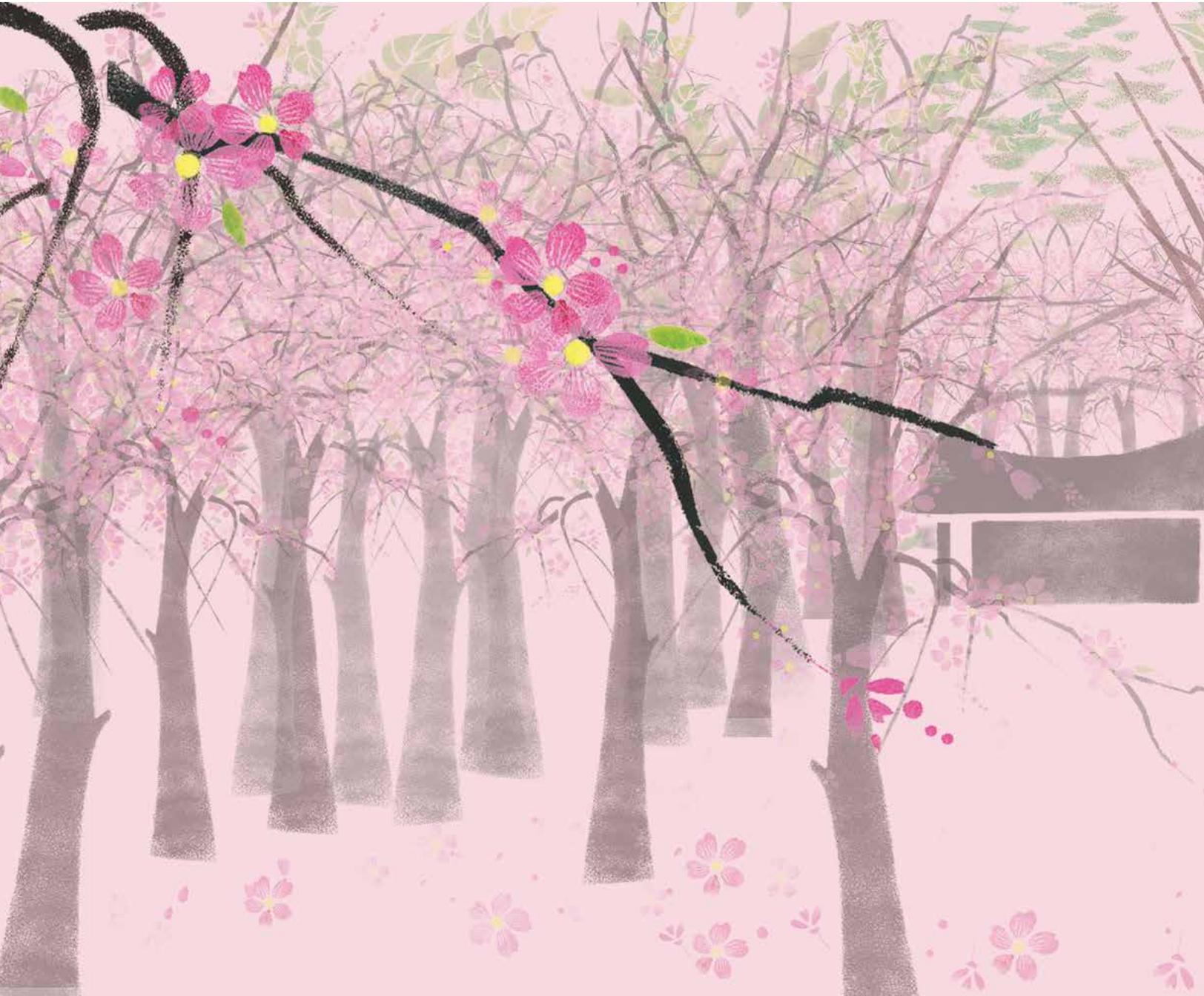
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## About the 'Voices of Future Generations' Series

To celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Voices of Future Generations Children's Book Series, led by the United Nations and a consortium of educational charities including the World Future Council (WFC), the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL), the Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF), the Fundacion Ecos and the Trust for Sustainable Living (TSL) among others, also the Future Generations Commissioners of several countries, and international leaders from the UN Division for Sustainable Development, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Education, Science and Culture Organisation (UNESCO), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and other international organizations, has launched the new Voices of Future Generations Series of Children's Books.

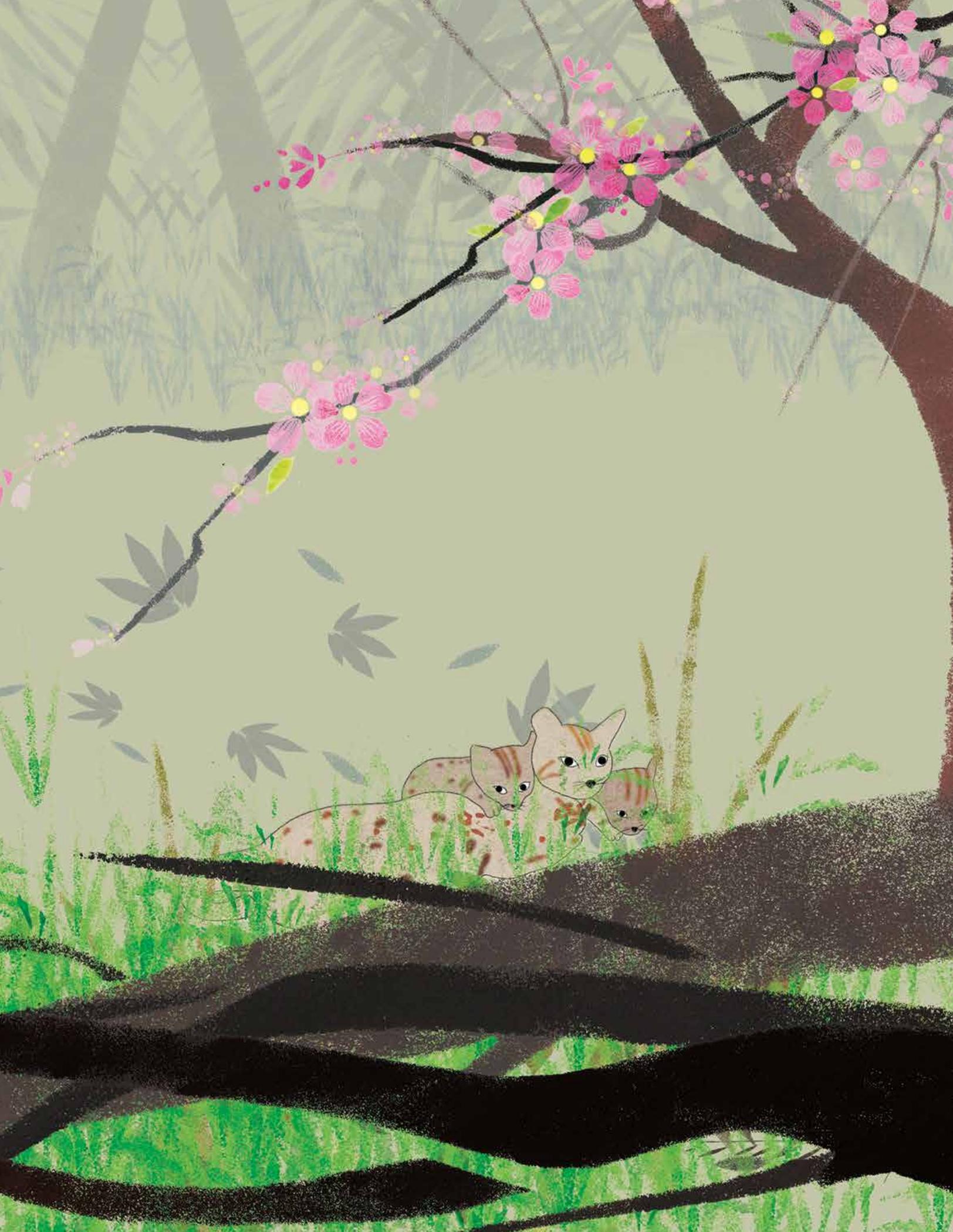
Every year we feature stories from our selected group of child authors, inspired by the outcomes of the Earth Summit, the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) and the world's Sustainable Development Goals, and by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) itself. Our junior authors, ages 8-12, are concerned about future justice, poverty, the global environment, education and children's rights. Accompanied by illustrations, each book profiles creative, interesting and adventurous ideas for creating a just and greener future, in the context of children's interests and lives.

We aim to publish the books internationally in ten languages, raising the voices of future generations and spreading their messages for a fair and sustainable tomorrow among their peers and adults, worldwide. We welcome you to join us in support of this inspiring partnership, at [www.vofg.org](http://www.vofg.org).

















This wonderful story shows how human activity (like road construction) can cause serious ecological harm. All of us should examine the impact of human activity from a different point of view - like Lucia and Lucius in this extraordinary book, because as former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated, the protection of biodiversity is “essential for the welfare of current and future generations.

**Marcel Szabó,**

***Judge of the Constitutional Court of Hungary, former  
Ombudsman for Future Generations in Hungary***

Join the human and leopard siblings on a heart-warming search for a path to life for all living creatures in Asia.

Read it with your children and grandchildren. Read it with your parents and grandparents. The illustrations are utterly beautiful.

**Karl Hansen,**

***Executive Director, Trust for Sustainable Living***

This extraordinary story underscores the strengths of children in the face of adversity and the inherent power of youth to serve as the cornerstone of their communities and of society overall. It reminds readers of the power of children to find innovative and compassionate solutions to the issues facing current and future generations of society while highlighting the power and fragility of nature.

**Dr. Alexandra Harrington,**

***Professor, University of Albany School of Law, and affiliated  
faculty at the Global Institute for Health and Human Rights  
Executive Director, Trust for Sustainable Living***

**UNESCO Voices of Future Generations | Children's Book Series 7  
A Path to Life | 1**



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