



**Take urgent action  
to combat  
climate change  
and its impacts**

### **Crimson Descent – SDG 13 – Climate Action**



For centuries, man had ravaged the earth: consuming its resources mercilessly, changing the climate, cutting trees, and killing animals without a care, and as guessed, the aftermath was horrific. Resulting in extreme weather patterns, rising sea levels and mass extinction of species. But perhaps, the most painful death of them all was that of the trees. They were the lungs of the earth, purifying the air, giving vital habitat to countless creatures, giving fruits and taking care of our earthlings without any expectation of returns. And now, after all the unconditional love, stood alone the last tree ever.

What did humans give earth if not annihilation? Scientists had been tasked to watch over the lone tree, monitoring its health, and search for any indication of life. They were perhaps the only remaining individuals who for reasons that only they could

understand, loved the earth and wanted to save it. In their suits with masks and goggles covering their faces, they carefully observed the leaves of the tree. The lead scientist, Dr Maya Patel, started speaking. “Are there any changes from yesterday?” “No,” Dr David Chen, the botanist, answered. “Leaves are wilted and yellow. No new growth.” Maya sighed and trailed her gloved hand across the rough bark of the tree. “Not looking too good. We are going to come up with a solution soon or it will be too late.”

For the small team of members who have been studying the tree for several months with high effort and low results, motivation ran low. Perchance the daunting thought echoed that time had finally run out, and earth had reached its “tipping point”. Any chance of return would be lost if this tree dies. As the sun sank lower, and the wind grew cool, the temperature became cold and chilly. Scientists gathered around a campfire sharing stories and memories of what life was like before everything changed. They couldn’t help but reminisce over the vast woods and crystal-clear lakes, birdsongs, and the soft rustle of leaves in the breeze. It all felt so surreal now like a faraway dream. Suddenly, the ground began to shake. The scientists scrambled to their feet, their hearts racing with fear and excitement. It was a sound they had never heard before—the sound of rain. “It’s raining!” exclaimed Dr Sarah James, the meteorologist. “I don’t believe it!” The scientists rushed to dig out their instruments so as to document this miracle. Drenched, they danced and played, their faces raised towards the sky, thankful for the moment of mercy and hope.

Unfortunately, the celebration proved to be short-lived as the rain quickly ceased, leaving only a faint trace of moisture on the ground. Watching the droplets evaporate before her eyes, Maya felt her heart sinking with a heavy feeling of disappointment. “We must take action,” she declared with unwavering determination, her voice reflecting the weight of the situation. “We cannot simply stand by and witness the decline of our planet.” The other scientists nodded in unity, their expressions somber, yet resolute, fully aware that they could not rescue the entire world, but perhaps they could salvage this singular tree. With this purpose in mind, they commenced their efforts, brainstorming and experimenting tirelessly, driven by a steadfast resolve to discover a solution. As days turned into weeks, the tree displayed no signs of revival despite their relentless endeavors. They exhausted every conceivable method, from artificial rain to soil supplements, yet to no avail. The tree remained withered and devoid of life, symbolizing the loss they were experiencing. One weary evening, amidst their fatigue and despondency, Dr Chen proposed a new perspective, “perhaps we have been approaching this the wrong way. Instead of striving to save the tree, maybe we should concentrate on preserving its legacy.” “What do you mean?” enquired Dr James. “We could gather samples of the tree and safeguard them in a controlled environment,” he elucidated. “Even if the tree perishes, its genetic material will endure.” Hope ignited within the group as they contemplated this daring plan, recognizing it as their final opportunity.

The following day, they meticulously gathered samples and secured them in a protected container, a painstaking yet ultimately successful endeavor in preserving the tree’s legacy. As the sun cast its final golden rays over the landscape, marking

the end of an era, the scientists gathered around the tree for one last time. With heavy hearts filled with both sorrow and appreciation, they bid their farewells. They had been unable to rescue the last tree on this planet, but they had safeguarded its legacy and maybe, that was enough. As night descended, Maya stood alone, gazing at the twinkling stars above. She reflected on the irreplaceable beauty and marvel that had once flourished on their planet, now forever lost. She also contemplated the tenacity of her team, and the legacy they had preserved. In that poignant moment, she made a solemn vow to herself and to the world. They would not surrender. They would persist in their flight, seeking a way to heal their planet and resurrect the trees.

Even though the last tree on earth had vanished, its legacy would endure, serving as a symbol of resilience and determination in the face of devastation. With a heavy, yet resolute, heart, Maya turned and made her way back to the camp, prepared to confront whatever challenges lay ahead. For the sake of the of the last tree on earth and the future of their planet.

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I am an 11th-grade student at Kothari International School, studying under the Cambridge curriculum. I think words can make a difference, and through the 17 SDG Stories Competition, I tried to use mine to motivate action.

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