

She lived in a house, in the neighborhood of a place called suburbs. She lived there with her dad, her mum and her little brother of early age. All of them spoke in a musical language that



At the playtime the girl was always alone while several groups of other children were playing around her. She often reminded her native country and the friends she had left there. Then her eyes filled with the image of rivers and lakes that run through her native lands and she wanted to start to run, and jump very high, and fly in order to return there again.

In her closed hand she always carried a charm that her grandfather had given her some time ago. He told her when she was a little younger:

‘While carrying this charm with you nothing bad never will happen to you’



The charm also had ....might

She remembered the first day at her new school. Her teacher, Miss Nicole announced that there was a newcomer in class and suggested that they introduce themselves. All the pupils did so in turns. When it was the girl's turn to present herself to the others, she looked hesitantly at them and then humming and hawing she said 'Goulain '. The sound of her name seemed so funny to some pupils that they burst into laughter and Goulain immediately blushed. Miss Nicole instantly remarked that it is not right to make fun of others'. It is time for our break now, so make sure that you all play together, will you?' added the young teacher.

Indeed all the children asked Goulain to play with them. They joyfully rushed to the school yard to play a traditional game of their country. They formed two teams. As Goulain could not speak their language and only knew a few words, she could not understand what her team mates were saying and her team lost.

‘Why on Earth did we ask her to join us?’ said Christine.

‘Without her, we would have definitely won’ added Andrew and everybody else agreed with him.

Even though Goulain could not understand much, she felt that everybody blamed her for the team's defeat.

Away from the other children, she burst into tears wondering why they were all angry at her since it wasn't her fault she could not understand what they were saying. ‘They are acting as if I wanted our team to lose. I wish I could be a bird and fly back to my village to see my dear friends. I miss them so much and







wonderful voice. In the end, everybody clapped enthusiastically and it was at that moment that Goulain felt she belonged.

The following morning Miss Nicole asked to meet Goulain's parents because 'she had some very important things to discuss with them'. After realizing that they were less capable of communicating in the new language than their daughter, Miss Nicole offered to teach them the language herself. And so she did. Every afternoon she visited Goulain's family for a new lesson.



A few months later Goulain's class decided to take part in a singing contest. The prize for the winner was a generous amount of money. Everyone voted for Goulain to be their main singer of their choir, and they started rehearsing after school. They did

really well and each time they listened to Goulain's voice spellbound.

The day of the competition came so fast and before they knew it, the children were on stage, ready to perform. They had felt really anxious, but now they were trying to find some courage in Goulain's confident face. All of a sudden, this shy girl from a country not even heard of before, had been transformed into their leader that guided and inspired them. Her voice sounded like angels singing to their ears.



What followed their performance was beyond the children's expectation. Everyone at the audience stood up and applauded. As expected, their school came first and won the prize.

Goulain felt so happy and so grateful to her Grandpa for giving her that charm, which she had kept with her the whole time. She was really happy and

proud of herself and her friends. They were her friends now and from then on she never felt alone again.

After a few days, while they were playing in the school yard her new best friend, Sophia, suggested they played 'Blindfold'. Goulain closed her eyes and put a scarf to cover them. She could hear their carefree laughter but she didn't manage to catch anyone. Finally, she touched somebody and that meant the end of the game. When Goulain took the scarf off her face, she just stood there speechless for a few moments in surprise. Right in front of her eyes was her Grandpa with his arms wide open for her.



'Happy birthday Goulain' said her Grandpa in their language. Then she heard her friends joyfully wishing her 'Happy Birthday'. She had almost forgotten it was her birthday.

'If it hadn't been for your friends, I wouldn't have come. They offered all the prize money you won to buy me the ticket. The charm has helped you so far, but the best thing in life, is to believe in yourself and to have friends you can rely on. Now you have both'.

From that day on, Goulain and her friends did everything together. Goulain showed them games she used to play in her little village and taught them words in her own language and songs she knew. With her mother's help she even cooked those strange recipes that proved to be really tasty.

She felt so strong and never had to worry about anything. Her friends were always there for her.



**THE END**