

Sabira Stahlberg

Find in the earth



Lecti

book studio

Chapter 7

The gadget beeps once more and falls quiet.
“What is it doing?” I ask.
“No idea”, Axel says. “We’ll take it to the tent and test it without anyone looking.”
“The thing must be a radio”, I comment.
“It is not a television. We found one last year. There was only snow falling on the screen when we managed to get it working.”

I sit in the tent with the book on my knees.
Nothing happens when I press the buttons.
When I open the gadget, I find a battery.
It is certainly empty and needs electricity.
Something is written on the battery,
but I can’t read the text.

It happens often that we cannot read the letters written on the things we find.
Yesterday we found a small booklet on paper, which was sent to an expert.
The expert informed just now that it is written in a language, which no longer exists.
The booklet has many pictures nobody understands. I think they are snakes.
The expert believes they are symbols.
Axel states that they are simple tubes.
But nobody knows for sure.

"It could be an advertisement", Axel snorts.
"Earlier many advertisements were printed.
We often find brochures among the rubbish.
What an enormous waste of paper!"

I go out to Axel, while the battery is charging.
I have connected it to our little power plant.
Axel laughs and lifts up a thing made of plastic.
It has a long handle and a shaggy end.
"A toy", he says. "It looks like a doll."
"Where are the legs?" I ask.
"Maybe it was used to brush the hair?"
Axel says. "Too big, hair brushes are smaller",
I answer. "Then it is a cult object", he decides.
"Oops, here we have paper on a roll."

"Grandmother's mother wrote that she bought
paper on rolls for the toilet", I explain.
"What a funny idea". Axel shakes his head.
"Why would anyone use paper in the toilet?
All you need is water to clean your bottom."
"It is unhygienic to use paper", I say.
"Everybody knows that. But people back then
were not so hygienic." Axel nods:
"Paper can contain bacteria, viruses or mould."
"Arsenic is found in paper", I add.
"It was used for medicine, but it is poisonous."
"Arsenic is found in clothes and glass",
Axel says. "If you get too much of it, you will

start vomiting." I shrug: "You might die. But our clothes no longer contain any arsenic. We use only pure wool from sheep."
"We can get arsenic from the soil into the body," Axel says. "I wonder how they lived with all those poisons? People must have had lots of chemicals in their bodies."
"I think the doll is a brush for the toilet", I decide. "You are standing in somebody's ancient bathroom, Axel."

"Terrible lack of hygiene! Here is a skeleton of a dead rat", Axel shouts.
"Do you think it has eaten of the paper?"
"The poison is not enough to kill", I say.
"What is that?" Axel points.
"Trousers", I reply. "They have holes."
"Then they must be rags", Axel says.
"No, the funny thing is that the holes were made at the same time as the trousers. Here is a sweater with holes, but these ones were made later. Perhaps by the rat?" I say.

I shiver. I can't get used to rats. Snakes and worms are disgusting, too. The snakes like our open holes in the earth. The mice fall into the holes and can't get out. The snakes wriggle down to hunt them. We find a satisfied and lazy snake, but no mice.

Some years there are lots of mice, but then the following year they are much fewer. The animals fall ill, when they are too many. Lately we have not found many animals here. Axel says that the weather is bad and that is why there are fewer animals. Autumn is on its way and the mice hide in the earth for the winter. "The number of animals and species also depends on how much poison there is", Axel says. "Just like people they react on how clean the environment is."

Just then I hear a bang and turn around. The tent with the gadget is burning. "The gadget", I shout. "It blew up!" "It was the battery", Axel says. "Old batteries can explode. The gadget is actually a mobile phone, you know." I run to the tent, but can do nothing. The guards try to put out the fire. The tent burns down with gadget and battery. Nobody knows that I tried by myself to get the mobile phone to function. They think it was the power plant. The worst thing is that also the book with codes and maps was burned. Now I have only the diary left. Fortunately it is hidden under my mattress at home.

**A solar storm wipes out all
computers and digital knowledge.
The archaeologists dig in the earth
for valuable information
and precious metals.**

**Can they help humanity
to return to life before the storm?
Others are also interested
about the findings in the earth...**



ISBN 978-619-192-261-1 (Paper)
ISBN 978-619-192-263-5 (PDF)
ISBN 978-619-192-264-2 (EPUB)