

Peonidou Elli

The Green Tower SUMMARY

Almost a century ago a French merchant went on a sea-journey to foreign lands for the sake of his business. The ship was caught in a storm, forcing the merchant to spend a few weeks on an island while his ship was being repaired. There he fell in love with a local girl. They were married and he built for her a small palace, The Green Tower..

The couple's daughter, the beautiful Sylvia, was the most sought-after bride on the whole island but she wanted only Thomas, a poor gardener, for a husband. When her father heard of it he was furious. He dismissed Thomas and moved to Paris with his family.

Hurt and humiliated, Thomas travels abroad and by working hard manages to buy the Green Tower with its huge garden. The only pleasure in Thomas's life -he never married- was to work in the garden, transforming it into a small paradise.

With the passing of time the town begins to change. The trees are cut down, the old, beautiful houses with their tiled roofs are demolished and replaced by high concrete buildings. In the middle of this city of concrete there remains only the lone, peaceful, Green Tower with its lovely garden, now a place of sanctuary for birds.

And so we come to the present. Thomas, almost a hundred years old, feeling the end approaching, thinks up a way to keep the Green Tower for the city's children as a library and Botanical Garden. However, his greedy relatives are planning to turn the Green Tower into a huge shopping centre.

Old Thomas asks his young friends, Stathis and Lakis, to help him and leaves them a simple Will. Thomas dies and the two boys begin an uneven contest over the Green Tower, supported by Lakis's father, a journalist and his friend who is a lawyer. Those two promise to stand by the youngsters.

An unexpected role in the story is played by a young artist Sylvie, the granddaughter of Thomas's old love. Sylvie had arrived a few months earlier, carrying a message of eternal love for Thomas from her dead grandmother.

The battle of the two friends takes on unimaginable proportions. The children of the town join Stathis and Lakis in their struggle to save 'their' paradise and the city's last 'lung'.

Intrigues, police involvement, mysterious happenings, lawsuits, and strikes by the children, hold the attention of the reader to the last page.

A socially relevant and ecological story suitable for both children and adults.

Translation by Billi Rosen