

Upside-down World!

Zara's boots scraped along the gritty canal towpath. Her parents were ahead to her great relief. Every night locked in her room she escaped the booming voices echoing up the stairwell. Why were they so unhappy for they had her and Tom her loveable Labrador? Tom was the only thing that made her happy at the moment.

Leaves of chestnut, auburn and honey fell all around as Tom sniffed them with his wet nose. His electric blue eyes danced in the sun that was golden and dipped in pink. Zara looked too at the sky painted before them and said "come on Tom, time to go home." Tom did not walk up to her though, instead he lumbered to the edge of the canal. "Come on Tom!" she whined as she went to put on his lead.

It was then she caught sight of what Tom had paused to look at. Rather than the usual murky waters, she could have sworn there was a mirror in its place. The arched branches of the trees crossed like the hands of old friends as their golden leaves tumbled with the vivid sunset as their backdrop. They kissed the surface of the subtle water then... wait... where did they go? Entranced by this vision Zara reached to catch this falling treasure. Suddenly she was pulled, as if by magic, into the depths of the water!

Here comes the icy splash, here comes the waves to swallow me... but none came. Water was not rushing past her face instead she felt a refreshing breeze and warm sunshine! The smell of fresh grass met her nostrils and beautiful birdsong filled the air in this peaceful new world. She sat up, dazed, and looked around. A voice behind her said "hello Zara". Zara turned around to look who was speaking and her jaw dropped! It was Tom! "You can talk" gasped Zara. "We talk every day just not using words" replied Tom "that's why we are such good friends! I'm going to show you how to turn your life upside-down in the real world. Come on". He trotted off in the fresh grass. Ahead they saw Zara's mum and dad who were laughing and joking. Zara could see the love in their eyes, something she had not noticed for a long time. Tom saw her expression and said "they are like this on the inside, whichever world, you just don't take enough time to notice. Maybe you need to spend more time with them?". Zara nodded, her head spinning. How had she not seen it from their point of view before? Zara plucked up all her courage and said "I'm ready to go back'.

The light changed, the sun set, Zara moved forwards and her wellies met the gravel path. She ran, with Tom, to join her parents in a tight hug. In that embrace she felt love and finally things were the right way up. The waters behind her rippled, murky once again...