



A GOOD IDEA

AT THE BEGINNING...



It's a hot afternoon in May.

A group of friends is studying for the last tests of the year: to be precise, their art teacher has assigned them to do a project in groups and they have nearly finished their work: they have the material, but now they have to present it in a creative way.

At the moment they are having a break after the work they have already done, laying and chatting on some of the sofas in the balcony at the house of one of them.



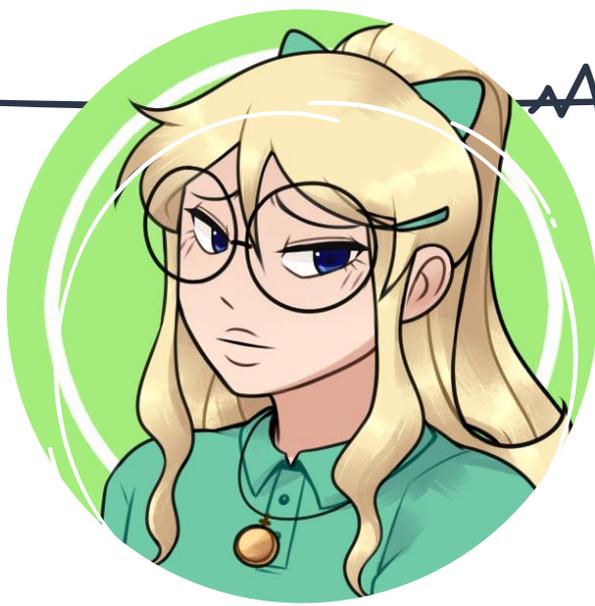
AT THE BEGINNING...



They are all thinking about summer and the last of their thoughts is the school project: actually they are looking forward to have finally some free time after 10 months of school.

«Come on! The sooner we finish the project, the sooner we leave the house and hang out!» screams one of their friends.

Gathered around the table where they were previously working they start discussing an original but quick way to get their work done, but none of them is able to propose a suitable idea. But suddenly...



One of the girls in the group comes up with the first original option: she is **Maya**. She doesn't talk too much because she's an introvert, but she always tries to get out of her comfort zone when she has the opportunity. Actually, that is the first time she has spoken after doing in complete silence the task that had been assigned to her within the group.



«!...I might have had an idea...» says Maya. «Come on, tell it!» encourages one of the youngsters.

«What about a poster? Maybe we can paste all the material we have on it... what do you think of that? Maybe we can als...-» She doesn't have time to finish the sentence as a strong laugh interrupts her. “ What kind of idea is that? A poster? Really? Maya, are you still in primary school? Instead of saying stupid things, keep quiet like you've done so far! Shut your mouth!” Maya suddenly stops talking, and lowers her gaze.





He's **Mike**. He's a kind of boy who seems tough apparently, but actually he has problems expressing his real emotions and feelings and tends to hide his fragile side.



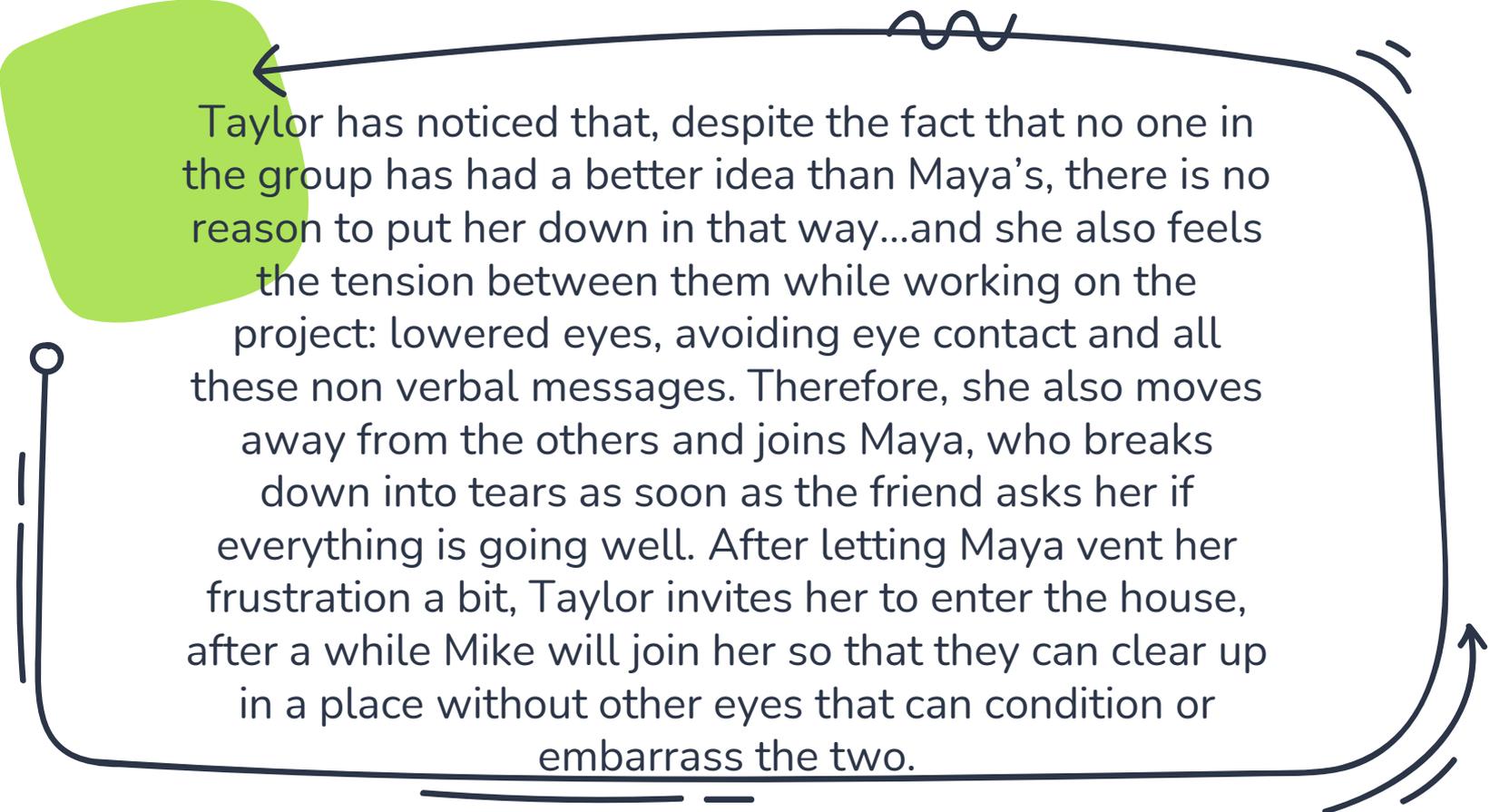
After that, Maya slowly walks away from the table and lets her other classmates discussing... she feels so stupid, she wishes she'd have never said anything. In addition, this is not the first time Mike talks to her in that way, despite the fact that she feels badly looked by him all the time.

She sits behind the others, not to let them see her eyes that are filling with tears: on the one hand, she would like to see all those around her disappear, on the other hand, she hopes that someone will come to comfort her, but she feels invisible to others, and she has now resigned herself to this. But that's not really the case, there's someone who manages to go beyond the things Mike said and beyond the indifference of others. And she is...





She is **Taylor**. She's a neutral character because she's both friend of Mike and Maya, so she won't take sides. Furthermore, she's really extrovert and she has learnt how to be empathic by developing a careful eye and learnt how to be patient by looking after her siblings, who argue really often.



Taylor has noticed that, despite the fact that no one in the group has had a better idea than Maya's, there is no reason to put her down in that way...and she also feels the tension between them while working on the project: lowered eyes, avoiding eye contact and all these non verbal messages. Therefore, she also moves away from the others and joins Maya, who breaks down into tears as soon as the friend asks her if everything is going well. After letting Maya vent her frustration a bit, Taylor invites her to enter the house, after a while Mike will join her so that they can clear up in a place without other eyes that can condition or embarrass the two.

THE MOMENT OF MEDIATION

At first neither of them wants to talk, they don't even look each other in the eye.

Taylor decides to take matters into his own hands by breaking the ice with a few questions to the two, who after a while begin to discuss.

At the end of the discussion, it emerges that if Mike behaves like this with Maya, it is only because he has recently declared his love interest in her; she is confused and doesn't know how to respond. It causes embarrassment and resentment in him: since that day they have never spoken face to face, this is the first time since that day.



THE MOMENT OF MEDIATION

Taylor manages to help them by setting turns, understanding one another: she also has to use her sense of humor in order to make them feel comfortable.

Sometimes, it is hard for her to be patient, especially when one of them tries to divert avoiding certain topics or not saying a word, but she gets over it.





“Thanks to you, I have understood that talking about misunderstanding immediately, would have been a better way of resolving the situation between us.

I was focusing on school and on myself when Mike told me he was having feelings for me but I didn't have the courage to say that I needed more time by myself, I only told that I was confused without adding anything else and I kept being quiet.

I'm really sorry for that, but I don't think I deserve to be excluded like that.” said Maya “Also, I am interested in Mike, and maybe now I'm ready to start something...”





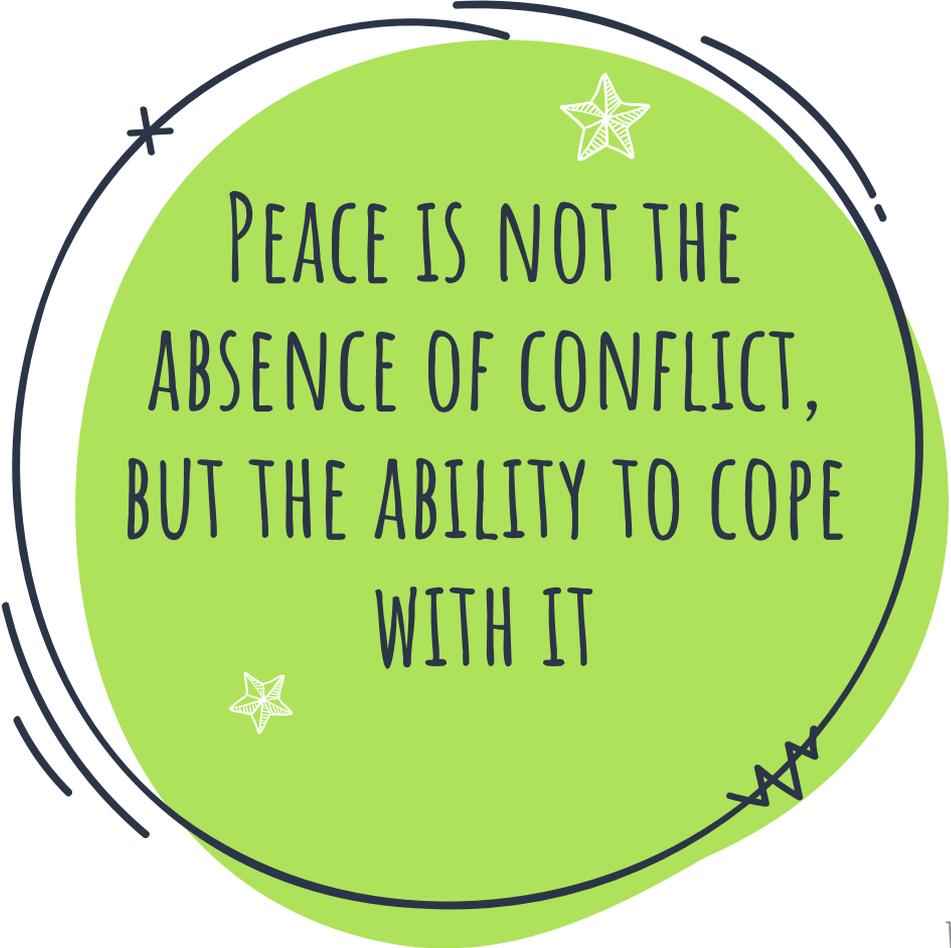
“ How could I ever think all this if you're just telling me now?” says Mike “Taylor, I want to thank you, too: if you had not convinced and encouraged me to speak truthfully with Maya, I would probably still have a lot of grudge inside me and I would be putting her down, trying to exclude her so as not to have her in front of my eyes .

Sometimes all we need is a push... but come on now, let's finish our project...or should I call it “poster”?”



Maya and Mike show up at the table together and start working on the poster.

Meanwhile in Taylor's mind arises a relevant quote by Mahatama Gandhi :



PEACE IS NOT THE
ABSENCE OF CONFLICT,
BUT THE ABILITY TO COPE
WITH IT



THE END