

Charlotte Kleine-Depenbrock, 8b

May 20th

It's official! We are in a lockdown! I mean it sort of was clear that something had to change at some point, but now the government confirmed a constant lockdown for everybody. And whenever we want to go out –what we should only do when we need to go shopping or go to work– we have to wear special air masks, which clean the air, so we can breathe normally. Nowadays, the air is so full of chemicals, carbon dioxide, and smog that we can't breathe the air without getting sick and eventually after a longer duration, even die. The air has been bad for a while now. The last year with good quality air was 2020. As we learned in school that was the year where there were similar requirements for the population, but for a completely different reason. Back then there was a huge breakout of a virus. To keep the virus at bay people had to stay in isolation. Back then, many young students protested on Fridays for the future (the „Fridays for future“ movement) and now looking back on it, we should have done more for the environment. This lockdown is our last chance to save our world, otherwise everything and everybody will eventually die. Everything as we know it will change.

May 21st

Our dog is totally freaking out. He wants to be walked, but we are not allowed to go outside for a long time. The government has decided that every dog owner is allowed to go outside with their dog for 10 minutes. Otherwise it would be too big of a risk for the dog as well as the owner. Our dog is a very active dog so it is very hard on him to only be able to go outside for a very short period of time. He is just running around in the house now and is very nervous. And this is only the first day, how will it be in one week or in one month.

May 23rd

At the moment the teachers are trying to figure out how online school is going to work. Although there have been several cases before, where school was online it is a different situation now. Now every teacher has to give us work and teach us the entire curriculum online, which is new for everybody.

May 24th

Although the house has an air conditioning system, which is why we can breathe inside of the house and other buildings, ours has been making weird noises the past few days so somebody has to come and fix it.

Later today somebody came over to fix the AC. We are really lucky that they had time for us and especially so fast because right now many AC's are breaking and they don't know why, but they think it's because they had to filter so much smog and chemicals out of the air for a while now. My school still doesn't know how we are going to learn our curriculum, so right now I don't know what to do and I am bored. Maybe I am going to draw something or write something or maybe I'm going to call my friends. I kind of hope that our school is going to figure something out soon.

May 27th

Today was our first day of school with the new online system. Our school programmed a system where our assignments for the day are listed so that we can learn them on our own. Some teachers want our finished assignments, so that they can assure that we did the work and that they can correct them and give us grades. Sometimes I don't understand an assignment and then I have to write the teacher my question in an e-mail.

May 28th

Today mom and I had to go to the supermarket. There has to be done a lot of preparing before going outside. We had to wear the special masks to be able to go outside. Even going from the house to the flying hoover -it's like a car but it doesn't drive it flies above the ground- could be dangerous without the masks. After we arrived at the supermarket we had to wait because many people wanted to go to the supermarket. Eventually we were allowed in and had to go through a wind machine so that all the chemicals and particles are blown off of our suits and won't pollute the supermarket. Going through the aisles I noticed that almost everything is sold out because so many people are stocking up on food and groceries. We could hardly get anything we needed and many people were freaking out because they couldn't find essential groceries like bread or toilet paper.

May 30th

The government told everybody who has a garden or some kind of field has to plant one tree per 5 square meter, with more trees the air will get cleaned quicker, which means we have to go to a garden center and get 5 trees for our garden. And every three days trucks will come by and will be spraying pollen so that the trees and flowers will grow. We had to start doing that a few years ago, since the bees are nearly extinct and otherwise every plant would just die out.

June 1st

After over one week in lockdown I haven't seen my friends and really I miss them. We are not supposed to drive around in the flying hoover so the pollution won't get greater as it was. And driving by bike with an air mask is very hard because it's so uncomfortable. But we call and text each other every day and we even started to watch a show while we were on the phone all together. The government also decided that we have to stay in lockdown for at least four months. Our dog got also used to the fact that he can't go on such long walks anymore.

"This story creates a rather dystopian outlook on our future – creative ideas on how life will look like!"

"Cleverly constructed and full of imaginative details. Let's hope for some more ambitious developments in schools, shall we?"

Hope for a Nation in 877 words

Lennox Költzsch, 10e

„Hope is always a double-edged sword“

There once was a nation,
at the centre of her world.

She had the biggest population,
and she got all her neighbours to serve.

Thousand year old empire, she had everything she needed:
spices, silk, porcelain and tea.

One day another world set foot on the dynasty,
wanting these goods for their majesty.

Even when she sold it at outrageous prices,
all of the other european nations wanted their slices.
The big chinese cake was shared by france, britian, portugal and spain.
These fighting for their empires name,
for them it was all just a game,
to drain the empire for their own gain.

That the people united for an uprising wasn't suprising.
55 days they held until the imperialists had risen to power,
and starting again to devour.
Cities like Hong Kong, Chengdu, Macau and Shanghai,
taken away for „protection“, that was their alibi.

There wasn't really much to do, they could only hope to survive.
Difficult! Since the Emperor Puyi was only at the age of five.

„Hope is the pillar that holds up the world. Hope is the dream of a waking man“
Enough is Enough!

Thereof a republic!

Free and filled with liberty!

A dream by the man of Sun Yat-sen.

It wasn't a question of „if“ but rather of „when“.

The year was 1911, where they tried to fight the big 7.

And the Creation of a new Nation.

Which fell again into seperation.

New ideologies, talking about superior biologies, if minorities should be embraced,
or if there was a masterrace.

Once again divided and misguided, a nations demise, and another threat on the rise.

The people could only hope, but they were left in the cold.
Another conflict, another civil war.

„I hoped today might be a good day. Hope is a dangerous thing“

A new regime with a new king,

his name was Mao Zedong.
Who ruled China for his lifelong.

The people hoped the terror was over,
getting to „the heaven on earth“ as the government described, a little closer.
That was far from the truth,
plan was to get the new communist ideals into the youth.
The adults into detention camps or prison,
they weren't allowed to have their own ideas, neither was it their decision.

The land was purged to find the people who had more,
getting to the greedy core.
Millions suffered and were suppressed,
just because of the things they possessed.

Again the people hoped, but these wishes just went and became smoke.
Distant dreams, far from reality,
even if they just wanted something close to normality.

A big famine swept across the land.
Every crop became sand, people's cries for help banned.
Nothing the government planned.
They called it „a great leap forward“, that everything will be fine.
But in the summer of 1959,
they saw the results,
forcing thousands of adults,
to abandon their farming,
what sounded charming,
was just harming.

Hoping for a better future, millions died,
until the regime was satisfied.

But then out of the blue, the people saw some breathing space too.
Then in the same year Mao Zedong died,
and the nation slowly started to turn its tide.

A new era:
It almost took two decades later,
until the changes were major.

The new party leader was Deng Xiaoping,
seeing the bomb ticking, started improving.
Problems which were rooted deep down,
before the government got overthrown,
came up with the solution on his own.

He gave the land back and putting a stop

to the rule let the farmers to sell their crop.
Free should be the Chinese,
they all should be able to have luxuries, companies and to sell overseas.

Four economic zones,
where foreign countries produced their products in factories for loans.
China got a new reputation as a nation, being the location, for the specialisation on building
cooperation.

It seemed like the Chinese people became free because of the new market policies,
even the minorities.

Picking up the democratic pieces.
But all that was an illusion,
a solution,
until their economic problem decreases.

In the cities it seems like in the western countries,
with thousand industries.
But everywhere forced labour,
Workers underpaid.
And the camps didn't fade.

Feeding the people lies,
But at what price?

Revolutions end in prosecutions.
Protesters drowned.
How can a nation be so upside-down?
The Muslim population in Xinjiang widespread,
even until this day getting pork force-fed.

The State knows where you were, where you are and where you'll go.
Like a big reality show.
Not a single other country in the world, has a bigger surveillance system,
every normal citizen child, adult and elderly are the victim.

Hoping for a better future,
ending the wrath of this authoritarian creature.
Not believing that Taiwan descended,
And is now independent.
Monks in Tibet,
are seen as a threat.
The 1989 Tiananmen Square protests in the history books blackened,
as if the deaths on that date never happened.

We all can just hope that there will be a year, a month, a day, a person who will change all of this to put a stop to this regime.

Maybe we can do more than hope, and help to fulfill this as a team.

The free Chinese dream.

The end.

"This ambitious poem reminds you that art can turn something desolate into something beautiful."

"It leaves me speechless to see how something as long and as tangled as the Chinese history can be put into something as orderly and plain as a poem. And it works, too!"

"Powerful and poetic, factual yet fascinating, an absolutely stunning piece of literature!"

Life, me, hope

Leonie Forth, 9d

I am not going to start this letter with a „*Dear father*“, you are neither enough dad, nor nice, sympathetic, supporting enough. I am not even hesitating while writing this because you are simply not worth this polite introduction. I am telling the truth when I say that I do not think much of you. I hate you. Sometimes I feel the intense urge deep inside of me which makes me want to hurt you. Hurt you as bad as you hurt me, perhaps even worse. Although I am everything but proud of this, the urge still exists, maybe it will forever. There are times it fades into the background but then it suddenly overwhelms me like a wave of boiling water. You destroyed my life. You may not realise this but you made me sit at the windowsill, crying and thinking, I was not worth living. You knocked me off a cliff, into a deep, black hole, actually sort of a labyrinth. After trying to find my way out of it, I gave up. I failed. You turned life itself into a tornado, a spiral. The thing about a spiral is, if you follow them inward, it never really ends. It just keeps getting tighter, in infinitely. Then it reaches a certain point where the spiral is so tight, you are only able to centre around yourself. You are trapped in a cage. In a small cage. And then you realise: You yourself are the cage, containing the burden of all the people. You yourself hold back all the luck and happiness in life.

„I went to the woods because I wanted to live deliberately...

I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life!

To put to rout all that was not life...

And not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived...“

N.H. Kleinbaum, „*Dead poets society*“

Life is short. I am constantly aware of that, more than anything else. As a matter of fact, my largest fear is to die one day without having truly lived. I know that forgiveness would make everything so much easier, would not waste time but for now I am choosing the path of anger, frustration and hate. I always choose that path. I am used to acting like I am fine in the daytime

but starting to cry as soon as the sun sets. Every single time it is like a dike is breaking and with the water, a bunch of all the negative feelings in the world overwhelm me. These emotions blossom inside of me and spread in my body, go through every single vein, every single muscle. They take control over me and I do not do anything against it, because I am weak. I am like a doll, being shoved around because she can not express her feelings and needs, because she can not clarify them out loud. I lock my emotions inside me, hoping they will never break out. Never.

“The worst part of being truly alone is you think about all the times you wished that everyone would just leave you be. Then they do, and you are left being, and you turn out to be terrible company.”

John Green, „*Turtles all the way down*“

I isolate myself so often that I sometimes forget how fun it is to be out with my friends. Meeting in the nature, turning on the music and dancing beneath the sky, covered with stars, shiny, bright stars. I like the night. Without the dark, we would not be able to see the stars. In these moments I feel like there is nothing holding me back, I feel like life is perfect, there is nothing to worry about. And then I am running down the hills, toward the sky, being finished with concerning myself with things I cannot control, leaving all my negative feelings and painful memories behind me that I just kept hanging onto because I was too afraid to forget. Then I suddenly feel something running through my veins, running through my whole body. It is hope. Pure hope. It is doing something to me, it is changing me. It makes me feel like I can be anything. The feeling of not being able to live this life to its full potential has vanished. And I know, I just know that one day, when I am old, I will look back with no regrets.

*“Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.”*

Emily Dickinson

There are times I am not sure about the „*it never stops at all.*“ because it feels like hope is never going to come back. It feels like hope is not a part of me but rather a virus that sometimes needs a host and chooses me by accident. When I feel it, I am aware that it will leave someday, maybe any minute. To still hold onto that feeling of hope, I take photos. It is funny how you can capture a moment with just pushing a little button. You do not really realise what they are worth until you have nothing left but them. But there are other ways of saving feelings. Music accompanies most of our lives, mine as well. We listen to it when we are sad, when we are happy, when we feel lost or when we just want to enjoy life. All these emotions stay with the songs and come out again when we listen to the same song years and years later. When I was a child I once tried to lock up sunshine in a little jar of pickles. I will never know if it really worked but I believe in it. As a child everything was easy. You were the only important human, there were not so many branch-offs in your brain, it was just a straight path to the only aim: getting older, being an adult. Now i have reached a certain age which makes me want to be a clueless child again because my heart was once full of love, happiness and hope. I laughed so often and it was always that kind of laugh which makes your lungs feel like they are going to burst, the best of all kinds.

„We can be Heroes, just for one day.“

David Bowie, *„Heroes“*

Although I am not always completely and utterly consumed by the feeling of hope, I know that it is somewhere deep down inside me. Hidden and waiting for me to find it again. Because, it is not my duty to wait for hope to find me, it is my duty to find it myself, discover it, hold onto it.

I know that I am going to be a hero one day and even if it is just for a single day, I will enjoy it and make the best of it. Because I have hope. Hope is something every human being has. Some of them have more of it, some less but we all do have it. And I think these moments, when it rushes through our veins and fills our whole bodies, we are capable of doing anything. Of doing everything.

Because we are heroes.

Every single one of us.

Although I have not forgiven you and maybe never will, kiss, Leonie.

“This narrator’s voice resonates in a reader’s ear, vivid and raw.”

“This unique writing makes the reader sympathize, feeling heart shaken in the beginning, yet after stripping some layers a delicate blossom of hope starts to bloom.”

“This story won me over within the first line and it’s empowering message stayed with me long after. A strong yet tentative account of reclaiming one’s strength!”