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Cinderella and Her Rat

By: Alyssa Elizondo, Cheyenne Ruiz, Aidan Garcia, and Ashlin Padilla

Once upon a time, in a kingdom shrouded in darkness and despair, there lived a girl named Cinderella. Her days were filled with endless chores, her nights with dreams of freedom that seemed as distant as the stars obscured by the thick, polluted skies. The once lush forests had withered into barren wastelands, choked by toxic fumes that spewed relentlessly from factories and machines. The rivers ran black with pollution, their waters poisoned and lifeless. Cinderella's stepmother, Lady Tremaine, cared only for her own comfort and wealth as she ruled over their crumbling estate with an iron fist. She reveled in the exploitation of the land, blind to the suffering it caused.

One day, an invitation arrived at their doorstep for a homecoming, hosted to welcome the prince back from his endeavors in an attempt to find him a suitable bride. Cinderella's stepsisters gleefully prepared for the event while Cinderella was left behind to tend to the fires that burned day and night.

As Cinderella toiled away, a strange visitor appeared. A rat matted with grime spoke to her of a world beyond the smoke and shadows. A world where nature still thrived in hidden places, waiting to be rediscovered. The rat promised that if she helped restore the polluted kingdom to its once beautiful nature, he would dress her into the most beautiful girl in the kingdom, and the prince would surely want to marry her. With the help of the rat and other creatures of the night, she worked day after day to convince the people of the kingdom to better their ways. She spent days replanting trees and plotting to better the environment.

After a long time of hard work, Cinderella was met with skepticism and scorn from others who doubted her efforts, but she pressed on, fueled by the rat's words of a new world. She stood before the prince with trembling hands and spoke of the kingdom's dire condition, painting a vivid picture of a world on the brink of collapse. To her surprise, the prince listened intently, his eyes filled with a newfound understanding, and was moved by Cinderella's words. He vowed to use his power and influence to enact change and to heal the wounds inflicted by the stepmother's estate. And so, with the prince's support, Cinderella embarked on a journey to better the world, her voice echoing across the kingdom. In the days following, Cinderella and the prince worked tirelessly together, planting trees, restoring rivers, and spreading awareness of the importance of preserving their world for future generations.

Slowly, the kingdom started to change. The skies and the rivers that were once polluted were now clear. True to his word, the rat granted Cinderella the most beautiful dress she could ever dream of. Once again, she stood in front of the prince, but it became clear that he did not care for her looks but rather her courage to speak up for a change in the kingdom. And when the time came for the prince to choose a bride, he knew his heart could belong to none other than Cinderella, whose compassion had forever changed the course of their kingdom. And so, the prince and Cinderella were wed on the eclipse. Their union was a symbol of hope and harmony in a world forever changed by the power of love and determination to make a change in the world.