

Impossible Rita

Did you know that every town has something special about it? And this one is no exception. But don't be too impatient to find out its secret. First let me tell you the story of...

Impossible Rita

Rita is really called Margarida. Everyone in the town said it was a splendid name, but Rita wanted them to shorten it. It was much too hard for her to say such a long and difficult word. In fact, it was IMPOSSIBLE!

Everything seems difficult to Rita. When she sits down to do her homework, she daren't even read the questions. She's so scared she won't be able to do the exercises that she spends the whole time puffing and sighing, and all she manages to do is send her pencils rolling across the table.

When she goes out onto the street, her friends call her to come and skip with them. But no matter how they insist, Rita always thinks the same thing. What if I slip? What if I lose count? Or even worse, what if I get confused, and don't know what I'm supposed to do? To Rita, it seems that everyone else knows how to do things she'll never get the hang of. At home, she gets in a tizzy when she imagines having to set the table, because she's scared the plates might fall out of her hands. That would be terrible! She couldn't do that. It's IMPOSSIBLE.

As I'm sure you can imagine, she repeated the word so many times, that the people of the town started to call her "Impossible Rita". Eventually, people stopped asking her to do things. The teacher didn't expect her to do her homework. Her friends didn't ask her to play with them any more. And her mum and dad set the table without her. But far from making her happy, this just made Rita feel sad and very lonely. How did other people manage to do all these things that seemed so IMPOSSIBLE. One day, Rita went for a walk on the beach beside the town. She liked to watch the boats bobbing in the water, and she always found treasures in the sand.

"Look! A sea snail!" she said. "And there's a clam shell! How easy it would be to be a seashell," thought Rita. "Seashells never have to do anything difficult."

"That's what you think!" said a voice from behind her. And when Rita turned round, she saw her grandpa Josep, with a big smile on his face.

"Look at this," said her grandpa, holding towards her a seashell, with a shiny ball inside it.

“That’s beautiful!” cried Rita. “What is it?” she asked, beside herself with curiosity.

“It’s a pearl,” said her grandpa. “Oysters live at the bottom of the sea, and the wonderful thing about them is that if a little grain of sand gets into their shell, they turn it into a pearl.”

“Really?” asked Rita, who couldn’t believe her ears. “And how does it turn the sand into a pearl?”

“How do you think?” asked her grandpa, chuckling. “They just get on with it. All they have to do is trust in themselves.”

Then grandpa asked Rita if she’d like to go out in his boat. And they sailed out together, as they’d often done before.

“Grandpa, where are we going?” asked Rita.

“I don’t know, you’re steering the boat,” said her grandpa.

Rita was just about to start protesting that it was IMPOSSIBLE, when she noticed how smoothly the boat was gliding over the waves. They hadn’t bumped into any rocks, they weren’t going round in circles, they hadn’t run aground on the sand, and they didn’t seem to be about to sink. They were sailing! And she was at the tiller.

Rita couldn’t believe it. She’d found the courage to do something that, up until now, she’d only seen other people doing, and she was very pleased.

“Grandpa, can I ask you something?” asked Rita.

“What is it?” said her grandpa.

“Can I keep the pearl?”

“Certainly! It’s yours really,” said her grandpa.

“Mine?” asked Rita. She couldn’t understand what he meant.

“Of course it’s yours. Margarida means ‘pearl.’”

Rita smiled happily. No-one had ever told her that her name meant something so beautiful. The pearl was so shiny that she couldn’t stop looking at it. She decided to keep it forever.

The little boat sailed over the waves, until it came to a beautiful bay. There were all kinds of pretty little fish that Rita had never seen before. And she realized that she would never have got there, if she hadn’t steered the boat herself.

That day she decided she wouldn’t be “Impossible Rita” ever again. She wanted everyone to call her “Margarida”. And since she didn’t like being on her own, she decided that she wouldn’t be scared of things either. Besides, now she knew what she had to do. She’d be like an oyster, and trust in herself.

Script: Mireia Vidal