

Phosan stared glumly at the piece of blank white paper in front of her and wished, not for the first time, that she had followed her instinct to spread the news by word of mouth instead of reporting direct to her great great grand mother Tallun at the training college.

She had the feeling that a simple report of The facts was not what Tallun had in mind when she ordered Phosan to put the Incident in writing, but where was she supposed to start. She had no experience of this sort of thing, it was only six months ago that she had taken up her duties on her permanent station and this was her first leave, plus which, she had been chosen to stand-in for "Guardian of the Meet" since the selected student guardian had gone down with Zinga flu along with most of the other students at the college. Okay the facts first, then see what comes to mind.

The 50th day of second summer, the humans call it August, with good weather to start the day. The visitors started arriving with a family group among them. It looked like two adults with three younglings of different ages; they were enjoying themselves and eventually sat down, obviously intending to have something to eat. One of the adults unpacked food and passed it around, all normal enough, until the biggest youngling let an empty wrapper blow away on the wind. This was also fairly normal and Phosan made the usual mental note to check the site for litter later on, when she realised that the smallest youngling was causing a fuss. Phosan carefully moved over to where she could hear properly, making sure that she stayed under cover using a large boulder to mask the faint outline that crossed the visual border from her home universe to the universe of the humans.

From her understanding of their language it appeared that the oldest youngling was telling her sibling off for being a litterbug, this was not normal, usually if one member of a group was a litterbug all of them were. Also the middle youngling was joining the fuss on the side of the smallest youngling and of course the two adults were getting involved as well.

Phosan wandered what she could do to help the two smallest siblings and on impulse, used a glamour to shape a puffy white cloud into an exact replica of the litterbug, carefully nudged it lower in the sky so that the group could see it clearly, waited for it to be noticed and then scattered brightly coloured replicas of the empty food wrappers all over it. She waited again and then caused the food wrappers, no longer empty, to fall all over the group. By the time all of the phantom food wrappers had reached the ground, the group was draped with bits of apple skin, banana skins, crisp fragments, bits of bread, there was even a burst teabag on the biggest of the younglings, the litterbug himself.

It was noticeable that the two smallest siblings did not have any debris on them, even so, both of them started to collect the litter and after a few minutes so did the rest of the group. The biggest sibling was sent to pick up the original piece of litter, by one of the adults. It was, Phosan thought, the first evidence she had come across, which proved that the education program started by the human teachers was beginning to work at least amongst the smallest younglings and she did not think today's lesson would be forgotten by that particular family.

Phosan still didn't know what Tallun thought of her actions and was a bit apprehensive about the eventual outcome, but if it worked, it worked and after all no permanent harm had been done.