

High-Intermediate 3
Unit 2 Reading
Presented by Mohammad Rajabpur

Once Upon a Time

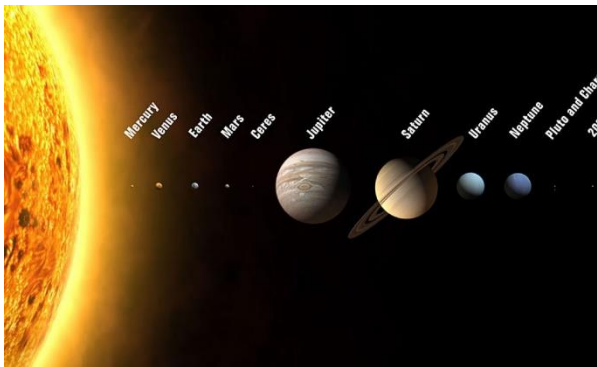
once upon a time = long ago; in the (good) old days; in days/times gone by

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a green and beautiful planet. It was the third planet out from a yellowish sun in a stellar system in a relatively remote part of the galaxy. Members of the Galactic Council knew that the planet was between 4 and 5 billion years old, but no one was sure exactly how long life had existed there.

yellowish = looking like yellow; resembling yellow

stellar = related to a star

- *The Solar System is a stellar system in the Milky Way Galaxy.*



The Solar System



The Milky Way Galaxy

Point:

All in all, Hubble reveals an estimated 100 billion galaxies in the universe or so, but this number is likely to increase to about 200 billion as telescope technology in space improves.

relatively = rather, fairly, somewhat

relatively ≠ absolutely

remote = far

galactic = related to the galaxy

council = a group of people especially experts or those who have been elected for a particular purpose

The Galactic Council had been watching Green, as they called it, for millennia. It was a responsibility of the Council to observe and monitor all planets that harbored life in an effort to predict which ones might destroy themselves. Thus the Council could intervene if it had to. Each planet had its own watcher, and Planet Green's was Ambassador Gorkon. His job was to

visit Green and investigate thoroughly. On this occasion Gorkon was making his report to Mr. Xau, the president of the Galactic Council.

watch = monitor, observe

millennium = a period of 1000 years

millennium (singular) => **millennia** (Plural)

harbor (v.) = support, provide

effort = attempt

destroy = ruin, devastate, demolish, annihilate

intervene = interfere

watcher = observer; inspector; supervisor

ambassador = the top diplomat representing a country in a foreign land

embassy = the office in which an ambassador works

investigate = examine; verify

thoroughly = completely

occasion = special time

President Xau said, "Well, Gorkon, you're late getting back. There must have been something serious happening to keep you on Green for so long."

Gorkon responded, "Yes, sir. I had to stay longer to be absolutely sure of my calculations. Affairs are not going well there. I'm afraid that if Green doesn't change its ways immediately, the planet won't be able to support life, and life won't endure there. Green is now on a destructive path. There used to be clean air and water, but now there's pollution everywhere. The acid rain that's caused by the pollution in the atmosphere has killed plants and some animals. In some large cities you can hardly see the sky, and the land is full of garbage and toxic waste dumps.

respond = answer, reply

absolutely ≠ relatively

absolutely = completely

endure = last; continue; persist

destructive ≠ constructive

path = way; road; route

pollution = contamination

that's caused = that is caused

toxic = poisonous

waste dumps = garbage piles

They're cutting down beautiful rain forests in the southern hemisphere. They've been releasing some very dangerous chemicals—fluorocarbons, we would call them—into the atmosphere, and a hole in the ozone layer has developed over the southern polar cap. You're

aware how dangerous ultraviolet radiation can be. If something isn't done, the amount of radiation in the atmosphere will be very dangerous and even lethal within twenty or thirty years. It could happen even sooner."

cap = the top part (of)

radiation = the emission of energy or waves

lethal = deadly

The president looked sad and asked, "Is that the only serious problem?"

Gorkon responded, "Unfortunately not. Several individual nations on Green have developed the bomb and other deadly weapons. So far they've avoided using the weapons against each other, and right now there's a sort of uneasy peace, but there's no guarantee it's going to last. The saddest thing that's happening on Green, though, is the extinction of species. Some have already died off entirely, and many more species are endangered—like wolves and tigers. Environmentalists are making efforts to save the whale and the panda, but it's mostly a case of too little too late. You know what happens to a planet when its species start to die off."

unfortunately = unluckily

WMD's = weapons of mass destruction

last = continue

extinction = dying out; becoming extinct

die off = die out; perish; become extinct

entirely = completely

environmentalist = a person who tries to protect the environment

too little too late = little has been done and what has been done is too late

"Yes, of course," said the president. "We've got to stop that. Well, shall I call the Council into executive session?"

"Yes, Mr. President," said Gorkon.

"Right away. I'm afraid we're going to have to interfere. If we don't, Green may not last much longer. We wouldn't want to see them suffer the same fate as Earth did."

executive (adj.) = related to performing a task

right away = immediately

fate = destiny; what happens to a person at the end

Full Text:

Once Upon a Time

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Sample Summary:

"Once Upon a Time" tells the story of the Galactic Council monitoring a planet called Green, which is on the brink of environmental collapse due to pollution, deforestation, and species extinction. Ambassador Gorkon reports to President Xau that the planet's atmosphere is becoming toxic, and several nations have developed deadly weapons, leading to an uneasy peace. The Council decides to intervene to prevent Green from suffering the same fate as Earth, emphasizing the urgency of immediate action to save the planet.

Source:

<https://www.anglophone.ir/high3/>