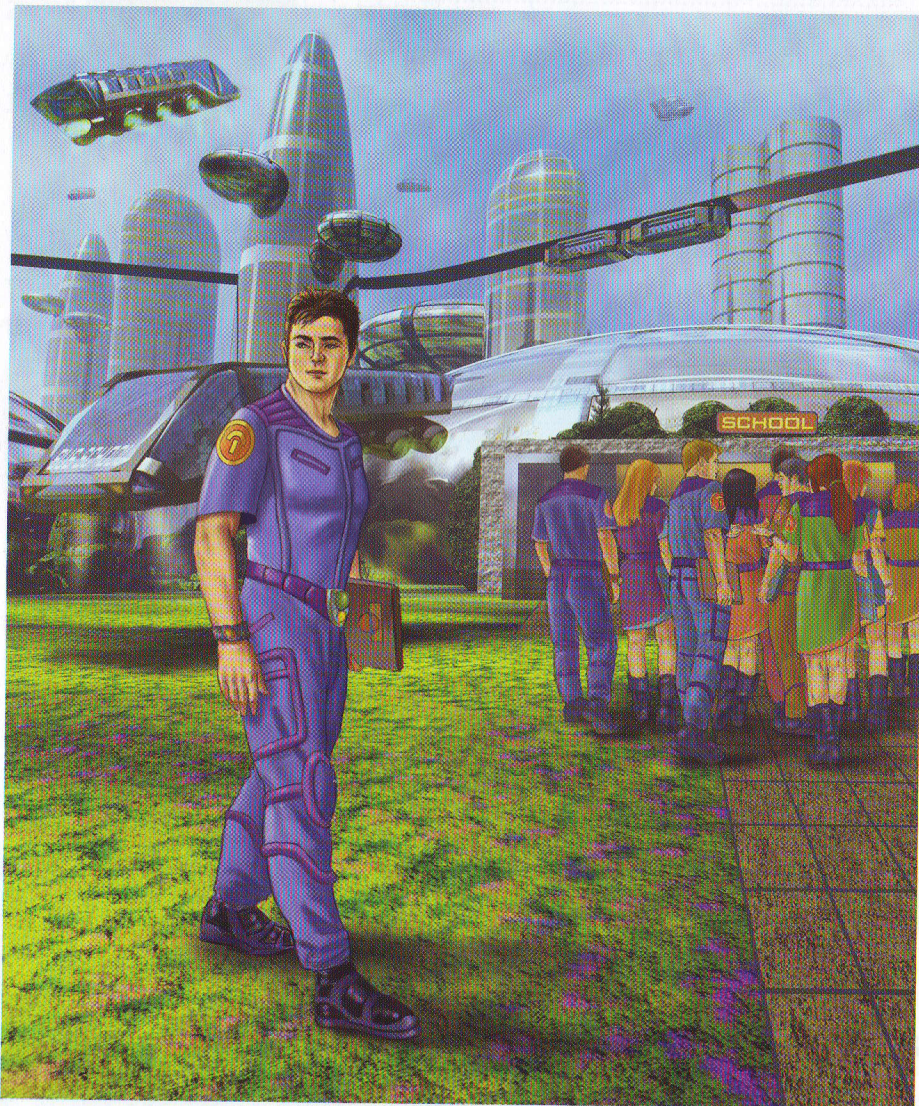


'Be a Good Friend'

*BZ didn't understand. Didn't she know School Procedure:
'Always say yes'? 'No' wasn't friendly.*



The bus stopped outside the front of the school and the students got off. BZXY741 looked for the girl. He wanted to say, 'Enjoy your lessons', but he couldn't see her. He followed the other students into the building and walked slowly to his classroom. He thought about the girl with grey eyes.



'What was that look in her eyes? Who is she? Perhaps she's new here.'

Some of his friends turned round and called to him, 'BZ! You're going to be late.'

'I'm coming,' he answered, 'I'm coming.'

The first three hours of lessons that morning were Life Studies: '*Be a Good Friend*.' Then there were two hours of '*Do People Like You?*' BZ really enjoyed these lessons, so he stopped thinking about the girl on the bus.

At midday, the students had lunch in the Flower Garden. BZ sat down at a table under a big tree with beautiful flowers. It was a warm day and the **smell** of the flowers was strong. The birds sang the menu: 'Hamburger or sandwich, chicken with **salad**, chocolate ice cream. Enjoy your lunch!'

BZ took a drink from his glass of cold green **juice**. Wonderful. He closed his eyes and thought for a minute about his future. It was a good future.

'I'm going to be on The **Team**,' he thought. 'I *know* that I'm going to be on The Team.' The Team worked for The People's Happiness. People were happy because they made the **laws**. The Team's work was important. They were the most important people in Eden City. That was BZXY741's future and he felt very happy about it ...

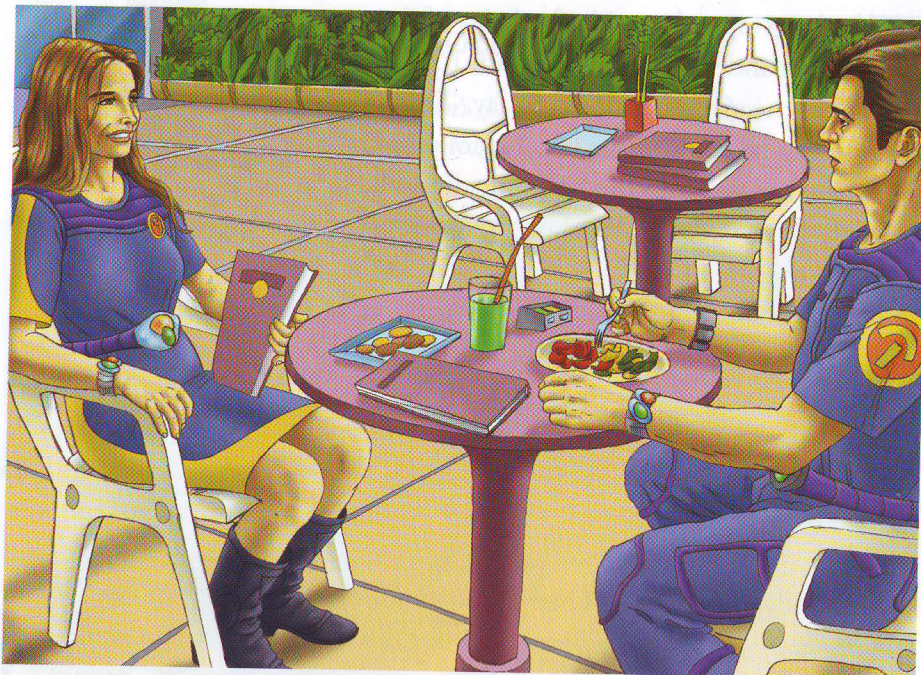
smell /smel/ (n/v) *Smells* can be good or bad. You use your nose when you *smell* something.

salad /'sæləd/ (n) When you make a *salad* from vegetables, you don't cook them.

juice /dʒu:s/ (n) *Juice* is a drink from fruit or vegetables.

team /ti:m/ (n) When people are in your *team*, they help you with work or in a game.

law /lɔ:/ (n) A *law* is an important rule for the people in a country. When you study *law*, you study the rules.



When he opened his eyes, he saw the girl with grey eyes at his table.

'Hi, BZ!' she said.

'Hello.' He smiled, and then he remembered his first lesson of the morning: *'Be a good friend. Give something nice to somebody.'* So he pushed his plate across the table to her.

'Please have some of my salad. It's very good.'

She laughed. 'No, thanks. I don't like the school food.'

BZ didn't understand. He started to feel strange. Didn't she know School Procedure: *'Always say yes'*? 'No' wasn't friendly. The girl laughed again.

'BZ! Don't look so worried. I like the word. I often say it. No, no, no, no! The sky doesn't fall on my head!'

'I don't understand.'

'It's OK. Forget it.' She moved her chair near his chair. 'Listen, BZ,' she said quietly, 'I know everything about you. I think you're a wonderful

person. I want to help you. And I think that you can help me. And a lot of other people, too.'

BZ looked at her carefully for a minute. 'I think I understand now,' he said slowly. 'This is a *Friendly Joke*. Of course – yes! It's very strange, but very funny!' And he laughed very loudly. She put her hand on his arm.

'It's not a joke. I want to tell you something. Something very important. It will change your life. And perhaps the lives of everybody here in Eden City.'

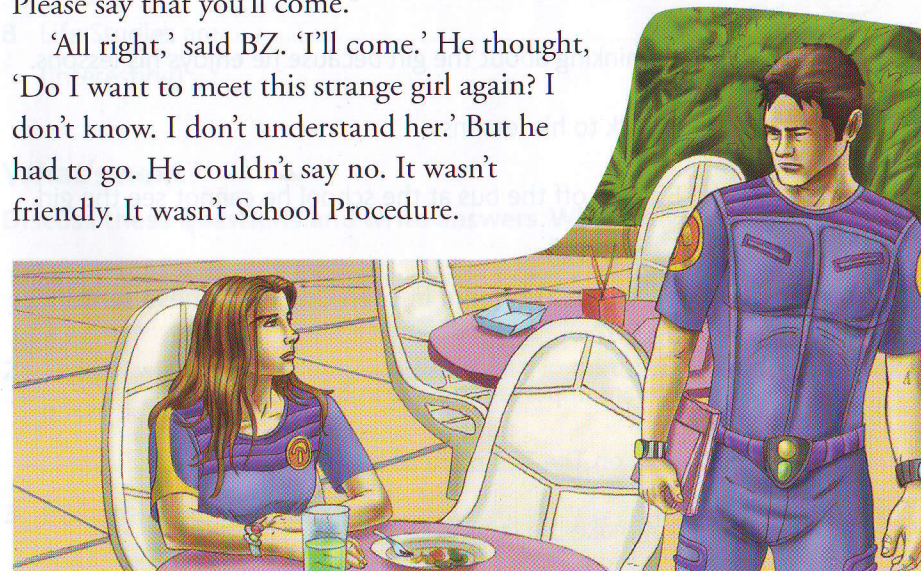
Then the birds sang, *'Go back to work, boys and girls. Back to work.'*

The students in the Flower Garden stood up. BZ stood up, too.

'I'm sorry. I don't understand this conversation. It's very interesting, but I don't understand it.' He smiled his best smile. The girl didn't smile back at him.

'Listen,' she said, 'there's a dance tonight at the House of Music. I'll see you there. Please come. It's very, very important. For you and me. Please say that you'll come.'

'All right,' said BZ. 'I'll come.' He thought, 'Do I want to meet this strange girl again? I don't know. I don't understand her.' But he had to go. He couldn't say no. It wasn't friendly. It wasn't School Procedure.



joke /dʒəʊk/ (n) A joke is a funny story.

'Dancing is Good for You'

'Do you know about the real world, BZ? Do you want to know about the real world?'



When BZ arrived at the House of Music, the girl was there at the door.

'Hello,' he said. 'Isn't it a beautiful evening? You look very nice.'
Lesson 672: 'Starting a Conversation.' The girl said nothing. She took his hand and they went into the building.

The dance started. People moved slowly with the music. It was a new song, 'Dancing is Good For You'. Blue and white lights shone on the faces of the dancers. BZ and the girl began to dance.

'Dancing is good for you,' sang BZ quietly. 'Do it every day.'

'Do you know my number, BZ?' the girl asked.

'I'm sorry, I don't.'

Each student had a number. The number was on the inside of their left arms. The girl showed him her white arm ... there was no number there!

'But where is it?' asked BZ. 'You have to have a number!'

'I don't. I have a name.' She smiled. 'My name is Eve.'

For a minute, BZ felt afraid. *'Be the Same – Different is Ugly.'* But this girl, with her grey eyes and her warm smile, wasn't ugly. She was beautiful.

'What's happening to me?' he thought.

Then two of his friends danced past them.

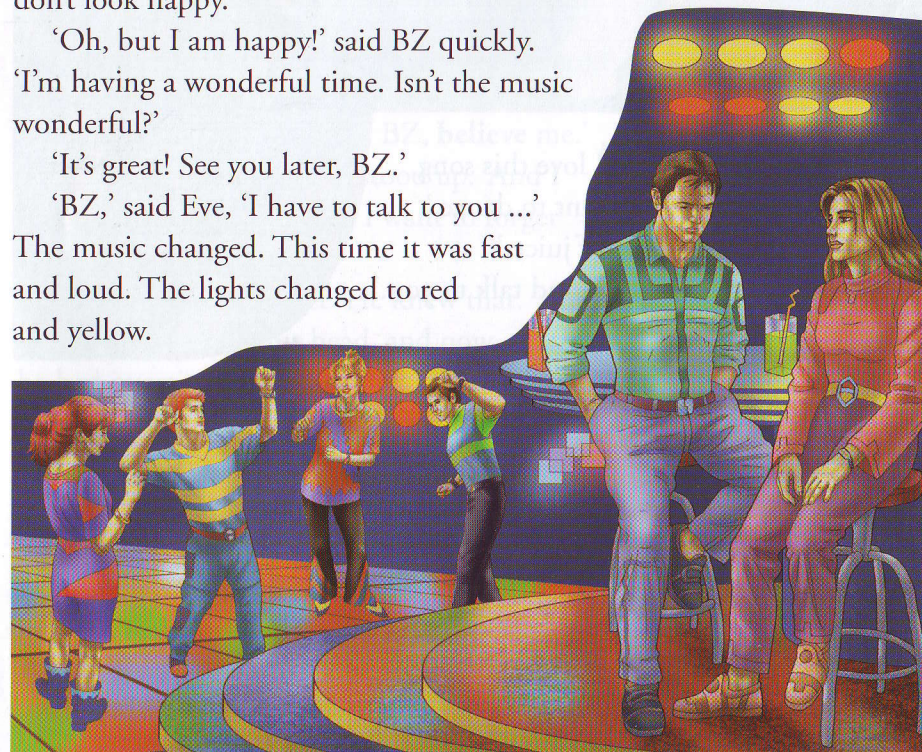
'Hello, BZ! Are you having a good time? What's wrong with you? You don't look happy.'

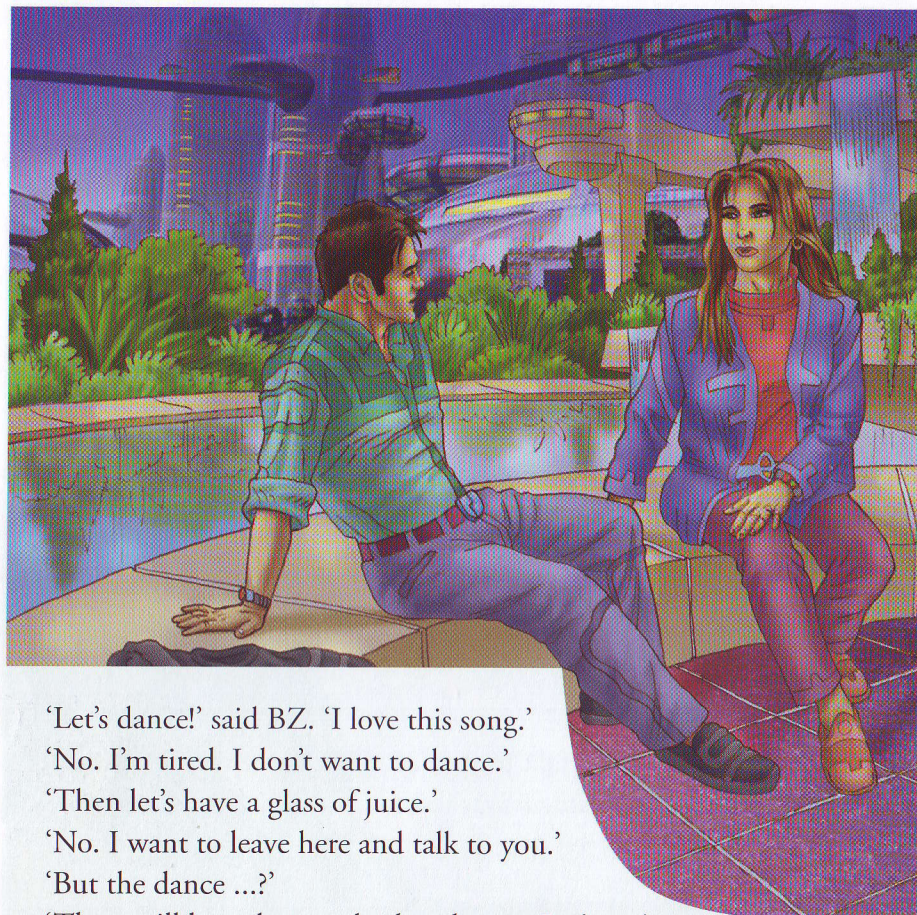
'Oh, but I am happy!' said BZ quickly. 'I'm having a wonderful time. Isn't the music wonderful?'

'It's great! See you later, BZ.'

'BZ,' said Eve, 'I have to talk to you ...'

The music changed. This time it was fast and loud. The lights changed to red and yellow.





'Let's dance!' said BZ. 'I love this song.'

'No. I'm tired. I don't want to dance.'

'Then let's have a glass of juice.'

'No. I want to leave here and talk to you.'

'But the dance ...?'

'There will be a thousand other dances. Let's go.'

He followed her out into the quiet street. They walked but didn't speak. Then they sat down near some water. The water smelled lovely and the sound of it was music.

'What do you want to tell me?' BZ asked.

'How much do you really understand about Eden City? What do you really know about our lives?'

'Life is for Happiness. Love Your Friends ...'

'No, no, no, BZ! Those are only words. They teach you them at school. But, they don't mean anything.'

'Don't mean anything? How can you say that?'

'Do you know about the real world, BZ? Do you want to know about the real world?'

'What real world? I don't understand ...'

'This isn't the real world. Eden City isn't real. Nothing in Eden City is real. The **air**, the sky ... look up, BZ! It's not real!'

'Then where *is* the real world?'

'It's above us. Nearly 500 kilometres above us, there's another world. The real world. There, people live real lives. Nobody tells them, 'Think this. Feel that.' They live in families, not only with friends. They love, they hate, they fight. They get ill, they get old, they die. They're **free**!'

BZ put his hands over his eyes.

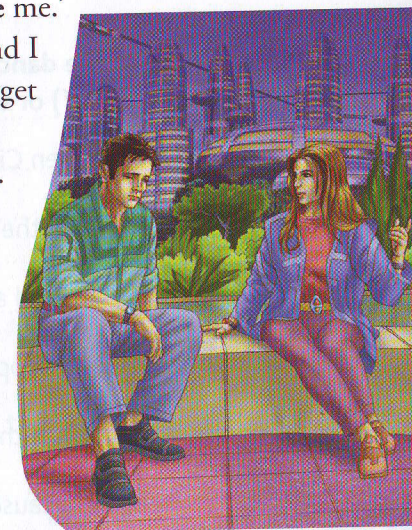
'Oh, no. That's a sad life.'

'No, it isn't. It's the best life. We aren't really living. We aren't free. We have no **freedom**. We can't change anything. The Team makes the laws for us. We have to listen to them. We have to think their ideas, feel their feelings. That's not freedom, BZ, **believe** me.'

'I *don't* believe you.' BZ stood up. 'And I don't want to listen to you. I want to forget all this. I don't like it.'

But he couldn't forget. He knew that. Eve's words were in his head, and now he had questions about his life. He felt unhappy for the first time. He walked away from her.

'Wait, BZ! I'm sorry. I know you're unhappy. But you have to believe me. I can show you. I can take you up into the real world. Now. Tonight!'



air /eə/ (n) You take in *air* when you open your mouth.

free /fri:/ (adj) When you are *free*, other people don't control your life. You can enjoy your *freedom*.

believe /br'i:li:v/ (v) You *believe* your friends when they tell you something.