

Dear Verdala students,
teachers, parents, alumni, -
and dear whoever else might be reading this newsletter,

Some might still remember me as Carol or Caroline, a Verdala student from the Graduation class of 2013 (Gosh, that's 8 years ago now!!), but let me introduce myself as Kaya.

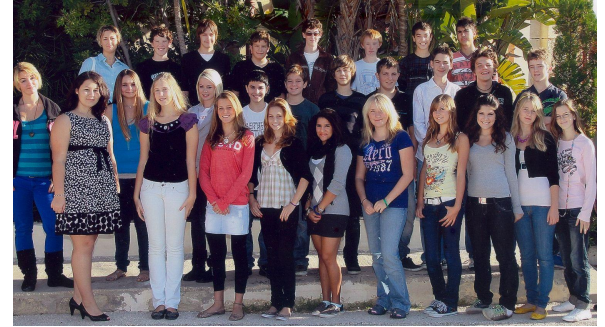
It's been a long journey. I still remember those afternoons in the scorching hot sun trying to study for my IB exams, but distracting myself by pondering on my own ideas, writing a diary entry, or a chapter in a future book. Inspired by the sea, the cool, salty breeze and the reflections of the sparkling city lights, I would often go running or walking outside while creating characters and conversations in my head, but in general, there was never enough time to finish any of my stories.

I had always loved writing, inventing stories, even before I was moved to Malta by my dad's crazy idea to live there. I had a feeling of love and hate for this new "home". There were times I knew it was the right place for me to be, because I had to learn and make exactly those experiences to grow. And on other days I just wanted to go back: back home, back to Germany, back to my elementary school friends and the simple wish to have a dog and a family one day...

Four years of Verdala, and then four years of University followed; graduating in a subject *very far* from creative writing and fantasy: Business Management and Economics.

I soon discovered that *no*, that was not the path I wanted to continue after university. Though I mastered my degree with distinct grades, I decided against taking the usual route of a job and flat and perhaps a car at some point... Is life really about selling one's time and effort for other people's ideas, so that one can buy free time...? What else is there? Creating... trying out... and failing, perhaps, as well?

I went to a place in Scotland to volunteer and learn about karma yoga, living without any more possessions than necessary to live in a community with its own garden. One place led to the another, and soon I was volunteering, living and learning how to "live" in many different, interesting places: from yoga ashrams, to eco-villages in France and Spain, to abandoned farm places trying to get back to life with young energy... I backpacked, hitchhiked, and even became a teacher for a year at a Colombian Waldorf school! I learned about permaculture, about community life, and about living all by myself in literally the middle of nowhere, about agriculture, about children, the beauties of meditation, yoga (in its spiritual sense), and so much more. I learned to re-discover my inner child's dream and my biggest passion again: writing, creating, telling stories, drawing... and sharing it with others! Soon, I read chapters from some of my books to children, and printed other chapters for adults to read and think about. I was happy to share it, to receive their feedback. It made it all the more meaningful. And it was about time to make the final step: to publish...



Though this is not the earliest book I started writing, it is one with the most powerful storylines, written for especially Young Adults and Adults. Many moments in nature, and many people in my life inspired me to keep on writing on this piece of work: *The Cats and the Dogs*. Now finally it is out - only for me to write the second book of this series, and to keep on writing. It is a journey, and with gratefulness I can say: it is not about arriving, but about the journeying, *the way*. Each step is what makes it so worth it, not the final goal itself.

Where will your journey take you? I am excited to hear from you.
With love,

Kaya Luchs



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I would love to hear *your* story!

