



CHARLIE ALICE RAYA

easy town books

building

campaigns & getting started

book 4, part 1

easy town books

CHARLIE ALICE RAYA
CAMPAIGNS FOR OUR FUTURE

special editions
book 4, building
day 32 - day 25

easy town books

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campaigns

book 4, building
special edition 2

II **days 32-31** II 28 February - 1 March II Jellybridge Estate

II Most of the Jellybridge Estate woke to a veil of clouds so thin that the sun shone through. The air was mild, birds greeted the morning, and at the prospective site for the town, a fox came out of the Young Forest and looked towards the lake, maybe a little wistfully. By this time Alice, Raiden, and the twenty-four heads of the Building Site Team had already been in a meeting for the best part of an hour. Earlier, when Alice arrived in the one-storey tower, a large rectangle room with windows on all sides, she was in for a welcome surprise. ‘Amahle, Kojo, Ualan!’ Alice exclaimed. ‘I’m happy to see you, but how come you’re here?’ Amahle smiled and bumped fists with Alice. ‘We couldn’t resist. The Building Site Team were looking for media people, and we applied, arguing that the South Africa Team, like other international teams, is preparing to join the campaigns anyway. We’re just early.’ Alice laughed and bumped fists with Kojo. ‘It’s so great to see you! And Ualan?’ ‘Got lucky, too,’ Ualan returned. ‘I said I’d do anything, even transport people with my wheelchair. I just wanted in. Next day, they offered me the job as coordinator for building material supplies. I accepted and brought some of my architecture students from Edinburgh.’ ‘Fantastic!’ Alice said, and then the team dived straight into their work. The tasks of the Building Site Team were to adjust the original plans for the town to the specifications of the prospective site, to prepare everything for the start of construction, to recruit workers, to find suppliers for materials, to get the necessary machinery, to prepare accommodations and build tent towers, to restore the train station, to schedule the building phase, to determine priorities for structures and buildings such as the circle roads and the first clinics, to develop safety protocols for people and for the site, now and for the building phase, to organise steady food supplies, to prepare potential power

and water supplies, which included setting up solar panels and battery storages around Jellybridge House and at the train station, to set up radio towers, to plan the waste and waste water systems, to find local and regional cooperation partners, including farmers and craftspeople, to prepare the application process for future towners, including the Hub room for this, to find and train craftspeople, to be accessible for local and regional people. 'And we'll have campaigns, too,' said Kojo (media). 'But we don't use fancy names for our campaigns. It's all straight forward: Campaign one: neighbours, campaign two: regional farmers, campaign three: regional businesses, campaign four: material sourcing, campaign five: application process information, campaign six: environment, campaign seven: biodiversity.' Later Megan, head of the Agriculture Team and liaison for regional and international farmers, said: 'If we want all the roads we planned, we'll have to cut into both forests, the Old Forest in the east and north and into the Young Forest in the south and west.' 'How?' Alice asked. 'We could work with roads in the tree tops, or halfway up, we could build some or all of our facility buildings on stilts, and we could use the underground. In some places, we have no choice but to replant trees. I've already contacted a team of replanting experts.' 'OK,' Alice said. 'Ethan, what's your take?' 'I'd say we explore our underground options first,' Ethan, head of the Town Planning Team, returned. 'Then we'll know what else we need above ground. Give me another week to compile that data.' 'OK.' After discussing some other road issues, Ethan pointed to a large map on the blackboard behind him. 'As you can see, I divided the estate into four main stripes, east to west. Stripe one in the south is farmland, mostly unused, some of it used for the horses. Stripe two: Jellybridge House with cottages, stables and barns. The area around the house is roughly a square mile and is

surrounded by the Young Forest. There is a second large clearing, further above Jellybridge House. I suggest to use it for the sanctuary. It would be in a relatively remote place outside the town. Stripe three includes the site for the prospective town and has an extensive area in the west which we won't develop. This western area includes the hill above the lake, the meadows and the Young Forest next to the hill. For our town, I suggest that we use the forests south and east as natural borders while keeping a minimum distance of forty-six feet from its fringes. In the north the lake and parts of the Old Forest will serve as natural borders, and in the west we will use the foot of the hill as marker. The site itself is divided into the east and the west side by the natural fold which runs from the Young Forest in the south to the Old Forest in the north. Our neurological clinics and rehabs will use much of the area near the top of the peanut-shaped lake, and the centre of our town as well as the large Common Garden will also be in the proximity of the lake. However, the north shore and the land beyond the lake will be wild land, partially wetland. The Jellybridge Estate has a lot larger than we'd need for our original plans. We can use the additional land to space out our design, add more gardens and town farms. Most intriguingly, we will have new opportunities to experiment with different levels of population density. The final stripe on this map covers the area north of the prospective town and includes the pocket of flat land surrounded by the Old Forest which we would use for the Gods Garden and for the Party Den. Near the fringe of the Old Forest, in the north/west, runs the river, and the Camping Garden could nestle between river, lake, and the edge of the Common Garden. Next to the lake is the wild land, I mentioned, and above it, at some distance from the hill, is another forest which partially belongs to the estate as well. Most of the estate's neighbours are cautiously curious

about our project. However, in the west, beyond the hill and beyond the Young Forest, the Jellybridge Estate borders on the land of a hostile neighbour who frequently informs us that we have no permission to trespass on their land or to cross it to reach the coastland they own. This neighbour has threatened to file charges for every violation.' *The neighbour*, Alice thought, shaking her head. *How can a single person own coastland?* And 'How will we tell the towners that the direct road to the coast is closed to them?' 'We have three options,' Anthony, head of Security for the building site, replied. 'A) We build a fence. B) We challenge the courts on the right to roam. Or C) We let people trespass.' A reckless sparkle appeared in Alice eyes. 'We let them trespass until the owner is fed up with suing us?' Anthony nodded. Amahle, co-head of the media team, put her head to one side. 'I always lean towards revolution, and owning land is an invention that has caused more damage than benefits through the ages. But our neighbour is very rich, and they are very upset about the prospect of getting us as a neighbour. If we stir that fire, I fear it's the kind of fire that can easily grow into a blaze. I'd say our project is too important to get sidetracked by a petty fight.' Alice nodded thoughtfully. 'Choose your fights?' 'Yes,' Amahle said. The team continued to check topics off their list, and some time later, Xantha (volunteers coordination) concluded her report with: 'The sheer number of volunteers who want to help building our town is overwhelming.' Alice smiled broadly. 'That's great! The more people help the faster we can build and the more people will have a connection to our town.' 'We have to set a limit,' Scott (head of the Ecology Team) cautioned. 'There is only so much body waste a location can deal with, and we need food and water for everyone. I'd suggest we use a simulation to find a maximum, and then we stay some five to ten percent below this number to be on

the safe side.’ ‘How will we decide whom to accept as a volunteer?’ Beatrice, head of the Admin Team, asked. ‘We go by first come first served for the skills we need,’ Marci, head of the workforce team, replied. ‘Same for volunteers.’ Alice left the meeting early to have a word with Jimmy, the master of horses, who had lived and worked on the estate for decades. Together, Alice and Jimmy decided to increase the horse population and have built more wagons of different sizes in preparation for the building phase but also for the future town. It was only ten when Alice, Colin (head of Admin & Society) and Beatrice (head of Admin) welcomed a group of twelve regional mayors to Jellybridge House. Over a cup of tea in the stripped-down library, Alice, Colin and Beatrice spoke about the advantages the town and the project businesses would have for the region. Later, when the visitors and hosts crossed the main hall again, a mayor remarked to Alice: ‘Your businesses are interesting. But your town? That might be a bit too crazy for us.’ Alice smiled a little and returned: ‘I always wonder what’s so crazy about the idea that life could be healthy for humans if they figured out how to do it.’ Another mayor asked: ‘Do you really think that brands will disappear once your dot.international is fully established?’ Alice shrugged. ‘I’m not a friend of brands. Their natural goal is to make everyone ask for the same, and goad us into conformity. On the designers’ side a lot of talent goes undiscovered because a few ideas dominate the markets. With dot. we empower, both a myriad of designers worldwide and the customers who get an incredible variety of choices and who can communicate what they want to wear. By dressing in clothes which suit the customers and which are durable, there is no need to constantly buy new clothes.’ Outside of Jellybridge House, five wagons, each drawn by two horses, were waiting for the guests. Several members of the Building Site Team joined the guests to take

them on a tour of the grounds. A veil of clouds still covered the sky, the atmosphere was relaxed, and in each wagon more conversations took place as one wagon after the other entered the Young Forest. One mayor asked Beatrice (head of Admin): 'Can a town work without religion?' Beatrice smiled, shaking her head. 'I have no idea, and I am curious about that myself. You see, our project focuses on universal issues: business environments and practises, living environments, demography, coexisting with nature. Personally, I think we can have a great town without religious practices. But if not, we'll have the Gods Garden around the corner.' When the wagons reached the prospective site for the town, Kim (head of Landscape Architecture), Ethan (head of Town Planning) and Jason (head of Architecture) stood up in their respective wagons and spoke about the plans for the town whenever the wagons stopped for a moment. Around the same time and in London, Isabel (head of campaigns) opened the Campaign Square on the Hub, and her team published the first events, workshops and challenges, people could sign up for. The invitation to the millionaires boot camp drew the immediate attention of the press and triggered rage on social media, many posting memes on the theme: EAT THE RICH. 'That went well,' John (business) remarked and added a post about the new transparency rooms on the Hub, one of them dedicated to the campaigns' finances which stoked the fire further when people discovered that a ticket for the millionaires boot camp cost 7 million pounds. The project didn't comment, pointing out that the TRUE POWER IS IN CREATION Campaign was in charge of the boot camp, and they weren't officially open for business, yet. At noon, the Jellybridge party stopped at the lake for a picnic, and a mayor said to Alistair (head of the Economics & Business Team): 'Yesterday, I read that powerful groups in the US,

and also here in the UK, want the government to reverse regulations which protect the environment. And I thought, damn! The moment we impose laws, we force corporations to do something they don't want to do. And that's the problem right there: imposing laws is always less effective than convincing corporations and people that something is not only necessary but also in their best interest. Corporations will always try to outsmart any law or regulation, or fight them. That's why I'm interested in your town experiment. Maybe it can convince people that a healthy relationship with the environment is in their best interest.' Alistair nodded, stroking his beard. 'That's what I've been thinking. And others on our team. If we need a law for something, then that has my alarm bells ringing, telling me that something in the system is amiss. A beneficial economic, political or any other system doesn't need to be upheld by laws other than the laws of physics and nature, and our convictions, our choices, our visions. In my opinion, if we find something that needs a law, then we should dig deeper and find out what makes this or that law necessary, and what can we adjust so that this or that law won't be necessary any more.' Simon (head of the Health & Care Team) sighed a little. 'I agree. And I guess we'll need to rethink very basic perceptions, like how do we view humans? Do we have to treat the human like an animal that needs to be drilled to fit into the world we humans invented? And that needs to be kept in check by laws so that the faulty systems can be kept in place?' Simon shook his head and the friendly mayor nodded. 'You know,' Alistair said. 'I hope we get a chance to build the town and find out what might be possible. And with that give people a chance to see what options we have.' Another mayor who had been listening in, nodded and said: 'It's not effective to demand the protection of the environment. We need to want change. In order to

want change, we need to grasp what is at stake.' Simon smiled. 'And what we have to gain when we get to know and embrace nature.' Another mayor shook his head. 'We can't take away people's freedom.' 'People want the freedom to destroy their habitat?' the first mayor returned. 'They don't see it that way. They just do what's always been done.' 'How do we get out of this?' the second mayor asked. 'By giving them something to want.' 'Like what?' the first mayor challenged. 'Sex, money, drugs, an enemy.' 'These are outdated narratives,' Alistair remarked. 'They are. People hold on to outdated narratives because that's what they know. That's what they can handle.' By half-past two the guests and the hosts were back in the library at Jellybridge House, and several mayors got news about the first project campaign, LONGEVITY, which had launched at three minutes to noon with a spectacle in Hyde Park, celebrating life and everything it can be, with music, dancing, playing, debating, creating, exploring, thinking, cooking, challenging, breathing, learning, fighting, laughing, storytelling, walking, trading, nurturing, building, chilling, planting and more. At Jellybridge, the mayors commented on the event when they looked up from their phones. In one conversation, a mayor mentioned the lack of affordable housing in the UK, and Olivia (head of the Building Site Team) returned: 'That's a subject I tend to get upset about, and my upset starts right with the term housing. In my opinion housing sees the human as something that needs to be stored away whereas in our town, we want to find out what makes a community and how to build it, how to design it. As a designer, I want to create homes, communities, not boxes.' 'But we need to house more people.' 'The one thing we need, is to rethink community life and to get away from assuming that all a human needs is a roof above their head.' 'Community? But how?' another mayor asked. Jason (head of the Architecture

Team) took a cookie from the tray and returned: 'Why does anyone move anywhere?' Another mayor put down her cup of tea. 'Because the pay is better in the new place?' Jason nodded. 'How can you establish a community when people aren't interested in the location, in the neighbours, only in the pay of a new job?' 'Then what would you do?' Olivia shrugged. 'Build a town experiment and find out what makes a vibrant, thriving, trusting, supportive community?' Several mayors smiled and one said: 'Your Campaign Square on the Hub is pretty impressive. Would you say that it makes sense to have a digital town square for each town?' Raiden (town simulation) nodded. 'It might be a good idea.' 'An exclusive place for towners?' another mayor asked. 'Or for people who want to visit,' the first mayor returned. Alice frowned. 'Tourists. Hm. I actually prefer the idea of a digital town square where towners can just happen to each other, and where they discuss local issues, but in an informal way. Or maybe just to find out who is going where this night so they can meet in person.' Later, another mayor brought up her concerns about ultra processed foods. 'My assistant mentioned that your Longevity campaign picked up the issue?' Megan (head of the Agriculture Team) nodded. 'Ultra processed food is not just potentially unhealthy, it also wastes a lot of resources for materials, production, packaging, transports, sales. That's a lot of fuss for products that have little to no use, except to fill shops and make a few people money. If we let go of ultra processed foods, we could dismantle thousands of factories, with which we would considerably reduce pollution, power consumption, health costs and more.' 'Hm. But what would happen to the workers?' Megan snorted. 'You're not saying that we should keep harming ourselves and our habitat so that we can continue to do fun jobs along conveyor belts? Which reminds me, we would reduce the number of dull factory

jobs if we ate more whole foods again.’ ‘Another point for longevity,’ another mayor remarked. ‘Yes!’ At four the mayors were invited to the basement of Jellybridge House where the Programming Team had set up their central offices. Raiden and Daria showed the mayors the new town simulation and ran some scenarios. Later, one of the mayors said: ‘You propose to use less energy in your town. How?’ ‘By being thorough,’ Alice returned and Raiden said: ‘We take a look at every item which needs power and ask: Do we really need this? Do we need illuminated buildings or billboards. Do we need blinking restaurant names? Do we need monitors at train stations when everyone uses their phones to check train times these days? If we find that we don’t need a powered item, we use less more sustainable solutions.’ Daria nodded. ‘And if we come across something, like a fridge or a computer, we think we need, then we ask, how can we make them more energy efficient, or whether it would be possible not to use them as often as we do now.’ ‘Hm,’ the mayor said and another asked: ‘Have you considered cooperations for energy supplies?’ ‘Not yet,’ Raiden returned. ‘Our simulation suggest that we might produce a power surplus which we’d be happy to make available to our neighbours, at town prices.’ ‘What are town prices?’ ‘Our prices will vary, I’m afraid, depending on which price model we test.’ Several mayor shook their heads, and one said: ‘So, if we did business with you, there’d be no certainty, and we’d become part of your experiments?’ ‘To some extent, yes. We’d inform you upfront of any changes or new ideas, and in some cases we’d offer compensations. But we’d also hope that you’d explore with us whenever a subject might be relevant for your town.’ Later, at the early dinner, another mayor asked Alice: ‘Which political system will you use in your town?’ ‘We’re not really thinking about politics at the moment,’ Alice returned. ‘We’re interested in

what humans and nature need to thrive, and once we know that, we might be able to develop a political system or maybe more a kind of a governance system.’ The mayor looked thoughtful. ‘Are you saying it doesn’t make sense to create a political system before you know the results of your experiments?’ Alice shrugged. ‘It’s too early to say. But, in my opinion, when it comes to politics, there’s too much corruption, manipulation, populism and procrastination involved, and too little pragmatism, too little rationality and too little actually getting things done. Especially in our time where we urgently need to rethink how we do business globally, which resources we can and can’t use and all the rest of it. We need decisive action in favour of a future, in favour of restoring our planet, in favour of communities, in favour of new economic systems, not endless debates, compromises and lobbying. I don’t see any benefit in destroying more of our planet, in letting more people get sick, in covering more of our planet in rubbish products only because some clever people managed to manipulate yet another vote. There must be another way. We need another way. And we need it fast. Will we find it in our town? Will we find it in time? I don’t know. But I’m certain that going to the roots of our problems is necessary to tackle the mess we are in, and we need to do so in a way that actually makes a difference, ends suffering and restores the planet.’ Some fifty minutes later, Alice and the mayors joined a special Q & A session in the ballroom. There were more guests from the region and many members of the Building Site Team. A young, local politician said to Alice: ‘We need law and order. A strong hand keeping our community safe. A strong hand that guarantees no one takes advantage of us.’ Alice raised an eyebrow. ‘You make it sound as if humans are naturally criminal and selfish bastards. I doubt that. From what I’ve seen, people are happiest when they can be useful and

helpful. Creating and supporting fills us with pride. Well, tricking the government does that, too. But that only indicates that politics gets a few things wrong. It shouldn't be fun or satisfying to trick governments.' One of the mayors grimaced. 'Are you saying, it's our fault that people trick the government?' 'That's a speculation I hope to explore in our town experiment. See, if I believe that a system is unjust, why would I support it? Or worse: if I believe a system cheats on me, what better way to retaliate than tricking it in return?' Meanwhile, Betsy and her staff cleaned the dishes in the kitchen, and Leo (coordination) found her to thank her and her team for the superb dinner. Betsy smiled a little nervously and said: 'We might not be able to do this every time. I mean there are bound to be more people next Friday for the daylong Q & A.' Leo nodded. 'We can restrict the number of people—' Betsy interrupted, shaking her head vehemently. 'Absolutely not! You need the people to come here. And they need to know that you're not hiding but that you're listening and that what you say makes sense. I'm just saying, we'll have to offer simpler food: two or three good soups, good bread, apples. Simple like, nourishing. People will understand. But you can't tell anyone, they can't come!' 'How can I help?' Leo said with a gentle smile. 'Well, maybe you could tell people what to expect. I could give you the details. I just hate to disappoint people. But if they knew upfront ...' It was just past eleven that night when Alice walked with the mayors to the front door and one of them remarked: 'This was an extraordinary day. Thank you.' Another mayor said: 'You have a very vivid imagination. I'll give you that. And maybe you even have a point. But a point will not get you your town.' Outside of the front door, a third mayor remarked: 'You sure know how to be a host. And you have a gift for visualisation. I wish this was a situation where any of us could say, let's just do it. It sounds great when you

conjure up your ideas, and when your visions take shape in our minds. But once we step back into the chilly night, we wonder whether any of it could actually happen.’ The last mayor to leave said: ‘I feel ashamed that I want to support your project just to annoy London. But maybe my pettiness will help you nonetheless.’ Not much later, Alice called Rohana in London for an update. ‘An update? After your perfect day by the lake?’ Rohana teased. Alice chuckled. ‘There were loads of mayors there, too.’ ‘That doesn’t count. You had a day at the lake and probably plenty of excellent food.’ Alice laughed. ‘You know, I think we owe much of today’s success to Betsy’s cooking and her amazing team.’ ‘Like I said, you were feasting while we kept toiling throughout the day.’ Alice chuckled. ‘So what are the news?’ ‘Great actually. The Longevity Campaign had a tremendously successful first day, with a lot of people catching on and saying: “Yeah, you’re right, every aspect of life, society, business practices contributes to our health (and the lack of it,) and that largely determines how long we’ll live. And yes, no one has a right to keep us from finding out which conditions provide the best chances for a long and fulfilling life.” There were quite a few who pointed out that coming together and working together has much greater health benefits than competition and outsmarting each other. And the balanced tech angle also worked wonders with over a million people signing up to a twelve days mornings-off-screen challenge, starting tomorrow.’ ‘Wow. That’s great. What’s next for the Longevity Team?’ ‘Tomorrow they take a live coverage team on a tour in London to interview professionals. Their first stop is a London waterworks, next a hospital, then a housing estate where they also host an all day event with music, sports and foods, then a secondary school, an artists centre, an anti-discrimination NGO, and a End Loneliness group.’ (31) The next morning, one

newspaper's headline read: **This much noise for a single town?** 'Yes!' says Skye Mattis. 'Because this town can do the groundwork for the future of all other towns and cities.' At Jellybridge, Alice spent a grey morning at the site with changing groups of people, discussing the plans for plumbing, roads, gardens and buildings. The seven circle roads were already marked with slim timber sticks and cotton strings some six feet above ground. Back in London, a few minutes before noon, the YOUR POWERS Campaign opened with its spectacle on Trafalgar Square where three hundred and thirty-three people lay on the square, slowly wake up, discovering themselves, each other, the square, and eventually the growing audience. Performed like a giant party trick, the campaign team then erected stalls, stages and, unbelievably, mobile gardens, some floating in the fountains' basins, transforming Trafalgar Square into a green exploration ground. Once the space was transformed it opened on seven sides to the public which were invited to discover — powers. Everywhere posters had gone up, each pointing at a potential power. For example: As a human: be yourself, learn yourself, create yourself. As a customer: demand change by boycott, sue for damages, reduce demand. As an entrepreneur: become the better alternative. As a patient: report, report, report, inspire. As a friend of a patient: open doors, get the ice cream in. As a doctor: challenge medical education, improve interdisciplinary cooperation, sue pharmaceutical companies and medical equipment providers, refuse to play the money game! You are a doctor not a profiteer. As a business: create, nurture, serve, restore. As an employer: use the power to be an energiser, to unearth. As a politician: be bold and use your imagination to rethink and reshape the world. Not for profit. Not for gratifications. Not for votes. But for a future. Use your imagination to build the world and don't try to fix what

already failed. As a journalist: ideas, visions, digging deeper. Expose and then add visions. Create stages for many voices. Inspire thinking. Invite debates. Connect people of all walks of life. As a famous person: use your voice, your platform, set an example, think, empower. As a parent: ask for help. As a restaurant owner: ask where do I buy, what do I offer? As an observer of our project businesses & campaigns: challenge us! Throughout the day more power inspirations were added. At several corners of Trafalgar Square, the town project's ripples news and other media outlets interviewed visitors. 'The smile did it for me!' an older man told Mudiwa and Rose from ripples news. 'The task was to leave the spectacle and walk to Leicester Square or to the Thames, smile at strangers and see what happens. It never occurred to me that a smile is something incredibly powerful. But I smile at someone, and with most people everything changes. They straighten, they seem to wake up, a bit surprised about my smile, they smile back, and as they do, their features soften. One asked me why I smiled at him, and we had the most amazing conversation. Two strangers discovering the power of a smile, and of a conversation, of sharing an experience. We can make someone's day, lessen someone's burden and worries with a single smile. And smiling affects us, too. The reactions to our smile strengthen us, too. Never thought a smile could be this powerful. Totally blown away.' A lesbian couple laughed with Mudiwa and Rose, and one of them said: 'Best day I've had in ages.' 'Energising. So energising,' the other added. 'Yeah, it's about our powers, and they are unearthed by all the energising input you get here. It's like, yeah, my power exists, and it's there, but it's been kind of sleeping. I didn't know about it. But seeing the spectacle, the art shows on Leicester Square, the street theatre performances here and down at the Thames, the spontaneous chats everywhere, dancing at

Piccadilly Circus and in the streets, it's like a power source that makes me feel invincible.' 'YEAH,' the other exclaimed. 'Invincible. Hell, I feel like I'd been in some deep sleep, and the prince finally found me and kissed me awake.' 'The prince, eh?' 'Nah, my love, you're right. It was a princess! Isn't the head of the project a woman?' 'Non-binary,' Rose replied. 'Oh, well, kissed awake by a project I want to know more about.' 'Oh, we've got to run. We're on our way to yoga on the roof, strengthening our bodies to harness our powers.' Later, a young man seemed rather shy and said to Mudiwa: 'My parents always helped our neighbours, and some of them made fun of my parents for being so nice.' The young man swallowed and said quietly: 'I was embarrassed. But today, when I saw the initiative to give a hand, as part of the Your Power Campaign, I just had to try. For the first time I wanted to know what it's like to help, whether it's really something weak and stupid and—' The young man stopped, tears welling up. 'My parents passed last year, and I'll never be able to tell them how proud I am of them, and how fantastic they were. And that those people who made fun of them just didn't know better, were suffering from all the things life had thrown at them. Helping is incredibly powerful, and I have the power to make a difference when I give a hand.' In the afternoon and at the Jellybridge, Alice spoke with Megan (head of the Agriculture Team) in the library while spooning a tomato soup with chickpeas. Megan had an apple and said: 'We haven't made much progress with farmers abroad. They don't believe us. But they have heard about the dot.stations and the Hub Stations, and are interested in those. They also say they won't sign anything unless we get the permission to build the town.' 'Winning the site would prove that we're trustworthy?' Alice asked. 'Maybe. But maybe they don't want to be associated with people who have lost a fight.' Shortly afterwards Ualan rolled

into the library, and the three of them discussed which materials they would need for the first weeks of building the town. At six Alice asked THE to inform the queen that the project might agree to the building materials deal the queen had offered — if they could agree on the conditions. Alice had been reluctant to add another connection to the royals, but since the queen held extensive rights to extract natural resources such as sand, clay, gravel, limestone, and since some suppliers' doors had already banged shut in opposition to the town project, Alice had finally relented. 'I'm a Scot, Alice,' Ualan said. 'I know exactly what you mean. How can any person have a right to extract natural features of our planet? The land and everything it has to offer belongs to all of us. But we need the materials, and this is the safest way to get them. It'll guarantee that we won't have any shortages and that we can build as fast as we want to. Plus, once we've signed these contracts, some of our opponents might do a U-turn just to earn some money with our project, after all.' At seven Alice and Raiden left Jellybridge Estate. They reached the Compound in London around eleven and met with Rohana in studio 2 for a briefing. 'Several companies got in touch,' Rohana told Alice and Raiden. 'Some backed out again after a few hours while others confirmed their interest in a cooperation. I tell you, the business world is nervous, as greedy and shortsighted as ever, and deeply divided about how to deal with us. 'Can we use that?' Raiden asked. 'Tempting,' Alice said. 'Maybe in an article, something like: How divides in the business world could benefit our project, and why we won't make use of these divides. This article could be part of the Narratives Campaign.' Rohana grimaced. 'Doing the right thing sucks.' Alice smiled. 'And that, too, is a narrative that could do with a rethink. Why does the idea of tripping someone up gives us such a thrill? And how could we get our thrill fix with something that's not

quite as silly?’ Rohana’s eyes suddenly lit up. ‘Surprise! Doing something unexpected for someone. That’s the same kind of thrill.’ Alice chuckled. ‘That’s good. So how can we surprise the business world with something they would like but would never expect to get from us?’ ‘They are a difficult species,’ Raiden remarked. ‘But maybe we could— Hm.’ ‘Give them a voucher for dot.’ Rohana suggested, doubtfully. Alice shook her head. ‘That would be too expensive, and it would seem like a bribe. You’re right Raiden, they are a difficult bunch. It’s so much easier to trip them up. I’ll have to give this some thought. Anyway, how did the Your Powers Campaign go, today, Rohana?’ ‘A bit too much, a journalist wrote. She might be right. There was a lot of content.’ ‘Anything go viral?’ Raiden asked. Rohana cleared her throat. ‘Oh, well. There’s that interview Mudiwa and Rose did with Emine.’ ‘Oh, what about?’ Alice asked. Rohana grimaced. ‘You haven’t heard about it?’ ‘No,’ Alice said. ‘What’s it about?’ ‘Well, you know Emine’s big smile, right?’ ‘Of course. Her smile is only equalled by that of Princess Felicitas.’ ‘Right. So, Emine, our amazing lawyer, smiles her big smile, and tells Mudiwa and Rose in front of a livestream camera that Your Power as a lawyer is in holding corporations and governments to account.’ Alice frowned. ‘Well, she’s right.’ ‘Yep. But. With that big smile, she tells the world how much pleasure she will take in suing all food giants for planetary destruction, health hazards for consumers, price distortion and speculations with foods on the global markets, slavery, the lack of durability and quality of the food products, water pollution, soil deterioration, monocultures, land robbery, corruptions and bribery.’ ‘Well ...’ ‘Oh, that’s not all. Not by a long shot.’ ‘Oh?’ ‘Well, Emine keeps smiling, adds similar lists for food chains, food restaurants, farmers, fishers, pesticides and fertiliser producers, and when she is done with everything food, her

smile extends that bit more, and she jumps right into saying that everyone who extracts oil, gas, coal should go straight to jail, that everyone who drives a car should be held accountable for the damages they cause—’ ‘—Oh ...’ ‘That’s not all! Every company that has even the slightest connection to anything that has a connection to crude oil, which is pretty much every business and every household in the western world and in quite a few others on our planet, will be sued for destruction, ecocide and harm to humanity. Next is everything plastic, then everything building, then everything entertainment—’ ‘—alright. How did it end?’ ‘I can show you the video. Mudiwa and Rose are pale by the end, and when Emine stops and notices their expressions, she asks worried: ‘Oh, my! Did something happen?’ Alice and Raiden laughed. Rohana smiled a little. ‘The interview was live, and the reactions a massive blow for our project. But there’s also some loud applause. Afterwards, Mudiwa asked Emine to watch the recording, and that was when Emine turned pale and cursed. She made a second statement and clarified that her lists were meant as inspiration, and apologised for the misleading choice of words. She added that it would be good, though, if we clarified via such lawsuits that only because poisoning each other is normal, that doesn’t make it acceptable, and we should see such ideas not as an attack but as a wake-up call to rethink our life on our planet and with each other.’

II days 30-20 II 2-12 March II Campaigns, speeches & reactions II (30) 5:30, studio 3, workout.

‘I was surprised to hear you’re back,’ Alice said, smiling. ‘I promised to return in March. So, here I am,’ Master Lee replied. He still looked like an Asian monk, bald, ageless face, the calm presence of a person who has mastered inner balance. As Alice and Master Lee moved through the practice, breathing, stretching, flowing, tapping into the energies, Alice managed to take stock of what was

going on inside her, and she realised how much she was keeping a lid on. After an hour, Master Lee smiled. 'I am here whenever you want to practice, even if it's just for a few minutes.' Alice took a deep breath and nodded, still feeling the tensions she had allowed to enter her mind, frustration about how much the team had to push to stay ahead of the negative publicity, the useless and senseless bashing of the project's ideas for no other purpose than to be against something, bleeding clickbait. The silence of other figures: scientists, journalists, writers who seemed to consider the town project too frivolous for their worlds. Even Robin, who was a renowned scientist, had complained about her colleagues' reluctance to engage with the project, or, at least, to acknowledge that this experiment was a chance to discover something. Master Lee put a hand on Alice's shoulder. 'Let your body feel your frustration. Let it feel what it feels. Ride it — until you're ready to redirect your frustration with a chuckle.' 'Turn shit into flowers, you mean?' Master Lee laughed. 'Exactly, just like nature.' Alice laughed, too, and Master Lee added: 'If you react to frustration, it will solidify. But if you let it be, if you observe it as something that is happening but doesn't have to take hold of you, then frustration will remain liquid, and eventually you can swim through it to the shore, towel yourself off and walk on.' Alice smiled a little. 'I'm glad you're back.' 'Tell me, when was the last time you wrapped yourself in silence?' 'Oh. Oh, I ... I don't know. I doubt I tried after you left. I never got the hang of it again, not after the ride on the King's horse and the loss of Giselle. Though, I used a cutting-off ritual over Christmas.' 'You did? Why?' Alice grimaced. 'My mind was playing tricks on me and I wanted someone out of my system. It worked. Sort of. But— Could we try wrapping silence? I remember that it was a powerful way to focus in an unpleasant situation. I might need it.' Master Lee nodded. 'What do you

remember?’ Alice closed her eyes. She had discovered wrapping silence around herself some time after Jazz had begun to train her in the art of deep energies. She needed— Yes, that was it: she needed to sense every single of her energy streams. It was a bit like acknowledging each of them, and once she was aware of them, she could wrap them around herself, and they would create a shield. Not a solid shield, a shield that made it impossible to attack her because every blow would go right through her. And once she was in this safe space, she could focus. Voices, her own included, sounded distant, but her mind achieved an incredible clarity. How could she have forgotten about all of this? Alice took a deep breath and sank into the silence at the centre of her energy streams. That was another thing, you didn’t have to think in here.’ Master Lee said something, and Alice let go of the silence, smiling. ‘I remembered.’ ‘Indeed, you did.’ At half past seven, Alice joined the Campaigns & Negotiations Team, and Emine exclaimed happily: ‘Alice! They are coming for us!’ Alice raised her eyebrows. ‘Who?’ ‘Everyone! We have a massive influx of lawsuits against us. And against you personally, too. This is a reaction to the start of the campaigns and to your meeting with the regional mayors.’ Alice shook her head with a chuckle. ‘Shouldn’t you take some credit, too? After your interview.’ ‘Oh, yes. But. That was nothing. Sorry if I was a bit enthusiastic.’ Alice smiled. ‘It’s great to see you happy.’ ‘Oh, I’ve been dreaming of this! I just wish Javiera was on our team, too.’ ‘Can’t—’ ‘—No, no!’ Emine interrupted. ‘The Business Expansion Team need her. And here comes her call. They’ll have gotten lawsuits, too. The game is on, Alice! This is great! They are rattled. They throw nonsense at us! But our lawyers— Oh, this is a dream! We will shred them. I swear!’ Alice took a deep breath and Emine answered her phone, jumping into another ecstasy. ‘Well,’ Alice said to

Rohana (coordination), Troy (illustrations) and Navarro (society) who had listened. 'Let's hope we get some happy moments, too. Rohana, could you have one of your people take a look at Emine's happy letters, just so I can get a taste of what is brewing out there?' 'Yes. There's one case which might require an immediate reaction from us.' 'Oh?' 'Yesterday's Longevity Campaign did events at a housing estate raising a wide range of critical issues from mould to the lack of playgrounds, sports fields, shops, arts, libraries, plus high rents, loan sharks and so on. Apparently, the event emboldened the tenants and some are calling for action, sparking fears of violent riots.' Alice frowned and Navarro said: 'It's probably propaganda by the owners, but just in case, we should record a statement that we, as a project, are committed to non-violence.' Alice nodded and Troy chuckled. 'I had a session with Kahu. She has a story about a planet where the people protested by laughing at the ridiculousness of those who thought they owned the world. Maybe that's what we can do for those housing estate people: provide ideas for how to protest in unexpected ways and with that ridicule their opponents. Because if they get violent, they hand the victory to their enemies.' While the Campaigns & Negotiations Team continued to prepare their speeches, there were some sixty groundbreaking ceremonies worldwide for new dot.stations and new Hub Stations. Meanwhile, the Building Site Team began with their seven campaigns, and at a few minutes to noon, the Narratives Campaign was launched in seven UK cities (Edinburgh, Newcastle, Liverpool, Cardiff, London, Bristol, Exeter) with challenges, comedy acts, thinking sessions, comic murals, concerts, reading hours, poetry slams, story workshops and debates, all themed: Pick your favourite narrative and take it on a stroll. The opening in London had everyone talking, and some complained of mental and

physical dizziness. When Navarro returned to the seventh floor of the Compound's Central Building, everyone present applauded. Navarro blushed surprised. 'What's happening?' he asked. Skye smiled. 'Your idea of building this windy path where, when a person takes a moment to think, the grounds turns wobbly, that's a hit!' 'A tech masterpiece,' Hayley added, grinning. 'You're people did it exactly as I imagined. Thanks so much for that,' Navarro returned. Skye smiled. 'I love the whole thing. It's fantastic to let people experience what it's like when solid ground turns wobbly, and how they can create stability by building rails together, by holding on to each other. Spectacular! Everyone is talking about it.' 'It's a great idea,' Raiden chipped in. 'A great way to illustrate that our world is built on invented narratives and stories, and that the moment we grasp that something is just an invention, we lose stability, but we can create new stability, a stability we shape consciously, a stability we build together.' Robin nodded. 'Great job, Navarro! I also like the angle that we don't have to understand everything. We can learn to deal with uncertainty, and we can gain security by making exploring, shaping and testing into a habit.' 'You're too kind! All of you. Thank you,' Navarro returned, blushing deeply. 'I might add, any idea is only as good as the team who bring it to life. The Narrative's Team, the Tech Innovations Team and the Crafts Team made all of the Wobbly Path of Enlightenment possible. And the visitors were great, the responses sometimes overwhelming. People wept, others thanked us, some got angry. It was very intense. Actually, I'd suggest we set up the wobbly installation here at the Compound, build more for the other cities, and invite people to use it, alone, in groups, to experience the un-reality of our reality. We could offer conversations about the experiences afterwards.' Dennie (security) nodded. 'The green space left of the Front House could work.' Hayley nodded. 'We'd need

a team on location. Could we have a twenty/four seven team, Isabel?' Isabel nodded. 'I'm already texting the Narratives Team. We'll try.' 'I'll text Security,' Dennie said. 'They should be on location, too. And we'll need mood lights during the night.' Some minutes later, Navarro sat down next to Jack, sighed deeply and wiped his face. 'Are you okay, Navarro?' 'Yes, yes. Just. Jack how does everyone know? I mean. Yes, it was my idea. But. You know, I was actually more interested in the second part, in questioning whether we really gain that much security from establishing truths, customs, fixed ideas about life, work, nature and so. It is true that we can create a sense of security if everyone agrees on What is What and on how this or that is done. But, to quote Robin, "if we tell people What is What, then What will always remain What and never evolve. So what if we could learn to turn exploring into our modus operandi, our motivator and guide? In the sense that so long as we explore, so long as we keep asking questions, so long as we unstuck ourselves as soon as we get stuck, or as soon as we discover something damaging— What if that could gives us security because we know that we keep in motion?' 'Just like nature,' Alice said, joining them. 'Yes! Nature is always in motion, not fixed, not carved in stone.' Jack nodded and said: 'We are safe so long as we remain curious and keep exploring. It's brilliant! We could challenge this thought by testing it for historic events.' Alice's eyes lit up. 'A simulation! We pick twelve historic events from the last twelve centuries, and for each event we build scenarios of how a flexible, exploring mindset might have changed the events and their outcomes.' 'Already sending the idea to the Narrative's Team,' Navarro said. 'And I'll talk with Andy,' Alice said and asked: 'Navarro, do you have the notes for the thinking sessions?' 'Press Pause Campaign. Not yet. Quintessa and her team are still working on the details. I meet with them later today.' 'OK.

Thanks.’ ‘Alice?’ Emine called across the common area. ‘Coming,’ Alice returned. ‘Jack, can we postpone today’s voice training?’ Jack raised his eyebrows. ‘Absolutely not, my friend! You know how it is: if we make an exception today, we’ll keep making exceptions. Besides, I have a special session planned for you, today.’ Alice smiled a little. ‘You’re probably right. I just have—’ ‘Alice!’ ‘Coming!’ ‘You go. I’ll pick you up and will dare anyone to stand in the way of your bit of daily fun.’ Alice chuckled and left. Jack sighed and Navarro frowned. ‘You two spoke, haven’t you?’ Navarro asked. ‘You know?’ Navarro nodded. ‘Sort of. But you’re not together?’ ‘No,’ Jack said with another sigh. ‘Sometimes it feels like we never spoke. Like we still ... There are moments when I wish we could just run away together and—I can’t believe that we might have another thirty days of this.’ Navarro smiled a little. ‘We put so many hopes on hold. There are moments when I can’t help but wonder whether we really should, how much we risk by not claiming life for us right now. What if there’ll never be a right time to be with the ones we want to be with?’ ‘Sammy?’ Jack asked. Navarro nodded. ‘I like our arrangement. We both have our lives, and occasionally we enjoy each other’s company. But I have become so accustomed to our precious days together that— It’s only been nine days of this campaigns marathon. I don’t think, I have ever missed anyone this much.’ ‘I know what you mean. The first bit, too. What if we never get a chance to make up for these weeks?’ Navarro shook his head. ‘I never thought, I’d ever talk with you about longing for someone. Never thought I would ever long for someone.’ Jack smiled a little wistfully, and Navarro asked: ‘How come everyone knew the wobbly ground installation was my idea?’ Jack chuckled. ‘Oh, that. Someone leaked the info.’ ‘Really? Who? Not—’ ‘Yes. Sammy, our star guest architect gave an interview this morning and happened to mention you.’

Navarro blushed. Meanwhile Alice and Andy talked about simulations for the campaigns. 'We should use simple simulations, too,' Andy said. 'They are faster to compile and usually as effective.' 'Like a black image, you push the slide and night turns into day?' Alice asked. Andy nodded. 'A planet covered in water sliding to a planet turned into a dessert.' Alice nodded. 'A farmers market overflowing with fruits and vegetables sliding to an empty market with just some canisters with some kind of vital nutrients mix.' 'Or plain empty, no more food, no more people,' Andy returned. Alice frowned. 'You're not usually this dark.' Andy smiled a little. 'I've been working on gruesome simulations for nine days. I had to hire more people for my team so that people could get longer breaks between shifts.' 'Then the simulations are working.' 'Absolutely. To be able to see what effect a narrative has on society, on nature, on communities, to be able to go back and forth, gives me a chill every time and more over time. The worst are the changed narratives. I mean most people understand by now that if you cut down a tree, it's gone and something vital is missing. The destruction human's cause becomes more and more obvious to more people. But what really gets me and my team is everything we already forwent. The missed chances. Millenia worth of unused potentials. I have nightmares.' Alice frowned. 'That's not good. But it's very good.' Andy smiled. 'Alice, I love you.' Alice chuckled. 'Let's prioritise simulations that focus on what we and our planet missed out on, and what we can gain if and when we change our destructive narratives and stories. Yes, let's visualise what we have forgone and what we have to win.' Andy smiled. 'Will do.' 'Maybe we'll have to add a nightmare warning?' 'One with hope value.' Alice and Andy bumped their fists together and smiled. In the afternoon, Alice and Fran met with the Conference Team. They finalised the schedule with key talks

such as: Women and men — where does it come from? // Human Nature, Human Energies // Intelligence, creativity, laughter and other human specialities // The war against ourselves, AI and diets // Family and domestic violence. //

(29) The next morning at six, Alice talked with Any, the head of THE, via a video call. ‘We’ve doubled security on all your lawyers and their families,’ Any said. ‘Also on your ripples news teams. Wherever they go, my people keep them safe.’ Alice grimaced. ‘How dangerous is it for them?’ ‘We’re uncertain. That’s why we take no risks.’ Alice nodded. ‘How’s the press this morning?’ Any smiled. ‘My favourite headline reads: “London to be littered with stinking feet.” ‘Stinking feet?’ ‘The LONGEVITY Campaign offers free photo shoots of faces and feet with local photographers, today, on the streets of London, and in all other participating cities. They print out the best photos and display those along strings throughout London.’ ‘Ah, I remember. They want to fix the strings to lampposts and sculptures.’ ‘That’s the one.’ ‘Ah, I wish, I could go.’ ‘One photo string starts from the Front House, at the Compound.’ ‘Oh, great!’ Alice chuckled. ‘I like that they wrote stinking feet. Imagine we would add smells to the feet photos.’ Any chuckled. ‘Anything else from the press?’ Alice asked. Any shrugged. ‘Nothing you need to know. Your fact check website has more traffic every day. I’d say that means more and more people are curious about the project and are prepared to form their own opinions.’ At six forty-three, Alice had her face and feet photographed for the LONGEVITY Campaign. Today’s campaign theme was: **Playful, strong, together — having fun and doing the unexpected.** One of the team told Alice that they had already found an expert on feet smells. Just after seven, Alice went to conference room 1 on the third floor of the Central Building and joined a meeting with the Business Expansion Team. This team’s tasks were: Recruit to expand

the businesses. Expand the workshop networks for each business. Establish more businesses at Hub Stations. Plan headquarters for the various businesses. Extend the supply networks and make use of synergy effects between the different companies. If possible find and nurture symbioses within all networks and across all networks. Use ripples news to document the expansion and to bundle discussions. Work closely with the Alert Team, with the future town's Business Team, and with the Hub, in particular with the Hub Stations and the Hub's online shopping mall. Also, for the future town: involvement in the adjustments of the Yards, the Roof Gardens complex, and production and storage facilities, in- and outside of town. Plus: inventions for the town. A big question was: Which businesses and products will be needed for the building phase and later in town? At the start of this meeting, Seth (business liaison for all transition teams) announced: 'We'll limit our expansion efforts to seventy-seven project companies, not including our supplies networks in this count. We're getting a lot of headwind and need to make it clear that we don't come to conquer but to inspire and empower, to unearth creativity and to restore our planet. We're prepared to share our knowledge, so long as it isn't used for exploitation, oppression or mere profiteering. We stand for balance not for competition.' Lakeshia from dot. nodded and said: 'I think we need to get this message out there and more clearly. We create to restore, empower and serve. Too many still think our project is just another remake of the old power plays, corruptions and greed.' Devery from the Hub agreed. 'We should keep repeating what we stand for and add all our day-to-day-business stories to our communications to illustrate and substantiate what we do.' Ef from toys around the world nodded. 'It might even be necessary to publicly compare our businesses with other players in the same

industry and show what our businesses do for customers, for the community near our stations, for creatives, and what effects other businesses have locally and globally.' Alice nodded. 'Raiden did a simulation to compare dot.'s effects to those of other fashion companies. We can adjust this simulations for each of our businesses. We can also be different in the way we present ourselves. We don't have anything to hide. We don't need to make flashy presentations. We can simply be ourselves. Be honest and transparent.' Lakeshia from dot. smiled. 'A customer said to me, yesterday, that he loves how enthusiastic we are about everyone involved in our company. I think that's a great point in our favour, too. We seem to have created a business model where it's possible to love what we do and with whom we do it.' Several people chuckled, and, chuckling herself, Lakeshia added: 'It sounds a bit cheesy. But this ease, this inclusiveness, this fun, people notice it.' Not long before ten, Alice reached the town museum and opened the second press conference. She began with remarks about the project's business expansions, repeating several of the positive thoughts from the team meeting. But when she noticed some dismissive looking journalists, her mood flipped, and before she could stop herself, she lashed out about the disturbing practice of producing heaps of so-called fashion only to dump heaps of it in landfills. 'Can you plant a single tree on fabrics?' Alice challenged. 'I doubt you can. And fashion is only one example of the business world's obsession with flooding the markets with goods which aren't even good enough for the dumpster. Every single one of our companies only sells what has been ordered, what the customer wants and needs, and what has been produced responsibly. And while doing so, we empower everyone involved in the production, distribution and sales processes. In our businesses incomes are automatically distributed

widely unlike the still common practice of handing huge incomes to a few or worse to speculators, which then need to be taxed in order to make up for mechanisms which always favour a few, which always favour those who only seek to increase numbers not actual wealth and wellbeing. Besides, how about you take a closer look at the idiocy of producing anything on the off-chance that a marketing team is good enough to sell the product. It defies all logic. You can ask your questions now!' Alice ended, unhappy about the lame exit line, unhappier that the press didn't take the bait. They didn't retort. They didn't call her out for losing her composure. They didn't ask a single question relating to dot. *Silence. Bloody silence. It's so effective in shutting someone up. Why not shut up idiots for a change?* one of Alice's thoughts fumed. Another thought shrugged. *Listen to them, even here, even now, all they care about are their bleeding millionaires and billionaires.* Another thought sneered. *Good. Our millionaires boot camp will teach them something, too!* Alice took a deep breath and was glad that her Campaigns & Negotiations Team handled all following questions with ease, humour and clarity, even when the rumours about the queen being held hostage by the project were brought up — again. Alice smiled a little when a few good questions were posed about the first three campaigns which were running parallel by now. Two hours later, back on the seventh floor, Navarro remarked: 'This press conference was another interesting display of how people rather suspect a conspiracy than focus on issues we need to address. And no amount of nudging them towards relevant issues made a difference. They just kept digging were their suspicions hoped to find an irresistible headline. Bizarre.' Not much later, Alice signed several orders for project businesses and other contractors. On the shopping list were: pipes, tubes, cables, solar panels, small wind engines, biogas equipment, work clothes,

sleeping bags, tents, scooters, bicycles, cargo bicycles, project phones, tools, helmets, and what else was likely to be needed in the first weeks of the building phase. All orders were made public. Comments ranged from praise for thorough planning to taunts for creating waste by producing what the town project would never need. The most shared meme was: 'Plastic-free helmets! Turning workers into knights!' Around the same time, Hayley (tech) stated in an ad hoc interview: 'The project phones are built and customised by our tech company highFLY. The phones have a link to the town simulation, and to special Hub rooms. There is an overall Hub room for the building phase, and there are sub-rooms for the various building teams where team members can connect, keep up to date, and where all relevant data is published. In case we don't need those phones, they can easily be repurposed because these are modular phones with our own, highly adaptable operations system.' Back at the meeting with the Business Expansion Team, Alice asked Miles, the head of Ingbars Inc: 'How are the Ingbars doing?' 'Going through the roof after our test campaign. We'll start for real in the following cities: Plymouth, London, Manchester, Swansea, Glasgow and Belfast. In each city, we start with one area and then slowly expand as demand grows.' 'That's the plan,' Milli, another member of the Ingbar team said. 'Only demand is already much higher than we expected, and the question is whether to ride this wave or whether to grow slowly, learn, extend a bit more, learn and so on.' Alice thought for a moment and then said. 'Maybe you can do both. Stick with your one step at a time policy, but in the background you build the foundations for expanding further. This way, after you've learned a good deal, you can speed up the process.' There were several smiles around the table and Alice asked: 'What's the secret of your campaign?' Miles grinned. "Ingbars: no more

wasting time and money on shopping grocery. With Ingbars you get exactly what you need and eat. Ingredients and foods at the highest quality with the guarantee that no exploitation of planet or people are involved at any stage of these products.” Magnus, head of Ingbar marketing, nodded. ‘We have a second spot. “Ingbars — No more worries about ingredients, labels, environmental damage, slave labour, false promises. Ingbars are free from all pretence and waste. Each Ingbar is customised to meet a household’s food needs. Worry-free quality for people’s health and conscience.”’ ‘Fantastic,’ Alice said, smiling. ‘Yes,’ Miles returned. ‘Ingbars went viral. And we got some thousand lawsuits.’ Alice laughed. ‘On what grounds?’ ‘Manipulation and intent to destroy the global economy.’ Alice shook her head. ‘Wow! What imagination. What are you doing about it?’ ‘We asked a judge to compare our business practices with those of our opponents’ and to determine which of us is bent on manipulation and exploitation, and which of us is doing an overdue rethink of harmful business practises — and benefits more people—’ A knock on the conference room door made everyone look up. The knock was followed by Rohana’s head who mouthed that she needed a word with Alice. As soon as the door closed behind Alice, Rohana said: ‘The mayor of London requests your presence.’ ‘Oh! OK. When?’ ‘Now!’ ‘Oh.’ ‘Several people think you should take Jack, use his celebrity status as a calming effect.’ Alice raised her eyebrows. ‘Why does the mayor need calming?’ ‘He’s upset about the longest photo gallery ever.’ Alice laughed and punched the air. ‘I knew it! I knew that the feet and faces idea would open doors. YES!’ Around four o’clock, Alice and Jack met with the mayor of London who seemed curious about them but who was visibly annoyed about the photos which cluttered the sky. ‘If you were a bird,’ Alice returned with a lopsided smile.

‘I’d understand that the photos must be irritating. But you’re a human. You can keep your gaze on your own feet. You don’t have to look at the feet and faces above your head.’

‘Alice Adler, half of London is a live gallery of faces and feet of all sorts. Some parents reported that their children got scared by some expressions and by the sight of naked feet.’

‘Many kept their shoes on.’ ‘Some had ten photos taken of their feet: feet with shoes, with socks, dancing feet, running feet, squatting feet.’ Alice smiled. ‘I saw those. I love the creativity people bring to the campaigns.’ The mayor grimaced. ‘And what has any of this to do with longevity?’

‘Embracing diversity, laughing together, creating together, shaping together. Everything that makes our hearts lift contributes to our health.’ ‘Hm. Why feet?’ ‘Because we see feet even less often than faces. And feet like all our body parts are unique, and uniqueness is fun and precious. Besides who would have expected feet in connection with faces?’ ‘Someone smart who thought this was about a person from head to toe.’ Alice smiled broadly. ‘That’s good! I hadn’t thought of that.’ The mayor smiled a little, too, and let out a loud sigh. ‘Alright. But I make you personally responsible for cleaning up this fun. You have until Monday morning. And from now on, I want to be kept in the loop regarding future show-offs with the press — which is the whole point of this so-called celebration of creativity, I believe.’

‘Not really. Though we might not have made this into such a big event if we weren’t a little annoyed by the press’ constant attempts to make us look like fools. But an event like this is absolutely in line with who we are: the crazy people who do the impossible and somehow make it work.’

The mayor shook his head. ‘A business partner warned me, not to underestimate you.’ Alice shrugged. ‘I wish people would say instead: there is a person with the kind of mind and openness you could make use of — if you had the

courage.’ The mayor smiled a bit and looked at his watch. ‘I will keep that in mind. Thank you for coming at this short notice. Oh, and by the way, any chance I could get a signed copy of the “This is our world” comic? Not for me. Obviously. My daughter is a great fan.’ On their way back to the Compound, Alice listened in on the remainder of the Business Expansion Team’s meeting, and when they arrived at the Front House, Alice and Jack joined this week’s Q & A in the theatre. (28) The next morning, Alice was called to an unofficial meeting with the prime minister. The prime minister greeted Alice with a smile and said: ‘Ms Adler, thank you for coming. I know how busy you are. I won’t take up much of your time. The reason I asked you here this morning is that I’d very much appreciate your cooperation. The public is rather impressionable and increasingly seems to be falling for you. That’s why I need some solid arguments against your project.’ Alice raised her eyebrows. ‘And you need *me* for that?’ ‘You are the best qualified on this topic and,’ the PM added with the flicker of a smirk, ‘you have the reputation of being painfully honest. My advisers suggested that we put your honesty to the test. If you are indeed honest, then you will give us the best arguments against your project.’ Alice’s frown deepened. *You want my honesty?* one of Alice’s thoughts sneered. *She asks for it!* another chipped in. *Go, go, go. Make her wish never to meet another honest person again. Make her wish to be surrounded by liars for the rest of her life.* Alice took a deep breath. *Well, let’s give the prime minister a taste of how painful honesty can be.* ‘Madam, under different circumstances, I might be sorry to disappoint you. You see, the disappointing truth is, I have no arguments against the town project.’ A playful challenge appeared in Alice’s eyes and she added: ‘Unless, of course, you and your government decided to question and rethink all your policies, the economic system you are

complicit in, and if you addressed all present environmental and societal crises heads on. In that case our project might quickly become redundant, and we could all celebrate your outstanding leadership, reshape our economic and political systems together, and restore our planet.’ The prime minister looked unmoved, but her voice betrayed some dissatisfaction and a need to demonstrate her authority. ‘It is out of the question that we’d allow you to run a lawless vigilante experiment, and that for 12 years.’ Alice grimaced, a little impatiently. ‘Twelve years is a bare minimum to see whether our ideas can work. It’s the minimum required to make and test adjustments, and to develop more ideas. Twelve years will give us the time to be relatively thorough on most critical issues.’ The prime minister shook her head. ‘Do you really believe that your town can’t fail?’ ‘Our town will fail, several times, in different ways, in multiple areas. But each time we fail, we’ll have gained new data, new insights, new ideas, and that will allow us to do better in our next attempts. And that’s something you, as a politician, don’t get to do because you don’t have the time and you are always afraid of losing votes. But in our town, we will assemble people who are prepared to test ideas for all of us, for our future. It will be a comparatively small group, compared to the millions of people which you subject to the experiment of leaving the European Union.’ The prime minister raised her head dismissively. ‘Are you suggesting we should have run a Brexit test in a single town?’ Alice smiled lopsidedly. ‘If you had, you’d at least have been prepared for the aftermath. But then, no one expected Brexit to happen, right?’ The prime minister sat down at her desk and began to sort the papers on her desk. ‘I knew this would be a waste of time. But sometimes you have to listen to your advisers to make them see how wrong they are. Good day, Ms Adler.’ Alice shook her head. *Waste of time! Right! Waste*

of my time! On the way back from this unsatisfactory meeting, Alice wondered whether the queen's Letter of Protection would have made a difference. Probably not. And anyway, how likely was it that the prime minister didn't know about it? Talking with Any, head of THE, during the drive back, didn't help much, and he said one thing that stuck with Alice, not in a pleasant way. 'Keep in mind that there are many interest groups. While the government wants an elegant way out of approving the town project, some interest groups might push for the town project just to oppose their government.' Back at the Compound, Alice checked in with the Campaigns & Negotiation Team, and a smile had appeared on her face because her team was of the opinion that things were heading their way, and Dennie pointed out: 'The PM wouldn't have called you to a meeting if she wasn't worried about the public's growing interest in the town project. And you just rattled her that bit more.' Later, Alice joined the Business Expansion Team in conference room 1 again. She had listened to her team's optimism, but she was still worried and asked Seth: 'Are the project businesses affected by the campaigns for our town?' Seth shook his head. 'All publicity seems to give our businesses a boost.' 'Hm. No attacks?' 'There are attacks from corporations and political groups, plus the odd attempts to smuggle in a mole, but nothing major, and overall the expansions of our businesses are on schedule, plus more and more craftspeople, raw material producers, tradespeople and customers join our networks.' Alice nodded. 'OK. Is there an update on dot.?' 'Yes,' Tess, co-head of dot. replied. 'This morning dot. started to produce clothes for construction workers, including work jackets, trousers, shirts, gloves; shoe port starts to produce work boots. The UK dot.workshops can't meet all our demand. Other dot.workshops in Europe help out. Members of the

international teams have their outfits produced in their local dot.workshops.' Hachiro, dot.designer and Alice's friend, smiled. 'Plus, today, dot. will play a special role at the Connections Campaign's opening. Our team created a large parkour in Hyde Park which illustrates the connections, locally and globally, of the dot.business model, and how those connections create ripple effects and with that additional connections.' About an hour later, Jazz, head of Project Security, and Dennie (security) picked Alice up from the meeting. 'Is everything OK?' Alice asked surprised. 'Sort of,' Dennie replied. 'Just a few troubles at a few campaigns.' Alice raised her eyebrows. 'What and who?' Jazz replied in her calm way. 'Minor accidents, a few troublemakers who try to incite event visitors to violence, some preacher-kind of people who campaign against the town campaigns, some water supply delays, some complaints about peeing people — at all campaign events.' 'Hm,' Alice mumbled and followed Dennie into a small office where the three of them sat down at a round table, and Jazz said: 'Water and toilets won't be a problem again. And we increased the number of ambulances on standby. Preachers and troublemakers are the issue where I need to know what you want.' Alice raised her eyebrows, and Jazz smiled a little. 'Not you personally. I know you're not happy with preachers. I need to know what you as the head of the project want with regard to them.' 'Oh. Well. Hm.' Alice thought for a moment. Then a small smile appeared on her face. 'Could we solve this pro-actively? Like, each campaign event gets two dedicated areas, one for troublemakers, another for preacher-type people. A bit like a zoo cage with a sign which gives our visitors some background on these people and some information which might be useful in evaluating the statements of these people.' Dennie shook his head, grinning and bumped fists with Alice. 'I told, Jazz. You

wouldn't like any of this, but we should tell you because you'd have a fun idea.' Alice smiled. 'Yes, let's give them room while we're clear about not agreeing with them.' 'You can leave this to me Jazz,' Dennie said. 'I'll make this happen with the seven campaign teams.' Late in the afternoon, the theatre in the Front House filled for the first run of The universe is worried. Kahu (ecologist, town project team) and her friends posed as visitors from other planets and invited the audience to ask these alien visitors how the people of other planets dealt with the troubles and mysteries the people of planet Earth are confronted with, too. This evening Alice, Seth (business liaison), Jack (film), Raiden (town simulation), Hachiro (dot.), Dana (ecology) and Rohana (coordination) went to another party. The second this week. Two days ago, it had been a party with some hundred politicians. Tonight it was a business party. 'It's so boring to always play with the same kids,' a young tech entrepreneur said to Seth (business liaison). 'I love how much my competitors hate your project,' another guy in a suit said to Alice. 'I should have send you flowers.' 'Me, too,' another suit chipped in. 'I just love it when they panic like upset chickens.' 'I also like it when people hop around like flushed ostriches,' Alice returned with a smile, and the suits laughed. An hour or two later, Alice was running out of smiles, and when a slimy suit parroted the old tales of how to make the most money, Alice squinted her eyes and countered: 'Cheap is too expensive. Think of all the rubbish cheap products turn into, the toxins, the waste of valuable resources, and consider the people who slave to make cheap possible. The lives damaged. The lives lost. Bloody short-sightedness.' The suit wanted to interrupt, but Alice wasn't done yet, and, raising her voice just a bit, she continued: 'Here we have country A who is determined to outgrow every other economy. What does it do? It's so afraid

of a shrinking economy that it counters national slumps with building more factories and pushing more stuff onto the world markets at prices apparently no one can resist, thereby endangering thousands if not millions of local economies. What for? So that one country can be the best? — and gets to bury the planet in even more rubbish? This is what we need to understand: a healthy economy is like a healthy ecosystem, it doesn't know borders, it doesn't know superpowers, it doesn't know overconsumption or exploitation. Like a healthy environment, a healthy economy is all about balances and cycles — and that globally. The only economic system that makes sense knows no competition and serves humanity, offering what is needed.' 'And that's where your dot.clothes come in?' an elder, friendly businessman asked. 'Yes, and our other project businesses, too. We're building a businesses ecosystem where pretty much everything is connected, and where we aim at creating balances for everyone involved, including the customers and our habitat.' 'Aim at?' the businessman asked. Alice found a spare smile and replied: 'We started setting up companies less than a year ago. We're still learning a lot, testing, adjusting. But so far our ideas have been confirmed, and it's amazing to see what happens when humans are empowered and have a community, a job, an outfit they feel connected to.' A businesswoman had been listening with a dismissive expression on her face. Now she remarked: 'You're forgetting that people need jobs.' Alice lost the spare smile, only just kept herself from snorting and retorted: 'And because people need jobs, we have to witness a ridiculous race to replace humans with more robots and AI?' 'You have heard of efficiency gains?' 'I have had the pleasure of exploring with my team how inefficient efficiency is.' 'Well, well,' the slimy suit chipped in. 'We provide the markets with what is needed.' 'No, you flood the

markets with rubbish and pay billions to make people buy what they don't need.' 'We can only grow our economies if we increase our output.' Alice stared for a millisecond. Then one of her thoughts remarked: *It's OK to take a break. Breathe.* Nodding, Alice excused herself — only to stumble into a related discussion between Raiden (town simulation) and another suit. The middle-management red-tie wearer elaborated why the world depended on using fossil fuels. Raiden used the first gap in the sermon to remark: 'That would mean, humanity is doomed to kill itself because it can't live without fossil fuel.' 'True. Mars is our only hope.' 'At the rate at which we are destroying our societies and our planet, there won't be enough time to get to Mars, let alone make it habitable. Everything points to only one road.' 'And which road would that be, Ms Adler?' Not quite in the mood to be talking again, Alice smiled nonetheless because one of her thoughts was quite intriguing, and she replied: 'The one road that's open to us, is the one where we can't postpone tidying our room. Like when we were kids. There is that point where you have to wade into the mess and sort your way through it. Sticking gums, heaps of unused toys, stinking socks, the rotting apple under the cupboard, all the books, sketches, cushions, pens and pencils. Sticky, dusty, in a mess. That's us. Time to face the mess. Time for the big clean-up.' Sometime later, Alice passed a bar table where Jack (film) had a few drinks and laughs with a bunch of businesspeople, and Jack called: 'Alice, these gentlemen are concerned about all the job losses our business models must incur if less is produced.' Alice joined the group, her eyebrow raised, and she asked: 'Would you say, we should keep eating sugar so that dentists don't lose their jobs?' 'Well,' several in the group returned. 'Would you say, we should keep having convoluted tax laws so that tax consultants don't lose their jobs?' 'Hm.' 'Would you say, we

should keep the political landscape corrupt and ambiguous so that politicians don't lose their jobs?' 'Erm ...' 'Or would you say, we should keep polluting our water, air and soil so that those people who fail to understand that they, too, need clean water, air and soil, can continue to destroy the basis of all our lives?' A businessperson shook their head. 'Alice Adler, you are dangerous.' Alice frowned. 'I keep hearing that. But this is the first time that I remember to ask why someone would think that I am dangerous. What is it that makes me dangerous in your eyes?' The businessperson shook their head again. 'If people started listening to you, then our days would be counted.' Alice twitched the corner of her mouth. 'I wouldn't call that dangerous. I would call that progress.' Jack and one of the guests laughed. The former speaker smiled a little. 'You should be careful, Alice Adler. We don't like to be threatened.' 'I guess you prefer to be the thread.' 'Indeed.' Some time later Alice and Rohana took a break at the bar and had a peppermint tea. Alice tried to empty her mind, but one thought managed to get out nonetheless. 'Do you think peppermint really helps the mind to take clear decisions?' Rohana shrugged. 'I'd still drink it if it didn't. I like the taste.' Alice smiled, took another sip and looked up when two entrepreneurs joined them. After some small talk one of them remarked: 'People need the freedom to open any business they like.' Rohana rolled her eyes. 'Tell me, how often have you been to a bar, a shop, a mini golf place and thought: Hell, even I could do a better job than that?' One of the entrepreneurs smiled. 'Too often.' Rohana nodded and Alice said: 'In our town we don't just let things happen. We find out whether a business proposal fits into the town's business composition and stands a chance to generate a healthy income within a healthy work environment and without exploitation. This approach has the longterm benefits of doing business that is sustainable for

staff, customer and planet. Plus, we are aware that there are a lot of people with a lot of ideas but with few skills regarding some very fundamental aspects, such as design, management and cooperation. So, when a free person comes to us with an idea, we give them every bit of help they might need to make their business a masterclass in every respect, on every level. And we don't squeeze all ideas into one corset, or create one ubiquitous brand. No, we are all about diversity and empowerment, and we are curious about where the individual wants to go. There is an additional benefit to our approach. Since we are involved in all businesses, not least because they are part of the experiment, we can find synergies and intertwine business activities. You won't find competition in our businesses. The freedom we offer is the freedom to become your best in an environment that is cooperative and well composed.' 'Hm.'

'Think of all the waste created by failed business ideas, small and big. Think of the trauma of failure. Think of all the damages inflicted by people who only care about making some money quick without any thought for customer welfare or the future of the planet. All of this can be prevented if we don't just stand by and let things happen. And no, no government can possibly know what should and what shouldn't be produced. And it's not a government's task to make those decision. But what we can do is to be open to the suggestions of the towners, to test their ideas, to find out whether we can fit their ideas into our town, and how to do so in an optimal way.' Later Alice passed Dana (ecology) near the dance floor and overheard a politician say: 'I'm a conservative.' 'Ah, and a conservative conserves ideas but not their habitat? That seem a rather selective kind of conservatism to me.' Again later, Alice sat at a table with two politicians, three businesspeople, Seth (business liaison) and John (business). Alice sighed. 'Free trade? There is no

such thing. There are bullies, marketing people, and a lot of rubbish. Just think about the waste created by the health industry. People are lured into self-medication, and lured into buying loads of creams and tinctures without anyone caring what their skin really needs. And all the time, the industry floods the markets with products that promise big and at best do little — except end up as plastic and chemical waste. It just doesn't make any sense as soon as you look at the bigger picture, and as soon as you develop something like respect and care for humans. Free trade is a farce that doesn't deliver.' 'Then what's the alternative?' Seth (business liaison) straightened: 'Our business models. dot. produces only what customers order. Breathe adjusts any medication to the precise needs of the patient. Soap Opera examines your skin before it mixes what you need. And soap opera offers frequent tests plus refills. We even have a body bar now, a personalised arrangement of different containers each with a cream, shampoo, powder or whatever else your skin needs. And the body bar can be refilled in one go after a year or two. You never have to waste time on shopping or searching again, no plastic is in use, no horrendous transport costs. And there is toys around the world, an explosion of rediscovering toys from around the world, the resurrection of various toy-making crafts, and a company which also only produces what has been ordered, at local workshops around the world, where kids and adults can also go to invent and build their own toys. Or highFLY, our tech company, which takes tech to another level by offering modular systems for phones and computers. It's entirely up to the customer what is part of their phone or computer, and which apps are installed, from super simple to very complex. Everything is possible and nothing is produced on the off-chance that someone will buy it. Nothing is set up with millions of options and functions which only annoy the

customer.’ John nodded. ‘Much of the business world have become obsessed with numbers, especially those for productivity, growth, profit, and they lost sight of what is actually needed, what products are actually for.’ Alice nodded. ‘If you look at our economies, you could wonder whether today’s sole purpose for products is to make money.’ ‘Likely,’ a guest at the table remarked. ‘I’ve never looked at it that way. It makes me shudder. All this effort just to have a higher profit with no concern whether a product is actually needed.’ When Alice, Seth and John had a moment to themselves while waiting for their teas at the bar, Alice remarked: ‘It’s great to see you two together again. I remember, back at Tom’s you were this business double act.’ Seth smiled. ‘Until Beatrice snatched John away.’ ‘She didn’t snatch me away, we mutually snatched,’ John returned with a smile. Alice and Seth chuckled. ‘But Alice is right,’ Seth added. ‘I can’t wait to live in our town and have you and Beatrice for dinner. Campaigning and building are all fine, but I miss my friends.’ (27) The next morning, Troy’s comic WHY AUTONOMY MATTERS (not just for our town experiment) made waves in the press and on social media. Meanwhile, in seven UK cities, hundreds of helpers began to prepare this evening’s cities-wide street-cooking events for the Longevity Campaign. And in the Front House Theatre, the kids hours began, a few minutes past ten. The Campaigns & Negotiations Team had invited sixty kids and their parents, all of whom actively supported the town project. The idea was to learn from the kids and find out what their questions and suggestions were. Davie (9 years, Jack’s son) and Kuruk (7 years, Isabel’s son) were there, too, and had brought kids from their schools. One of the saddest and probably truest suggestions by an eleven-year old was: ‘Make politicians honest so they don’t keep lying only because they are afraid.’ ‘But how?’ Robin (education)

asked. The kid shrugged, and Jacie (6 years, Chenoa's child) asked: 'Can't you make a potion or so?' A kid from Davie's school raised his hand. 'Maybe they don't understand that they are better off if they are honest.' Navarro (society) nodded. 'The benefits of honesty. Troy can your team come up with a story for that?' 'Sure. Maybe some of you kids can help me?' Another suggestion was no less practical: 'Send politicians to school so they learn what really counts and understand what needs to be done.' Around twelve o'clock, the kids and Campaigns & Negotiations Team had lunch in the courtyard of the Front House. Davie and Kuruk sat at one of the long tables, left and right of Alice, while Jack sat next to Davie, and Isabel next to Kuruk. The kids told Alice about their plans to further support the town project. 'We network with other schools,' Davie said. Kuruk nodded. 'We started with our schools which was easy because we are friends. And then we talked to the schools where Rose and Kyle went, and the teachers remembered them, and so we got a contact there, too.' Davie nodded. 'And soon we'll have connected all schools in London and beyond, and we discuss the town ideas and tell our parents to support our future by supporting our town. And the teachers, too. And the teachers have friends. And then Kuruk laughed and said to me "Davie, we're doing ripples. And soon all of the UK will be covered in ripples, and everyone will talk about the project and see how good it'll be for all of us.' After lunch, the team and the visitors discussed today's YOUR POWERS CAMPAIGN, digging deep into how one can feel safe when empowering others, and how to deal with the anxieties humans experience when they allow someone else to have control, too. The biggest take-away was that there is no need for a single person to have all the control. An interplay of people who each take responsibility, and with that part of the control, is much safer because:

‘More eyes see more, more heads have more ideas, more hands get more done.’ ‘But we have to really learn to see each other and to listen and to sort of make this a kind of dance, like it all comes together,’ an older child remarked, thoughtfully. Alice left the kids hours in the afternoon to be in time for her appointment with Queen Lusana. The queen had invited Alice to tea for an update, in accordance with the conditions of queen’s offer, and to discuss and potentially sign a deal for building materials. Emine was viewing the proposed contracts in a nearby room with three of the queen’s lawyers. ‘Three lawyers?’ Alice asked with a little chuckle. The queen smiled. ‘Your lawyer has a reputation, and no one wanted to face her on their own.’ Alice chuckled, and the queen suggested that they leave the legal details to the lawyers and enjoy the tea. They did, and Alice recounted some of the suggestions the children had brought up at the kids hours, like: ‘The queen could tell the MPs that they will all get a medal if they vote for the town.’ ‘Bribery? I guess you told them that you would not agree to such an idea.’ Alice chuckled and smiled lopsidedly. ‘I did. But the kids have agile minds and found the loophole. Their speaker explained: “It doesn’t have to be bribery. Saying thank you is not bribery. But when a queen says thank you that means a lot, and people might like it. It’s only real bribery if something bad happens if they don’t vote for the town.” The queen smiled. ‘I’m starting to think I should have a kids hour, too. They are clever.’ ‘And that makes me wonder when and why we lose our cleverness.’ ‘Your latest campaign THE BENEFITS OF EMPOWERMENT suggests that you have assembled a lot of clever people on your teams.’ ‘And they make me smile every day.’ ‘I admit that giving a stage, a voice, an audience to strangers no one has ever heard of, is an alien thought to me. It puzzles me. I fear I have always seen myself as a servant to my people while at the same

time assuming that they needed me to guide them gently, to be a point of reference to what is right, to rally them in the hour of need. What I saw today —’ The queen shook her head. ‘What I saw today rattles the foundations of my self-perception, my idea of who I am supposed to be. It tells me that those I call my people are stronger and wiser than I ever gave them credit or a stage for. I don’t know whether to thank you for that, or whether I should call off our agreement.’ Alice held the queen’s gaze but didn’t comment. There was nothing much she could say. Though, she had experienced something similar when she had watched some of the campaign’s opening clips on the drive to the palace. *Strangers who have something to say. Strangers who are strong. Strangers who care about the world. And no one knows who they are.* Alice leaned back and let her eyes wander to the window. *How much potential is out there we know nothing about? Can we really unearth all of it and make use of it, or will it be too many voices, chaos? No. No, if we give unearthing a chance, we might be able to turn it into a dance where we all benefit from each other. Just—* ‘You are a challenge, Alice Adler.’ Alice gave the queen a half-smile. ‘That’s good. I have wondered whether humans challenged each other too little, over the last centuries, and let too much just happen.’ ‘Hm.’ Later, the queen remarked on the NARRATIVES CAMPAIGN which had done a piece on the Myth of Royalty, and the queen asked: ‘Did you add that topic to reassure yourself that you are not suddenly siding with me?’ Alice smiled a little. ‘No. Our research team identified a number of narratives which have survived for a long time despite rather dismal records. The ideas of royalty, empires, wealth, power— all of these fall into that category and tend to be wrapped in fairy tales. Few seem to have asked what is lost and destroyed because of these narratives.’ Later, Emine and the other lawyers joined Alice

and the queen, and eventually all present agreed on the content of the contracts for building materials. At the door, Queen Lusana said to Alice: 'I have never bumped fists with anyone. I should like to try.' Outside of the palace, one of the mayor's people was already waiting for Alice. 'You're expected at the mayor's office.' Alice frowned. 'Why?' 'Your Longevity Team said twenty-three locations. By now, there are over three thousand spots across London where people cook in the streets.' 'Oh! Well, I'm actually a bit peckish.' 'The mayor of London is expecting you in his office.' Alice sighed. But when she slipped into the security car, she smiled cheekily. More than three thousand! The team had hoped that some people would pick up the idea and set up their own Let's Cook in the Streets, Neighbours! spot. But three thousand! *That's amazing.* The mayor of London was fuming and Alice countered impatiently: 'Don't you want ideas which address the problems your people struggle with?' 'Ideas? Street events are your solution to housing shortages, crime, discrimination, child poverty, costs of living crises, loneliness, immigration, a crumbling NHS?' 'Partly, yes! People need to come together. They need to find out what they want, collect ideas of how it could be done, and come to you to make it happen.' 'I can't just make things happen!' the mayor snapped. Alice straightened. 'On the streets, debating, dancing, cooking together, that's where people can bond again, where they can turn strangers into neighbours, where they can find out what it is the other and they themselves need. That's where they can learn to interact in a way they and the other like, and that's a basis for shaping society. Society is not shaped by the angry ramblings of a few people, or the scheming of a dubious elite. Society is the sum of every single human, and it will only be shaped into something alive if every single human is part of that. Our world is in an incredible mess. We are

seeing the consequences of centuries of failures by those who claim and claimed to be pillars of society.’ Alice shook her head. ‘Let people find each other, let them interact, let them tear down the walls, the walls which our way of building cities, our ideas of working, our concepts of families have erected. My team only set up twenty-three cooking spots. Your people, the people of London, set up more than two thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven cooking spots. Why? I don’t know. I like to think that we inspired them. But maybe all they needed was an idea which allowed them to do what they wanted to do anyway: come together, tear down the walls, bridge the divides.’ The mayor turned and walked back to his table. Annoyed Alice added: ‘Only good that the mayors of the other cities don’t call all the time.’ The mayor sat down, looking at Alice again. ‘Oh, they do. They call! Me!’ ‘Oh!’ ‘Ms Adler, you have to be careful! You’re upsetting people who very much dislike being upset. They dislike it so much that hardly anyone knows who they are. They are watching you. And they don’t like what they see. Good day, Ms Adler.’ On the way to the car, Alice cursed: ‘Damn! I couldn’t think of a retort. He got the upper hand, after all. Which is kind of OK. But. Damn! I should have thought of a retort!’ Jazz (head of Security) shrugged. ‘He’s not bluffing. But THE watches these people. We know who they are. You’re safe.’ Back at the Compound, Rohana told Alice that the millionaires boot camp team sent an SOS, some hours ago. Apparently, the group of eleven hundred and eleven participants was too big, and since the same amount of tickets was sold for all upcoming boot camps, they needed a solution. ‘Navarro volunteered to head a second camp, tomorrow. And Itzel, head of the True Power is in Creation Campaign, is busy finding a crew for the second camp.’ ‘Hm. How big were the previous two camps?’ Alice asked. ‘The first had only three people. They posted

about the camp, and by the evening all tickets were sold. Except for day two which had only thirty-three participants. The boot camp leaders said, thirty-three was a good group size.' 'Hm. Let's see how tomorrow goes. If the fifty-plus groups are still too big, then we'll have three boot camps. The more millionaires we can inspire to become creators instead of suckers the better.' 'I'm already typing a message for Itzel.' When Rohana looked up from her phone, she said: 'The boot camp is a big favourite with the press. And some the conspiracy theorists managed to trend with the hashtag: town project bankrupt.' 'What?' Alice said, chuckling. 'Yep. They made out that we initiated the millionaires boot camp because we need the money.' Alice laughed. 'And?' 'Dennie logged into the Hub Campaign Square for an online debate with those people. I've got it here. Listen.' Rohana started the recording and Alice heard Dennie say: 'Nope, our coffers are brimming. The millionaires boot camp is just a way to demonstrate how much is actually possible if you use your creator's imagination. A yacht, a sports car, a vineyard, a big house, that's all things you just buy, and then you have it, and that's it. There's nothing exciting or alive about it. But if you build something, if you use your imagination to shape the world, for example, by building a fleet of sailing ships so that fewer people fly, or by building a network of library gardens so that more people can enjoy reading, or by creating a town which focuses on film making, a haven for film makers, all of these things are alive and create ripple effects, continue to grow, they live on. A yacht will end up in a junkyard. A vineyard, if you're serious about it, will hardly ever extend its influence beyond an exclusive circle of people who like to get pissed. How original. A big house is just that. It doesn't do anything. But a town, a network, a fleet, they all grow, evolve, shape and empower.' (26) The next morning, Any, head of THE, called Alice. 'Tensions are

rising,' Any said to her. 'Nearly a hundred politicians are calling for you to be questioned publicly.' Alice frowned. 'And afterwards they want to burn me at the stake?' Any shrugged. 'This might be a reaction to the US's efforts to put pressure on the UK. The US want the UK to stop your project. And some UK politicians want to stone you publicly because you signed a building materials deal with their queen.' 'Will they stone me before they burn me, or burn me and then stone me so that it's easier to scatter my remains?' Any smiled a little. 'Keep that spark of humour, however dark. You'll need it.' 'Hm. Not making friends, am I?' Any grimaced. 'I have more bad news.' 'Hit me.' 'Some billionaires and their minions have been pouring fortunes into anti-town campaigns. We had our eyes on some of them, but they were very careful, using inconspicuous people to engineer the campaigns. Twenty-one minutes ago, someone leaked their plans. That's why I'm calling. Their first wave of attacks will be launched at half past nine.' 'Today? In thirty minutes?' 'Yes. Sorry about that. My team already sent everything we have to your teams.' 'Who are these people?' Any grimaced. 'Apparently everyone with an agenda your project seems to threaten. There are fossil fuel lobbyists, unionists, pharmaceutical people, fashion giants, your right wing populists, religious groups, and, as so often, some artists and even some scientists have joined the fray.' 'And they are all attacking today?' 'I think they will. See, the major campaign will use every possible channel for their attacks, and once that's underway, I think everyone else will jump on that train, too, including the press who love to be the echo-chamber of populists and controversies.' Alice frowned. 'What are these people saying?' Any grimaced again. 'OK. I'll read one comment to you. Just so you get a taste of it. It says here in the leaked script: "Despite the global overpopulation, we don't have enough people on this

planet to defend ourselves against every preposterous proclamation that crazy town project issues. And that's by design. They flood us with crazy ideas to confuse us. They want to shut us up. Sheer overload. But we fight back!"

'Hm.' Alice mumbled and Any added: 'You'll need a thick skin today, and probably for a good while. Best thing you can do: don't listen, don't read. My team will give you and your team everything you need to know for your counters. No need to wade through all the BS yourself.' Alice nodded and took a deeper breath. *Choose which fights to fight. Choose only to know what you need to know. Counter. Counter.* 'I need to speak with my team.' 'Yes!' Twenty-three minutes later, ads and articles against the town project were published online, broadcast on various TV channels, repeated in podcasts and spread on social media. More attacks followed in short order, and several attackers announced that they would keep going until the town project was unmasked as the evil scam it was, a scam which threatened the very survival of all societies and would bring poverty to all. Alice called for an emergency meeting, and the Campaigns & Negotiations Team asked the Media Team and the Alert Team to join them. Together, these three teams decided to add force to today's town campaigns and to react to accusations and fears with levelheaded responses and clarifications. Rohana and her team kept an overview of the attacks, prioritised which attacks should be countered first and suggested who might be best suited for which response. Meanwhile, the Media Team taped additional interviews with Alice, Jack (film), Rohana (coordination), Navarro (society), Heather (media), Skye (care), Dennie (security), Emine (law) and Robin (education). And Troy pushed his team to create more memes and comic snippets to counter the opposition's claims. Emine suggested lawsuits against several media outlets for fearmongering, populism and lies. 'Tempting,'

Alice said. 'But, and you are welcome to call me too optimistic, but for now I'd rather find ways to lure the press to our side than to put them off us completely.' Jack shook his head, and in a rare outburst, he said: 'The press get away with too much! We should demonstrate that Your Powers applies to us, too. And we should use the power we have to hold the press to account.' 'You're right, Jack,' Emine said. 'Unfortunately, so is Alice. Our project might just be crazy enough to flip some journalists.' In the middle of all this, Robin (society) called everyone together for the kick off of the PRESS PAUSE CAMPAIGN, a few minutes before noon, which opened with breathing and meditation offers popping up across London and in twelve other UK cities. 'Just for a few minutes,' Robin said, 'Let's take a break, too. It's going to be a bloody long day.' Some unexpectedly peaceful minutes later, more project team members, including members from the project businesses, from the Building Site Team and from the international teams found ways to counter the baseless attacks, many of which rode along the same lines, like: 'The town project will destroy our way of life.' 'The project will cause mass unemployment.' 'The town project is a cult.' 'No one will be able to fly any more.' 'This project forges chains and sells them as wings.' 'I like that one,' Alice said. 'It's a nice imagery. Troy, can you counter that?' Troy scratched his head, shook it, and suddenly a smile appeared on his face. 'I can. But I'll need Kahu for the story. I see a child lost in the jungle of a city with all the freedom to become someone who speculates and destroys whole landscapes for gain, another child with all the freedom to become a drug addict, another child with all the freedom to rape, another child with all the freedom to become a boss and produce rubbish, another child with all the freedom to be complicit in wars. And we end with: "This is the freedom you defend?" And then we do a second comic with kids who live

in our town, kids who have the freedom to test whichever profession takes their fancy, kids who don't have to worry about food because their parents earn enough and have spare time for their kids, kids who find their calling in a craft, in an art, in a science or in a service, and who have the best teachers because we take care of those who teach and make sure that they don't cause harm. And we end with: "This is the freedom we want to find." But this idea needs more substance and more subtleness, more depths. That's why I need Kahu.' 'Don't let me keep you,' Alice returned. Around this time, Adriana, the project's head of neurology, opened the second part of the PRESS PAUSE CAMPAIGN with a speech. 'Change starts in the mind,' Adriana said. 'It starts with the realisation that we are not okay, and that we all need to make the troubles of our societies and our planet our business. Change starts in the mind — because our minds allow us to recognise our situation and to develop ways which will make it possible for us and for our planet to heal. The trick will be to be the majority. Be the majority. There are excellent voices out there. But those are swallowed in the whirl of everything that happens in our lives and around us. What if we focused? What if all writers, thinkers, activists, scientists, explorers of our planet focused on creating the narratives, the stories, the visions we need to reshape our world? What if we came together? Not to speak with one voice but with all our many voices, each adding a piece to the puzzle, each with the goal to make a future for us and our planet happen. We don't need people with answers, judgements and divides on their minds. We need people with imagination, clarity, curiosity and courage, people who contribute their visions. We are the majority — as soon as we decide to become the majority. And as soon as we are the majority, everything is possible. PRESS PAUSE is our project's invitation to pause everything that

occupies our minds and focus, focus on what needs to be done so that we will all have a future. The PRESS PAUSE CAMPAIGN invites you to discover the power of thinking, the power of shaping our minds.’ Adriana’s speech was followed by animated discussions at all event spots, in all twelve cities, sometimes complemented with short meditations and breathing sessions. Meanwhile the attacks on the town project continued. Though, some attacks were so predictable by then that the town team occasionally managed to publish a counter before the actual attack. By six in the evening, some opponents’ indignation about the town project’s ideas, about the queen’s additional involvement, about seven days of conspicuous campaigns, and about the project team’s audacity of publicly preparing the Jellybridge Estate for the start of the building phase was intense, and some attackers got personal, targeting Alice as false prophet, Andy and Jack as traitors to their home country, and other team members by deliberately misquoting snippets from their speeches and statements. But by that time, there were also a lot more people who asked questions, and quite a few people who commented on the exchange of attacks and counterattacks. Some commentators decided to play referee and gave points for each attack and for each counterattack. Around seven, the town project was a bit behind the opposition, but only, as one referee pointed out, because they started later. Most attacks were baseless, but one rebuke got the team talking. A large group of restaurants attacked the Longevity Campaign because of the losses the Let’s Cook in the Streets, Neighbours! events had incurred. ‘It’s a thin line,’ Elio (head of the Longevity Campaign) remarked. ‘Feedback from participants at the cooking spots is super positive, and yet the income losses of the restaurants are real.’ John pursed his lips. ‘But only because we normalised eating out.’

Seth nodded thoughtfully. 'It's an argument I keep stumbling over. We defend businesses because they secure an income for a group of people. I sometimes think that we keep ourselves from evolving, from choosing better alternatives, because of our dependence on money.' Isabel (head of campaigns) nodded. 'So long as everything is about what income it can generate, we'll keep getting things wrong.' 'But how do we get out of that?' Elio (head of the Longevity Campaign) asked. John straightened in his seat. 'If our experiments in town suggest that cooking together, in the streets or in the open kitchens we talked about, is the best we can do for the community, then we will find a way to make it work.' Seth smiled. 'Have you had a cup of Navarro's TURN CAN'T into CAN potion?' John returned the smile. 'These words have become a permanent presence in my mind. And it helps. It helps to say: I'm not going to bother with I CAN'T. The only thing of interest is to find out how we CAN. We might not get an answer, but it's still a much more useful occupation for the mind.' At midnight the project team had caught up with the opponents' attacks count and received congratulations from several commentators for having won today's matches by an impressive margin with their counterattacks. When this was announced by ripples news, the Campaigns & Negotiations Team still sat together, and Isabel remarked: 'Well done us! Only, I doubt we can keep up this pace.' 'We don't have to,' Troy said. 'Tomorrow is our day off. I spoke to the Hub people, and they put the Hub Campaign Square on a break, too. And Noel added a button where people can choose to put all their Hub rooms on a break for the day.' (25) The next morning, the Campaigns & Negotiations Team focused on writing their upcoming speeches. After some hours, Skye (care) said. 'Isn't today supposed to be a pause day?' 'We pause to have time to think,' Navarro replied, 'and thinking is what we're

doing. You could say, the people on our project have been on pause for months.’ Several people chuckled and Dennie said: ‘I always thought pauses felt more refreshing.’ ‘Ah, my friend,’ Navarro returned. ‘You’re a little spoiled by good company. You must have forgotten how exhausting empty words and gestures are.’ ‘You win,’ Dennie returned with a smile. At eleven, the team were asked to turn on the radio. ‘Welcome to the late morning show on radio seven. I am your host Phoenix Dragonfly, and this is Dragonfly Time. There’s a fun lineup of guests this morning, and you might discover that they have something in common. My first guests are members of the notorious town project we keep hearing about, and who, yesterday, delivered an impressive fight against a barrage of bullshit which was hauled at them from all sorts of people who have started sweating and swearing at the thought that they finally might be held to account — not by our government, unfortunately — but by a group of people who set out to rethink, well, everything, and who want to build a town to test their ideas instead of simply lobbying for something that might or might not work. I have no idea whether we can truly reshape how we live on this planet and with each other, but I’ll take the mad explorers any day over pretentious, self-serving lobbyists. Anyway, enough talk from me. With me now are two talented musicians and composers. A really young guy from London and a slightly intimidating, impressive guy from Bucharest. It’s an honour to have them on the show today. Welcome Kyle and Bertok.’ ‘Who are they?’ Marita (economics) whispered. ‘My son,’ Jack whispered back, surprised. ‘Kyle is my son and Bertok is a member of our Romania Team.’ ‘So good to be here,’ Bertok said. ‘Thanks for having us, Phoenix. Much appreciated!’ ‘Well, you promised the world premiere of your new song. I couldn’t say no to that, could I?’ ‘That’s what we were counting on.’ ‘Tell me about the song.’

‘We wrote it to surprise and support the Campaigns & Negotiations Team,’ Kyle said. ‘Oh?’ ‘We didn’t get on the team,’ Bertok added. ‘So we had to find another way to help. Can I talk to the team directly?’ ‘Sure, sure. Go ahead.’ ‘Hi, everyone on the Campaigns & Negotiations Team,’ Bertok said. ‘We miss you! We send our love’ You’re doing a great job. And Alice, I love you! This song, this song is for you and for the town. You once said, you have music in your veins, but you can’t figure out how to translate it into an actual song. But I think your song is the town. And it will be fantastic. Kyle, you say something.’ There was a chuckle from Kyle, then he said: ‘Alice, I agree with Bertok. Though you’ll probably say that the town is created by everyone, and it is, but it is also your song. We used some of the material you, Bertok and I worked on last year, and we put together an album.’ ‘Yes, we did,’ Bertok said. ‘We’ll start a tour of the UK, today. A different club every night until the thirtieth of March because on the thirty-first, we’ll be in London and hope to play in Hyde Park.’ ‘Wow!’ the radio host, Phoenix Dragonfly, said. ‘That’s quite something. Your song is the town. Wow! That’s poetic. Let’s hear the song.’ The amazing thing about the song was that it unfolded, starting with a single guitar and growing into a rock/pop symphony of sounds, beats and melodies. It was fun, uplifting, and as far as most of the Campaigns & Negotiations Team were concerned, it was a hit, and a love song. Phoenix Dragonfly had more surprises in store. His next guests were Penelope, head of the Narratives Campaign, and a group of comedians who had started their UK tour for the town project last night and who dissected the world’s most beloved narratives: superman will save us, growth is the ticket, they are the enemy, competition is in our blood, all is lost, the truth is always right and a lot more. In the course of the next weeks, the comedians would cover eight locations a night between

them, and on the final day of March, they, too, planned to join the town project teams and to perform all day in the streets of London and in front of the House of Parliament for as long as it would take to win the case for the town. After another song by Bertok and Kyle, Phoenix Dragonfly asked, a grin audible in his voice: 'Have you guessed the theme of today's show? Let's see, maybe our next guests will give you another clue. With me now are Kim, the town project's landscape architect, Jason, the project's lead architect, Roger, the head of the project's Crafts Team, Daria and Noel, programmers for the project, Tilly, head of the project's Sports and Martial Arts Team. Yeah, they really have that team. And there is Megan, the head of the project's Agriculture Team, plus Rose, a member of the project's paper ripples news, and Davie, both children of our very own Jack Harris.' 'Hi, Dad!' Davie chipped in. 'Davie tells me that he's very active in his school for the town, but that's not why he's here, today. But before we get into this, there are some more people. And, yes, it's really crowded in here. Let me see. Ah, there is Seth, a business experts with a long list of responsibilities. And we have Beatrice, head of the Admin Team, and Leo, Alice Adler's personal assistant who acts as her eyes at the prospective building site. And over there is Bülent with two small children. Bülent is a writer and the husband of Emine Hamdi, the formidable lawyer of the Campaigns & Negotiations Team, we hear so much about. Speaking of spouses, we also have Nitis and his son Kuruk. 'Hi, mum!' Kuruk piped up. 'Husband and son of Isabel, the artistic director of the fun campaigns we've been enjoying over the last week. And we have Steven, a member of the Education Team. Wow! Welcome to you all. It's great to have you here. You told me, you don't want to talk about the town project. So what's this about? Who wants to make a start?' 'I will,' Noel said. 'Hi, there. I said we should have done a

video call. I'd love to see all your faces. We're all here to support you and to tell you, you're doing great. Keep at it. Andy and Alice, special vibes to you.' 'And from me,' Daria chipped in. 'I'm the oldest here. I go next,' Roger's deep voice announced. 'I hope you're hearing this, especially Constance, Jack, Troy, Alice and Navarro because I know you best. I was so angry when those bleeding bastards tried to shred you, yesterday, and so proud to see how you and all teams turned the tide. Keep going! We can do this! Who is next?' 'Me, Kuruk, Beatrice and Bülent,' Nitis said. 'This is for all of you, but in particular for our partners. Isabel, my love, I am so proud of you and your work. We miss you! But we wouldn't have it any other way.' 'Go get the town, mum,' Kuruk called, chuckling and added. 'I love you, mum.' 'John, I love you,' Beatrice said. 'We're really busy at Jellybridge to support you all. Alice, you're doing great. Don't let anyone get to you.' There was a noisy inhale, then Bülent said: 'Emine, you are my love and my pride. We miss you, but don't worry about us. Keep getting the bad guys like you always wanted.' 'This is Jason, Rose and Davie. You were all fantastic, yesterday. And, of course, Hayley, we're proud that you represent our team. Great work! And Jack, this here is your special support group.' 'I love you, Dad,' Rose said. 'I'm super proud of you.' 'I love you, too, Dad,' Davie said. 'We will get our town. I know it! And Alice, we love you, too. And all the others. You're really cool. Are you next?' 'I'm now,' Tilly said. 'This is a big hug and kisses for Skye. You rock, my friend! And a noisy high-five for you Alice because you don't like hugs and kisses. At least not from me.' Tilly chuckled and added: 'I'm the lucky one who sees you lot at the workouts, but I just wanted to say this in public: I studied self-defence most of my life, but what you lot delivered, yesterday, were masterclasses in non-violent combat. And also kudos to Jazz and her security team for keeping us all

safe. Kim, you're up.' 'Alice, whatever they throw at you, always remember that we have your back. And to the whole team, you're fantastic! Thank you, for doing this for all of us. Leo?' 'Erm, yes. Alice, Rohana, Andy, I'm incredibly proud of you all, and since yesterday, I just know that we can win this. Megan?' 'This is a big hug for Dana and more hugs for every single one of you -- except Alice and John, nudges to you both. Don't forget to breathe at times. But also don't slow down. You can win this! Steven?' 'This is for my dear friend and boss Robin. It's a privilege to know you and to be part of your Education Team. Your compassion and wisdom are amazing. And Alice, thank you for bringing us all together. Thank you that you never stopped fighting for us, for the town, and that you never gave up on humanity. I wish there was time to name every single one of the team, but we're over time already. You're all impressive! And we know that the future of the town is in the best possible hands. Seth?' 'I'll keep it short. This is for John, my best friend. I'm so proud, mate. And for Alice, you turned my world upside down and I love the view. Thank you for all you've given us. And for the team, look after each other. Keep going! Don't forget to breathe! You're doing great! We love you! Over and out.' 'Wow!' Phoenix Dragonfly exclaimed. 'That was quite something. The studio team here sends their support, too. Go get the bad guys. I love that. What we need now is a bit of a break to let everything sink in and give these wonderful people a chance to empty the studio again, and that means? Yes, you guessed it right: MUSIC! And guess who is performing another world premiere song?' When Bertok and Kyle hit the drums and guitar again, Navarro whispered: 'Sammy didn't come.' 'No one came for me either,' Dennie said. Alice put a hand on Dennie's shoulder. 'Ah, I wish I could say, I'd have gone to the show for both of you. But I think, I'd have stayed out of it like Sammie. It's so sweet and

uplifting, my eyes are wet, my nose snotty but—’ ‘Not your thing?’ ‘Nope. Though, maybe after today, I’d just do it, for the support. Eyes closed.’ ‘I couldn’t do it,’ John said, a tear shimmering in his eyes. ‘Too many people in a cramped space and too sentimental. But ...’ ‘Yeah, me too,’ Alice said. ‘My next guest is the beautiful Geraldine from Scotland. Thanks for joining me.’ ‘Thank you. It’s great to be here.’ ‘Geraldine is the head of the Your Powers Campaign, and you wanted to make an announcement, and then I get to ask you some questions?’ ‘Yes. I’d like to start with the announcement. Maybe we’ll get first reactions while we speak.’ ‘Good point. Go ahead then.’ ‘For all of you who haven’t heard, the town project got massively attacked, yesterday, by several campaigns which aimed at discrediting the town project and members of our Campaigns & Negotiations Team. My team published a list of companies and individuals who financed the attacks. And we ask you, the public, to use your powers and vote on the Hub Campaign Square whether or not you approve of this or that attack.’ ‘Wow! Do you really know who financed—?’ Alice didn’t hear the rest because she had to leave. Apparently, the mayor of London insisted on her presence, at once. On the drive to the mayor’s office, Any, the head of THE, told Alice that a group of Hub users had also reacted to the anti-town campaigns and had announced a spontaneous march for the town project. ‘When?’ ‘Tomorrow. In London. The opposition responded quickly and announced a counter march, taunting the campaign team with “This is what your day off looks like?”’ Alice smiled lopsidedly. ‘They have a point.’ When Alice entered the mayor’s office, he shot up and called angrily: ‘One day! I only had one day without having to see you!’ ‘You missed me?’ ‘I’m not having rallies on my streets! I am intrigued by your project, but you’re going too far.’ Alice twitched the corner of her mouth. ‘I don’t have

anything to do with the march. I first heard about it from your office. I only know what my team could find out in the meantime, and that is that the people involved met on our Hub's Campaign Square. We managed to reach one of them, before I got here, and this person told us that they don't want to involve us. They want to be their own voice. And they are not doing this for us exclusively but for a better future.' 'You have nothing to do with this?' 'Nope. This is organised by Hub users who want the town to happen.' 'You're giving me a headache!' Alice chuckled. 'I know that feeling.' 'How am I supposed to deal with those Hub users?' 'Isn't it the job of a mayor to find out what the people need and sometimes even what they want?' 'I should let it happen?' 'What do you have to lose?'