

Dàlia’s Christmas light

When winter comes to the Vall de Boí, the streets seem to be made of whiteness and silence. A girl named Dàlia lives there. She experiences the world in her own particular way. She is autistic and especially sensitive to loud noises and rapidly flashing lights. So when the village switches on its big Christmas tree, she usually prefers a quiet corner at home. There she plays with her wooden train and enjoys its steady “tap-tap”, a sound she finds soothing.

That evening, something unexpected happened: the tree would not light up. Nobody in the square could find the fault. Neighbours hurried about while the people responsible checked the connections, without success. When Dàlia’s parents told her, a little spark of interest lit up inside her. Puzzles had always fascinated her much more than noisy celebrations. She asked if she could go and help.

She arrived in the square wearing her noise-protecting headphones and holding Mum’s hand. She did not need to join the bustle; she preferred to watch quietly. She slowly walked around the tree, noticing the details, until she spotted a cable bent and trapped between two branches. She did not touch it. She pointed it out to the technician.

The technician checked the installation and carefully freed the cable. The tree lit up in a thousand colours! Warm light filled the square, and everyone clapped. Dàlia covered her ears a little, but a smile appeared on her face. The mayor came over to thank her. Her careful observation had been a great help.

Mum asked whether she would like to stay for a while. The music had been turned down, the lights glowed gently without flashing, and her quiet spot beside the stone bench was free. Dàlia said yes. She sat with her train and headphones, watching the tree from a comfortable distance.

That Christmas, Dàlia celebrated in her own way: without rushing, without too much noise and in a place where she felt at ease. The village learned that a different perspective can help solve a problem, and that adapting a celebration lets more people enjoy it at their own pace.