

The Adventures of Aila and Niilá



Chapter 3

GERMANY

As soon as they arrived in Germany they were expected from an elephant. The elephant was a friend of the magpie. The elephant said, "We are in Cologne." Aila and Niilá wanted to see more of the city of Cologne. They asked Várjjalit and the elephant to take them to the biggest sport stadium in town, the *Rheinenergiestadion*. On their way they got to know that at this place the city's football team *1. FC Köln* plays their home matches and that it seats over 50.000 people. The elephant and Várjjalit had to wait outside, since animals were not permitted to the stadium. Aila said, "This stadium is huge!" Afterwards they decided to have a look at the cathedral of Cologne. They admired this magnificent building. The elephant told them, "The cathedral of Cologne is a Roman Catholic church and about 157.38 m high. It is the Europe's second



highest church." Then they walked inside and admired the nice interior. After that Aila and Niilá took a walk to the river Rhine and enjoyed a river cruise. Later on they visited the zoo of Cologne and had a look at the various animals: monkeys, elephants, hippopotami, lions, tigers, birds and bears. Inspired by this attraction they watched the movie 'King of the Lion's Marathon', that lasted four hours. Aila and Niilá really liked Cologne and its sights and attractions. Then the elephant said goodbye to the children with the words, "You have been travelling already quite a long time. Now take the train to the city of Essen. At the train station you will find a restaurant where you are going to be expected by a rabbit that will show you the town. I wish you a safe trip! Goodbye and take

care!"

Being on their way they got really hungry and thirsty, therefore they went to the restaurant as soon as they arrived at the train station in Essen. They ordered a meal which tasted very delicious and then they met the rabbit. They made a tour through town and when it was evening the rabbit had a good idea, "You could spend the night in a room at the restaurant and tomorrow we will see what to do next." "This is a wonderful idea," answered Aila and Niilá and the two of them spent the night in a guest room. The next morning they had a breakfast of eggs and bacon. "This tastes very good, we



don't have it at home," Niila said. Later on they went to *Grugapark* and met ducks, goose, horses, flamingos, golden poison frogs and colourful parrots. Having discovered the park they walked onward to another cinema called *CinemaxX*. "Here in Essen you find the largest cinema of whole Germany," the rabbit explained to them. "Let's have a look inside and watch a movie." "But how do you want to manage to get inside?" Niilá asked. "Let's climb on

top of the roof," the rabbit answered, "there is a hatch and we can look inside." So it happened that they watched another movie with the title 'Dolphin Tale'.

Afterwards they went to a place called *Zeche Zollverein*. "It is used to be a mine of black coal and Europe's largest coking plant. They closed the production in 1993 because of financial reasons. After the production was closed down they changed the place to the *Zollverein UNESCO World Heritage*

Site. Here the visitors may achieve a good knowledge of the industrialisation that took place during the last centuries,” explained the rabbit. “This is very interesting to know,” Aila said. Then the three of them took the underground to a downtown shopping mall to do some shopping. It was their first time in an underground and they had lot of fun in the mall.

Their last stop was at a big aquarium called *Sealife* in the town of Oberhausen. There they admired various species of fish, sharks and all sorts of marine life. Then the rabbit told them, “From now on I can’t come with you anymore. My friend the turtle is going to show you the nice town of Hamburg.” They said goodbye to each other and Aila and Niilá said, “We had lots of fun here in Essen but now we have to travel on. Thank you and goodbye!”



They were already expected of the turtle. Right away they went to the harbour and did a harbour boat trip. Later on, they went to a restaurant since Aila and Niilá were really hungry. When they had finished their meal it was nearly dark outside and they went quickly to a performance of the musical “The Lion King”. Aila and Niilá were very excited. At the entrance there was a lady who checked the tickets. Aila and Niilá explained that they didn’t have any tickets because they had been on a long



trip. The woman hesitated at first but then she said, “O.K. I will make an exception for you. You can go inside and watch the performance free of charge.” So both of them went inside the musical theatre and enjoyed the show. Afterwards the turtle brought them to a hotel. They were really tired!

The next morning they went to a wildlife park in the south of Hamburg which is called “Wildpark Schwarze Berge”. The turtle said to Aila, Niilá and Várjjalit, “Let’s visit the wildlife park with all its animals. There are about 1000 of them. The biggest attractions are the pot-bellied pigs and the pets corner.” “I hope you liked Hamburg, unfortunately I can’t accompany you any longer but if you travel to Berlin you will meet my special friend the Berlin bear.”

Aila, Niilá and Várjjalit said goodbye to the turtle and were happy get to know Germany’s capital city.





As they arrived in Berlin the children and the reindeer were glad to meet turtle's friend. "Hello, I'm the Berlin bear and I will guide you through the wonderful city of Berlin. Let's go to the *Brandenburg Gate*, Berlin's most famous sight. On our way I will tell you about how come that a bear is on the Berlin flag. Sometime during the city's history there was a person called Albrecht the bear. People had the idea to use the animal of his name on the flag because it fits so well." After quite a long way they reached the Brandenburg Gate and they begged him to tell something about it.



"O.K., the Brandenburg Gate is about 26 metres high and the passage is 11 metres deep. The figure on the top is called *Quadriga* and represents a goddess of victory in a four-horse chariot. Since it was built from 1789 till 1791, it's over 200 years old." "Cool, this is very interesting. And the Brandenburg Gate is really already 200 years old? I didn't expect that because it looks so nice!" Aila exclaimed. "Let's take a tram and get some sweet things! Would you like to eat some *Berliner*?" "What? You eat the people?" "No of course not, I thought about the pastry!" the bear said. "Oh well, do you always have to scare us like this? I have already thought that it would be horrible if the citizens ate each other," responded Aila. "Sorry," answered the bear "I didn't want so scare you!" "In most of Germany's regions it is no problem to order a *Berliner* in a bakery. But in Berlin people call the pastry *Pfannkuchen*. We should go and get one right now." "We can't walk anymore!" the children both said in unison. "No problem," the bear said, "we will take a tram." And soon they ate delicious *Berliner*!





Strengthened with this little snack they walked on to see the Berlin television tower. It is situated in the middle of the city centre at a place called *Alexanderplatz*. As soon as they could see the tower the children asked with much interest about it. The bear explained to them, "At about 203 meter there is an observation storey. In the next story you find a coffee bar. It turns about its own axis once every thirty minutes. You may enjoy a very nice and far view over the city. The tower's height is 365 metres, it was built from 1965 till 1969. The main part till 250 metres is made of reinforced concrete then there follows a pylon with red and white stripes. They rebuilt the far end of it in 1997 and extended it with 3 metres." "Cool," Aila and Niilá said, "but we haven't heard anything yet about the Federal Chancellery! In addition to that we also would like to know since when Angela Merkel works there as a chancellor." So they took a

taxi and drove to the Federal Chancellery. Luckily they had a very nice driver who allowed Várjjalit in the taxi.

Aila and Niilá didn't have to ask. The bear started to tell them as soon as they arrived in front of the Federal Chancellery, "This is the main building, it is called *Leitungsgebäude*, which is about 36 metres high and has eight storeys. In the seventh floor there is the chancellor's office, in the eighth floor she has her official residence. In addition to that she owns her private flat in Berlin. The Federal Chancellery is situated right at the river Spree and continues on the opposite bank of the river. In the western direction you find the nice chancellor garden. Since you have to go on soon, we will go to the Reichstag and in case you have any more questions you just ask." But the children didn't have any further questions because of the detailed explanation of the bear.



After a short walk they arrived at the Reichstag building and the bear had again something to tell them about this sight. "The Reichstag is the domicile of the German Bundestag. This sounds maybe a little weird but is easy to explain. The building was erected between 1884 and 1894. Afterwards the *Reichstag* of the German empire held its meetings right there, with the German emperor Wilhelm. From 1995 till 1999 the building was reconstructed and modernized. Since April 19th 1999 the German Bundestag is convening for its meetings in this building, but for the building the original name is being kept." The bear had given them a lot of information about the city and with this experience they went back to the main station. There they went into a shop and bought some crackers for the long trip. Then they said farewell and thank you to the bear and meant, "You know very much about Berlin and it was a pleasure for us to have you as a guide through this wonderful city. But now we have to go! Goodbye!" Aila, Niilá und Várjjalit rode on and the bear shouted to them, "Just ride on South, there you will meet my friend the mountain goat, she will show you another exciting part of Germany, have fun!"



The Zugspitze

Aila, Niilá and Várjjalit tramped through Garmisch-Partenkirchen. When the three passed a cable railway they met Lotti the mountain goat she said, “I will show you the Zugspitze, Germany’s highest mountain.” Aila felt uncomfortable but Niilá encouraged her. On their way Lotti explained that the Zugspitze is 2062 metres high. After a walk of about one and a half hours the four of them found a place to rest. Revitalized they went on.



Then Lotti explained, “Joseph Naus was the first person to climb on the top of the mountain on 27.08.1820. Today you even find a hotel up there.” Finally, after six long hours of climbing the children and Lotti and Várjjalit reached the top. They were all very impressed of the amazing view, so they forgot about being exhausted from the long journey. “You can look as far as Munich from up here on a bright day as it is today,” meant Lotti, “isn’t that great?” After they really had enjoyed the view, they took the cable railway to get back down to the valley. Aila and Niilá passed a coach stand and one coach drove to Munich. They harnessed Várjjalit as well and so he became a coach reindeer. When they arrived in Munich Lotti was very hungry and wanted to eat something. Aila asked, “So do you know a real Bavarian dish?” Lotti answered, “Pretzel and German spaetzle dumplings with cheese. Let’s go and have some.” They went to a restaurant and ordered pretzel, spaetzle with cheese and some mineral water.





Following their meal they all went to the German Museum Munich. There they discovered a space traveller trainer. Niilá wanted to test it right away and even got an autograph of a real space traveller. "I'm really tired," Aila yawned. "In my parent's stable you find a nice warm bed of straw, there you can stay for the night," Lotti answered. The next morning Aila asked the goat, "Is there a coffee house nearby?" "Yes," said Lotti. They drank something in the coffee house to get ready for their journey. Aila drank lemonade, Niilá a cup of tea and Várjjalit and Lotti

drank a bowl with water. Lotti gave Aila and Niilá a complete hiking equipment and bid farewell, "Now you have everything you need for the long journey, but it is worthwhile the effort, you will meet my friend the deer and she will show you a nice little town with a great school." After say said goodbye to each other, they got on their way to Gerolstein.



There they met the deer right at a nice church. They said hello to each other and the deer said, "Hello, nice to meet you. I am here to show you the city of Gerolstein." "Yes, that sounds like a good idea," Aila and Niilá answered excited. "Lotti already made us very curious!" Firstly the deer showed them around in the Protestant church of town, which is called *Erlöserkirche*. A famous architect with the name Franz Schutzen built the church from 1907 till 1913. Then the deer told them, "Now I will accompany you to the primary school, there some of the children expect you. It was built in 1974. It has 16 classrooms, 3 rooms as a dining area, a kitchen, a big gym and even a library."



After that the animal brought them to the Dolomites of Gerolstein and explained to them, "These are the Dolomites. It is a very large mountain of rocks that have been formed during the last 400 billion years." The visitors were truly impressed and they did some more hiking in this nice nature until it was almost dark. They found a nice place to camp. During the night it was really cold but because of the good equipment it was no problem for them. The next morning they walked through another part of town until they reached a place called *Auberg*. The deer said to Aila and Niilá, "The legend says that the earth swallowed a giant and since then you can just see the fingers. Therefore the mountain looks like five fingers." They had a very nice view and they really enjoyed being up there. Afterwards the deer brought them to a Greek restaurant with the name Poseidon. There Várjjalit was already waiting. He had taken a tour through town with some other animals. Now their journey through Germany had come to an end. The deer brought them to a bus stop, bid them farewell and told them, "Take this remote bus, it goes right to Luxembourg. Bye bye!"