

## Chapter 6

- I am really happy to be back in Sweden. We have been away for a long time and I want to go home to Mum and Dad, said Aila.
- But now when we are here in Gothenburg we have to go to Liseberg, the amusement park, before we continue our journey back home, replied Niilá.
- But first we have to find a place where Várjjalet can graze. He is tired and very hungry.

The two children and the reindeer went on their way. After a while they found a beautiful park and here they left Várjjalet.

- Look over there, Aila! I recognize that building. Do you know what kind of a building it is?
- It looks like a church.
- Come on! Let's go inside, said Niilá.



The children walked up to the building, went inside and found out that it was a huge fish market. They walked around and looked at all the strange fish and seafood. There were also restaurants so they had a good meal because they were also hungry. Here they learnt that the building was called Feskekörka which means “fish church” because it looks like a church and they sell fish.

- Time to go!
- Look! They have got trams here. Let's go for a ride to Liseberg.



They arrived at Liseberg and went inside. The first thing they did was to go on the “Flume Ride”, a rollercoaster where they got really wet. Luckily it was nice weather and quite warm. After going on several rides they decided to go to a lottery booth.

- You can win bikes here. Let’s buy some lottery tickets, said Niilá.
- Yes, that is a good idea. It would be good for Várjjalet. He needs a rest from carrying us for so long.

They were very lucky and won two bikes, one green and one blue. Then they went to fetch Várjjalet and continue their journey.

On the way they met a cat that wanted to show them the way out of Gothenburg. This was good because Gothenburg is the second largest city in Sweden. At the outskirts of the city they said goodbye and thank you to the cat and began the bike ride back to Lapland.

- We have really seen some wonderful places and met such nice people and animals. Paris was really impressive with the Eiffel tower, museums, churches and many other things.
- And before France we were in Luxemburg. It is a mountainous country and it reminded me a little of home.
- And before Luxemburg we were in Germany, not far from Luxemburg.
- The first country we visited was the Netherlands. I always thought that the country was called Holland, but now I know that Holland is only a small part of the Netherlands. They have very good cheese there.
- And I liked the German hams and sausages and the French croissants and baguettes.

They continued to bicycle and talked about their experiences. After many days they saw a huge lake. It was Vänern, the biggest lake in Sweden.

- Hello children, said a wolf. I have come to take you to a very special place a little further north from here. And that is the house, where Selma Lagerlöf lived and wrote

many of her books. But first I must tell you something else. Vänern, the big lake you can see here, is more than twice the size of the country of Luxemburg.

- Wow, said both Aila and Niilá.

Várjjalit was not that impressed.

- But let's continue to Mårbacka, said the wolf.



It didn't take them many hours to reach Mårbacka which is now a museum. Here they were met by a guide who showed them around and talked about Selma and her life.

- In this house Selma was born in 1858 and died in 1940. She became a teacher and an important Swedish author. She was the first woman and the first Swede to receive the Nobel Prize for literature in 1909. Because of a problem with her hip she couldn't play around like the other children but she was a very clever child. She liked to read and decided at the age of seven that she would become an author. First she studied to become a teacher. The book about Nils Holgersson and his journey around Sweden became an international success. She didn't live here her whole life. She lived, studied and worked in many other places. You can visit one of these places, Falun, on your way back home.
- Thank you very much, said Niilá.
- You have taught us so much. I must say that we have made the same kind of journey as Nils Holgersson. He got to see Sweden but we got to see parts of Europe, said Aila.

They said goodbye and thank you to the guide and continued north. On their way they made a quick visit to Falun.



A few days later they reached Mora. This is the finish of the Vasa ski race. It is 90 km and begins in Sälen. It is a yearly ski race in commemoration of the Swedish king Gustav Vasa, who became king in 1523. He had to flee from the Danes and skied from Mora to Sälen. But he was summoned back to Sweden to fight the Danes out of the country. He ruled for many years.



They travelled for many weeks and saw many different places but mostly they went through pine forests. There are very few people in the northern part of Sweden. You can travel for many days without seeing another person.



- I long for Mum and Dad, said Aila.
- So do I, and I long for some traditional food like smoked reindeer meat or some fried char, said Niilá.

As they were getting closer to home they became very excited and wondered what their parents would say. They had run off without telling them. Perhaps they were angry.

- Look over there! I can see our home, cried Aila.
- I can see Dad and look, Mum is just coming outside.

They hurried home and of course their parents were happy to see their children. They hugged and kissed each other. The five dogs also came outside to greet the children and the reindeer. Várjjalit was happy to be home but also very tired. He went into his stall in the stable for a good night's sleep. Mum, Dad, Aila, Niilá and the dogs went inside the house and closed the door.