

## Chapter 1

### Wiesenthal – The Arrival

„Yipppiiieee!" shouted Klaus gleefully "no School today, coolio!" and he danced joyfully in the school's front court, throwing his cap in the air. His black hair blew in the summer wind.

It was a beautiful summer day. It was hot, so hot that all the children of Wiesenthal, a small village built on seven hills, did not have to go to school. In front of the entrance door of the school there was a sign that said: "Due to extreme heat, the school will be closed until further notice".

That had not happened in Wiesenthal for a long time, at least since Peter, Klaus and Monica attended school there. The three friends were delighted having some days off, just like a little vacation. They fell into each other's arms in exuberant joy. They had no idea of the adventure that awaited them. How could they.

"Yeah, no school today!" Peter also cheered happily on the playground when he, like Klaus and all the other children, had learned that school was closed due to the terrible heatwave hitting their region.

Peter, like his two best friends, Klaus and Monica, attended their last year in primary school in Wiesenthal, the most beautiful village in the country, they say. After most of the students had already started their way home, our friends gathered at the sports and playground behind the school building.

"What are we doing today in this heat?" asked Monica with a smile as she swung back and forth on the swing, her red hair blowing in the wind.

"We could go swimming in the pool at your house," Klaus said.

"Oh, yes, going swimming, that's a great idea," Peter agreed with him. Peter was the biggest of them all, and the smartest, at least that is what he thought.

"Hey, we could also hike to the pond in the forest and afterwards follow the shady forest path to the hill and have a picnic up there. Play Frisbee and gaze at the mountains from afar. Today we can see them," Monica suggested. Her parents had their own swimming pool built in the garden some years ago. But she wanted to do hiking rather than swimming in the pool and staying home.

"Swimming pool!" Peter and Klaus shouted in unison.

"I know what," Monica said, still swinging back and forth, "we'll do both. We will go swimming this morning, and picnicking on the hill in the afternoon," and

then she jumped off the swing and landed just steps away from Peter's feet and fell right into his arms.

"Hey, watch where you're going, you almost knocked me over" he replied to Monica and then they both tripped and fell on the lawn bursting out laughing.

"Yes, let's do both, that's a great idea!" Klaus delightedly called out to his laughing friends on the floor. He also hopped off the swing but did not land on his feet as elegantly as Monica. Instead, he stumbled and fell on his belly. After Monica and Peter helped Klaus back to his feet, they all laughed about his funny failed jump. "Come on, let's go guys," Monica smiled, and they all picked up their stuff and started their way home.

"But I still have to let my mother know that I'm coming to see you, so she won't worry," Peter said gleefully.

"Me too," Klaus shouted while saying goodbye to Monica and Peter, "see you in a bit, at your place Monica," and he was off.

Monica's father worked as an investment banker for a reputable and well-known bank, so her parents could afford a large swimming pool. Only, he was almost never at home, at least not during the day, and often, he came home late in the evening. However, fortunately, he arrived mostly always just in time to give Monica a good night kiss. And on weekends he was the best father in the world. Monica looked forward to the weekend because Dad was there all day. Monica's mother worked as a manager for an international company in the nearby city. Today, however, she had taken the day off because Karin, the nanny and housekeeper, was spending two vacation days with her parents.

"What are you already here, my little princess, it's not even noon?" and she pressed a big welcome kiss on her cheek.

"We're off school today because of the heat," Monica squealed overjoyed. "Peter and Klaus are also coming over for a swim, and this afternoon we want to go picnicking on the hill, can we? Please Mom," she begged, looking at her expectantly with her most loyal brown doe eyes.

"As if I could say no to that," her mother replied, and she squeezed Monica tightly in her arms.

"But then we still have to prepare everything for the picnic, what do you want?" she asked with a smile.

"Nutella Sandwiches, apple juice, chocolate, candies...." Monica licked her lips.

"Wait, wait, wait, not so fast. A few healthy things might be good too, no? ", her mother asked questioningly.

"Then how about I put something together for you, like fresh raspberries, apple juice, some sandwiches and some sausages to grill on the fire?" she asked Monica.

"And candy?" said Monica, beggingly pouting a little.

"And candy, if you really want it, and a blanket to sit on, and cups and plates and a paper bag for the trash. We do not want all the trash on the hill, you must promise me that," and she raised her index finger again, admonishingly but still smiling.

"Promised," and Monica hugged her mother, thankfully.

"Hey, I think those are your friends over there" and she pointed with her finger towards the garden, where Klaus and Peter could be seen turning with their new e-bikes into the driveway.

"Peter, Klaus, I'm coming," and Monica ran, no she almost flew, to her friends and led them to the garden to the swimming pool.

"Whoever gets into the pool first is the winner," Peter teased and before anybody could say something or react in time, he jumped into the refreshing water with his clothes on.

It was a great morning. Monica, Peter and Klaus played water polo, competed in swimming and practiced jumping into the pool, while Monica's mother served lunch outside at the table by the seating area. She watched the children. Adoring how much energy and fun they always had inventing new games and thought back a bit wistfully to her own childhood.

After our friends had finished packing everything for the picnic into two small backpacks, they all ate lunch together. They had spaghetti with tomato sauce and wiener sausages with ketchup and mayo.

"Yummy, yummy, swimming makes me very hungry," said Peter, who had already cleared his plate for the third time. And after fresh passion fruit juice and a vanilla yogurt for dessert, everyone was more than full, they were stuffed.

"I don't think I can eat any more at the picnic, I'm so full", and Klaus touched his bloated belly with his right hand. Everyone found this so funny that Monica and Peter also stretched out their bellies firmly and inflated them.

"Mine is bigger than yours," snapped Peter.

"No, my belly is the biggest" Monica replies.

"Yes, you all have beautiful bellies," Her mother interrupted. "But now you must be on your way. Not that you will be late to get back home in time before it gets dark. Here are two backpacks with the picnic items and a blanket" and she handed the backpacks to the two boys.

"But that's unfair, Monica doesn't have to carry anything," Klaus complained as he accepted the backpack.

"Well, Monica is still carrying these letters and the package to the postal office, which is on your way. Here's money, treat yourself to an ice cream at the store," she winked at the children.

When they heard that they were all allowed to buy an ice cream, they were unstoppable. They hurried to the post office, posted the package and the letters in record time and then ran to the store to buy a "rocket water ice cream" for each one of them.

"Let's go to the forest pond, then," Peter announced in an almost incomprehensible language, while slurping his ice cream at the same time.

And so, our three friends set off for the forest lake. Once there, they saw the frogs and fish, played "tag" with the salamanders without hurting them, and picked some reeds. While marching up the pleasantly shaded forest path, they sang a song:

"We are the Champions; we are the champions of the world...."

When they reached the end of the forest path, a green hill covered only by grass opened up in front of them.

"We're here!" shouted Monica, running up the hill, "The first one to the top gets a glass of apple juice."

Peter and Klaus did not need to be told twice and they ran after Monica at a fast pace, but they could not catch up with her, no matter how hard they tried. Monica was not only very athletic, regularly winning the sporting events of her class, but she was also incredibly intelligent. Her favorite subject was mathematics. Well, all three of them had good grades and were among the best students in their class.

When they finally all reached the top of the hill, they noticed that they could not see the mountains because it was too hazy.

"Very unusual, actually" said Monica, "at this time of year you can normally see the mountains from here.

"I'm sure it's because of the Sahara sand dust," Peter replied with a proud chest, "It was on the news yesterday."

"Oh, that's too bad we can't see the mountains," Klaus said, a little disappointed. But the apple juice dispelled all displeasure and after everyone had drunk two glasses of the delicious homemade juice, they lay backwards on the picnic blanket and looked up at the sky.

"I see something you don't see, and it's white and flies" giggled Monica.

"That's easy! A cloud" Peter replied. "Now it's my turn. I see something you don't see, and it is " and then he squinted his eyes, rubbed them again and continued, "and it's pink, and it is getting bigger and.... "

"Yeah right, don't talk nonsense Peter," and Klaus gave him a little nudge with his elbow. Peter was known for his imagination and his hoax stories.

"No, no nonsense, up there, don't you see it?" and he pointed his index finger wildly toward the sky.

"No way....," Monica said quickly. "Quick, there's something coming at us, we have to hide" and they all rose in a flash and ran down the hill to the edge of the forest. There they stopped at a safe distance and focused their eyes on this huge pink floating device dropping from the sky.

"That must be a spaceship," Peter said. But Monica and Klaus did not hear him, instead they stared in disbelief and amazement at this ever-growing pink flying object, which looked like an oversized carrot, until it finally landed on the hill, humming softly.

"We have to call the police" Klaus whispered a bit scared and was about to run to get help in the village.

"No, stay here, the police won't believe us anyway if we tell them that a pink carrot spaceship has landed on the hill. Let's see what happens next," Monica said curiously.

"What if a monster comes out of there?" retorted Klaus.

"Stupid, monsters don't even exist!" hissed Peter.

"But neither do pink carrot spaceships," Klaus quavered.

"Now be quiet for once and see what is happening" whispered Monica still hiding behind a tree. Peter and Klaus did the same and looked spellbound up the hill.

Suddenly, a door opened, where there was none before. As if out of nowhere, this door appeared, sliding upwards, and then our three friends almost lost their breath. Slowly, a yellow giant figure stepped out of the pink carrot spaceship.

"A giant yellow gummy bear" Monica breathed in disbelief.

"I wonder if you can eat it?" asked Klaus quietly.

"Shut up, or he'll hear us," Peter hissed audibly, so that the giant gummy bear turned his head in their direction. At the same time, that metallic buzz of the door closing behind the yellow bear sounded again. And then, to everyone's amazement, the spaceship disappeared into thin air. It simply disappeared. It had disappeared from the face of the earth. The three friends could not believe their eyes. What was going on? Where was the spaceship?

Then they heard a click and a crackle, which slowly turned into a singing hum and suddenly they heard a voice:

"Don't be afraid, I come in peace." In a gentle voice it continued, "wait, I may be a little too big for you and he rubbed his belly and his head, and then he shrunk from a giant bear to a child-sized yellow teddy bear. "Come out, I can see you and hear you, don't be afraid, I won't hurt you." And he slowly marched down the hill.

"Come on, let's get out of here before he catches us!" warned Klaus and was about to run away when Monica boldly stepped out from behind the tree and said, "Good afternoon, Mr. Bear or whoever you are, welcome to Wiesenthal, my name is Monica!"

"Good day Monica, my name is Tony. Tony from Planet Ony, I am glad to make your acquaintance, and what are the names of your two friends?" he answered with a trusting smile.

"And what if he eats us or kidnaps us in his spaceship?" hissed Klaus.

"It's probably too late for that anyway, he's already seen us. Besides, this cuddly teddy does not look very hungry, if you ask me," Peter said and he also left his hiding place. "My name is Peter and that's our friend Klaus over there behind the bushes, come on out Klaus and show yourself, you wussy."

"Okay, okay, I'm coming," Klaus grumbled and brushed against a stinging nettle. "Ouch, stupid nettle, that hurts," Klaus cursed when he finally crawled out from under the bushes.

There he was, little Klaus, wearing a nettle on his head and pine needles all over his terrycloth T-shirt. He was holding his knee and limping in pain. He looked like a forest man.

Peter and Monica could no longer hold back and burst out laughing. "Klaus the forest man" they teased.

"Pleased to meet you Peter and Klaus, my name is Tony from the planet Ony, but you can call me Tony." And he approached the three friends with open arms.

Smiling, Monica slowly walked up to Tony and extended her hand in greeting, "Hi Tony, what are you doing here in Wiesenthal?"

"That's not nice laughing at Klaus," Tony said and he pointed his finger at Klaus. Suddenly the tip of his index finger lit up and a glittering light slowly streamed out of the finger and flew straight towards Klaus.

"No, please don't" he cried aloud, but it was too late. The light had already reached him and flooded his whole body until it disappeared inside him. To

everyone's amazement, Klaus stood up. The nettle on his head was gone, the pine needles as well, and the burning sensation on his legs had also disappeared.

"There, that should do it, or is it still burning Klaus?" laughed Tony.

"Uh, no, it's not burning anymore, thanks Tony. How did you do that?" asked Klaus now curious and no longer afraid but at ease and he looked Tony directly in the eyes.

"Don't mention it, there are some citizens on our planet who have the power of healing, but there are fewer of us with every year, unfortunately." He sighed a bit sadly "that's why I'm here, I'm looking for the healer named Elise, do you know her?"

"A healer named Elise, here in Wiesenthal, ne never heard of her, what does she look like?" replied Monica.

"Well, she is somewhat grayish, has a long body and a two- edged tongue, pointed teeth and piercing eyes," and with his finger he drew a bright fluorescent picture of a snake into thin air.

"A snake," all three answered at the same time.

"But there are no, or hardly any snakes here. You'll find some in the zoo in the city." Klaus said now noticeably confident, to everyone's astonishment. "But how do we get there?"

"We'll never make it; besides, we have to be home soon," Monica explained, "we promised my mother."

"But if we were to fly to the zoo in Tony's spaceship, we could make it," argued Peter.

Tony looked at the children sadly and mumbled softly, "Then I guess, I'll have to go on my own, because my spaceship won't be back for hours, and I don't have any fruit with me to make us "fly" either. Or do you have fruit on your planet?"

"Our picnic," and Monica dashed off and ran up the hill to get the backpack with the raspberries. Returning completely out of breath, she opened the backpack and took out the jar of raspberries. "Does this work?"

"Wow and hello, where did you get those Raspbies? With them, we can all fly, and he took a raspberry and rubbed it gently in his hands. Then he closed them and when he opened them again, there was luminous dust in his palms. "There, we call this stardust. With this, we can fly," and he sprinkled a little of the stardust on the heads of each of the children and himself. "So now move your arms, like a bird and you will see, you can fly."

And indeed, Monica, Peter and Klaus, began to wiggle their arms and one by one slowly rose from the ground, higher and higher, until they were all floating together above the trees of the forest.

"That's not possible. Wow, that's awesome Dudes," Peter shouted aloud, "I can flyyyyy". And then he began to flap his arms vigorously and flew faster and faster up into the air. "But how do I get back down now?" he shouted to the other three.

"Just a minute, wait here," and Tony flew like a rocket toward Peter, catching up to him just before he dove into a cloud. "Phew, that was close, you almost flew away from us" he grinned at Peter.

After Tony had given everyone extremely helpful flying instructions and hints, Peter managed to land like a feather on a treetop. They all flew up the hill. "From here we can see the city of the lion zoo, and that's where we have to go" Monica explained bossily.

"Let me quickly see if Elise is really there" and Tony curled his hand into a tube and looked through it, as if through a telescope. Sure enough, after a brief instant, he tells the children that there are obviously several "Elises" in the zoo and they should leave at once.

"What fun," Klaus squealed with delight as he lifted off the ground again.

"Don't forget the raspberries for the snakes, otherwise we have to carry them" Peter called aloud to Monica and the others.

Monica quickly flew to the raspberry can and grabbed it without touching the ground: "I've got it! Yippiiiiiee is that cool" and she rose again into the air to meet Tony and Klaus.

"Wait for me!" demanded Peter. All of them flew together over the land of Wiesenthal.

"Look" said Monica, "isn't that my house down there?"

"Yes indeed. You can see the swimming pool and your mother in the garden" Klaus replied "come we fly down to her quickly".

Now Tony interrupted: "No, no, no, we can't do that, besides, no one can see or hear us anyway when we're sprinkled with stardust. Let's hurry" and he grabbed Monica and Klaus by the hand and flew towards the lion zoo. Peter was already gone.

"Oh, no, what's Peter doing there? Look where he is flying, Tony," and Monica pointed her finger down towards her mother's house. Peter flew as fast as an arrow towards the house, then over the roof, around the garage, and finally made a short turn with a somersault and swept over the water of the swimming pool, just past Monica's cat Nala.



The surprised cat made a hump and jumped into the air, as if she wanted to catch something, and finally and fortunately landed on the air mattress in the swimming pool. Monica's mother had not noticed Peter, but when she saw the cat on the air mattress in the swimming pool, she was amazed: "But what funny things you do Nala." And she fetched the pool pole to bring the air mattress back to the edge of the pool.

Nala quickly rushed to the "shore," shook herself, and ran away in the direction of the garage. There she hid under the car with a terribly loud "meow".

"Ha, ha, did you see that? Wow!" Peter grinned mischievously all over his face.

"You're out of your mind," Monica said. "Nala could have been killed."

"But she didn't! I guess your mother will tell us a funny story tonight!" and he was beaming all over his face as he did another loop, whooping gleefully. "Woooooohhhhhooooo!" Admittedly, Peter was the best aerialist of the three.

"So now show me the way to the zoo. You must tell me in which direction we should fly now." said Tony a bit lost.

"That way" Monica replied, moving like a bee in the air, suddenly and abruptly accelerating.

"Yoo-hoo," Klaus and Peter now squealed as well and followed Monica in the direction of the zoo.

## The Zoo

It did not even take them two minutes to get to the zoo, which was now visible below their feet. "And where do we have to go now? Where is the terrarium?" asked Monica.

"Wait here. I'll be right back" Klaus called and flew down to the zoo entrance as fast as an arrow, just past a birch tree, which wobbled its tops due to his acceleration, as if a breeze had whirled the branches. But there is no wind. Still, no one seemed to notice, apart from a little girl who was licking a popsicle. She looked up and noticed how the leaves of the trees moved in the breeze.

"Look mom, the wind!" she said in a state of amazement.

"There is no wind honey" replied his mother.

"Yes, there is, take a good look." And the child pointed to the tree again. But just at that moment, when her mother looked up, Klaus had already landed unnoticed in the middle of a group of visitors in front of the cash register.

Now, without touching anyone, he had to make his way to the cash register, which he amazingly managed to do without too much effort. He quickly picked up two zoo brochures with an integrated situation map and then slowly and silently floated back into the air to reappear a fleeting time later before Tony, Monica and Peter. "Here, some plans of the zoo. "

"Al right, here comes Klaus. Well done. You would make a good air force pilot officer on Ony," Tony congratulated him as he took a plan from Klaus.

"There's the terrarium up ahead, about 200 yards away, right next to the penguin garden," and Peter showed the direction with his index finger.

"Let's go then" Monica rejoiced and slowly they all floated towards the terrarium.

"We have to be careful not to touch anyone or they notice us" warned Tony.

"We'll never be able to do that without being seen" sighed Klaus.

"I have an idea," whispered Peter, who was now already situated in front of the entrance to the terrarium. "If we make ourselves visible again, we can get into the terrarium completely unnoticed and look for Elise."

"That's an exceptionally good idea. Make me small so that you can take me along in Klaus' shirt breast pocket. But do not forget the raspberries, or we won't get to the spaceship in time! Time is running out!", Tony reminded.

Tony removed the raspberry star dust from everyone's hair and at the same moment Monica, Klaus and Peter appeared one after the other next to the restrooms in front of the entrance to the terrarium.

"Come on, get in, quickly, Tony" and Klaus grabbed Tony with his right hand, who was now the size of a small stuffed Teddy bear. He fit perfectly in the breast pocket of Klaus' shirt. Tony could even stick his head out of the pocket.

"There we go. To the snakes!" Monica was excited and ran off.

Peter and Klaus followed her wordlessly, while Tony watched the surroundings with his eyes. Suddenly he said, "Stop, there she is."

Klaus beckoned Monica and Peter to him with his right hand. "You found Elise?" asked Peter?

"There, look closely" whispered Tony. Klaus and Monica, however, tried in vain to spot a snake through the glass in the seemingly empty terrarium.

"There she is," and Peter nudged Klaus lightly in the side with his elbow.

"Where, there?" Klaus was puzzled, rubbing his eyes with both hands, trying to see better.

"Well, there, can't you see them"? and he pointed to a certain spot in the glass box.

"You have incredibly good eyes, Peter" replied Tony "Peter is right, Elise is there, just above the sand, you can hardly see her, as she is not moving". And then he whistled a soft low note and then another and another. Suddenly the sand moved, and a melodious barely audible whistle broke the silence, where before there was nothing.

"Hiss, hiss! Is that you Tony? Hiss" and she noticeably moved and then changed her body from sandy white to pink with blue shiny eyes and a red tongue, in front of the children.

"Yes, I finally found you, my Elise" Tony had tears in his eyes, which did seem a bit strange for a "stuffed animal".

In the meantime, a girl had joined Monica, Peter and Klaus and they were now all looking with amazement at this beautiful pink snake with the glittering blue eyes and the red tongue.

"Mom, Dad, come here" suddenly the small girl called "there is a beautiful pink snake here".

"We have to hurry" Tony whispered to Klaus.

"What are we supposed to do, we can't very well break the window" Klaus replied, perplexed, shrugging his shoulders.

"No need for that either, I'll take care of it." Laughed Tony and he whistled again a soft melody. To everyone's surprise, his whistling turned into an intelligible melody with words. "Elise, come here, the time has come, I am here

to free you and to take you back home to our planet Ony. Come on over, Peter to your right will pocket you." and his fingertip sent a small glistening white light to the lower right edge of the terrarium glass.

"But how is that supposed to work?" Peter was about to say, when he saw Elise wiggle through the white light channel through the glass at lightning speed and slip right into his pocket. It was not two seconds before Elise landed out of the terrarium and into Peter's pocket. "Wow," Peter exhaled as the light from Tony's fingertip abruptly went out.

"There, there she is, the pink snake" the child now cried, with her parents in tow.

"I don't see anything, do you?" and the mother looked questioningly at Monica.

"We don't see anything either" and Monica shrugged her shoulders.

"There's nothing pumpkin" the mother said gently to her little daughter. "Come on, there are really big snakes up ahead" and she pulled her disappointed daughter from the now empty glass box towards the Anaconda enclosure. The girl's eyes and Tony's crossed for a moment and suddenly the child's eyes lit up brightly for a moment, before she followed her mother to the next "enclosure" with a beaming smile.

"What did you do to her?" asked Peter.

"I just made sure the little girl doesn't remember Elise and putting a smile on her face," he grinned sheepishly and continued, "we have to go, time is running out, my planet needs mine and Elise's help."

"Go that way," Peter urged his friends in an almost commanding tone. "Quick, the ticket inspectors are coming!" Klaus and Monica followed Peter, who now opened the door to the tiger cage and entered.

"Hey, you there, wait a minute." Shouted one of the inspectors, holding the door open with his right hand. "Here, you left your backpack." And he stuck it out in front of Klaus.

Ow, thank you very much, my mother wouldn't have been very happy if I came back without it." He said with a red face.

"Better watch out next time" said the zoo inspector and handed him the backpack. Just at that moment, and to the zookeeper's astonishment, Elise of all people fell out of the backpack. But before the keeper could say anything else, Klaus, Peter, Monica and Elise, as well as the backpack, disappeared before the eyes of the stunned inspector, who now spun around several times looking for the children and the snake. "I guess I need a break," he muttered to himself and marched off in the direction of the cafeteria.

"Whew, that was a close one Tony" breathed Klaus heavily as they all floated slowly and invisibly into the air, leaving the zoo behind them.

"Yes, let's hurry, time is of the essence, if I haven't said so already," and Tony set course for Wiesenthal where his spaceship was. Elise had snaked around Tony's neck and resembled a necklace with a large pink gemstone.

They flew over a big lake, forests and fields, villages and hills until they finally landed gently and safely on the hill next to the invisible spaceship. Now that everyone was made visible again by Tony, he took Elise from his neck and placed her at his feet. Elise turned back into a pink snake with glittering blue eyes and hoisted: "Tony, finally. I have been waiting for you for decades, I cannot wait to go home.

"Thanks also to you my liberators," she tongued in front of Peter Monica and Klaus.

"You're welcome, anytime Elise!" they all shouted together.

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart" and again light appeared on Tony's index fingertip. The light streamed towards the invisible spaceship and slowly the pink rocket reappeared out of nowhere in front of everyone's eyes.

Published under a pseudonym: Kandoo Lake

### **Impressum**

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