

## TAKE THE TRAIN: SECOND PART OF THE STORY

While they are on the ferry to Bari, a man recognizes the two children: he is one of their parents' friends! His name is Reza. He left Damasco before the beginning of the war, searching for a job. In Italy he works as a barman in Rome. He has just been to Greece to visit his girlfriend Joana. Now he is going back to Italy.



Reza invites the children to spend some time with him in Rome. As soon as they disembark in Bari, they go to the station to take the train to Rome. During the journey Reza sees the caterpillar coming out from Dalia's rucksack. Reza is overwhelmed by emotions: the man tells Dalia that he gave her the caterpillar as a present when she was a baby. Then Reza thinks about the children's parents. Lulled by the train, Ahmet and Dalia fall asleep dreaming their parents.

When they arrive at Rome railway station, the children are struck by the noise and the crowd. Reza takes them to eat a pizza and then to his place. The day after they walk around visiting the historic city

centre: they are amazed by the monuments grandeur: the Coliseum, The Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps. Finally they go to Villa Borghese gardens where they play and have an ice cream.



A Few days later Reza thinks about his friend Souad, a children's distant cousin and calls her on the phone.....Souad tells him that she is in Italy, in Santa Margherita Ligure, a small town on the Ligurian Riviera where she works as a villa janitor. The children talk with her on the phone and she reassures them that Italy is a safe place to live. She says that they can stay with her but only for a few days because the villa owners will arrive soon and from that moment on she will be very busy. The children accept joyfully. Souad takes a day off to pick Ahmet and Dalia up at the train station.

The children leave Rome by train: Reza buys the tickets and with the money left they have an ice cream at the restaurant car. When they arrive in Santa Margherita, they are impressed by the calmness of the

place; they visit the villa and they are amazed by the fact that from the window of their room, they can see the sea. For a moment they feel to be back in Syria! There is also a swimming pool where the following day they will splash happily all the day long.



During the night, the children are waken up by strange noises which scare them. They decide to lay side by side and, to give each other courage, keeping their caterpillar, their “adventure buddy”, between them. In the morning they discover that the noises were produced by a broken tent flapping in the wind. Moreover, some bats were flying back and forth from the attic above.

After having breakfast with juice, bread and jam, Ahmet and Dalia take a walk around Santa Margherita. They stop in front of a building where a lot of children play in the courtyard: it’s the Scarsella school! This make them realize how much they miss their school. It was destroyed by bombs.....Who knows when they can go back there..... What a wonderful time!



They also have a trip by boat with their cousin and admire the Ligurian Riviera.

After a few days, with mix feeling, Ahmet and Dalia must leave again. Where will they go? They remember that, some years ago, Dalia's uncle, Abkader, moved to Slovakia to search for a job and finally he got a position as a supermarket cashier. In the rucksack, they find an old address and quickly they send there a telegram. Abkader answers promptly sending them money for the train tickets to Bratislava and a picture of him so they will recognize him at their arrival.