

englisch

# Chatterbox's Summer Holiday Diary



NETZWERK  
IN FAMILIE

DORTMUND  
ÜBERRASCHT.  
DIE

Stadt Dortmund  
Jugendamt





Chatterbox's

Summer Holiday Diary

# Foreword

Dear children,

The INFamilie Network continues to grow and develop, just as you and Chatterbox do. Chatterbox – but, whatever you do, don't call him that, he doesn't like it – is already at school and has learned to read and write. Inspired by his absolute favourite book, Chatterbox began to keep a diary last summer.

As patron of the INFamilie Network, it is my pleasure to deliver to you today – with his express permission, of course – his summer holiday diary. I hope you have lots of fun and enjoyment reading this, and hope perhaps I will be able to look forward to read stories that you've written yourself sometime.

By the way, have you noticed it yet? You're holding a "two-in-one" book, known as a "flip-over" book. When you turn it around, you can read it in a different language – Arabic, Turkish, Spanish, English, French or Polish. Is there a language there that you can read?

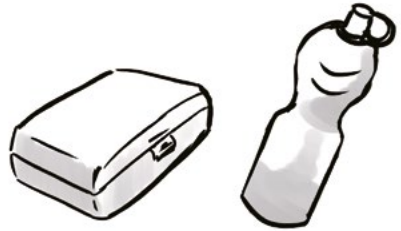


Birgit Jörder  
Mayor and Patron  
of the INFamilie Network

## 15 July

Holidays at last! I spent half of the first day just dozing around. Then I got straight to being bored. Out of sheer excitement about everything I didn't have to do in the holidays, I'd given no thought whatsoever to what I wanted to do.

Suddenly, Enis is stood therefore at the door, ringing the doorbell like mad, completely out of breath, thinking I was gone already. Gone?



Where? To the pools, of course, like everyone else. Yeah – I could have thought of that one. So I rushed off to get my swimming stuff together. As we were just heading off, mum stopped me, hoisting a lunch box and bottle of drink upon me. I actually had to go to the pools with my school stuff. Yeah, I know you get hungry after swimming, but you don't get a hankering for cheese sandwich and bell pepper slices. Thankfully Enis had been given some money, so we went into the shop first to buy a bag of crisps and a bottle of coke.

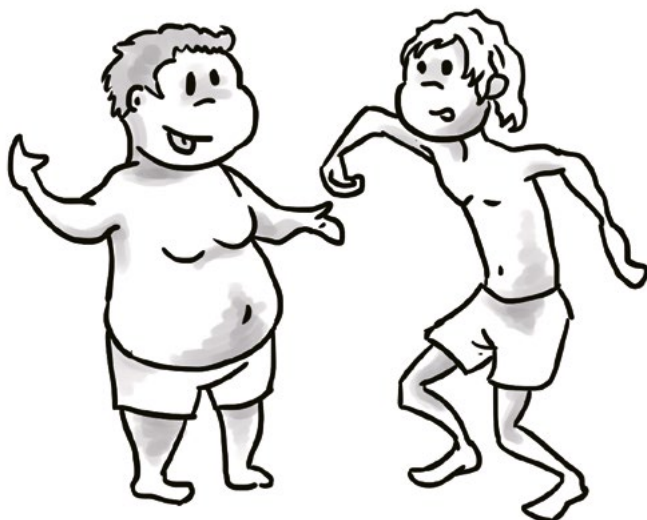
At the pools it was really full. You could barely see the grass for all the towels. Just as we were about to give up looking for the others, we almost ended up tripping over Leo and Mo drying off in the sun. They poked fun at us for being so late. They got there early enough to be able to pick the best spot to lay down.

Anyway, Enis got changed right away and jumped right into the pool with a cannonball. Wish I'd pulled my trunks on at home! I find it really awkward doing this on the field, and the men's changing room is a right nightmare.

I then stood there looking stupid for a while, watching Enis swim. Then I found Jaku and Louis. It looked like Jaku was teaching Louis to swim. Jaku was running back and forth in trunks and a t-shirt, giving Louis instructions like a real swimming teacher.

All that was missing was the coach's whistle. Louis paddled through the water, spluttering along the way, looking like he was struggling. Once he saw me, I guess he'd had enough. Louis then had a go at me, not to look at him so funny. I couldn't resist having a dig at that point, which I was actually sorry about, because in

a way it's really quite cool to admit that you don't know how to swim and to learn how to. But when the lanky beanpole made a point of saying how fat floats to the top, so I shouldn't have any problems swimming, that's what did it for me.



Then I really started taking the mick out of him. I pointed out that even my little sister was able to swim, and how he was a loser. That's where Jaku stepped in and told me to stop being so mean. Even Enis, who had swum in towards us, gave me an evil look. Great! All against one.



So I decided to get out of there, disappearing into the toilet booth to get my trunks on.

When I got back, Louis, Jaku and Enis were on the blanket with Leo and Mo. I wanted to do a really cool jump into the pool with a running start, until this old guy comes toward me and seriously says, "Oi, Chubby!" – yeah, he actually called me 'Chubby'

– "don't you even think about jumping in the pool! You'll end up splashing all the water out. I do still want to go swimming, you know."

Seriously?

Had he completely lost it? I couldn't believe that an adult could be that mean. If my friends hadn't been there, I think I would have cried there and then. But when it comes down to it, they're there for me. So they all jumped up and dove into the pool at the same time, which caused a right splash! Of course, he was absolutely soaked through and pretty mad. The boys just dove under and the old man had no-one left to whinge at. I had a huge grin on my face and, behind his back, did a cannonball into the



pool, something that I'm best at for a change. The guys cheered and then we had a little diving competition.



When we were laying on the blanket later, completely knackered, the pool was a bit emptier, so we were able to expand our campsite a little. So there we were, laying down, waiting for the sun to dry our trunks. I love laying on my back, just watching the big blue sky.

When Enis and I unpacked the coke and crisps, we became heroes – the others only had their lunch boxes with them, but we even finished those up. Yup, swimming definitely makes you hungry.

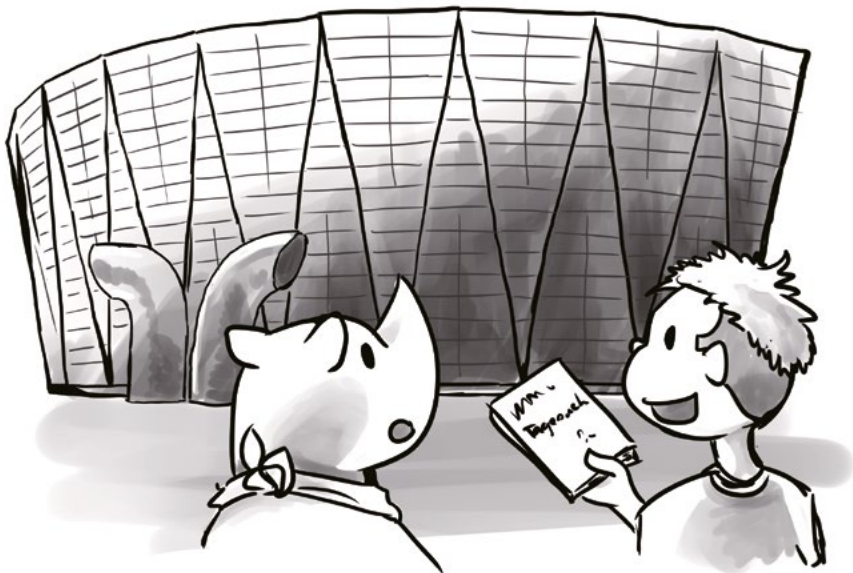
Later we met a few others from school, including some girls from our class.

Samira, the girl who sits next to me, wasn't there unfortunately. We all had a big water fight. It was really fun! Tomorrow we all want to meet up at the pool again.



## 22 July

We went to the pool every day last week. As far I was concerned we could have kept doing that all through the holidays, but since the big thunderstorm yesterday evening it's got a lot colder. Outside it's all grey and overcast today, regardless of which window I look out of. All grey. Even everything in me is grey. Well, my skin is grey anyway. The sun didn't change anything there. Not like Enis, Mo and Jaku, who got a helluva tan. And Louis at least got sunburn. But me, no, I'm greeeeey. Thankfully Enis called. No idea how long I'd been pushing down my horn on the living room window, blurting out "greeeeey".



He wanted to drag me over to the library!  
Lib-ra-ry! Really hard word to pronounce.  
Enis said I could just pronounce it "lie-ba-ry"  
instead.

Just because Enis goes to the lib-ra-ry, he  
didn't have to make himself out to be such a  
know-it-all.

Anyway, Enis wanted to borrow a book about  
guinea pigs, and his mum had books to take  
back. Enis didn't even have any guinea pigs.  
He told me that he wanted some, but was only  
allowed to have them  
when he'd found out  
exactly what it means to  
own them. So, now, he  
knows what guinea pigs  
eat, how to treat them  
and in particular how  
not to.



Being at the lib-ra-ry can't be as bad as being  
greeeeeee. We met at the Brunnenstrasse metro  
station and travelled to St. Reinold's Church. I'd  
already been there before.

Last winter we went to the Christmas market  
with our class to bake biscuits.

It wasn't far to walk from the tram stop to the library. Of course, I'd already seen it from outside, but never really thought about what a weird building it is – doesn't even look like a building. Not in the sense of a building with bricks and a roof in the way that my little sister would draw a house. It's made completely out of glass and looks more like a big bowl.

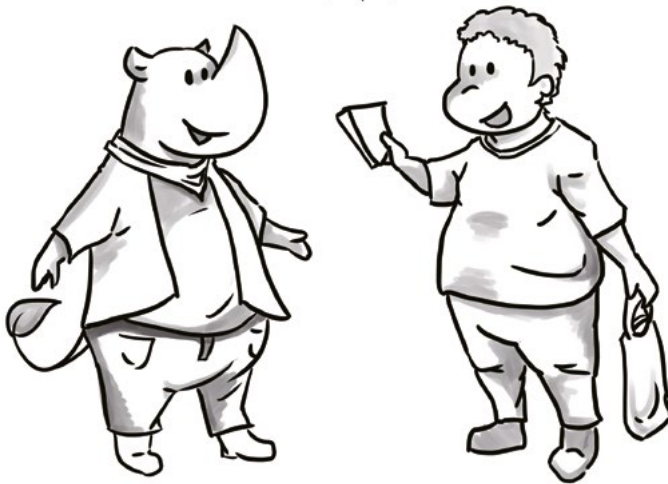
So in we go, into the bowl, through the revolving door. What a sight! This library is huge! Three floors with escalators and everything full of bookshelves. But it's not just books – you've also got games, music CDs, audiobooks, DVDs, magazines, even console games.

And I think there's even more. There are computers to use as well – they have a lot of computers there. And Jaku, who I was surprised to also meet there, told me that Louis, who takes trumpet lessons, even gets his sheet music there sometimes.



I didn't realise that all of my friends were bookworms. Enis said you didn't have to be. Jaku is really into mangas and there are loads of them

there, way more than in the school library.  
So I'm getting curious.



This is where my mum would have been asking "what's the small print?", by which she means, "what's the catch?" That's where Enis and Jaku jumped in at the same time, and I found out that it's free for kids to borrow books, games and so on if they have a library card. Only DVDs and console games cost a small fee. You can keep the things at home for a certain amount of time. You can even extend the loan, but if you bring them back late, break them or lose them, that can get really expensive. Good thing I'm so careful with my stuff. So they went to the main counter with me and we asked about a sign-up form.

I was told I needed to get my mum or dad to sign it and that I could also bring my mum or dad's ID card with me.

Probably a better idea to bring all of my mum with me. I want her to see this, and my little sister too! I bet they'd love this. The lady at the counter told me that there were books here in over a hundred languages. Maybe there's even one in mum's language here.

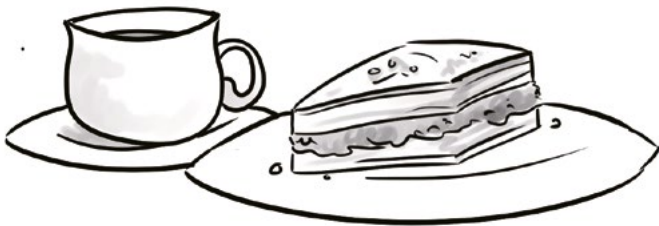
We then all went through the library on our own and, I have to say, I really liked it there. It smelt so nice and even the peace & quiet was nice. Not the kind of "psst, be quiet" kind of peace & quiet, but rather a concentrated, focused quiet.

And the comics section is AWESOME! And so many audiobooks! I was really sad that I didn't have a library card yet.

When we were just on our way out the revolving door, Enis' mum bumped into two old friends of hers. They didn't live near us so they really want to spend some time yapping. Enis' mum then offered to buy us a cup of tea and a pastry in a café over the way.

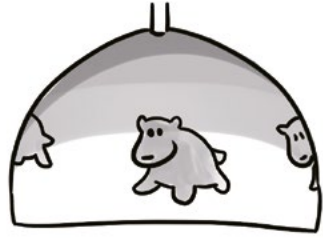


There were these little sweet Turkish things – baklava they were called, I think. I know them from Enis' birthdays. Everyone got to pick out three types, and they were really nice! So the day was quite nice after all. And not quite so greeeeey! Mum promised me that we'd all go to the lib-ra-ry together at some point. Heh-heh. She was a bit surprised at the difficult words that I knew.



# 25 July

When I get up early this morning – well, not that early – I realised right away there was nothing going on today. Nothing. Nada. Zero. Zilch. I'd liked to have slept in some more, but I couldn't. So I just stared at the ceiling for a while, but there's nothing there to see except the lamp. And that's where I noticed for the first time that I still have my children's lamp there with a little polar bear on it. Crikey! I'm really too old for that now. I definitely need a new, cool lamp! So then I thought that it might be a good time for breakfast, and so I rolled out of bed. Mum wasn't there, just a note from her on the kitchen table. That's when I remembered that she had a dentist's appointment and was going to meet a friend afterwards. Of course, she'd taken my little sister with her.



In the note, she'd written everything that I was allowed to eat: bread, cheese, yoghurt, apple, bananas and the rest of the potato salad. She even left a bag of crisps there for me! So I made a cheese sandwich and a cup of hot chocolate and ate a raspberry yoghurt. Then I went back to bed. But because I'd had enough of staring at the ceiling, I sat and pushed my pillow against my back. I thought about what I could do in bed except sleep, snooze and stare at the ceiling. Sucks that I can't have a smartphone. I bet over half of my class has one. But my parents are relentless when it comes to that. Enis is with his grandparents the entire week. If I had a phone, we could at least write.

Enis has had a phone for almost a year now.

Okay, so what about the new comics I borrowed a while ago (using my own library card) from the library?

So the options are: read, draw, listen to music, listen to audiobooks. Eating's out, because crumbs are scratchy (especially from crisps),



and if I make a mess on the bed, I'll not only get stick from my parents, it's disgusting anyway. I could watch TV in bed, but for that I'd need a TV in my bedroom. Which I'm not allowed to have either. No phone, no TV. Just because my parents grew up in the stone age, doesn't mean I have to.

But alright – before I got totally depressed, I got out of bed and fetched everything I might need. Just don't make too much of an effort. If I was going to have a lazy day, then I was going to make it really lazy!

So I put down some comics, the hilarious book that had Enis in absolute stitches, my favourite CDs, the old audiobooks, a drawing book and some pencils. Because I'd forgotten my eraser, I had to get up again – bugger!

And then I actually went and did all that! I was laughing my head off, listening to music, singing along loudly, listening to an audiobook and drawing aeroplanes. And eating a bit of potato salad now and again.



I was really surprised when I suddenly heard the sounds of keys in the door and voices down the hallway. Mum, Dad and my little sister all came in at the same time and were in a really good mood. Mum then made my absolute favourite food – pancakes with cheese and ketchup! I managed to eat six of them!

And Dad said that there'd be a surprise film after for the whole family. And we'd be watching it in our PJs! And whoever falls asleep gets carried to bed! Another day that was better than I thought it'd be.

And the rain had finally stopped.

# 5 August

My Nan and Grandad have an allotment here in the north of Dortmund. My Grandad is there almost every day, but I know he doesn't just work there – he also likes to lounge around there with a newspaper and a pipe. He sometimes likes to have an afternoon snooze on the old sofa in the allotment hut. My Nan is always there when there's fruit & veg to be picked.

Sometimes the whole family meets up there for a coffee or barbecue.

But this time, I was asked to help! Mum said the apples were ripe and needed to be used for something quickly, because they wouldn't keep. So Nan decided to make apple compote.



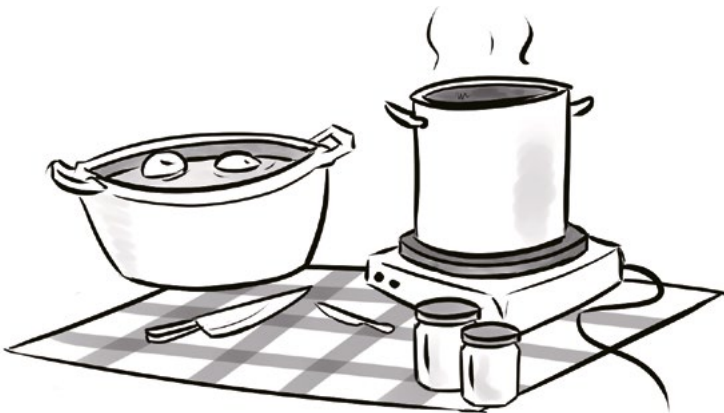
Us kids were expected to go and collect and pick the apples. There was no getting away from it – there was no reasoning with Mum, I had to go.



Sucks that my cousin Dina had to come with me. Dina's a year older than me and has been quite bitchy lately. Recently she made a point of ignoring me and just played with my little sister.

When we got to the allotment, my aunt and Dina had already been working for a while. Dina didn't make any comments – she just said "hi", casually waved and got back to her collecting. My aunt, on the other hand... "Hello, Chatterbox, sweetheart", she yelled out loud. Is she nuts? I've been telling her for years not to call me that any more.

Nan had already set everything up outside – a tub to wash the apples, a stove with a big saucepan, a kettle and loads of buckets, kitchen knives and jam jars. The smell of apple compote was in the air! And I knew that we'd be getting some too and that there'd soon be potato pancakes with apple compote. Dad will be thrilled! It's his absolute favourite food.





So Dina and I collected apples more or less in complete silence and my little sister went all out. She was darting back and forth, working really hard, but she was talking and laughing the entire time. It was a bit annoying, but I was grateful for it, because it meant I didn't have to say anything.

Eventually, we finished collecting the apples from the floor and picking them from the tree. But, of course, our apple compote cook still had plenty to do.

Just in case, I'd packed my book in my backpack and looked for a quiet, shady spot to the side of the allotment hut.

I thought, if they didn't see me, they might leave me alone.

I got comfy under a cherry tree.

To my surprise, Dina had the same idea, sitting close by with her back against the hut.

"What'ya reading?" she asked, more out of politeness than curiosity.

I held up my book so that she could see the cover. She flashed a grin – almost just like she used to when we played together – dug inside



her bag and pulled out the same book, no less! Of course, I had to smile as well. She was only a few pages ahead of me.

So we sat in peace for a while opposite one another until my little sister peeked around the corner. "Come on!" she called. "Apple compote is ready and we've got waffles!" Nan's famous waffles!



Of course, that got us running back to the others right away.

Of course, they left us some and we all ate a huge mountain of waffles together.

# 12 August

Just yesterday, Enis was telling me the holidays were boring. Something had to happen, something unexpected, something exciting – a bit of action. Well, now he's got his action! I bet now he wishes he was bored again, because then he'd still have his bike.



They got broken into last night. Not the flat. Enis said that would have been even scarier, shuddering at the thought of a flashlight-wielding masked burglar, sneaking

into the flat at night with a bag over his shoulder while everyone slept peacefully.

Thankfully it was just the basement. But that was bad enough!

When his Mum went down to the basement this morning, she saw right away that the padlock had been broken. And not just our padlock, but every padlock to the rooms in the basement! Enis' Mum then raised the alarm and rang on everybody's doorbells.

The neighbours then went running down to the basement to see what was missing: Enis' bike, which was still pretty new, some top-quality tools, a big suitcase and a sports bag.

The burglar had even nicked some clothes from the washing line from the laundry room and some food. "All my supplies!" complained the neighbour who lives down below and always pretends to be the building caretaker in charge of the place. Usually she always hears about what's happening in the building and is always complaining about us. Only wish she'd paid better attention last night!

Must have been a right racket in the basement,  
loads of screaming and shouting!

Then someone called the police, who arrived  
pretty quickly. Two cops came – a man and a  
lady. They looked at everything and made a  
note of what was missing.



After a while, Enis asked when the evidence  
collection team would be there. One of the cops  
looked up quite surprised from her notes and  
praised Enis for his excellent knowledge.  
Maybe he wanted to be a police officer too?

Enis has seriously been thinking about this since. So she had a quick word with her colleague and said, "alright, the evidence collection team will be along soon, but you usually don't find fingerprints on broken padlocks because burglars mostly wear gloves.

But maybe the guys will find a few fingerprints or at least an earprint." What, an earprint?!

Enis wasn't the only one surprised.

Even the adults were, even those who watch cop shows every evening. But then it dawned on me – burglars listen first to see if someone might be in the basement.

But before Evidence Collection came, the policewoman asked if Enis' bike was registered.

"Reg-i-what?" His Mum understood though and said "yes" right away. She ran into the flat and fetched a piece of paper with the number of the bike on it. The officers wrote it down and said that there was a chance that the bike might be found and possibly even the thief.

Then the Evidence Collection team actually came – two men this time.

They had a big black case with brushes and



black powder that they used to search for fingerprints – and earprints! – on the big door to the basement area and the other doors. When they found something, it was marked with tape. “We can’t tell if it’s usable yet!” said one of the team who Enis had been watching the entire time and who was friendly enough to answer Enis’ questions. It was really exciting! At the end, one of them said, “if we find anything here that leads us to the perpetrator, the victims will receive a message from the police.” Enis had real trouble repeating this sentence exactly and needed a few tries. “I’ll have to remember that,” he said, “if I actually want to be in the police.”



He then came straight to me, told me everything, and said we could take matters into our own hands and look for his bike. Maybe someone here nearby was cheeky enough to be riding around with it in the neighbourhood. So that’s what we did! We looked around on the road, in backyards and

everywhere, and at one point we saw a parked bike that looked very similar to Enis' bike.

He was really excited, but it turned out not to be his. We searched for a long time, but eventually we had to get home. Enis was very sad about it, but I promised that we'd carry on looking tomorrow, and that our other mates would probably also help. Enis just nodded, gulped and mumbled "bye".

Honestly, I don't think he'll be getting his bike back! And I'm really mad that someone could be so mean as to steal other people's stuff.





# 15 August

We – I mean, Enis, me and the other guys – went searching for Enis' bike for a few days. But we didn't find anything and neither did the police.

But right now – not forever, but at the moment at least – Enis doesn't need a bike.

He's now got a cat! A little cat.

He went to the animal shelter's open day with his Mum. Actually, they only went to have a look. Enis actually wanted a guinea pig.

But then Enis saw that cat! "You won't believe how cuuuuute she is!" he said, squeaking the word "cuuuuute" in a way that only girls otherwise do. And he told me about how cheerfully it played with the ball on

a string while it was in its little cage. Enis was lucky that his Mum was just as charmed by the cat, and after a phone call with his Dad, who gruntingly approved, they actually did it – they borrowed a travel basket and went home with the little cat.



"If you want to see her, you'll have to come over!" Enis said on the phone. So I went right over. After all, I like cats, animals in general, but especially cats. They don't stink like guinea pigs and they even like to cuddle.

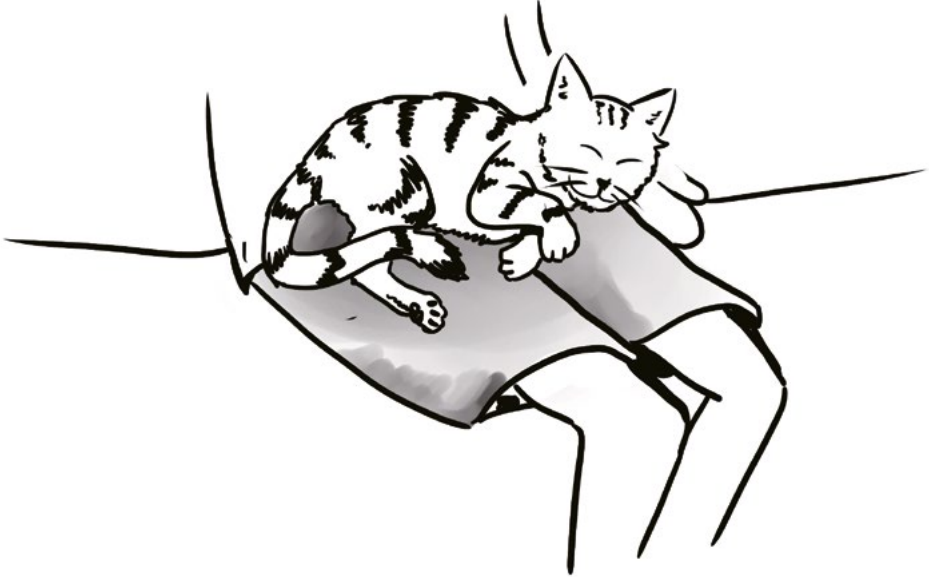
It's usually always Enis that opens the door when I ring the doorbell. I ring in code – long, long, short – so that Enis knows it's me.

He does the same with me. But this time, Enis' big sister opened the door.

She had a grin on her face. "Enis can't come to the door right now. He can't move an inch." I completely got the wrong end of the stick and thought of my Nan, who couldn't move an inch whenever she had back problems. But Enis didn't need his back seeing to – he needed his head seeing to! But I could understand why a little.



He was sat stiffly on the sofa, the little grey, striped cat on his lap. She had her eyes closed, and Enis was stroking him very gently.



"Have a seat", whispered Enis, "but carefully, then have a listen!" So I put my ear next to the cat and listened to it purring.

Enis flashed a satisfied smile. "She's called Nin-ja," he explained, "because she's such a fearless fighter!" Not exactly my idea of what a fearless fighter should look like. After a while, she opened up her eyes – green eyes – and yawned. And that was a heckuva yawn! I could see her rough, pink tongue.

Then she jumped off of Enis' lap and looked

around for something to play with. There was stuff everywhere for her to do, enough for ten cats! Enis had looked for everything in the house that he thought a cat could play with. Little balls, corks, a ball of wool. And he even bought a little toy mouse with his pocket money! It already looked as though it had been put through the wringer. There was also a nice, soft basket and a bowl with water.



Of course, we got off the sofa as well as played with Ninja. She had it in for our toes in particular, which is how I noticed that she was actually a fighter! But eventually, she's had enough of playing

and fighting, slurped on some water and then cleaned herself. Enis could barely contain himself – but she really did look incredibly cute, the way she ran over her nose with her paws and how she contorted her body to be able to lick everywhere., Then I guess she'd had enough, but she didn't go into her nice basket – she just disappeared. Went into hiding.

"Okay, that's enough," said Enis' Mum. "Leave her be. You can go and do something else now." Okay, okay. So we went off to see Jaku.



## 24 August

Back to school on Wednesday. Somehow the holidays have gone by really quickly. I always used to really look forward to going back to school, especially to see all my friends again. Malek, for example, spends the entire summer holidays with his grandparents in Turkey each year. It's not worth going otherwise as the trip is so long. This year, Louis, Mo and Jaku had been gone for a few weeks. But they're finally back again. I met them at Hakim's birthday today.

Hakim is in my class. I don't actually know him that well, he only came into my class after the Easter holidays. He started out pretty shy, but now he's our class clown.

He does pretty funny things, tells jokes, pulls funny faces, and so on. Sometimes he gets into trouble for it, but sometimes he even gets a laugh out of the teacher. I didn't know at first if I should go, but it seemed he invited the entire class.



And I wanted to see who had already come back from holiday. I was hoping that Samira would be there. I hadn't seen her all through the holidays.

Hakim didn't invite us to his house, but to the Fredenbaumpark with the Big Tipi. Enis' Mum brought us there – she didn't want us taking the tram on our own.

She always looks so serious! But when she saw that half of Hakim's family was there too, including the adults, she just asked when we wanted her to pick us up again.



Hakim's Mum didn't let her leave though. She didn't say anything, she just smiled, because Hakim's Mum doesn't speak German very well! But she talks a lot in Arabic – loudly – and she rolls her eyes whenever Hakim acts like a joker.

At the Fredenbaumpark, near the little tipi tents, there's also a wooden hut with a patio, a big table and wooden benches.

We had the patio all to ourselves. We were all squeezed up on the benches and the table was on the verge of collapse under the weight of all the tasty food. Of course, the table wasn't actually at risk of collapsing, I just meant it figuratively because the table was full of food.



And that's how it was! We all ate and ate and ate, but there never seemed to be any less of it. Hakim's Mum or older sister kept putting new things on the table.



I didn't know some of the stuff and was a bit cautious when tasting it, but most of it was so nice – soooo nice – that I had to have more of it. Eventually though, we were really full up, absolutely stuffed.

It was really hard to get up off the bench again. Then someone had the idea of playing hide-and-catch. I'm pretty bad at catching, but I can hide really well. We had the most fun with balancing though.

Hakim pretended he was in the circus and fell off the rope on purpose. All of us then did the same, trying to outdo each other until Arek hurt himself.

We actually wanted to cool off in the smaller tipi tents, but nah – it was dark in there, but it was also even hotter than outside.

It was a bit of a dare game – to see who lasted longest in the tent. Eventually though, we had to run out and get some air, and then it was almost nice to be outside – didn't feel quite as hot.



We avoided the barbecue spot where they were grilling corn-on-the-cob – usually I love that stuff, but first, it was too hot,

and second, I was too full – or the other way around. We didn't even get around to joining in the hut-building or riding BMX bikes. The day absolutely flew by. Eventually though, all the excitement had worn us out and we just wanted to rest on the patio and drink something cold. The table was full of tasty food again, stuff that people had brought with him in loads of fridge bags! At first we groaned – we wouldn't be able to eat a thing ever again – but then did eventually try a bit.

Suddenly, Enis' Mum screamed out loud. Arek's trousers were covered in blood. All of the adults were panicking and shrieking.

But Hakim's big sister kept calm. Hakim proudly told us that she was training to be a medic or something. With ambulances and sirens and all that. She carefully cut Arek's trousers open, then we saw Arek's wound. At the first sight of it we all screamed – it looked like his entire leg had been torn to shreds – but it was just all the blood. Hakim's sister then dabbed the leg



carefully with a wet cloth. Unbelievable, all the stuff she had in her bag! It was actually only his knee that had been injured, but the wound was so big that Hakim's sister thought it better to take him straight to a real doctor.

The accident clinic was right by the park.

Arek's leg was properly bandaged up before Hakim's Dad carried him away on his shoulders. Hakim's sister went with them.

Hakim was a wreck, worried that none of us wanted to be friends with him anymore.

Seriously?! It wasn't Hakim's fault! All of us told him that, and that his birthday was really nice. And that we were really happy to have him in our class.

Hmpf, now I'm actually looking forward to getting back school a bit.

I'll finally get to see Samira again.

