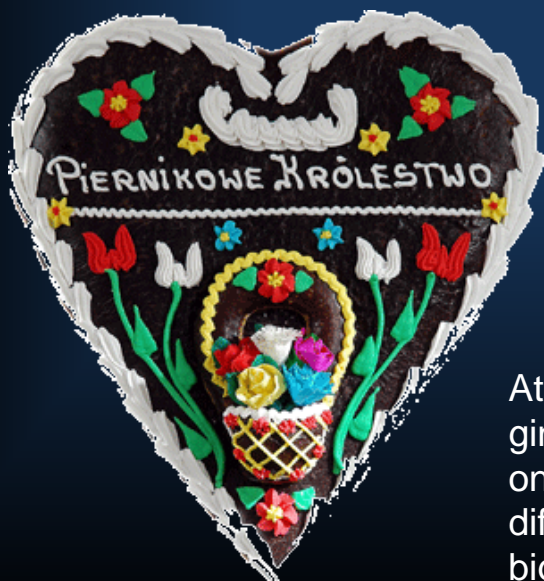




- Today we are visiting one of the most beautiful cities in Poland-said Yanek. The children were very excited. Bright Star was flying to Toruń - the city on the Vistula River situated in northern Poland.

Toruń is the birthplace of the astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus and it is a city where the traditional Polish gingerbread is produced. Bright Star stopped at the square. Around the square there were picturesque, old tenement houses.

- We are in the heart of the city . The medieval part of the city was designated as UNESCO's World Heritage Site. What is more, in Toruń we can admire an Ordensburg - an old fortress. But that's not all. There is also Nicolaus Copernicus University. Nicolaus Copernicus was an astronomer . In the 15th century he formulated a theory that the Sun is in the centre of the universe not the Earth - said Yanek.



At the square there were many shops where gingerbread is sold. It was difficult to choose one gingerbread from the wide variety of different shapes and flavour. Children chose big gingerbread hearts.

While they were eating Yanek decided to tell the story about Toruń's gingerbread.

- Long, long time ago there lived an old confectioner in Toruń. His name was Bartłomiej. He had a young apprentice whose name was Bogumił. Bogumił was young, but he was the best confectioner in Toruń. Old Bartłomiej had a beautiful daughter named Zosia. Bogumił liked her very much. One day the Polish king visited Toruń with his family. He wanted to taste Toruń's gingerbread. People were happy to see the king. All confectioners in Toruń started to bake gingerbread. Everybody was worried, but not Bogumił. He was relaxed and he spent his time walking and picking flowers in a meadow. When he bowed to pick the flower he heard a despairing buzz sound.



A bee was floating on the surface of a pond. Without hesitation he picked a leaf from a tree and pulled the bee out of water. The bee thanked for saving her life. Then she asked Bogumił where he lived and what his job was. He introduced himself and said: "I'm a confectioner". It appeared that the bee was the first lady of the bee family. As a reward for saving her life she revealed him a secret- "to add some flavor to gingerbread you have to add forest honey and the bee can give you the honey". It was good advice as among many gingerbread cakes, which were lying on the table, the royal family chose the Bogumił's gingerbread as the best. The king proclaimed Bogumił and Bartłomiej royal confectioners. Happy Bartłomiej agreed for the marriage between Bogumił and Zosia and they lived happily ever after. The Toruń's gingerbread tradition is still present in Poland.

- Oh, it's so romantic! - said Maria and Zeynep.

-By the way, I'm not surprised that the Toruń's gingerbread is so tasty - said Yanek.

- Oh yes, it is delicious! - said Maria and Zeynep.

Children were sad that they had to leave Toruń but they were curious where they would go next with Bright Star.



While they were flying over Wrocław, Yanek said:

- The city we see below is Wrocław where we can see the biggest bridge in Poland.

- Can we ride a bike on the bridge?
- asked Maria.

- Of course - answered Yanek. Bright Star landed on the bridge and changed into a bike.



I wish you could see one more place in Wrocław!, said Yanek. It is called 'Panorama of the Battle of Raclawice'. Before we enter the building you should know that it is an impressive relic of 19th century culture and it is the oldest and the only extant example of panorama painting in Poland. The huge painting, which we will view, will 'take' us into different time and different reality.



Do you know why? Because a special kind of perspective and technical effects such as lighting, artificial area, dark and twisting passage to the viewing platform are used to enable the visitors to experience the historical events fully. Then Yanek asked Bright Star to land for a while and the three kids entered the round building where they admired the glorious masterpiece. - It was the most amazing painting we have seen so far! Thank you, Yanek, the girls said happily. The kids were on Bright Star again and it was flying over the city.

Children were exhausted and hungry after the ride so Yanek said:

- Let's go to that restaurant.

- Ok- answered the girls.

- Let's eat pierogi. It's our traditional dish - said Yanek.

- Can I take your order, please? - asked the waiter.

- Yes, we'd like pierogi - said Yanek

- Pierogi? What is it? - asked Zeynep

- Pierogi are a kind of boiled dumplings of unleavened dough, traditionally stuffed with potato filling, sauerkraut, cheese or fruit.

- Yanek, what is your favourite type of pierogi? - asked Maria.

- I think that "pierogi ruskie" with cheese and potato filling are the tastiest - said Yanek.



- Now I have a story for you. The story is about Wrocław and Polish food. It's called 'The Legend about Dumpling Gate' - said Yanek

- Long, long time ago there lived a quiet family Agnieszka and Konrad. Agnieszka cooked great dumplings. Konrad made pots and sold them at the market. One day Agnieszka got sick. After few days she died. Konrad was upset and hungry because he couldn't cook. His neighbours cooked more and gave him some food but the food wasn't tasty. One day Konrad came back from the market. He was tired and hungry so he fell asleep under the gate. He was dreaming about Agnieszka. In his dream she gave him a bowl of dumplings and she imposed one condition "In order to have another bowl full of dumplings he had to leave one dumpling in the bowl". Suddenly, Konrad woke up and looked at the bowl with dumplings. He ate almost all the dumplings except one which was left in the bowl. He thought that this dumpling is tastier than the other dumplings so he decided to eat the last dumpling but it escaped. He caught the dumpling but it escaped again. He grabbed the dumpling but it fell on the gate. He climbed up the gate. When he managed to reach to the top of the gate the dumpling changed into a stone so Konrad took the bowl and went home. The next day the bowl was empty. According to the legend the stone dumpling is still lying on the gate.



Children left the restaurant and jumped on Bright Star, which was flying over the city the next few minutes. It is time to leave Wrocław because we have to go further - said Yanek.

The girls were sad but at the same time happy to see the next city.

- Where are we going? - asked Zeynep.

- Kraków is our next destination - answered Yanek.

Children were tired and soon they fell asleep.

Bright Star woke them up early in the morning and said " We are in Krakow now" After a while the Star changed into a bike. Children were riding straight ahead. When they were next to the sign Yanek showed them the direction. They were heading to the Old City because there was the most beautiful square and castle in the world. When they saw Floriańska Street they also noticed the gate.

-What is it? - asked Maria.

-This is the Floriańska Gate and this is a part of the old curtain wall and the Barbakan. Soon they were at the square.

Yanek bought 'obważanek' for everyone.



KRAKÓW

- Now we have to see a fantastic multimedia museum about the history of Kraków. The museum is situated below the square and this building is called the Sukiennice. Children visited the museum and the square where they saw lots of pigeons. The birds were walking between the florists. Suddenly they heard the trumpet. The sound was coming from the Mariacka Tower.

- What is that? - asked Maria.

- Mariacki's bugle call. We can hear it every hour.

Then the children went to the Mariacki Church to see the famous altar.

- Who made it?

- Wit Stwosz - answered Yanek.



Then Yanek suggested going somewhere to eat. He chose an old restaurant "Warzynek", where Polish traditional dishes are served. After a delicious dinner children travelled towards the Wawel Castle. Before entering the place they had to stand in a long queue to get tickets. After visiting chambers, the treasury and the armour room, Yanek decided that they should also see "The Dragon's Cave" under the castle. When children went into the cave, they had to be careful because the ceiling was very low. When they went down the stairs they saw a statue of the Wawel Dragon. They really liked it when the dragon breathed with the fire, and Yanek recalled an old legend about the dragon and Dratewka shoemaker. He told children the tale.



After that the young travellers went out and Yanek asked the Bright Star with a mysterious smile:

- Can you go back in time, Bright Star?

- Of course I can! What period in the past do you think of? – asked Bright Star.

- I think about Christmas time because I want to show all of you the traditional cribs from Cracow.

- So let's go!

Suddenly it got very cold. They noticed that the rooftiles of the old buildings were not red, but white, covered with snow. Yanek said happily:

- It's great we are here. Every year at this time we have a Crib Show here in Cracow.

Zeynep asked with curiosity:

- Tell me, what are the "cribs"?

And Maria added :

- This is a custom which aims to present the events connected with the birth of Jesus. The first Christians celebrated it. In my country – Italy – the first crib was made in medieval times.. Its creator was Saint Franco from Assize, who used a natural scenery, live animals and in 1223 he presented a real scene of "Christ's birth". And then it spread through Europe...

- You are right – answered Yanek – these shows, called "yaselka" have been organized in churches and Franciscan monasteries since 14th century. In the background with rocks and caves there was a cre'che and wooden sculptures of Jesus Christ, St Mary, St Josef, shepherds and animals, Three Kings and other characters.

- I could talk about it for long hours – added tired Yanek – but I don't want to bore you so we will stay here only for a moment.



Suddenly they were standing at the Old Cracowian Market, just in front of the Historical Museum of Cracow City. They looked at the glass cabinet in front of the entrance, where they admired a fabulous building. After buying the tickets, a middle-aged tall guide looked after the young tourists, taking them around. They were stopping here and there and looked with disbelief at elaborate and sophisticated works of the artists who created these amazing buildings.

Please, imagine – said the guide – that people didn't want the tradition of building the cribs to disappear. That's why in 1937, just before the II World War a contest was organized, just in front of Adam Mickiewicz Monument. It was a contest for the most beautiful Cracowian crib. There was a second edition of the contest a year later. During the German occupation there were no contests for the best cribs until the year 1945, when a crib maker appeared near the destroyed monument. The Historical Museum of Cracow City has been organizing the contest since 1946, and last year in 2010 there was a 68th edition of the contest.



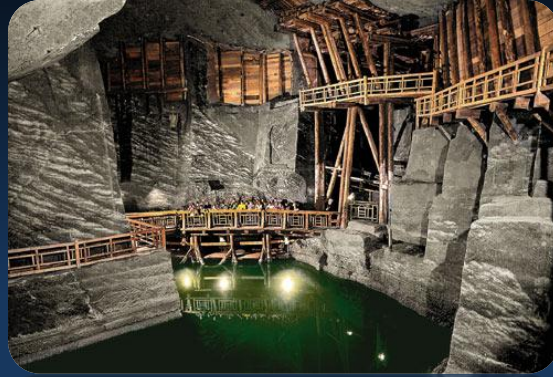
The children were looking at the details of the small buildings and the guide was telling them:

This is an open contest, the participants are people of different professions – from workers to doctors and architects, there are lots of participants among whom there are schoolchildren and small children. All of them can present three cribs. The works are marked according to three categories: seniors, juniors and children's works.

Then they moved to another room. The young travellers were happy and excited. The guide was going on:

The basic material to make the skeleton of the crib is wood or plywood. Towers and smaller architectural elements are made of cardboard. These two elements are covered with aluminium foil from the outside. Some crib makers also use colourful metal plates. The stained-glass windows used to be made of paper and colourful cellophane. In the 1950s they used colorfully painted glass and now transparent synthetic materials are used.

They left the Museum after almost two hours, feeling as if they had visited a completely different world.



Suddenly Yanek reminded them that they should see a fantastic Salt Mine in Wieliczka. The three kids jumped on their bike and arrived at the place very soon. When they went down the mine, they were stunned looking at magnificent salty sculptures, chambers and halls made of salt. There was a maize of winding paths and they almost got lost but Yanek was taking care of them and followed the guide. The children found out that the Salt Mine is a UNESCO treasure listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. When they went out of the mine, Maria and Zeynep were amazed. It was almost a twilight.



The tired children asked the bicycle to become Bright Star again and in this way they continued their trip going towards the south. They finally arrived at the famous town



ZAKOPANE

- It is widely known that Zakopane is the most famous tourist attraction in Poland. But Zakopane isn't known only because of its natural and landscape values. The town attracts not only the Tatras' nature lovers, but also those who admire local art and craft – explained Yanek.

- Let's go for a trip to visit the most famous places in Zakopane. The heart of this picturesque place is "Krupówki" – and there we are going! One of the most interesting places is Tatrzańskie Museum – there is a great collection of ethnographic and natural exhibits from the Tatra Mountains' regions. Moreover, you may admire here an old mountain cottage from the 19th century, clothes and regional exhibits. There is also a very interesting collection of pictures painted on glass and a collection of mountain robbers' belts.



Children went out of the museum and walked down the Krupówki Street to admire the variety of Zakopane's souvenirs which could be found on many stalls and in small shops. In one of them they met an old highlander who told them a legend about the foundation of Zakopane town.

- We really want to buy a mountain cap and an alpenstock – whispered Maria to Yanek's ear.

- Could you show us alpenstocks and mountain caps, please? – Yanek asked the man.

- Of course, lad – answered the highlander.

- Have you got alpenstocks with "Zakopane" written on them? – asked Yanek.

- Yes – answered the man.

- I'd like to buy one, and a cap with a feather – said Yanek.

- 62 zlotys – decided the highlander.

- Thank you and good bye – smiled the young travellers.



- We all have become very hungry, so let's go to the local market place to buy and taste "Zakopane's oscypek".

- What is "oscypek"? – asked Zeynep.

- Oscypek is a tough smoked cheese prepared of sheep's milk – explained Yanek.

- I'd like to try it – answered Zeynep.

- Can I have 6 "oscypki"? – said Yanek to a street-trader.

- Big or small ones? – asked the woman at the stall.

- Three big ones and three small ones – answered the boy



After eating the cheese, the children went towards the Gubałówka.

- We have some more energy after eating – said Yanek – So let's go to Gubałówka mountain. When you in Zakopane it is necessary to climb the Gubałówka. Do you want to go there on foot or go by cable railway?

- We'd like to go by the cable railway. There must be beautiful views from the top – answered the girls.

- OK. Let's buy the tickets and here we go!

They went back very tired. Visiting the ski jumps, Morskie Oko (Sea Eye Lake), Aquapark and Trolland (line park) must wait for the next time in Poland. The girls liked Zakopane so much that they promised to come back to Poland once again.



They shouted together:

- Our dear Bright Star! Now we want to go back to Istanbul where we will build our common Turkish – Polish – Italian European Museum. Let's go ahead for our further adventures!!!

MUSEUM ON THE ROAD

COUNTRIES



TURKEY



ITALY



POLAND



THE END