



Translated extract from

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Zwei Schwestern bekommen Besuch
Atlantis-Verlag
Zürich 2005
ISBN 3-7152-0503-2

pp. 1-32

Sonja Bougaeva
Two Sisters Have A Visitor

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Two sisters get a visitor

On an island there lived two sisters.
They led a happy life there. Nothing bad ever happened except perhaps for when the snails ate the strawberries, or they ran out of tea. Then the sisters rowed their boat to the nearest town so that they could go shopping.
Once a week, the ferry brought the newspapers.

Everything was fine ...

... until one day the postman brought a letter.

The sisters opened the envelope and read:

Expect me on Tuesday.
Your cousin Hans.

“Tuesday! But that’s today!”

And indeed their cousin arrived by the same ferry.
The sisters were delighted!

But after just one day, he said:
“How on earth can you live like this! But hang on: I’ll help you!
I’ll sort things out!”

First of all he repaired the tap. Then the lamp in the hallway.

Then a few more things.

And then he repainted the house.

“Ha! Amazing, isn’t it? *So* much better than before. Really modern. My pleasure, that’s for sure!”

When the sisters came down to the kitchen the next morning, their cousin had already laid the table. But where were the butter and jam? And what had happened to the pancakes?

“As of today, it’s just muesli on the menu. It’ll do you good, just wait and see! And it’s so tasty! Isn’t that fantastic?”

And when it came to supper, he said: “Animals don’t belong in the house! They spread germs!” From then onwards, the cat, the dog and the birds had to live outside. Which was particularly unpleasant when it was raining.

“Well, are you awake yet?” the cousin cheerfully bellowed first thing in the morning when it was still dark outside and the sisters were still fast asleep.

“I recommend some early morning aerobics! It’ll do you good!”

From then onwards, the sisters had to perform complicated exercises every day before sunrise, when it was still quite chilly.

And then on top of that, the cousin wanted them all to go swimming together.

One morning while they were brushing their teeth, the sisters heard very suspicious noises coming from the living room.

“I’ve just tidied up a bit! There’s no need to thank me. I like doing it! We’ll take all this clutter up to the attic; it just gets in the way here. I’ll show you what modern living’s all about!”

The rooms became cold and uninviting. Even the lovely clock had gone. A deep silence fell.

When the sisters wanted to water their flowers after their afternoon nap, it was already too late.

“*Someone* has to sort the garden out! You won’t believe how nice it will look!”

But everything gradually became dull and empty and worse and worse.

And then the sisters fell ill.

“Don’t you think he’s overdoing it?” one sister cautiously asked one evening.

“Oh, thank goodness! I thought you liked it!” answered the other.

“We absolutely have to tell him that it can’t go on like this!”

“But how?”

They spent the whole night pondering.

When they went into their cousin’s room the next morning, they found him packing his suitcase. All he said was:

“What boring people you are! What a miserable pair of creatures! Haven’t I helped you? Haven’t I repaired everything? And you don’t even say thank you. You just can’t do anything right for people like you! I’m going home today!”

“Oh, do stay a bit longer”, pleaded the sisters, for they were well brought up.

“No, no, I’ve not got time!” answered their cousin, and then he was gone.

Barely had the ferry left when everything changed back to how it had always been. The animals lived in the house again; the dog was allowed to sleep on the sofa again.

All the homely things were restored to their places, and the sisters' health immediately recovered.

Sometimes when they were peeling potatoes or sitting in the garden, they talked about their *lovely* relative and his recent visit. Such a pity he'd gone off in a huff.