



*A Christmas  
Adventure*

Michelle Ananko, Artemis Bogdantis,



Once upon a time, it was a cold snowy day of the 24th of December in a small town. Everyone was so excited for Christmas to come. They would sit at their homes with their families and friends, have a nicely decorated house, a big, shiny Christmas tree and a family table full of tasty foods and sweets. Alex and Sky were as excited as everyone else. They would play under the Christmas tree with their cat and discuss about the presents Santa Claus would leave them under the tree the next day. "I've been a good kid this year", Alex said. "Santa will definitely give me the present I asked him!" "Me too", Sky agreed. "Santa is always fair and kind. He knows how well we've been" "Christmas is the best time of the year! I hope all kids find nice presents under their trees", Alex said. "True! But I wonder sometimes...", Sky was thinking. "The other day the teacher at school told us that not all countries around the world celebrate Christmas as we do here. I would love to know more about Christmas in other countries..." "Well", said Alex, "it is too late now, we should go to sleep and we ask mom and dad about it tomorrow..." "Ok", Sky replied, frowning.



Alex and Sky said  
goodbye to their cat,  
kissed their mom and  
dad to sleep and went to  
bed.

When they fell asleep,  
they both started  
dreaming.

They saw they were  
travelling in magical  
places, with colourful  
lights, Christmas songs  
and kids opening their  
presents.

And when the clock hit  
midnight, something  
amazing happened...



Their window opened, and a big white, fluffy cloud came into their room.

“What is happening?” , said the kids.

“Hello kids” , replied the Cloud.

“I am the Christmas Cloud.

I heard you were curious to see how Christmas is like in other places.

So, I came here to show you.

Hop on, and let’s go!”

So Alex and Sky hopped on to the fluffy Christmas Cloud and started flying...



“Kids”, said the Cloud, “this is Austria.

Christmas here is a bit different from what you know.

Here kids do not have a Santa Claus to give them presents, but the Christkind (Christ Child).

It is a child, like you, but with wings and a halo, and on December 24 it comes into the window of every house to give children their presents.”

“And who are these scary men with the big horns?”, asked Alex.

“Oh, these are the Crampus.

They are dressed like demons and are half men-half goat.

But be careful... if you are a naughty kid, they put you in a sack and take you away!”

“Aah! I don’t like them!”, said Sky.



“Don’t worry, you are safe here. Let’s now go to our next place”, said the Cloud.

“This is Norway, kids. Here Christmas is called JUL. At this time of year, people are afraid of evil spirits and witches, so one day before the JUL they hide away their brooms, so that the witches won’t find them.”

“Woww, that’s so cool!”, said Alex.

“Yes, and people here also like to make gingerbread houses andrisengrynsgrøt”

“What is that?”, asked Sky.

“It is a really nice sweet.

It is hot rice pudding with sugar, cinnamon and butter.

On the Christmas table, everyone has some, and if you find the hidden almond that is in one of the plates, you win a marzipan pig!”

“And you can eat that too?”, asked the children.



“Yes, you can!”, said the Cloud.  
“Let’s now move to Sweden.  
Do you see that huge goat?  
This is called the ‘Yule Goad’.  
It is made up of straws, and people  
make it to show that Christmas time  
is here”.  
“That’s so big!”, Alex observed.  
“And do they also have gingerbread  
houses here?”, asked Sky.  
“Yes, they do. And their Santa,  
called ‘Jultomten’, does not leave  
the presents under the tree for the  
kids, but he gives them in their  
hands.  
And on Christmas day, when the  
clock strikes 3:00, families go in  
front of the TV and watch all  
together the ‘Donald Duck and his  
friends wish you a Merry Christmas’  
show.  
“I also like this one!”, said the kids  
together.

‘I’m glad you do.  
But let me now show you  
something really different.  
Look, kids.  
This place is called Australia.  
At Christmas time, it is not  
winter but... summer!’  
‘Summer! So there is no  
snow?’, Alex asked.  
‘That’s right. It is really hot  
here, so that’s why people go  
to the beach, have barbecues  
and go surfing.  
They also do the ‘Kris  
Kringle’, which means that  
they do the secret Santa with  
the presents’.  
‘I like snow more’, said  
Sky. ‘Because you can make  
snowmen and play with it’.



“I will now show you something you will really like”, said the Cloud.  
“This is Mexico. Here kids have Piñatas filled with sweets and fruits and, one by one, they strike them with eyes closed so that the sweets come outside”.  
“They are so cool! I want to hit one as well!”, said Alex.  
“And what are those foods?”, asked Sky.  
“These are the foods people eat here. They are called ‘tamales’, ‘pozole’, ‘bacalao’ and ‘pomeritos’. The Christmas table is filled with them”.  
“They look so tasty...”, said the kids.



“They are for sure”, the Cloud responded. “Let’s now go to Kenya. This is a country in Africa. People here also like to make barbecues with their families, like in Australia. Look at those house and churches! They have lots of balloons, ribbons and flowers”.

“And Christmas trees!” the kids said.

“That’s right”, said the Cloud.

“And, as you can see, the Santa Claus here doesn’t come with a sleigh and reindeer, but with a car”.

“A car! Really?” , Alex said with eyes open wide.





“Yes. There is no snow in Kenya, so Santa doesn’t need a sleigh”, the Cloud explained.

“Let’s now see Israel, kids. Here people do not have Christmas, because they are Jewish.

They have the Chanukan, it lasts eight days and they light the menorah, the holder for the candles, adding one candle each night”.

“They don’t give presents to one another?”, asked Sky.

“Of course they do”, said the Cloud.

“They also like to eat ‘latkes’, their potato pancakes, and play the dreidel game.

Those little letters mean ‘A great miracle happened there’ ”.

“Woww”, said the kids.

“And this is Japan. Christmas here is full of shining lights and colors.

People think it is the most romantic day of the year, like the Valentine’s Day”, said the Cloud.

“It is so beautiful...”, said Sky.

“It is.

And people there are waiting in this big line to get some Kentucky Fried Chicken, their Christmas dinner.

And then, they have their Christmas cake, called ‘kurisumasu keki’, with whipped cream and red strawberries”.

“That looks so tasty!

We should tell mom to make us some tomorrow!”, said Alex, and Sky agreed.





“I am glad you are having fun, kids.  
But now it is almost Christmas, and I  
should take you home.  
Remember to always be good and love  
your family and friends”.  
“We will, Cloud.  
Thank you for taking us with you!”, said  
the children.

So the Christmas Cloud fled to heir home,  
put them to bed and disappeared in the sky.

The next morning it was  
Christmas day.  
Alex and Sky woke up, went  
down to their parents and they all  
opened their Christmas presents.  
Alex looked at Sky and smiled.  
And she smiled too...

