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Sunday

Arrival in Augsburg

Emily and Lucy could almost hear their hearts pounding. The two girls stood in the departure hall of Inverness Airport as their flight to Frankfurt was called. The whole class was there to say goodbye. “Be on your best behaviour,” a voice said, joking. “Oh dear,” Lucy whispered, “Look! There’s the mayor together with a photographer from the newspaper. They are all here just because of us!” The mayor and the two girls turned their heads smiling into the camera. The mayor spoke with a formal voice: “Augsburg is our twin town. Please represent us as well as you can. I’m really looking forward to your return, and especially to hearing all your interesting stories about the beautiful, old town. See you next week.” The two girls then had to check in. While waving back one last time, they entered the huge airplane and took their seats. After a loop above the Moray Firth, Inverness Airport became smaller and smaller. Everything was exciting and new for the two girls.

Emily and Lucy had never expected something as great as this. They had taken part in a writing contest: all pupils from Augsburg and its twin towns were invited to send in short stories, and Emily’s and Lucy’s stories were amongst the best ones. So they were allowed to travel to Augsburg to be part of the book presentation. They were happy to be spending a week with some pupils of the Mary-Ward-Gymnasium to learn about the many things Augsburg is famous for.

“Do you know,” Emily suddenly asked, “if the school has something to do with the famous Mary Ward from Yorkshire?” – “Oh, I looked it up on the internet,” Lucy said eagerly. “One of Mary Ward’s best friends founded this school over 400 years ago. That’s why the school was called the English Institute for a long time.” – “Wow, that’s fantastic, so it should be easy to communicate with the pupils there, because my German isn’t very good,” Emily had to admit. “Mary Ward wanted young girls to see the world and to take matters into their own hands,” Lucy went on. “Well, she seemed to be successful ... Augsburg, here we come!” Emily burst out proudly.

At Frankfurt airport the two girls took the train to Augsburg. Three hours later they arrived in Augsburg and found their host parents already waiting for them on the platform. A few girls from the Mary-Ward-Gymnasium were at the train station, too, ready and eager to show their beautiful home to the two Scottish girls.

Monday

A freezing experience in summer

1 After a sleepless night the girls started their first day full of expectations. Soon they were told that they would take part in some lessons at the Mary-Ward-Gymnasium that morning. Lucy and Emily entered the classroom and their welcome by the other students was very friendly. Emily asked a girl called Linda which subjects they would have today. “In the first lesson we have English and the next subject is history,” Linda answered. Emily’s eyes started to shine because history was one of her favourite subjects. “What will you talk about today?” she asked. “Our teacher planned a trip to the old city wall of Augsburg. That’s what we’ll do this morning,” Franziska replied. The time passed by very fast and Mr Fischer, the history teacher, picked the class up. It took only 10 minutes to reach the old wall where Mr Fischer started to explain the most important facts: “Augsburg is one of the few cities, in which a great part of the historical wall is still present. It’s quite old, it can even be dated back to the Middle Ages.”



How to soften a heart of stone

“Wow!” Lucy whispered. “It’s amazing to see these old parts in real life!” she added. “And what did people use the wall for?” Emily wanted to know. “Well, the most important aim was to protect the city and its inhabitants. Especially during fights and wars, the stone wall was necessary to defend the city,” Mr Fischer replied. “So let’s walk a little bit further,” the teacher said.

The legend of the man of stone

They all walked along a path beside the wall until they reached a weird looking figure. “Do you want to hear the legend of this man?” the teacher asked. “Sure!” the whole class shouted. “All right, so listen up!” Mr Fischer announced. “The legend is about a baker named Konrad Hacker, whom you can still see here as a stone figure. During a long siege in the Thirty-Years War he baked a big loaf of bread made of sawdust in-