

# Lia

Von DeLeila

## Kapitel 2: English version

It is the beginning of December – advent season. The city is beautifully decorated, colourful stars are glowing in the windows and Santa Claus is climbing many walls. The Christmas market is open and many people are hurrying from store to store – to get the last Christmas presents. The air is filled with “Christmas mood”. Bells are ringing through the night and the smell of cinnamon makes the people stop and breathe in the aroma. Yes, Christmas is near.

Lia is in the city as well. She is sitting on a bench in a small, deserted park. It is cold and the girl is freezing. She huddles herself deeper in her coat. She is still and glares into the air. What is she thinking of? Maybe the past... Then she shakes her head and stands up.

She walks to the market place, it is warmer there. As soon as she comes closer she can see the people and these wonderful aromas are tickling her nose. She slips through the mass of people, small, grey and unnoticed. She looks down and no one notices her. Who pays attention to a young girl? Here and there she takes a piece of waffle, sips on a left-over hot wine punch. Now she doesn't feel cold anymore – the drink is warming her. She keeps walking through the crowd – but suddenly it ends. She looks up in surprise. The girl had not paid attention to her surroundings. Now she is standing in front of a stage. A man is standing above her and is making a speech.

Lia just wants to turn away as she catches the words of the man:

“He does exist, our shepherd, he is always at our side”

Lia stops and listens. There is someone who's always by her side? She wants to know more about that - but the man carries on:

“His kingdom is eternal. Our lord himself is gracious and cares about us all. All our loved-ones who have passed away will be in his kingdom, all of us will be united in eternity and we will live in peace. This earthly life is nothing compared to the kingdom of our Lord!”

Lia cannot believe that. She remembers. Her parents have told her about “God”, but Lia doesn't believe in God, nor in the “father in heaven” who is above and rules in eternity. The one that has created us and who loves us all.

Her parents have told her all that - but then they died. Crashed on their way back home – where they were closest to heaven. No God has prevented it.

No, Lia cannot believe in God. The memories of her loss hurt too much. The girl turns around and walks away. She leaves the colourful crowd behind and steps in the dark. She is searching for a place to sleep. Finally she finds an old armchair in a deserted backyard and falls asleep...

The next days are uneventful. Lia manages to get everything to survive, a nice old lady even gives her chocolate, but she can't forget about the speech the man made.

Then she finds a stone. It is a beautiful stone, silver-grey in the shape of a wing. Lia puts the stone in her pocket. Maybe it will bring good luck.

She strolls through the city – one hand always encloses the stone in her coat. It warms her and gives her strength. It has been snowing overnight – now it is even harder for Lia to find a place to sleep.

Late in the evening she discovers an abandoned garage. She steps in and lays down at the back wall. There she is protected from the falling snow. A street light droopingly illuminates the garage. Lia hauls the stone out and examines it. Suddenly she hears a whispering voice. She listens intensely. "I will protect you. I will guide you and help you... If you protect me..."

The voice fades away and the girl asks herself, confused, who had talked to her. The stone?

There is the answer, coming out of nowhere, "The answer is hidden inside your soul. You have to find the truth for yourself."

For a long time, Lia doesn't move. She is confused and tries to think about it, but then she falls asleep.

She has a clouded dream. She runs through dense fog. Then she feels a sudden pull - something seems to be gripping and guiding her. She can't see a thing and pads blinded around, but then it clears off and Lia recognizes where she is.

A springtime meadow stretches out in front of her, sheep are grazing on it and close to the horizon she can see a shepherd and his dog. It is a harmonic and peaceful picture.

Then Lia wakes up. Her head aches and she feels like moving around. She gets up, fumbles for her stone in the coat and sets off. She walks the whole day. Without a destination, she strays through the alleys and streets. Lia doesn't have to think about it, she knows them by heart. Just moving... but she cannot get rid of the thoughts in her mind. Her stone rests in her pocket, neither heavy nor light, just present.

At night she returns to that garage. It is a good spot for her, sheltered from the weather and far from apartments. No one would find her.

That night Lia sleeps well, just as in the following nights. But in the night before Christmas eve, she dreams again. It is almost identical to the one she had before. She runs through the mist, guided by something and again she finds herself in that meadow, and suddenly Lia feels that the answer to all her questions is there.

In the middle of the night she awakes and sets off.

She doesn't know the direction, but she has faith in her senses. She squeezes the stone in her hand and then she steps onto the unknown path outside the city. She has never been there before. The girl tries to remember the details of her dream. What did the path look like? She cannot remember.

Suddenly she feels like someone is there. It is like a pull. Now Lia knows that she is on the right road. It is her invisible guide - she will show her the way.

Sure enough, the dense fog is clearing and she can see the meadow. Just like in her dream, the sheep are grazing there, and further away, the shepherd is standing. He is smiling at her. Lia is a bit scared now. She remembers the last weeks. Yes, this is the truth she wanted to find. There IS a place full of love and security and someone, who is watching over her. Lia finally has found the place where she belongs...