

EARLY WAKE UP

My dreams are unpleasantly interrupted by a sudden loud staccato of strange noise around me. Then again silence, only quiet waves from far away. I'm irritated, still half asleep, hold my breath, heart pounding fast. I feel a warm, cautious breath close to my right ear. Something tickles. That's not a dream! Instinctively I tighten the muscles of my neck. Just don't move, for God's sake! Obscure imaginations of beasts of prey drift through my drowsy mind. Wolves? There are no wolves around here. A pungent odour, strangely enough somehow familiar. Now again this hell of a noise, somewhere near my feet and behind my back. My brain, still at night rate, tries feverishly to speed up. Cicadas? They sound different. And they don't stink.

Unwillingly I open one eye. My free view to the sea is disturbed by legs. Pairs and pairs of slender, hairy legs with hooves. Fringy fur in all shades of brown. My confused look slowly gropes its way up. I look into a pair of big brown eyes with golden rims and endless lashes. I see shy examination. I'm completely surrounded by curious goats! Some stand close, the younger ones in safe distance. Most of them just look at me, one is nibbling my book. Half of the front page has already gone. Two others test snorkel and rucksack – not edible! The delicious peach, that I had spared for my lunch, has already been found and enjoyed.

I break out laughing, and they step back a bit. I try to start a conversation, remembering long gone experiences high up in the alps back home in Austria, when I had a summer job as a dairy maid. No reply. They won't even react to my poor Greek, so I give up. Anyway, I feel wide awake now. As I stand up, I get a last bleat from the black billy goat, that sounds rather reproachful. Then the circle opens up, and they slowly move on.