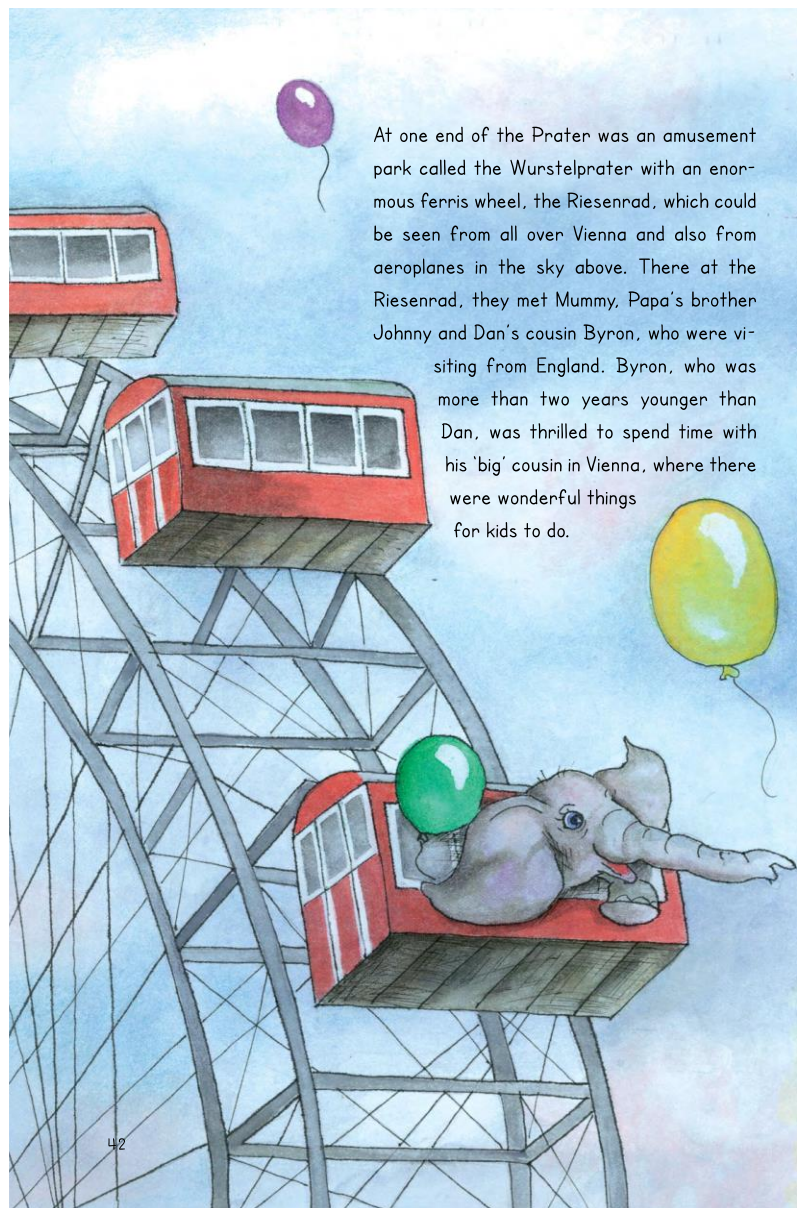




At one end of the Prater was an amusement park called the Wurstelprater with an enormous ferris wheel, the Riesenrad, which could be seen from all over Vienna and also from aeroplanes in the sky above. There at the Riesenrad, they met Mummy, Papa's brother Johnny and Dan's cousin Byron, who were visiting from England. Byron, who was more than two years younger than Dan, was thrilled to spend time with his 'big' cousin in Vienna, where there were wonderful things for kids to do.

They got into the long queue for the Riesenrad, which moved quite fast because each carriage hanging from it took more than 20 passengers. When their turn came, they all got into a carriage – which had room for a baby elephant, too – and off it went, slowly rising higher and higher. From the top, they had a splendid bird's-eye view of Vienna, the woods and hills around the city, the river Danube, and even Paradiso on the Donauinsel and Dan's home near the Alte Donau. From way up there, everything looked tiny, like a toy town. Below them in the Wurstelprater, they could see children on ponies, a roller coaster, carousels, the Lilliputbahn and lots of other fun rides for both grownups and kids.

Biju was delighted. He'd never been up so high before. Dan asked Papa if they could go around a second time. At the landing place Papa gave a sign to the supervisor, who winked at them, closed the carriage doors and sent them off again. A small elephant on the Riesenrad was such a big attraction that the long passenger queue had stretched as far as you could see, so everyone was happy. The Riesenrad made more money than on any other day that season, thanks to Biju and his friends.

Lunchtime! The family went to Schweizerhaus, one of Vienna's most famous garden restaurants, right there in the Wurstelprater. Schweizerhaus was known for its excellent beer, and Schweinsstelze (roast leg of pork) with sauerkraut. The mood was hearty and the leafy garden very pretty.

However, smokers were puffing away on their cigarettes in the outdoor dining area although many people around them were eating, so they decided to keep the lunch break short. Also, not wanting to risk using up Schweizerhaus's entire salad supply, Papa had brought along several bunches of bananas for Bijou.

After lunch, they decided to take a ride around the Prater on the Liliputbahn, which was so well kept that they couldn't believe that it was, in fact, nearly 100 years old! Everyone enjoyed sitting in the bright open carriages – even little Byron, who slept for most of the trip snuggling between Bijou and Dan. The scenery changed as the train joggled along beside the tree-lined trails, stopped briefly for the engine-driver to shovel in more coal and, finally, took them back to the noise and excitement of the Wurstelprater.

Dan showed Byron and Bijou his favourite rides. First, they went the autodrome, full of electrically-powered dodgem cars on poles. The boys jumped into one and set off, taking turns at the steering wheel. Bijou wouldn't fit so he watched for a while, alarmed that the cars kept bumping into each other.



"What dreadful drivers these kids are!" he thought, "They are colliding all the time. They need help!"

Slowly, he walked to the middle of the autodrome and directed the traffic with his trunk. The young drivers were delighted to be in 'real' traffic and did their best to follow Bijou's rather confusing directions. The cars buzzed around Bijou at high speed, some of them bumping into him, too. Bijou was startled at first but, since it didn't hurt and the kids were having great fun, he put up with it.



Next, Dan took them to the pony-ride corral. His favourite mount was a gentle, pretty pinto pony – with black, brown and white patches – called Sophie. When it was Dan's turn, Sophie walked quietly around the corral with both him and Byron on her back. After a few rounds, Bijou felt that Sophie might be tired, so he offered to take over for a while. Sophie was grateful, the old man in charge was quite happy to give her a break, and all the kids watching wanted to take turns riding on Bijou.

By the time they left for home, Bijou had become a celebrity! Everyone – the attendants at the Riesenrad, the Liliputbahn and the autodrome, and also Sophie the pony and all the children – wanted the little elephant to come back to the Prater again the next weekend. Once again, Dan felt proud and happy to be Bijou's friend.