

Sáve Sápmi



Inga Elin Marakatt

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Davvi Girji

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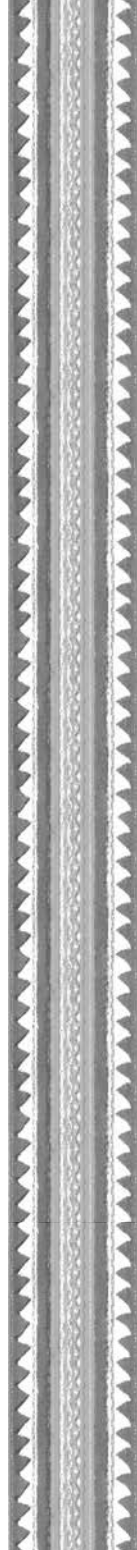
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To Mom and Dad





# Prologue

She's always liked cheap things, but Sáve never could've guessed that it would end up like *this*.

Sáve watches as her mom, Ellen Marizza, drives behind the store once again. She can't say or do anything to stop what's about to happen. She's never been able to before, anyway. Her mom has a big, black bag in one hand. Her dark hair flutters in the wind and her eyes light up like stars. Ellen Marizza is going out on another diving trip.

She hops into the big dumpster, her legs and red high-heeled shoes sticking straight up. Sáve shuts her eyes. She can't watch this. She doesn't want to see her mom swimming in garbage.

"WOOOOOW!" Ellen Marizza exclaims from deep in the dumpster. "Sáve! You won't *believe* what I found. And it's FREE! I found GOLD!"

"It's just trash," Sáve shouts in response.

This is just one of her mom's many dumpster dives. Sáve doesn't really know how things ended up this way. Or why *her* mom specifically just *had* to become a dumpster diver.



# Snapchat

The first rays of winter sun creep over the small village of Idivuoma, where the E45 winds its way between dense pine forests, sand dunes, ponds, and lakes. There's a small yellow house by the big asphalt road – a house with thin window panes that the frost sneaks through in the winter. This is where Sáve is sleeping: on the second floor beneath her warm comforter. Her long, brown hair is disheveled, going every which way on her white pillow. There's a view of the big lake Ađevuomijávri, which is right outside their house, from her bedroom window. She can hear her mom rummaging around in the kitchen as she slowly wakes up, yawning and snuggling deeper into her thick comforter. Ellen Marizza is almost definitely in the process of making fluffy, American pancakes – just like she does every Saturday morning – and filling up the house with thick smoke.

Idivuoma is a small village about twelve miles north of Karesuando. Around 100 people live here, and Sáve knows every single one of them. Her grandmother, grandfather, and Uncle Áslak also live here. Many of the people in the village are either cousins or relatives of some sort, and almost everyone owns reindeer. Some people work in Karesuando – like her mom – and they drive the twelve miles between Idivuoma and Karesuando every day. Sáve's mom works in Kiruna Municipality's offices in Karesuando, where a lot of other people work as well.

## Ellen Marizza the Perch

In the kitchen, Ellen Marizza turns the volume on her computer up so loud that Sáve can hear it all the way up in her bedroom on the second floor. She's singing along to "Oops ... I Did It Again" playing on YouTube. Sáve knows the song. It's Britney Spears – an old song from when her mom was younger and had such a good voice that you might even think she was a *real* artist. But almost no one knows that when she was young, she left Idivuoma and flew across the pond, where she lived on the streets and sang at karaoke bars every night until a big, important man discovered her and took her to a real studio. She recorded a song there that was a huge hit, and then she became a star. A *real* star, practically overnight. But that was long before she moved back to Idivuoma and Sáve was born. Britney Spears – or "Britta" as Ellen Marizza calls her – was one of her best friends in America.

As expected, Sáve's mom is frying up pancakes in the kitchen, a thick, dark smoke spreading throughout the room. She has a spatula in one hand like it's a microphone and is singing at the top of her lungs: "*I PLAYED WITH YOUR HEART, GOT LOST IN THE GAME, OH BABY BABY!*"

She was also an actress and even acted in a feature film in America. Even though you can only see her on screen for a couple of minutes and she's wearing a dinosaur costume, she was in a big, American movie! Not all moms have done that, but of course *her* mother, Ellen Marizza Larsdotter Abbor, has. There isn't a single thing on earth that she hasn't tried. She's done everything: jumped out

of a plane, traveled around the world by train, and lived with indigenous peoples in South America. But that was all before she decided to become a normal grown-up, one who works in an office from nine to five and pushes paper and writes important messages on her computer. Sáve is happy she became a regular old mom because it would've been *super* embarrassing to have a mega-famous actress mom who's always traveling all over the place. Sáve thinks it's nice that Ellen Marizza stays between the four walls of her office.

Her mom is a little ... unique. When they made it possible to change your last name in Sweden, she wanted the name *Abbor* – like the fish. As a little girl, she loved standing in the middle of the bridge in the village, pointing at the perches. So she changed her last name to Abbor. Sáve and her father didn't change their names, though.

Ellen Marizza fries American pancakes just like she does every Saturday morning, and talks about America just like she always does, and of course about Los Angeles because she lived and worked there as an actress. She sang and danced and was a big star on the other side of the pond. In the living room where they have their huge TV, there are big paintings of Ellen Marizza in skimpy leopard-pattern clothes, and they're painted in a way where you might not even believe it's her. That Ellen Marizza Larsdotter – she's one unique mom. Sáve knows a lot about America even though she's never been there. She knows what they like to eat and that there are tall buildings where they make big Hollywood movies. Her mom has promised to take her across the pond someday to show her where she lived before Sáve was born. That was before her great love

and the “boy next door”, Lásse Ándre, came into her life and brought her back from America.

“Good mooorning, my dear Sáve Bahamas! Take a seat. Hot AMERICAN pancakes are coming up soon,” her mom bubbles cheerfully.

“My name is just *Sáve!*”

“But that’s where you were conceived,” her mom says with a sly smile. “My little Bahamas girl!”

Sáve glares at her. Today, her mom is wearing a short, colorful dress and blood-red lipstick. She’s also wearing thin stockings, and her hair is dark purple these days. Ellen Marizza clearly has a very special style; people notice her – and she loves it. She likes to say that she was *once* a famous musician and actress, after all. Musicians are *supposed* to be special.

“Put down your phone, it’s time to eat breakfast and enjoy life!” she says to Sáve. “Your dad will be here soon, too. He’s just in the bathroom.”

Her mom has decided that they’ll eat breakfast together every Saturday because her dad is in the mountains so much these days, out by Pulusjärvi, where he and Uncle Áslak have the herd. They barely even see him on weekdays, but her dad gets the weekends off because her uncle is a bachelor and likes being in the mountains all year – summer and winter alike. He says the reindeer and the reindeer herder can never really take time off, which is why he always has to be out in the mountains.

“But *Mommmmm*,” Sáve whines. “I NEED to go soon. Nils and I are going to have a bonfire. I don’t have time to sit around. A reindeer herder never gets time off.”

“Sáve, you know that we do this every Saturday, and that means today, too. Sit down and eat some pancakes. Do you want a little bit of smoothie?”

Sáve's dad comes out of the bathroom without a shirt on, sweat dripping from his red face. He pulls a sweatshirt over his head and kisses Ellen Marizza ... right in front of Sáve!

"Ewww, don't kiss in front of me!" she says.

Her dad looks at her. Lásse Ándre has thick, dark hair, dark brown eyes, and a muscular body, and he's much younger than her mom – just 37 years old.

"Good morning, sweetie," he says, sitting down at the table. The pancakes are thick and steaming. The smoothie has a dark green color. It's one of her mom's special smoothies that only has veggies in it.

"You slept in late today," he continues.

Her dad has been herding the herd all week and came back last night.

"Grandma and Grandpa are going to Gran Canaria this week," Ellen Marizza says, taking a sip of the green smoothie. "We're going to have a little 'going away party' for them," she says with tears in her eyes. Sáve knows her mom doesn't like that her parents will be going south for the winter again.

"Oof, I'm dead tired. We drove the snowmobiles way out on the plateau, all the way to Rostojávri. We needed to check if there were any reindeer north of Čievčasjávri at the summer pastures on the Norwegian side," Sáve's dad explains to her. "And we found a smaller group that we drove back to Pulsujärvi."

Sáve listens intently as she eats the fluffy pancakes. Then she replies: "I want to go out with you every day."

"You'll be able to come soon, Sáve, to the home of the Sámi children: the freezing, windswept plateau," he says.

Sáve smiles. She wants to join her father out on the plateau. It's the best thing ever.

“You can go with Dad when you have spring break,” her mom says. “These American pancakes don’t have any sugar, flour, milk, or eggs. Aren’t they tasty?” She smiles.

“What are we actually eating, then?” her dad asks, looking at her skeptically. “What makes them so good?”

“Don’t ask, Lásse. They have tons of healthy ingredients, I can promise you that.”

With her belly full of healthy pancakes, Sáve gets dressed in so many layers of thick, warm snowmobile clothes that she can barely walk. Nils is waiting for her; they’re going to ride snowmobiles out on the plateau. Nils sends a third Snap: “Where are you? COME OUT!”



## Forest Fox

Sáve stands outside of the yellow house, listening to the sound of a snowmobile approaching. She knows it's Nils. He has a Lynx – a noisy, ancient snowmobile. Sáve has her dad's old Lynx Forest Fox that you have to start by pulling a cord, but she knows the best way to get it started: she pushes the black button and then pulls the cord about a thousand times until she's *really* tired. And then if there's any life in the engine, she squeezes the throttle and gets it started. Almost always, anyway.

“Do you need help?” Nils shouts over the racket. He's parked next to her and watches as she tries to get her snowmobile started.

“No, I'll let it idle for a bit so the engine warms up and then we can get going,” Sáve shouts back after practically wearing herself out with the starter cord. She's dripping sweat beneath her many layers of clothes.

A thick, black cloud of exhaust billows from the Forest Fox, and even more pours out when Sáve accelerates. The exhaust rises straight up into the sky and she can barely see anything as she drives out of the cloud, coughing. They head out of the village, over lakes, across roads, along snowmobile trails, and all the way to a headland. Sáve grins and looks back to make sure Nils is still there, then she gives full throttle and the old snowmobile practically flies over the lake. Nils plays around, driving through the loose snow at full throttle.

“WAHOOO!” he shouts with joy. “This rocks!”

All of a sudden, the snowmobile can't handle anymore and spins deeper and deeper into the snow.

"Dangit!" he shouts over the noise. Sáve pulls up next to him and they start digging the snowmobile out of the snow, working until sweat is running down their faces and backs. The engine dies out and they sit on the mound of snow that's gathered from their digging.

"Geez, this old snowmobile is heavy," Sáve says, taking off her fur hat and drying the sweat off her forehead.

"Yeah. Okay, so when I press on the gas, you need to push on the runners," Nils says.

It feels like they've been digging all day before there's finally some life in the snowmobile again. It emits a powerful sound and sprays snow in all directions. Sáve pushes the runners with all her might, and the snowmobile is finally free.

They drive over to the other headland and up to a ridge, where Nils stops. Sáve comes up behind him.

"We've been herding for hours now. Let's take a little break and light a fire!" Nils says with a grin.

The two of them collect branches, twigs, and some bark. Nils takes a few firestarters out of his pocket and lights some bark beneath a big pine tree. The fire starts to burn. Sáve kneels beside it, takes off her mittens, and starts warming her hands in the heat of the fire.

Ahh, that's nice," she says happily.

Nils smiles.

"Hang on a second, I'll put some twigs on top so it really gets going and we can *actually* get warm."

Nils goes over to his snowmobile and grabs a big, dirty plastic bag that he takes back to the fire. He pulls out some cinnamon rolls, a sooty coffee pot, and a bottle of water.

“Now we can have a little coffee since we’ve been gathering the herd all day,” Nils jokes. He pours water into the sooty pot and sets it on the fire to boil.

“We need to go get the herd that’s down south afterward,” Sáve jokes back.

The fire is roaring now, and a strong wind from the west gives even more fuel to the flames.

“Maybe we should’ve waited until spring before making coffee up in the mountains,” Sáve says, shivering.

“No, no, Sáve, this is nice, just a little chilly,” Nils says as he sets a pine branch on the fire with his ice-cold hands.

“Yeah ... we’re *really* warm now,” she says, and the two of them burst out laughing.

Sáve takes out her phone and snaps a picture of the fire and Nils that she sends to her friends, Juhan and Sárá, so everyone can see how much fun they’re having in the mountains. In the picture, you can’t see how cold it really is. The fire is burning so beautifully and the sun is about to set.

The water in the sooty old coffee pot finally starts boiling, and Sáve pours it into a colorful plastic cup and stirs in some hot chocolate powder. Nils does the same, and the two of them drink hot chocolate from plastic cups and shiver.

“Ahh, it’s so pretty out here, and soooo warm!” Nils jokes.

Sáve laughs. It’s cold; almost five below zero and windy. The wind almost makes it feel like it’s minus *fifty* – and maybe it is. Sáve’s bare hands practically feel like popsicles as she drinks her hot chocolate.

“How about we get the little herd south of the headland and head back home?” Nils suggests.

“Yeah, let’s do that,” Sáve says with a smile. They practice, play, drive, and gather their herd. Both Nils and Sáve dream about being either a reindeer herder or a YouTuber, but Nils also dreams about becoming a soccer player in England.

## Mom's Job

A couple of weeks after Grandma and Grandpa's going away party, someone knocks on Sáve's door early in the morning. Sáve is in dreamland as usual, but she knows it's a weekday and that she needs to get up and drag herself to school. Mom creeps over in the dark and turns on Sáve's heart lamp, which is on her bedside table. The whole bedroom is filled with red light when the heart lamp is on. When Sáve sleepily blinks her eyes open, she sees that her mom's been crying. Sáve doesn't understand. *What's happening?* she thinks dreamily. *Has she really been crying or am I dreaming?* What could it be? She knows her mom doesn't cry for no reason.

"Sáve," her mom says. "Sáve, are you awake? I wanted to tell you something yesterday but you went over to Nils' house."

"What is it?" Sáve whispers back, barely able to keep her eyes open. She rubs her eyes and yawns from beneath her cozy comforter.

"I lost my job, Sáve. My workplace in Karesuando is being shut down. I don't know what I'm going to do or how we're going to make it."

Sáve sits up and wraps her arms around her mom. The woman who was so happy, singing in the kitchen only yesterday, is now crying in the dark morning hours. Sáve doesn't always understand grown-ups. At least not her mom.

"I'm here," Sáve whispers.

Sáve knows how much her mom's job means to her, and now everything is being shut down. She thinks about everyone who will lose their jobs now – at least twenty people.

“Why is this happening?” she asks, but her mom doesn't answer right away and looks at her with sad eyes. Then she tries to explain:

“It's happening because it's been decided that all of the municipal workplaces will be moved to the city of Kiruna,” she says. “And our village also belongs to Kiruna Municipality.” She pauses. “They want everyone to live in the cities. Then there won't be any more villages. They'll disappear when all the workplaces are moved to the cities and they want to gather all of the municipal employees in Kiruna in the same place by the town hall. But then we'll just sit there in our own offices staring at our computers. No one actually cares about where you do your work.”

Sáve starts getting scared. She swallows a lump in her throat and summons her courage to ask her mom the question she's dreading:

“Do we have to move to Kiruna?”

## Empty Cupboards

She can't be bothered arguing with her mom so she just stomps around the kitchen. She opens the fridge and sees that it's still empty. *Totally* empty except for a pitiful piece of dried-up cheese on the top shelf plus a glass of lingonberry jam with a few sad-looking lingonberries at the bottom.

"Mo-ommmm, make some food, I'm starving!" Sáve shouts so her mom can hear her from the bedroom.

But the minutes tick by and she still doesn't hear her mom moving around.

"MOMMM!" she shouts again. She has to come out at some point, doesn't she?

"Make some macaroni! I'll be right there," she can hear her mom reply from the bedroom. The room she basically hasn't left in a month.

Sáve rummages around the cupboard, looking for the macaroni. It's so high that she can't reach it, even when she stands up on the counter. She hops up to grab the package and tumbles off the bench, landing on her rear as the macaroni spills all across the kitchen floor.

Her mom comes running in when she hears the racket.

"Sáve, what on *earth* are you doing?" she shouts.

"WHAT AM I DOING? ME?" Sáve screeches back.

"What are *YOU* doing? You never get out of bed, you don't shower, you don't do *anything*! You don't make food for me! I'm about to STARVE to death. And you STINK, you know that, right?"

Her mother crumples up and starts to cry. She sprawls out on the floor like a little kid.

Sáve has never seen her mom as pitiful as she is now. She feels the tears starting to well up and can't bear to look at her anymore. It's all so difficult – everything that's happened recently.

"I'm sorry, Sáve, sweetie," she whispers in a small voice.

Sáve can barely hear her. She doesn't say anything, just hugs her mom. She hugs her back and they sit like that in the middle of the floor, holding each other.

"It's fine," Sáve whispers back.

Suddenly, they hear someone on the stairs outside. Her mom jumps, and so does Sáve.

"Who on earth could that be?" They weren't expecting any guests now, and it had been a long time since anyone stopped by.

"Hellooo?" a familiar voice shouted from the hallway. Nils!

Nils steps into the kitchen.

"What STINKS in here?" is the first thing Nils asks when he comes in, staring wide-eyed at Sáve and Ellen Marizza sitting on the kitchen floor

Neither of them replies, and Sáve is embarrassed. She's so embarrassed that she wishes she could dig through the floor, all the way to Yokohama on the other side of the world. Then she feels the anger welling up inside her, first at her mom for having put her in this situation, then at Nils because he came here even though she's told him not to at *least* a thousand times.

"Uhhh ..." Nils says uncertainly. "Why does it look like the whole kitchen is infested with flies?" he asks as a fly buzzes past him. He tries to wave it away.

"Because it IS infested with flies!" Sáve practically screams as she stands up and runs upstairs to her room.



Ellen Marizza and Nils are left in the kitchen, macaroni scattered all around them. And from the look on Nils' face, you can tell he doesn't understand. He doesn't understand anything at all.

# The Satellite Phone

After their family's animals were split up from the larger group around Christmas, Sáve's dad and Uncle Áslak moved their herd to Liidnečearru on the plateau, close to Pulsujärvi, where they live in a cabin and herd the animals on ski.

One night while Sáve and her mom are doing yoga in the meditation room, Dad calls from the plateau. There isn't any reception out there, so it's a bit concerning that he's calling with the satellite phone.

Mom is afraid because she knows he only calls when there's a real crisis underway. He's only called once before – when Uncle Áslak got lost on the plateau and was missing for two days. Luckily, he was found alive. But why is he calling with the satellite phone now?

“Oh, Sáve, I'm too scared to answer. You have to!”

“Why?” Sáve asks, surprised.

“Your dad is calling with the satellite phone.”

“Mom, come on! Fine, I can answer,” Sáve says, taking the phone from her mom's hand and picking up.

Her dad gives her a detailed account of what happened and tells her what she needs to do now while her mom watches in terror, not saying anything. Sáve just listens before she suddenly exclaims:

“The authorities?” she asks. She waits for his response. “Okay. We'll see you tomorrow, then. We'll come there,” she says and hangs up.

“What did he say?” her mom asks. “What authorities? What's happened?”

“Dad had really bad news,” Sáve explains gravely. “The herd hasn’t stayed on the plateau, and today they found out that part of the herd was killed by a wolverine. It only killed them halfway and they were tortured to death ...” Sáve’s voice breaks.

“Oh my goodness! What a disaster! First I lost my job and got sick, and now the wolverines are eating our flock,” her mom cries out. “Why, why?” she practically shouts. “When will this end? When will our luck turn?”

“You have to call the authorities tomorrow morning so they come and check the reindeer that were killed, and we also have to go to the plateau to take a look,” Sáve explains. “That’s what Dad said.”

Early the next morning, Sáve and her mom drive to Pulsujärvi. It’s about thirty miles from Idivuoma, and a narrow road goes to the plateau where they have their autumn pastures, enclosures, and cabins. As they’re driving, Mom calls the authorities and tells them about the wolverine and how many reindeer were killed. They decide to fly out with a helicopter as quickly as possible to take a look at the damage.

Sáve’s dad is waiting for her in Pulsujärvi and they head out for the plateau. She sits in the sled dressed in thick snowmobile clothes with a fox skin hat on her head. Suddenly, her dad stops. Sáve gets out of the sled and spots a bloody reindeer up ahead. When she goes a bit closer, she sees the reindeer’s stomach is ripped open and its intestines are hanging out. But it’s still alive. It stands there, suffering, unable to move. The white snow is no longer white, but red with blood.

“Jesus Christ,” her dad shouts, burying his head in his hands.

Sáve is also angry, but more than anything, she's sad. When she goes even closer, she sees the earmarks. It's her reindeer marking.

"My *vuonjal*," she says with tears in her eyes. The young female with the white nose ... Now it's practically dead, killed by a wolverine!

"That damn wolverine," her father curses. "It just PLAYS with the reindeer. It doesn't eat them, it just kills them halfway then abandons them. Now that wolverine has almost killed off the entire smaller herd on this mountain," he shouts into the wind. The only person who can hear him is Sáve.

Dad goes over to the reindeer, takes out his phone, and starts filming.

"Why are you filming?" Sáve asks, shocked. "Are you like Mom now? Filming everything?"

"I'm going to show this video to the authorities so they FINALLY understand what their precious predators are doing. They're torturing the reindeer to death. It's us reindeer herders who are feeding these *monsters*!"

# Dumpster Diver

Now it's Sáve's turn to sit in the back of the car. Mom and Dad are driving to the big grocery store that's between Tornio in Sweden and Haparanda in Finland. They're going on a big shopping trip since there aren't any grocery stores in Idivuoma. When the car stops and Sáve hops out, she sees they've parked behind the store.

Why did they park back here? There's nothing but big dumpsters. Then she spots her mom, who is holding a big, black plastic bag in one hand. Her purple hair flutters in the wind and dollar signs are flashing in her eyes. She walks toward one of the dumpsters. But ... what is she doing?

Sáve watches as her mom dives headfirst into the big, green dumpster, her legs sticking straight up in the air.

*What on earth is she doing?* Sáve thinks. Then she sees her dad standing there, holding the plastic bag and filming with his phone as Ellen Marizza digs through the dumpster.

"WOOOW!" she shouts. "You guys are never gonna guess what I found! And this is all FREE! FREE TREASURE!"

Sáve watches as her mom puts expired food in the plastic bags her dad is holding outside the big, green dumpster. She puts in milk, vegetables, meat, and canned sausages. Soon, the first bag is full. She hears her mom talking to the camera about how she's outside a grocery store and how stores throw away so much perfectly good food that she's now taking home to eat. These groceries are still good, they're just labeled "best before".

Sáve gapes. She has no idea what to do. She feels her face turning red with embarrassment. Why can't her family just be like other families? Why is her mom so weird? Why do they do things like this? *Nobody* else she knows does anything like this. Her mom's smiling face suddenly surfaces over the edge of the container. More free food!

"Come and help, Sáve. There's so much good stuff here! Even those canned sausages you like!" Ellen Marizza calls out to her.

Sáve doesn't say anything. She can't stop thinking about how weird and embarrassing her mom is. Why doesn't she have a NORMAL, old-fashioned mom? Like all the other kids? A NORMAL, BORING mom who sits at home and knits mittens and works at a nursing home. She wants a mom like Nils', who's never been further than Övre Soppero and the Finnish side of Karesuando, and who doesn't even have a computer, let alone a mobile phone. Nils has the best mom in the world, and she doesn't even have a phone.

And she – ONLY SHE – has the weirdest mom in the world: Ellen Marizza, a musician, actress, and now a *YouTuber*? And a blogger on top of all that? Now she has her own famous blog and only dresses in pink and red clothes. Plus she's started spending the night in big warehouses ... and now she's getting old groceries out of dumpsters? Why is her mom diving for garbage?

*Why does Ellen Marizza Abbor have to be my mom?* she asks herself, but nobody answers. Not even the wind has an answer.

"Umm ... Maybe DON'T take garbage out of the dumpster?" Sáve shouts at her parents.

"This is *dumpster diving*!" her mom tells her, emphasizing the words in English. "It's totally normal and really

popular in Southern Sweden and America. Everyone does it there.”

*Anything with an English name automatically sounds cool*, Sáve thinks. She doesn't really agree with her mom, though ... and is this even legal? She's not so sure about that. This seems more like stealing than environmentalism.

“Mom, you're *stealing!*” Sáve shouts as her mom keeps digging around for more food.

“I'm not stealing, Sáve, this is dumpster diving! I am now the DUMPSTER DIVER Ellen Marizza Abbor. It's my new job. And this is so great for the environment! Stores throw away so much food that hasn't even gone bad yet. Perfectly good food! I'm just helping the environment and I can give the food to the needy. It benefits everyone. Win-win for everyone, Sáve. Good for the environment and me and you! Do you know how much this food would cost if we bought it? SO much! And all this is free! It's actually a good thing the municipality laid everyone off in Karesuando, otherwise I'd still be sitting around pushing papers. It's ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC they shut everything down so I can really EMBRACE LIFE,” she says, grinning. “You know what they say, Sáve, YOLO, you only live once! I am now the dumpster diver Ellen Marizza Abbor!”

Sáve eyes her parents dubiously as she starts to feel that familiar feeling of wanting to sink into the ground, all the way to the other side of the earth, to countries like Japan and China, as faaaaarrrr away as humanly possible.

Dad carries a whole box of canned sausages to the car. After that, he grabs some bottles of Coke.

“Look what I found, Sáve. A bag of marshmallows! You and Nils can eat them when you're out with the herd.”

Sáve goes over to her mom and watches her rooting around in the dumpster. She's filthy after digging around the garbage, and she *smells* bad too – sour and fly-infested.

“I made a YouTube video: Dumpster Diving in Sápmi. I just published it, and guess what: soon it'll have 100,000 views! 100,000 in the whole world, can you *believe* it, Sáve?”

“Cool,” Sáve grumbles. “Now can we go **INSIDE** the store like normal people?” she shouts as she starts walking toward the store like other ordinary, boring people do.



## Youtuber

The car is jam-packed on the way home and they have to drive slowly. Sáve sits in the backseat, where it smells funny – probably from all the garbage her mom collected from the dumpster outside the grocery store. *Maybe she's right*, she thinks. *Do stores really throw away so much food?* Sáve didn't know that. She could hand out canned sausages to everyone in Idivuoma and they'd still have plenty left. The “best before” date hasn't even passed on them, and apparently, they're still good for a while after that, too.

It's afternoon by the time they get back home to the yellow house – and now they have to carry everything inside.

There are dozens of big bags and heavy boxes. Even though there are three of them carrying everything in, it takes time. When Dad opens the door, they hear a voice counting in Sámi inside the house: *okta, quokte, golbma*.

“The parrot is counting in Sámi,” Dad laughs.

Meanwhile, Ellen Marizza turns on the computer and screams so loudly it echoes through the house.

“My garbage video has 400,000 views! Sápmi and I are about to get FAMOUS!”

Sáve runs downstairs to watch the video. She thinks her mom is good at explaining why she's doing what she's doing – even if it's not entirely legal.

*Could Mom go to jail? She did film it for the whole world to see ...* Sáve wonders. She shakes off the thought; she doesn't want to think about it and doesn't dare to ask, either. Mom is finally happy again. They celebrate with a can of sausages and a bottle of Coke from their dumpster diving trip.

It's a bright spring evening, and as the sun sets, Sáve starts to feel how tired she is. She's looking forward to being able to lie down in bed after having fed Blesset. The parrot continues to count: *okta, guokte, okta, guokte*. Ellen Marizza films ot. Now, she's a real YouTube celebrity. Suddenly, the parrot says: "Don't buy, don't buy!" Mom laughs. "Yes, exactly. DON'T BUY ANYTHING."

## A New Message

The weekend passes quickly on the plateau. They have bonfires on snowless patches of earth and go fishing in the lakes. They see lots of Norwegians skiing and camping. Sáve can't understand how anyone could live in a tent during the winter. It's cold enough in their little cabin in the mornings! She doesn't get up until her dad has lit the stove and made her some hot chocolate. Her mom also gets up when the cabin starts getting warm and she smells the coffee brewing. This is their last day on the plateau since school starts again tomorrow, and Sáve knows they have to drive over sixty miles back to Idivuoma. She wishes they could stay here longer, though, even for the whole spring if she could choose.

"My dearest, kindest Dad, there's only one thing I want in the whole wide world! Can't we stay here for a few more days?" Sáve pleads, looking at her with her best puppy dog eyes.

"No, we can't. I have to be at work at the mine in Kiruna tomorrow," Dad says. "And your mom is having blog and Instagram withdrawal. She's practically shaking because she's so desperate to post all her pictures online," he laughs.

Her mother is drinking her third cup of coffee and eating crispbread.

"Sáve, there's something we want to tell you," she says gravely.

Sáve looks at them fearfully, a queasy feeling spreading through her body. She entertains the thought that

her parents might be getting divorced since her mom is so very, very serious.

“Sáve, we need to tell you something,” her dad continues while Ellen Marizza takes a sip of coffee. She seems to not want to share whatever the news is.

“What is it? Tell me NOW!” Sáve practically shouts, even though she doesn’t mean to; she’s just so scared. “Are you getting DIVORCED?”

“No, no, Sáve. But we’ve decided that our family – me, you, the parrot, and your mom – are going to move to Kiruna permanently. It’ll be great. Your mom found some work there too, and I have a full-time job in the mine,” her dad explains. “And you can dumpster dive there every day! You have no idea how many big dumpsters there are in Kiruna,” he jokes, trying to be positive.

Sáve is so shocked she can’t even get any words out. She can’t process what she’s just heard – or maybe she simply doesn’t want to. Her worst nightmare is about to come true. They’re going to move away from Idivuoma. They’re going to live in KIRUNA.

“WHAT?!” she shouts after a long silence. “No, no, no, you can’t do this to me,” Sáve screams at the people who apparently make decisions for her. “I AM NEVER, EVER GOING TO LIVE IN THAT MINE DUMP IN KIRUNA! What about Blesset? Where is BLESSET going to live? It can’t live in the city!” she screams, her blood boiling, overwhelmed by sadness and anger simultaneously. She runs to her little bedroom and presses her head into the soft pillow while thousands of tears stream down her face.

Her dad comes in after her, sits down on the bed, and strokes her long, brown hair. He doesn’t say anything.

“GO. AWAY!” Sáve shouts into the pillow. “Just LEAVE and go to that stupid mine dump!”

“Oh, Sáve, honey, don’t cry,” he says, stroking her hair gently. “It makes me so sad when you cry. You know what your mom and I have to do to make ends meet. Everything is so expensive and we have to buy food for the reindeer when there’s a lean year. Plus gas, electricity, and clothes are expensive. Everything costs a lot,” he explains, trying to console her.

But it’s no use. Sáve’s safe, happy life no longer exists. She’s going to move to Kiruna. And the tears will never stop flowing. She doesn’t want to go home; she just wants to stay out here on the plateau forever. When she goes to school, she knows it’ll be sad because she’ll be leaving soon. Everything she does will be for the last time. The last time she plays out on the sports field, the last time she eats in the cafeteria at the big municipal school that the students from the Sámi school have to run to because they don’t have their own cafeteria, and the last time she sits in the classroom with all her friends. She keeps crying at the thought of it. She doesn’t want to tell anyone they’re moving to Kiruna. Stupid, stupid mom and dad, and stupid, stupid lean years.

“I’ll live with Grandma and Grandpa” Sáve sobs. “I DON’T WANT TO LIVE IN KIRUNA! I’d rather move to AMERICA than KIRUNA!”

“Alright, Sáve, that’s enough. Think about how fun this will be! You can start school in Kiruna and make lots of new friends. It’ll be exciting,” her mom says encouragingly. Her dad has already given up and gone to the kitchen.

“And we’ll rent a nice apartment that you and I can decorate and take pictures of for the blog. It’ll be so much fun,” she says, trying to comfort her.

But Sáve doesn’t say anything. She presses her head deeper into the pillow, which is now soaked with her

tears. And she'll be leaving Nils, too ... her best friend in the world. She cries even harder, even though it shouldn't be humanly possible.

Mom and Dad are packing up the sleds outside. There's a blizzard blowing in when Sáve comes out of the cabin. Her eyes are red and swollen and she runs to the outhouse without a jacket or hat because she doesn't even care anymore.

"You'll catch a cold like that, Sáve!" her mom shouts through the snowstorm.

Dad locks the door and they start up the snowmobiles. He promised Sáve she'd be able to drive the other snowmobile behind him. She's never been allowed to do that before, and she knows it's because they're trying to cheer her up. She sits on the snowmobile until her dad is finished packing the sleds and doing everything else he needs to do before they can leave. Sáve is wearing a calf-skin hat and earmuffs and white reindeer-skin mittens, and she tests out the snowmobile's throttle. It makes a noise and moves when she touches it.

"Don't drive off just yet!" her mom shouts from the sled, even though Sáve can't hear her through her hat and earmuffs.

Dad starts up his snowmobile and Sáve follows suit. She accelerates and the snowmobile flies forward. The speed and the freedom rush through her. It's such a good feeling that she almost forgets they'll soon be moving to the big, black dumpster that is the city of Kiruna.