

Hilbbán

Thomas Marainen

Laila Labba

DAVVI GIRJI

© Davvi Girji 2025

Original title: Hilbbán

Text: Thomas Marainen

Illustrations: Laila Labba

Graphic design: Pikelus

© Davvi Girji 2026

English sample translated by John Prusynski © 2026

Financial support: NORLA – Norwegian Literature Abroad

www.davvi.no

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of the copyright owner.

All foreign rights are managed by Davvi Girji. For any questions, please contact us:

e-mail: post@davvi.no

website: <https://www.davvi.no/>

Hilbbán





Nils Ánte once had a very wild and combative reindeer calf. He called her Hilbbán. You couldn't get close without her raising her head and lifting her front legs to stomp the ground.



Hilbbán wasn't the least bit afraid of dogs. Nils Ánte's old dog, Dilkko was afraid of her and knew that if he got near to her, he'd get chased away.

Nils Ánte had gotten mad at Hilbbán many times, when she had run into and hurt him, but all the same he secretly liked her. Hilbbán wasn't like other reindeer. She was a bit different in every way.



Hilbbán was a really remarkable reindeer. “What am I supposed to do with her when she has changed so much,” thought Nils Ánte.

Now that she had taken a liking to the dogs, Hilbbán was spending more time in the enclosure and close to camp. Whenever the dogs barked fiercely at her, she would just get very happy. She became a really good friend to the dogs, and would keep trying to sniff them.

One day Nils Ánte hears howling up on the mountain ridge. Hilbbán, who has begun to believe herself to be a wolf, starts jumping around all over the place. Nils Ánte thinks Hilbbán is afraid.

“Don’t be afraid, Hilbbán. I have a rifle in case the wolves get too close,” says Nils Ánte comfortingly.

Auu Auu





When Hilbbán arrives at a little hill beyond a marsh, she stops to see if she can spot anything. She doesn't see anything before she walks over a few hill faces. Then she notices a wolf cowering among the brush.



Hilbbán comforts and strokes her friend. The wolf's back legs seem to be coming back to life when Hilbbán tries to touch them and massage vigor back into them.



Hilbbán does not like how this is going. She would rather have been part of the wolf pack and followed them. “What should I do now?” thinks Hilbbán.

Hilbbán starts nodding her head at the wolf Valán, as if begging for something. She extends her front leg towards Valán. She wants to pet him. Valán backs up a bit and begins to bare his big teeth. Now Valán is getting a bit angry and annoyed, but Hilbbán doesn't understand. Hilbbán thinks Valán is smiling, and she bares her own teeth.

Valán also starts to feel hungry. Meat that he doesn't have to chase doesn't taste as sweet, so he doesn't do anything to Hilbbán. Hilbbán tries to pet him again, but Valán moves even further back.

"I don't feel like fooling around with you any longer. I'm going to head back to the herd, since the wolves don't seem to want me as a friend," thinks Hilbbán.





Just as Valán is about to jump and bite Hilbbán in the throat, she hears a gun fire. Nils Ánte, who has followed the tracks, has caught up to Hilbbán to save her. The wolves get afraid when they hear the shot and they turn to flee.

Hilbbán was really lucky this time that she didn't get eaten by the wolves, and she went on to live many years and have many beautiful calves for Nils Ánte.

