



# Magic Station

Once upon a town there was a city: Bratislava. That's where I was born. My name is Alma.

The school holidays have just started. I'm staying with my Grandpa and I'm loving it. Grandpa lives in a magic house. It has a garden full of flowers, bumblebees, an attic and a small turret, too. I'm just scared to go down to the cellar because the walls are covered in cobwebs, there are beetles crawling about on the floor and I'm frightened that a bat will fly into my hair.

Grandpa has an African hedgehog. He's prickly, but he's cuddly and smart too. Grandpa says Hedgie can talk but so far he's just been quietly watching us.

Grandpa lives in the Old Town. He has loads of books, but no TV or wi-fi! I can't use my tablet at his house because the best games and apps work only online.

Today is a big day. My favourite cousin Damián arrived this afternoon. He'll stay with us for two weeks! He's a head taller than me, rides a skateboard and is really cool. He wants us to explore Bratislava.

You'll have to take the metro if you want to see all the sights, Grandpa said.

What is the metro?

The metro is like a bus or a tram, except it runs faster and under the ground and can do magic. Would you like to see it?

But Bratislava doesn't have a metro! Everyone knows that!

Sure it does! A secret one!

Let's go! shouted Damián and grabbed his skateboard. Hedgie, too, headed for the door.

Right, off we go! Grandpa said.

I wouldn't for the world go down to the cellar on my own. But Grandpa held my hand. Hedgie came scampering along. Damian got on his skateboard and went hurtling down the stairs and sliding down the banisters.

The corridor took us down and down. It was dark and draughty. The stairs creaked and began to move. The escalator went faster and faster. We rode it for a while until it stopped and there was a red and yellow train waiting for us.

Kids and grown-ups, a magical mystery tour of Bratislava is about to begin! said a voice.

We jumped on at the last minute, Hedgie only just scraped through the closing doors. Bang! The metro moved off into the unknown.