

The History of Civilization

Gerhard Schnell

THE SECRET OF THE ALIENS

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The History of Civilization

The Secret of the Aliens

novel
from
Geri Schnell

The novel was translated into English with de, translator program. Sorry if not everything is perfect.

Ethiopia

Kira is awakened by strong turbulence. She looks out the window and is startled. She has the feeling of heading straight for a ridge. The plane sways back and forth, then sags again. She's not the only one on board clinging to the chair. The view from the window is also unsettling, with the plane almost brushing the treetops. Then it sags again. Kira assumes the worst; the trees are so close that another fall would spell disaster. The pilot seems to have the plane under control again, the ridge is behind them. The wall drops off steeply and there is no longer any need to be afraid. Now it goes steeply down, she has a clear view of the city.

With a hard push, the plane touches down and rolls out, all in the green. The worst is over. Drive slowly to the gate. The engines are running out and the passengers are frantically preparing to disembark.

It feels like an hour later she's standing at the taxi stand and the friendly driver nods when she says the destination is the Hilton Hotel. Now all she wants to do is sleep, but first she needs patience, the traffic in Addis Ababa is extremely taxing on Europeans' nerves. It's hard to imagine how the cars can get through this chaos without colliding. The relief is great when she drives up the driveway to the hotel. Now do the registration formalities and then sleep.

Before falling asleep, she thinks about how it came about that she is now lying-in bed in a hotel in Addis Ababa. A week ago, her friend Mark sent a text message, well friend might be a bit of an exaggeration. She had met Mark at lunch about three months ago in the canteen. He sat down at her table and wished her good appetite. Then they got talking and Mark asked if she knew a cheap hotel. He has to stay two nights in Zurich because he has to attend a

course at the university. For some inexplicable reason, she has offered to stay the night in her pad.

Well, she got faint that night when he was lying in bed next to her, dressed only in his underpants. She really couldn't expect him to sleep on the floor and she doesn't have a sofa. What did it matter, after all Mark looks good, has good manners and she hasn't had a man in her bed for a long time.

The SMS that Mark sent was now more than mysterious.

Hello Kira

I made an exciting discovery with my friends in Aksum. You should definitely see this. Write to me when you can arrive in Aksum, which is in Ethiopia. I'll pick you up at the bus station.

Kiss Mark!

For a moment, in her hotel bed, she ponders whether it might not be better to book the next flight to Europe, but then curiosity prevails. What do you think he found? Then the two nights with Mark go through her head and she falls asleep calmly.

After breakfast she lies down by the hotel pool. She still doesn't have enough energy to try to continue her journey to Aksum. She has to recover today, the flight from Zurich via London had stressed her out.

She keeps wondering what Mark discovered that made him seek the help of a student struggling with an artificial intelligence degree. She won't graduate this year, so a month's delay doesn't matter anymore. In addition, she had wanted to go to Africa for a long time, well, actually Kenya, Namibia or South Africa, but Ethiopia is also interesting. Ethiopians are friendly but very proud people. You are immediately sympathetic to her. She likes it when people appear confident even when they face a tough life. What

little they have; they share with others with a naturalness that we Europeans could learn something from.

Three days later, Kira is on the bus to Tissiat. She was advised not to cover the route to Aksum in one go. It is very strenuous and in Tissiat it is worth visiting the Blue Nile Rapids. The man at the reception gave her a big look when she asked him how best to travel to Aksum.

After just an hour on the bus, she is glad that she listened to the porter's advice. The bus is full to the last seat. As a white woman, she was given the privilege of sitting in the back. Only two women are sitting on the bench, which is actually designed for four people, one with a basket on her legs, in which two are chickens tied together lie. The second woman on the other side is breastfeeding her baby.

As a reward, she gets a corncob to nibble on.

Babysitting is the least of her problems, but she struggles more with the loud music and the stench on the bus. So, holding the baby comes in handy as a welcome change.

Crossing the Blue Nile is not spectacular. A huge bridge connects the two banks. In contrast to Egypt, the shore is bare, at most some herbs grow on the steep bank.

After the bridge, the road climbs steeply and winds its way up the slope with countless serpentines. She's glad she's not sitting right by the window, because next to the road, the terrain often drops vertically into a deep ravine. Not to be compared with the pass roads in Switzerland. The road is narrower and often the rear of the bus hangs directly over the abyss. Several buses, which lie smashed further down, show that things don't always go smoothly.

Some on the bus are throwing up. One curve follows the next. Kira fights too. The woman with the chickens gives

her a stalk of a plant and motions for her to chew on it. It tastes terrible, but it helps, the stomach settles down.

Now the baby requires attention, her mother has to look for something in the basket. Kira gives the little one her index finger, she sucks it with pleasure and is satisfied with it.

Finally, the road is dead straight again. The worst seems to be over. There is a half-hour break at one stop. A cup of coffee and some sort of bun will help settle your stomach. Going to the toilet is urgently needed, even if it takes some effort to use it.

Freshly fed, it goes on. In Tissiat, Kira is relieved to say goodbye to the baby and the chickens. She sees a bicycle shop opposite the bus station. They offer bikes for rent. If she follows the signs and pedals hard, she can reach the rapids of the Blue Nile or the nearby campsite in just over an hour.

She's putting off visiting the falls until tomorrow. In the camp, she lies down in a vacant spot and crawls into the sleeping bag. She briefly wonders whether she will wake up in the morning and find an empty backpack. There is nothing else to do, she is so tired that she takes the risk.

In the morning the backpack is still there. She worried for nothing. In the camp she affords herself a breakfast of ham, eggs and coffee. The spirits awaken again and the thirst for adventure seizes them. She descends the path to the falls. However, they are not like that

spectacular, as she had expected, even the Rhine Falls are more impressive. However, some rare plants grow in the immediate vicinity of the falls.

She sits on a rock and watches the few tourists watching the spectacle. Most of them are locals and she can also spot some school classes, which are guided through the area by the teacher.

Kira has time to think. What awaits you in Aksum? Now she has left through the travel brochure that she found at the reception desk in the hotel in Addis. She marvels at the large steles that can be admired in Aksum. They are at least as beautiful as the obelisks in Egypt. What do you think Mark discovered that inspired her to take this trip? He has to have a valid reason, just because he longs for her shouldn't be enough of a reason. Is he in love with her after all?

So what? After the two nights, she thought about him for another two weeks, but then she went back to her normal rhythm of life and checked him off. She liked Mark instantly, it was like love at first sight, if such a thing even exists. Now she is no longer sure. She convinces herself that she only took the trip out of curiosity. Women can't take it when they can't fathom a secret.

Hunger drives them back to the campsite. A few more photos of the rapids and she hikes back. She wants to sleep early because she knows tomorrow will be another strenuous journey.

Aksum

Mark is waiting for you at the bus station in Aksum. She sees the kiss as a greeting more as a disappointment. Kira feels more insecurity than passion. It is probably more the discovery that caused him to lure her to Aksum and not the longing for her.

"It's not far," Mark shoulders her backpack and gestures to go, "how was the trip?"

"Very exhausting," explains Kira and follows Mark.

"The accommodation options in Aksum aren't particularly comfortable," Mark apologizes, "I hope you're not too disappointed!"

"I just want to sleep," says Kira, "I'm dead tired. I'll sleep on a hard rock tonight too."

Mark opens a door and invites Kira into his pad. In the very simply furnished communal kitchen, everything is very cramped and there is

not a device that could be described as a luxury. There is a sandwich on the table.

"I thought you were still hungry!"

"Thanks! Yes, I'm hungry, then show me the bed!"

"This is the bedroom," Mark points to the door to the bedroom, "unfortunately the light works not, you have to get used to that, some things don't work here. It's also very hot, I recommend only light clothing."

Mark leads her to a bed in the dark and she lies down.

"I'll come later. I'm still waiting for my friends. - Sleep well!"

A kiss on Kira's forehead and he closes the door. She falls asleep instantly.

When Kira wakes up in the morning, she is in bed with Mark. The smell of coffee comes from the kitchen. Since she cannot resist. She straightens the t-shirt, puts on her

shorts and goes into the kitchen. Mark is also sitting at the laid table. A colleague fills her coffee cup.

"This is Dario and this is Gildo!" Mark introduces his two friends.

Kira greets them both with three kisses on the cheek, then she shoves a fried piece of bacon into her mouth, she is hungry and enjoying the English breakfast.

Then she turns to today's program. While Gildo and Dario continue digging in the excavation site, Mark will visit Aksum with Kira and show her the most important sights.

The sights in Aksum amaze Kira. The highest steles are over 20 meters high and decorated with patterns. Even if some have already fallen over, there are still many who are still standing vertically on a small area. Amazing and has been for hundreds of years.

Access to the church, in which the Ark of the Covenant is said to be kept in two stone crypts, is forbidden for women. Mark comforts Kira, it's nothing spectacular that you're missing out on here. Such tombs can be found all over the world. It is the mysticism, which is artificially built up, which gives the stones a special aura.

At the market, Mark buys a kind of omelet, which must be sufficient as a snack. A few more richly decorated churches, then the tour of Aksum is complete. Mark leads Kira back to her flophouse. She needs to change and Mark gives her a yellow boiler suit.

"It's a rule, otherwise you're not allowed to go to the excavation site, put on your hiking boots, you have to hike a bit first."

Only in shorts Kira gets into the overalls.

"It's a rule, otherwise you're not allowed to go to the excavation site, put on your hiking boots, you have to hike a bit first."

Only in shorts Kira gets into the overalls.

"Is that okay?" asks Kira, "I'm afraid it will get too hot otherwise!"

"It suits you perfectly, you're the prettiest archaeologist around, I can assure you."

Mark shoulders another backpack, then they start hiking. After half an hour they approach a group of trees. Kira is glad to finally have some shade. Hidden behind a bush, she now discovers the entrance to the excavation site.

"We still have to wait until four o'clock," explains Mark, "then the local helpers will call it a day. We don't want them to hear about our discovery just yet."

Kira nods in agreement and watches the hustle and bustle. Every two minutes a young man leaves the tunnel and hands Mark a basket full of excavated material. It is poured through a sieve so that any valuable objects get caught. Only when the sieve has passed is the excavated material dumped on a heap. Kira takes over the sifting of the earth that hasn't fallen through the sieve. What awaits you at four o'clock?

They wait until ten past four. Then Mark invites her into the narrow passage. He lights her way with a flashlight. After a turn, Mark stops and begins to scan the side passage. Then he found what he was looking for. He carefully pulls a loose stone out of its anchorage. Now he shines a light into a hole, which turns out to be a corridor decorated with reliefs. However, the aisle is so narrow that a normally built person does not pass.

"We used an endoscope to look into the chamber behind it and discovered strange objects that puzzle us."

"What do you suspect?" asks Kira as she looks at a picture, "what purpose do these objects have."

"We assume that they represent some kind of archive, but that's just a guess. I was hoping that with your slender figure you could feel one of these objects, would you like to try it?"

"I'll definitely try," she says optimistically, "I can't promise I'll succeed. But please don't leave me stuck in the narrow aisle."

Before Kira tackles her special task, she is prepared accordingly. A rope is tied around the legs so that they can be pulled back if necessary. She is also given gloves because one does not know whether touching the objects could be dangerous. With a hose, Mark could blow extra fresh air into her face via a pump.

"So, now it should work," Mark looks at his work one last time. Kira kneels down and begins to crawl inside. Her torso has already disappeared down the aisle. Men never got that far. Shortly thereafter, she feels the end of the corridor with her hand.

"I can feel the wall of the chamber," she reports to the back, "push a little more and I can dive in up to my elbow."

Mark supports her feet. Now Kira pushes forward a few centimeters again. After a short break, the next attempt.

"Enough, I can reach into the room now," reports Kira.

After a short breather, she continues groping.

"I have an object in my hand," she reports enthusiastically, "you can withdraw me now!"

The three men carefully pull Kira back.

"Uff, that was exhausting!" reports Kira when she's back in the main aisle. She proudly shows her found treasure.

"It looks like a coil!" says Dario, "what was it for?"

"We'll find out later," says Mark, "now the corridor has to be closed again and all traces have to be removed. Gildo, you accompany Kira outside, she deserves some fresh air."

While Gildo lights her way, Kira leaves the dig site. She rejoices in the last rays of the sun, which color the sky red. It's done.

She is still holding the found object in her gloved hand. Now in the light she can really look at him for the first time. he looks weird She has never seen anything like it. In fact, Mark's description comes closest to reality. Something

is coiled on a round body. Just what is that? She has never seen anything like it. The coiled thread is reminiscent of fiber optics, but how is it possible that the builders of the facility were able to produce fiber optics? At the university in Zurich, they will have a lot to nibble on.

Now Dario and Mark also come outside. They closed the passage again so that the local helpers shouldn't notice anything the next morning. Mark doesn't want to share the secret just yet. First of all, it must be clarified what this object is and, above all, why and when it was made and stored here?

"You have to help us again," Mark turns to Kira. "We'll be checked when we leave the excavation site. I suspect that if you're a woman, they won't pat you down as closely. Can you hide the item in your shorts?"

"Anything else?" asks Kira.

'No, then you've done your job. I invite you to dinner at the Sabeian International Hotel tonight!'

"I can't say no to that," she pulls the zipper of the yellow coveralls far down and sees how she can best accommodate the item in her shorts. She doesn't mind that the boys can admire her breasts again. Her attention is focused on the mysterious object, she wants to take him safely to the flophouse and later to the university in Zurich.

As expected, they pass the check by the park attendants without any problems. The guard hardly dares to look at Kira, let alone touch her.

Around eight o'clock Mark strolls towards the entrance of the Sabeian International Hotel with Kira on his arm. Both Mark and especially Kira have dressed nicely. The waiter takes the reserved sign from a table and offers Kira the chair.

A real pleasure after the days of deprivation. Just reading the menu makes your mouth water.

A good hour later, treat yourself to a coffee at the bar. The food was excellent.

"We should get the item to Zurich as soon as possible!" suggests Mark. "My father is trying to organize our return journey as soon as possible."

"I have to book my return flight three days in advance," explains Kira, "but maybe the airline will talk to you."

«My father is trying to organize a flight via Asmara, so we would save ourselves the exhausting journey to Addis Ababa. In this case, money is not an issue."

"If that's the case, I have nothing against it, but I can't contribute to the additional costs."

"Of course, you're invited," says Mark, "without your slim figure we'd have to wait a long time for the item. You also have to help take the item out of the country. At the border with Eritrea and at the airport in Asmara, there are less controls than at the airport in Addis Ababa, they are very well set up there. »

"I adapt, but I don't want to be a smuggler in an Ethiopian prison, I want to avoid this experience."

"I'm not interested in that either. It won't work out tomorrow, dad needs time. How about a trip to Lalibela? I can rent the excavation team's jeep. This is a day trip and the rock churches are very interesting. That is simply part of a visit to Ethiopia."

"Well, after such a good meal, I'm ready for new adventures."

The trip to Lalibela is very interesting, but again very exhausting for Kira. She doesn't show anything and takes pictures of the imposing church carved into the rock.

Back in Aksum, the email from Mark's father arrived. They have the code with which they can get the plane tickets in Asmara.

The next morning, they leave early. Gildo will drive the two of them to the airport in Asmara by jeep, after which

they are almost home.

They only have to survive the baggage check. In Kira's beauty case, she manages to get the item onto the plane.

They fly to Zurich via Dubai.

The next evening in Zurich, the two take their backpacks from the conveyor belt at the airport. The return flight wasn't as exhausting as the arrival, but Kira is still tired. After a hamburger at Mac Donald's, she wants to get to her apartment as soon as possible. Mark actually wanted to visit his parents, but he canceled by phone. He wants to sleep with Kira, he can make up for the family visit next week.

In her apartment, Kira proudly takes the item from her beauty case. You did it, the item passed all customs check without any problems. Finally, they can take a closer look at him. In Ethiopia, they didn't dare to take him out of the bag they put him in immediately after the rescue. They feared that someone might be watching them.

The item looks unusually modern for an antique. It's a bit like a spool of thread, but there are big differences, but they don't want to worry about them until they've had a good night's sleep.

They photograph the object from all sides, place it in a shoebox and pad the box with cotton. Kira takes the box to the basement. You don't know how sensitive the object is. In the cellar it has at least a similar temperature as in the burial chamber and in the box, it is protected from light.

The next morning, Kira and Mark enter the university in Zurich, well rested, fed and showered. Kira carries the box while Mark struggles to find the office where they set up a date with a student named Ulla.

"Hay Kira, hello Mark," she greets Ulla, "now I'm curious what you brought me, that sounded very mysterious."

Kira puts the box on the desk and opens the lid. Mark watches Ulla's face with excitement. There's no mistaking it, she's disappointed.

"That's supposed to be an antique piece?" she says, horrified. "Are you kidding me?"

"Now take a good look at it," insists Mark, "we found it at an excavation site and I don't think anyone was joking."

«Okay, - today isn't the first of April and they don't shoot anymore. Let's proceed as is customary with an antique object."

Ulla calls up a form on the PC, notes the date and time, then photographs the object in a box lined with lined paper with a line spacing of one centimeter and copies the first image into the form on the PC. It receives a register number under which the form is archived.

Now she has some questions for Mark. Time of discovery, location.

"Can't you be a little more specific?" she asks back after Mark only gave Ethiopia as the place of discovery.

"Okay, let's say Aksum, but there are no more precise details for the time being."

The form is gradually filling up. Weight, dimensions and general condition are registered.

"So now we have to go to the laboratory," says Ulla, "I still don't know if it's worth the effort, it looks rather modern."

"I assure you - it is not!"

"Well, I have to prepare a few things, you can have a coffee in the meantime, I need half an hour."

When they return to the lab 40 minutes later, Ulla is so busy that she doesn't even hear them coming.

"It's the strangest thing I've ever examined," says Ulla with an astonished expression on her face, "even the material is strange, Scandinavian, I've never found that in a sample. This also indicates that it is not a fake, as Scandinavia is difficult to obtain today. »

"I try to explain that all the time, the thing is real and there are more of them," explains Mark, "I just didn't want to inform the Ethiopians before I know what it is."

"At least it's neither toxic nor radioactive, I won't know until tomorrow what biological contamination looks like."

"What's next?" asks Mark.

"We check the individual parts again. In particular, the thin thread that is wound on the spool must be analyzed more closely. It seems to have a function. But which one is still a mystery to me. I'll sleep on it for a night, maybe then I'll have an idea."

"We have time, the thing was buried in the ground for centuries, now one day doesn't matter. I'll call you tomorrow and we'll see."

This marks the end of your visit to the university. Kira wants to show Mark something else about Zurich.

The next morning, Mark calls Ulla.

"Hello Mark, it's good that you're calling," you can clearly see her excitement, "I suspect that data is stored on the thread, between the Scandinavian atoms, sometimes beryllium atoms and then Alkalium atoms again. No idea how they could do that? It's not that easy to do chemically."

"I have a similar assumption," says Mark, "can you separate some sequences, then we can try to decode the message with translation programs?"

"I've already tried that, the first attempt failed, with a new method that I'm just starting, it should work better."

"Okay, can we help?"

"No, it will take time, I should have read most of the information by this evening, then the translators can begin. Then this is something for you Kira! The AI will be challenged, if not overwhelmed."

"Then I'll leave you to work and call you again tonight. I'm visiting ETH today; I'm looking for a small robot so I can salvage more coils."

Using a cardboard box, Mark quickly builds a model of how the access to the site is structured. He uses it to visit ETH and see if they can find a robot that can cope with the events. The first robots fail at the edge, which leads to the cavity after the narrow passage. Other robots cannot grab the coils. It won't be easy.

After some remodeling, a robot seems up to the task. The project manager wants to ask his professor whether the robot could be released for this task, but the professor can't be reached until tomorrow.

The two end the afternoon with a walk on Lake Zurich. Back at the apartment, Mark calls Ulla.

"Hello Mark," she reports, sounding optimistic, "I was able to unwind and examine a few coils, I'll send you a file with thousands upon thousands of bits. I've already reserved the big computer for tonight, it's going to get pretty hot, I'm curious if we can read a first text tomorrow."

After that, the two get caught up in detailed discussions, Ulla is brimming with ideas and Mark keeps up, so a lot comes together that can keep the computer busy for the night.

«That sounds good, can you send the file to my email address? I'm really excited to see what they have to tell us."

«I'll try, I don't know if we'll get a readable text in connection with AI yet. Good night, see you tomorrow! I probably can't sleep."

Kira tried to get Mark's mind off with a good dinner. It takes a lot to get him in the mood today. But finally, the two fall asleep tightly embraced.

They both enjoyed breakfast. Mark, but also Kira, keeps watching the computer, which acoustically indicates incoming mails. Some spam e-mails upset her unnecessarily, but then finally, the e-mail is from Ulla.

Mark notes that it is a text written in German. The AI has already done the translation. Kira begins to read:

The jeep is being prepared for an excursion. Y1, Y2 and Y3 start driving.

"What's that supposed to mean?" asks Mark, "they certainly didn't have a jeep, so the translator program must have misinterpreted the era. Anyway, let's hear what he condenses next."

They climb a hill and photograph the surroundings. Later they leave the hill and drive out onto a plain. They keep stopping and taking photos.

Later they reach a restaurant and are greeted warmly. The host invites you to the table and you are provided with sufficient food. While Y1 and Y3 are eating, Y2 visits the landlord's wife and gives her seeds for the garden.

Then she takes a different route back home.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Mark is surprised, "that would mean that the coil is at most seventy years old, that can't be."

"That's probably due to the translation program, it's not yet programmed for the right language or time period."

"I'll call Ulla now, maybe she has an explanation."

"Hello Mark," Ulla answers immediately, "I'm sure you're a bit surprised too. Those were the only sequences the translation program could understand. The rest, it is in the megabit range, are probably photos, files or measurement results. In any case, the program couldn't make sense of anything. Sorry, are you disappointed?"

«Yeah, but every beginning is difficult, after all there are some indications that stories are actually saved. We just don't know how to read them."

"Kira might be able to do more with the file, she's more experienced in AI than I am."

"We're not in a hurry," says Mark, "I'll take care of how we can bring more spools to Zurich. Nice day!"

After Ulla's call, Mark calls his family. He wants to use the time and visit her again.

"Are you coming with me? I want to introduce you to my family."

"Isn't that a bit early? We haven't known each other that long!"

"It could wait, but I have to convince father to step in as a sponsor. We have to organize a number of things that cannot be managed through a university budget. I hope you can help convince him it's a good investment!"

Kira is a bit nervous; she didn't think that Mark already wants to introduce her to his family. Now they are on the train to Brugg. Mark's mother will pick her up at the train station.

"That's my mom," Mark introduces his mother, "that's Kira!"

"I'm Gabriela, call me Gaby, that's easier."

Gaby doesn't look like she's 50 years old, she looks much younger. On the way to Mark's parents' house, Kira is questioned. How did you meet? how old is Kira and what she is studying and much more that mothers just want to know.

Well, the reports are not overly detailed. At lunch together in the canteen, Kira's description of getting to know each other ends. The mothers don't have to know everything either!

"Father is coming home for lunch, I'll cook something."

While Gaby cooks, Mark shows how and where he grew up. His room still looks the same, with pictures of the space stations and photos of the moon landing still decorating the walls.

"Food's ready, Andi just drove into the garage, are you coming down?" Gaby calls.

"This is Andreas," Mark introduces his father, "this is Kira."

"Oh, very pretty!" Andi can't help but give a compliment, "What did my son do to deserve that?"

"It turned out that way, I haven't found anything better!" Kira counters the allusion.

Now plenty is served. The full program, aperitif, starter, main course and dessert. Kira can no longer and has to pass the dessert.

"I took the afternoon off so we can talk at length over coffee on the porch."

Mark has already announced that he could use his help, or at least some good advice.

Gaby serves the coffee, then she clears up the kitchen. Mark shows Andi the photos of this mysterious coil. Then he briefly explains where and how they found them and that there are others lying around that he would like to smuggle past the Ethiopian authorities. We've found them and now we're interested in what secrets the coils still reveal.

Only at the end does he inform you about the first translation and the strange text that poked out of it.

Andi listened quietly until the two had given all their information. Then he leans back in his chair and seems to be thinking. Andi was a senior officer in the military before pursuing a career in the private sector as a works manager.

"How heavy is this coil?"

"Two kilos and three hundred grams, it's about the size of a beverage bottle, just a little heavier."

"I suspect that if you put them in your hand luggage normally, they would be noticed by X-ray."

"Definitely," Mark explains, "Kira smuggled her through customs in her beauty case. She wrapped it in aluminum foil so that it looked like a perfume bottle, but that worked in Eritrea, it would never have worked in Addis Ababa."

"You gave me a real problem; I have to sleep on it."

"No problem, I'm only flying back to Ethiopia in a week."

"Kira can sleep here tonight, or is your bed too narrow for the two of you?"

"Of course not, thanks for the offer!"

The next morning, they are both on the train to Zurich. Kira has another class to attend and Mark wants to work on the robot modifications.

At lunch, the two meet in the canteen. It's almost the same as the first meeting, only this time much more relaxed. Mark has an appointment with a mechanical shop that needs to attach some jigs.

After dinner, Kira uses her computer at the university, she wants to deal with the mysterious translation.

She saved the character string read out from the coil on her stick. She wants to try to translate them herself, after all AI is her major, maybe this will result in a topic for her diploma thesis, or at least for a term paper.

It takes some time for her to work her way into the file. Now she is convinced that it doesn't just work in binary, there is still information that can be assigned to a higher level. She analyzes the data using the octal and hexagonal system without being able to make a clearer statement. The systems seem to change randomly depending on the information they contain. The human brain is overwhelmed, it needs a lot more information to follow the ideas of the writers. She will only be able to crack the code once additional coils have been evaluated.

Now she just goes through the text again. Put simply, it gives some words a different meaning. She's free to choose.

A jeep becomes a research vehicle and an excursion becomes a research expedition.

The research vehicle is being prepared for a research expedition. Y1, Y2 and Y3 start driving.

This makes the beginning of the text a little clearer and no longer tied to the twentieth century. The fact that three people took part in the expedition is neutral and independent of time, but does not say much.

Next, she changes photographing to exploring.

You climb a hill and explore the area. Later they leave the hill and drive out onto a plain. Again and again, they

stop and continue researching.

Instead of research, there could also be measurements or test drilling.

But after that, the text gets trickier. What do you mean by restaurant? Obviously the three are entertained, but does it have to be a restaurant? It could also be a farmer's yard, or more appropriate in the desert, a tent. How friendly the reception really was also questionable for Kira. It will only be possible to determine this more precisely later, when one can interpret the signs better.

The role of Y2 becomes mysterious. Why is he giving the landlady seeds for the garden? Is paid with the seed? Do the three plants want to sow which ones are better suited to the desert? Why does the landlord, who was probably her husband, have to deal with the other two? Couldn't it be that the seed was planted in the landlady's wife, in her womb? Now the story becomes somewhat ambiguous. Now the story reads quite differently:

The research vehicle is being prepared for a research expedition. Y1, Y2 and Y3 start driving.

You climb a hill and explore the area. Later they leave the hill and drive onto a plain. Again and again, they stop and continue researching.

Later they reach a tent and are greeted. The owner of the tent must provide them with sufficient food. While Y1 and Y3 feed themselves, Y2 gets the owner's wife pregnant.

Then she drives back home on a new route.

Where is this home? It can be at most half a day's journey away. Kira also has other problems classifying the story with the changed words.

Kira has to digest this twist in the story first. She tries to go back in time. Not an easy task, because she doesn't know which time period this actually applies to. Most finds in Aksum are dated to the fourth century. At that time there were no expedition vehicles. Well, it could also have been a

camel caravan, but what does that change about the description? - Nothing!

She is still deep in thought when Mark rings the bell.

"How was your day? - Do you think the robot is up to the task? »

"It'll be fine," says Mark, but doesn't fail to kiss her in between, "they know their job, that's no problem, just how do we get the robot to Aksum? I have to discuss this with father. I hope he has a good idea!"

"I'm sure he did," but come in, "we have to cook the food together, I didn't have time to prepare anything."