

engage  
Kids

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ENGAGE EUROPE



THE HEART OF EUROPE

# HEART PROBLEMS

Louie pressed his nose against the back window of the train. Margot had chosen that spot so they could see everything.

"The train is cool because we get to see different stuff than we do from a bus. Look, Margot! It's a castle...or...what used to be one. It looks soooo old!"

Margot wasn't as excited as Louie. She'd seen many castle ruins. But she understood Louie's enthusiasm, so she smiled. "It sure does, Louie. Now that we've crossed the border into Slovakia, we should get to Vrbovce Šance (VAIRRR-bo-tseh SHAN-tseh) before too long."

"Gooooood. We've been traveling all day. First by bus, now by train, and...wait. Where? Ver...who?" Louie decided his tongue wasn't made for that kind of twisting.

"That's the name of the village where Tim and Sharron Teed live. This train will take us right there." Margot patted the seat, inviting Louie to sit beside her. "I've got a few more words for you to try: Czechoslovakia (check-uh-slo-VAA-kee-a) and bryndzové halušky (BRIND-zo-vay hal-LOOSH-ski)."

As Louie tried to mimic her pronunciation, she explained the big words. "Once upon a time, Slovakia and the Czech Republic were one country called Czechoslovakia. Bryndzové halušky is a favorite Slovak dish of small potato dumplings topped with salty sheep's cheese and bacon crumbles."

Louie's stomach growled. "You had to mention food, didn't you?" He laughed. "Tell me more about Slovakia. Maybe that will quiet my growling stomach."

"I can do that! Slovakia has many castles, but it also has more than 3,800 caves and several underground rivers."

"Oooohhh... I wonder what it's like to swim in one of those!" Louie said.

“Tourists from around the world come for Slovakia’s mineral springs. They are known for helping people’s aches and pains. The snowy mountains are perfect for skiing and other winter sports. Slovaks love all cold-weather sports, especially ice hockey. Bratislava is the only capital city in the world that is in one country while bordering two others.” Margot paused, her forehead wrinkled. “The Slovaks have a lot to be proud of—their heritage, their beautiful country, and their famous status as the center or the heart of Europe. But that’s part of the problem. They are TOO proud.”

“Too proud? What do you mean?” Louie turned to watch another castle pass by.

“You see, they are so proud that they find it hard to admit they need God,” said Margot quietly.

“The heart of Europe needs to know more about the heart of Jesus,” said Louie.

“Yes,” agreed Margot. “They do indeed.”



# Games from Slovakia

**Kolo, Kolo Mlynské (Wheel of the Mill):** One of the most famous Slovak circle games, similar to “Ring Around the Rosie.” Children hold hands, walk in a circle while singing, and all drop to the ground at the end of the rhyme.



**Zlatá Brána (Golden Gate):** Two players raise their arms to form a “gate” while the other children walk through in a chain while singing a traditional chant. When the song ends, the gate drops to “catch” a child, who then chooses a category (e.g., apple or pear) and joins the gate.



**Vlci a Husy (Wolves and Geese):** A classic playground game where one child is the house-keeper and one is the wolf. The rest of the children act as geese. They chant a call-and-response rhyme before the wolf chases the geese back to the housekeeper’s “home.”

Can you find your way  
to the heart of Europe?



## MEMORY VERSE

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit  
within you.

Ezekiel 36:26 NKJV



# A HEART FOR OTHERS

“We’ve arrived!” Mr. Ed Durham walked toward Louie and Margot. Mrs. Heather followed close behind, holding a small gift bag in one hand.

“What’s in the bag?” Louie asked as he hopped down from the train, one step at a time. “Is today someone’s birthday?”

Mrs. Heather smiled brightly. “Nope, not this time. This is a treat for Harper!”

“Who’s Harper?” Louie asked, but his question was lost amid a rush of hugs and hellos from the missionaries they had come to visit.

Heather patted Louie’s head and said, “Louie, you remember our dear friends, Tim and Sharron Teed, don’t you?”

“Oh, yes! I do! You guys used to drive trucks, right?”

“We did!” said Sharron. “We drove trucks together for ten years. Then God changed our hearts and showed us He had another plan for us.”

Ed said, “They followed God’s leading, started pastoring and working with teens, and then we came along and tugged at their hearts again.”



“You sure did!” Tim spoke up. “You talked about Slovakia and how this beautiful country needs missionaries. Sharron and I prayed that God would send some, and then...He chose to send us!”

Harper and his friend Lilly wait for Tim to fix supper

“He laid a burden on us to reach the people in the geographic heart of Europe with His love,” added Sharron.

Margot reached up and took Sharron’s hand. “How long have you been here?”

“Around three years, and we love it. Tim has helped with lots of construction projects, plus we’ve been learning the language and building relationships with the people. Much of our work is with children.”

Louie bounced up and down. “Will we get to meet some of them? And...who is Harper??”

Sharron laughed. “Of course you can! Do you want to meet Slovak, Filipino, or Roma kids? We work with all three.”

“Really? Impressive. But...which one is Harper? Is he Slovak, Filipino, or Roma?” Louie really, really, really wanted to know who the treat was for.

“None of the above,” Tim said as he slid open the door to their big white van. An adorable black-and-white puppy barreled out and knocked a surprised Louie to the ground. Louie laughed so hard he could barely catch his breath as Harper licked and slobbered all over his face.

“Louie,” said Sharon, with a dramatic sweep of her arm, “meet our Boston terrier, Harper. I believe you two will be great friends.”

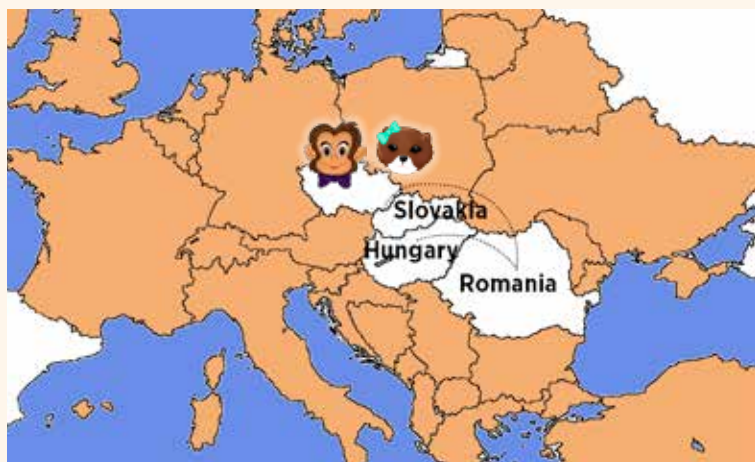


# Louie's Treehouse Lain



## WHERE ARE LOUIE AND MARGOT?

Louie and Margot have left Romania and traveled to Slovakia. They rode 518 kilometers (That is 322 miles.) on a bus and then a train.



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