



3. The story is started by Stavros, Constantinos, Olga, Christofora (Greece)

Theofano was very happy. Just a few days earlier, she had celebrated her 15th birthday! Soon she would get married as her father was going to choose the man who would be her husband.

She knew that he had discussed this with several young men who came from important, aristocratic families in Constantinople but no decision had been made. She only wished her future husband would be as kind as her own father.

Her father was a wealthy Byzantine merchant who often travelled to faraway places. Her mother's family came from a distant country of the cold north, called Livonia. They had travelled south to find a better fortune after their village had been burnt down in a raid by an unknown tribe.

Thefano's mother and father were both very special people and they always told Theofano how happy they were when she was born. Unlike poor people, they did not have to worry about the dowry they would give to her future husband, so she was not a burden to her family.

When her younger brother was born, though, she remembered that celebrations lasted for days. When her brother became six, a private educator started to come to their house to teach her brother. Her parents agreed that she could have lessons with her brother and she knew that this was something very few girls were allowed to do. She felt privileged!

Theofano was also looking forward to two important events. The following week she would participate in the custom of Cleidon, an ancient tradition, together with her friends. She might find out, at last, which man she would marry.

But the second event was equally exciting. In a few weeks her father would travel north, on business. This time Theofano, her mother and her young brother would go along and they would visit her mother's land of origin. They would visit distant Livonia....



3. Story is continued by Ieva, Undīne and Rota (Latvia)

The next day her parents told her that, she and her uncle had to go to Turkey because her uncle had to settle a contract with an important dealer, and after that visit Livonia because her parents had other issues a few weeks more. She agreed because she was eager to visit other countries.

She started to pack for her adventure. Early in the morning, they went to the port to get on board a ship. She was very excited. After three days, they reached their destination. While her uncle was having a business meeting, she had some free time for herself.

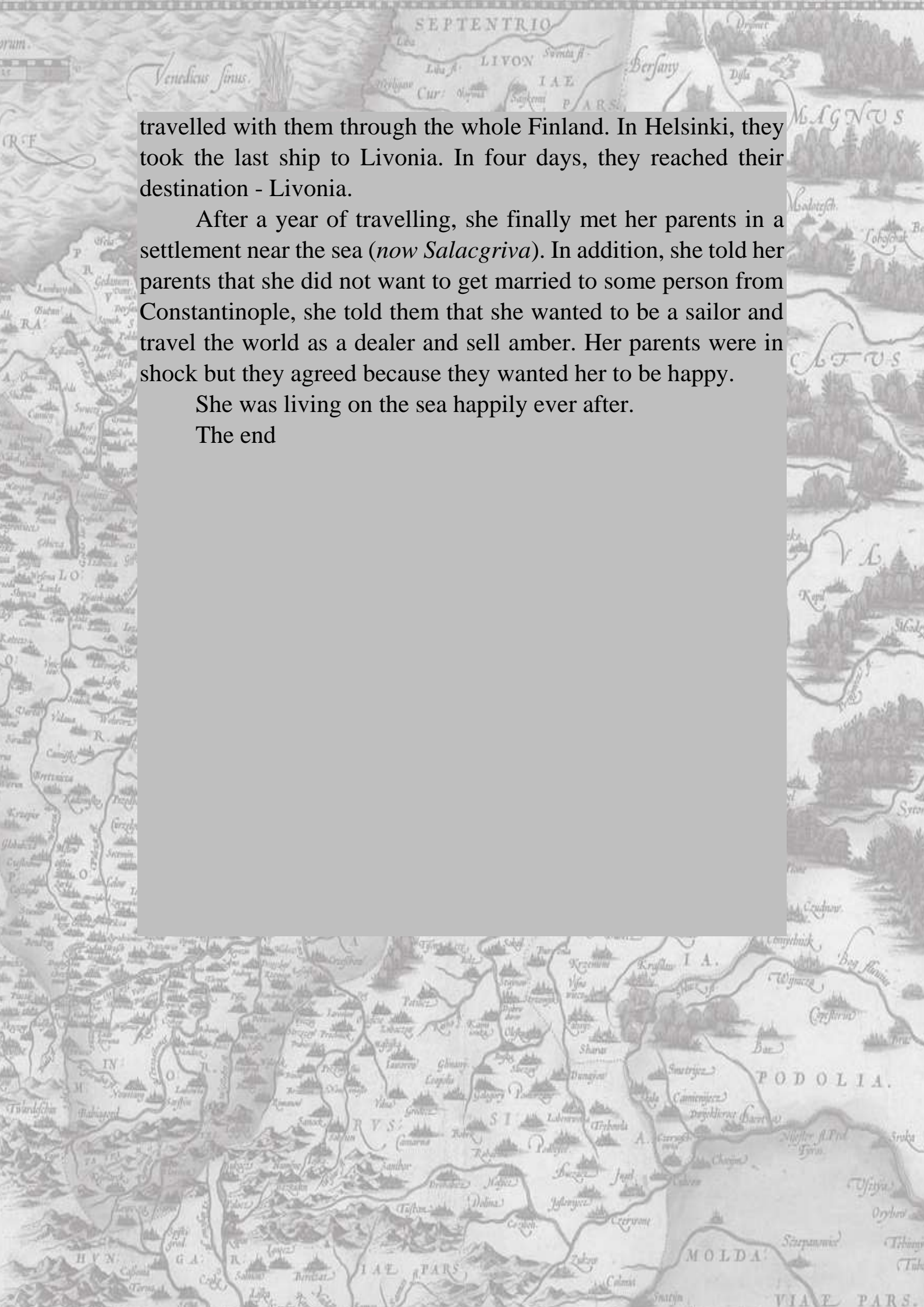
Turkey was quite similar to Greece - the same markets, the same weather but only the language was different. She bought some clothes and jewellery. She waited for her uncle to come back and they could go further to distant Livonia.

It was after a week in the Mediterranean Sea when on a foggy evening a pirates' ship came from nowhere and seized their ship. Her uncle locked her in her room for safety, cut her long, brown hair, and told her to dress up like a boy.

The next night they stopped in the middle of nowhere. The pirates took all the jewellery and money that they had found. During the black night, they threw all of the people overboard in the water. In the morning, the sun was shining brightly and they woke up on a beach of Galicia that is at least what her uncle said.

They went to the closest village to get some information about the next ship to the north. The next ship was leaving in 20 minutes but the ship was only going to Iceland. In Iceland, her uncle had some good friends. For a week, they were in Iceland and they went to search for his friends. His friends gave them money, clothes, food and ship to go on.

They went to the north of Norway so they could avoid Vikings. They sold their ship and bought a dog sledge. They



travelled with them through the whole Finland. In Helsinki, they took the last ship to Livonia. In four days, they reached their destination - Livonia.

After a year of travelling, she finally met her parents in a settlement near the sea (*now Salacgriva*). In addition, she told her parents that she did not want to get married to some person from Constantinople, she told them that she wanted to be a sailor and travel the world as a dealer and sell amber. Her parents were in shock but they agreed because they wanted her to be happy.

She was living on the sea happily ever after.

The end



*Picture drawn by Ieva Podgainija
(one of the authors of the story)*