

Benjamin Schreuder
Dominik Rupp

Die

ZeitBande

Der Zorn des Pharaos

Adam

Tinka



Niko

TESSLOFF



Mudbath with a snake

All of a sudden, Adam, Niko und Tinka find themselves a few meters above ground - but not for long. Because suddenly they are falling...

»... **downwaaaaards** ...!« yelled Niko. The next moment, the friends landed with a smacking noise in viscous black mud.

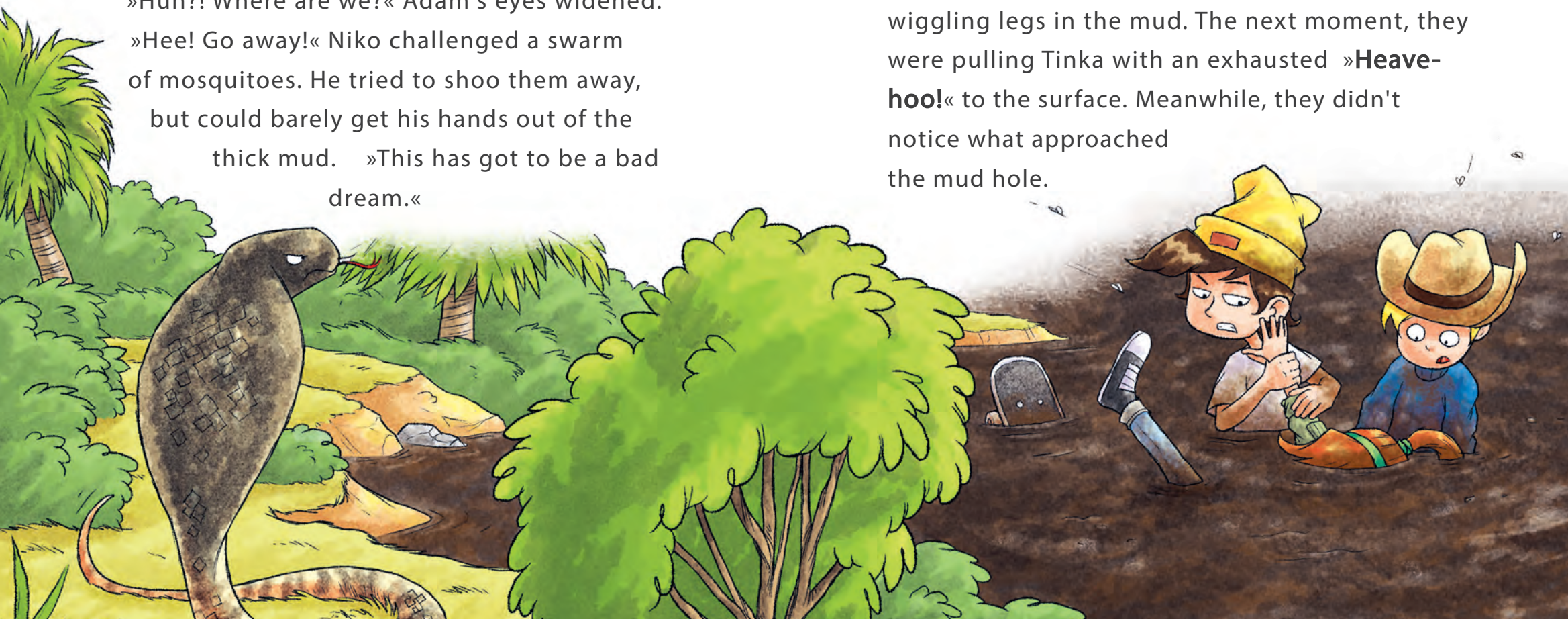
»Huh?! Where are we?« Adam's eyes widened.

»Hee! Go away!« Niko challenged a swarm of mosquitoes. He tried to shoo them away, but could barely get his hands out of the thick mud. »This has got to be a bad dream.«

»Then I am having the same dream as you«, commented Adam. Suddenly he remembered something. »Where is my skateboard? Oh ... and ... where is Tinka?«

»Oof! Good question« it also occurred to Niko. Adam pointed to his ear. »Is someone shouting?«

»True! I hear something.« said Niko. »Sounds weirdly muffled.« Just now they noticed the wiggling legs in the mud. The next moment, they were pulling Tinka with an exhausted »**Heave-hoo!**« to the surface. Meanwhile, they didn't notice what approached the mud hole.



»Baaaah!« Tinka spat out in disgust. As soon as she wiped the mud from her face and looked around, she shouted with sparkling eyes: »Do you think we might have landed in Ancient Egypt?«

Niko tilted his head in doubt. »I certainly don't see any pyramids. If we're unlucky, we have landed in a really weird time, where there's only mud and mosquitoes.«

»Excuse me!« Tinka wrinkles her nose. »Only because you are not seeing any pyramids ...? That's such a nasty cliché that there is ... er ... was one of these things in every corner of Egypt!«

Adam slapped his hand over his mouth in shock. »What's that?!«

»What's a 'cliché' ...?«, Tinka misunderstood him and explained immediately: »An exaggerated or even false idea of something.«

»I mean, what is this thing over there?« Adam pointed alarmed to a spot on the moor bank.

A long, scaly body wriggled across the mud towards them. Niko rummaged hard in his memory, while looking at the approaching reptile. »Time for my snake knowledge. So ... let's see ... big head ... brown scales ... could easily be an Egyptian Cobra. Unfortunately 'highly poisonous' - sorry!« Tinka bit her fingers.

»That's not good! Dad once told me about a cobra. Queen Cleopatra is said to have died from its venom.« Niko's gaze wandered nervously back and forth. »Then we should do better than this Cleopatra.«

»You don't happen to have any detective rules that we can apply right now?« Tinka replied, somewhat perplexed.

»That would be rule 6: Run away! But that won't work with all this mud. In this case let's jump to rule 7: Cry for help!«. Niko was already shouting 'Heeeelp!' at the top of his lungs. But his call simply faded away.

Adam looked pleadingly at Tinka: »Now would be the perfect moment for a flash of inspiration!«

»What am I supposed to use for an invention here?!« she gasped. »Mud, mud or mud?!«

»I could offer my skateboard« Adam said while trying to heave it out of the thick mud.

Tinka was about to reply, when they heard a bell-like laugh. A boy with dark hair stepped towards them. In his hands he held a long, thick bamboo cane.

»I've never seen anything as funny as you,« he said, amused by the three of them. »Shall I help you or are you just enjoying your mud bath?«

Niko looked angrily at the stranger and was about to reply, but Adam beat him to it.

»Well, I prefer my mudbath without a poisonous snake« he joked with a frown.

Instantly, the boy stretched out the bamboo cane, shooed the cobra away and then pulled Adam, Niko and Tinka to solid ground.

At the same time he shouted in the direction of the muddy shore: »I'm sorry, Sobek. You'll surely find another meal somewhere else.«

Eventually, Adam, Niko and Tinka discovered a dark pair of eyes, which peeped out of the muddy water - and it didn't belong to the cobra.

»A mud-monster?!« Niko exclaimed in panic. Their new friend giggled.

»You're so funny. Every child knows that crocodiles live here on the Nile. They are particularly easily irritated during the breeding season now. The cobra was still harmless in comparison to a crocodile. I'm Juja by the way.«

