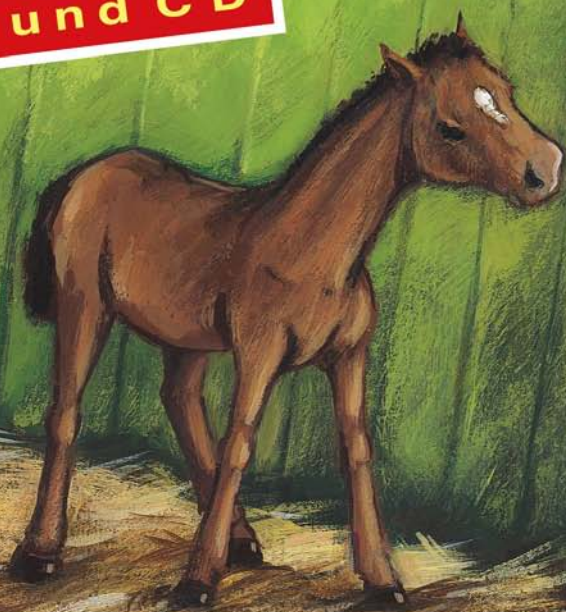


FIRST READING WITH
MAGIC LANTERN

Ursel Scheffler

Paula on the pony farm

Pictures by Dagmar Henze



Oetinger

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Translated by
David Henry Wilson



Verlag Friedrich Oetinger · Hamburg

Magic Lantern – Erster Lesespaß auf Englisch

Best girl friends (von Cornelia Funke)
Best girl friends and the horse thief (von Cornelia Funke)
Children's Day in Bullerbü (von Astrid Lindgren)
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Mick and Mo in space (von Cornelia Funke)
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Paula on the pony farm (von Ursel Scheffler)
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Theo wants to be a knight (von Marcus Saueremann)

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Die deutsche Originalausgabe erschien 2003

im Verlag Friedrich Oetinger GmbH unter dem Titel

„Paula auf dem Ponyhof“

Englisch von David Henry Wilson

Titelbild und farbige Illustrationen von Dagmar Henze

Reproduktion: Die Litho, Hamburg

Druck und Bindung: Proost N.V., Turnhout

Printed in Belgium 2009

ISBN 978-3-7891-1234-8

www.oetinger.de



“Pony farm! Pony farm!
I can go to the pony farm!”
cries Paula,
and goes dancing
around the flat.

“And that’s where you belong,”
grumbles Titus.

“You’re the silliest donkey I know.”



“Grrr! You’re just jealous!”

hisses Paula.

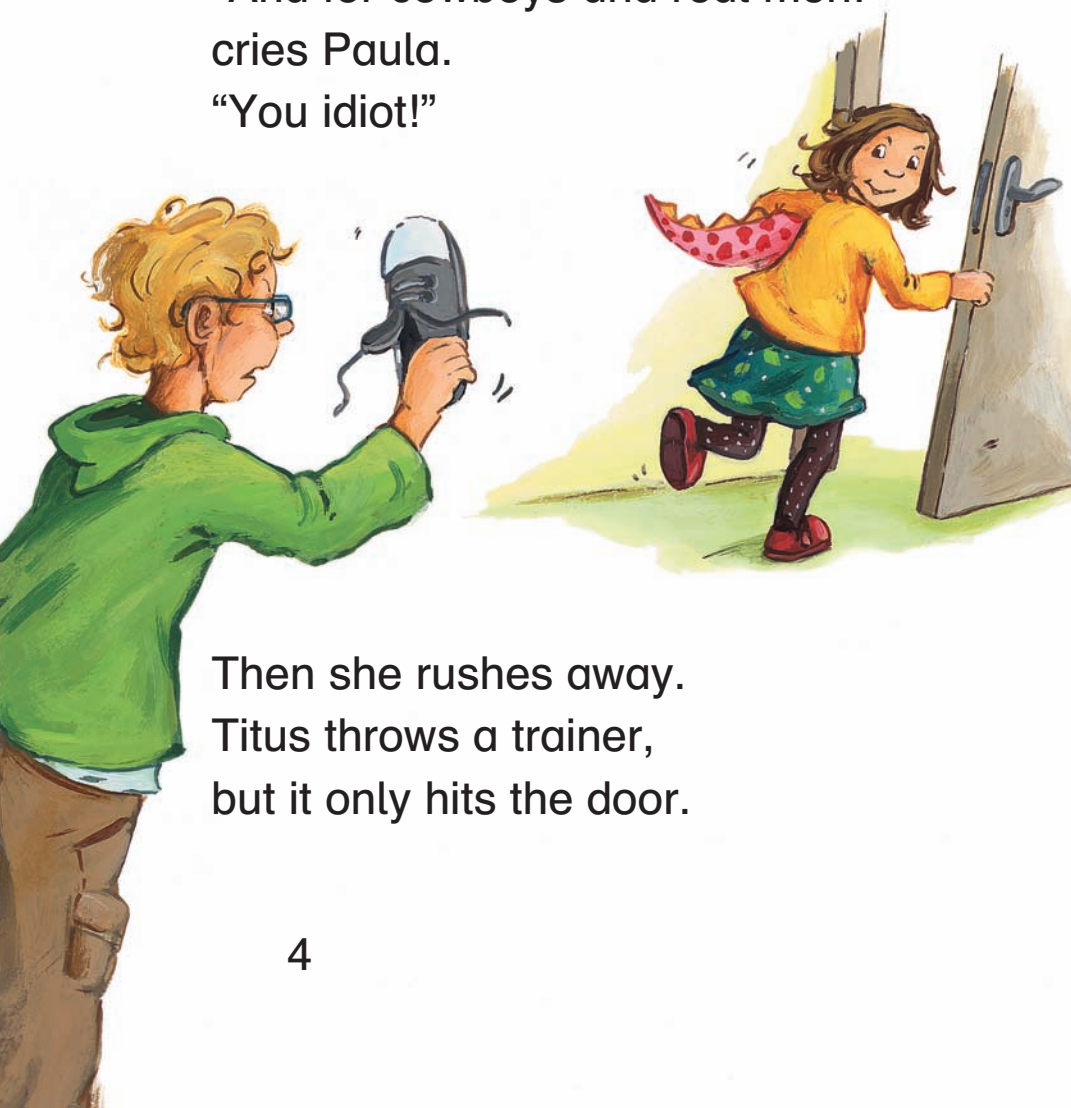
“Horses are only for girls,”

sneers Titus.

“And for cowboys and real men!”

cries Paula.

“You idiot!”



Then she rushes away.

Titus throws a trainer,
but it only hits the door.

What's really great
is that Paula's best friend Sarah
is allowed to come as well.
For hours the two girls
are on the phone,
talking about all the things
they have to pack.

"Jeans and a pullover will be
enough,"

says Paula in the end.

"Aunt Elfie has riding helmets
and boots."



Paula's favourite aunt
has just set up
a pony farm for children.
Paula and Sarah
are the first visitors.
Aunt Elfie is standing
at the farm gate
when Paula's dad
brings the two girls.



“Are the ponies in the stable?”
asks Paula.

“They’re still in the field
behind the house,” says Aunt Elfie.



“This one’s my favourite,”
says Paula.

She’s standing in front of
a brown pony
with a white blaze.

“His name is Shooting Star!”

“And what’s the name
of the white pony?”
asks Sarah.

“Snoopy,” says Paula.

She waves a carrot in the air.
Snoopy comes running.



He pushes his muzzle
into Paula's hand.

It's warm and soft.

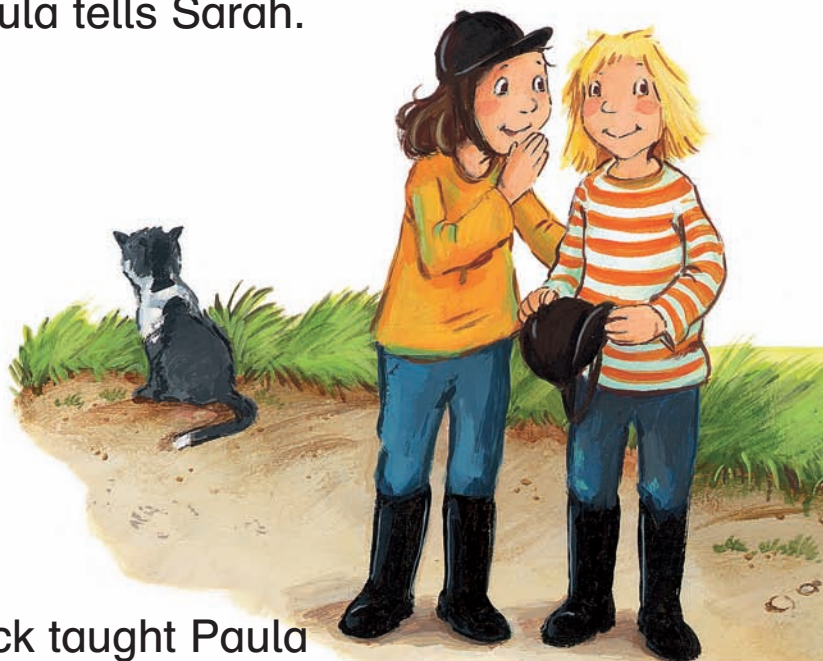
"Can we go riding straight away?"
asks Paula.

"That's all right with me,"
says Aunt Elfie.

"Jack will help you saddle up.
Boots and helmets
are in the changing room."



Paula likes Jack.
He's her cousin.
"Jack's five years older
and five times nicer than Titus,"
Paula tells Sarah.



Jack taught Paula
to ride some time ago.
Now he helps Sarah
climb into the saddle.

“Snoopy is nice.
But hold tight all the same,”
Jack tells Sarah.
Then he rides away
with the two girls.



Sarah went to a pony farm
last year too.
But she still can't ride
as well as Paula.
And so Jack
stays very close to her
all the time.



They trot for a while
alongside the stream.
A rabbit hops across the track.



Snoopy is startled
and suddenly stops.
Sarah falls headfirst in the grass.
Luckily she's all right.
"It's a good thing
you've got your helmet on!"
says Jack, relieved,
and helps her to stand up.





Paula is a little bit jealous
because Jack is only paying attention
to Sarah.

But then he rides
to Paula's favourite spot,
a little glade in the forest.



A few obstacles
have been built there,
made out of tree trunks.
Paula is allowed to jump over them
on Shooting Star.
Sarah isn't allowed yet.
“Maybe in two or three days,”
says Jack, the riding instructor.

When the sun sets
behind the edge of the forest,
they ride back to the farm.



“It was wonderful!”
says Sarah to Jack,
and her eyes are shining.
“Yes, it was wonderful,”
says Paula,
and puts both her arms
round Shooting Star’s neck.



“The fun comes first,” says Jack,
“and then comes the work.”

Now they have
to take off the saddles,
rub down the ponies,
give them food and water,
and scrape the hooves.
Paula spreads some fresh straw
round the stalls.



Then they lead the ponies
into the stable.

Jack locks the stable door.

“But you don’t normally do that,
do you?” asks Paula in surprise.

“It’s better,” says Jack seriously.

“For some time now
there’s been a horse thief
going around the area.

Yesterday
a pregnant mare
was stolen
from our neighbours.”



“What does pregnant actually mean?”
asks Sarah in the evening,
when they’re brushing their teeth.
“Pregnant means
the mare is expecting a baby,”
explains Paula.

The girls lie awake
for a long time
and tell each other stories.
Finally they go to sleep.

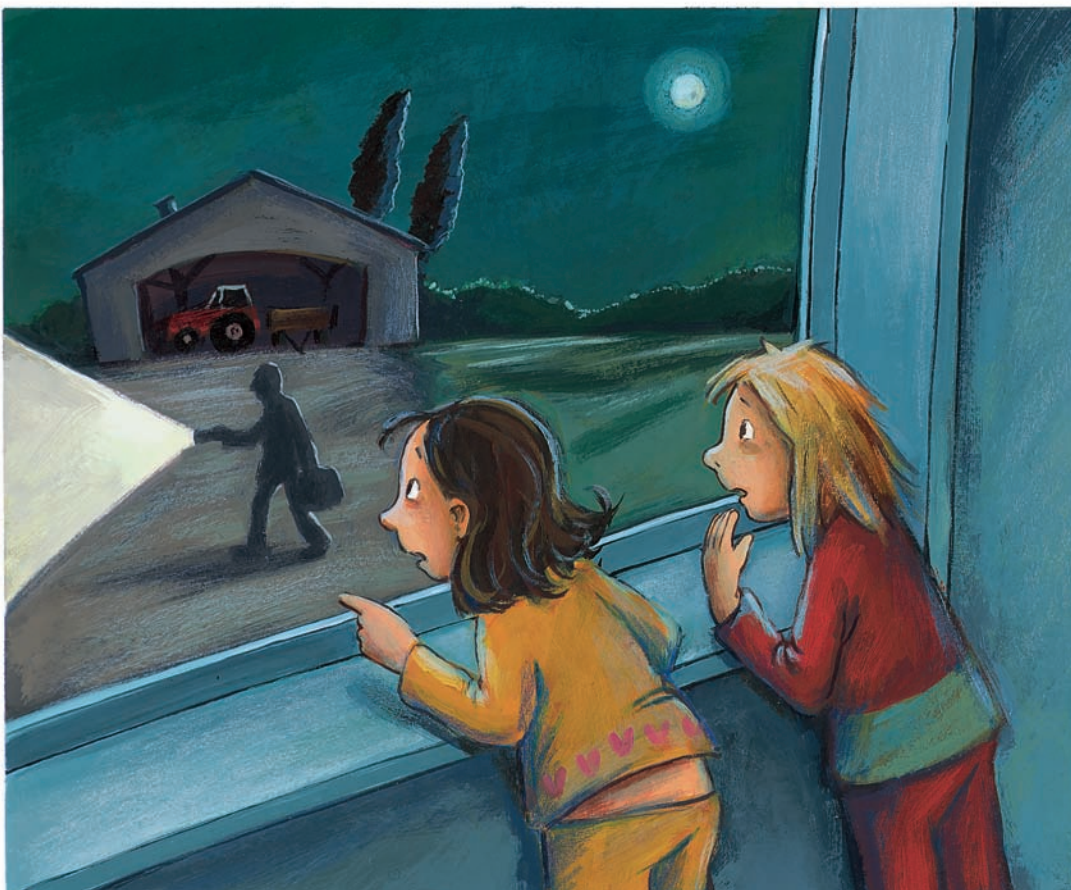


Then in the middle
of the night,
Paula hears
strange noises.



She climbs out of bed
and runs to the window.
Oh dear!
A dark figure is creeping
across the yard.
The light from a torch
shines on the stable door.

“Sarah, wake up!”
cries Paula nervously,
and pulls the cover
off Sarah’s bed.
“There’s someone in the yard!
I’m sure it’s the horse thief!
We must wake Aunt Elfie up!”



As silently as two ghosts
in the night,
the two girls creep
along the passage
to Aunt Elfie and
Uncle Alf's bedroom.



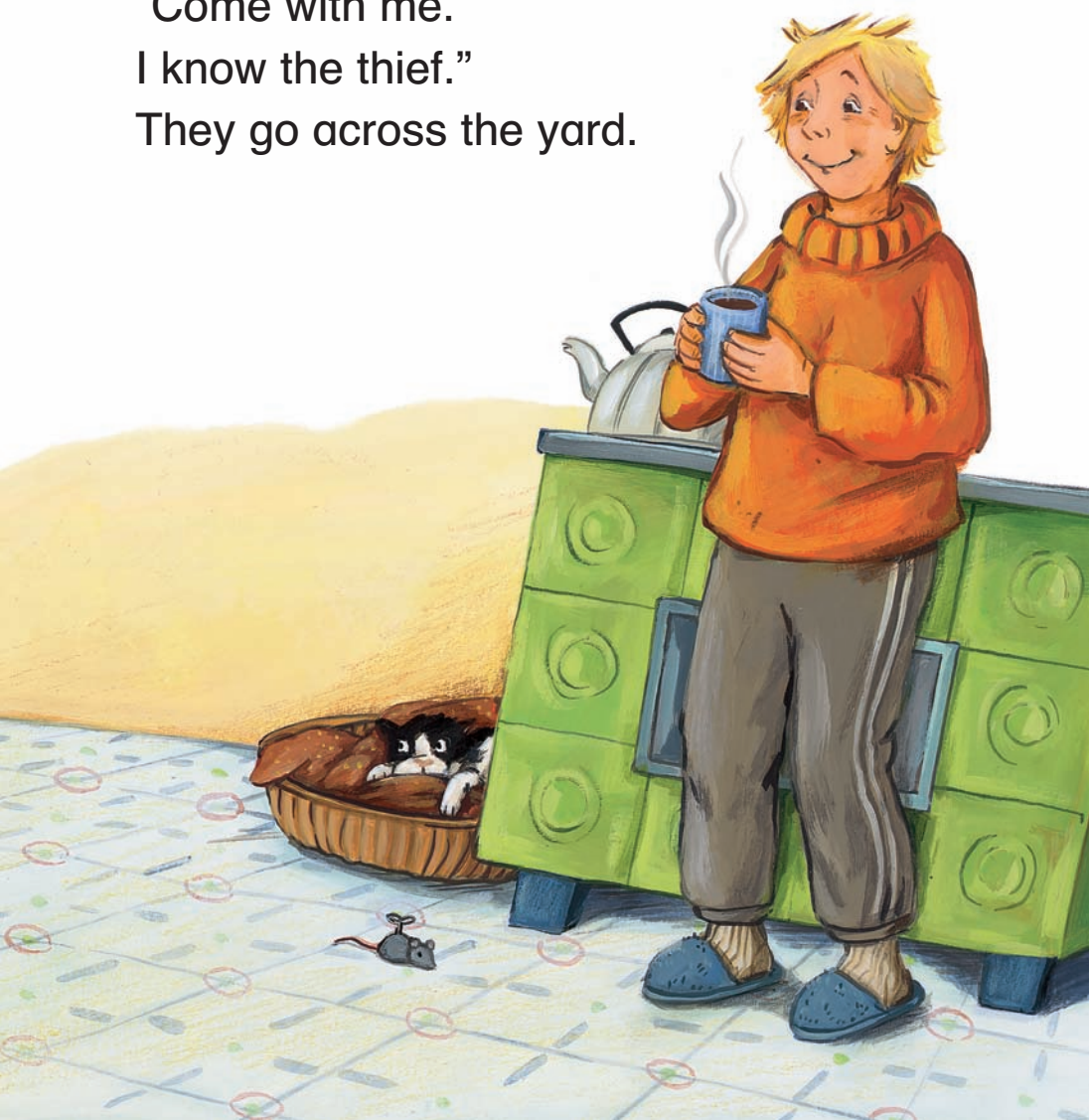
Carefully they open the door.
“Aunt Elfie? Uncle Alf?”
whispers Paula.
Nobody answers.
Paula puts on the light.
Aunt Elfie and Uncle Alf’s beds
are empty!
Could the thief
have kidnapped them both?
“What shall we do now?”
asks Sarah, frightened.
“Call the police!”
says Paula, resolutely.
“Come with me!
The telephone’s in the kitchen!”
On tiptoe the two of them
creep downstairs.



There's a light on in the kitchen,
and there's a smell of fresh coffee.
Aunt Elfie is standing by the oven.
"What are you doing here?"
she cries in surprise
when the two girls
suddenly appear in the kitchen.



“A thief!” whispers Paula.
“Over there at the stable.”
But Aunt Elfie just laughs
and says:
“Come with me.
I know the thief.”
They go across the yard.



The stable door is just slightly ajar.
Standing in the stall
next to Snoopy
are Uncle Alf and Jack.
And the stranger
is kneeling there too!
He is helping a little foal
onto its feet.
“The thief is our vet,”
explains Aunt Elfie.
“Senta has had her foal
before we expected it.”



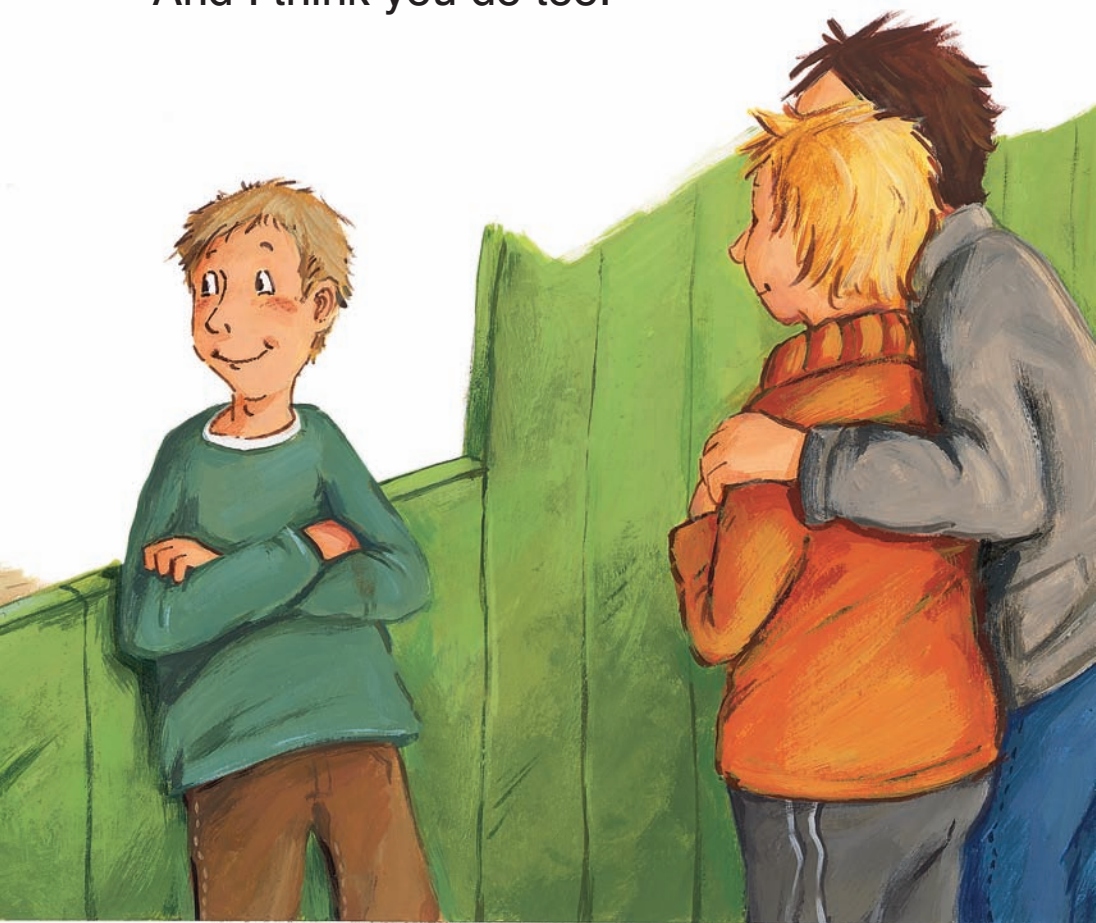
“We need to give
the little one a name,”
says Uncle Alf.
“What about Robber?”
says Jack, and grins.



“We need a name
beginning with A!
Because the foal’s father’s name
is Amadeus,
and so the foal’s name
must also begin with an A,”
says Uncle Alf.
“Ali Baba!” cries Paula.
Everyone agrees.



The little robber Ali
is still standing
on very wobbly legs.
His mother lovingly licks him clean.
“Right, the two of them
need some peace and quiet now,”
says the vet firmly.
“And I think you do too.”



“I’m not tired at all!”

says Sarah.

“I’d really like to sleep
with Ali in the stable!”

“But I’m going to bed,”
cries Paula happily.

“Because I think
straw is very prickly
on the bottom!”

