



ANNA AND ALEX TAKE ON THE BANKNOTE FORGERS



Anna and Alex are classmates and best friends. They are always getting caught up in hair-raising adventures. Today is no different.

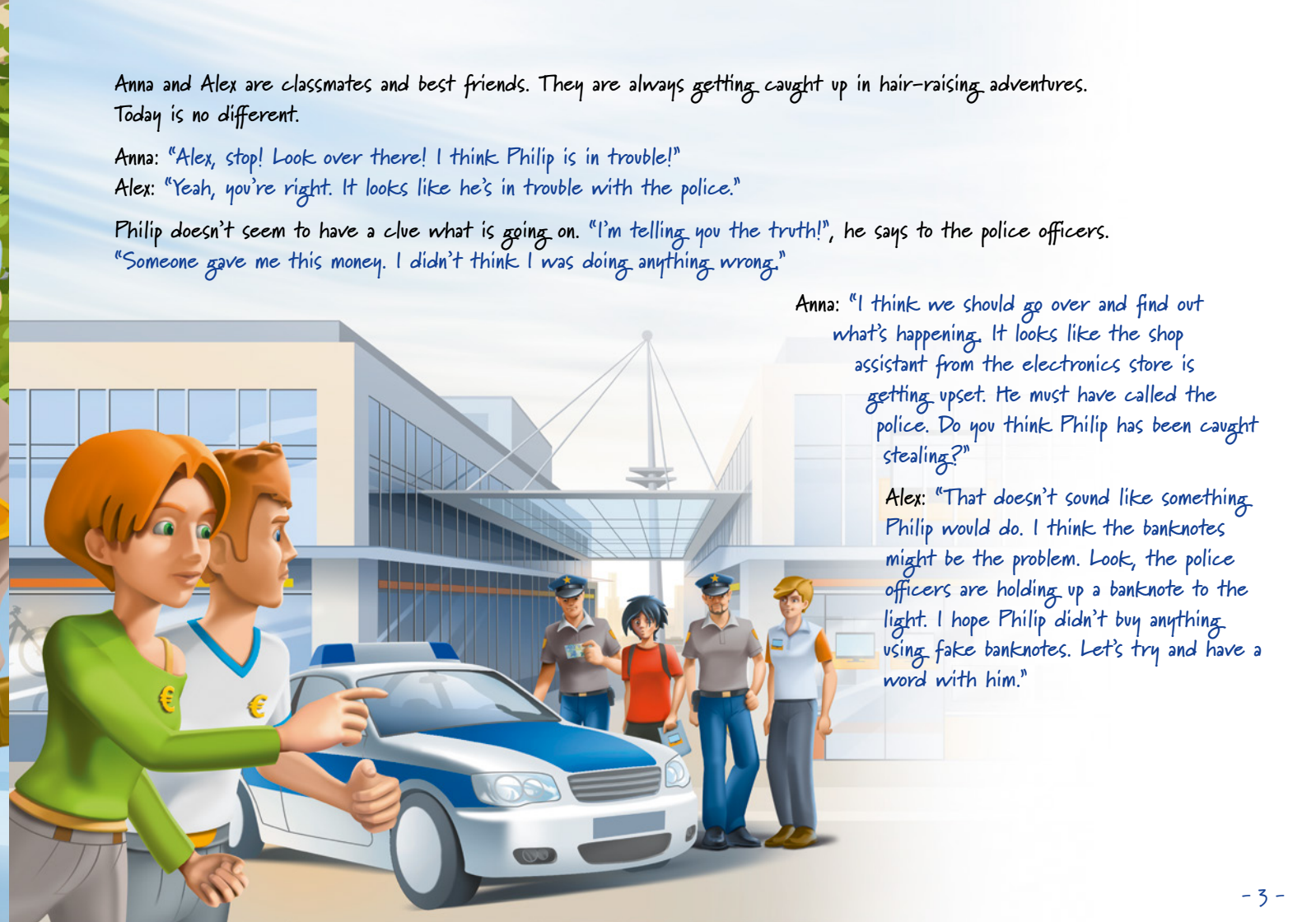
Anna: "Alex, stop! Look over there! I think Philip is in trouble!"

Alex: "Yeah, you're right. It looks like he's in trouble with the police."

Philip doesn't seem to have a clue what is going on. "I'm telling you the truth!", he says to the police officers. "Someone gave me this money. I didn't think I was doing anything wrong."

Anna: "I think we should go over and find out what's happening. It looks like the shop assistant from the electronics store is getting upset. He must have called the police. Do you think Philip has been caught stealing?"

Alex: "That doesn't sound like something Philip would do. I think the banknotes might be the problem. Look, the police officers are holding up a banknote to the light. I hope Philip didn't buy anything using fake banknotes. Let's try and have a word with him."





Anna and Alex explain to their friend that he's been tricked: the banknotes must be fake. It was a cunning plan: in exchange for the fake banknotes, Billy Foxham would receive real euro notes and coins as change, not to mention a video game! Anna and Alex can see that Philip is in a sticky situation and decide to come to his rescue.

Philip: "You've got to help me! My parents are going to kill me if they find out that I'm in trouble with the police. I've got no idea what's going on. Billy Foxham gave me some cash and asked me to do some shopping for him. I met him on the internet. He's really nice. I'm helping him find his way about town, as he isn't from around here."

Anna is speechless for a few seconds and then bursts out, "What on earth were you thinking, Philip? Didn't you find it a bit weird that a total stranger just gave you money like that?"

Philip: "No, why would I? I did him a favour, and he was going to pay me. Billy gave me three new 20 euro notes to buy him a video game. All I had to do was bring him back the game and the change. In return, he promised to pay me five euro."

With the help of the police, they prepare a trap for Billy Foxham, because they are worried that he might persuade other young people to use fake banknotes. The police also fear that a large criminal organisation might be behind this scheme to get teenagers to put fake banknotes into circulation.

Working together with the police, Anna and Alex manage to find Billy Foxham in an internet chatroom. He wastes no time in arranging to meet them.



When Anna and Alex meet up with him, he asks them to buy him a video game and gives them some money. Instead, Anna takes a genuine banknote out of her purse and compares it with the ones he has given them.

"These notes are fake!," she exclaims. Billy Foxham realises that he has been found out and runs off.



Fortunately, the police are nearby and chase after him. There is a scuffle when they catch him. Anna and Alex breathe a huge sigh of relief as Billy Foxham is arrested and taken away in a police car.

After this adventure, Anna and Alex are awarded a prize by the European Central Bank for their help in catching Billy Foxham.

Anna: "Thank you very much, but it was the police who stopped the forgers. We just set them on the right track."

Alex: "Most of all, we wanted to help Philip, who had been taken in by Billy Foxham's scam. As for Billy, thankfully, he's behind bars now."

Following the award ceremony, Anna and Alex catch up with Philip at the euro exhibition organised by the European Central Bank.

Philip: "Thanks again. You're real mates! I heard that Billy Foxham confessed to everything and that the illegal printing works producing the fake banknotes has been shut down."

Anna: "Wow! That's big news! I'm going to post something about that on our school Facebook page."

Alex: "You know, Philip, you should have been more careful. Sometimes you can meet bad people on the Internet. Everyone knows that you shouldn't take money from strangers!"

Anna: "Come on, Alex. Everyone makes mistakes."

Philip: "Yeah, that's for sure. I learned the hard way that using fake banknotes is against the law and can be dangerous!"





After reading the information on the euro banknotes and coins at the exhibition, Anna says, "Look! It's easy to tell if a euro banknote is real. You just have to check three things. You start by feeling the banknote. It must have a crisp texture and be thicker in certain places. Next, you look at the watermark against the light. Then you tilt the banknote to see the light effect on the hologram and the emerald number."

Alex: "Anna, stop talking to us as if we're experts. Can you explain that gobbledegook in English, please? How did you know that Billy Foxham's banknotes were fakes by holding them up to the light?"

Anna: "I was checking the watermark. Look closely. When you hold a new euro banknote up to the light, you can see Princess Europa."

Philip: "Who?"

Anna: "Europa is a princess from Greek mythology. The European continent is named after her. All the new euro banknotes feature her in the watermark and the hologram. In the new 20 euro banknote, she also appears in a really cool new part of the hologram called the portrait window."

Alex and Philip: "Hologram? Portrait window? You've gone way over our heads now!"

Anna: "Have you noticed the shiny, silvery stripe on the note? That's the hologram. Watch what happens when you tilt the banknote back and forth. Don't wave it all over the place! Do it slowly! Can you see how the images change? And look near the top of the hologram."



Feel of the paper

The paper feels crisp, firm and thicker in some parts.

Watermark

Hold the banknote up to the light: Princess Europa becomes visible.

Emerald number

Tilt the banknote to see the shiny effect of the light.

Hologram

Tilt the banknote and watch the images in the silvery stripe change.

Portrait window

Hold the banknote up to the light and note how the window at the top of the hologram becomes transparent.

Alex: "Wow. It goes transparent when you hold it up to the light. It looks like a window and there is a portrait of Europa in it."

Philip: "What's that shiny number on the bottom left? There was a kind of light effect when you were tilting the banknote."

Anna: "That's the emerald number. It's another feature that makes the euro banknotes safe and easy to check."

Philip: "I never realised! After this little adventure, I'll definitely be paying much closer attention to euro banknotes! It's not that hard, after all."





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