



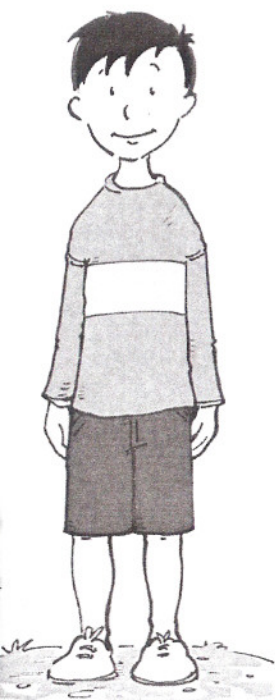
# The adventures of Luc and Lucie

## Easter

### Episode 10

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# Easter

There was silence in the village. It was Easter Saturday and yesterday, on Good Friday, the bells had stopped ringing. When they were small Luc and Lucie had been told that the bells flew away and would come back on Easter Sunday with presents. Now they were older they didn't believe that the bells went anywhere but they knew there would be some presents and some Easter eggs on Easter Sunday.



Denis' family were having an Easter celebration and all Luc and Lucie's family were invited.

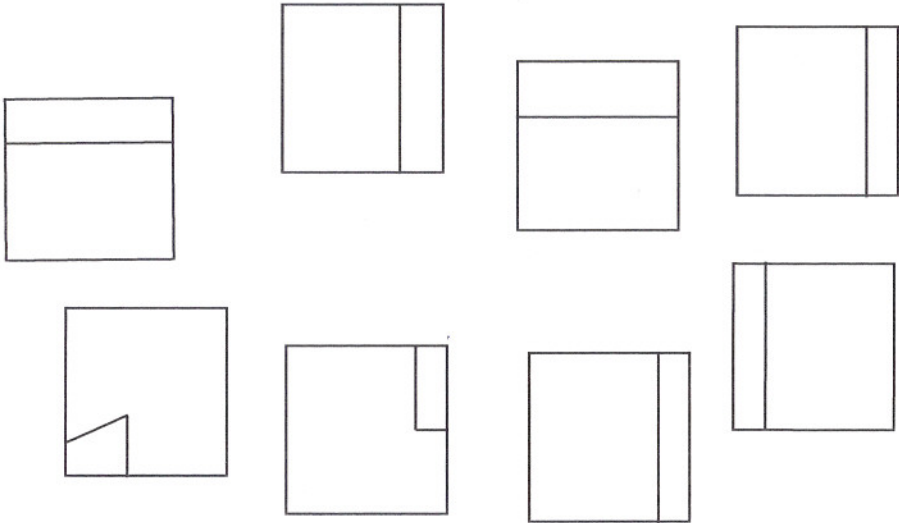
Denis and his little sister Anne-Marie had decorated the invitations with Easter Eggs and Easter bunnies.



Luc and Lucie asked them about the treasure hunt but they didn't know anything.

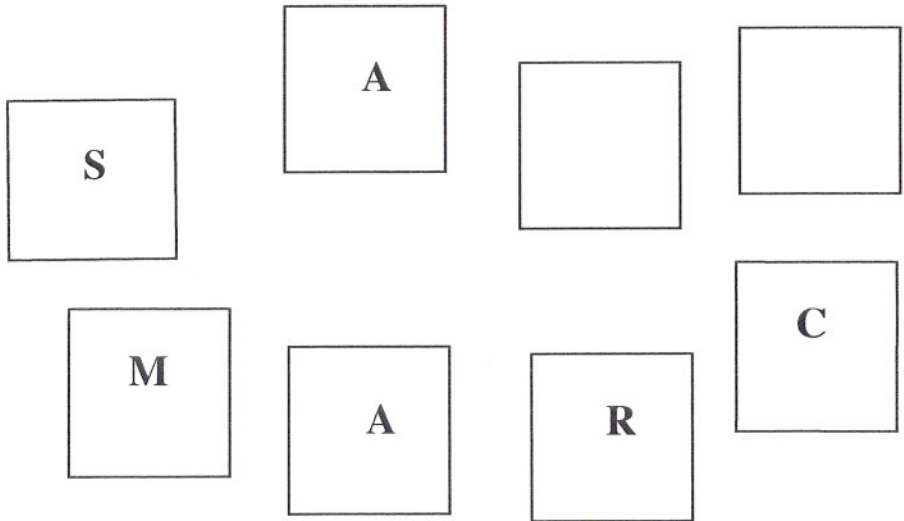
"Dad produced the invitation - we just drew the pictures," said Denis. He'd drawn the Easter Eggs and Anne-Marie had added a rather fat rabbit.

The sun shone and the bells rang - it was Easter Sunday. Luc and Lucie were at Denis's. They were sitting upstairs, in his bedroom, puzzling over the square of cardboard while their parents were having a drink downstairs.



But however long they looked they couldn't make any sense of the designs.

"Turn them over" said Denis. "Let's look again at the letters".



"The one I got in the procession had the usual straight line on it" explained Lucie "but no letter".

"Perhaps it's more than one word" suggested Luc "what about CAR SAM?"

Lucie said "I think ....." but what she was thinking they would never know as from below came the voice of Denis's mother "Are you all ready for lunch?"

Luc put the squares away and they all went downstairs.

The dining room had been beautifully decorated with apple blossom sellotaped on to the shutters inside and there was a huge vase of brilliantly coloured tulips on a table near the window. Denis and Anne-Marie had made Easter Eggs and bells which hung from the ceiling.

On the table there was a large slab of pâté and from the kitchen drifted the scent of lamb roasting in the oven. They could see Denis's mother there putting out some cheese - a piece of Brie and another of Cantal and she said that there was 'a surprise' for them in the fridge.

Denis's father began to serve the pâté. "Is that all right for you Lucie?" he asked as he placed a piece of pâté in front of her.

"Careful" said a voice behind her "Think of all the food to come."  
And there was the parrot peering through the tulips.

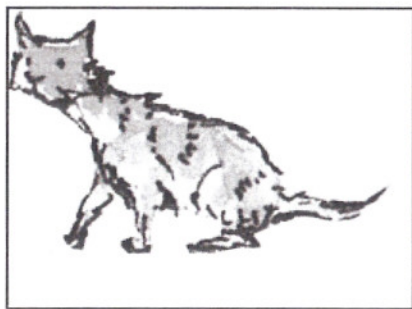
Lucie swung round. "Shhhhhhhhhh," she said.

"Lucie," said her mother rather sharply, "what are you doing? Listen to what Matthieu is saying. I'm sure that's plenty for her Matthieu".



"Sorry," said Lucie "I thought I heard something."

At that moment Anne-Marie's cat, Napoleon, came in. He was quite a tough animal, a great 'mouser' - unlike Jospehine who loved to curl up in her basket or in the sun. His back was arched and his eyes wild. He looked first at the vase of tulips but then at the corner by the fireplace and leapt towards it.



"Whatever's the matter?" asked Denis's father. "What did you see? A mouse? This old house has quite a few - that's why we keep the cat but they usually only appear at night."

Luc and Lucie and Denis all looked at each other.

The parrot was right. There was a lot of food and the parents ate - and drank - slowly and talked. The cheese came and went and then the surprise - a huge 'Bombe' which was an enormous ball of home-made ice-cream in four different layers. First there was chocolate, then pistachio, then strawberry and finally vanilla. As Denis's father cut into it you could see all the different colours.

By the time they had finished eating it was past two o'clock. As coffee and liqueurs were prepared for the adults, Denis' mother said to the children "Now why don't you go into the garden and see what you can find."

Off they went - with the cat - glad to escape, though the food had been amazing. They separated and wandered round: Lucie to the hedges in the front garden, Anne-Marie to the rockery, Denis to the garden shed and Luc to the chicken run. To begin with nobody found anything. Then the parrot flew overhead





giving instructions.

"Newspapers by the bin in the shed," he squawked to Denis, "behind the moss covered rock by the gnome," to Anne-Marie "under the straw in the chicken run," to Luc and to Lucie "dig near the box hedge."

First Anne-Marie, then Luc, then Denis and then Lucie found something. They all met - Denis carrying a newspaper packet, Luc with a cardboard box, Lucie with a little tin and Anne-Marie with a plastic bag. They opened the packages and discovered milk chocolate rabbits, tiny sugar-coated Easter eggs, dark chocolate chickens and white chocolate bells. They were just about to take them all indoors when, suddenly, it seemed to Luc that he was back at the station in Paris and to Lucie that she was again in the procession in the village square. They could both hear a voice singing 'Savez vous plantez les choux?' and at the same moment, they rushed towards the kitchen garden and the cabbages. There was a row of six of them and Luc began at one end and Lucie at the other. They carefully examined each cabbage, watched in bewilderment by Denis and Anne-Marie. Finally they met in the middle and there it was, among the leaves of the final cabbage: the tiny

cardboard square with another line across it. Suddenly the parrot swooped over them as the cat gave a strangled miaow and leapt after a long grey tail which disappeared behind the garden shed.

"That was a near squeak," shrieked Pirate. "Happy Easter and don't eat all that chocolate at once." He watched them disappear into the house and then among the cabbages he picked up in his beak a tiny bag of sugared almonds which the children hadn't found.

"I love almonds," he said happily. "Happy Easter, Pirate."

