

Søren Padkjær

Skovagervej 22
DK-8850 Bjerringbro

Tel. 86 68 36 63 – Mobil 51 84 36 63

Fax. 86 68 36 32

E-mail: sopax@post4.tele.dk

9th December 2001

Dear Bedstemor Hildur and Tante Anna,

It is not even freezing outside, but it is bitterly cold, and my fingers are just like ice taps.

You see, I have a small problem here in the forest: Since we built the house I have been planting several hundreds Normannsgran, the traditional species of Christmas trees. However the deer seem to like the buds, and every winter most of the trees have been scalped. In that way the trees either do not grow any more or – if some side buds have been left – they grow in strange formations.

So I am trying to protect as many as possible of the trees by fencing them one by one – which is some kind of a job – or my newest invention: To put up some blue strings around and above the trees. I thought I was early in doing this, as we still have not had severe frost or snow. However I just saw that several of the trees had already been eaten – so may be I should let nature rule and just see what comes out of it.

Actually I am even feeding the deer (and the birds) with wheat to keep them well fed. On the other hand that may actually attract them to our land...

Now the long winter evening have come I have resumed reading. A recent favourite is Jan Gillou (a Swedish author mostly known for his criminal books), but who has also written a trio logy from the 11th century. It is about a young Swedish boy, who is turned into a monastery, first in Sweden and later in Denmark (Vitskøl Kloster at the Limfjorden). He is a fine boy, but the first volume (Jerusalem) ends with him being convicted to 20 years of service for the Crusaders to save Jerusalem. The second volume (The Crusader) alternates between what happens to him in Jerusalem and what happens to his beloved girlfriend in Sweden. In the last volume he returns, settles down and fights. The whole frame is historically correct, but of course the figures are more or less fantasy. An amazing and very exciting story with a fine flavour of life at that time.

After that book I asked the librarian what they could recommend in a similar style. She suggested the Norwegian writer, Gunnar Staalesen, and I got a CD-Rom with a Danish radio broadcast. He is always writing about Bergen, and has just released the first 2 of 3 books about a Bergen dynasty. I have copied the CD for you, so I hope you will understand the dialogue, partly Danish partly Norwegian.

The family is doing fine: Camilla has completed first step of her education as nurse and is now preparing for the next step. She has got a boyfriend and they are living together in Viborg – happy and in love. Anja is doing very well in her second year of the Social education. She is practicing homecare, and is visiting 4-6 elderly or handicapped persons every day to assist them with cleaning, bathing etc. In your case I guess that you would qualify to some hours of daily homecare as well as brought in food.

My mother died last March. She had a stroke, came to the hospital, was clear in the evening, but slept in quietly the next day – exactly the way she had hoped for. We have therefore sold her house (where the girls used to live) and have instead bought a small apartment in Bjerringbro, 2

miles from here. Anja is living in this apartment, but as we are not allowed to live permanently here in our forest house, we need the apartment and address as a “cover”.

We have been quite busy with renovation of the apartment. The previous user was a single lady, who smoked small strong cigars. We simply had to pull all the wall cover down, throw out all carpets, polish the wooden floors and paint several times to get the smell out.

Benthe is still working in Grundfos producing pumps. Actually she is doing very well, and in August she spent one month in Hungary as “teacher”. The company has established a new factory in Hungary, and she was sent there to help in training the local staff. Actually she is going again in February next year, when the second stage of the factory is starting production.

And myself, I am now back to the normal (not so high) level of work. Most of the year I have been quite busy in preparation of the local elections on the 20th November. I am the chairman of the local branch of a political party, and therefore have the responsibility to get as many as possible of our candidates elected. As I am the only person in the group with practical experience in sales and marketing, I got the job to create leaflets, advertising, photos, internet homepage etc.

Actually it was quite exciting and our party had good results, as we doubled the number of votes compared to 4 years ago.

The local elections are always held with 4 years intervals. The national parliament is elected for max. 4 years, but the prime minister can at any time call for an early election. Suddenly with 3 weeks notice he decided to have a national election on the same date as the local election. So we got even busier with promoting our local candidate for the parliament.

Also on the national level we did well, as we pushed the ruling social democrats from power, and instead formed a 2-party government. As the smaller of the two parties we did not get the prime minister post, but some other important ministries. The leader of our party was main speaker this summer when we had a fine arrangement on a sunny June afternoon. He was so impressed by the arrangement and the attendance that he promised to come again next year – and this time it will be as Minister of Economy and Business.

Finally we all send you both our love and warmest greetings for the Christmas and New Year.

