

JULIUS
by Juzo®

In his third adventure, Julius stands on solid ground and proves that someone who's tough on the outside is often soft on the inside.



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EN · 14021003/1/1 · W461 · Volume 3

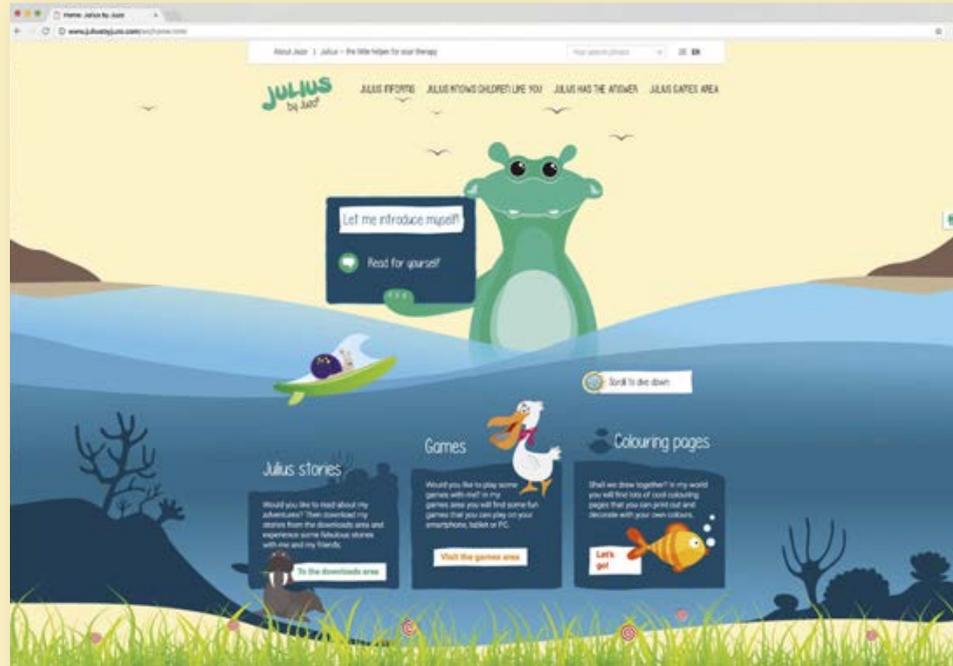
JULIUS

IS READY FOR AN
ISLAND ADVENTURE



Julius and his Adventures

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Julius is enjoying his new life with his seagrass flipper, for now he spends nearly every day at the surface of the water.

With the help of the pelican Henriette he has built a small platform out of drift wood and seagrass string that is anchored to the seabed by a long seagrass rope.

Sightseeing flights from the platform to the island are now taking place regularly in Henriette's beak. Apart from Fridolin the "cleaner fish", whose biggest dream in life was to fly, many other sea creatures have now seen the world from above too, including a family of clams, several crabs and a whole shoal of clownfish.

But Julius also had something else in mind when he built the platform. It's not very far to the island from the platform. Since Henriette told him about a strange resident of the island, Julius has become even more curious to swim to the island with the help of his seagrass flipper.



This strange resident is an ancient walrus who lives completely isolated from all the other animals. »That part of the island is actually the prettiest«, Henriette sighs as she and Julius sit on the platform one afternoon.

»But what's so odd about him that makes no one want to have anything to do with him?«, Julius asks. »He's always in a bad mood and he always barks at us«, Henriette answers. »It's almost unbearable. So us pelicans have decided to simply stay clear of that part of the island.«

Julius shakes his head: »Have you never asked the walrus why he's in such a bad mood?« Henriette shrugs her wings: »No idea why. And I don't really care either.« Henriette, however, hasn't reckoned with Julius' reaction: »That's not okay, Henriette! You can't talk about someone behind their back just because they're in a bad mood without asking them why.

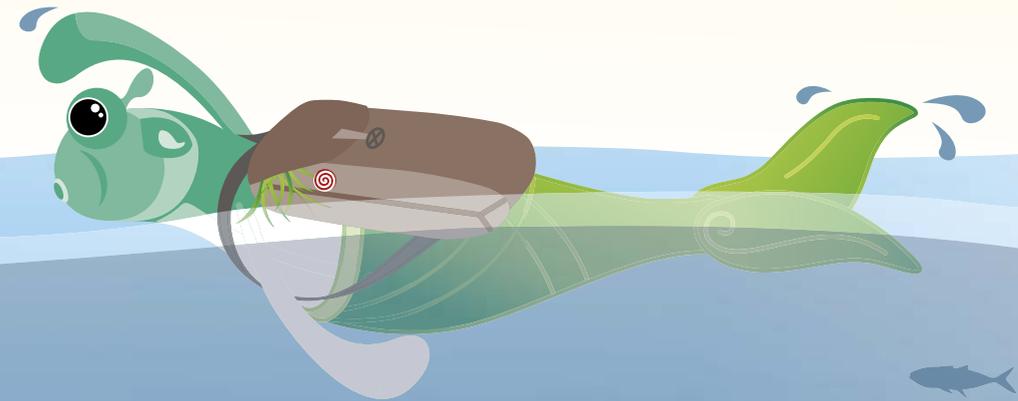
Let's meet here again tomorrow and then I'd like you to introduce me to the walrus. I shan't take no for an answer!«
Henriette isn't keen but nevertheless agrees to do it.



The next morning Julius puts a few seagrass specialities into his rucksack – after all you should always present your host with a gift. Then he swims up to the platform where Henriette is already waiting for him.

»Good morning, Henriette«, Julius says, »are you ready?« »I still don't know why you're so desperate to get to know that grumpy old walrus, but if you want to spoil your day, be my guest!«, Henriette snaps.

»We'll see! You fly ahead and I'll swim as fast as I can behind you with my seagrass flipper.«

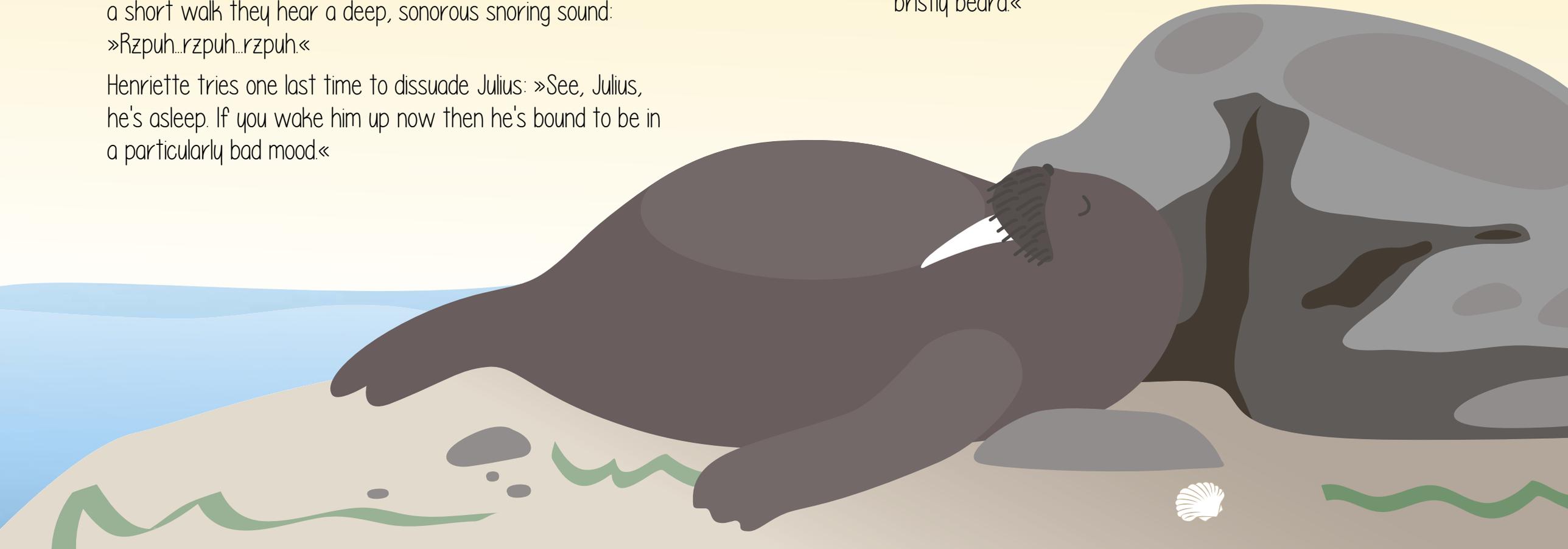


Shortly afterwards they meet again on the shore. Julius slides out of his flipper and hides it under a large leaf so that it doesn't dry out.

»This way, Julius«, says Henriette, waddling off ahead. After a short walk they hear a deep, sonorous snoring sound:
»Rzpuh...rzpuh...rzpuh.«

Henriette tries one last time to dissuade Julius: »See, Julius, he's asleep. If you wake him up now then he's bound to be in a particularly bad mood.«

As they turn the corner, however, they suddenly come across the sleeping walrus right in front of them – lying in the shade next to a large rock. »What an almighty creature«, Julius says to himself, »and a bit of a scary one with his long teeth and bristly beard.«



But Julius doesn't let that stop him and calls out in a loud voice: »Heelloooooo!« The walrus, however, is totally unfazed and keeps on sleeping. Julius calls out again, yet the walrus just keeps on snoring.

Julius takes a look around and spots a bucket in a pile of flotsam nearby. The last bout of rain has filled the bucket almost to the brim – so Julius picks it up and tips it right over the walrus' head. With a loud splutter the walrus wakes up, shakes the water off his fur and rubs his eyes in astonishment.



When the walrus sees Henriette and Julius, it sits up, takes a deep breath and puts on a grim face. Henriette hides. But just as the walrus is going to bark at them, Julius takes off his rucksack containing the seagrass presents and holds them under the nose of the snorting walrus.

»Hello, my name is Julius and this is Henriette. I'm pleased to meet you and as a welcome present I've brought you some seagrass from my seagrass bed at the bottom of the ocean. I hope you like seagrass?«

Puzzled, the walrus stops, sniffs the rucksack and then starts to smile. »Seagrass? I love seagrass! And it's been about 100 years since I last had some, since I've been sitting around on this confounded island.«

Quick as a flash the walrus pulls the seagrass treats from the rucksack, gobbles them up in one go and belches contentedly. »Well come and sit down then. What would you like to know? My name's Gottfried, by the way.«



»Henriette says, you're always in a bad mood. The other animals on the island don't want to have anything to do with you.«

Gottfried furrows his brow and starts to tell his story: »No wonder. Firstly I'm a long way from home and secondly I don't like the food on this island. That's enough to put anyone in a bad mood!«

»Where's your home and how did you get here?«, Julius enquires. »I lived far away from here with my friends, on a big sandbank. It was always fun with them and there was an unlimited supply of seagrass. One day a research ship came and took us away. I managed to escape but I've been stuck on this island ever since. Who knows what happened to my friends.«

»Now I understand why you're always in a bad mood«, Julius says, »maybe I can help you get some seagrass and some new friends. I've got a large seagrass bed near the island and I'm happy to share it with you. I'm sure the other animals on the island will want to get to know you too once they find out you're not that unfriendly after all.« Gottfried has tears in his eyes as he hugs Julius with his strong flippers: »I don't know what to say«, he murmurs into his bristly beard.

Julius and Henriette say goodbye to Gottfried and walk back to the beach to where Julius has hidden his flipper. »What did I tell you, Henriette? The walrus isn't that bad after all! He's just hungry and he's got no friends. We can try and help him, can't we?« Henriette agrees and flies off to tell the other pelicans of their meeting with Gottfried.



When Henriette arrives at the sightseeing platform the next day, Julius has already been busy. »Look, Henriette, I've already harvested three days' worth of seagrass for Gottfried – the poor thing has had to go without for so long. I suggest we don't do any sightseeing flights today but instead get the pelicans to fly the seagrass over to Gottfried.«

Henriette is delighted: »Excellent idea. Then the pelicans can all meet him.«

And from that day on Gottfried was always in a good mood because there was always enough seagrass. And once all the pelicans had visited him it didn't take long for word to get around that Gottfried was actually quite a friendly walrus. Turns out he'd experienced so many things that he always had great stories to tell. So from that day on there was never a dull moment for Gottfried.

