

## Athens Adventure – Day 2

*'Now Bro, let's plan this trip!' Freddy said.*

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*'Socks...check! Scarf...check! Trainers...check!' Wil was going through the things he would need for Athens, and was packing them into a small suitcase.*

*'We haven't got long actually', said Freddy, glancing up at the clock on the wall, which seemed to be ticking by quicker than usual, 'H will be here in a minute, and then we need to be down the road by two'.*

*'What's the time now?' said Wil.*

*'It's one-thirty-five'.*

*'Oh, that's OK, it's still one'.*

*'No, one-thirty-five is closer to two o'clock'.*

*'Well, it says one in one-thirty-five...'*

*'Oh, never mind, just get on with it'.*

*'Socks...check! Scarf...check! Trainers...check! Wil took the things out of his bag again.*

*'Come ON, Bro, we'll be late'.*

*'I know, but I've run out of room for the rest of my stuff. I want to take this, this and this.'*

*'Well, I know you need stuff for the journey, but your clothes and toothbrush are the most important things'.*

*'No...definitely haven't got space for a toothbrush', said Wil defiantly, stuffing his Emile Heskey action figure (now wearing full Liverpool kit) into the bag.*

*'Look, what's more important? The state of your teeth, or having a few things to do on the journey?...' Freddy looked for a moment at Wil, who was busy trying to get two size five footballs into the bag, then at Wil's teeth, which were busy trying to escape from his mouth to get to the sink for a once-a-week brushing, '...OK, you don't need to answer that, but for goodness sake, HURRY UP!'*

*Eventually Wil was packed, with the two footballs hanging on the outside from some specially constructed string that Wil had spent at least ten minutes putting together.*

*'Now have you got your pass...?' The doorbell rang. They grabbed their bags and raced downstairs.*

*'Hardy! How're you doing?'*

*'Fine...' panted Hardy.*

*'Did you have to rush?'*

*'Not exactly...' he gasped, '...but look...'. He pointed behind him at three huge suitcases. Matching ones. With little luggage labels and matching padlocks. Tartan.*

*'What on earth have you got in them? said Freddy, looking incredulously at the cases.*

*'Well, my Mum said that 'coz it was my first time away, I needed to be well prepared. Case one...(he pointed to case one)...is my warm weather case. Case two (he motioned to the second suitcase which was completely wrapped in cling film) is my wet weather case.' He slumped down and sat on the third case.*

*'So what's that one?' chirped Wil, smiling broadly, 'no let me guess! That's your heatwave case?'*

*'No'.*

*'Your snowy weather case?'*

*'No', said Hardy pitifully, 'that is my just-in-case case'.*

*'Just in case of what?' said Freddy.*

*'Just in case I lose my other two cases' mumbled Hardy miserably.*

*Freddy took charge as usual.*

*'Well, you don't need those two. You're not going to lose anything, and the weather forecast for Athens is bright and sunny the whole week. Come on, let's go'.*

*Hardy looked happy for the first time that afternoon, and parked his two superfluous cases inside the hallway, after checking to see that his Mum had driven off. The cloud of smoke and the screeching of tyres as she left told him she had.*

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*They marched down to Springhurst bus station and found the bus to Gatwick. Mr Andrews was already there, with Clara and Michael. Clara had on a Liverpool scarf and was carrying a picture of Robbie Fowler. Michael was dressed in full Liverpool kit.*

*'I didn't know you supported Liverpool!' said Wil as they settled into their seats on the bus.*

*'Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't...' replied Michael cryptically, 'you never can tell with Michaels!'*

*Wil looked at him with a mixture of puzzlement and admiration. Such a cool guy, he thought.*

*They sat towards the back of the bus. Mr Andrews buried himself in his book (The Mysteries of Ancient Greece). The others were too excited to talk, so they just generally jabbered about nothing really. As they waited for the bus to depart, Freddy said,*

*'Where's Alex? He should be here by now...'*

*'Oh don't worry, he'll make it. He's always late'.*

*'I know, but he's cutting it a bit fine this time, isn't he?'*, said Freddy, as the bus driver started his engine.

*As the vehicle pulled out, there was a thump on the roof of the bus just above them, followed by four or five quieter thumps, like footsteps, moving towards the front.*

*'I think he's here!' Jaz said excitedly.*

*As the bus driver jabbed at the 'door close' button and the heavy door started to slowly close, an athletic blond-haired figure swung down and round the door frame, supporting himself on the bus wing mirror, and, throwing a small rucksack through the now half-closed door, turned himself sideways and slid through the door as it shut.*

*'Hi guys!'*, called Alex, as if his arrival were the most natural thing in the world, *'sorry I'm late!'*

*'Hi Alex!'* they called out, except for Freddy, whose head was buried in a small book. After a while, he looked up at Alex and mumbled,

*'kalimera... alexis... ti kanis...mu aresi... i... elarda'*

*Hmmm....*

*...at least Alex had arrived, but Freddy...*

*...seemed to be ill...'*

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