

EN

# GLETSCHI'S GREAT ADVENTURE



greatest glacier of the alps

## Gletschi's great adventure

Plop. Oh, what was that? Gletschi, the smallest of the Montanini glacier flea family awoke with a start and jumped up from his ice bed. He hit his head on the ice lamp and, slightly dazed, he fell back into his ice bed. Plop. Again. His eyes flew open once more. This wasn't a dream. Something was going on. Plop. The little glacier flea hit his head and looked around cautiously. His 29 brothers and sisters were fast asleep. And his mum and dad hadn't noticed anything either. Plop. Since Gletschi was the smallest and weakest of the family, his mum and dad had always been very protective of him.



This mollycoddling had turned him scared of many things. Much to his displeasure, nature had given this glacier flea a fluffy, ice-blue fur and a red nose. To make up for it though, he was also the most inquisitive and restless member of the glacier flea family. So, he took a deep breath, got out of bed and carefully crept along the ice wall to where the sound was coming from. Plop.

The glacier flea saw a pink liquid dripping into their living room from above. He looked up. The drops were coming from a tipped over drinking bottle. Plop. Next to it dangled a black strap, exactly where Gletschi had played tiddlywinks with his brothers and sisters before bed. Egged on by his curiosity, he gathered all his strength and jumped. There was a little ridge along the bottom of the strap, giving Gletschi a good foothold. "Wow," he thought in awe. He had never seen his home from so high up before. Because Gletschi's family had always been so protective of him, he had always concentrated on finding a soft landing when jumping. Maybe that's why he had fallen so much and rarely jumped high, prompting endless advice from his family. But now, with a goal in sight, he had jumped like never before. Plop. Once Gletschi had seen everything there was to see from his perch, tiredness overcame him – he had, after all, been sleeping peacefully in his bed

until the plopping sound had woken him. He merely wanted to rest a little. But moments later he had fallen fast asleep.

Gletschi only woke, when his makeshift bed began rocking dangerously. It took a moment before the ice-blue glacier flea remembered what had happened. He was no longer in his home cave, but hung on the end of a strap. He was shaking with fright and anxiety. Where was he? “Mum?” Gletschi sobbed in desperation. He had never been separated from his family before. How would he ever be able to get back home? Then he remembered what his aunt Maren from Moosfluh had once told him, “Enjoy life and trust that everything is going to be all right in the end – even if you’re in trouble. And even if you think your situation is hopeless.” His family had always dismissed this attitude as simpleminded. Unsurprisingly. His aunt was, after all, a dotty old flea. But Gletschi was fascinated by her carefree life. Perhaps because they looked so alike? Aunt Maren also had a fluffy, ice-blue fur and a red nose. And she always wore red shoes. She travelled a lot and tended to come back with wondrous stories. The little glacier flea loved these stories. So he decided to trust aunt Maren’s advice. What else could he have done?

Gletschi tried to believe as hard as he could that he would make it through this adventure. And, all of a sudden, he no longer minded the strap swinging back and forth. In fact, he quite enjoyed it. Gletschi looked around. From up here, he had a great view onto the world around him. There were so many spectacular things to see. Beautiful alpine pastures full of flowers. A sky that was as blue as his fur, and big, white, soft pillows seemed to float across it. But what interested him most was the strap he was sitting on. It belonged to a backpack that was being carried by a girl with pigtails.



He heaved a sigh of relief. Human children – he had learned this at flea school – were much like flea children: inquisitive, sometimes a little fidgety, nature-loving, very active and kind. “Emma, Luca, are you coming?” the girl’s parents interrupted his train of thought. He turned around. Next to the girl he now also saw a boy. That had to be Luca.

Everything the glacier flea saw from the girl’s backpack during this hike aroused an unquenchable curiosity in him. He quickly forgot all the things his mum had told him about being careful. Gletschi gathered all his strength, fixed his gaze on the handle at the top of the child’s backpack and jumped. He had done it.

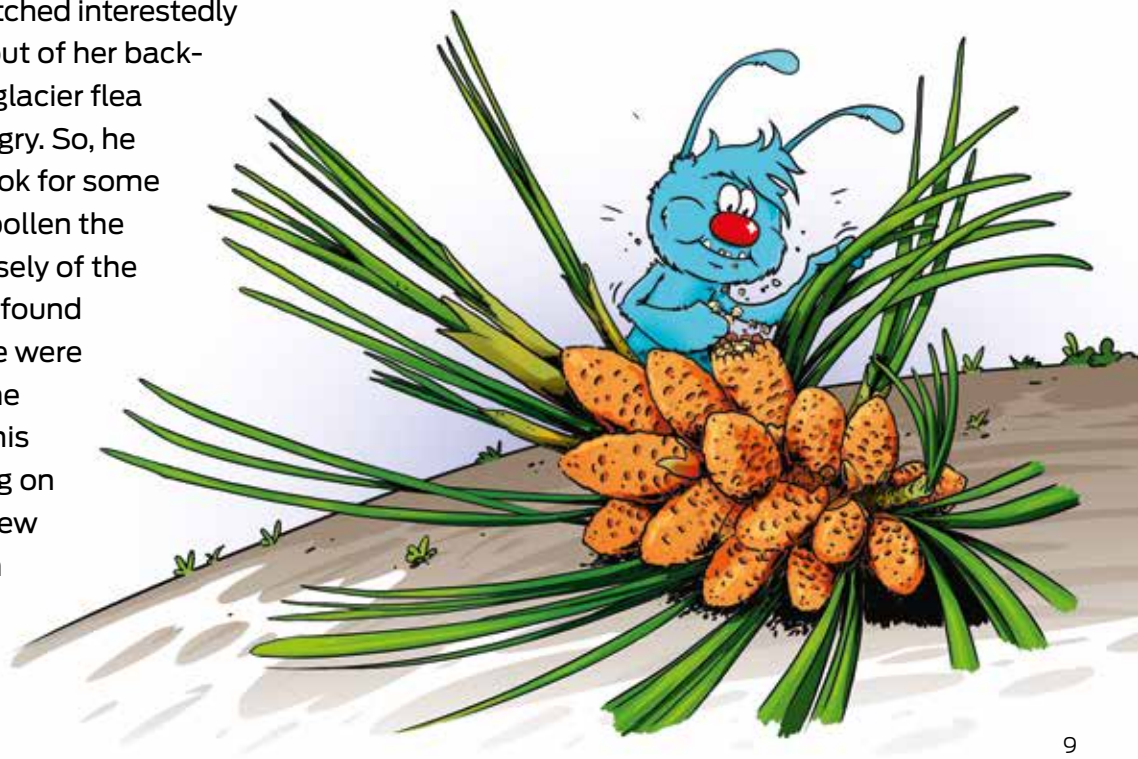
For the second time that day he had jumped higher than ever before. He gave a little whoop of joy. Having reached the handle, the glacier flea made himself comfortable. From here, he had the perfect view of where Emma was going. After a little while, Gletschi became even more confident. Over-confident, the grown-ups would call it. He jumped again and landed on Emma’s head. Up there, he had to hold on to Emma’s hair so as not to fall down. But that seemed to tickle her. Several times, Gletschi was lucky not to get squashed by her scratching fingers. Reluctantly, he retreated. With a sigh, he let himself fall back onto the handle. “Don’t be so nosy all the time,” his mother’s words echoed in his ears. “Mum,” the little glacier flea sniffed.



But he didn't have time to be sad for long. In every direction, he had a breathtaking view of the surrounding mountains. Gletschi calmed down. He was fascinated by what he saw. And he felt how the sight of his beloved mountains and the glacier also moved the people around him. Emma and Luca marvelled at the views and fooled around. The grown-ups seemed to relax. They looked happy and liberated. At the viewpoint on Eggishorn they stopped to take a break. Gletschi recognised this place because his father had once described it to him. Emma took off her backpack and Gletschi leapt onto the nearest rock. He watched interestedly as Emma pulled her sandwiches out of her backpack and began to eat them. The glacier flea realised that he, too, was very hungry. So, he jumped off his rock and went to look for some pollen. Hmmm, he liked summer pollen the best because they tasted so intensely of the different trees and herbs. He even found some mountain pine pollen. Those were his very favourite ones, because they tasted so nutty. Gletschi dangled his legs from the branch he was sitting on and revelled in the breathtaking view of the mountains Jungfrau, Mönch and Eiger.

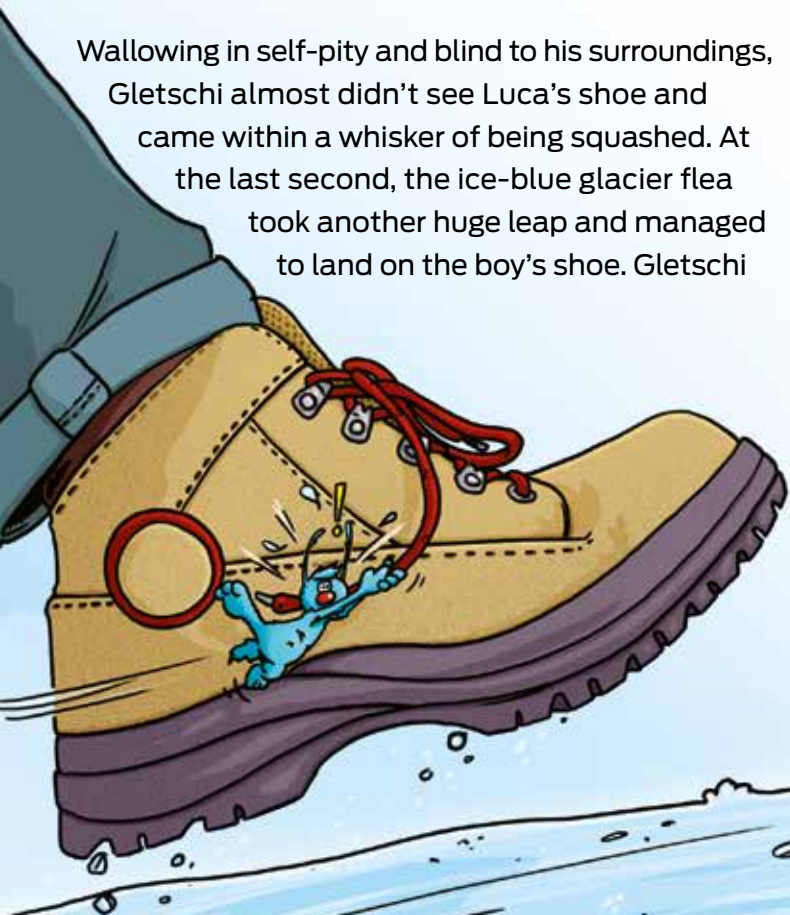
When he turned around, he could also see the Matterhorn, Dom and Weisshorn summits. Lost in this stunning view, he didn't notice how the girl packed her things, shouldered her backpack and continued on her way together with her parents. After he had eaten his last pollen, Gletschi roused himself from contemplating the mountains and looked around. He gave a start. He had missed the departure of his transport.

Gletschi felt miserable. Emma, whose scent he had grown to love, was already out of sight.



And he couldn't smell her anymore either. His red nose high in the air, the little glacier flea sniffed in every direction. Nothing. His transport was gone. Sadly, he sank back onto his stone. Tears ran down his ice-blue cheeks. He was scared. He missed his mum, his dad, his 29 brothers and sisters and aunt Maren. And anyway. He was fed up with adventuring. "Enjoy life and trust that everything will be alright in the end," he parroted his aunt.

Wallowing in self-pity and blind to his surroundings, Gletschi almost didn't see Luca's shoe and came within a whisker of being squashed. At the last second, the ice-blue glacier flea took another huge leap and managed to land on the boy's shoe. Gletschi



held on as tightly as he could, just like he had learned during climbing lessons at flea school. By the time he had found a more comfortable position, he heard Emma's familiar voice. "Luca, hurry up. Mum and dad are already waiting!" Gletschi had to suppress a grin. He had heard this sentence all too often before – directed at him. The children's parents were talking about the glacier world on Bettmerhorn. Gletschi pricked his ears.

He had heard his aunt Maren tell fascinating stories about the glacier world. But to his dismay, the little glacier flea learned that they would only go on that trip the following day. Gletschi swallowed. This adventure was getting out of hand. Of course he wanted to come along to the glacier world. But staying away from home over night? He couldn't imagine doing that. But he couldn't turn back now, either. He was at a loss what to do. What could he do? But then Luca's even walking pace rocked the exhausted glacier flea into a deep sleep.

Gletschi only woke up the next morning, when Luca tied his shoelaces. The little glacier flea was much too excited to be scared of what was to come. Finally he, too, would see the glacier world on Bettmerhorn. But this time, they did not go hiking. Instead, they



entered a room with two benches and many windows. They hovered up to Bettmerhorn as if by magic. Gletschi recognised the mountain terminus and was thankful that his dad had always been so strict during geography lessons. Even when he was still a very young glacier flea, his dad kept reminding him in his deep, sonorous voice: “Boy, that’s our habitat. You’ve got to know where we belong.” “Dad...” Gletschi once again suppressed the homesickness that threatened to overwhelm him whenever he thought of his family. So he decided to concentrate on the glacier world instead. There were so many things to explore! The mountains, nature, the glacier. Things about which Gletschi had not yet learned anything at school. How exciting! The little flea jumped around the glacier world all day. And, of course, he lost track of Emma and Luca again. But Gletschi only realised that he was all on his own, when the sun already hung very low in the sky. Sadness engulfed him once more. He had liked those two children. And all of a sudden, the little glacier flea realised that he was trapped. If he wanted to keep on exploring the wonders that surrounded him up here in the mountains, he would have to stay. And if he wanted to return to his family, he would have to give up his adventures with Emma and Luca. In desperation, Gletschi started to sob. He was scared and didn’t know what to do.

After what felt like ages, Gletschi saw someone hopping towards him from the corner of his eye. “Aunt Maren!” the little glacier flea sniffed. And indeed, there stood his dotty aunt from Moosfluh. She had heard his sobs and had come as fast as she could. She took Gletschi into her arms and let him cry until his tears subsided. Then Gletschi told his aunt exactly what had happened: how the dripping drinking bottle had woken him and how he had jumped the biggest jump of his life to land on Emma’s backpack. He told her about the fantastic hike up Eggishorn, the breathtaking views, the delicious pollen meal and how he had, thanks to Luca, arrived at the glacier world. And how much he had enjoyed everything. His aunt patiently listened to the whole story. When the little glacier flea had finally finished, she hugged him, pressing him tightly into her fluffy, ice-blue fur. “Gletschi, you’re so brave. I’m really proud of you! And you should be proud, too,” aunt Maren told him. But her nephew just couldn’t appreciate the praise at that moment.

Gletschi explained his dilemma to aunt Maren. On the one hand, he didn’t want to give up the mountain world. He liked Emma and Luca and the adventures he could have with them. There were so many things they could still explore together. But on the other hand, he missed his family terribly. And then,



aunt Maren told him how they dealt with that kind of problem on Moosfluh, her home mountain: “I’ll show you how you can get rid of all your worries. We’re too small to understand everything and find a solution for every problem. Simply pass on your worries to a stone. Then take the stone and throw it onto a hollow tree trunk. All you need to do then is keep still and quiet for a moment. Listen to yourself. You’ll see, the solution will come to you,” she encouraged her nephew. Gletschi’s heart skipped with excitement. He asked Maren to accompany him to Moosfluh. Of course the ice-blue glacier flea could hardly wait to get started. But his aunt told him not to get overenthusiastic. That’s something she had learned on her many travels: you needed to pace yourself when heading out on such a long trek. Having finally reached Moosfluh, Gletschi had a big meal of mountain pine pollen and then had a good night’s rest.

The next morning, refreshed and full of confidence, he chose a pebble and, with a lot of effort, he heaved it into the hollow tree trunk. Together with his worries. Just like his aunt had said. The glacier flea sat down, closed his eyes and waited what would happen next. At first, he couldn’t bring himself to sit still. His feet kept tapping nervously.



But after a while, he calmed down. When Gletschi opened his eyes again, he felt light and brimful of confidence. He told his aunt, who smiled. It seemed her little nephew had finally found his self-confidence. He was ready for the truth.

“Have you ever asked yourself, why the two of us happen to have a fluffy, ice-blue fur and a red nose?” aunt Maren began. Gletschi shrugged. “You and I, we are special glacier fleas,” she continued. “Our strong will allows us to be at home in both worlds. In the human world and the mountains as well in the icy world of the glacier fleas. Thanks to the colour of our fur and nose, predators can’t see us. In return, we have a mission in life: Whenever we see people hiking up the mountain who look unhappy, we need to tickle their ears. Until they start to laugh.” Gletschi stared open-mouthed at his aunt. Indignantly he called out, “But why are you only telling me this now, aunt Maren?” “You had to find your own strength first and start believing in yourself,” she explained patiently. At that moment, Gletschi realised that his worries had evaporated: he no longer had to decide. He, the weakest and smallest member of the family could have both from now on: go on adventures with Emma and Luca and be with his family. “And if you ever need transport or help, just call me,” a deep, warm

voice interrupted his train of thought. Gletschi jumped with surprise and saw a pair of big, cunning eyes: unnoticed by Gletschi, the fox had sneaked up on them. Gletschi knew the fox from aunt Maren’s tales. “But if I’m not needed at the moment, I’ll retreat to a quieter spot for now,” the clever fox continued. “I’m not as young as I was, and all this excitement is too much for me. Go and have fun with the children,” the fox told the little glacier flea. As a reward for being so brave, aunt Maren and the fox gave Gletschi a pair of red shoes. Just like the ones his dotty aunt always wore. He pulled them on and jumped back home to his parents and brothers and sisters as fast as he could. They would be amazed at everything he had to tell them!

And if you’re really quiet, you can hear the ice-blue glacier flea on Moosfluh. You can hear him groaning and grunting whenever he is rolling another pebble with a worry up the hollow tree trunk. You may also meet the curious glacier flea in the glacier world on Bettmerhorn. He can usually be found sitting in some corner and learning new facts about his home region.

Be careful when you're hiking on Eggishorn. Maybe you'll carry the little ice-blue bundle of fur part of the way? Look carefully at the stones you want to sit down on. You might just see something ice-blue and red jumping up and down there. And what if you feel something tickling in your ear? Well, maybe you should think about writing down your worries on a stone and leave them in the hollow tree on Moosfluh.



All the things Gletschi can do.

 Facebook  
/Aletsch Arena Familien

 aletscharena.ch/gletschi



Hello, it's me – Gletschi!  
Colour me in and win fabulous prizes!



## Painting competition:

Send us your painted glacier flea and win one of 10 fantastic Aletsch Arena prizes.

The prize draw takes place twice a year – once at the end of the summer season and once at the end of the winter season. All decisions are final. The winners are notified in writing. No cash payment option available in lieu of the prizes.

Please  
affix stamp

Surname, first name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

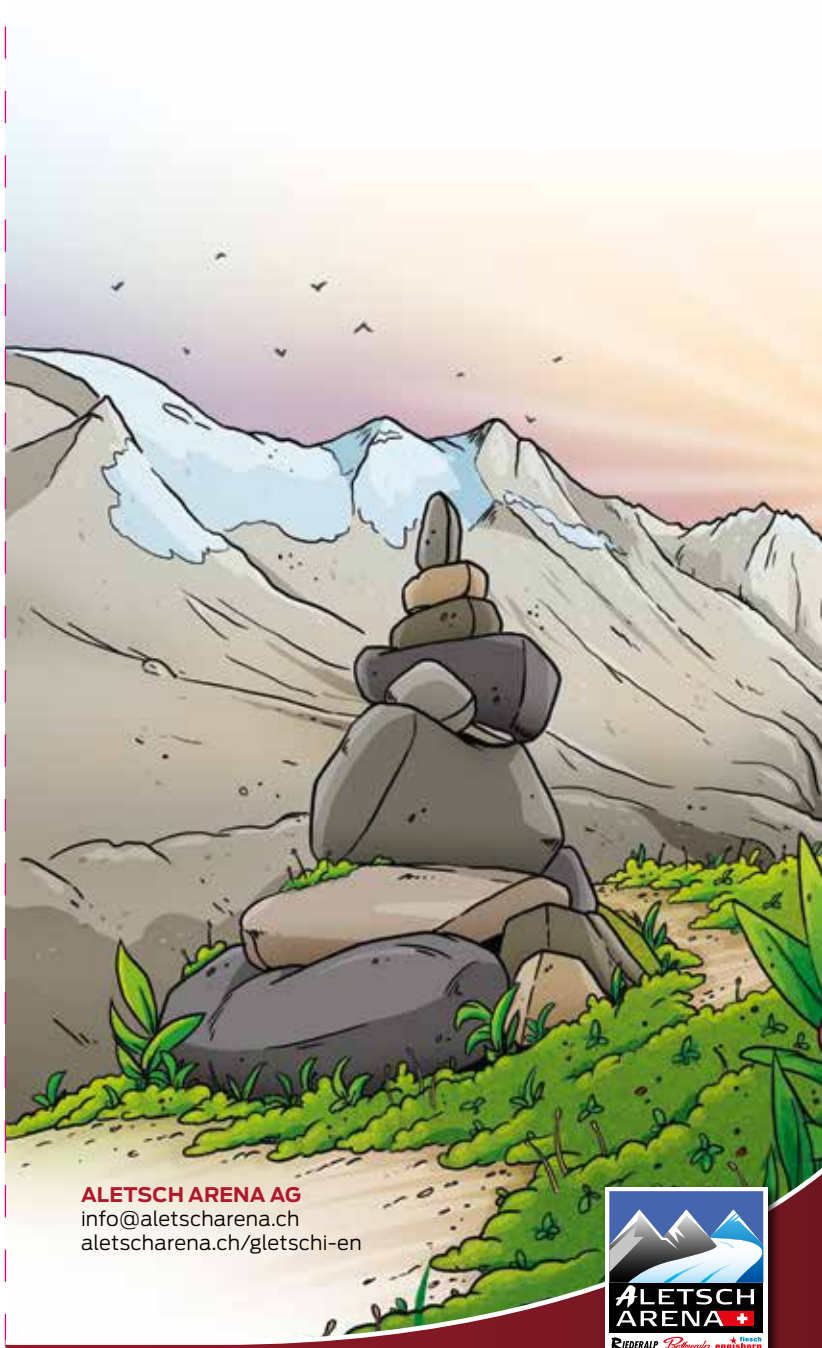
Street \_\_\_\_\_

Post code / city \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address:  
Aletsch Arena AG  
Furkastrasse 39  
3983 Mörel-Filet  
Switzerland

Please do not use this address for advertising purposes



**ALETSCHE ARENA AG**  
info@aletscharena.ch  
aletscharena.ch/gletschi-en



greatest glacier of the alps