



# My name is Marcel.

I am a snowboarder from Switzerland.  
This is the story of my journey to the Special Olympics World Winter Games Turin 2025!



Written by  
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Illustrated by  
Andri Anto

# Marcel and His Snowboard: Reach for the Sky



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Marcel and His Snowboard: Reach for the Sky

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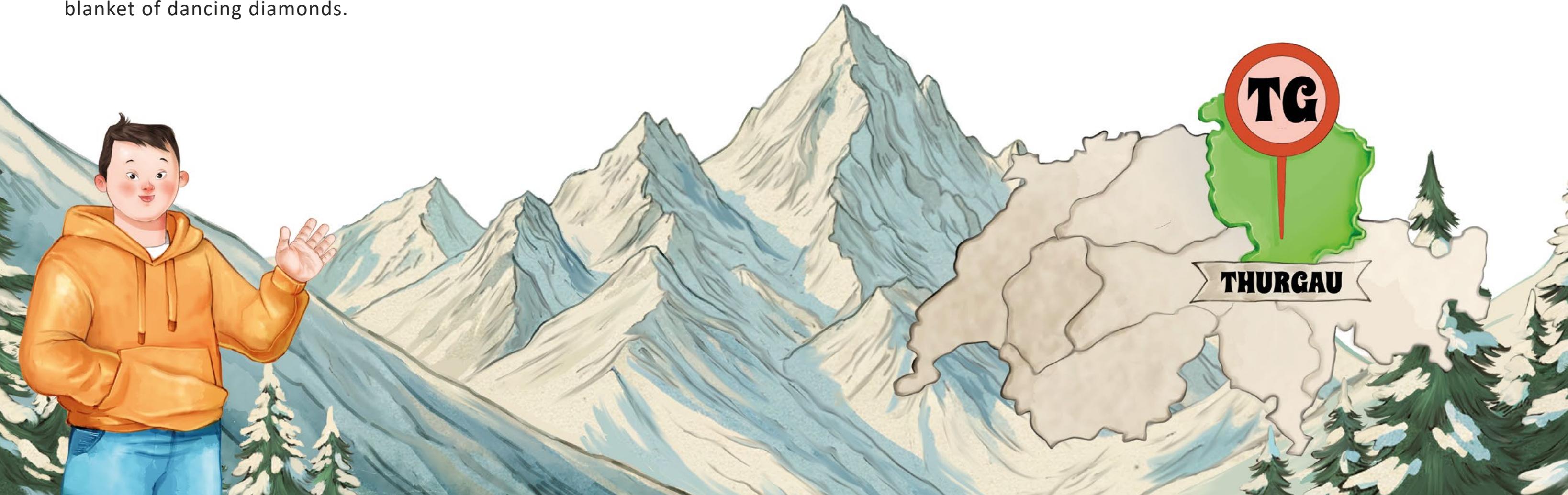
# Marcel and His Snowboard: Reach for the Sky

Illustrated by  
Andri Anto

My name is **Marcel**.

I come from Thurgau, a beautiful region in Switzerland known for its apple orchards and the sparkling waters of Lake Constance.

When the sun shines on the lake, it looks like a blanket of dancing diamonds.



When I was a baby, I was very sick.

I spent a long time in the hospital until I was nine months old because I had problems with my heart.

The doctors did not know what my future would look like.

After I had surgery on my heart, things began to change.  
I began to grow stronger.

Even back then, something small but very, very bright was glowing inside me — a spark that refused to go out.



I have an intellectual disability.

Growing up, it sometimes took me longer to pick things up.

At school, I learned best by doing, trying things out, and taking on responsibilities step by step.

I didn't speak very much, and sometimes people didn't understand that I understood them.

But when my brother Nico was with me, I felt safe and included.

Playing with him and the other children helped me grow stronger and continue learning in my own way.





I also work on a farm, helping with the animals and the land.

The farm is peaceful, and I like the rhythm of the work: feeding, carrying, moving, lifting. It keeps me strong.

I love travelling alone by train from Weinfelden to the Valais region so I can train with my coach, Armand.

The journey takes several hours, through fields, forests, and finally the mountains.

Watching the landscape change through the window makes me feel independent and proud.



Armand is one of the most important people in my life. He has known me since I was a child, and he understands me on and off the slopes. He knows when I'm excited, nervous, determined, or tired.

With just a smile or a slight nod, he helps me believe in myself.

He taught me how to balance on a snowboard, how to turn, how to trust the snow beneath me. He trains me in cycling and swimming too.

To me, he is not just a coach — he is a friend.



I also spend time with Lucky, my dog.

Lucky is full of energy and always makes me laugh.

When we walk together, I feel calm and happy,  
and the world seems simple and kind.

All of this — the farm, the travelling, the sports, the people I love —  
helped me become the athlete I am today.



Thanks to my hard work and Armand's support, I competed in the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy.

There were athletes from all around the world — skiers, snowboarders, skaters, dancers, floorball players, snowshoers, and teams from many different countries.

Everywhere I looked, someone was chasing their dream.

The excitement in the air felt like electricity.



On the snowy slopes in Turin, I won one gold and two silver medals.  
When I stood on the podium, I could hear the cheers echoing across the mountains.

I held my medals and felt the weight of everything it took to get there — every challenge, every early morning, every moment of courage. Armand stood beside me, proud and happy.

We achieved it together.



Snowboarding lets me speak without many words.

It allows me to shine.

And I hope you find something that lets you shine too —  
something that shows the world exactly who you are.

