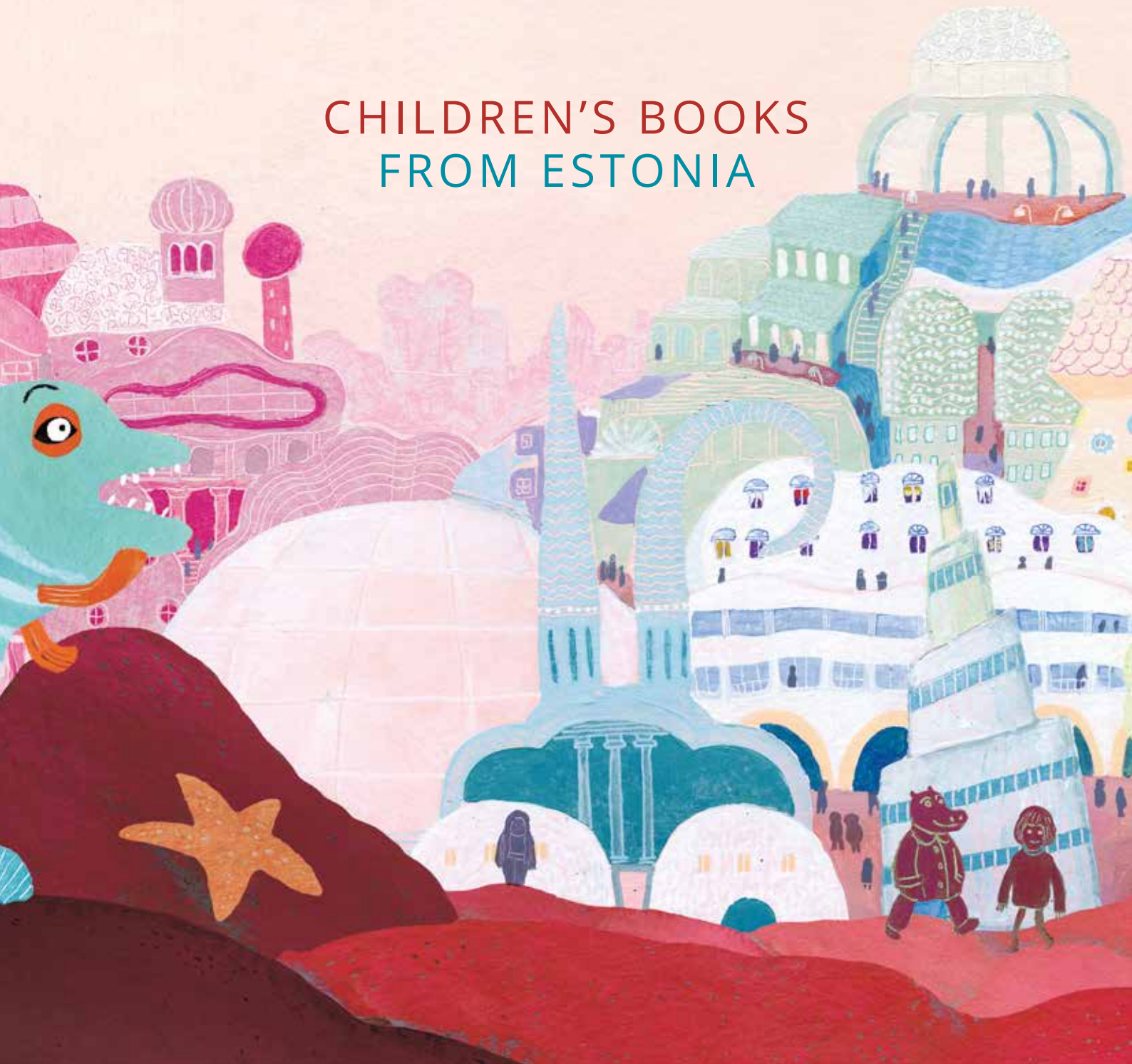


# CHILDREN'S BOOKS FROM ESTONIA



# THE ESTONIAN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE CENTRE

The Estonian Children’s Literature Centre is a specialised competency organisation that promotes the country’s most outstanding children’s works abroad. This includes representing Estonian children’s authors at the world’s largest book fairs, organising their appearances abroad, maintaining a database of Estonian children’s literature, and producing publications on the topic. The Centre collaborates on a large scale with publishers, researchers, translators, teachers, and other specialists.

## How can we help? We ...

- provide information on Estonian children’s writers and illustrators.
- publish topical information in print and at [www.elk.ee](http://www.elk.ee).
- send newsletters to publishers and translators.
- help interested parties contact Estonian authors.
- assist in the selection of suitable translators for Estonian children’s literature.
- inform publishers and translators about opportunities for financial support.

## The TRADUCTA grant programme

Traducta offers grants to translators and foreign publishers to promote the translation and publishing of Estonian literature abroad.

The English Wallet programme supports the publication of Estonian prose and poetry into English.

Norsk Pengepung supports the translation of Estonian literary works into Norwegian, Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, and their publication in Norway, Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark.

Application deadlines are 20 February, 20 May, 20 August, and 20 November of each year.

Apply here:  
<https://www.kulka.ee/programmes/traducta>  
[traducta@kulka.ee](mailto:traducta@kulka.ee)



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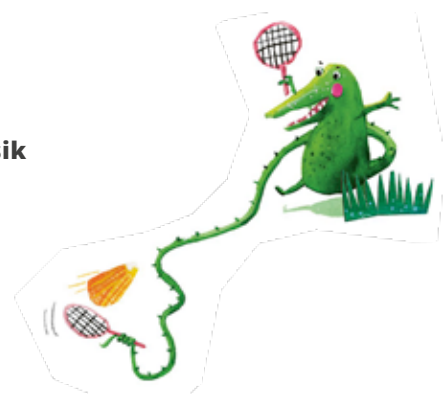




## The Crocodile's Tail

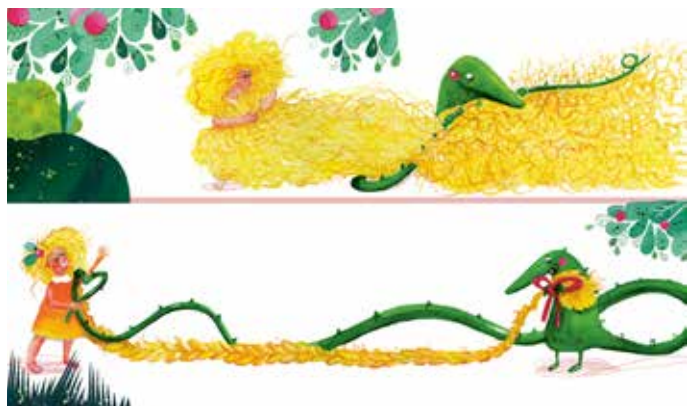
Written and illustrated by Tiiu Kitsik

Koolibri 2019  
257×223 mm, 25 pp  
ISBN 9789985042632



The crocodile has a long tail. It's everywhere! He likes his tail, for the most part. It's a nice thing to have and it helps him a lot. Yet sometimes the tail can cause problems, and occasionally it's downright annoying. The worst is when someone accidentally steps on it. The crocodile isn't selfish or impolite. He tries to be however others want him to be – something that's very hard to do. Too hard.

Tiiu Kitsik's picture book teaches children how to accept yourself just the way you are.



**Tiiu Kitsik** (1981) is a visual artist, illustrator, and children's author. She graduated from Tallinn University in advertising and media and has also worked in the field. Kitsik is a cofounder of the Estonian crowdfunding platform Hooandja, where she has worked for several years. She has written two children's books and contributed to the children's magazines *Hea Laps*, *Täheke*, and *Mesimumm*. She lives and works as a freelance artist in Berlin.



## The My Body Series

Written by Aidi Vallik

Illustrated by Elina Sildre

Lugu-Loo 2010–2019  
157×155 mm

*My Stomach* (2019) 48 pp  
ISBN 9789949949892

*My Legs* (2010) 36 pp  
ISBN 9789985977477

*My Arms* (2018) 48 pp  
ISBN 9789949949861

*My Head* (2019) 48 pp  
ISBN 9789949949885

I'm me! I have arms, legs, a stomach, and a head. My arms are for hugging. My legs help me move. My stomach rumbles sometimes and every now and then, it hurts, too. Naturally, my arms, legs, and stomach do other interesting things, but only what the brain inside my head tells them to do. It's so fun to find out how your body works!

Vallik's *My Body* series for young children is beloved by readers of all ages.



**Aidi Vallik** (1971) is a children's author, columnist and screenwriter. She graduated from the University of Tartu in Estonian philology and has written over twenty books for children and young adults, children's plays, TV series, and scripts for children's films. Her trilogy of young-adult novels about a girl named Ann received several awards in Estonia and abroad, and has been translated into Finnish, Latvian, and Lithuanian. Vallik has a sharp eye for contemporary social issues as well as the sensitivity and warmth needed to address them in a manner suitable for children.

**Elina Sildre** (1980) is an illustrator and comic artist who graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design. She has illustrated over 30 children's books and contributed to the children's magazines *Täheke* and *Mesimumm*. Sildre has also created illustrations and comics for anthologies, textbooks, and activity books. The artist has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the Knee-High Book competitions.







## The Evil Fish Café

Written by Hasso Krull

Illustrated by Marja-Liisa Plats

Kaksikhammas 2019

261×193 mm, 40 pp

ISBN 9789949999149

There are many fish both large and small in the deep blue sea. Among them is one evil fish who loves to snack on others, who do their best to keep away from him. Only the giant whale doesn't swim away. Instead, he opens his mouth and swallows the evil fish along with a cloud of plankton. What will become of the evil fish in the whale's belly?

Hasso Krull's first children's book contains equal doses of amusement and absurdity.

### Award:

2019 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, special prize of the Estonian Children's Literature Centre



**Hasso Krull** (1964) is a poet, literary critic, and translator who graduated from Tallinn University in cultural theory and policy. He has researched Estonian mythology and taught cultural theory and creative writing. Krull has written over 30 books and is a recipient of the Baltic Assembly's Prize for Literature, in addition to the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's annual literary awards for essays and poetry. *The Evil Fish Café* is his first children's book.

**Marja-Liisa Plats** (1984) is an illustrator, graphic designer, photographer, and singer. She graduated from Tartu Art College in photography. Plats has illustrated more than 40 children's books and regularly contributes to the children's magazine *Täheke*. She has received extensive recognition for her works and was twice listed in the White Ravens catalogue. Her illustrations are inquisitive and experiment with a broad range of visual techniques.



## Mommy's Dragon

Written by Piret Jaaks

Illustrated by Marju Tammik

Päike ja Pilv 2019

256×215 mm, 33 pp

ISBN 9789949737635

A dragon lives inside my Mommy. Sometimes, it breathes fire – like when I drip jam on the floor or spill a mug of hot cocoa in bed or cut a hole in Mommy's ball gown. The dragon doesn't like it when I have those accidents, so it comes out and roars. I reckon it's all my fault. Mommy doesn't believe I'm capable of summoning her dragon, because she alone knows the magic words to do so. She'd actually like to forget them, because she's very tired of the creature. Still, I think it's great to have your very own dragon!



**Piret Jaaks** (1980) is an author and playwright. She graduated from the University of Tartu in theatre science and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in drama at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. Jaaks has worked at several theaters and teaches at the Drakadeemia creative writing school. She has published short prose, literary reviews, articles, and worked as a literary editor. *Mommy's Dragon* is her second children's book.

**Marju Tammik** (1972) is a fashion artist and illustrator.

She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in fashion design. Tammik's illustrations can be found on posters and packaging, as well as in magazines and books. She is a two-time winner of the Estonian Design Awards Prize. Tammik has illustrated four children's books and has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the Knee-High Book competitions.







## Tap, Tap!

Written by Ülo Pikkov

Illustrated by Anne Pikkov

Päike ja Pilv 2019

251×175 mm, 35 pp

ISBN 9789949728596



The forest is nice and tranquil until one day, a tapping starts and just won't stop. All the forest animals set out to find who could be making such a racket. At the top of an old fir tree, they discover a little woodpecker-boy. No matter how nicely the animals ask for some peace and quiet, the woodpecker keeps on pecking. Why on earth is he pecking so loudly that it echoes to every edge of the woods? When will it finally be quiet again?



**Ülo Pikkov** (1976) is an internationally renowned filmmaker, producer, and film scholar. He graduated from the Turku University of Applied Sciences in animation and from the Institute of Law at the University of Tartu. Pikkov likewise received a doctoral degree in animation from the Estonian Academy of Arts and was an associate professor in the EAA Animation Department for ten years. Since 1996, he has directed several award-winning animation films and published articles on cinema. Pikkov has written five children's books and has illustrated more than ten.

**Anne Pikkov** (1974) is an illustrator, graphic designer, and book designer. She graduated in graphic design from the Estonian Academy of Arts, where she is currently a visiting professor and vice rector of academic affairs. Pikkov has illustrated 14 children's books and contributed to the Estonian magazines *Täheke*, *Pere ja Kodu*, and *Jamie*. She has received many awards at annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions. Her art is ornamental, laconic, spiced with humour, and evocatively expressive.



## The Gingerbread Story

Written by Piret Veigel

Illustrated by Catherine Zarip

Postimees Kirjastus 2019

231×231 mm, 32 pp

ISBN 9789949669585



Once upon a time, a king and queen lived in a faraway kingdom. When the holidays drew near, they decided to give their subjects a present. The king and queen reckoned you can never have too many fun traditions! They thought and thought about what the fantastic gift might be, but couldn't come up with anything. One day, an angel offered to help and suggested that they bake cookies. Alas, the royal couple was unaware that an evil witch had been watching!



**Piret Veigel** (1969) is an editor, publisher, children's writer, and translator. She studied at the Estonian Institute of Humanities and graduated from the Rõpina School of Horticulture in landscaping. Veigel has worked as a middle-school teacher, journalist, and editor-in-chief of the magazine *Kodu & Aed*. Currently, she works as a publisher at the Postimees publishing house. For a full decade, Veigel has participated as an artist and instructor at the annual "Gingerbread Mania" exhibition, which inspired her second children's book, *The Gingerbread Story*.

**Catherine Zarip** (1966) is an illustrator and graphic designer.

She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in ceramics, after which she worked at the publisher Avita as a book designer and art director. Zarip has illustrated dozens of textbooks, more than 30 children's books, and has designed about 200 works in total. She has been awarded twice at the Tallinn Illustrations Triennial and ten times in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition. Her art is fresh and elegant – simultaneously animated and restrained, detail-rich and simplified.







## The Day Full of Holes

Written by Kadri Kiho  
Illustrated by Mirjam Siim

Päike ja Pilv 2019  
225×225 mm, 35 pp  
ISBN 9789949737604



Karl Joonas wakes up and finds a hole in his favorite sock. Little does he know that an exceptionally holey day has dawned. On the way to Grandma's house, their car hits a pothole, they find a rusted hole in the metal, Dad has to find a gap in his calendar to take the vehicle in for repairs, and he finds out that his uncle loves donut holes more than anything in the world. Karl Joonas never realized that a day could hold so many holes!

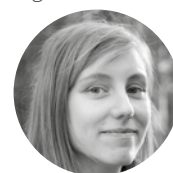
### Awards:

2019 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, special prize of the jury to a newcomer  
2017 The Knee-High Book Competition, 1<sup>st</sup> place



**Kadri Kiho** (1984) graduated from the Tallinn Technical University's Tartu College in landscape architecture, has another degree in gene technology from TalTech, and works there as an instructional designer. She is a co-founder of Höp: an Estonian publishing house focused on innovative children's educational and activity books. Kiho has written two children's books and an adult radio drama.

**Mirjam Siim** (1990) is an illustrator and painter. She graduated from Tartu Art College in media and advertisement design and currently works as a freelance artist in Porto, Portugal. Siim has organised many personal exhibitions in Estonia and Portugal and taken part in group exhibitions in both countries as well as in the US, the UK, and Russia. She won the Ashurst Emerging Artist Prize in 2016. *The Day Full of Holes* is the first children's book she has illustrated.



## Saskia Looks for Colours

Written by Liis Sein  
Illustrated by Catherine Zarip

Tammeraamat 2019  
236×236 mm, 25 pp  
ISBN 9789949616909



Saskia the elephant girl is sad. She doesn't know her colours yet. When the elephant family stops by a river to rest after a long journey, Saskia decides to do something about it. She sets off on an exciting journey to find colours and get to know them better. What colour is a lion? Is it yellow or is it the colour of the sun? Is a parrot blue or a shade of the sky? What about a zebra, a giraffe, or a leopard? Do you know what colours they are?

### Award:

2019 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books



**Liis Sein** (1983) is a playwright and children's author. She graduated from Tallinn University in adult education and has received additional training in playwriting and creative writing. Sein currently works as an administrative assistant at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre. She has written three children's books and won the Knee-High Book Competition in 2019. Sein conveys the world through children's eyes such that adults also see it as a bigger, brighter, and more lucid place.

**Catherine Zarip** (1966) is an illustrator and graphic designer. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in ceramics, after which she worked at the publisher Avita as a book designer and art director. Zarip has illustrated dozens of textbooks, more than 30 children's books, and has designed about 200 works in total. She has been awarded twice at the Tallinn Illustrations Triennial and ten times in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition. Her art is fresh and elegant – simultaneously animated and restrained, detail-rich and simplified.







## The Ghost and Facebook

Written by Andrus Kivirähk

Illustrated by Heiki Ernits

Varrak 2019

246×173 mm, 128 pp

ISBN 9789985347225

The colourful cast of characters in Andrus Kivirähk's new collection of children's stories includes ghosts, laptops, dogs, cats, kids, grown-ups, sauna whisks, and caterpillars. They build birdhouses, go to plays, grow nettles, and take trips to The Avocado. The year just flies by when you have good friends and exciting individuals all around! You're strengthened by your escapades and gain many a good experience. Perhaps some readers even have enough resolve to extract and ponder the things hidden between the lines of Kivirähk's humorous and fantastical writing!



**Andrus Kivirähk** (1970) is a playwright, topical satirist, screen-writer, and author of adult and children's prose. He graduated from the University of Tartu in journalism and is the most commanding and prolific figure on Estonia's literary scene today. Kivirähk has won many major awards, including the IBBY Honour List in 2008.

His children's stories are known for their rich fantasy and unique humour. Kivirähk's style is straightforward, his stories fast-paced, and their cast of characters colourful and filled with surprises.

**Heiki Ernits** (1953) graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute as a teacher of arts and crafts. He has worked as a photographer, art teacher, art director, and film director. Ernits has made 19 animated films, produced commercials, designed book covers and layouts, and illustrated more than 30 children's books.

Highly popular among Estonian children, he has received six Nukits Awards to date.



## The Inflatable Grandpa

Ann had an inflatable swan. Marcus had an inflatable shark. Edward had an inflatable crocodile. It was summer and the weather was hot, meaning the kids would be able to go to the beach and have so much fun splashing in the water with their inflatable animals that it'd bubble like a whirlpool. Unfortunately, there was a rule that said little kids weren't allowed to go swimming without any adults around.

These adults, on the other hand, were as busy as could be all summer long! If they weren't mowing the lawn, then they were probably painting the fence, after which they needed to trim the lilac bushes and weed the flowerbeds. Ann's dad was even working on fixing their roof. None of them had time to go to the beach.

"What's the point in going out to the country in summertime when all adults do is work here, too?" Marcus grumbled. "Just stay put in the city!"

Ann and Edward sighed. The inflatable animals had very sad faces, too.

Then, Linda rounded the corner with a flower-print beach bag slung over her shoulder.

"Let's go swimming!" she called out.

"We're not allowed to go without a mom or a dad," Edward growled. "There has to be at least one grown-up keeping an eye on the kids – that's what they tell us."

"My grandpa will do it," Linda said. She took a rolled-up object out of her bag and started blowing to inflate it.

"What kind of animal do you have there?" Marcus asked. "A big bunny?"

"More like a panda," Ann suggested.

It was hard for Linda to talk as she blew, but she tried all the same.

"It's not an animal at all," she said through gritted teeth. "It's a grandpa. An inflatable grandpa. I bought it from the store yesterday."

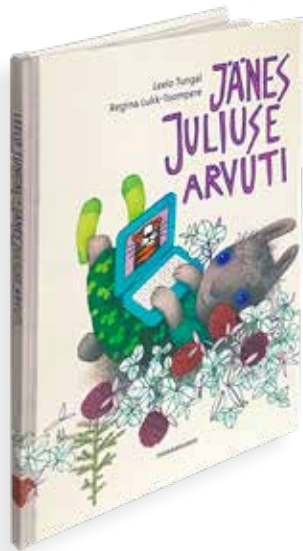
"An inflatable grandpa?" the others echoed and burst out laughing.

However, the more that Linda blew, the less the kids laughed, because it really was a grandpa!

*Translated by Adam Cullen*







## Julius the Bunny's Computer

Written by Leelo Tungal

Illustrated by Regina Lukk-Toompere

Tammerraamat 2019

283×205 mm, 25 pp

ISBN 9789949690053

One day, Julius the bunny is given a computer – just what he's always wanted! His sister's sled and his brother's skis seem too ordinary to the bunny-boy. Julius's father shows him how to click on icons and play games. How exciting they are! The games let him run from wolves, stack heads of cabbage, and fling carrots. However, his favourite is a tiger-hunting game. It's so nerve-racking that the bunny barely finds any time to eat and sleep, much less play with his brother and sister. When all the tigers are finally caught, Julius finds himself in a totally different world.



**Leelo Tungal** (1947) is a poet, children's author, and translator.

She is the founder and served as a long-time editor-in-chief of the children's magazine *Hea Laps*. Tungal has written more than 90 prose and poetry books for children and young adults. She has received a multitude of honours and awards, including the IBBY Honour List in 2010, the Baltic Assembly's Prize for Literature, and the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's Award for Children's Literature on two occasions. Her works are optimistic, communicate directly with the reader, and contain fluid storytelling and wit.

**Regina Lukk-Toompere** (1953) graduated from the

Estonian Academy of Arts in illustration and book design. She has illustrated more than 90 books and textbooks. Lukk-Toompere was on the 2014 IBBY Honour List and has received several awards in annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions. She is masterful at a wide range of traditional drawing, graphic, and painting techniques. Collage adds an element of realism to her works, but also gives them a certain dream-like quality.



It took a fair amount of time, but one fine day, his long-expected victory arrived! A swarm of countless little predators filled the tiger cage, their long tails jerking back and forth and their fangs glinting in their wide jaws. Trumpets blew, the screen rippled, and big red letters appeared.

"Hooray!" Julius cried out. "At last, I won! Dad, what's this say?"

"Hold on, let me get my glasses!" the bunny's father said in a rather gravelly voice.

"Glasses?" Julius asked wide-eyed. "Since when do you wear glasses?"

"Oh, the optometrist recommended them even before I retired!" the bunny-dad replied as he shuffled over to the computer.

"Retired?! When did you retire?"

Julius couldn't believe his ears.

"Your mother and I are quite elderly bunnies now, you know," Julius's father said. "Luckily, we're still in good shape – Mom even went to the pensioners' exercise club today!"

"Julia! Juhan! Are you hearing all this weird stuff Dad is saying?" Julius called out. However, both his brother and sister had vanished.

"Where is everybody?" he asked.

"Oh, Julia has been living abroad for a long time already – she married a Finnish skier-bunny," Julius's dad told him.

"Juhan became a famous cabbage breeder. He and his wife Angora live right nearby. All their five kids are fantastic little rabbits! Every time they come to visit, the kids have learned some new song or other . . . Have you really never noticed them here before?"

Julius didn't reply. He glumly eyed the letters on the screen in front of him. Looking even gloomier, he peered at the mirror next to the computer table – staring back at him was a scrawny, red-eyed bunny with droopy whiskers.

It couldn't be true! That limp-eared reflection in the mirror was him, the clever bunny-boy Julius!

*Translated by Adam Cullen*







## All Jobs Are Good Jobs

Written and illustrated by Margit Saluste

Koolibri 2016–2019  
296×210 mm, 78 pp

All Jobs Are Good Jobs 1 (2016)  
ISBN 9789985037850

All Jobs Are Good Jobs 2 (2019)  
ISBN 9789985042342

Can you guess how a doctor works, what a reporter does, or what a scientist's day looks like? Do you know why we need archaeologists, psychologists, and speech therapists? Who on earth are lepidopterists and gemologists? How can lawyers and arborists help people? There are so many exciting jobs! So many opportunities! Who would you like to be when you grow up?

Margit Saluste's books introduce children to over 150 professions for men and women alike.



**Margit Saluste** (1964) is a children's writer and illustrator.

She graduated from the Tallinn Light Garment Technology School in clothing design and modelling, has studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts' Open Academy, and has worked as a nursery art teacher. Saluste has written 12 books for toddlers, illustrated works by herself and others, and regularly contributes to the children's magazine *Mesimumm*. She expertly expands children's worldviews by explaining things in an easy-to-understand way – be it introducing professions, describing climate phenomena, or detailing the wide range of human emotion.



**Penny the publisher** is the editor-in-chief at a publishing house. She talks to authors, decides what manuscripts will become books, and figures out what their print runs will be – meaning how many of them will be printed – as well as their sizes and prices. Penny is a big fan of literature – she has read hundreds, no . . . *thousands* of books!

The publishing house needs a new, modern-day office. Penny calls an architect to design the building.

“The three little pigs didn’t have an architect, and we all know what happened to their houses!” Penny says.

“I’ll make the building book-shaped!” Alistair the architect proposes. “That should make book fans’ eyes sparkle.”

**Alistair the architect** designs houses, kindergartens, schools, stores, office buildings, and much, much more. He has meetings with clients, during which he asks them about their needs and desires. You can’t build a building without an architect.

Next, Alistair makes a model of the building he is designing. A small model is a good way for seeing how the planned building will look in real life.

Penny and Alistair shake hands.

“Now, for the final test,” Penny says, nodding to give Alistair the sign. The architect blows on the model, which stays firmly standing!

*Translated by Adam Cullen*



## What Do You Dream About?

Written by Kadri Hinrikus

Illustrated by Anu Kalm

Tammerraamat 2019

246×175 mm, 73 pp

ISBN 9789949616947

Kids' lives are nowhere near as easy as grown-ups think! For example, Eve misses her father who works far away in the capital. Andreas, on the other hand, is worried that his parents are in over their heads with caring for his baby sister. The city-girl Helen finds herself afraid of everything in the countryside: frogs, worms, bees – you name it. Jake is there to support her, but then, he's overcome by a surprising sense of unease, too. It sure is nice when there are adults around who take kids' worries seriously. And it's even greater when they're able to offer a good solution!



**Kadri Hinrikus** (1970) is a children's writer and journalist. She graduated from Tallinn University in theatre direction and currently works as an editor of the children's magazine *Täheke*. Hinrikus has penned fairy tales and memoir-like books about her family, and is also a skilful teller of warm and humorous stories about kids' everyday life. Her works were featured in the White Ravens catalogue in 2013 and 2016.

**Anu Kalm** (1960) is a graphic artist, illustrator, and art teacher. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in printmaking and illustration, and now teaches at the Tallinn Art School. Kalm has illustrated textbooks and more than 20 children's books, in addition to contributing to various Estonian children's magazines; her works have twice been included in the White Ravens catalogue. The artist's enjoyable style has a note of childlike simplicity while demonstrating a strong grasp of graphic art and classic drawing techniques.



## Timmy

**T**immy lives in a village. His sun-yellow house is surrounded by flowerbeds and gooseberry bushes and stands in a straight row on the edge of town alongside other identical houses. A couple houses further down the line, all you find are fields, meadows, and forest.

Timmy has to get by being home alone in summer when the preschool is closed and his parents are at work. Naturally, he does so splendidly! Timmy heads off to work just like his mom and dad.

Up in the attic, Timmy digs his grandma's old mailbag out of a pile of unused things. His gram-gram once used it to deliver people's mail. Gram-gram died, but the bag can certainly still be used for something.

"I'm going to be a mailman when I grow up," Timmy decides resolutely.

But why should he have to wait so long?

Timmy slings the mailbag crosswise over his shoulder. It is very big, roomy, and almost brushes against the ground as he walks. Timmy takes his mom's book of crossword puzzles and two newspapers from the living room table, and sticks them inside.

Inside his dad's desk drawer, he finds three postcards and some papers with the word INVOICE written on them. They all fit snugly into the mailbag.

There's one more thing to do before he sets off: a proper mailman must wear a nametag.

Timmy cuts out a nametag-sized piece of paper, uses a crayon to draw the name CRISSTOFFER on it, and pins it to his sweater. He's very pleased with his reflection in the mirror. The mailbag looks cool and the name sounds right for a grown up. Timmy is sort of a baby's name – you can't go to work with a name like that!

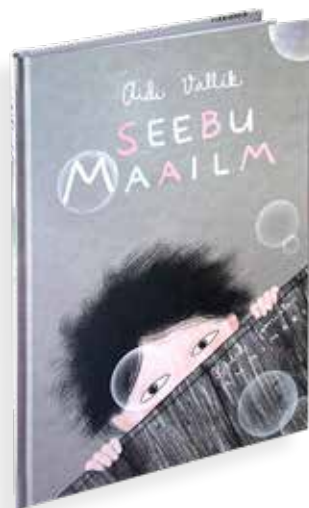
Chrisstoffor pulls on a baseball cap, closes the garden gate behind him, and sets off with a spring in his step. It's his very first day as a working man!

The mailman stops at the neighbor's mailbox and slips his mom's book of crossword puzzles through the slot. The neighbors living in the next house receive his dad's INVOICE.

*Translated by Adam Cullen*







## Soapy's World

Written by Aidi Vallik  
Illustrated by Lumimari

Lugu-Loo 2019  
246×174 mm, 47 pp  
ISBN 9789949949878

Soapy's name isn't really Soapy – that's just what people call her, because more than anything else in the world, she loves blowing soap bubbles. Soapy got her first bubble-blower when Mom came home from her job abroad for a few days. Dad had already moved out by then; Soapy and her brother are cared for by their grandmother. Whenever Soapy blows bubbles, she forgets that Mom and Dad no longer live together, that Mom is always sad and far away, and that everyone is too busy to notice her problems. Blowing bubbles is great, because the soap bubbles you blow only take what you like from the real world.



**Aidi Vallik** (1971) is a children's author, columnist and screenwriter. She graduated from the University of Tartu in Estonian philology and has written over twenty books for children and young adults, children's plays, TV series, and scripts for children's films. Her trilogy of young-adult novels about a girl named Ann received several awards in Estonia and abroad, and has been translated into Finnish, Latvian, and Lithuanian. Vallik has a sharp eye for contemporary social issues as well as the sensitivity and warmth needed to address them in a manner suitable for children.

**Lumimari** (1976) is a digital artist, designer, and illustrator. She studied photography and film at the Tallinn Polytechnic School and worked as a photojournalist at the national daily *Postimees*. Lumimari currently works as a freelance designer and artist for animations, mobile applications, and online content. She has held several individual exhibitions, illustrated three books, and designed cards, calendars, and bed linens. Lumimari's illustrations have warm, soft tones and a contemporary artistic signature.



One day, Soapy finally blew a bubble that was the color of waiting for Dad. She blew it very carefully so it wouldn't pop too fast – and lo and behold, it didn't! Soapy entered the bubble.

Inside was their home and their yard and summer. Soapy skipped impatiently on the paving stones in the grass with her eyes locked on the front gate, because she could hear a bus approaching and at any moment now, Dad would finally be coming home!

And that, he did. With the swagger of a tall man, he came in through the gate. Soapy swooped up like a bird and wrapped herself around his neck. Dad scooped her up in his arms and laughed with his whole mouth and his eyes and his voice. Then, he took her hands and spun her around in the air. Soapy squealed with joy and excitement, as well as with the somewhat queasy feeling spinning like that gave her.

Mom peeked out through the open kitchen window and giggled. Dad's gaze swung towards her and he gently set Soapy down on the grass.

"I'm going to go say hi to Mommy, too," he said, and went inside.

Soapy watched through the window as they joked and laughed.

Later, they all had dinner together, after which Dad went out with Soapy to romp around and play in the yard.

But then, a bee buzzed up and slipped under Soapy's shirt oh-so-unexpectedly! She nearly screamed in fright, but Dad told her quickly and firmly not to move a muscle. He rolled her shirt up high and let the bee out – Soapy didn't get stung!

Then, the two stretched out on the soft grass. The summer sun was low enough in the sky that they were able to stare up without squinting.

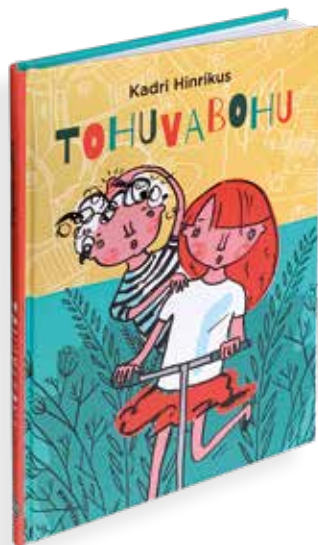
"It's endless, you know," Dad said. "The blue sky. It's endless. It just goes on and on and on."

Knowing that put Soapy on cloud nine with happiness.

The bubble burst, but Soapy kept on thinking about the blue sky that never ended.

*Translated by Adam Cullen*





## Pandemonium

Written by Kadri Hinrikus

Illustrated by Anne Pikkov

Tallinna Keskraamatukogu 2019

231×174 mm, 48 pp

ISBN 9789949997152

Johan wakes up feeling ready to take on the world. But where are his parents? Why can't he smell a mouthwatering breakfast? The boy discovers his mum making a crown in her bedroom and his dad sailing paper boats in the bathtub. What is he to do? The boy reckons his teacher can certainly help, so he hurries off to school. However, standing at the front of the room and ordering adults around is Johan's classmate. The teacher herself has climbed up a tree outside with cat whiskers drawn on her cheeks. What the devil is going on?



**Kadri Hinrikus** (1970) is a children's writer and journalist. She graduated from Tallinn University in theatre direction and currently works as an editor of the children's magazine *Täheke*. Hinrikus has penned fairy tales and memoir-like books about her family, and is also a skilful teller of warm and humorous stories about kids' everyday life. Her works were featured in the White Ravens catalogue in 2013 and 2016.

**Anne Pikkov** (1974) is an illustrator, graphic designer, and book designer. She graduated in graphic design from the Estonian Academy of Arts, where she is currently a visiting professor and vice rector of academic affairs. Pikkov has illustrated 14 children's books and contributed to the Estonian magazines *Täheke*, *Pere ja Kodu*, and *Jamie*. She has received many awards at annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions. Her art is ornamental, laconic, spiced with humour, and evocatively expressive.



Johan opened his eyes without his mother having come to wake him up. He glanced at the clock and was startled – he'd slept in incredibly late! At best, he'd make it to school only by the beginning of the third hour, and even then, he'd have to jump out of bed and sprint straight out the door.

"Oh, boy!" he exclaimed as he changed into jeans and a checkered shirt. "Where's Mom?! Is she sick?! Did she sleep in, too?!"

Johan couldn't remember it having ever happened before. The only time that came to mind was when his mother had been fighting a cold, though it didn't prevent her from sending her son off to school. There were no ifs or buts with her when it came to his attendance.

Johan flung his bedroom door open with a bang.

"Mom!" he yelled across the apartment.

There was no reply. The fact that he couldn't smell bacon frying or coffee brewing like he did every morning made him worried. Johan peeked into the kitchen, the living room, the entryway, and then sprinted up the stairs to his parents' bedroom. There, he found his mother sitting in a bathrobe in front of her big mirror.

"Mom, I looked everywhere for you! We sure did sleep in today! May I stay home from school?" Johan blurted out in a single breath.

His mother didn't answer. She was busy cutting out pieces of yellow construction paper and gluing them together.

"What are you up to?" Johan asked curiously.

Mom spun her craft project around in her fingers and then placed it on her curly blond hair.

"A crown?" Johan gasped as he stepped closer. "Did you make yourself a crown?"

"Queens wear crowns," Mom said, smiling at her reflection.

"What queens? What are you talking about?" Johan asked in confusion.

"Are you my new manservant?"

"I'm not a servant! Stop joking around, Mom. You know who I am – I'm Johan. Aren't you going to work today?"

"One must not be so discourteous with the Queen! You may serve me my breakfast now."

Mom reclined on the bed, snuggled into her pillows, and closed her eyes. "I'm waiting."

*Translated by Adam Cullen*







## Our New Home is Haunted

Written by Kristi Piiper

Illustrated Sirly Oder

Tänapäev 2019

206×150 mm, 117 pp

ISBN 9789949855186

Six-year-old Säde and seven-year-old Siim are flabbergasted – their mom and dad have decided to get them a nanny for the summer! The kids can't wrap their heads around why they need some hundred-year-old Ms. Elga when they can get by just fine on their own. The two have all kinds of tricks up their sleeve for getting rid of the woman. Still, as luck would have it, none of them turn out the way the children imagined.



**Kristi Piiper** (1983) is an author of children's and young adult literature. She earned an International Baccalaureate Diploma in Berlin and currently studies nursing at the Tartu Healthcare College. Piiper has published four children's books and a three-part young adult series. Her characters are highly active and independent young persons for whom no problem is insurmountable, especially when they work together.

**Sirly Oder** (1983) is a set- and costume designer. She graduated in scenography from the Estonian Academy of Arts and has worked as an artist for many Estonian theatre productions and short films. Currently, Oder manages and designs the Rahva Raamat bookstore chain's book displays. She has illustrated eight children's books and has been awarded in the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competition. Her illustration style includes personalised modern design coupled with a unique minimalist colour palette.



The nanny apparently survived the night (and a little too well, at that). In any case, when Dad had already gone to work and we were at the table eating porridge the next morning, she showed up once again – a bona fide living and breathing old lady. Before long, Mom had to leave to fix someone's broken tooth; she waved goodbye to us from the entryway.

We finished our breakfast and left the nanny to sit on her own in the kitchen for a while. Siim reckoned we didn't need to stay and keep an eye on *her*, because she was the one who had come to watch us. And if that was her intention, then be our guest – come and find us! We figured that if she didn't see us long enough, then maybe she'd forget we existed in the first place and would go back home. Old people can be so forgetful sometimes. For instance, they'll forget why they went into the kitchen or where their glasses are. Sometimes, they go around looking for their glasses even when the pair is still on right on top of their head!



Siim gently closed the door to our room and we sat down on our beds. I would've liked to play, but Siim said we shouldn't make a single peep.

"I don't think the nanny will realize anything's wrong – she'll just leave. She's so old that I bet she'll forget," Siim said.

We'd barely managed to finish munching on a couple cookies we had stashed away in a drawer before the nanny came in.

"Siim! Säde! Dearie me – what nice, quiet little kids you are! Just sitting and doing activities here all by yourself!"

I felt a little sick again when I heard her say the word "activities" because it was obvious that starting now, we'd have to start doing things together with Ms. Elga, just like she'd promised when she first arrived. I quickly stretched out on my bed.

"Auntie, I don't feel so good. Sorry, but I won't be able to do any activities today. I really wanted to, but I think it's my appendix."

Translated by Adam Cullen





## The Carrot Pie

Written by Ilmar Tomusk

Illustrated by Heiki Ernits

Tammerraamat 2019

269×206 mm, 40 pp

ISBN 9789949616954

Carrot pie is a tasty treat. To make it, you need ten fun characters to play along: the useful Felicity-Margaret Flour, the snow-white and easy-to-spill Mark Milk, the mysterious Yuri Yeast, the incredible Bartholemew Butter, the noble Solomon Salt, the sweettooth's favourite Sam Sugar, the tireless traveller Roland Rice, the modest but busy Ellen Egg, the spicy Penelope Pepper, and, of course, the star of this pie – Carolina Carrot. You need just the right amount of all of them to get baking! Before you know it, you'll have a scrumptious golden-yellow pie ready to be sliced and shared. Yum!



**Ilmar Tomusk** (1964) is a civil servant and children's writer.

He graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute in Estonian language and literature education, and currently works as Chief Director of the Estonian Language Inspectorate.

Tomusk has written more than 30 children's books. His humorous stories, which alternate between elements of realism and fantasy, tell of clever, busy children's everyday activities and adventures. Testament to his popularity among young readers are his three Nukits Awards in addition to several other reader's-choice prizes.

**Heiki Ernits** (1953) graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute as a teacher of arts and crafts. He has

worked as a photographer, art teacher, art director, and film director. Ernits has made 19 animated films, produced commercials, designed book covers and layouts, and illustrated more than 30 children's books. Highly popular among Estonian children, he has received six Nukits Awards to date.



## Yuri Yeast

**Y**uri can't wrap his mind around who he really is. At one moment, he's big and round like a balloon full of vim and vigor. Seconds later, he can look like a pair of old, floppy galoshes.

However, the greatest surprise of all comes when Yuri opens his mouth to introduce himself.

"Believe it or not," he says, "but in fact, I'm really a fungus – a mushroom, in other words!"

Is there anybody who doesn't know what an actual mushroom looks like, be they button mushrooms or chanterelles? Mushrooms have stems topped with handsome caps. However, Yuri has neither a stem nor a cap! Yuri Yeast is a grayish-brown substance that blossoms and swells when it comes into contact with water and sugar and other ingredients.

"The mushrooms you see on trees and logs and poking up through moss in the woods aren't the only fungi around!" Yuri explains. "There are a ton of mushrooms everywhere in the world that don't look anything like the ones we're used to."

Yeast is made up of tiny microscopic microorganisms. Special kinds of yeast are used for baking breads and making many other things.

"If it weren't for me, there would be no pastries, cakes, or pies – neither flaky nor doughy! They'd simply be baked blobs of batter that no one would want to eat. It's thanks to me alone that baked goods look so nice, which is also why they're so tasty," Yuri Yeast proudly proclaims.

Yeast helps dough to rise by converting sugar into carbon dioxide. The gas bubbles stuck in the dough cause it to swell and expand.

"If you want to have good dough, then yeast alone isn't enough. You'll need to have many other ingredients as well: flour, milk, salt, sugar, and butter!" Yuri Yeast adds.

*Translated by Adam Cullen*







## Piia Biscuit and the Bandits

Written by Kairi Look

Illustrated by Ulla Saar

Tänapäev 2019

236×172 mm, 143 pp

ISBN 9789949856473

Piia is a lucky girl! She lives with her parents and their cat Loofah on Poplar Boulevard. Upstairs lives her best friend Jack and his girlfriend Mirjam. What else could a kid wish for? And yet... When Piia's mother finds out she is expecting triplets, the girl feels it's just what's been missing from her life. Now, she finds her hands chock-full of things to do: she helps raise the babies, searches for a wife for her neighbour, befriends her new classmate Villem, and solves several mysteries. There's truly nothing little Piia can't handle!

*Piia Biscuit and the Bandits* is the sequel to *Piia Biscuit Moves In*.



**Kairi Look** (1983) is a children's writer and publisher.

She graduated from the University of Tartu in physiotherapy, and from the University of Amsterdam in children's rehabilitative therapy. Look works in academic publishing, but writing children's books is her greatest passion. She has penned a total of seven books to date, many of which have been awarded and translated into languages including Finnish, French, German, and Lithuanian. Her works stand out for their stunning fantasy, brisk pace, unusual characters, playfulness, and humour.

**Ulla Saar** (1975) is an illustrator, product designer, graphic artist, and interior designer. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in product design. Her first illustrated book *Lift* achieved immediate widespread recognition and was listed in the 2014 White Ravens catalogue. Since then, every one of her books has received international attention. Saar practices a contemporary, design-like approach to book illustration: her spirited and playful art is often more a part of the work's overall design than free-standing pictures.



## The New Biscuits Move In

The welcoming committee was waiting impatiently outside – finally, the triplets were coming home! Piia was holding three clumps of bellflowers, Grandpa three hooks, and Jack three bears. Loofah was keeping watch on the roof with three sausages in her belly. They all heard honking. “They’re here!” Piia cried out.

Alas, it wasn’t Dad. Uncle Rasmus careened around the corner on his bike and braked so hard that mud flew over his head. “Ahoi, there, houseflies! Sorry, it took a while to get my present. In the end, I picked out the longest they had so there’d be enough for everyone.” He pulled a gigantic green velvety toy snake out of his bike basket, so long that it filled up the entire yard.

“Good day, miss – do you have any candies?” the snake asked in Uncle Rasmus’s voice and burrowed its head into Piia’s pocket. A candy in a crinkly wrapper disappeared into the snake’s mouth.

“Shame on you for stealing a kid’s candy!” Grandma scolded.

“I’m not a kid – I’m a big sister now!” Piia declared. At that moment, a car rolled into the driveway. Dad drove three circles in front of the building before coming to a slow stop.

Three bundles were sleeping soundly in the backseat. [...]

Before long, everyone was snacking on cake in the living room. The whole apartment was filled with flowers, congratulatory cards, and toys. Loofah was standing watch by the edge of the crib. Suddenly, there was a knock at the door.

“Hey, you rascals! What are you up to?” It was Dad’s friend Mr. Mati. He gave Dad such a mighty slap on his back that he wheezed and doubled over. After that, Mr. Mati gave Mom a very long and gentle hug.

“Not bad, not bad at all!” he grunted, peeking at the babies. “Fox-faced, just like their old pops.”

“You’re the one with the fox face!” said Piia. “My dad’s the handsomest man in the world. When I grow up, I’m going to marry him and we’ll always go to the grocery store together.”



Dad smirked. “You got it, kid. Should we reveal their names?”

“Yeah, who are they?! I can’t wait any longer!” cried Jack.

Dad stood up and cleared his throat. “My sons . . .”

“Our sons,” Mom corrected him.

Dad nodded. “Our sons—Kaspar, Jesper, and Joonatan!”

“Just like in that old children’s book, *When the Robbers Came to Cardamom Town!*” Mirjam exclaimed and laughed.

*Translated by Adam Cullen*



# Meg, Our Class, and I

Written by Tiina Laanem  
Illustrated by Andres Varustin

Pegasus 2019  
216×144 mm, 135 pp  
ISBN 9789949681525



Miia-Maria just can't wait for the new school year to begin. Still, she can't possibly imagine how incredible second grade will turn out to be! Most of the excitement revolves around her new classmate: a spunky girl named Meg who has dark black skin. Together, the girls hunt for vampires, help undecided shoppers at the grocery store, go hiking, and have much more fun. All these things could be done alone, of course, but life is a blast when you have a best friend and wonderful classmates.



**Tiina Laanem** (1974) is an author and playwright. She graduated in administrative management from the Tallinn Technical University and has worked as a journalist at several daily newspapers, as well as an editor for the Estonian Magazine Publishing House. Currently, she is a publisher at the Pegasus Publishing House. Laanem has written award-winning novels, short stories, and plays for both youth and adults. *Meg, Our Class, and I* is her first children's book.

**Andres Varustin** (1968) is a caricaturist and illustrator. He graduated from Tallinn University in art education and drafting. Varustin has designed and illustrated many books and publishes his caricatures daily in his own *Õhtuleht* newspaper column. Additionally, he has illustrated 17 children's books and contributed to the children's magazine *Täheke*. Varustin's illustrations demonstrate his fine sketching abilities and adeptness at portraying movement.



Meg studied the brown orbs and wrinkled up her nose, as if I'd brought dog doo-doo with me. "What are *those*?" she asked curiously. "Pâté balls."

"And why're you bringing them to school?" Meg pressed in disbelief.

"Today is Estonian National Foods Day," I reminded her. "Everybody had to bring a dish to share."

Before I could add anything, Meg's eyes widened in shock. Soon, tears were streaming down her cheeks. She had forgotten to tell her parents about National Foods Day. [...]

"I can't go to school today," Meg sobbed.

"I could give you some of my pâté balls," I offered.

"No, they're nasty. I don't want them," she refused, shaking her head.

The two of us stood at the bottom of the stairwell, looking dismal. Meg was bawling and I had no idea how to console her. A man wearing a fur hat stepped out of the building. He sat on the bench in front and cracked open a beer. The stranger took a couple of sips and stared at us.

"What're you crying for, girlie? It's only morning!" he said a little testily.

"I forgot!"

"Forgot what?" the man asked.

"I forgot my Estonian national food," Meg explained, sniffing. [...]

"Don't you be howling, now!" ordered the man. "More often than not, my fridge is so empty that you could move right into it. I don't go around crying about it, though, do I?!"

"But what should I do?" Meg demanded somewhat combatively.

"Make snowball soup!"

"What's that?" Meg stopped crying.

"Do you two really not know Estonian kids' own national dish?" the man scoffed, chuckling.

We both shook our heads. I would have proposed pancakes or crumble cake, but quickly realized that people probably eat those foods everywhere.

"Estonian kids' national food is snow!" the man bellowed before taking a long swig of beer.

We stared at him wide-eyed. Neither of us had ever heard anything like that before!

"All Estonians eat snow when they're kids," he explained. "I don't know nobody who didn't. Isn't that right?!"

Thinking hard, I nodded. At least everyone in our class had eaten snow before!

Translated by Adam Cullen







## The Summer Trackers

Written by Hugo Vaher

Illustrated by Joonas Sildre

Tänapäev 2017-2019

221×149 mm

Cousins Martin and Markus spend their summer holidays at the family cabin. One day, they discover a mysterious inflatable raft and a sack of money on the shore. As the boys are big fans of detective stories, they decide to investigate the source of the money. This leads them on an exciting and dangerous journey, by the end of which the boys start calling themselves The Summer Trackers. When a costly painting disappears from a neighbouring mansion the following year, The Summer Trackers are called into action again.

### Award:

2017 Children's Story Competition My First Book, 3<sup>rd</sup> place (*The Case of the Strange Sock*)

The Summer Trackers:

The Case of the Strange Sock (2017) 120 pp

ISBN 9789949852369

The Summer Trackers:

Between Land and Sky (2019) 134 pp

ISBN 9789949854639



**Hugo Vaher** (Urmas Jaagusoo, 1974) is an author, translator, composer, and guitarist. He graduated in law from Tallinn University. Vaher has written five books for children and young adults, and has been awarded in both the My First Book children's story competition and the Estonian Youth Novel Competition. In his works, Vaher uses thrilling scenes to show that even the most ordinary child can be a hero, especially if they have a friend by their side and a safe home to which they can retreat.

**Joonas Sildre** (1980) is a comic artist, illustrator, and graphic designer. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design and works as a freelance artist. Sildre has illustrated close to 30 children's books and published the graphic novel *Between Two Sounds* – a biography of the composer Arvo Pärt. Sildre teaches comic drawing in workshops and art schools, has compiled anthologies, and organises Estonian comics exhibitions. In 2013, he became a co-founder of the Estonian Comics Society.



The boys noticed that the neighboring cabin, which had been for sale the last year and where the thieves had camped out, had been demolished and a grand villa had sprouted in its place. It was as if the building had popped up overnight!

"I wonder who's going to move in," Markus said curiously.

There was no one in sight. It was obvious that the house wasn't completely finished yet. Judging by the construction materials stacked in the yard, they determined that the walkway was still unfinished, and the window trim hadn't been put up yet. Snow-white sculptures were still waiting to be installed and small cedar trees with their root balls wrapped in netting were crowded in one corner of the garden.

"It's going to be quite the castle," Martin's father reckoned when he noticed the boys peering at the neighboring yard.

"Who's going to live there?" asked Martin.

"Don't really know. I heard it was some businessman," his dad replied.

"Hope it's not the same kind of businessman as the last ones," Markus murmured.

His pulse quickened whenever the events of the previous summer came to mind. It had all ended well, but he didn't want to encounter that kind of fear ever again – even though it *had* been very exciting. He'd prefer things to be exiting but not scary. Like at the movie theater.

"We'll figure it out, won't we!" Martin said, elbowing Markus. "All three of us. Where is Ricky, by the way? Have you seen him? Are they here?"

Ferdinand, the neighbor who lived north of their cabin, hadn't arrived yet. However, given the nice warm weather, it wouldn't be long before he showed up as well. He and Ricky both – the third member of their gang. Ricky was a dog the boys had trained to track scents and knew how to rescue people from the water, too.

Translated by Adam Cullen







## When Wolf Was Still Human

Written by Paul-Eerik Rummo

Illustrated by Kaido Ole

Tammerraamat 2019

246×207 mm, 119 pp

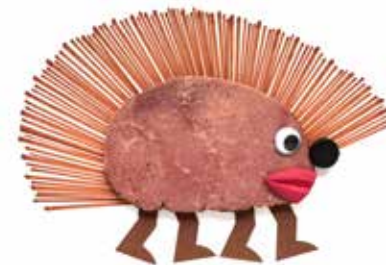
ISBN 9789949690008

Can you guess how Ants and Anni met three hedgehogs? Or what the right way is for greeting bears, wolves, hares, and foxes? What should you do when your mum's favourite mug falls off the table? How did the world become round and what role did Turtle, Hedgehog, and Cosmic Dog play in it? What happens when Bear enters the house of three little girls? What kind of unusual creature is a maned wolf? You'll find the answers to these and many other essential questions in *When Wolf Was Still Human* – a collection of children's stories.



**Paul-Eerik Rummo** (1942) is a politician, children's author, and living Estonian poetry classic. He graduated in Estonian philology from the University of Tartu. Rummo has written poems, plays, film scripts, lyrics, dramatizations, and 13 children's books, and has translated poems from several languages into Estonian. He has received an abundance of awards over the years, including the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's annual literary award and Estonian state decorations. Rummo's children's literature is playful, fantastical, and enchanting for readers both young and old.

**Kaido Ole** (1963) is a painter and illustrator. He studied design and painting at the Estonian Academy of Arts, where he has also been an instructor of drawing and painting and a professor in the Painting Department. Currently, he works as a freelance artist. Ole has received the Kristjan Raud, Konrad Mägi, and the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's annual art awards, and has been decorated with the Republic of Estonia's Order of the White Star, III Class. With a thrilling sense of fantasy and a fun, playful style, he is a virtuoso at devising unimaginable artistic ensembles.



## Coming Out of Hibernation

**H**edgehog came out of hibernation and immediately began making plans. [...]

First of all, he needed to check and see if Starling was around. Not that any element of Hedgehog's existence depended upon it – he simply wondered. You couldn't say the two were friends, exactly, but they were good acquaintances indeed, and kept an eye on each other's activities.

Whichever saw the other first, be it Starling seeing Hedgehog or vice-versa, was the winner. Hedgehog liked being the winner. Cautiously, he poked his head out of his winter nest, sniffed the air, listened, and squinted. He could almost seem to make something out; something appeared to be going on, though what it was precisely, he couldn't tell. What's more, the sudden sip of fresh air made the little creature's head spin. [...]

Just then, Hedgehog heard the fluttering of wings and none other than Starling herself landed on the damp soil just a few human footsteps away. Briskly, as usual, Starling cast a few quick

glances at her surroundings before hopping around and arranging the twigs on the ground.

"Is she really making her nest already?" Hedgehog marveled. "That means I was slumbering away for quite a long time this year."

"Tup-tup-tup-tup!" he snorted as loudly as he could. The sound was his traditional way to let Starling know she'd been spotted. To tease his playmate even more, he quickly drew back into his nest of leaves, sticks, and pine needles.

Starling looked around with a twig held in her beak. To be honest, she wasn't very fond of Hedgehog's tricks and played along just for the sake of appearances. "Fine, fine – your win," she said. "You can come out now." Then, she continued poking around the ground.

Feeling somewhat disappointed, Hedgehog crawled back out. Yet as luck would have it, the sun emerged from behind a massive cloud at that very moment, flooding the forest floor with dazzling light that made Hedgehog look downright majestic – his quills glistened, and he was filled with self-confidence.

Translated by Adam Cullen







## Shoe #39

Written by Jaanus Vaiksoo

Illustrated by Katrin Kaev

Ärkel 2019

221×148 mm, 183 pp

ISBN 9789949727223

Paul the fifth grader oversleeps for the first time in his life and doesn't make it to school. Yet when he goes out to get a breath of fresh air, it turns out that the day's extraordinary events aren't over yet. A series of escapades unfolds, starring the world's most beautiful saleswoman Yekaterina, the artistic Arthur, and Arthur's spunky daughter Minna. The leading role in all these events, however, belongs to a strange man who buys a brand-new pair of size-39 shoes every day without trying them on first. Why would anyone do that? Will Paul manage to figure out the shoe-man's secret?



**Jaanus Vaiksoo** (1967) is a children's author, literary scholar, and instructor. He graduated from Tallinn University in Estonian language and literature. Vaiksoo has written over 20 books of stories and poetry for children and has contributed to the children's magazine *Täheke*. Additionally, he has published a book of ABCs, scripts for television and TV films, and an adventure libretto. The psychological intricacy of Vaiksoo's characters and their depiction through a prism of warm humour offer support to readers of sensitive ages and help them on their path to adulthood.

**Katrin Kaev** (1965) is a book designer, illustrator, printmaker, and calligrapher. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic art and has worked there as an instructor. Kaev has illustrated seven children's books, textbooks, and magazines, and has designed nearly 300 books and magazines in total. She has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competitions. Kaev's style is defined by classic pen-and-ink drawing and realistic sketch-like illustrations.



Just then, Sumo and Plum were lurking on the corner of the street, both buried in their mobile phones. It would only take a single glance up from their screens for them to spot Paul.

Yet, the boy was in luck – there was a shoe store right ahead of him. Without taking his eyes off his adversaries, Paul darted to the door and yanked it open. He was safe.

The store was dim and an unusual scent struck the boy's nostrils: the scent of new shoes. Paul had visited the store a couple times before with his mother, but had never simply walked in unaccompanied. Only one customer was milling around, inspecting winter boots. Paul warily peered out the window to see if he could still glimpse Sumo and Plum . . .

"Hi! Can I help you?"

Paul jumped. Standing next to him, smiling, was the saleswoman. He hadn't been prepared for that! All of a sudden, he found himself unable to utter a word and felt himself blush. The saleswoman was young, very pretty, and had long red hair.

"I . . . I'm just looking," he finally mumbled, and began purposefully looking at shoes.

"Well, be my guest," the saleswoman said, and smirked before leisurely walking back behind the counter.

"What's so funny?" Paul wondered. Then, he realized that in his haste, he'd been standing in front of a shelf of women's shoes. Two long steps took him the opposite side of the store and the men's selection. He felt foolish pretending to look at shoes, but he was trapped – under no circumstances could he leave the store just yet. At that moment, a man entered the store and the saleswoman's attention pivoted to the new customer.



The man greeted the saleswoman. Briskly, he walked up to the very same aisle where Paul stood. His gaze drifted over the shelves before he leaned down, picked up one dark-brown shoe, and took it straight to the counter.

"I'd like a pair of these," he said.

"Size 39, as always?" asked the saleswoman.

*Translated by Adam Cullen*





## Under the Sign of the Rose

Written by Reeli Reinaus

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A young man named Johan disappears on the island of Hiiumaa. His girlfriend Ingel is understandably distraught. The police can't locate a body, nor even any clues to pursue. Ingel and her friend Saara decide to investigate the case themselves. In the process, they meet Miikael from the mainland (who is tormented by nightmares) and a mysterious girl trying to help him named Vika (who claims to be a psychic). At first, it appears the girls might be able to help their new acquaintances, but then, they notice the boy wearing a ring with a rose symbol identical to Johan's. Even so, Miikael claims to have never met their missing friend. Things become even more bizarre when the girls notice the local pastor wearing a rose ring as well. Who could be behind Johan's disappearance and what is the story behind the rings? The clues lead to an ancient curse...



**Reeli Reinaus** (1977) is a folklorist and writer for children and youth. She graduated from the Tartu Academy of Theology and received a master's degree in Estonian and comparative folklore from the University of Tartu.

Reinaus has written more than 20 books for children and young adults. She has won numerous awards in the My First Book children's story competition, as well as in the Estonian Youth Novel Competition. Reinaus has a flair for writing about young adults' everyday lives and problems in the crime and fantasy formats.

**M**iikael stared at the girl's body jerking and twitching. He could feel his heart-rate and breathing quickening as he watched. Inside he was strangely cold, yet at the same time his palms were sweating. He didn't know what to do, but he couldn't just stand there. He paced nervously back and forth. He felt like he was dreaming yet not dreaming all at the same time.

In fact Miikael didn't want to see what he was witnessing, yet at the same time he was unable to turn his gaze away from Vika. It was as if watching her would be just enough to control what was happening. It wasn't, of course. Besides, her unconscious body made him feel uneasy. Vika looked helpless. And ugly.

This wasn't the Vika he knew. She had become something else. A giant doll perhaps, that looked like the real thing. But hollow inside. An unconscious husk. A biomass.

At last he turned his head away. He didn't like the thoughts that were pushing their way into his mind. Yet at the same time he didn't like finally losing control of the situation and for that very reason he returned his gaze to the girl a moment later.

Vika was now jerking even more violently than before. Miikael wondered whether he should call for an ambulance and if so, what he would tell them. Would they believe him? And even if they did, how likely was it that they would be able to help her?

Miikael didn't explore this line of thought very far because a couple of minutes later it looked as if it was all over. Gradually the jerking was dying down. Now it looked like she was just having a restless sleep. He hoped she would soon open her eyes, but her head suddenly started jerking from side to side again.

Miikael clenched his fists. He didn't even know why. Well, that wasn't true – of course he knew why. It was all his fault. But now he suspected something. Suspected or feared. Vika had never done this before. Miikael didn't dare to think about what would happen if something went wrong. Or whether something already had. Like if Vika could not or could no longer come back. Vika herself had told him stories about it. It had happened to a girl once while she was still a child and still didn't know that that kind of thing was even possible.

Miikael glanced at his phone and realised that too much time had passed since the beginning of Vika's trance. "I won't be gone long," she'd said. And she'd told him not to worry. Not worrying was something he found easier to promise than to do. With each second Miikael was more and more on edge.

But then something happened. Miikael almost jumped when Vika's body twitched and she sat bolt upright. For a split second he thought it was finally over.

But it wasn't. Vika was in a trance again and when she looked at Miikael he could see only the whites of her eyes.

"Blood debt!" she announced. "You are bound by a blood debt!"

**P**astor Olaf Saar was walking along the aisle to the church door in time with the organ, summoning his most neutral expression to his face. This was phenomenally difficult to do. Right now he had only one desire: to be able to throw down his books and dash outside. The boy could not be too far away. And Olaf was absolutely certain it was him. There was no possibility of error. He'd seen him just a moment ago standing at the church door.

All the same, Olaf could not break into a run – that would be outrageous. Therefore he fixed his gaze on the door and walked slowly onward, gritting his teeth. Yet his thoughts would not give him rest. And the aisle seemed with each step to become longer and to mould itself into an interminable narrow tunnel even though he knew that ultimately, escape awaited him at the end. At least that's how it looked because he still had duties to perform.

Olaf grasped the books more tightly and walked on, while somewhere in the back of his mind he heard the strains of the organ and the steady strike of the church bells that were now ringing.

"Lord, give me strength to do my duty," prayed Olaf silently as he walked.

The church floor creaked now and then as he trod, although he felt rather than heard it. The bells rang louder the closer he got to the open door. The sun dazzled him as he finally stepped out of the vaulted church, but he realised that there was no longer any point looking round. The boy had gone.

What happened next had a dreamlike quality. It was as if he'd switched to autopilot – handshakes, congratulations, asking after the health of the elderly. He forced himself to smile, but all the while his inner being was aflame. He knew he'd seen him. Just for a moment, only for the boy to vanish into thin air never to be seen again. Just like all the previous times.

And finally, when the very last person had left, he stood alone at the church door in the deceptively warm autumn sunshine and could sense with every cell in his body that he had failed once again.

*Translated by Susan Wilson*



