

Heiki Vilep

**LUCY IVENTS
A CANDLE
BLOWER**

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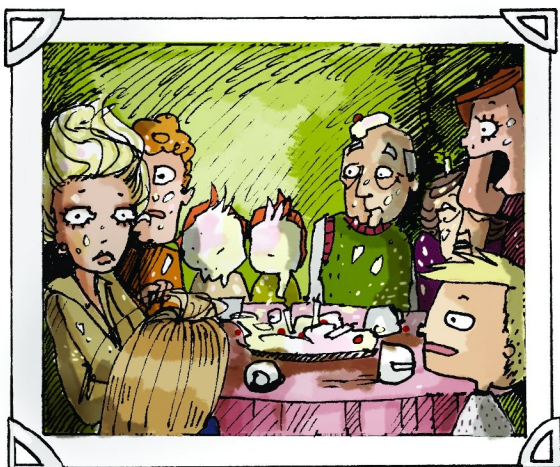
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Lucy invents a candle blower



“Hey, Andy,” Lucy asked her brother who was sitting at the computer. “What happens if I don’t feel like blowing out all the candles on my birthday cake?”

“Then it’s your own stupidity,” Andy figured.

“But you see,” Lucy continued. “Now there’ll be six candles on the cake. What if I can’t blow them all out at once?”



“Well, then you’ll blow twice,” Andy replied.
“But it won’t be the same thing,” Lucy said. “If you don’t blow the candles out at once, then your wishes won’t come true.”



“They won’t come true anyway,” Andy teased her.
“You’re just being nasty,” Lucy snapped. “My

wishes are that big that it would be a real pity if they didn't come true."

Andy sneered and went on playing his computer game. Lucy saw that her brother was of no help to her whatsoever. Once again she crawled behind the coats hanging in the hall and got thinking. Somehow she always came up with the best ideas when hidden behind the coats hanging on the coat hanger.



“One option would be tricking the birthday guests,” Lucy got an idea “I would have to use external forces, the vacuum cleaner, for instance. But how?” She climbed out and started walking back and forth in the hall.



“You can also make a vacuum cleaner blow, at least the old round one that’s been standing in the hall closet for ages. But how do it so that others

wouldn't notice? Where should I hide the end of the vacuum hose so that nobody would see it?" She stopped at the cloth hanger and all of a sudden everything became clear – the room had to be made dark for the time she was blowing out the candles!



Lucy almost felt happy! She hopped on one foot for a while and admired herself for being this clever. Then another question came into her

head. How to switch on the vacuum cleaner at the right moment? And what was even worse – the vacuum cleaner made a noise!



Lucy decided that there was no way she could do without her brother’s help this time. She went to Andy, leaned against the desk and cast a cunning glance at her brother.

“Hey, Andy, listen,” she said, beating about the

bush.

“What is it that you want now?”

“Are you my friend?”

“Well,” Andy said, “I suppose I am.”



“Do you want my biggest wishes to come true?”

“Of course I do,” Andy figured.

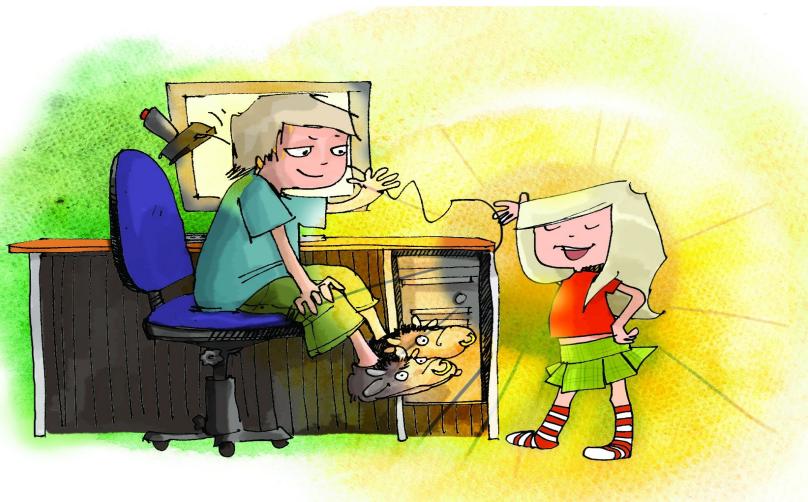
“Then I need you to give me a hand.”

“Alright, tell me.” Andy saw another one of Lucy’s tricks coming and even stopped playing his computer game.

“I invented a candle blower,” Lucy announced proudly.

“Oh, really?”

“That’s right. But I could really use your help.” Lucy scratched her chin and her head, just as if she was having big doubts about whether to trust Andy with such a huge task. “I could use an assistant who would turn on the candle blower at the right moment. And then I have a problem with the noise that the candle blower makes.”



“Hold on a second,” Andy started to realize what Lucy was aiming at. “Do you want to blow out the candles on the cake with the vacuum cleaner?” He stared at the ceiling for a while and then burst out laughing.

“You’re always laughing like a horse,” Lucy felt offended.



“Well, to be honest,” Andy giggled, “it isn’t such a bad idea after all!” The he got really serious and said:

“The candle blower has to be made silent. We have to hide it in the closet and cover it with blankets and pillows.”

Lucy was pleased that her brother was so helpful. She forgave him for several things all at once. “But how do you switch it on at the right time?” she looked at Andy.



“That’s a piece of cake,” Andy said. “I will switch on the vacuum cleaner before the guests get here and put the hose in the right place. Then we only need to plug the cord. This I can do

without anyone noticing, especially if the lights are out.”

“That’s right,” Lucy agreed. “We need to turn off the lights and put the vacuum cleaner in the closet underneath the blankets and then, when the time is right, I will take the hose and you will plug the cord and...” Lucy had the plan ready.

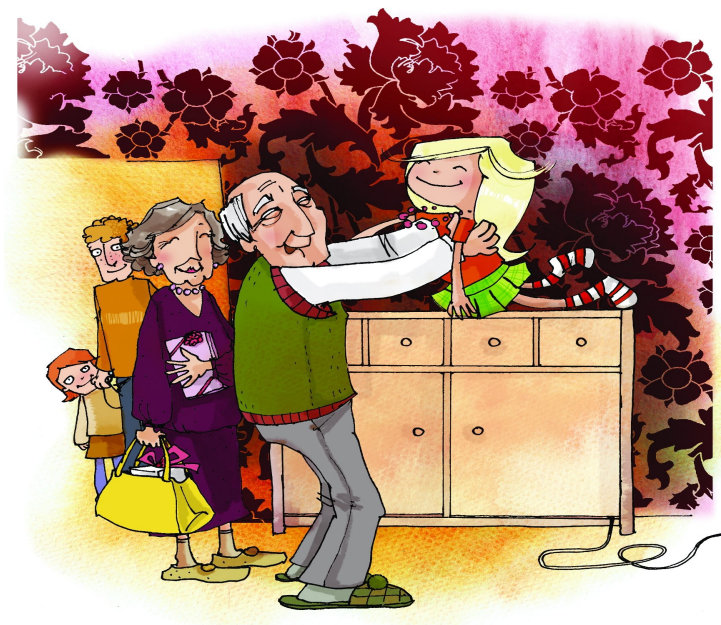
“But don’t tell anyone, right?” she warned Andy.

“Not a single word, okay?”

“No worries,” Andy smirked. “I’ll be as silent as the grave.”



And then it was the evening of Lucy's sixth birthday. The table was all set and there was a huge cake with whipped cream in the middle of the table. There were six candles placed in a circle on top of the cake and Lucy had picked out a seat next to the closet where blankets were kept. This was the closet where they had hidden the vacuum cleaner. Lucy only had to open the closet door in the dark and get hold of the hose. Andy had already placed the cord from underneath the bed right next to the wall.



“Welcome! Come in!” Mum was greeting the guests at the door. There were quite a lot of people present: Amy with her mum, Ian from the playschool, the twins Mary and Maggie with their dad and also some relatives, who were always the last to leave.

Finally it was the time for Mum to officially announce:

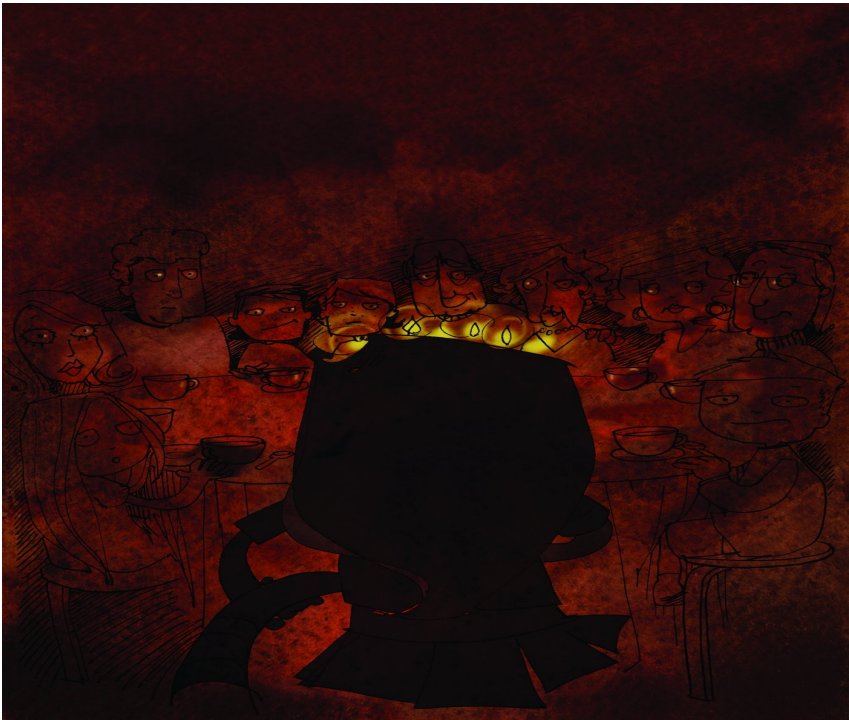
“Beloved guests, please come and have a seat at the table!” And so the beloved guests did. Adults gave speeches and everyone wished Lucy happy birthday.



Then there were no more speeches and once they had eaten and drunk enough, it was time for Lucy to blow out the candles and, of course, wish her biggest wishes. She gave Andy an anxious look and he nodded.

“Mum, can you please turn off the lights. Then it’s more beautiful,” Lucy said in a loud and clear voice.

“Alright,” Mum agreed and turned off the lights.



There was complete silence in the room and when Andy plugged the vacuum cleaner, they could still hear an awful lot of loud whining coming from the closet. Lucy quickly reached for the hose and pointed it towards the cake. The hose turned out to be quite heavy and didn't bend very well, so Lucy didn't get it right on the first attempt.



The hose was also quite short and she had to use her other hand to pull it out. As she was pulling

the hose with one hand, she didn't pay attention to what her other hand was doing. In the end she got her candle blower in the right position and blew out all the candles. They all went out at once! And Lucy got to wish her biggest wishes:

“Ten Barbie dolls, an umbrella with flowers, a pram with a big doll who pees, a pink ballerina dress, a whole pile of new cartoon DVDs, a small pool in the yard, a playhouse next to it, a nice curved slide like we have at playschool, and a proper piano...” Her wish list was cut off here by the lights that were switched on.

“It can't be!” Mum grabbed her head with both hands. What they saw was more than awful. Amy's mother's sprayed hair was standing up, just like gone with the wind, there were blobs of whipped cream on the guests' faces and you could hardly see the twins. There was even something hanging on the ceiling lamp. The candles were gone from the cake. One of them was on Granny's head and another one had got stuck in the curtains. It was an awful mess. Luckily Andy managed to unplug the vacuum cleaner before the table was completely empty.



Everyone was completely silent for a very long time and Lucy closed her eyes.

“I’m not here,” she mumbled to herself. “I don’t even exist.”

The birthday party turned out to be quite short this time but some of Lucy’s wishes did come true after all. She got an umbrella and a ballerina costume, a couple of dolls and quite a few new DVDs with cartoons.

“If you really want something this much, you have to get at least a couple of things,” Mum figured. Dad would recall this day quite a few times in the future; every time describing how Aunt Christy’s hair were gone with the wind, how there was a single cake candle on Granny’s

head and how he could eat cake with a spoon straight off Grandpa's bald head.



But the further use of the candle blower was strictly prohibited and the old vacuum cleaner

was thrown away.



+ two stories in book...

Heiki Vilep



Occupation: freelance writer

Date of birth: 27 March 1960 (in Tartu)

Education: Tartu X Secondary School, Estonian Agricultural Academy (Electrification), National University of Tartu (Mathematics), Tallinn Pedagogical Institute (Mathematics)

Membership: Estonian Writers' Union, Estonian Literary Society, Estonian Authors' Society, Estonian Performers Association, Estonian Parents Union

Heiki Vilep represents the Estonian new children's literature which during the last ten years has gone through numerous significant changes and developments.

These developments include the progress of information technology and visual media which tends to dominate over traditional literature.

Estonian children's literature has recovered from the low point it experienced in the nineties. The upheaval is characterised by an increase in the number of original publications and improvement in the quality and design of publications. Children's literature which is supposed to associate with ethical, aesthetic and social development of young generations has become a part of an entertainment industry called children's culture. One cannot become a

successful children's writer without realising and following this development.

In this thesis I observe the extraliterary factors influencing the development of new Estonian children's literature. The development of re-independence time Estonian children's literature is characterised by the domination of translated literature which introduced the market with badly translated and edited yet colourful books. It became evident that for a book's success it does not only have to be well written but also well designed.

Modeled on colourful translated books of western origin Heiki Vilep's books for children have always had high quality colour illustrations. Publishing children's books with superior illustrations has always been one of his foremost aims. Heiki Vilep is also the first children's writer to open his own homepage on the Internet, a fact that has greatly increased his popularity among children of the Internet generation.

In addition to these extraliterary features Heiki Vilep is also quite simply a talented children's writer. He has written prose and poetry; realistic and fantasy stories. His poems are humorous and

have excellent punchlines but he is also an appreciated lyrical poet. His main goal is to create joy. Heiki Vilep's perception of the world is a source of joy. He has created a bright, harmonic, and secure world where the relations between parents and children are always good. Vilep's fantasy stories have been created with didactic purpose; for example they teach children to appreciate silence or how not to be afraid of darkness.

Heiki Vilep's most popular realistic stories are Liisu stories. They describe the world through the eyes of a little girl, Liisu. Through doing that the author enables the reader to become one with the fictional child in the narrator's position. The main prototypes for Heiki Vilep's characters are his children. His stories are mainly addressed to children 5-10 years of age but they are also provide a pleasant reading for adults. Vilep's literature is always printed in capital letters in order to be more accessible for children who are learning to read.

Heiki Vilep's books are written from a child's viewpoint. He uses childish language and naïve style. In his poetry the important facets are the

ideas and moods not experiments in rhyme and rhythm.

Heiki Vilep is an author who has had considerable influence over development of Estonian children's literature scene. Humorous contents and attractive packaging appeals to children who may have previously shunned reading.

I would like to express the hope that with this thesis I have managed to analyse and record the development of one of the Estonia's future children's literature classic authors.

Eike Metspalu (baccalaureus artium)