

Heiki Vilep

# SANDMIAN'S



New

Stories

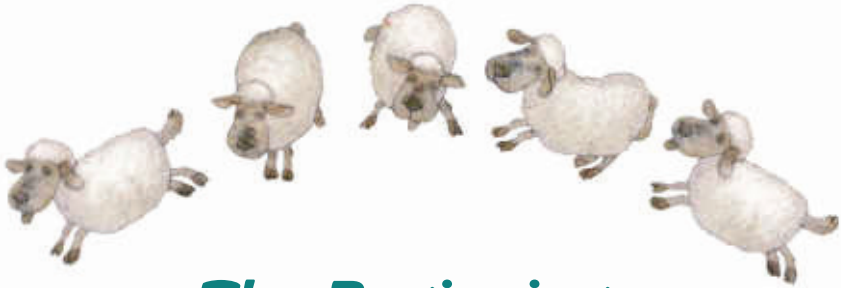
# Sandman's New Stories

by

Heiki Vilep



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## The Beginning

It was well past nine o'clock but Marilyn was still awake.

“Where is the Sandman, I wonder,” she thought to herself and started to count sheep out of an old habit. Marilyn could easily count up to a hundred now and even further but it didn't really help. Every time she got to about fifty, the sheep started to play tricks on her. Some put out their tongue; some started to dance instead of leaping over the fence, and some just stumbled on the fence lath and fell down like a sack of flour.

“You haven't seen anything yet,” a voice suddenly said from somewhere near the footboard. “Once I had kangaroos, elephants and Santa Clauses instead of sheep. They kept on leaping over the fence, and when one fell, all the others fell on his back. The Santa Claus came first, the kangaroo right after him and then the elephant on the top of all. Once the



Santa Claus managed to get out from under the kangaroo and the elephant, he was so flat that the wind carried him away to the meadow, like a kite.”

“Hi, Sandman!” Marilyn said happily. “I’m so glad that you finally returned!”

“Oh, cut it out,” the Sandman said reluctantly. “It’s me who is glad that you finally returned. And you know what? I won’t waste a grain of sleep sand on you today but I will tell you an almost true story instead.”

“What do you mean by an almost true story?” Marilyn asked.

“Well, I added little bits to it myself,” the Sandman



smiled and quietly giggled to himself.

“But only a tiny bit...” He made himself comfortable, sitting next to Marilyn, and started to tell the story.

## **A Sparrow in Hand, a Pigeon on the Roof**

“You know, not a long time ago I visited a strange man called Hans. He was very fond of all sorts of wise books and sayings.

One hazy summer afternoon, an old folk saying started to twirl in the man’s head. It went “Better a sparrow in hand than a pigeon on the roof.”

The man spent long hours staring at sparrows and pigeons from his window and tried to understand the meaning of this piece of folk wisdom.

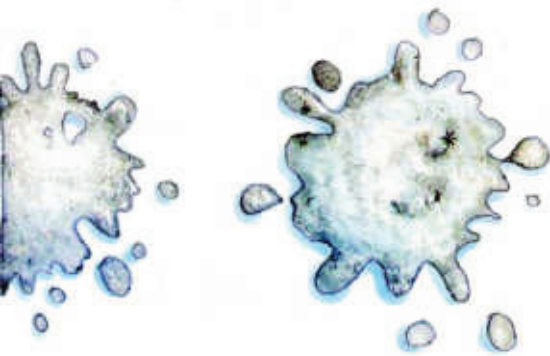
„A sparrow in hand, a pigeon on the roof...” he kept on repeating to himself and couldn’t get any sleep even late in the evening. Well, then I went and sprinkled some sleep sand in his eye.”

„And that was it?” Marilyn asked, disappointed.

„Oh no,” the Sandman snickered. “In the morning, the man went to the store and bought a butterfly net. He wanted

to try out himself whether the folk wisdom was true or not.”

Hans spread some bread crumbs in the yard and stayed lurking behind the corner with the butterfly net in his hand. When sparrows discovered the bread crumbs, he jumped at them with his net and, indeed, managed to catch one. He put the bird in a cage and stared at him.

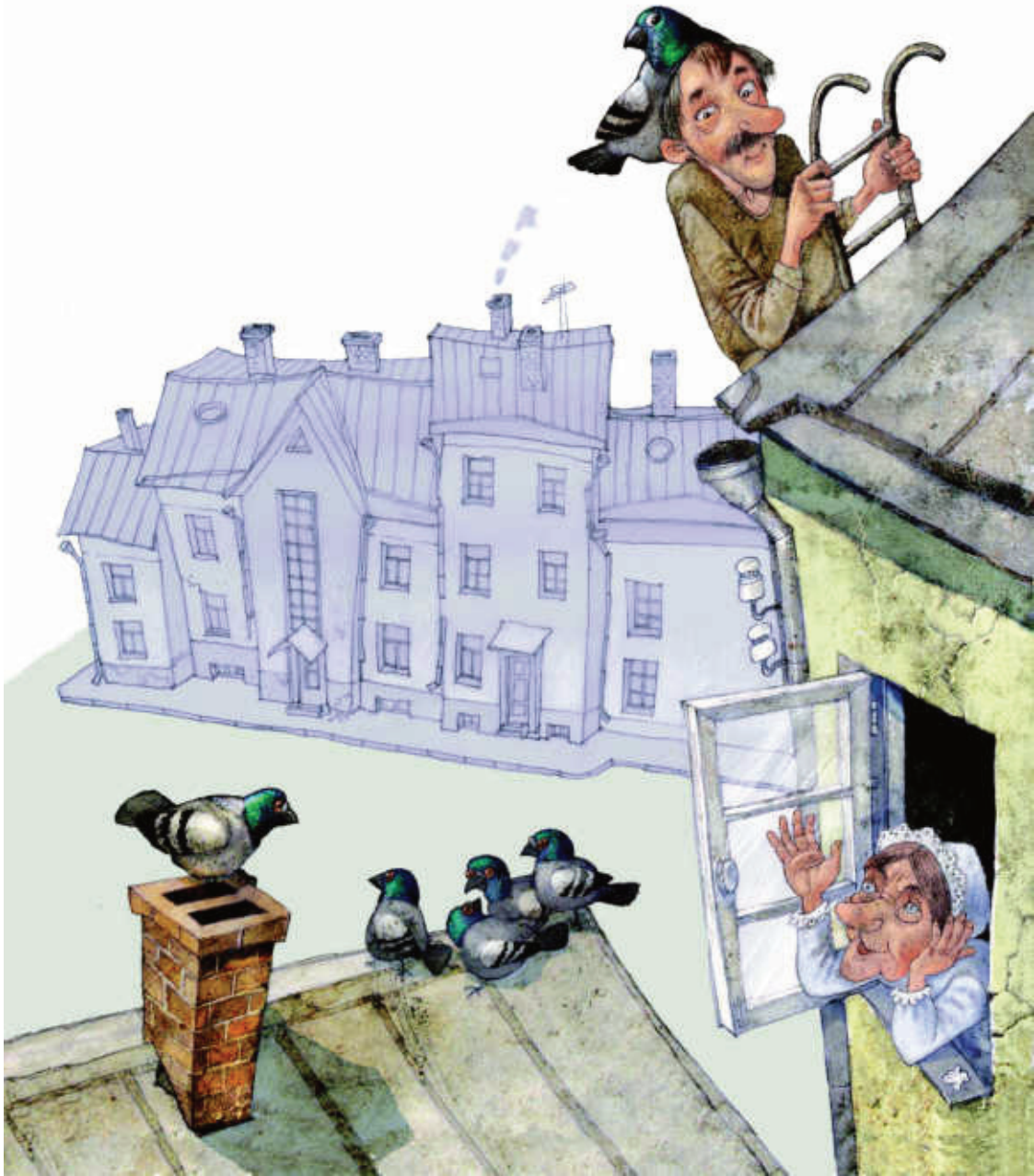


„You are a real sissy,” the sparrow said, breaking what had been a long silence. “Look at the pigeons laughing up on the roof. Catching tiny birds like me is a piece of cake!”

The bird climbed out from between the cage bars and flew away through the window. Hans remained sitting at the table and staring at the roof of a three-storied house next door. Just as to tease him on purpose, a fat pigeon flew to Hans’s window from the roof, clunked on the window sill for a while and then flew back, leaving a large white blotch behind.

“This is it,” Hans decided, and went to the theater nearby to rent a pigeon costume. He put it on and climbed up to the roof of the house next door using the fire escape.

He huddled on the roof and waited. Finally a cocky young pigeon came up to him and asked:  
“What’s up?”



“Oh, you know. I was wondering which was better - a sparrow in hand or a pigeon on the roof.” At the same time, Hans was thinking to himself that the pigeon was about to attack him in a second.

“Are you stupid or something?” the pigeon laughed and stepped back. “Oh, but I know you! You are the loony guy from the third floor of the house next door!” He cooed, laughing, and flew away. Hans stayed up on the roof for a while but no other pigeon flew to him anymore.

An old lady from the flat next to Hans’s was watching all this. She clapped her hands with astonishment, shook her head and called the emergency number.

“My neighbor has turned into a pigeon and is climbing up on the roof! Please do come and help!”

The rescue team came and brought the pigeon down from the roof. One firefighter wanted to look smart and said:

“It’s better to have a pigeon in hand than on the roof!”

“You are an extremely stupid man!” Hans said and went to return the pigeon costume to the theatre.

On his way home he thought he would stop by at a friend’s place. His friend loved animals a lot. He had many cats and dogs, and a huge pigeon cage on the porch.

“Listen, my friend, do you think I could hold the pigeon for a second?” Hans asked.

“Sure,” his friend said, and Hans held the pigeon in his hand for a while.

“It feels really good,” he said to his friend.



“I know,” the friend said and put the pigeon back in the cage.

Hans went home and felt at peace. He didn’t think about pigeons or sparrows anymore.

“This firefighter wasn’t such a stupid man after all,” he thought before falling asleep.

The Sandman could hear Marilyn snoring and he didn’t mind at all. You don’t have to hear every bedtime story until the very end. Sandman patted his sand sack and hurried to work.



# Lazy Sausage

The following day, the Sandman came really slowly. He was actually dragging his feet towards Marilyn's bed and at some point it felt as if he wasn't going to make it.

"What's wrong?" Marilyn wondered.

"I will tell yoo-uu in a sec-ooond," the Sandman said very slowly and climbed onto the bed sluggishly. Marilyn was starting to get worried.

"Have you fallen ill?" She checked the Sandman's forehead for temperature and it did feel a bit hot.

"Well, I'm always a little high," the Sandman smiled. "Otherwise I wouldn't come up with these crazy stories, you know."

"But I like them," Marilyn comforted him.

"Alright. But you know I dawdled here today for a reason. The story I'm going to tell you today is about being sluggish and lazy."

"Shoot!" Marilyn made herself comfortable on the pillow and the Sandman started:

"Once upon a time, there lived a totally ordinary boy named Will. On a totally ordinary day he got the idea of stealing sausages from the shop. Nobody knows where these

kinds of thoughts come from but Will got one of those, anyway.

So Will stepped into a shop and wandered around between the shelves. There were so many different kinds of sausages that he was baffled with all the choice.

“Should I take a cheese sausage?” he wondered to himself. “Or maybe a smoked sausage? Or a half-smoked sausage or a liver sausage?”

Once Will had been stumbling back and forth in front of the sausage counter for half an hour already and touched each sausage at least twice, the security guard stepped up to him.

“Well, young man! What are you planning here, eh?”



“I’m not planning anything,” Will said, apologizing. “I’m just trying to find the right sausage...”

“So all these sausages here are wrong?” the security guard inquired. “Or are you maybe one lying sausage yourself?”

Will saw that he had no other option but to quickly make up his mind about which sausage to steal. He closed his eyes, grabbed a random sausage and took it to the check-out.

There he passed the people standing in the queue and went through the check-out gate, hiding the sausage in his coat.

“Catch the thief!” the lady at the check-out screamed and the security guard was already running to help her.

Will had already reached the door by making long leaps and now dashed towards home, as fast as he could. The security guard couldn’t keep up his pace.

“Hold on!” he shouted to Will, panting.

And then something strange happened. Will’s steps become sluggish, as if he had stepped into glue. With each step, his movements become slower and slower. In the end, the security guard caught Will.

“Well then, lying sausage,” the security guard panted. “Let’s go to the police now, right?”

He took the sausage from Will and in the package it read in capital letters LAZY SAUSAGE.

The security guard felt straight away how he was becoming lazy. He threw the sausage back to Will and ran away.



Will kept on dragging towards home and felt that he was no longer in a hurry. Once he got home, he cut himself a thick slice of Lazy Sausage and ate it with great pleasure and very slowly. The sausage was quite delicious. Being sluggish become his usual way of being so that even his best friends started calling him Sluggish Will and Lazy Sausage. He did everything very slowly and was as lazy as a bluebottle fly.”

“So did he stay that way then, sluggish and lazy?” Marilyn asked.

“No, he didn’t,” the Sandman comforted him. “Once the sausage was finished, Will was back to being his perky self. But he didn’t go stealing in the shop anymore and every time he bought something, he was careful to check the label.”

Once Marilyn had no more questions, the Sandman sprinkled some sleep sand in her eye. Then he got up, stretched himself and got going, a whole lot faster than he had come.



# The Santa Claus and the Police

The Christmas was here. Daddy had brought a huge Christmas tree to the living room and it took Marilyn and William quite a long time to decorate it properly. To hang eggs and gingerbread on the upper branches, they had to bring a table to the tree. Daddy helped to put the lights on the tree.

In the end, everything was ready and the tree was glowing in all its glory. The following evening, the Santa Claus was supposed to come and bring presents.

Even her older sister Lucy had learned a poem by heart, not to mention Marilyn and her tiny brother William. It was only one night and day left to go and then... All the children were very excited and couldn't get any sleep in the evening. They sat on the carpet in Marilyn's room and dreamed about their gifts.

"Good evening, children!" the Sandman suddenly said, standing at the door.

"Hi, Sandman!" the children replied with one voice.

The Sandman sat among them and placed his sand sack next to him, in a dignified way.

“You have no idea how I got here today,” the Sandman said. “You see, I hitchhiked.”

“What does that mean?” tiny William asked.

“I know,” Lucy explained. “If you don’t have money for the bus ticket, then you stand by the road, lift up your thumb and stop the cars that pass by. Some of them will pick you up and take you to your destination eventually.”

“Something like that,” the Sandman was satisfied with Lucy’s explanation. “So I went hitchhiking. And no car wanted to stop. You see, I’m really small and quite hard to notice. I was standing by the road for about an hour and



started getting cold already, you know. But then I saw him coming! Straight from the skies! The Santa Claus himself! With a neat reindeer sledge and everything.

So he landed straight in front on me and shouted: “Jump on, Sandman!” I felt so happy it nearly took my breath away. I quickly climbed onto the sledge and off we went. Straight to the skies! The Santa threw me a big warm scarf so I could cover myself.”

“Is the Santa here already?” the children got excited.

“Well he kind of is and kind of isn’t,” the Sandman sighed. “He’s at the police station now, being held in a cage.”

“The Santa in a cage?” tiny William stared at him.

“In a cage, yes. In a cell,” the Sandman said.

“You see, what happened was that when the Santa landed near here and turned into your street, he didn’t use the turn signal. The police stopped him with their striped wand and asked to see his driver’s license. But the Santa didn’t have a driver’s license. Neither did he have a pilot license, an ID, insurance or a technical inspection proof of the sledge. Neither did his vehicle have any lights, brakes, safety triangle, wheel chocks, medical kit, or fire extinguisher. Besides, the Santa had no education and a couple of his back teeth were missing. So, considering all these things, the Santa was one of the most serious criminals the police officer had ever met.”

“And how did you manage to escape?” Lucy asked.



“But I wasn’t guilty of anything,” the Sandman said. “One police officer pointed her finger at me to show the others that there was another one of those, a tiny one! But as I wasn’t driving, they let me go.”

“Oh my God! Does it mean that Santa won’t be coming tomorrow?” Marilyn gasped.

“Don’t worry. The Santa will get out of there. He knows all kinds of magic tricks and I’m sure he will find a way to prove them that he’s the real Santa Claus.”

The children were very worried and nobody could get any sleep. This was a chance for the Sandman to do his job properly, so he sprinkled sleep sand in the eyes of all three children.

Once the Santa had left the children, he went to the police station to investigate the matter, just in case. He climbed onto the window sill and peeked in. The picture that he saw calmed him down instantly. The Santa had been let out from the cell and was sitting on a chair, a sack full of sweets next to him, looking all pleased. A police officer was reading a poem, waving her hands, another one was dancing and the third one was locked in a cage. There was a bunch of twigs lying in front of the cage door and you could see that it had been used. The Sandman felt happy and he skipped on to work. The reindeer were trampling their feet in front of the police station as the Sandman waved them goodbye.



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