

HEIKI VILEP



**SANDMAN'S
STORIES**



Heiki Vilep

Sandman's
stories

Translated by Anni Kõõnnemägi and
Helena Niidla

Illustrated by Ott Vallik

ISBN: 978-9949-9642-0-8

www.vilep.com

vilep@vilep.com

Phone: +372 56567827

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The Sandman, Marilyn, and sheep



It all started on one regular evening. Mum and dad were too tired from work to tell a bedtime story to their little Marilyn. It was already well after nine, but without a bedtime story Marilyn just could not fall asleep. She tried to force her eyes shut and imagined a large flock of sheep like mummy had taught her. The sheep kept jumping over the fence one after another – woosh and woosh.

'One, two, three, seven, fifteen, one hundred, many ...,' Marilyn counted the sheep.

She could not count very well yet, so she counted as many as she knew how to:

'One, two, three, seven, fifteen, one hundred, many ...'

'What are you doing here?' someone suddenly asked right next to Marilyn's ear. Marilyn was startled, opened her eyes and saw a real Sandman next to her in bed.

'I-I am counting sheep,' she stammered to answer the little man's question.

'Oh, don't bother!' the Sandman said. 'It doesn't work every time. Once you know all the numbers then you can try again. It will work



better then.'

'Oh, I see,' Marilyn remained in thought.

'That's right,' the Sandman confirmed, and took quite a handful of sand out of his bag.

'I should better sprinkle some sand in your eye.'

'Sand, really?' Marilyn looked curiously into the Sandman's palm.

'Yes, sand, you know,' the Sandman answered.

'Well, sleep-sand.'

'Please don't do it!' Marilyn pleaded. 'Better tell me a story! Tell me a proper bedtime story!' The Sandman made big eyes and mumbled reluctantly:

'I don't get paid for that, you know.'

'But tell it for free!' Marilyn kept asking, 'without getting paid.'

'For free, for free,' the Sandman hesitated. 'You can't get anything for free these days.'

Now Marilyn started crying. Her nose was runny and tears were flowing uncontrollably.

'Wait, wait!' the Sandman tried to console the little girl. 'Children are not supposed to cry while falling asleep!'



'Nobody would tell me a bedtime story!' Marilyn wept and the Sandman's heart started to melt.

'Alright, I will try. But only a very short one.' He thought for a while and then became quite serious.

'You know, now that I think about it, it turns out that I don't even know any proper bedtime stories.'

'But make it up!' Marilyn recommended. 'Just go ahead and make it up!'

'It's easy to say,' the Sandman scratched his head. 'I will have to tell you a made-up story then ...'

'Let it be a made-up story,' Marilyn agreed, 'as long as it's a story!'

The Sandman lied down on his side, got comfortable with his hand supporting his head, and tried to get started somewhere.

The sock and the boot



'Once upon a time, there lived a sock and a boot. They lived together because they worked together in the same place.'

'What crazy story are you telling me now, ' Marilyn laughed.

'But you wanted it!' the Sandman was a bit hurt. 'I am just doing the best I can.'

'All right,' Marilyn softened, 'please continue!'

'Well, so the sock and the boot lived together and they worked well together. But on one morning, the boot started to pick on the sock:

'Hey sock, do you ever wash yourself? You already smell of old cheese!'

'You smell yourself!' retorted the sock. 'If you start picking on me, I will tell on you to the foot!'

'Pshaw!' made boot and squeaked quietly on its own:

'You have always been such a suck up! I hope you will get a hole in your heel! '

The sock was a little offended and because it had a small hole at the heel, it shut up for a while.



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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)