



“Don’t Worry About Me ”

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Age: 7+

In spring, when the apple trees begin to blossom, Robby’s grandmother dies. When autumn arrives and the apples are ripe on the trees, the boy decides to visit his grandfather in the countryside, even though he reckons it will be a sad trip to take alone. He and his grandfather go fishing together, play checkers, and watch football on TV. Then, one evening, Robby takes a walk through the orchard. Spotting a nice-looking apple under his favourite tree, he picks it up. Yet right as the boy is about to sink his teeth into it, he notices a little worm who beckons him to follow it into a wormhole. Inside the fruit, a whole world that summons strong memories of his grandmother starts to unfold.

Awards:

2017 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children’s Books

2017 Good Children’s Book



Reading sample

[pp 37-40]

Worryhag knocked on Wordyhag's door. In her great consternation, she didn't know what else to do than to trudge through the rain to Southslope.

Wordyhag swung open the door and stood staring at her neighbor in surprise. She was drenched from head to toe. The woman's dress hung limply from her bony body, her eyeglasses were fogged with tears, and rain trickled down her furrowed face. Wordyhag quickly pulled her guest inside.

"Dearest me, what made you go outside in this weather?"

All Worryhag could do was sob.

Wordyhag helped her neighbor dry off with a big towel, gave her a warm sweater and wool socks to wear, heated the teakettle, added honey to the water, and ushered the women over to the crackling fireplace.

"First, you must warm up and calm down. There'll be time to talk later."

She sat across from Worryhag and began knitting purple lace.

"This lace will be a new dress for my littlest daughter. Gerda is growing up so fast that she'll have already outgrown her current dress by the time the Big Dance rolls around next spring."

Worryhag snuffled and sipped her tea.

"How is it that nothing worries you?"

Wordyhag set her knitting down in her lap.

"Why do you think nothing worries me?"

"You always seem so brave and cheerful. You fly around and allow your own daughters to fly and swim in the sea. It's all so incredibly dangerous!"

"How is worrying going to help anything?"

Wordyhag shrugged. "I've found the very best teachers for my daughters – ones who impart all kinds of skills and wisdom to them. They've got to know how to manage in life."

"I can't help but worry. If anything bad should happen to my one and only daughter, I don't think I'd ever get over it."

"You know, I've noticed that this summer, when Poppy has been playing and learning together with my daughters, she's been so much happier than ever before. Doesn't that matter to you?"

"That's even more frightful in turn!" Worryhag moaned, sinking deeper into the armchair.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Of course I can see she's much happier being with your daughters than she is with me at home. I've never seen Poppy as cheerful as she was today, skipping and racing with the other girls in the sea."

"That's just great, isn't it?!"

"What's great about it?! I'm so terrified that Poppy will leave me."

"What kind of talk is that?!" Wordyhag exclaimed. "If I were you, I'd allow her to continue attending all the classes as she pleases. It'll be fun for her and will train her to be stronger."

"And one day, when she doesn't come home anymore, it'll break my heart," Worryhag moaned, and started to cry again.

Wordyhag was silent for a while, staring into the fire.

"You know, my dear neighbor, I think you could worry a little less about yourself."



“What do you mean, ‘myself’! I’m not worrying about myself at all. I’m worrying about Poppy!”

“If you say so,” Wordyhag sighed, and went into the kitchen.

Worryhag sat there for a long while longer, deep in her thoughts, and didn’t even notice the fire in the fireplace had gone out.

Translated by Adam Cullen

