



Carnival and Potato Salad

Text by Andrus Kivirähk
Illustrated by Heiki Ernits
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Storybook, fiction
Age: 6+

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In Carnival and Potato Salad, Kivirähk continues the style of storytelling he left off with his extremely popular collection of children's tales titled Poo and Spring. As usual for Kivirähk's stories, familiar everyday objects often get fresh starts in life – an eraser can become a football, or a pillow can be a teacher. Readers are given a close look at the tribulations of a white dress shirt and the worries of a button that falls off of a boy's pants while he is playing. Even a vacuum who happened to read a book has no problem heading to the banks of the Limpopo River to save an elephant calf from a crocodile. Each and every thing in Kivirähk's stories has a task to fulfil, undoubtedly pointing children's fantasies in a new direction.

Award:
2016 Nukits Competition, 1st place for
illustrations, 2nd place for text

Reading sample

The Little Old Lady and the Lilac

A little old lady once lived in a tiny yellow house. She lived there all alone— she had no children, no dog, not even any cats. The only thing she had was a window, which the old lady loved to look out of. She would stare through it day after day and for hours on end.

On the other side of the window grew a lilac bush, beyond the lilac was her yard, and beyond the yard was a street. People would walk down the street. The little old lady liked to watch them, but the people walked quickly and would disappear from sight before very long at all.

Birds would fly past the window, too, on occasion; especially chickadees. Sometimes, some of them would perch on a branch of the lilac bush – the old lady would be especially elated then, and would even put her glasses on in order to inspect the little birds better. But the chickadees never bothered to sit around on the lilac branch for very long; they would chirp a couple of times and be gone again in a flash.

If only I could somehow coax them to stay in one place for longer – that would be great! the little old lady pondered. But how?

She thought and she thought, and finally came up with an idea! One morning, the little old lady hung a ball of birdfeed from a lilac branch, and positioned herself at the window. Soon, the chickadees arrived. They started pecking at the birdfeed, and spent the entire day on the lilac branches! The little old lady was just as pleased as can be – she had been able to watch the chickadees for a good long while, and hadn't been bored a single moment of that day.

The little old lady started feeding the chickadees every day, and they would flock to the lilac bush. But after a few weeks, she had a new idea: The chickadees are lovely, of course. But perhaps I could coax someone else here with the same little trick? The little old lady would often see children running down the road on the other side of her yard, but they never even glanced over at the tiny yellow house. So now, she filled the branches of the lilac bush with dangling candies! Children walking home from school stopped to gape and stare at the bush. A few minutes later, they had already swarmed around the bush and were smacking their mouths with candy so loudly that it sounded up to high heaven.

The little old lady watched them from the window and waved, and the children waved back.

From then onward, the children would visit the lilac bush to eat candy every day; just like how the chickadees came for their birdfeed. Even so, the little old lady came up with newer and newer ideas. One morning, she hung a smoked sausage from a higher branch of the lilac bush. The mailman, who was just on his way to bring the little old lady her newspaper, saw it and was on top of the delicacy in a second.

“It sure is good sausage, miss!” he complemented, chewing with his mouth full and wiping off his moustache. “I wonder. . . will there be some tomorrow, too?”

“Of course there will be!” the little old lady promised. “But tell me, please: what food does your wife like?”

“She loves grilled chicken more than anything,” the mailman replied.

“Then bring your wife along tomorrow!” the little old lady said. “There will be grilled chicken – you can be sure of that!”

And already the next day, both the mailman and his wife were leaning against the lilac bush and munching on chicken wings so loudly that the air was filled with crunching noises! It goes without saying, of course, that they were also surrounded by children eating candy and chickadees pecking at balls of birdfeed. The lilac bush was swarming with people and birds! And all the while, the little old lady sat at the window in her yellow house watching them and feeling very, very happy.