

“Nice”

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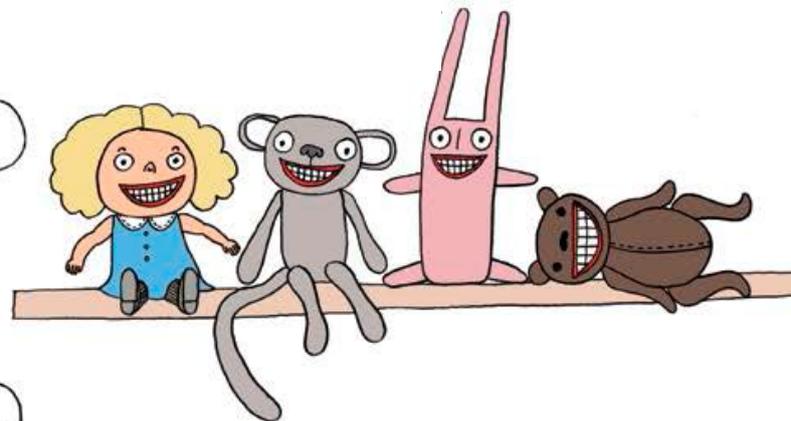
Leen and Oskar are big and busy kids! When they have a day off from preschool and their grandmother comes to keep an eye on them, the children decide to be especially good so that their mother will be pleased when she gets home. They tidy up their rooms, do the laundry, and clean their shoes. To top it off, they even make their mother a pie. They do these things all on their own, without any help from Grandma. Will their mother like what they've done?

Awards:

2016 5 Best Designed Estonian Children's Books,
Special Prize of the Estonian Graphic Designers'
Association for illustration

2016 Good Children's Book

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Reading sample

Oskar! Oskar, listen! Wake up!
I just had a fantastic idea!
Let's do everything really nice today. Okay?

[Radio greeting: The pastor and congregation of St. Michael's Church in Jõhvi congratulate Adda from Pinecone Village and wish her spiritual bliss.]

What should we do first of all?
Let's brush our teeth!
You need to brush back and forth for two minutes.
We'll wash our eyes nice and clean, too.

And then let's get dressed. Lickety-split!

Now, let's clean our room.
Rooms should be nice and tidy.
No one wants to live in a messy room, now do they?

We could do all our dirty laundry, too—what do you think?

You need to scrub this spot separately, otherwise the stain won't come out.
Oh, and we'll make our shoes nice and sparkly-clean, too!
Laundry day!

Look, all our porridge dishes are unwashed. And our mugs, too.
Let's make them nice and clean.

Listen, what if we bake a cake, too? Huh? Or a pie?
A cookie pie! Mommy will like that.
And Mommy's having another birthday soon.

I'd like to do something else that's especially nice...
Maybe we could draw or color something?
[Oskar] Being good was so great!
[Leen] It sure was. It tired me out, too.
You know, I don't think I'll have enough energy to be so good tomorrow...

[Mother's telephone call] Yes, uh-huh, they're so precious and really well-behaved. Luckily, they've got their grandmother, too; she's very happy to take care of them and is... They can be at home with her on Wednesdays. Oh, yes, it's just super that they're

able to spend one peaceful day at home in the middle of the week... kids do get quite exhausted at day care, you know... and then they get sick more often and are whiney and make mischief. But it's just great to have it this way; we're awfully pleased, you know.

Sometimes, it seems like everything is just no good. Everything. You yourself are in a bad mood and it feels like everyone else is doing everything wrong just to spite you. Some might even say something nasty. You try and you try with all your might, but most things seem to go sideways, all the same.

On those days, people say you got up on the wrong side of the bed. You feel grumpy and, well, everything just backfires. It's like the whole world is against you.

A thought might cross your mind—you'd like to cross that day off from your life entirely. You feel like it'd be better if it had never happened at all. Even if that meant living one day less.

But at that moment, all you can do is put your mind to work. Think. Look around. There simply has to be something nice and good somewhere. Something that helps you to realize that—look, this day is actually a lovely day, too, and it is your day, and it shouldn't be crossed off or given away or thrown out under any circumstances.

And you can start with... hmm. With what, then? Or with whom? Well, try for example one of the people, who are dearest to you.

[Mother] Oh, you munchkins... my very own little chicks. You're awfully dear to me, you know. No matter that you were even a little too good today...

Translated by Adam Cullen

