

## “Ten Little Butter lies”

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*Storybook, fiction*

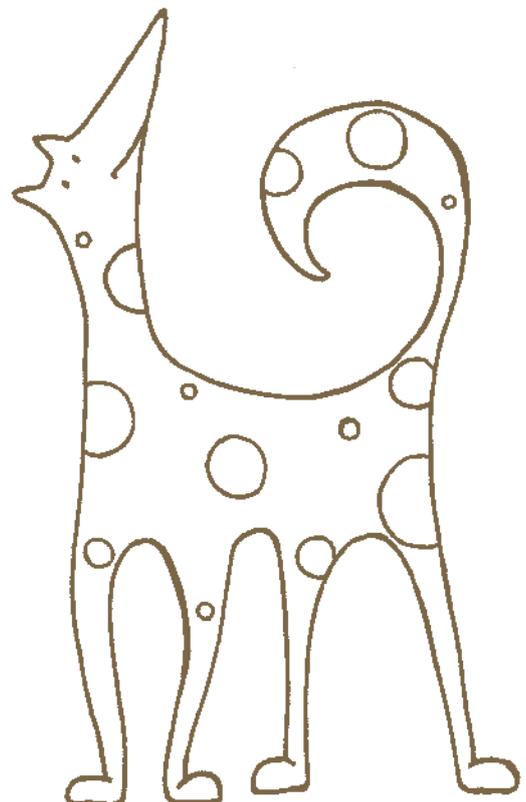
Age: 5+

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A beautiful, multi-coloured dog can be devoured in the cruelest way imaginable. A fox can be so tired and sad that he doesn't even have the will to live anymore, but then, in the big murky forest he can unexpectedly hear his friend Other Fox calling him, and can become cheerful again. A tiny yellow bird can accidentally pass gas while lost in the excitement of flying and make the other birds laugh so hard that they nearly fall out of the sky! A leopard's name can be Tõnu, and he can work part-time as a model in a photography studio. A greedy rabbit can completely escape punishment... And a little bear, who is in danger of a dreadful drowning at the bottom of the big cold sea can be saved at the last moment by a big fish. Anything can happen!

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## Reading sample

### Tõnu

“The powerful leopard – lord of the jungle”

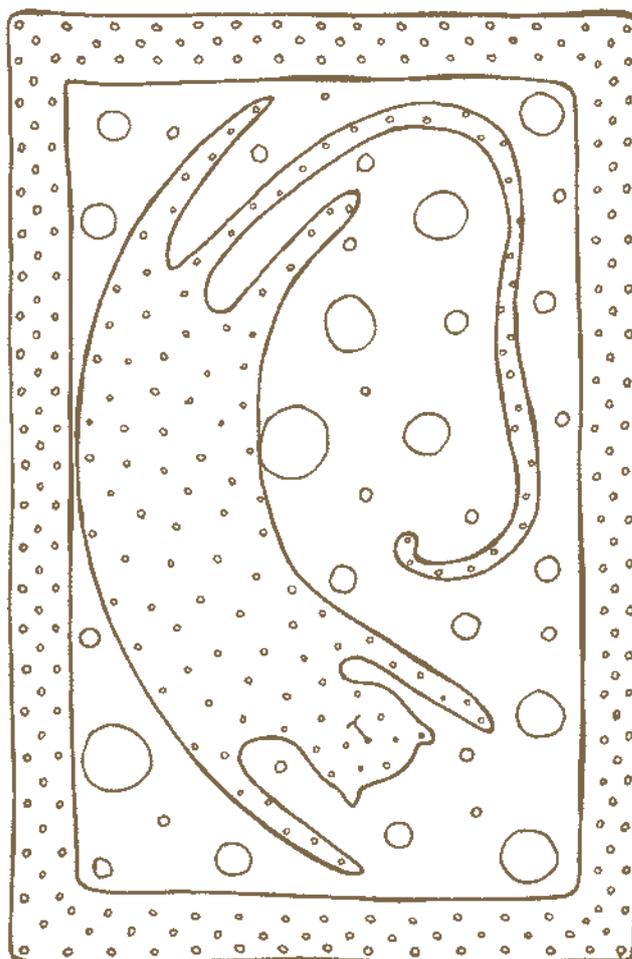
This was Tõnu’s favourite article. Mostly because of the title of course, although the story itself was excellent too. It explained why the true lord of the jungle is the wise and cunning leopard, and not the large and clumsy lion.

Yet again Tõnu had come out very well in the pictures. He always looked good in photos – if needs be he could be cute, or powerful, or sometimes even downright menacing and dangerous, as leopards are in fact. And always beautiful.

You couldn’t tell from the photos that in fact Tõnu was slightly smaller than other leopards. But Tõnu was just right for the studio where he worked as a model – it would be a tight squeeze just getting a full-sized leopard through the door, let alone having it jumping around and chasing prey animals.

A stalking leopard was what everyone liked to take photos of most. And Tõnu liked it too, because he liked sport of all kinds. The photographer liked it because Tõnu was a bit of a klutz and never managed to catch any prey – so there was no need to wash blood off the studio floor all the time. Never mind the fact that the photographer couldn’t stand the sight of blood. And the prey animals – well, no need for you to ponder whether they liked it!

Tõnu had a special soft spot for creating jumping shots. All of a sudden things would be completely frantic, he would scramble round the studio like a whirlwind and of course he would jump, he would jump! In the air he felt free as a bird and his happiness could not be dimmed even by the fact that each leap always came to an end – mostly accompanied by a very loud bang. No, a sore bottom and a few bruises were always part and parcel of the calculation he made when he took a jump.



And later, looking at the pictures, Tõnu always felt that in fact he wasn’t really all that clumsy after all, only mildly so. And clumsy he was, given that he never caught a single thing – but so what? he had no need of prey because he had a job that he was paid to do and with his pay he could buy food and other goodies in the shops.

Anyhow he already had a place to live and free food: at the zoo where he worked part-time as a leopard. So with his pay he could buy sweets and all sorts of special delicacies. And at Christmas a lovely fine-toothed comb or something.

## Ten little butterflies

This strange, blood-curdling story happened one gloomy, sinister, spring Sunday when Mum and Mihkel, his big sister and little brother, decided to bake cakes for Mihkel's birthday.

The poor things were so very happy because everything seemed to be going stupendously well. The previous afternoon, big sister had bought all the ingredients for the cake, forgetting not a single thing. And the things she had bought were sweet and wonderful: caster sugar, eggs, half a packet of butter, a packet of hundreds and thousands, chocolate sprinkles, and a little icing sugar into the bargain. Sound good to you?

The cakes were baked and looked absolutely delicious, but they hadn't yet sensed that this time there was no happy ending in store. They didn't notice that outside a strong wind was howling, rattling shutters against windows (they didn't notice because none of the houses in their road had shutters), tugging at the roof tiles so hard that they started to make a threatening, thunderous rumble, whisking the dust and sand in the street into the eyes and down the necks of the odd passer-by.

And then it happened. The children arrived at Mihkel's house. They brought him presents (two fantastic Lego sets, a pair of see-in-the-dark secret agent glasses, walkie-talkies, a book and two identical craft kits, but that was OK because two sets meant more bits and better builds). Then they played. After a while they ate potato salad, carrot and cabbage cake, bread with caraway seeds, and ham rolls. They had some fruit too. And berry juice to drink. Then they played again – all sorts of jolly games, and after a while it started to feel as if everything might still turn out fine.

But then Mum called the children to the kitchen once more ... They sat at the table. And Mum cut the butterfly wings, re-arranged them before the children's eyes and dished up. And the children ate every last scrap.

*Translated by Susan Wilson*

