

Priit Põhjala

Mu vanaisa on  
murdvaras!



### **My Grandpa is a Cat Burglar!**

Text by Priit Põhjala  
Illustrated by Hillar Mets  
Tänapäev 2016, 125 pp  
ISBN 9789949279432  
*Storybook, fiction*  
Age: 8+

Karl Priidu is a chipper schoolboy who lives with his spirited parents in a little four-apartment building near the city center. Their neighbors include Uncle Endel – a former sailor who tells the boy swashbuckling tales – and old Mrs. Helm, whose favorite activity is quarreling with the other residents. Living upstairs, right above their apartment, is the boy's favorite aunt – Aunt Maria, with whom the boy loves to talk about the world, listen to jazz, and dance. The boy's grandpa (an actor and a prankster) and adventurous grandma also play an important role in his life. Through Karl's perspective, we find out how the family goes grocery shopping, washes dishes, entertains themselves, and celebrates Christmas – not to mention what some of them are afraid of and how one or another of them might get offended.

#### Awards:

2018 Nukits Competition, 3rd place  
2016 Annual Children's Literature Award of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia nominee



[pp 50-52]

## Everyone Is Afraid of Something— Seriously!

Did you know that everyone is afraid of something? Seriously—even my dad is. And not just one thing, but many. One morning when my dad was leaving for work, he told my mom that he is afraid of bumping into old Mrs. Helm in the stairway. And one evening at the dinner table, he whispered to me that Mom's casserole tastes strange, and that he's afraid she mixed up the sugar and the salt again. I reckoned that Shrek wouldn't quiver in fear at something like that—he even eats rats, eyeballs, and cobwebs. My dad got a little irritated when I said this, and told me that while that may be true, Shrek is afraid Donkey might talk him to death. Not even Shrek would eat his own boogers and earwax, he added.

Anyway, if my dad and Shrek are afraid of some things, then I'm not ashamed to admit that I am, too. Now that I think about it, I'm afraid of quite a lot. I'm afraid that elves will go extinct like the dinosaurs did; or like those black-and-white people, whom you only see in old pictures and movies now. And if elves ever do go extinct, then that'll mean no more presents from Santa at Christmas. I'm also afraid that my dad, who is already very tall, will grow even taller, because he eats an awful lot of food. And if Dad grows even taller, then we'll have to move into a church that has high ceilings, but hard benches.

When I'm climbing trees, I'm afraid I won't be brave enough to climb as high as Henry does, and then the other boys will laugh at me. When I'm climbing down from a tree, I'm afraid I'll fall and get hurt—and then the other boys will start to laugh. I'm afraid of getting a C in math. Or even a D. I'm afraid of the world running out of chocolate, or licorice! At the department store that Mom and I shop at sometimes, a sign by the candy counter reads: "Without candy, darkness and chaos would rule the earth." I don't know what chaos is, but it sounds pretty grim, in any case. I certainly wouldn't want a world without licorice that's ruled by darkness and that... chaos-thing.

