



Not All Boys Grow Up

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Storybook, fiction
Age: 10+

The book tells of 10–14-year-old boys, whose summer break is filled with both exciting adventures and unexpected events. In the first part of the book, two friends – Jan and Villu – build a raft and conquer a small island. However, this attracts the attention of the other village boys, who – as one might expect – don't like it one bit...

In the second part, Jan and Villu are accepted as fully authorized members of the troop of boys. The neighboring village naturally has its own troop, and the annual custom must be honored – war is declared!

The stories are true events from Southern Estonia in the early 1980's, and most of the characters come from the author's own childhood.

Awards:
2009 Nukits Competition, 3rd place

Reading sample

The moss below the treetops was soft and moist. Lush ferns grew on both sides with leaves that stretched over the heads of the boys sitting beneath. Jan and Silver eyed up their handiwork, which rose up mightily between four trees – at least four meters high.

“I’d like to go to New York sometime,” Jan daydreamed in a loud voice. “There are high and narrow buildings that rise up to the clouds over there too.”

“Our hut doesn’t reach the clouds,” Silver retorted.

“Well, yes, but almost. One can still dream,” snapped Jan.

“Go ahead and dream. Let’s go climb onto the roof instead – there are loads of cooler views from there,” Silver proposed, and stood up from the moss.

The boys climbed up a half-meter-long ladder to the first story, and then onto the second floor along a walkway fastened to the inner wall of the hut. Silver unhinged the shutters and looked out onto the forest floor. The windows were narrow like the arrowslits of old castles.

Jan had already slipped up through the hatch from the second floor and stood on the roof’s veranda, which was ringed by a railing. Strong gusts of wind made the trees sway, and the hut lurched back and forth. Jan felt like he was in a raft on the sea. Nails holding the planks together at their joints screeched.

Silver’s head appeared through the hatch. “Incredible, right?”

“Nobody’s had such a hut around where we live,” Jan stated proudly. “You could live here at ease in summer. Maybe we could move here for a few nights?”

“We could make do, but being here definitely wouldn’t be super-luxurious,” Silver affirmed.

“I don’t know what kind of extravagance you expect, but I think I’ll try staying here for one night. Are you coming too?”

Silver hesitated. “I don’t really care to sleep here at night. It’s nicer to be at home.”

“Whatever you say. In any case, I’m going to take a quilt from home, a bit of food and candles, and will give it a try,” said Jan.