

Eva Lindström



Nominated for the 2014
H.C. Andersen Prize
by the Swedish Section of IBBY

Biography Eva Lindström

Born in Västerås in 1952
Lives and works in Stockholm

Education:

School of Arts in Västerås 1968–1969
Art School Konstfack, Stockholm 1969–1974

Professional profile:

Artist
Illustrator of papers, magazines, comics,
books for adults and for children
Author of children's books and comics
Member of the Swedish Children's Books Academy

Prizes:

Elsa Beskow Plaque, 1995
BMF Plaque, 2001
Expressen's Heffaklump, 2002
En Bok För Alla's Literary Humour Prize, 2003
Snöbollen, 2012 (best picture book of the year)

Picture books as Art: Make Way for Eva Lindström!

” The way I see it, if my story’s going to be the way I want it, I have to be my own target audience. I’m afraid that what I want to say will get diluted if I start thinking about the way anyone else, adult or child, might conceivably want to read my book.”¹

Eva Lindström has established herself as one of Sweden’s most accomplished picture book writers. With her special blend of darkness and humour, her original subject matter and her highly personal technique that mixes watercolour, gouache and pencil, she has raised the Swedish picture book to new artistic heights. She tells bizarre, comical, occasionally melancholy tales pulsating with existential overtones. Her characters at times express the child’s inventiveness, energy and unconditional delight in life, while at others evoking a very adult sense of loneliness, confusion and utter disorientation. Her art is held in high esteem and affection, particularly among the entirely new generation of picture book makers now emerging in Sweden. In one way or another, all of them have been shaken out of her overcoat, as one reviewer recently put it.

She occupies a special position in the picturebook field today, being seen as one of the most headstrong and original talents in the field. She attracts a devoted readership of all ages and – perhaps in the company of artist and picture book creator Jockum Nordström – enjoys cult status among the students of design and illustration currently coming up through the art colleges. ‘A milestone in the history of Swedish picture books’ and ‘the sort of book that only comes along once a decade’ declared one enraptured critic last year, going on to consider Lindström’s existential ideas with reference to Meister Eckhardt’s interpretation

of Genesis, ‘Mankind, you are a “Where?”’². He was referring to *Olli and Mo* (2012), a picture book in which two characters, an odd pair, yet oddly complementary, are out for a drive in the car and lose all sense of direction while passing through an extremely beautiful landscape, picturesque but deserted, conjured forth in pencil and thinly applied-gouache. Eva Lindström’s laconic language and dry humour permeate the text and combine with the dreamlike pictures in a succession of existential situations that would stand comparison with Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*.

1. ‘Eva Lindström: Jag är min egen målgrupp’ (I am my own target audience.) Interview by Siri Ahmed Backström, *Tecknaren* no. 2, 2012, p. 9.

2. ‘Mästerlig “Olli och Mo” av Eva Lindström: Bilderbok lika tung som Borges, Calvino och Gertrude Stein – tillsammans’ (Masterly *Olli and Mo* by Eva Lindström: A picture book as weighty as Borges, Calvino and Gertrude Stein put together). Review by Magnus William Olsson, AB, 21.4.13.



OLLI OCH MO

*Mo starts the car.
She puts her foot on the accelerator and they
zoom off.
'Where are we?' she cries after a while.
Olli leafs through the road atlas.
'We'll soon be on the outskirts of page three.*

*They drive on and lose their way.
'Is this an outing?' wonders Olli.
'I think so.' Mo is sweating in her coat. She's
never got lost in the car before, and doesn't
know what to do.
'Where are we?'
'Somewhere here.'*

*'So where are we now?'
'Here, maybe.'
Here could just as well be there.
'I think we'll go this way,' says Olli.*

Olli and Mo is without doubt the artistic culmination of Lindström's career to date. In both theme and image, it builds on two of her earlier picture books, *I skogen* (In the Woods, 2008) and *Jag tycker inte om vatten* (I Don't Like Wa-

ter, 2009). The three books together comprise a trilogy in which the natural world – the woods, the mountains, the water, weather and seasons – not only provide the setting and background but are the precondition of the stories themselves.

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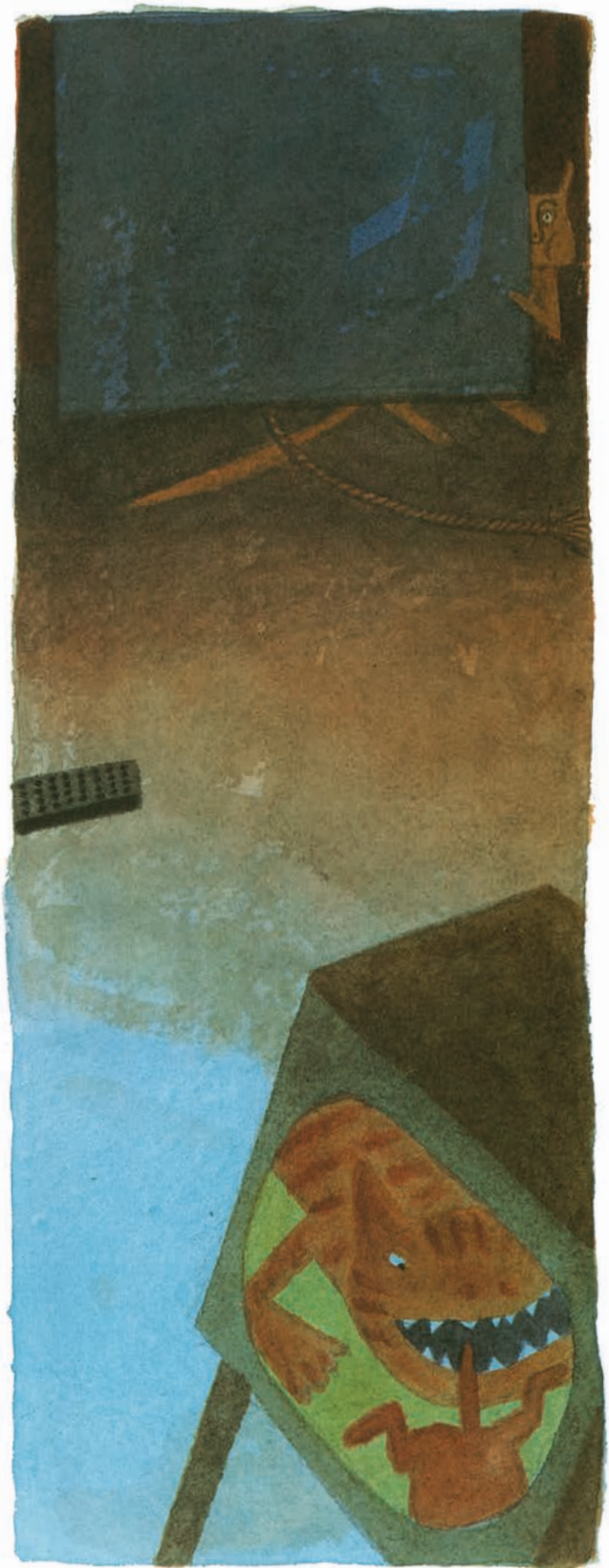
Eva Lindström was born in 1952 in Västerås. She was an art student in her home town for a year and then, at the age of seventeen, started at Konstfack (the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design) in Stockholm, where she studied painting from 1969 to 1974, a period of activism and left-wing orientation at the college. There, she and a number of others in her painting class formed the radical group 'Svarta hämnarna' (The Black Avengers), which used poster art to make a statement in the debates of the period. 'It was a fantastic and dynamic period,' as she puts it, and one which played its part in the development of her radical, polemical style, which came into its own in her cartoon strips in *Kvinnotidningen Q* (Q Women's Magazine) and

in her illustrations for the children's magazine *Kamratposten* (Friends' Post?), which at the time was experiencing a golden age as a hot-house for young illustrators. In the mid-1980s she started working on collaborations with a series of authors who appreciated the unusual and humorous style of her pictures. In these, her first picture books, she fills the pages with angular figures and anecdotal scenes in her rapid, sketch-like, caricaturist style. She receives many plaudits for the laid-back humour of both her texts and her pictures but also some criticism for her 'straggly' style and 'ugly children', somewhat alien to prevailing picture book norms of rounded cuteness. 'Ugly in what sense?' wonders Eva Lindström. 'That's so horrible to these lovely little children I've done.'

In 1988, Eva Lindström publishes her first solo picture book, the highly original *Kattmössan* (The Cat's Hat), in watercolour and ink. Her next book *Lurix* (Lurix, 1996) was her artistic breakthrough. Today we would characterise it as a richly illustrated story with generous amounts of text, rather than a regular picture book. It is an auto-fiction, in which the first-person narrator is an animal who does not know himself what sort of creature he is, or where he belongs. He is found by a solitary woman, who calls herself an animal lover, and with her help he gradually builds up his identity. It is a touching and intermittently dramatic story but, as always, spiced with Lindström's comic touches which help to balance out the underlying pain of not knowing who you really are.

I pick up a tub of something white and sit down in the armchair. There's a nature programme on television. A stripy animal is creeping through the grass. I've never seen an animal like it.

'Do you like soft cheese?' cries animal lover. So that's its name. I like watching it creep along, but suddenly another animal comes along. Soft cheese hides behind a bush. When the other animal goes past, soft cheese jumps on it /.../ The other animal screams. Now they're fighting. /.../ I don't like soft cheese.



LURIX

In the pictures, Lindström displays another side of her artistic competence, in tranquil scenes painted in thickly applied layers, using watercolour in a technique that both obscures and illuminates with its warm, dark, saturated palette and beautiful handling of light. In this



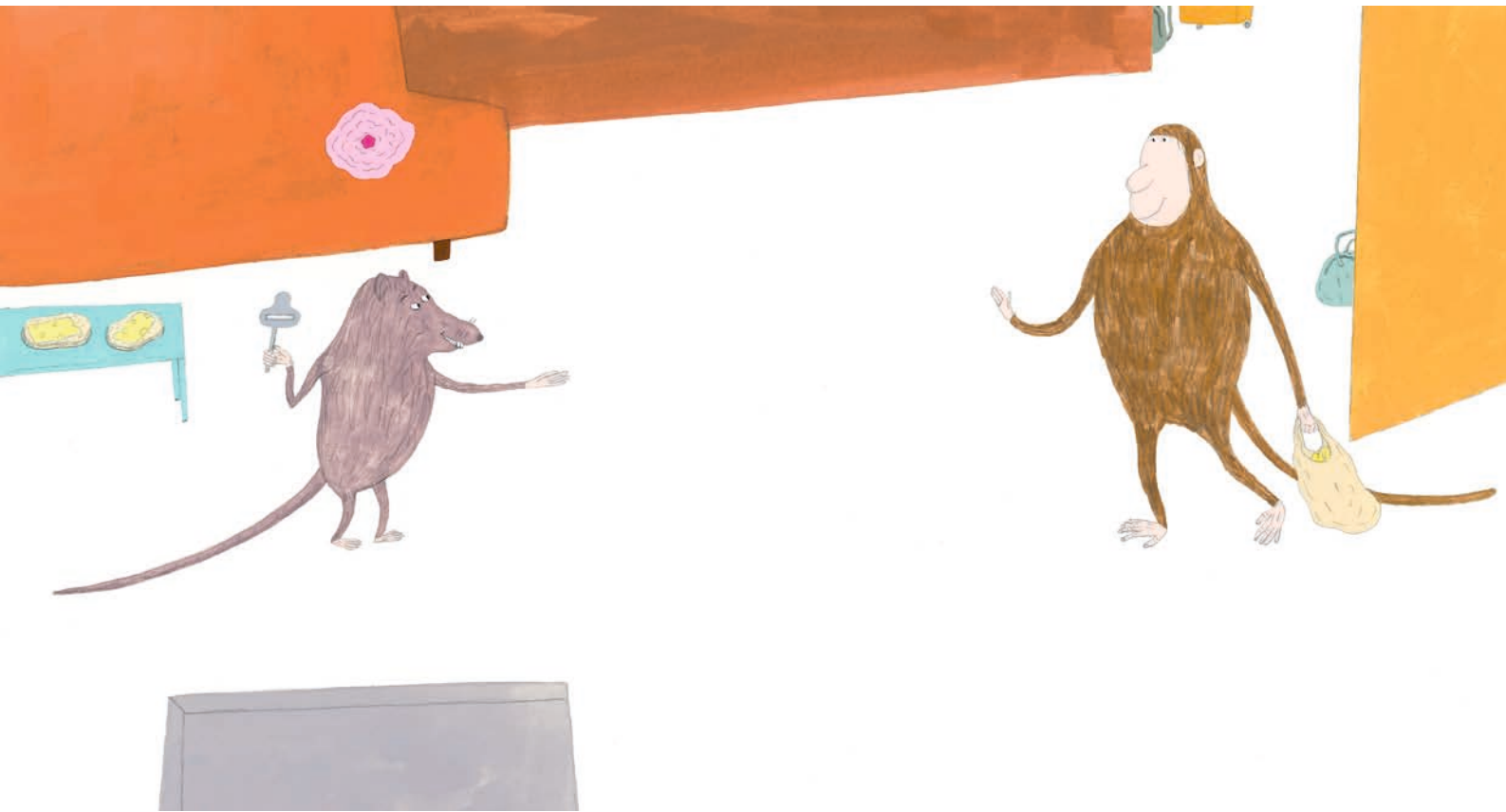
MIN VÄN LAGE

book she establishes her recurrent constellation of existential themes – loneliness, lack of self-esteem, a certain emptiness to life – and one of her main motifs: strong friendship between

MIN VÄN LAGE



a loyal, solitary woman and an animal, often rather shabby, often not entirely reliable. This motif is developed in *Min vän Lage* (My Friend Lage, 2001), where a woman describes her sporadic friendship with an owl called Lage who used to work ‘as an owl on several nature programmes’ on television. Now he has a job boring holes. But things aren’t going well and he gets the sack. ‘It couldn’t have been better. It suited him just fine to stop boring now.’ In the last picture, the woman is practising flying, with some success, after taking lessons from Lage. Their friendship never developed any further, as the woman might have hoped, but it did at any rate get her to the point of taking off – or rather: Lage actually taught her the principles for teaching *herself* to fly.



APAN OCH JAG

Another variation on the theme, this time with a dash of jealousy thrown in, can be found in *Apan och jag* (Monkey and Me), a book for younger children that in 2011 saw Eva Lindström become the first winner of a new annual prize, 'Snöbollen' (The Snowball), for the best Swedish picture book. The prize is awarded to a picture book that not only exploits the picture book medium in an artistic and conscious way but also succeeds in pushing the boundaries of the medium. In this book, Lindström tells a double story in lightly rhyming, humorous verse with pictures composed in a clean, pared-down style, the colours gradually intensifying as the woman's panic grows, the day she cannot find her friend the monkey. Has it run away?

*It's fun to go looking/for what's tucked away
But not all the time/and not every day.*

Has it gone to see its friend the rat in another town? While we follow all her anxious imaginings that the worst might have happened, the pictures show us that the monkey is simply playing hide and seek. We find clues in the pic-

tures around the woman's home. And happiness soon seems to be restored as they walk off with their arms round each other.

APAN OCH JAG





LIMPAN ÄR SUGEN

Younger children find lots to enjoy in *Limpan är sugen* (Sizzles is Peckish, 1997), a picture story with no words, about a little dog with a craving for sausages and the picture book *En fågeldag* (A Bird Day, 2000) about Bosse and Lena, a brother and sister, who do a lot of thinking and play some quite wild games. This motif – children’s wild and not always wholly



EN FÅGELDAG

innocent games – is another central and recurring one in Lindström’s work. Her children play and play, not always in a decorous or orderly fashion, and not always being nice to each other, but they are always one hundred per cent genuine children. Bosse and Lena tempt fate in traffic or play fainting games – when their parents aren’t looking, they collapse onto the ground repeatedly, and only leap up at the last instant. In *Jag gillar Stig* (I Like Stig, 1998), a drama of jealousy in a group of three playing together, the main protagonist decides they are going to play Hostage, so she can tie her rival to a tree and have the boy, Stig, to herself. When he anxiously goes back to set the girl free, she dashes home and – as an act of revenge – makes a thousand chocolate balls that she has no intention of sharing. Here, Lindström employs a stylistic device that is the illustrator’s equivalent to hyperbole, allowing the girl’s frustration to vent itself visually in the number of chocolate balls, thereby externalising her feelings in a way familiar to us from expressionist film.

But her friends come to the rescue; they gorge on the chocolate balls together, and in the final picture they are all laughing:



JAG GILLAR STIG



VILMA OCH MONA SPANAR OCH SMYGER

I feel ready to pop. I take the very last ball and burp as loud as I can. Stig squirms with laughter. Susanne laughs too.

So do I.

We all laugh together.

We can't stop.

We encounter the same tone and the same frenetic activity in a number of Lindström's other books, where children's wild games provide insights into children's concrete thought processes, described by Piaget as 'transductive': children jump from one specific thing to another in an entirely unpredictable way. In Lindström's comically absurd picture book *Vilma och Mona spanar och smyger* (Vilma and Mona Go Sneaking and Spying, 2002), the two girls are caught up in the world of their own imaginations. They hunt out things that seem to be lost, or misplaced, and even some that are not yet lost, but look likely to be. They want to 'help' at all costs. They pinch an orange cap from an old man's head. 'We could see a mile away that the cap was missing. The cap had vanished. We could see that, plain and clear. And they find another man, on a bench, and move him because he looks lost:



VILMA OCH MONA SPANAR OCH SMYGER

Up on the second floor of a block of flats, somebody's wondering where an old man has got to. Then we come in with one we've found; we drag him in with us and sit him on a chair. Well, it's the wrong man. It should have been a different one. Taller, with a side parting. It was a mistake, but we can't help that. We did our best.

We take it easy and wait for our next chance. Something will go missing soon. And we'll be ready.

What Eva Lindström is doing in these very 'childcentric' books with their child's sense of humour is to give artistic expression to the 'no man's land' that children permanently inhabit, a place we, in adulthood, have lost touch with. In that land, children play those secret games which Finnish brain specialist Matti Bergström calls their 'black games', profoundly creative, liberated and vital, but not necessarily acceptable to the adult world. Grown-ups seek to normalise children into adult order as soon as possible, teach them to play 'white games', give them knowledge and a moral code, in order ultimately to teach them to be creative again – but on adult terms.



JAG RYMMER!



JAG RYMMER!

In Eva Lindström, children are still children in that other, more naturally disorderly, even chaotic fashion. So the stories in her books sometimes feel subversive to the orderly, pedagogically inclined adult world, whereas for children and young people of varying ages, they seem intensely liberating, approving and life affirming.

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Ever since she started publishing her work she has also been a forerunner in Sweden of what is known as *the consistent, empathetic child perspective*, that is, the aesthetic principle of character creation based on telling the story from the child's point of view, with the eyes and voice of the child. There is no adult narrative voice, no explication or clarification. Here we find humour, but no irony or other such concessions to the adult world. As always when childhood is taken completely seriously, its blackness seeps out along with its light. Her books express a kind of credo: childhood is not always easy, things can disappear, it is easy to feel lonely, lost and confused, but there is a lot of fun to be had along the way.

In *Jag rymmer* (I'm Running Away, 2006), a sheep gets bored with grazing in the field and sets off restlessly in the youthful hope that life is happening somewhere else. He winds up in the company of a marten, who collects rasta caps, goes to parties and meets 'people'. But life as a runaway is not always easy.

A runaway can't work.

A runaway must always be on his guard.

There could be snoopers behind the trees, any time. /.../

The next worst thing for a runaway is that anybody could sneak up and sabotage it all.

The very worst thing is when nobody notices you've gone.

Gnawing away inside him is the question: why isn't anybody from home out looking for him? He writes home and gives his new address, and suddenly the whole lot of them are there:

We took time off to look for you./ Are you coming home to the field now?



I SKOGEN

But the book ends at the kind of juncture so typical in Lindström's books, before he has made up his mind:

*I'm not going back to the field/ I don't think./
Not for now, at any rate.*

*

In 2008, Eva Lindström published the picture book already mentioned above, *I skogen* (In the Woods), one of her best and perhaps most bold and serious books. Without a single word about the climate or the environment, she makes us understand what serious issues they are for the modern world – what will happen when nature is no longer on our side, when we lose control of existence? She tells us a story about a small group of people, children in fact, who are initially living a good life in the woods. They feel secure in the certain knowledge that they are the ones who decide, who have life fully under their control.

*We let it rain, and we are the ones who have
decided it will be wet./
It can be windy. The clouds can come and go.
Leaves can fall and turn yellow. Sticks can lie
across paths. The sun can shine.
We are always the ones who decide.*



I SKOGEN

All at once, the trees start to talk about going away, one by one; they want a holiday. When even the little aspens have gone, the children feel utterly forsaken. They try to create some sort of order out of 'what little is left'. They rake the now abandoned ground. 'The clouds charge around like lunatics and night soon falls'. They feel alone and lost. The seasons change at will. One day, the birches and pine trees come back. 'We don't say anything. We're still cross with them for going.' Finally the aspens return as well.

Everybody's home now. The pines murmur gently and the birches talk about their holidays, remembering that lovely lake. The birds say summer's here. We can't think of anything that would suit us better so we agree.

When the trees and bushes return, order is restored, but the children's trust has taken a permanent knock. Perhaps a metaphor for 'childhood': the ultimately childish sense of trust that everything will be all right has evaporated? Perhaps it is time to look at life around us more responsibly? To stop taking nature for granted?

The process of writing this book, like all the others, started with a feeling, which took shape as a mental image which she wanted to describe. In this case it was an insistent sense of the way things disappear unpredictably. In the next stage, images and characters start to occur to her, providing a framework to support the feeling. Trees, bushes and a bird give further structure and 'before I know it, a sort of plot has developed around my sensation that everything disappears, that life can't be counted on.' But she has no plan when she starts – and she describes her relationship with dramaturgy as relaxed. *In the Woods* is no conscious, premeditated contribution to the environmental debate; Eva Lindström thinks the big issues in contemporary society and politics are always interwoven with personal, private aspects of life. 'And right now, most of us seem to have that sense of a huge threat hanging over us. Stuff happens,

but we carry on with what we have to do, trying to arrange things for the best.'

*

Eva Lindström is currently hard at work. She has been involved in several exhibitions and worked on film versions of three of her books, and always has new book projects underway. *Djurvännerna* (The Animal Lovers), an animated film for children which incorporates a new version of *A Bird Day* and slightly revised versions of *My Friend Lage* and *I'm Running Away*, has recently been released. She worked on the original pictures for the film herself and enjoys seeing her watercolours in giant format on the screen and hearing the slightest beat of an insect wing in full surround sound. Her latest book is *Lunds hund* (Lund's Hound), about the relationship between a man and his dog Podge. She says she wants a fry-up, so we see him frying dog-food pellets. She tells him she adores the moon and Lund sidles out with a hammer and nails. Through the window we see a rocket whooshing into space and before long the moon is shining palely on the table in front of Podge. But will she ever be satisfied?

Ulla Rhedin

Critic, picture book scholar and author of a doctoral thesis on picture book theory.

Translated by Sarah Death



You cannot trust someone who just lets things happen: An Interview with Eva Lindström

By Giordana Piccini and Emilio Varrà. First published by Editrice Compositori

In Italy your books are not very well-known, and very little is known about you, too. Can you please tell us how you became an illustrator and a children's writer?

I have always been drawing, since I was a child it has been my thing. After Konstfack in Stockholm I began making cartoons for adults and then I had an offer from a publisher to illustrate a childrensbook with text by Katarina Kuick. This was in the beginning of 1980 and after that in 1988 I made my first book *Kattmössan*, where I did both the writing and the drawing.

While reading your stories, we feel that you are telling things the way they are and the way they happen. There are no bold twists, no major tragedies; there is simply the free flowing of your characters' lives. Everything goes on smoothly, even if there is no logical and linear narrative. Where do you get your ideas, and how do you build them up in your storytelling?

My ideas always start in a very diffuse feeling of something... I can get inspired for example by a tree or a person I have met. And then, when I think about the tree/person, if I am lucky something begins in my head and I get a more clear picture of what it is all about. And then I want to explore the whole thing – the environment, the characters, their relations.

So, it all starts in my mind with pictures, then there is the text. And the text is with me all the time while painting and drawing, it always changes as the work proceeds.

From your stories we get a very strong feeling of normality: you tell us about an excursion, or the life of a forest, or the unaccountable disappearance of hats at a birthday party, or about a lift that gets frequently stuck. Yet this ordinariness is far from being monotonous and repetitive. How do you capture, in everyday life, all that there is and even what is invisible to most?

I believe that I am always ready to receive messages from everyday-life. I like to tell stories and without really thinking about it I collect images and atmospheres and translate them so they can be a part of my world.

In your stories there is often a sense of waiting and suspension: children are waiting in I skogen; the sheep are waiting in Jag rymmer!; maybe even the children in Hit med våra mössor! are waiting in the hope to see their hats again. It is as if there was a "suspended time" in your work. Even when your characters are on a journey, like Olli och Mo, we always experience a different time, which does not follow any watch. Do these "time bubbles" exist for real? Are they a story's prerogative, or can we experience them in reality, as well?

Time-bubbles is something that appears in your mind, and what's in your mind is also "real" in a way. So I think that time-bubbles exists even outside the bookpages, in Real Life.



JAG RYMMER!

The natural cycle of seasons and of day and night is, on the contrary, a temporal dimension we instantly recognize. Light here is the true protagonist, for it makes your illustrations iridescent, as if it were running after the ever-changing landscape and our way of seeing it. Are these your aims when you begin a project? Do you know beforehand what kind of light or what kind of variations will be in any of your works? Is this aspect of your work important for you, and if so, how?

The light and the variations in the pictures is something that comes while working, I have no fixed plan, things falls in place as the painting and drawing goes on. Light and darkness and the way the colours are put together is as important as all other things; it is a language as well as the words that are put together to a story. You can read the colours, only not in the same direct way that you read words.

Light, nature, and a particular way of conceiving space and childhood are the common threads we identified in Swedish contemporary illustration for an exhibition we recently orga-

nized. What do you think of our analysis? Do you agree? Are these threads connected to life and culture in Sweden?

I can agree on that. We have a strong feeling for nature in Sweden, we are surrounded by forests and lakes so perhaps we have no choice, we just have to deal with it. It is perhaps making marks in illustrations as well as relations between children are, and between parents and children and between everyone and the society.

In your stories nature is often the protagonist; yet it doesn't seem to be in contrast with the humanity who inhabits it. In I skogen the characters want to have control over nature; they don't succeed, obviously; but they do not make a fuss about it; it is just a way of coexisting. There is a very balanced coexistence of natural and artificial elements, of internal and external spaces. Rather than a contrast there seems to be more like a fusion, like in Olli och Mo, where it is very difficult to trace a boundary between inside and outside. Do you really believe in the possibility of this coexistence? And in a fruitful and rich relationship between nature and humanity, today?



JAG TYCKER INTE OM VATTEN

I think it is a mix of coexistence and insecurity in the pictures. Where are we? What are we doing? And I also think that the coexistence between nature and the characters is perhaps a way of fixing one spot where one can take a deep breath and feel a bit hopeful. I try hard to be hopeful.

What are your artistic and literary points of reference?

I have no absolute point of reference, it is floating around among art, literature and film. But one thing I feel very strong for that remains

I SKOGEN





HIT MED VÅRA MÖSSOR!

as a reference is the films by the Kaurismäki brothers.

Reading your stories we feel a very similar atmosphere to the one we get in Tove Jansson's short stories, the same natural ability to capture the ease and complexity of life. Do you know this writer? If so, do you appreciate her?

Tove Jansson was a part of my childhood, first my mother read her books for me and my brother. And then, when I learned to read, I continued by myself.

I really like her. In her world everything is so in its right place, it is complete.

We also find the same ability to say only what is necessary to say, without any further explanation or lengthiness. Your writing is clear-cut, terse, sober, essential: it seems as if you know exactly which must be the words to say things in a simple way. How do you work on your texts?

I write and rewrite and it goes on for quite a long time. Then the text rests for a while, I work a bit more and when I feel that it is ready I start doing my pictures and continue with the text at

the same time. Things changes when I see the pictures, certain words suddenly are not needed, meanings that where hidden appear and become important.

The composition of images seems to be the essential element to create an ever-opening and ever-changing space, where proportions are irrelevant, where there is no up and no down, or any other point of reference. It is a space where figures seem capable of staying just where they think right to stay, in a sort of natural disorder. How do you work on the construction of your plates? Do you plan before executing them?

Before I start working on a book I have to decide what kind of environment it will take place in. How does it look? Characters must have their bodies and faces and personalities. When those decisions are made I just start somewhere and sort of paint and draw until everything is shaped in a way that fits in to the story. That is the plan I make. After this plan-thing I just go on with the work. Then there is no more planning.

Composition in your plates seems to hint at a mobile reality constantly reshaping itself, a real-



HIT MED VÅRA MÖSSOR!

ity we cannot keep under control, where things disappear and reappear, where trees leave and come back, where we go on a trip and suddenly the atlas is not useful anymore. For your characters everything seems possible. Is that so? Why?

My characters have to get used to lose things, they have to learn to be patient. I think that it is interesting to think about this; that we are so eager to have control and yet there is no way of having it really.

You seem to harbour a very deep affection for your characters. Even when you are ironic and you make them funny, you never mock them. Rather, you seem to enjoy yourself in watching them, in the small details, in the little things. There is lot of respect in your attitude. Is that true?

I only tell stories about characters that I have strong feelings for. The storytelling would be thin and boring if it was not loaded with my affection.

Your characters, in particular, stand out for their very strong, individual personalities. From the beginning, they present themselves to the read-

ers with their tastes and fears. We are thinking especially of the double page in Hit med våra mössor! which features many characters, each with his/her expression, his/her position, his/her behaviour. In this sense we can talk of diversity, not as a social issue, but as an element that characterizes every identity. We are under the impression that you allow your characters the freedom to be the way they are, be they runaway sheep or children who hate water. There is never an attempt, even by other characters, to make them different from what they are. How do you invent your characters? And do we really have this respect and this capacity to accept ourselves with all our differences?

If I did not allow the characters to be “themselves”, there would be no story to tell... that is the main thing about it, their personalities lead the way, they are the story.

They can also be like good examples: “Look at me, it is possible to claim that you should not come in contact with water!”

I think that when you invent a character it is just a way of presenting one side of yourself.

Picture books by Eva Lindström

Först är det vinter

First, It's Winter

Alfabeta, 1990

Hasse och Rune på semester

Hasse And Rune On Vacation

Alfabeta 1992

Kattmössan

The Cat Hat

Alfabeta, 1992

Ulla spelar munspel

Ulla Plays The Harmonica

Alfabeta, 1995

Lurix

Lurix

Alfabeta, 1996

Limpan är sugen

Sizzles Is Peckish

Alfabeta, 1997

Jag gillar Stig

I Like Stig

Alfabeta, 1998

En fågeldag

A Bird Day

Alfabeta, 2000

Jag och Stig gräver en grop

Me And Stig Dig A Hole

Alfabeta, 2000

Min vän Lage

My Friend Lage

Alfabeta, 2001

Vid bergets långa breda fot

By The Long Broad Foot Of The Mountain

Alfabeta, 2003

Vilma och Mona spanar och smyger

Vilma And Mona Sneak And Spy

Alfabeta, 2004

Jag rymmer!

I'm Running Away!

Alfabeta, 2006

Sonja, Boris och tjuven

Sonja, Boris, And The Thief

Alfabeta, 2007

I skogen

In The Woods

Alfabeta, 2008

Hit med våra mössor

Give Us Back Our Hats!

Alfabeta, 2009

Jag tycker inte om vatten

I Don't Like Water

Alfabeta, 2010

Apan och jag

Monkey And Me

Alfabeta, 2011

Olli och Mo

Olli And Mo

Alfabeta, 2012

Mops

Mops

Illustrations by Emma Virke

Natur och kultur, 2009

Fiction by Eva Lindström

Någon flyttar in – Berättelser om Mats och Roj
Somebody Moves In – Stories About Mats And Roj
Alfabeta, 2002

Mats och Roj – Berättelser om allt möjligt
Mats And Roj – Stories About All Kinds Of Stuff
Alfabeta, 2005

Books illustrated by Eva Lindström

Ekorren Frans
Frans, The Squirrel
Text: Lena Kallenberg
Alfabeta, 1986

Elin starkast i världen
Elin, Strongest In The World
Text: Katarina Kuick
Alfabeta, 1988

Inte mycket att hänga i julgran
Not Much To Hang In The Christmas Tree
Text: Katarina Kuick
Alfabeta, 1986

Lek med mej
Play With Me
Text: Siv Widerberg
Rabén & Sjögren, 1988

Grävlingen som ville bli bilmekaniker
The Badger Who Wanted To Be A Mechanic
Text: Sven-Olof Lorentzen
Bonniers juniorförlag, 1986

Vinden blåser vart den vill
The Wind Blows Anywhere
Text: Håkan Jaensson
Alfabeta, 1989

Stackars mej
Poor Me
Text: Håkan Jaensson & Arne Norlin
Alfabeta, 1987

Flickan som gått vilse
The Girl Who Got Lost
Text: Siv Widerberg
Rabén & Sjögren, 1989

Frans finner en svans
Frans Finds A Tail
Text: Lena Kallenberg
Alfabeta, 1987

Grodan och symaskinen: en bok om kroppen
The Frog And The Sewing Machine – A Book About The Body
Text: Lena Kallenberg
Norstedts, 1991

Det var en gång en mamma och en pappa
Once Upon A Time There Was A Mum And A Dad
Text: Siv Widerberg
Rabén & Sjögren, 1987

Råttans öden och äventyr
The Adventures And Fortunes Of The Rat
Text: Lilian Edvall
Almqvist & Wiksell, 1992

En otrolig historia?
Un Incredible History?
Text Siv Widerberg
Rabén & Sjögren, 1987

Gertrud och tiden
Gertrud And The Time
Text: Lena Kallenberg
Norstedts, 1993

Till höger om månen*To The Right Of The Moon*

Text: Börje Lindström

Alfabeta, 1993

Klockan tretton*Thirteen O'clock*

Text: Per Nilsson

Alfabeta, 1993

Haydns gräddbakelse*Haydn's Cream Cake*

Text: Eva Welander

Alfabeta, 1993

Litet djur i fara*Small Animal In Danger*

Text: Helena Dahlbäck

Alfabeta, 1994

Gunnar i granskogen*Gunnar In The Pine Forest*

Text: Börje Lindström

Alfabeta, 1994

Naturens vänner*Friends Of The Nature*

Text: Helena Dahlbäck

Alfabeta, 1995

Lille Mahmuts syster*Little Mahmuts's sister*

Text: Mahmut Baksi & Elin Clason

Natur och Kultur, 1997

Harald färgar håret*Harald Dyes His Hair*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 1997

Köttvars trollformler*Meatward's Magic*

Text: Katarina Mazetti

Alfabeta, 1998

Den enögde: en bok om nordisk mytologi*The One Eyed: A Book About Norse Mythology*

Text: Tor Åge Bringsværd

Natur och Kultur, 1999

Bullers bluff*Buller's Bluff*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 1999

Zigge med zäta*Zigge With A Zed*

Text: Inger Lindahl

Rabén & Sjögren, 2000

Krokodilfiolen*The Crocodile Violin*

Text: Kalle Tiderman

Alfabeta, 2000

Solisten, om divor underbarn och musikmagiker*The Solist – Divas, Whiz-Kids And Music Magicians*

Text: Eva Clementi

Natur och kultur, 2001

Bullers bingo*Buller's Bingo*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 2001

Zigge, nästan proffs*Zigge, Almost A Pro*

Text: Inger Lindahl

Rabén & Sjögren, 2001

Fjärrkontrolleriet*The Remote Controllery*

Text: Katarina Mazetti

Alfabeta, 2001

Tåfjuten*The Toe-kick*

Text: Ulf Sindt

Alfabeta, 2001

Stjärnstopp*Star Stop*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 2002

Bertil och badrumselefanterna*Bertil And The Bath Room Elephants*

Text: Inger Lindahl

Rabén & Sjögren, 2002

Ella, vilken bitch!*Ella, What A Bitch!*

Text: Pernilla Gesén

LL-förlaget, 2003

Bullers bröllop*Buller's Wedding*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 2003

Morsning och good-bye, Zigge*Howdy And Good-Bye, Zigge*

Text: Inger Lindahl

Rabén & Sjögren, 2003

Världen är stor*The World Is Big*

Text: Thomas Tidholm

Alfabeta, 2003

Råttans drömmar*The Rat's Dreams*

Text: Lilian Edvall

Rabén & Sjögren, 2004

Bullers buller*Buller's Bang*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta, 2005

Raggarråttan Roger*Roger The Roadster Rat*

Text: Ulf Sindt

Alfabeta, 2005

Bullers baby*Buller's Baby*

Text: Håkan Jaensson

Alfabeta 2006

Snöret, fågeln och jag*The String, The Bird And Me*

Text: Ellen Karlsson

Hippo, 2013

Movies by Eva Lindström

Lutning*Tilt***Äventyrspizza***Adventure Pizza***Limpan är sugen***Sizzles Is Peckish***Djurvännerna***Animal Lovers*

Foreign editions by Eva Lindström

Bullers bluff (text: H Jaensson)

Danish, Thorup 2003, *Bullers bluffnummer*

Det var en gång en mamma och en pappa (text: S Widerberg)

Norwegian, Det Norske Samlaget, 1987, *Det var ein gong ei mamma og ei pappa*

Danish, Carlsen Forlag 1988, *Der var engang en mor og en far*

German, Oetinger 1988, *Es waren einmal eine Mama und ein Papa*

Finnish, WSOY 1988, *Olipa kerran isä ja äiti*

Elin starkast i världen (text: K Kuick)

Danish, Høst & søn 1988, *Elin den stærkeste i verden*

En fågeldag

Danish, Carlsen 2000, *En fugledag*

Korean, Glendoman 2001

En otrolig historia? (text: S Widerberg)

Danish, Carlsen Forlag 1989, *En utrolig historie?*

German, Oetinger 1989, *Eine unglaubliche geschichte?*

Flickan som gått vilse (text: S Widerberg)

Danish, Carlsen Forlag 1990, *Pigen der blev væk*

German, Oetinger 1990, *Als das kleine Mädchen verlorenging*

Inte mycket att hänga i julgran (text: K Kuick)

Danish, Modtryk 1986, *Ikke noget at gøre stads af*

Grävlingen som ville bli bilmekaniker (text S-O Lorentzen)

Danish, Sesam 1986, *Grævlingen som ville være bilmekaniker*

Norwegian, Aschehoug 1986, *Grevlingen som ville bli bilmekaniker*

Harald färgar håret (text: H Jaensson)

Danish, Høst 1999, *Harald farver hår*

Hasse och Rune på semester

Danish, Gyldendal 1992, *Hasse og Rune på ferie*

Hit med våra mössor!

Norwegian, CappelenDamm 2010, *Hit med luene våre!*

I skogen

French, Autrement, 2012, *Dans les bois*

Jag gillar Stig

Danish, Gyldendal 1998, *Stig ka' jeg li'*

Jag och Stig gräver en grop

Danish, Carlsen 1999, *Stig og jeg graver et hul*
Korean, Glendoman 2001

Jag rymmer!

Norwegian, CappelenDamm 2011, *Jeg rymmer!*

Kattmössan

English (US), Kane/Miller

Danish, Sesam 1988, *Kattepelshuen*

Klockan tretton(text: P Nilsson)

Danish, Thorup 1994, *Uret der gik sine egne veje*

Norwegian, Cappelen 1995, *Klokken tretten*

Lek med mej (Text: S Widerberg)

Norwegian, Det Norske Samlaget, 1988, *Leik med meg!*

Danish, Carlsen Forlag 1989, *Leg med mig!*

German, Oetinger 1989, *Spiel mit mir!*

Lille Mahmuts syster (text M Baksi och E Clason)

Danish, Høst & Søn 1997, *Mahmuts søster*

Litet djur i fara (text: H Dahlbäck)

Danish, Fremad 1995, *Dyr i fare*

Norwegian, Cappelen 1995, *Lite dyr i fare*

Lurix

Danish, Sesam 1996, *Lurix*

Min vän Lage

Danish, Carlsen 2001, *Min ven Tage*

Morsning och good-bye, Zigge (text: I Lindahl)

Italian, Feltrinelli 2003, *Arrivederci Zigge*

Naturens vänner (text: H Dahlbäck)

Danish, Fremad, 1996, *Naturens venner: Nye eventyr med Camilla og Bjørn*

Någon flyttar in

German, Hanser 2006, *So ein Glück!*

Stackars mig (text: H Jaensson & A Norlin)

Danish, Høst & Søn 1989, *Stakkers lille mig*
German, Picus 1990, Fischer Taschenbuch Vlg
1996, *Eltern gesucht!*
Norwegian, Cappelen 1993, *Stakkars meg*

Till höger om månen (text: B Lindström)

Danish, Sesam 1993, *Til højre for månen*

Tåfjutton (text U Sindt)

Danish, Carlsen 2002, *Tåhyleren*

Ulla spelar munspel

Danish, Sesam 1995, *Annas mundharmonika*

Vid bergets långa breda fot

Korean, Gitan 2006

Vinden blåser vart den vill (text: H Jaensson)

Danish, Høst & Søn 1989, *Vinden blæser, hvorhen den vil*

Vilma och mona spanar och smyger

Korean, Gitan 2005

Zigge med zäta (text: I Lindahl)

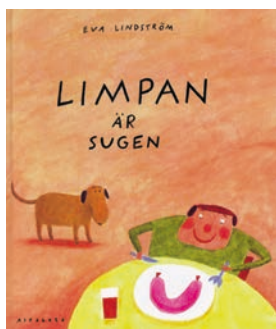
Italian, Feltrinelli 2003, *Zigge con la Zeta*
Norwegian, Damm & Søn 2001, *Zigge med Z*
Dutch, Ploegsma 2004, *Sigge met een Z*
Slovenian, Edycy 2002
Finnish, Tammi 2004, *Zigge zetalla*
Turkish, Ithaki 2006, *Sigge'nin z'si*

Zigge, nästan proffs (text: I Lindahl)

Italian, Feltrinelli 2003, *Zigge, quasi un esperto*

Eva Lindström – Press Reviews

SVENSKA DAG-
BLADET 31.12.1997,
p. 18
Limpan är sugen (Sizzles
is Peckish)



Sizzles is Peckish by Eva Lindström, 23 pages long with no words, is a story of loneliness, longing and fellowship. It expands into a morality tale of egoism, self-indulgence and the importance of empathy. But we are talking sausages here, not bread.

A fat lady is sitting at a table waiting, brandishing her knife and fork. She is served a big, plump, pink sausage. A solitary little brown dog is drawing closer and closer. In a greedy panic, the lady gobbles up the sausage, and the downcast dog slumps against the table.

The woman, who seems to feel very guilty (gluttony is one of the cardinal sins of our age), marches off home and the dog, a dogged sort of character, slouches sullenly after her.

Night falls and the woman's guilty conscience gnaws at her as she lies in bed. Finally she creeps to the door to admit the dog, which cleverly slips in without her noticing, so she assumes it has gone!

There is a multiple happy ending: the dog and the woman tuck into a sausage that she herself fries for them, in the middle of the night.

This is one way of narrating the story told in Eva Lindström's pictures, where ostensible childish simplicity combines with supreme mastery of space, line and shape. The interplay of space, form and sign generates both the action of the narrative and its moral dimension. She uses colours, both as single shades and in harmony with, or contrast to, surrounding shades, to bring out a range of emotions.

Sizzles is Peckish embraces many other words and many other stories, and lends itself to multiple readings in countless different ways.

Kristin Hallberg

DAGENS NYHETER
2.9.08
I skogen (In the
Woods)



She does it over and over again, Eva Lindström, finding new pockets of life whose praises have not been sung before. Always surprising. Always leaving things open and non-specific. Her main characters are often rather like vagabonds journeying through life, slightly on the outside in social terms, sometimes assuming an animal-among-humans guise. But they are often (self-) absorbed, living their odd lives in a passive yet manic fashion. Naturally there are encounters and contact is made between two or three, but these seldom lead to any actual reassessment or change. Shortcomings are remarkably often highlighted: an aspiration that leads nowhere, an ambition that remains unfulfilled. This is somehow sad and liberating at the same time, and occurs within the same loose, apparently chance dramaturgy that we tend to experience in everyday life.

In this autumn's new picture book, *In the Woods*, everything is absurd and unforeseeable. Three characters, Maggie, Cop and Trim, live in an unspecified, companionable relationship in an unspecified forest of pines and birches. They pick things up and tidy the place – and merely exist. Young or old? It doesn't matter in Lindström's world, as she reveals that part of existence which is the landscape of the spaces in between – whether geographically, psychologically or aesthetically. Eva Lindström's favoured means of expression, the first-person narrative, features again here, but the objectivity of the pictorial narration is retained. Here it is Trim's voice we hear and her outlook on life we are invited to share. We see her wearing a dress and a leather cap, but with a black muzzle like a dog's. Unambiguously human, yet just indeterminate enough for the canine element to be

of significance. Perhaps she is more dependent on others, extra loyal, and vulnerable for that reason?

Before the story gets properly underway Trim sets the psychological agenda, formulating the credo of naïve egocentricity in beautifully poetic and laconic Lindström prose:

“We let it rain, and we are the ones who have decided it will be wet.

It can be windy. The clouds can come and go. Leaves can fall and turn yellow. Sticks can lie across paths. The sun can shine. We are always the ones who decide.”

The picture shows the way the three of them relate to each other and to the rain, feeling safe and secure as they go about their tasks with their buckets in the wet, grey woods. Turning the page, we find the temperature of the colour rising and the friends clustered together in a frightened group. The trees have decided to go away, they need a holiday, and even the little aspens are soon running off after them. It is probably only now that the person looking at the pictures realises the whole forest actually had feet! Now everything changes: the place is suddenly as barren as a desert, and cold. All at once, the three friends have lost the control they thought they had, and the result is chaos.

What we ultimately witness here is an unusual display of our tendency to view ourselves as victims when things do not come up to our expectations. As soon as things are going well, we take the credit, but when they go wrong, it is someone else's fault! We get into a bad mood,

refuse all responsibility and put the blame on other people. When everything gets back to normal a few seasons later, the friends are consequently still sulking. It's tough not being in control!

It rarely attracts comment, but in a number of her books, Eva Lindström offers a distinctively personal satirical perspective on male/female: she sets the girls against each other and against the boy in the Stig books; and women against men in the Lage and Janne books. In one scene in this latest book, she casually probes another problematic element in male/female communication, when it is time to set the woods in order and straighten them out. Emotion clashes with Rational Thought when the girls are raking and turn to Cop, seeking a bit of attention: ‘Isn't it looking nice?’ and Cop answers ‘It's coming out stripy.’

It is an understatement to say that Eva Lindström makes beautiful books – anybody in any doubt on that score can go to Södertälje art gallery and relish the sight of the watercolours she produced for her picture book *Jag rymmer* (I'm Running Away) hanging in rhythmic colour composition on the walls. Eva Lindström makes consistent use of – and succeeds in endlessly varying – the interval colours of the palette: orange, ochre, olive green, grey, mauve, sepia and umbra. In this season's book, the colouring is more delicate, with delightful gradations of greys and shades of beige, sometimes towering up in fragile pale yellows against ochre.

Ulla Rhedin

A new Eva Lindström book is always eagerly anticipated by picture book lovers.

And she does not disappoint, proving herself as supremely skilful and unpredictable as ever in her deployment of words and pictures. In *In the Woods* she spins new tales of loneliness, waiting and the magic of everyday life, all the staple themes of her picture book universe.



This is the story of Maggie, Cop and Trim, three characters of indeterminate age, and it is set, as the title indicates, in the woods. Lindström is fond of setting her books out of doors. Animals and nature play as much of an active part as human beings, and boundaries of various kinds readily blur in Lindström's picture-book world. The three main protagonists are as much children as grown-ups, and have certain animal aspects. Maggie's nose looks like a bear's. Trim has a snout for a nose, while Cop wears a sheriff's hat reminiscent of cowboys in the Wild West.

The woods have a powerful fairytale aura. Everything has a spirit of its own. The trees and birds can talk, and the clouds charge around the sky 'like lunatics'. The birches and pines fancy a holiday and set off for a lake. When winter comes, all the birds disappear to other climes, except for one whose feet are hurting.

This absurd story has no plot as such, but its enigmatic nature is a major part of its fascination. The three protagonists, almost like picture-book versions of characters in a Beckett play, move around a single, contained space, picking

things up, arranging, tidying, raking and burning rubbish in a barrel. They do not exchange many words, but constitute a close-knit unit, a little family if you will. Their solidarity is underlined by the illustrations, in which they all stand in a group or sit squashed together on a bench.

I read *In the Woods* as a depiction of our need for control, and of an environment under threat. "We are the ones who decide," is a statement made in the book's opening pages. Maggie, Cop and Trim are in charge of the forces that determine the weather; they let the sun shine and the rain fall when it suits them. But the ability to command existence is taken from them when the trees of the wood decide to go away. All of a sudden, the three are left in a bare wasteland. A chill that they have not ordered comes creeping in. Everything feels lonely, frozen and lifeless.

In the last picture of the book, however, harmony is restored. Summer has come, the pines are murmuring again, and the birches are talking about their holiday. The pictures, in a muted palette of soft yellow and grey-blue, do much to heighten the mood of dreamy melancholy pervading this story. In visual terms, the woods themselves are an important character, with tree trunks so straight and tall that they seem to stretch to the sky. Lindström's pictorial evocation of the woods has clear parallels with Tove Jansson.

Lena Kåreland

Picture caption:

Eva Lindström's pictures "in a muted palette of soft yellow and grey-blue, do much to heighten the mood of dreamy melancholy pervading this story".

TOGETHERNESS.

Once again, Eva Lindström shows what a consummate picture book artist she is, this time for slightly younger readers. Much of the story is to be found in the details.



Eva Lindström's new picture book *Apan och jag* (Monkey and Me) will appeal to a younger audience than the one she usually addresses. But the light airiness in the picture composition and the eccentric, slightly lost characters clearly signal that this is a Lindström book. The rhyming text is minimal. There are only two short lines on most of the double-page spreads. The words work together with the pale pastel pictures to convey the story's theme of friendship and quest.

It all starts with happy togetherness. The first-person narrator, a man of indeterminate age with a black cap on his head, and his friend monkey are juggling bananas. They like each other. But all of a sudden, monkey is not there. Where has he gone? The question is posed throughout the book, and the reader is drawn into the search that forms the plot of the book.

Monkey is never far away. We can track its movements as we spot a tail or a head popping up in a corner. The narrator's concerns about what monkey is up to are clear from the pictures. Much can be read into the protagonists' looks, into eyes that turn away or meet. The rhythmic text takes the form of an appeal to monkey not to forget its waiting friend.

The story switches between home and away, companionship and loss. The plot, which unfolds both indoors and out, shifts between the trolleys at the supermarket and the narrator's home. In the latter we see him chopping onions and making himself cry. He hopefully sets the table for two, but has to eat alone. The picture of him sitting listlessly, his chin resting in his hand, can be seen as symbolising humankind's abandonment. In the final picture, however, the friends are reunited.

Once again, Eva Lindström shows what a consummate picture book artist she is. *Monkey and Me* is ingenious in its pared-down simplicity, far removed from all the easily digested cuteness which the picture book world so often dishes up. But proper attention is required for reading it. Otherwise it is easy to miss those artful details in the story.

Lena Kåreland

Reviews translated by Sarah Death



LUNDS HUND

 **ALFABETA
BOKFÖRLAG**

*i***BbY**