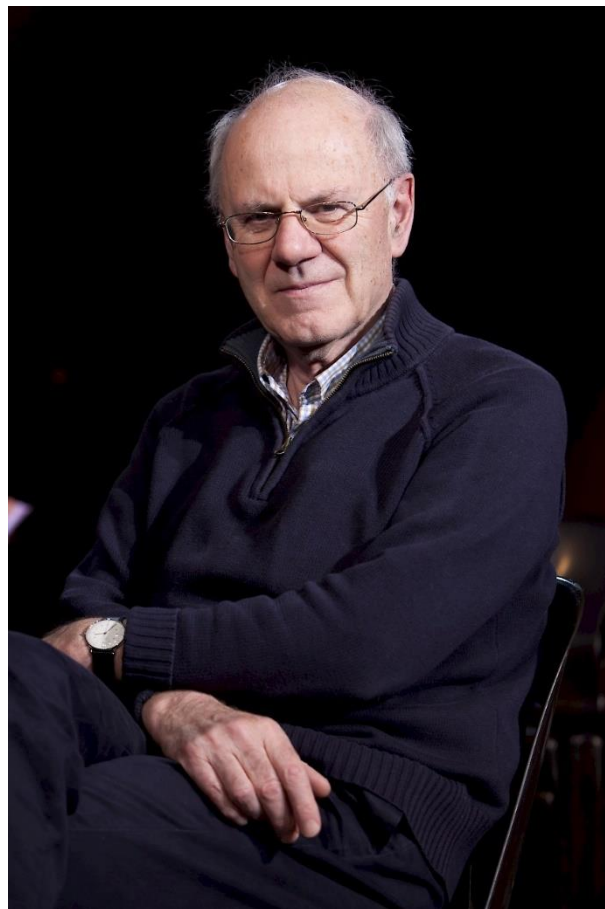


THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARDS 2020

Dossier on author **Toon Tellegen**

Candidate for the **2020 Author's Award**

Nominated by The National IBBY Section of The Netherlands



© Photo Keke Keukelaar

Content

Life and Work of Toon Tellegen: A Short Biography	3
Toon Tellegen’s Contribution to Literature for Young People	6
Appreciative Essays About Toon Tellegen.....	11
List of Awards and Other Distinctions	16
Bibliography of Toon Tellegen’s Books for Young Readers	18
Translations of Toon Tellegen’s Books for Young Readers	21
Ten of the Most Important Titles	30
Books Sent to the Jury	35
Selection of Reviews of the Books Sent to the Jury	36
<i>Listening to the Taste of Honey</i>	36
<i>Pikkuhenki’s Magic Power Frees the People</i>	37
<i>Touchingly Absurd Stories by Toon Tellegen. Father Can Do Everything</i>	37
<i>Garden of Eden on a Whale’s Back</i>	37
<i>The Day No One Was Angry</i>	37
<i>Kinderbuch von Toon Tellegen: Die Wehmut ist ein Schal</i>	37

NOTE:

This dossier has been compiled for the jury of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2020.

In case of public accessibility of this dossier, please note that all images (except for book covers) and primary texts are subjected to **copyrights**, as indicated. These materials may not be copied, printed or transmitted without permission of the publisher, author, illustrator or photographer.

In compiling this dossier, **references to sources** of descriptions, reviews or other secondary texts about the author and/ or his books have been made for as far as it was possible to trace those sources. Please mention those sources when re-using, quoting or referring to these secondary texts.



Dear snail,

May I invite you to dance with
me on top of your house? Just a few
steps? That's what I want most of all.
I promise I'll dance very delicately,
so we won't fall through your roof.
But of course, you can never
be really sure.

The elephant

Copyright © 2011 Boxer Books Limited

Source: excerpt from 'Dear Snail', in Tellegen, Toon, *Letters to Anyone and Everyone*, illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg, translated by Martin Cleaver. London: Boxer Books, 2011, p. 10.



Life and Work of Toon Tellegen: A Short Biography¹

Toon Tellegen was born on November 18, 1941, in Den Briel (The Netherlands) as the son of a general practitioner (family doctor). In 1959, after completing the gymnasium, Tellegen travelled to the United States to study liberal arts at the University of Virginia for a year. Back in The Netherlands he studied medicine at the University of Utrecht. From 1970, he spent three years working as a physician in a hospital in Kenya, where he also collected animal stories among the Maasai. In 1973, Tellegen settled in Amsterdam as a general practitioner. For a long time, Tellegen combined his medical profession with writing for both adult and young readers, as well as having a family of his own. Between 1997 and 2009, he worked part-time in several psychiatric clinics.

Toon Tellegen is a poet, children's book writer and writer of prose and theatre plays for adults. In 1966, his first play appeared titled 'Jimmy Walker' (written with H. Goslinga), followed by several others, some written specifically for the stage, some stage adaptations of his prose for adults. In 1980, Tellegen published his first book of poetry for adult readers, *De zin van een liguster* [The Sense of a Privet]. For adult readers, Tellegen not only writes poetry (about thirty books by now), but also prose such as *Twee oude vrouwtjes* [Two Old Ladies, also adapted for the stage], *Dora* [Dora], *Brieven aan Doornroosje* [Letters to Sleeping Beauty], and *De trein naar Pavlovsk en Oostvoorne* [The Train to Pavlovsk and Oostvoorne], a book of Russian stories that Tellegen's grandfather had told him, which was nominated for the Libris Literatuur Prijs.

His first book of animal stories for young readers, *Er ging geen dag voorbij* [Not a Day Went By], appeared in 1984. Many more books of allegorical animal stories followed: in 1995 the first extensive collection of those stories, *Misschien wisten zij alles* [Perhaps They Knew Everything], was published. In 2009, this collection was followed by a new one: *Iedereen was er* [Everyone Was Here]. Tellegen's animal stories have been translated in, among others, French, Italian, Spanish, English, German, Swedish, Czech, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Serbian, Polish, Turkish and Finnish.

Toon Tellegen's books for young readers have been honoured with several Golden and Silver Slate Pencils². He received the Woutertje Pieterse Award twice, and got a Golden Owl for Youth Literature in 2000. For his entire body of work for young readers he was awarded the Theo Thijssen Prize in 1997. In 2006, he received the Hendrik de Vries Award for his entire literary oeuvre, followed by the Constantijn Huygens Prize in 2007. Not to forget, Tellegen was a finalist for the biennial international Hans Christian Andersen Author Award in 2006.

¹ The information provided in this section is closely based on the Dutch *Lexicon van de jeugdliteratuur* [Lexicon of Youth Literature]. Full reference to the source: Staal, Jos (2010), 'Toon Tellegen'. In: Coillie, Jan van, Wilma van der Pennen, Jos Staal and Herman Tromp (eds.), *Lexicon van de jeugdliteratuur*. Groningen, Martinus Nijhoff e.a., 1982-2014. Link to source: https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/coil001lexi01_01/lvdj00955.php#t005

² For a full overview and brief explanation of the awards, see the section 'List of Awards and Other Distinctions' elsewhere in this dossier.

“In Toon Tellegen’s stories, it is always a holiday. In the forest where the squirrel and the ant, the hippo and the frog, the hedgehog, the snail and the elephant peacefully live together, nothing much happens. One may write a letter, organize a party, run into someone, soak up the sun, think a thought, and have a sort of coherent conversation.

Life flows as slowly as syrup, nothing ever needs to be done, there is great contentment and only occasionally vague desires stir, someone might want something else or go someplace else for a while, to he-does-not-know-where-exactly.”

(Bregje Boonstra, *NRC*, 21 July 1989)

Toon Tellegen's Contribution to Literature for Young People³

"Toon Tellegen is the great liberator of words. He gives words a chance to unfold their wings, they put on a warm coat and go off to see the world. The result is a surrealistic tendency in Tellegen's books, normal laws no longer apply, everything becomes new strange, funny, amazing." (Marjoleine de Vos, NRC)

"Toon Tellegen is an inventive and stylistically sensitive writer, with a very individual tone and beautiful use of language." (Hanneke de Klerck, de Volkskrant)

In Toon Tellegen's writing for young readers, animal stories hold a central place. They originated from the bedtime stories he told his own daughter. When she outgrew this storytelling ritual, Tellegen decided to write an animal story daily. Every evening he would take about twenty minutes to write a short story, one-and-a-half-page maximum. 'It was an entirely non-committal, self-imposed assignment,' Tellegen once told the *Haagsche Courant*. He never intended to publish the stories. This happened only after publishing house Querido, where he had already published several books of poetry for adult readers, insisted to do so. Since then, Toon Tellegen has become a much-loved writer who holds a unique position in Dutch (children's) literature, for young readers most famous for his animal stories that instantly became classics. This does not mean, however, that there is no variation in Tellegen's work, as this section will illustrate.

The Squirrel, the Elephant, the Hedgehog, and All the Other Animals



According to the index in Toon Tellegen's collected animal stories *Misschien wisten zij alles* [Perhaps They Knew Everything], there are 169 animals living in Tellegen's story-book woods. His favorites appear to be the hedgehog, the frog, the cricket, and the beetle. The squirrel, the ant, and the elephant crop up so frequently that it would be impossible to list all the page numbers.

From the very start, Tellegen had imposed on himself some limitations in writing the animal stories. Of every type of animal – never pets – there could only be one in a story. The animals all had to be the same size and interchangeable: they should not distinguish themselves based on personal characteristics. This last restriction turned out too difficult to keep up: several of the animals gradually developed specific profiles. The squirrel, who initially was supposed to appear in every story, is rather melancholic and contemplative in character. His friend the ant is clever and venturesome, yet also inclined to worry a lot. The bear is very fond of cakes, the elephant climbs trees – to then fall out of them with a thump.

The stories are set in an impossible world where woods, meadows, sea, mountains and desert can all be found right next to each other. In this remarkable biotope, the most diverse species of animals can be

³ The information provided in this section is closely based on the Dutch *Lexicon van de jeugdliteratuur* [Lexicon of Youth Literature]. Full reference to the source: Staal, Jos (2010), 'Toon Tellegen'. In: Coillie, Jan van, Wilma van der Pennen, Jos Staal and Herman Tromp (eds.), *Lexicon van de jeugdliteratuur*. Groningen, Martinus Nijhoff e.a., 1982-2014. Link to source: https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/coil001lexi01_01/lvdj00955.php#t005

found: cricket, hippopotamus, salamander, hedgehog, camel, earth worm, whale, just to name a few. There is no past, no future, only a present that seems eternal. What happens in one story does not influence what happens in the next; there is no development, it is a stagnant world. Laws of nature do not exist in this world, everything is possible: the sun fits in a box, the elephant flies through a hole in a spider's web. And all this is accepted as completely natural by the animals.



© 1995 Mance Post; Illustration from *Misschien wisten zij alles* (Amsterdam: Querido).

Tellegen does not write animal stories in the usual sense of the term. The animals do not behave according to their biology, yet they are also not humans in animal form. There is no moralistic point to the stories as there would be in fables. Toon Tellegen has created a unique genre in which all revolves around moods, absurdist philosophical reflections and language. The stories have a mysterious atmosphere of melancholy and longing, whilst always containing enough comic relief to prevent them from becoming dark or heavy.



In 2016, Toon Tellegen's animal stories have been adapted to a story-app (as an interactive picture book) titled 'Een verre reis' [A Long Journey]. Artist Gwen Stok, who is a great admirer of Tellegen's work, illustrated the story about the elephant who goes to the desert. The story is told by Toon Tellegen himself. The app has won several (international) awards.

Apart from the impressive number of short animal stories that Tellegen has created, he also wrote longer stories in which one (or two) of the animals feature(s) as the main character. Examples of these are *Jannes* (1993), about a small elephant that leads the protected life of a young child in a world in which every being wears a trunk, and *Teunis* (1996), where the main character is the only elephant in a world of human beings, resulting in a both poignant and humorous description of the struggle of someone who is 'different'. With *De genezing van de Krekel* [The Cricket's Recovery / The Cricket Recovers]⁴ (1999), Tellegen has added a sensitive, open-minded, yet also humorous

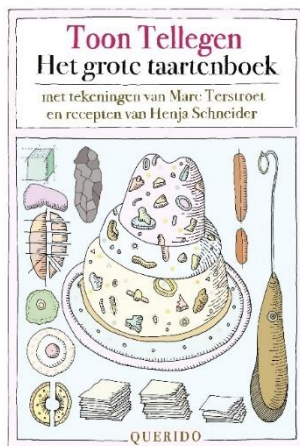
⁴ Described in more detail in the section 'Ten Most Important Titles' elsewhere in this dossier.

novel-length exploration of what depression feels like and how it may affect the individual and those around him or her.

Whilst many of Tellegen's animal stories are currently being (re-)published for an adult audience, new stories for younger readers do still appear. Together with Annemarie van Haeringen, one of the Netherlands' best illustrators, Toon Tellegen has for instance created several beautiful picture books: *Plotseling ging de olifant aan* [Suddenly the Elephant Lit Up] (2004), *Wat dansen we heerlijk* [What a Wonderful Dance] (2010), and *De tuin van de walvis* [The Whale's Garden] (2015).



Letters and Cakes



Apart from the animals themselves, other elements are highlighted in Tellegen's writing. In fact, the letter and the cake play a role much more essential than, for instance, the gnu or the sand-fly, who actually could have been replaced by any other animal. The cake and the letter are irreplaceable in Tellegen's woods as symbols, almost as personifications: the one of festive get-togethers of any group, the other of awkward, often futile attempts to make contact.

The letter takes central stage in *Brieven aan niemand anders* [Letters to Anyone and Everyone]⁵ (1996). The cake has also been honored in a book of its own: *Taartenboek* [Book of Cakes] (2001). In this collection of stories, including recipes by Henja Schneider, all sorts of cakes can be found: beech nut cake (the squirrel's favorite), grass cake, but also cakes with gravel, algae, or soft mud; secret cake, sad cake or last cake. There is even a failed cake, for which Henja Schneider provides the following advice: 'Don't even try. Making a failed cake is very expensive and a lot of work.'

In 2016, an extended edition of the book appeared, *Het grote taartenboek* [The Great Book of Cakes], in celebration of Toon Tellegen's 75th birthday. In the Foreword he writes: 'I have a hundred wishes, and when I think about it possibly a thousand. But one wish is my most treasured wish, and that is to sit on the banks of the river among the animals on an afternoon in the beginning of Summer. I will hardly say a thing and nobody will notice anything special about me. It is a beautiful day and we sit back, chew on a blade of grass, listen to the rippling of the waves and talk about nothing in particular. Ah, I will think, so this is the nothing in particular that the animals are always talking about!' After this, an invasion of cakes follows. 'It is the most usual day of my life. That is my greatest wish,' Tellegen concludes.

Stories about People

Besides his animal stories, Tellegen also created *Juffrouw Kachel* [Miss Stove] (1991), the terror of all schoolchildren, *Mijn vader* [My Father] (1994), a loving portrait of the world's most amazing father, *Dokter*

⁵ Described in more detail in the section 'Ten Most Important Titles' elsewhere in this dossier.

Deter [Doctor Deter] (1997) about a GP who cures his patients in an instance, and *Mijn avonturen door V. Swchworm* [My Adventures by V. Swchworm] (1998). In 2010, three Gouden Boekjes [Golden Books] by Toon Tellegen appeared. He wrote these toddler stories especially for his own grandchildren and even put their names in the titles: *Als Feda slaapt* (When Feda Sleeps), *Waar is Mo?* [Where Is Mo?], and *Mano de brandweerjongen* [Mano the Fire Brigade Boy].

Mijn avonturen door V. Swchworm [My Adventures by V. Swchworm] (1998) was first published as the national Kinderboekenweek-geschenk [Children's Books Week Gift]. This story can be seen as a key work in Tellegen's oeuvre. Although the title sounds like a starting car, it is in fact the pseudonym of a boy who wants to become a writer. The young writer aims high: 'I wanted to write beautiful books, but also important books. People who read my books should become cheerful and stop waging wars or plotting crimes.' All through the year, the aspiring writer struggles with the first sentence. He keeps trying: 'Giving up will always remain possible.' And then he discovers the essence of being a writer, that is the ability to create your own reality through imagination. The book was adapted to a family film in 2012 (director: Froukje Tan).



Poetry

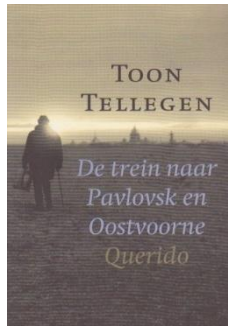
One would easily forget that Toon Tellegen started out as a poet. In his publications for young readers, however, poems appeared relatively late. In 1999, Tellegen made a selection for youth from his poetry initially published for adult readers: *Er ligt een appel op een schaal* [There Is an Apple on a Plate]. *Wie a zegt* [Who Says A] (2002) was written specifically for younger readers. On the surface, Tellegen's poems often look like little stories written in free-verse form, with characters, dialogue, and often some kind of plot. They are light-footed, surprising, absurdist. On closer inspection, however, Tellegen's little stories appear to have contemplative undertones, and his absurdism is never gratuitous. In his poems, Tellegen evokes a world that has its own whimsical but inexorable logic, where trees go walking, where a freshly written poem gets up and looks the poet in the eye, where a mosquito demands: Swat me!, where a straight road gets straighter and straighter and where peace walks down the street in a blue coat. Tellegen's poems have been compared with reported dream experiences. But, rather than reporting dreams, Tellegen seems to be taking language 'at its word'. By using conventional metaphors in their literal sense he gives them a surprising and intriguing twist: 'The distance between you and me / has been measured.' Abstract matters, feelings are made concrete, or even personified: 'Jealousy was young, / still steaming.'

"Tellegen's poems are parables for grown-up children. Their world is stripped-down, urgent, playful, quirky, familiar as children's games yet strangely disorienting. They induce a mini-millennial fever, the disquieting excitement of being about to pass through the needle's eye."

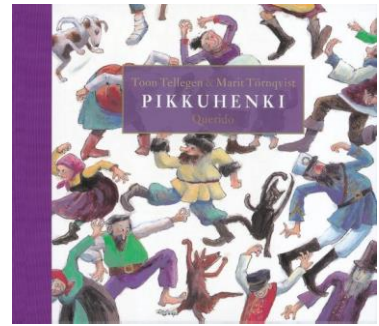
(Philip Fried, Founding Editor, *The Manhattan Review*)

Timeless and Ageless

One last, but not least, important feature of Tellegen's writing that needs to be mentioned here is the notion that much of his work is not only timeless - many of his stories became instant 'classics'- but can also be seen as ageless. Toon Tellegen has never taken much notice of possible dividing lines between books for adults and books for children. About his animal stories he told critic Bregje Boonstra in *Wat een mooite!* [Such Beautifulness!] (2009): 'I just wrote them and never specifically for children. I know nothing about what children like.' Nor has Tellegen taken much notice of genre boundaries, for that matter. If anything, language, and with that literature, comes first in Tellegen's writing, as well as those everyday thoughts and emotions shared by younger and older people alike. Whether in his poetry or prose, he has created his own 'Tellegen-esque' worlds in which time nor age impose any boundaries. With that he has created a unique oeuvre of stories and poems that can stay with readers and grow with them throughout their lives.



Many of his animal stories that were initially published for young readers were later published for adult readers. Moreover, several of Tellegen's books published for adults are, because of their theme or chosen point of view, also suitable for youth. *De trein naar Pavlovsk en Oostvoorne* [The Train to Pavlovsk and Oostvoorne] (2000), for example. This book,



about Russia by his grandfather, contains the fairytale *Pikkuhenki*. Tellegen later adapted this fairytale to a theatre play as well as the picture book *Pikkuhenki* [Pikkuhenki] (2005).

Much like the main character in *Mijn avonturen door V. Swchworm* [My Adventures by V. Swchworm] (1998), Toon Tellegen's writing attests to the notion that, in essence, being a writer – of and for whatever age - is the ability to create your own reality through imagination. In Tellegen's case, an unworldly yet somehow familiar reality where everything is possible and everything can be questioned at the same time. A reality that he manages to capture in his uniquely precise, purified use of language, with its humor, its melancholic and philosophic undertones that provide each piece with ample layers for readers of all ages to discover. Tellegen's bizarre, moving and unfailingly poetic mental constructions generated a body of enthusiastic readers of all ages across the world and won all major (national) awards for children's literature.

Appreciative Essays About Toon Tellegen

Trouw, 10 September 1997

With Toon Tellegen You Keep Rubbing Your Eyes in Surprise

LIEKE VAN DUIN

“The national world of children’s books softly shook in her seams”, Bregje Boonstra once said in a talk about the children’s literature debut of family doctor/ poet Toon Tellegen (55) *Er ging geen dag voorbij* [Not a Day Went By] in 1984. “We rubbed our eyes, we did not know what to do with it, and found no words for it.”

Now, thirteen years later, hands full of words have been found to typify his work, albeit stuttering: fantastical, funny, bizarre, surrealist, touching, melancholic, poetic, philosophical, dreamy, fleeting, incomparable... So many and so praising that, on Friday September 12 [1997], he will receive the highest Dutch award for children’s and youth literature: the three-yearly Theo Thijssen Award.

Already Classic

Initially, it mainly were Tellegen’s animal stories that invited admiration: after his debut another four collections followed, awarded one after the other and finally bundled in *Misschien wisten zij alles* [Perhaps They Knew Everything] (1995), which already is a modern classic.

What was it, that appealed so much? It was noticeable that Tellegen abided by certain rules, such as: of every type of animal there was only one, they were all about the same size and had about the same strength, and they had no past or future. But what was especially striking was the impossible that Tellegen made possible, the absurd in language and meaning that nobody else contrived: the caterpillar who celebrates his coat, the water snail who would love to be able to ripple [like a stream], the ant who dreams to be air, the elephant who visits the snail. And, of course, the countless letters sent by wind and that culminated in an exquisitely beautiful and special book last year, *Brieven aan niemand anders* [Letters to Anyone and Everyone], about the power and impotence of written language. Letters of one letter, in secret code and primal script, letters that get stuck after ‘Dear’. Letters like a poem, like a book, letters with sentences that immediately conjure themselves to be true. Begging, threatening, and stammering letters, letters to the table, letters that come to visit, and the ant himself becoming a letter.

Again, everything that you can think of exists. At least, according to the ant in his answer to his best friend the squirrel, when he asks: ‘Does that exist: to know nothing?’

Surprising

By the time that the critics who wanted something to criticize started muttering ‘He is simply incapable of anything other than those animal stories’ – they must have forgotten about his poetry

for adults – Tellegen surprised with something completely different: the wry, intense *Juffrouw Kachel* [Miss Stove] (1991), about a teacher so repulsive and terrifying that compared to her Roald Dahl’s Miss Trunchbull from *Matilda* is a sweetheart.

More books appeared that were ‘different’ than those first animal stories: *Jannes* (1993) for example, and *Teunis* (1996), both stories about a young elephant, and both a sort of thought experiment, starting from yet another specific rule. In *Jannes* it is the rule that a little being – the toddler elephant Jannes – consistently lives among members of his own kind, and in *Teunis* that a similar being, albeit a little older, lives in a world with beings of another kind: humans. Logically, in *Jannes* the warmth and safety of the toddler Jannes predominate, and in *Teunis* learning to deal with and accept being different, the search for identity. Surprisingly, the writer of timeless stories Tellegen here touches a timely societal theme.

Imagining

Once again different is *Mijn vader* [My Father] (1994) in which Tellegen lets the toddler Jozef fantasize about his father for whom he has an immense admiration. In Jozef’s eyes, his father can do anything: throw burglars out of the bedroom window, put out fires with his bare feet, extinguish volcanos and stop wars and floods. He can even be normal. Or so small that he fits in Jozef’s pocket like a marble. Creating the world is a piece of cake for him and he has decided to never die. Again, everything is possible, but now according to toddler logic. And again, Tellegen enlarges that logic to the absurd, giving Jozef’s father the mythical features of an almighty. Yet, he has no real divine radiance, for that Jozef’s claim to him is too exclusive, and for that he is too clownish: ‘My father walked across thin silk threads between the tops of the highest mountains.’ It is odd that this beautiful and moving ode to a father did not receive an award.

Toon Tellegen’s latest book, *Dokter Deter* [Doctor Deter], slightly resembles *Mijn vader*. Doctor Deter, too, is a sort of almighty figure who cures everybody in a jiffy, and here too the absurd reigns, like infections that crawl out of the ground at night and concussions that bounce along the street. The book will only appear next week, with gorgeous illustrations by Gerda Dendooven. On the occasion of the Theo Thijssen Prize, the mini edition of the animal story *De ontdekking van de honing* [The Discovery of the Honey] (1996) that was published last year will be published again in a wider jacket: yet another proof of a talent that is absolutely unique within children’s literature. For who else lets the ‘mor’ dance with the honey, the ‘shamrat’ long for sorrow and the crow discover suspicion?

NOTE: This is an unofficial translation made solely for the purpose of this HCAA 2020 nomination dossier. This essay was originally published in Dutch, and can be found on:

<https://www.trouw.nl/cultuur/bij-toon-tellegen-blijf-je-verrast-je-ogen-uitwrijven~a148a4af/>

Jury Report of the Theo Thijssen Award 1997

The story 'Flaming red' begins like this:

"Dear Pike,

I am a little bit angry with you,
but it's not worth mentioning.

The Carp

When the pike read this letter, he thought: angry? the carp? with me? He felt how his fins started trembling and quickly wrote back:

Dear Carp,

Why are you angry with me?
I would like to know that.

The Pike

There, he thought. I am curious. He ground his teeth for a bit and awaited an answer. That answer came shortly after:

Dear Pike,

Am I angry with you? I know nothing about that.

The Carp

When the pike read that letter he really became furious. He slapped his tail in the mud so that the entire river turned grey and muddy, and wrote back:

Carp!

This note you sent to me! This!
Were you angry with me or not? Eh?

The Pike.

He had wanted to write something other than Eh?, but did not quite know what."

'Flaming red' does not end there, but this Eh? is its pinnacle and the decisive moment, exactly in the middle of the story. The Carp started the animosities, but takes a step back in fright when he notices

his words hit home. He does so in such a denigrating way that the Pike becomes even more infuriated. Flaming red with anger he sweeps everything out of the river and the fish, now on dry land, 'looked at the arid air around them with big eyes'. In the end, the river regains its course while the fish, including the pike, once again swim around as though that great anger was never there.

This epistolary story by Toon Tellegen is exceptional because such anger and aggression are rarely present in the stories he writes. The animals in that separate world that Tellegen created generally treat each other kindly and courteously. Although they do not understand much about each other and their communication is usually full of misunderstandings, they are friendly to each other. Not exactly a mirror to the human world, this gentle realm, no matter how recognizable the animals' conversations, feelings and thoughts often are. Their extraordinary ways of interacting could be an example to human beings, but what is special about Tellegen is that his stories do not impose a moral onto the readers. They are no devout speeches, they are stories and through the way they are written, through their language, compact sentences, expressions and words that are given new meanings, they are above all literary stories.

Toon Tellegen has created an entirely new genre with his animal stories. His animal world is a non-existent place, the animals are not quite right (they are all the same size and of every sort there is just one) and they live in an unrealistic way. The reader does not get the sense that s/he has access to this mysterious realm or that s/he can take part in it, s/he can only look at it as one would look with great fascination at a scene in a snow globe with which one can also never really get in contact. The reader remains an outsider, but can see things happening with the animals that are quite common, s/he hears conversations about feelings that s/he knows and about desires that s/he has, s/he sees attempts by these creatures to break through their loneliness, to start friendships, to celebrate with everyone that is so kind to want to be their friend.

All of that is very special, but the question remains what Tellegen adds to that endless amount of animal stories that have been written through the ages. That is: language. Who reads his stories carefully discovers miracles of language; Tellegen's choice of words is so precise and seemingly mundane that often only after re-reading one notices how it is that one word, that conjunction, that exclamation (Eh? in the story 'Flaming red') that is decisive for a sudden turn of events. No matter how original his descriptions of situations may be, that originality is never obtrusive. In the story of the carp and the pike, the other fish 'look at the arid air around them'. Of course, 'arid' is the only right word here, but it is Tellegen who wrote that word.

Tellegen may not have invented the animal story (although he did provide it with an extraordinary form), he did enrich and extend the literary epistolary culture with the so-called 'auto-letter', the letter sent to a letter, as for example the squirrel's letter to the letter with the mind-blowing observation: 'It is very strange to write you, because while I write you become ever bigger. And when I start over you are suddenly very small again. So I never know what you are exactly. By the way, what is exactly?' An interesting question to which we, as readers, would also like to get an answer, but that does not happen with Tellegen. He and his animals only pose questions, about the answers readers should think for themselves.

Tellegen's stories are also absurd. Interestingly, the wind functions as postal service: when the squirrel has written a letter on the elephant's stomach (as an experiment more or less because the elephant can only get anywhere falling) he is delivered home by the wind. He then sends notice by letter that he blew home safely and did not crease.

Every once in a while, humans appear in Tellegen's stories, sometimes together with animals (for example in the elephant-story *Teunis*), sometimes exclusively. This happens in *Juffrouw Kachel* [Miss Stove] and *Mijn vader* [My Father], in which adults are described realistically, although enlarged, seen through the eyes of a very small and powerless child, so that the realism seems fantastical. Do such horrific school teachers exist, do such almighty fathers exist? 'Yes. Everything exists,' says the ant in one of Tellegen's animal stories. So they do exist.

Can a writer identify with his creations? We, members of the jury, do not know but suspect that Toon Tellegen, just like the ant, sometimes paces back and forth in his room and 'thinks about the unfathomable things that he will write. Thoughts flowing through his head, with the most peculiar and brilliant words and sentences. My, my, he thinks, how much is in my head!' And the best thing is that with Tellegen, those peculiar and brilliant and unfathomable words and sentences come up and are written down seemingly with such ease. It is because of that and much more: for that special and specifically linguistic humor for example, and for the boundless melancholy, for the emphasis on the indispensableness of friendship and love in life, for the endless streams of thoughts that flow through the animals and humans, and for the wonderful literary form that Tellegen has found for all this, that the jury has unanimously decided that Toon Tellegen deserves the Theo Thijssen Award 1997.

The jury consisted of Aukje Holtrop, Rudy Kousbroek, Els Pelgrom, Jacq Vogelaar and Gerard de Vriend. Aad Meinderts was Secretary.

NOTE: *This is an unofficial translation made solely for the purpose of this HCAA 2020 nomination dossier. This jury report was originally published in Dutch, and can be found on:*

<https://www.pchooftprijs.nl/theo-thijssen-prijs-1997/>

List of Awards and Other Distinctions

Toon Tellegen has received a number of awards for his outstanding work for young readers⁶:

- 1988: Golden Slate Pencil (Gouden Griffel) for *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- 1990: Silver Slate Pencil (Zilveren Griffel) for *Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden*.
- 1992: Libris Woutertje Pieterse Prize for *Juffrouw Kachel*.
- 1994: Silver Slate Pencil (Zilveren Griffel) for *Jannes*.
- 1994: Libris Woutertje Pieterse Prize for *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- 1994: Golden Slate Pencil (Gouden Griffel) for *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- 1997: Silver Slate Pencil (Zilveren Griffel) for *Teunis*.
- 1997: Theo Thijssen Prize for his entire oeuvre for young readers.
- 1999: Silver Slate Pencil (Zilveren Griffel) for *De verjaardag van alle anderen*.
- 2000: Golden Owl (Gouden Uil) for children's literature for *De genezing van de krekel*.
- 2004: Austrian Children's Book Prize (Österreichischen Kinder- und Jugendbuchpreis) for *Dokter Deter*.
- 2006: DUŻEGO DONGA [Big Donga] Award, Poland, for *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* (Polish edition).
- 2006: Short-list Golden Owl for *Pikkuhenki*.
- 2006: Die besten sieben (July), Germany, for *Pikkuhenki*.
- 2006: Finalist Hans Christian Andersen Author Award.
- 2007: Peter Pan Silverstar, Sweden, for *Pikkuhenki*.

For his entire literary oeuvre, Toon Tellegen was awarded:

- 2006: Hendrik de Vries-Prize.
- 2007: Constantijn Huygens-Prize.

Several of his books (poetry and prose) for adult readers were also awarded:

- 1969: Visser Neerlandia Prize for *Als moeder ergens ziek van wordt*.
- 1993: Jan Campert Prize for *Een dansschool*.
- 2001: Nomination Libris Literature Prize for *De trein naar Pavlovsk en Oostvoorne*.
- 2011: Popescu Prize for the English translation of *Raafvogels*.

Brief explanation of some of the awards

The 'Griffels' (slate pencils); annual awards for writing

In 1955 a regular award for writing was established by the CPNB (Collective Propaganda for the Dutch Book). This proved to be inadequate for the growing number of likely candidates. Since 1971, the CPNB has awarded a Gouden

⁶ Awards for the illustrations of books have not been listed here since they are, strictly speaking, not for the author.

Griffel (Golden Slate Pencil) for the best Dutch children's book and a Zilveren Griffel (Silver Slate Pencil) for the next-to-best. The 'vlag en wimpel' (Flag and Streamer) is an honourable mention for this award.

Woutertje Pieterse Prijs

The Woutertje Pieterse Prize was established in 1987, and awarded for the first time in 1988. Libris, a bookseller's chain, sponsors the prize, which is intended for children's books of Dutch origin with literary merit. This annual award is for a maximum of 15.000 euro. The goal of the Woutertje Pieterse Prize is to improve the quality of children's writing by means of this award. The jury is free not to grant an award when there is no book of sufficient quality. The prize owes its name to the character Woutertje Pieterse, since the story of this boy by Multatuli is said to be one of the finest ever written. This Award is seen as the most important award for authors of children's literature.

Theo Thijssen Award

In 1964 the Staatsprijs voor kinder- en jeugdliteratuur (State Prize for Children's and Juvenile Literature) was awarded for the first time. Since then the prize has been awarded every three years for the total work of a Dutch author. Since 1988, the prize had been awarded by the P.C. Hooft Foundation. A new name was chosen: the Theo Thijssenprijs. Theo Thijssen was an author of books for children as well as adults. His book about a schoolboy in Amsterdam 'Kees, de jongen' (The boy Kees, 1923) is still widely read.

Gouden Uil (Golden Owl)

A literary award for books that appeared in Dutch in The Netherlands and Belgium, initiated by a bookstore, the Flemish Television Broadcast and a magazine. There are three categories: Fiction, Non-fiction and Children's literature.

Bibliography of Toon Tellegen's Books for Young Readers⁷

- **Er ging geen dag voorbij: negenenveertig verhalen over de eekhoorn en de andere dieren** / [*Not a Day Went By. Forty-nine Stories about the Squirrel and the Other Animals*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jan Jutte. First edition: 1984, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Toen niemand iets te doen had** / [*When Nobody Had Anything to Do*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1987, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden** / [*Slowly, as Fast as They Could*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1989, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Het feest op de maan** / [*The Party on the Moon*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1990, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Misschien waren zij nergens** / [*Perhaps They Were Nowhere*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1991, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Juffrouw Kachel** / [*Miss Stove*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Harrie Geelen. First edition: 1991, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Jannes** / [*Jannes / Johnny*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Peter Vos. First edition: 1993, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Bijna iedereen kon omvallen** / [*Almost Everyone Could Fall Over*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Anne van Buul. First edition: 1993, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Mijn vader** / [*My Father*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Rotraut Susanne Berner. First edition: 1994, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De verjaardag van de eekhoorn** / [*The Squirrel's Birthday*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Geerten ten Bosch. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Misschien wisten zij alles: alle verhalen over de eekhoorn en de andere dieren** / [*Perhaps They Knew Everything. All Stories About the Squirrel and the Other Animals*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De verschrompeling van de olifant**⁸ / [*The Shriveling of the Elephant*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Lankamp & Brinkman.
- **De ontdekking van de honing** / [*The Discovery of the Honey*] Toon Tellegen. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Teunis** / [*Teunis / Tony*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jan Jutte. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Brieven aan niemand anders** / [*Letters to Nobody Else*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Dokter Deter** / [*Doctor Deter*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Gerda Dendooven. First edition: 1997, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De verjaardag van alle anderen** / [*Everybody Else's Birthday*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Geerten ten Bosch. First edition: 1998, Amsterdam, Querido.

⁷ From 2002 onwards, Querido has published various selections of Toon Tellegen's animal stories – initially published as children's books – for adult readers. These selections have not been listed here. It does attest to the notion that Tellegen's animal stories are not only timeless but also ageless and are enjoyed by children and adults alike.

⁸ Published on the occasion of the thirty-year anniversary of the children's books department of bookshop Lankamp & Brinkman.

- **Mijn avonturen door V. Swchwrn**⁹ / [*My Adventures by V. Swchwrn*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Marc Terstroet. First edition: 1998, Amsterdam, CPNB.
- **De genezing van de krekkel** / [*The Cricket's Recovery*] Toon Tellegen. First edition: 1999, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Ze sliepen nog** / [*They Were Still Sleeping*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 2000, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Taartenboek** / [*Book of Cakes*] Toon tellegen; with recipes by Henja Schneider; Illustrated by Rotraut Susanne Berner. First edition: 2001, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Is er dan niemand boos?** / [*Isn't Anybody Angry?*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen. First edition: 2002, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Lente** / [*Spring*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Ingrid Godon. First edition: 2003, Tilburg, Zwijsen Educatief (Schatkist [Treasure Chest] Series).
- **Plotseling ging de olifant aan** / [*Suddenly the Elephant Went On*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Middenin de nacht** / [*In the Middle of the Night*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Pikkuhenki** / [*Pikkuhenki*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Marit Törnqvist. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De eenzaamheid van de egel** / [*The Squirrel's Loneliness*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 2006, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De almacht van de boktor** / [*The Omnipotence of the Longhorn Beetle*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 2007, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De verjaardag van de eekhoorn en andere verhalen** / [*The Squirrel's Birthday and Other Stories*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Kitty Crowther. First edition: 2007, Amsterdam, Querido (revised edition of *The Squirrel's Birthday*, 1995).
- **Post voor iedereen** / [*Mail for Everyone*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Mance Post. First edition: 2007, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Morgen was het feest** / [*Tomorrow There Was a Party*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Ingrid Godon. First edition: 2008, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Iedereen was er: meer verhalen over de eekhoorn en de andere dieren** / [*Everyone Was There. More Stories About the Squirrel and the Other Animals*] Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2009, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Wat dansen we heerlijk** / [*How Wonderfully We Dance*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen. First edition: 2010, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Waar is Mo?** / [*Where Is Mo?*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jan Jutte. First edition: 2010, Amsterdam, Rubinstein (Gouden Boekje [Golden Book Series]).
- **Mano de brandweerjongen** / [*Mano the Fire Brigade Boy*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Arjan Boeve. First edition: 2010, Amsterdam, Rubinstein (Gouden Boekje [Golden Book Series]).
- **Als Feda slaapt** / [*When Feda Sleeps*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Gerda Dendooven. First edition: 2010, Amsterdam, Rubinstein (Gouden Boekje [Golden Book Series]).
- **Ik wou** / [*I Wished*] Portraits by Ingrid Godon; with texts by Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2011, Tielt, Lannoo.

⁹ Published as the national 'Children's Book Week Gift' 1998 by the foundation for Collective Propaganda of the Dutch Book (CPNB).

- **Een lied voor de maan** / [*A Song For the Moon*] Illustrations by Mance Post; with words by Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2012, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Brieven aan bijna niemand anders** / [*Letters to Almost Nobody Else*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrations by Jessica Ahlberg. First edition: 2012, Amsterdam, Querido (revised edition of *Letters to Nobody Else*, 1996).
- **Lotte aan het woord** / [*Lotte's Words*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Gerda Dendooven. First edition: 2012, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De verjaardag van de eekhoorn en andere dieren** / [*The Squirrel's and Other Animals' Birthdays*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg. First edition: 2012, Amsterdam, Querido (revised edition of *The Squirrel's Birthday*, 1995).
- **Een zondag met Caillebotte (kunstprentenboek)** / [*A Sunday With Caillebotte (Art Picture Book)*] Illustrated by Ingrid Godon; with tekst by Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2013, The Hague, Leopold and Gemeentemuseum Den Haag.
- **Toen bijna niemand iets te doen had** / [*When Almost Nobody Had Anything to Do*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg. First edition: 2013, Amsterdam, Querido (revised edition of *When Nobody Had Anything to Do*, 1987).
- **Morgen ben ik jarig** / [*Tomorrow It's My Birthday*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Waldemar Post. First edition: 2014, Amsterdam, Rubinstein.
- **Is er dan niemand boos?** / [*Isn't Anybody Angry?*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Marc Boutavant. First edition: 2014, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Ik denk** / [*I Think*] Portraits by Ingrid Godon; with texts by Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2014, Tielt, Lannoo.
- **Voor de das** / [*For the Badger*] Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2015, Amsterdam, Letterkabinet.
- **De tuin van de walvis** / [*The Whale's Garden*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen. First edition: 2015, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer** / [*One Morning in Early Summer*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Het gouden boek van Toon Tellegen** / [*Toon Tellegen's Golden Book*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Jan Jutte, Gerda Dendooven, Arjan Boeve and Waldemar Post. First edition: 2016, Amsterdam, Rubinstein (collection of four Golden Book stories by Tellegen).
- **Het grote taartenboek** / [*The Big Book of Cakes*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Marc Terstroet; with recipes by Henja Schneider. First edition: 2016, Amsterdam, Querido (expanded edition of *Book of Cakes*, 2001).
- **Ik moet** / [*I Should*] Portraits by Ingrid Godon; with texts by Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2016, Tielt, Lannoo.
- **Wij alleen** / [*Only We*] Toon Tellegen. First edition: 2017, Amsterdam, Querido.

Translations of Toon Tellegen's Books for Young Readers

Presented by title of the Dutch original (as complete as possible)¹⁰

Toen niemand iets te doen had [When Nobody Had Anything to Do] (1987)

- ***Vevercák a mravenec*** Czech / transl. from Dutch by Jirina Holenová. Ill. Pavel Suk. Praha Cinemax, 1998. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Far away across the sea*** English / transl. from Dutch by Martin Cleaver. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. London: Boxer Books, 2012. Children's Books. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Richtig dicke Freunde***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Wiebke Oeser. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2001 (DTV, Reihe Hanser; 62061). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Richtig dicke Freunde***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Wiebke Oeser. München etc.: Hanser, 1999. Children's Books. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***[Kogda vse bezdel'nicali]***. Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Ill. Mance Post. Moskva: Zakharov, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Kad su svi bili dokoni***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. Mance Post. Novi Sad: Prometej, 1996. Children's Books. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Nedostalati***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Novi Sad: Prometej, 1995. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from *Toen niemand iets te doen had*; *Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden*; *Misschien waren zij nergens*; *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- ***(Toen bijna niemand iets te doen had)***. Spanish / transl. from Dutch by n.n.. México City: Castillo, since september 2015 Children's Books, Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.
- ***Một cuộc phiêu lưu ra trò và rắc rối***. Vietnamese / transl. from English by Huy Toàn. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. Hanoi: Kim Dong Publishing House, 2018. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Toen niemand iets te doen had*.

Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden [Slowly, as Fast as They Could] (1989)

- ***Nedostalati***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Novi Sad: Prometej, 1995. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from *Toen niemand iets te doen had*; *Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden*; *Misschien waren zij nergens*; *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.

Het feest op de maan [The Party on the Moon] (1990)

- ***The party on the Moon*** English / transl. from Dutch by Greta Kilburn. Rotterdam: Story International, 1993. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Het feest op de maan*.

Misschien waren zij nergens [Perhaps They Were Nowhere] (1991)

- ***[Dobutsutachi no monogatari]*** Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. s.l.: n.n.W, 1994. In Tobu Kyoushitsu, nr.49 (1994), p.4-30. Children's Books, Original title: selection of stories from *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* and *Misschien waren zij nergens*.
- ***Nedostalati***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Novi Sad: Prometej, 1995. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from *Toen niemand iets te doen had*; *Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden*; *Misschien waren zij nergens*; *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.

¹⁰ Source: the translation database of the Dutch Foundation for Literature, available through the following link: [Vertalingendatabase Nederlands Letterenfonds](http://Vertalingendatabase.Nederlands.Letterenfonds)

Juffrouw Kachel [Miss Stove] (1991)

- **Gospozica peckarska**, Bulgarian / transl. from Dutch by Raina Stefanova. Ill. Harrie Geelen. Pleven: Lege Artis, 2004. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Juffrouw Kachel*.
- **Skolotāja Krāsne** Latvian / transl. from Dutch by Inese Paklone. Ill. Harrie Geelen. Riga: Petergailis, 2015. Children's Books. Original title: *Juffrouw Kachel*.

Bijna iedereen kon omvallen [Almost Everyone Could Fall Over (literal transl.)] (1993)

- **[Yongyuan busi]** Chinese / transl. from Dutch by Huifen Liu. Taipei: Morning Star, 2003. Children's and Youth Literature, paperback. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **A great and complicated adventure** English / transl. from Dutch by Martin Cleaver. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. London: Boxer Books, 2013. Children's Books. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **[Dare mo shinanai]** Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. Tokyo: Media Factory, 2000. Children's Books. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* (selection).
- **[Dare mo shinanai]** Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. s.l.: n.n.W, 1998. In Kokokuhiyo: Advertisement Comment Magazine, nrs.195-218 (juni 1996-juli 1998), Children's Books, Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* (selection).
- **[Dobutsutachi no monogatari]** Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. s.l.: n.n.W, 1994. In Tobu Kyoushitsu, nr.49 (1994), p.4-30. Children's Books, Original title: selection of stories from *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* and *Misschien waren zij nergens*.
- **[Kigen no ii risu dare mo shinanai]**. Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. Ill. Daisuke Soshiki. Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **Nie każdy umiał się przewrócić**. Polish / transl. from Dutch by Jadwiga Jędryas. Ill. Ewa Stiasny. Warszawa: Kowalska / Stiasny, 2005 (Seria z wiatrakiem). Children's Books. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **Nie każdy umiał się przewrócić**. Polish / transl. from Dutch by Jadwiga Jędryas. Ill. Ewa Stiasny. Warszawa: Dwie Siostry, 2013. Children's Books, Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **[Ne vse umeynt padat': skazki dlja vzroslykh]** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Ill. Anne van Buul. Moskva: Zakharov, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **[(Bijna iedereen kon omvallen)]** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Samokat, since maart 2016 Children's Books, Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **Nedostalati**. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Novi Sad: Prometej, 1995. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from *Toen niemand iets te doen had; Langzaam, zo snel als zij konden; Misschien waren zij nergens; Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.
- **Ở nơi xa tím mù khơi**. Vietnamese / transl. from English by Huy Toàn. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. Hanoi: Kim Dong Publishing House, 2018. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Bijna iedereen kon omvallen*.

Mijn vader [My Father] (1994)

- **Josefs Vater**. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. München etc.: Hanser, 1994. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- **Josefs Vater**. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006 (DTV Reihe Hanser; 62260). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- **Minu isa**. Estonian / transl. from Dutch by Kerti Tergem. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. Tallinn: Huma, 2002. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn vader*.

- ***Il mio papà***. Italian / transl. from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2001 (Feltrinelli Kids; 44). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- **[*Uri appa*]**. Korean / transl. from Dutch by Kang Myong-sun. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. Seoul: BIR, 2000. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- ***Tata***. Polish / transl. from Dutch by Jadwiga Jędryas. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. Warsaw: Dwie Siostry, 2016. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- **[*Moj papa*]** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Zakharov, 2007. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn vader*.
- ***Mi padre***. Spanish / transl. from Dutch by María Lerma. Ill. Rotraut Susanne Berner. Madrid: Siruela, 1995 (Las tres edades; 41). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Mijn vader*.

De verjaardag van de eekhoorn [The Squirrel's Birthday] (1995)

- ***L'aniversari de l'esquirol*** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Auke Oosterhoff Sanders. Ill. Marta Balaguer. Barcelona: Cruïlla, 2004 (El vaixell de vapor; 119). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- **[*Song shu de sheng ri yan hui*]** Chinese / transl. from Dutch by Fa Yu. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Taipei: Titan Publishing Co., 2007. Children's and Youth Literature, paperback. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***Eichhorn und Ameise feiern Geburtstag***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Düsseldorf: Sauerländer, 2003. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from his work, including stories from *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn* (1995); *Misschien wisten zij alles* (1999).
- ***The squirrel's birthday and other parties*** English / transl. from Dutch by Martin Cleaver. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. London: Boxer Books, 2009. Children's Books. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***Oravan syntymäpäivät*** Finnish / transl. from Dutch by Tarja Roinila. Helsinki: Nemo, 2004. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- **(*De verjaardag van de eekhoorn en andere dieren*)**. Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Etsuko Nozaka. Tokyo: Kaisei-sha, since januari 2016, expected September 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- **[(*De verjaardag van de eekhoorn; Misschien wisten zij alles (selection)*)]** Korean / transl. from Dutch by Young-Jin Kim. Seoul: BIR, since 2004 Children's and Youth Literature, Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***Ekornets fødselsdag og andre fortellinger*** Norwegian / transl. from Dutch by Kristin Gjestrum. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2012. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***La fiesta de cumpleaños*** Spanish / transl. from Dutch by Nadine Beliën. Ill. Lluïsa Jover. Madrid: Macmillan Infantil y Juvenil, 2010 (Librosaurio). Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***El cumpleaños de Ardilla***. Spanish / transl. from Dutch by Goedele de Sterck. Ill. Kitty Crowther. México City: Castillo, 2016. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***Ekorrens födelsedag*** Swedish / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Lönn. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Stockholm: Alfabeta, 2003. Children's Books. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.
- ***Sinh nhật ở rừng và những cuộc vui từng bừng***. Vietnamese / transl. from English by Huy Toàn. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. Hanoi: Kim Dong Publishing House, 2017. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn*.

Misschien wisten zij alles [Perhaps They Knew Everything] (collected animal stories, 1995)

- **Eichhorn und Ameise feiern Geburtstag.** German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Düsseldorf: Sauerländer, 2003. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from his work, including stories from *De verjaardag van de eekhoorn* (1995); *Misschien wisten zij alles* (1999).
- **(Misschien wisten ze alles).** Estonian / transl. from Dutch by Vahur Aabrams. Tallinn: Aasta Raamat, since juli 2018, expected October 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **L'anniversaire de l'écureuil et autres fêtes des animaux** French / transl. from Dutch by Véronique Roelandt. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Paris: Albin Michel Jeunesse, 2002. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **Mindenki más születésnapja: 50 mese** Hungarian / transl. from Dutch by Orsolya Varga. Ill. Mónika Egri. Budapest: Naphegy Kiadó, 2015. Children's Books. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **Il compleanno dello scoiattolo e altre feste di animali** Italian / transl. from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Kitty Crowther. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2003 (Feltrinelli Kids). Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **Lettere dal bosco. Trecento storie di animali** Italian / transl. from Dutch by David Santoro. Ill. Mance Post. Roma: Donzelli, 2007. Children's Books. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **Nedostajati.** Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. Manja Lekić. Belgrade: Apropo, 2011. Children's Books. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **(Misschien wisten ze alles).** Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Beograd: Apropo, since juni 2018, expected September 2018. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.
- **Mala nočna torta s plameni** Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Anita Srebnik. Ill. Suzi Bricelj. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: 55 stories from *Misschien wisten zij alles*; *Is er dan niemand boos?*; *Taartenboek*.
- **Çok tuhaf hayvan öyküleri** Turkish / transl. from Dutch by Burak Sengir. Istanbul: Mavibulut, 2011. Children's and Youth Literature, paperback. Original title: *Misschien wisten zij alles*.

De ontdekking van de honing [The Discovery of the Honey] (1996)

- **Der Murr oder Die Entdeckung des Honigs** German / transl. from Dutch by Peter Wessels, Jens Eschmann, Georg Verwey, Hendrik Neukäter. Ill. Verena Ballhaus. Düsseldorf: Sauerländer, 2006. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *De ontdekking van de honing*.

Teunis [Tony] (1996)

- **En Tonet, l'elefant.** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Mariona Vilalta. Ill. Montserrat Cabo. Barcelona: Cruïlla, 1998 (El vaixell de vapor; 79). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Teunis*.
- **Elevandipoeg Tõnis.** Estonian / transl. from Dutch by Katrin Laiapea. Ill. Jan Jutte. Tallinn: Huma, 2000. Children's Books. Original title: *Teunis*.
- **[Prohor i potap]** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Zakharov, 2005. Children's Books. Original title: *Teunis*.
- **Un elefante en la ciudad.** Spanish / transl. from Dutch by Nadine Beliën. Ill. Jan Jutte. Madrid: Ediciones SM, 1997 (El barco de vapor, serie oro; 16). Children's Books. Original title: *Teunis*.
- **Teunis.** Turkish / transl. from Dutch by Kevser Canbolat. Ill. Jan Jutte. Ankara: Aksel Yayincilik, 2009. Children's Books. Original title: *Teunis*.

Brieven aan niemand anders [Letters to Nobody Else, literal transl.] (1996)

- ***Cartes de l'esquirol, de la formiga, de l'elefant, de l'os...*** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Ferran Bach. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Barcelona: Destino, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- **[*Song shu xie gei ma yi de xin*]** Chinese / transl. from Dutch by Fa Yu. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Taipei: Titan Publishing Co., 2004. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders* (selection).
- ***Breve med vinden*** Danish / transl. from Dutch by Mette Jokumsen. Ill. Axel Scheffler. København: Gyldendal, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Briefe vom Eichhorn an die Ameise***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Axel Scheffler. München etc.: Hanser, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Briefe vom Eichhorn an die Ameise***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Axel Scheffler. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003 (Reihe Hanser; 62127). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Briefe vom Eichhorn an die Ameise***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Frankfurt am Main etc.: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Letters to anyone and everyone*** English / transl. from Dutch by Martin Cleaver. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. London: Boxer Books, 2009. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Lettres de l'écureuil à la fourmi*** French / transl. from Dutch by Véronique Roelandt. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Paris: Albin Michel Jeunesse, 2000. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders* (selection).
- ***Lettere dello scoiattolo alla formica*** Italian / transl. from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2001 (Feltrinelli Kids). Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders* (selection).
- ***Lettere dello scoiattolo alla formica*** Italian / transl. from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2015 (Feltrinelli Kids). Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- **[(*Brieven aan niemand anders*)]** Korean / transl. from Dutch by Young-Jin Kim. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Seoul: BIR, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- **[*Pis'ma tol'ko dlja swoih*]**. Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Ill. Mance Post. Moskva: Zakharov, 2006. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- **[(*Brieven aan niemand anders*)]** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Samokat, since oktober 2015 Children's Books, Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Pisma nikom drugom***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. Mance Post. Belgrade: Dejadora, 2006 (Biblioteka Latebra). Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Cartas de la ardilla, de la hormiga, del elefante, del oso...*** Spanish / transl. from Dutch by Heilette van Ree. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Barcelona: Destino, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Cartas de todos para todos*** Spanish / transl. from Dutch by Heilette van Ree. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. Barcelona: Noguer, 2013. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Riktigt goda vänner*** Swedish / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Lönn. Ill. Axel Scheffler. Stockholm: Alfabeta, 2001. Children's Books. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.
- ***Những lá thư nhờ gió gửi ai đó***. Vietnamese / transl. from English by Huy Toàn. Ill. Jessica Ahlberg. Hanoi: Kim Dong Publishing House, 2017. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders*.

- ***Bataaxalu xojog bu jëm ci mellentaan = Lettres de l'ecureuil a la fourmi*** Wolof / transl. from Dutch by Véronique Roelandt. Ill. Lamine Niang. Dakar: Groupe Culture Europe, 2002. In Benne bés la woon... = Il était une fois en Europe., p.38-51. Children's and Youth Literature, paperback. Original title: *Brieven aan niemand anders* (selection).

Dokter Deter [Doctor Deter] (1997)

- ***Dokter Deter***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Gerda Dendooven. Wien: NP Buchverlag, 2003. Children's Books. Original title: *Dokter Deter*.
- ***[(Dokter Deter)]***. Korean / transl. from Dutch by n.n.. Seoul: Marubol, 2012. Children's Books. Original title: *Dokter Deter*.

De verjaardag van alle anderen [Everyone Else's Birthday] (1998)

- ***Vrodziny prawie wszystkim***. Polish / transl. from Dutch by Jadwiga Jędryas. Ill. Ewa Stiasny. Warszawa: Dwie Siostry, 2014. Children's Books. Original title: *De verjaardag van alle anderen*.
- ***Rođendani svih drugih***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. by children. Beograd: Dejadora, 2006 (Biblioteka Latebra). Children's Books. Original title: *De verjaardag van alle anderen*.

Mijn avonturen door V. Swchworm [My Adventures by V. Swchworm] (1998)

- ***[Priklučenija V. Schwyrschwyrma]*** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Zakharov, 2008. Children's Books. Original title: *Mijn avonturen door V. Swchworm*.

De genezing van de Krekel [The Cricket's Recovery] (1999)

- ***Fora tristesa!*** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Auke Oosterhoff Sanders. Ill. Mercè López. Barcelona: Cruilla, 2005 (El vaixell de vapor; 133). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *De genezing van de krekel*.
- ***[Kak wyzdorawliwal swertchok]*** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Zakharov, 2005. Children's Books. Original title: *De genezing van de krekel*.
- ***Kako je ozdravio cvrčak***. Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. Manja Lekić. Belgrade: Apropos, 2010. Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *De genezing van de krekel*.
- ***Čriček in temačni občutek***. Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Staša Pavlović. Ill. Ana Zavadlav. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2017. Children's Books, Original title: *De genezing van de krekel*.
- ***La curación del grillo*** Spanish / transl. from Dutch by María Lerma. Ill. Jesús Aguado. Madrid Siruela, 2004 (Las tres edades; 110). Children's and Youth Literature, paperback. Original title: *De genezing van de krekel*.

Taartenboek [Book of Cakes] (2001)

- ***[Torty]*** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Ill. Gennadij Valentinovič Sokolov. Moskva: Zakharov, 2008. Children's Books. Original title: *Taartenboek*.
- ***Mala nočna torta s plameni*** Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Anita Srebnik. Ill. Suzi Bricelj. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: 55 stories from *Misschien wisten zij alles; Is er dan niemand boos?; Taartenboek*.

Is er dan niemand boos? [Is Nobody Angry?, literal transl.] (2002)

- ***[(Is er dan niemand boos?)]***. Chinese / transl. from Dutch by n.n.. Beijing: Beijing Yuanliu Classic Culture, since May 2014 Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*

- ***Man wird doch wohl mal wütend werden dürfen.*** German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Marc Boutavant. München etc.: Hanser, 2014. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***The day no one was angry.*** English / transl. from Dutch by Bill Nagelkerke. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Wellington (New Zealand): Gecko Press, 2014 (Curiously good books). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***The day no one was angry.*** English / transl. from Dutch by Bill Nagelkerke. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Wellington (New Zealand): Gecko Press, 2014. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***N'y a-t-il personne pour se mettre en colère?*** French / transl. from Dutch by Anne-Lucie Voorhoeve. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Paris: Albin Michel Jeunesse, 2013. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***Non sarai mica arrabbiato?*** Italian / transl. from Dutch by Manuela Calandra. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Milano: Rizzoli, 2014. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***[Nō to hwaga nassō?]*** Korean / transl. from Dutch by Dong-Ick You. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Gyeonggi-do: Pink Whale Publisher, 2015. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***[Neuzjeli nikto ne rasserditsja?]*** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Ill. Annemarie van Haeringen. Moskva: Zakharov, 2005. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***[(Is er dan niemand boos?)]*** Russian / transl. from Dutch by Irina Trofimova. Moskva: Samokat, since oktober 2015 Children's Books, Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***Pa zar niko nije ljut?*** Serbian / transl. from Dutch by Olivera Petrović van der Leeuw. Ill. Annemarie van Haeringen. Beograd: Dejadora, 2005 (Biblioteka Latebra). Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***Mala nočna torta s plameni*** Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Anita Srebnik. Ill. Suzi Bricelj. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: 55 stories from *Misschien wisten zij alles; Is er dan niemand boos?; Taartenboek.*
- ***¿No hay nadie enfadado?*** Spanish / transl. from French by Montserrat Muñoz. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Madrid: Edelvives, 2016. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***¿No hay nadie enfadado?*** Spanish / transl. from French by Montserrat Muñoz. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Madrid: Edelvives, 2014. Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*
- ***Är du arg nu?*** Swedish / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Lönn. Ill. Marc Boutavant. Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 2014. Children's Books. Original title: *Is er dan niemand boos?*

Plotseling ging de olifant aan [Suddenly the Elephant Went On, literal transl.] (2004)

- ***L' elefant fa llum*** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Auke Oosterhoff Sanders. Ill. Victòria Tubau. Barcelona: Cruïlla, 2006 (Històries en majúscules). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Plotseling ging de olifant aan.*

Middenin de nacht [In the Middle of the Night] (2005)

- ***A mitja nit,*** Catalan / transl. from Dutch by Auke Oosterhoff Sanders. Ill. Mance Post. Barcelona: Cruïlla, 2007 (El Vaixell de Vapor; 148). Children's Books, paperback. Original title: *Middenin de nacht.*
- ***Sredi noči.*** Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Anita Srebnik. Ill. Mance Post. Dob pri Domžalah: Miš Založba, 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *Middenin de nacht.*

Pikkuhenki [Pikkuhenki] (2005)

- ***Pikko, die Hexe***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Düsseldorf: Sauerländer, 2006. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.
- **[*(Pikkuhenki)*]**. Farsi / transl. from Dutch by n.n.. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Teheran: The Institute for Research on the history, 2018. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.
- ***Pikkuhenki. La petite sorcière*** French / transl. from Dutch by Maurice Lomré. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Paris: L'école des Loisirs, 2006 (Bruxelles: Pastel). Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.
- **[*Chiisanachiisana Majopitsuki*]**. Japanese / transl. from Dutch by Saki Nagayama. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 2006. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.
- **[*Pikkuhenki*]**. Korean / transl. from Dutch by n.n.. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Seoul: Marubol, 2007. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.
- ***Pikkuhenki. Berättelsen om en mycket liten häxa*** Swedish / transl. from Dutch by Signe Zeilich-Jensen. Ill. Marit Törnqvist. Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 2006. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Pikkuhenki*.

Morgen was het feest [Tomorrow There Was a Party] (2008)

- ***Morgen gibt 's ein Fest***. German / transl. from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Ingrid Godon. Mannheim: Sauerländer, 2011. Children's Books. Original title: *Morgen was het feest*.
- ***Jutri je bila zabava***. Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Anita Srebnik. Ill. Ingrid Godon. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2010 (Zbirka Deteljica). Children's Books. Original title: *Morgen was het feest*.

Als Feda slaapt [When Feda Sleeps] (2010)

- **[*(Als Feda slaapt)*]** Chinese / transl. from Dutch by Peng Sun. Ill. Gerda Dendooven. Beijing: Beijing Yuanliu Classic Culture, 2016. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Als Feda slaapt*.

Ik wou [I Wish] (portraits by Ingrid Godon, with text by Toon Tellegen) (2011)

- ***Ich wünschte***. German / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Erdmann. Ill. Ingrid Godon. München: Mixtvision, 2012. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Ik wou*.
- ***I wish***. English / transl. from Dutch by David Colmer. Ill. Ingrid Godon. Brooklyn (NY): Archipelago Books, since juni 2017, expected Spring 2019. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Ik wou*.
- ***J'aimerais***. French / transl. from Dutch by Maurice Lomré. Ill. Ingrid Godon. Genève: La Joie de Lire, 2013. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Ik wou*.

Ik denk [I Think] (portraits by Ingrid Godon, with text by Toon Tellegen) (2014)

- ***Ich denke***. German / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Erdmann. Ill. Ingrid Godon. München: Mixtvision, 2015. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Ik denk*.
- ***Je pense***. French / transl. from Dutch by Maurice Lomré. Ill. Ingrid Godon. Genève: La Joie de Lire, 2015. Children's Books. Original title: *Ik denk*.

De tuin van de walvis [The Whale's Garden] (2015)

- ***Ein garten für den Wal***. German / transl. from Dutch by Andrea Kluitmann. Ill. Annemarie van Haeringen. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *De tuin van de walvis*.
- ***Ein Garten für den Wal***. German / transl. from Dutch by Andrea Kluitmann. Ill. Annemarie van Haeringen. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 2016. Children's Books. Original title: *De tuin van de walvis*.
- ***Kitov vrt***. Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Katjuša Ručigaj. Ill. Annemarie van Haeringen. Dob pri Domžalah: Miš Založba, 2017. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *De tuin van de walvis*.

Ik moet [I Should] (portraits by Ingrid Godon, with text by Toon Tellegen) (2016)

- ***Ich sollte***. German / transl. from Dutch by Birgit Erdmann. Ill. Ingrid Godon. München: Mixtvision, 2018. Children's Books; Picturebook. Original title: *Ik moet*.

Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer [One Morning in Early Summer] (2016)

- ***(Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer)***. Italian / transl. from Dutch by Laura Pignatti. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Rome: Sinnos, since juni 2018, expected November 2018. Children's Books. Original title: *Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer*.

Other translations

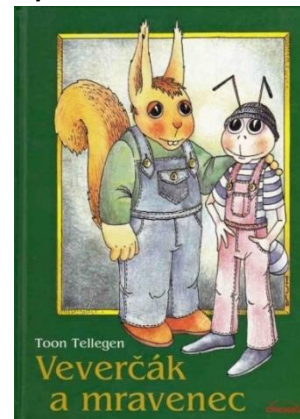
- ***Teltsjes fan Tellegen: Alventritich bisteferhalen***. Frisian / transl. from Dutch by Anne Tjerk Popkema. Ill. Douwe Dijkstra. Groningen: Utjouwerij Regaad 2017. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from the animal stories.
- ***[Pocti vzpravdu]***. Russian / transl. from Dutch by Olga Grisina. Ill. Mance Post. Moskva: Zakharov, 2004. Children's Books. Original title: a selection from the animal stories.
- ***Zabava na luni*** Slovenian / transl. from Dutch by Tanja Mlaker. Ill. Ana Kosir. Ljubljana Mladinska knjiga, 1999 (Zbirka Soncnica). Children's and Youth Literature. Original title: a selection of animal stories.

Ten of the Most Important Titles

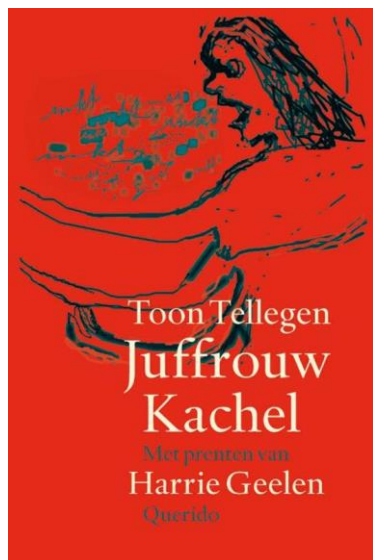
In order of appearance

***Toen niemand iets te doen had* [When Nobody Had Anything to Do] (1987)¹¹**

'One day, the squirrel was intensely missing the ant. He did not know why, but he could feel it right to the tip of his tail. Ant, he thought. Ant, ant, ant. The squirrel knew that such thoughts do not help, but he could not stop them.' Toon Tellegen's second book of short animal stories was immediately awarded a Golden Slate Pencil in 1988. From the publication of this book onwards, Dutch children's literature could no longer be imagined without Tellegen's mysterious, philosophic, slightly melancholic yet humorous world where the elephant likes to climb trees, the bear loves his cakes, the squirrel contemplates and the ant thinks he knows everything. And neither could international children's literature.



***Juffrouw Kachel* [Miss Stove] (1991)¹²**



Juffrouw Kachel [Miss Stove] (1991) holds a special place in Tellegen's body of work. The story is dark, almost aggressive in tone, contrary to his other stories. In diary-form, a young nameless boy vents his anger and frustration about Miss Stove, his school teacher: 'She usually hits without reason.' In an interview with national newspaper *de Volkskrant*, Tellegen explained that this book is based on his own experiences: 'The first two years of primary school I really had a teacher who hit us. Me and the others. Those hard punches on my upper arm, I can still feel them.' The boy first paints a portrait of Miss Stove in short, exact sentences. After that he extensively describes his fearful dreams and feelings of vengeance: 'I wish there would be ice and that she would go ice skating and would fall through the ice and that no one would find her. No, she should be rescued. Otherwise I would be to blame, no less.' The boy looks forward to when he will be big and a writer, then he can 'make up on his

own how someone will come to their end'. At the end of the book Miss Stove still stands in all of her massive crudity. That is exactly how illustrator Harrie Geelen has depicted her in his utterly vicious illustrations: cruel and implacable. *Miss Stove* was awarded a Golden Slate Pencil as well as the Libris Woutertje Pieterse Award in 1992.

¹¹ Published by Querido until 2004 (10th ed.); published in 2008 as part of 'Golden Slate Pencil series' by Querido and *de Volkskrant*; published in 2010 in Rainbow series by Muntinga Pockets; selection of stories re-published under the title *Toen bijna niemand iets te doen had* in 2013 by Querido.

¹² Published by Querido, latest edition (5th) in 2009.

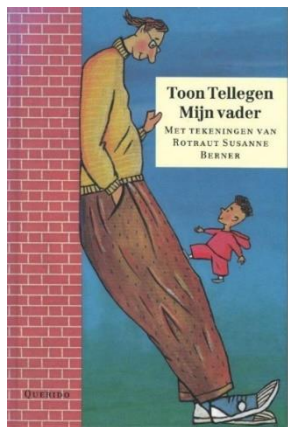
***Bijna iedereen kon omvallen* [Nearly Everyone Could Fall Over] (1993)¹³**



Instead of falling down, some animals in these stories actually fall up. The jury that awarded this book with the Libris Woutertje Pieterse Award in 1994 writes: “The rhinoceros ends up in the branches of a fir – even the plants do not stick to their place of origin – and shouts around: ‘Who is in charge of all this?’ I now continue the quotation: ‘Nobody knew. But the longhorn beetle, who had fallen up before – but then alone – suspected he might know. ‘I think nobody,’ he called out. He was hanging high up in a poplar tree.’ That is without doubt a superior answer, because it leaves the mystery open. And with that it leaves space for the thought – that is childlike, but also poetic: it is normal. And because of that special. A fragment as the one just quoted can also prove the high literary quality of Tellegen’s prose; as all literature it can be admired in detail.” This book was also awarded a Golden Slate Pencil in the

same year and once again proves how Toon Tellegen’s stories took Dutch children’s literature by storm.

***Mijn vader* [My Father] (1994)¹⁴**



Mijn vader [My Father] (1994) is generally seen by critics as one of the highlights in Toon Tellegen’s oeuvre for young readers. Whilst *Juffrouw Kachel* [Miss Stove] is dark, almost aggressive in tone (very unusual in Tellegen’s oeuvre), the register of *Mijn vader* [My Father], in which a small boy tells about his extraordinary father, is light. The book is beautifully designed and Rotraut Susanne Berner’s absurdist drawings make the relationships immediately evident. Father is a giant – but a visible and friendly one – an overgrown rascal in enormous trainers with strange glasses and an odd shock of hair. His son, Jozef, is a mini-person with a big head, who looks up to his father in every sense of the word. Jozef draws a portrait of this awe-inspiring being, who knows everything and can do everything: catch thieves, become invisible, put out fires,

hold back bulldozers and stop the war. Father whispers him the answers at school, knows better than the doctor and throws the horrible swimming instructor into his own horrible swimming pool.

There is a clear Von Münchhausen-style tendency towards tall stories. Just as, in the animal stories, the elephant flies and sits on the branch of a tree, and just as Miss Stove is the epitome of pedagogic pestilence, this is about the father of all fathers. It is precisely the way the age of unconditional belief and trust in paternal omnipotence is seen through childish eyes that ensures that this tall tale will be recognized by all readers as a true story, in essence.¹⁵

¹³ Published by Querido until 2003 (14th ed.); published in 2007 as ‘Treasure Chest of Youth Literature: 8 winners of the Woutertje Pieterse Award’ edition by *de Volkskrant* and WP award foundation; published in 2009 in Rainbow series by Muntinga Pockets.

¹⁴ Published by Querido, latest (6th) edition in 2015.

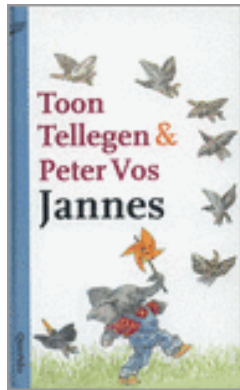
¹⁵ Description by literary critic Bregje Boonstra. Source: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/nl/boek/288/mijn-vader>

***Misschien wisten zij alles* [Perhaps They Knew Everything] (1995)¹⁶**

Not much needs to be said about this book. Known as ‘the Tellegen Bible’, this collection of Toon Tellegen’s short animal stories reached its 36th edition in 2016. Through the years, stories from new publications were added to the collection, and it contains twelve stories that haven’t been published elsewhere. Throughout the book, Mance Post’s illustrations - that have become so characteristic for the squirrel, the ant, the hedgehog and all the other animals- can be found. This book, almost a standard Dutch household item, attests to the status of Tellegen’s animal stories as classics.



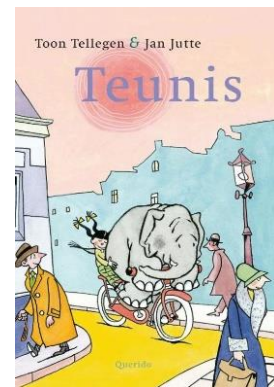
***Jannes* [Johnny] (1993) and *Teunis* [Tony] (1996)¹⁷**



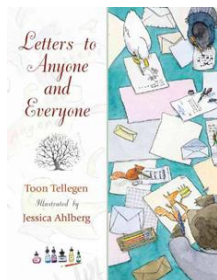
In Toon Tellegen’s work there is a special role reserved for the elephant. In Tellegen’s animal stories he is the only one who has managed to winkle a name off the author.

In 1993, *Jannes* suddenly appeared, a tiny protagonist in a world inhabited exclusively by elephants who, together with his mother, led a contented existence that precisely resembled that of a human toddler. On the cover of *Teunis* [Tony] (1996), however, the eponymous hero marches around on four legs with his bare grey skin exposed to the surrounding, neatly-dressed people who clearly turn away from him. Tony walks alone, because apart from his parents

and himself, everyone around him is human. All day long Tony exerts himself with human activities. He goes to school, to the museum, to the beach and to music lessons. But still he remains an elephant. Tony worries about his identity and would do anything to be ‘normal’. He is desperately in search of a role model, but father elephant is always off travelling the world in search of strange kinds of people. His son has to learn to accept being different and this gives the funny, almost slapstick, stories about his existence a darker undertone. *Teunis* shows us clearly why the elephant is the Tellegenic animal *par excellence*: no matter how stylishly you curl the trunk, the basic colour remains grey.¹⁸ Tellegen received a Silver Slate Pencil for both books.



***Brieven aan niemand anders* [Letters to Anyone and Everyone] (1996)¹⁹**



In Toon Tellegen’s stories, the letter represents both the great importance of contact and the great difficulty of truly understanding each other, at least through language. In *Brieven aan niemand anders* [Letters to Anyone and Everyone] (1996), the letter makes an appearance in every story, either in a leading role, or simply because the woods’ inhabitants are used to seeing written signs of life being borne along by the wind. The human outlines of the letter become visible already on the second page, when the squirrel dresses his epistle to the ant in a jacket and tie before sending it off

¹⁶ Published by Querido, latest (36th) edition in 2016.

¹⁷ Both published by Querido, last (3rd) edition of *Jannes* in 1995; last (3rd) edition of *Teunis* in 2005.

¹⁸ Description by Bregje Boonstra. Source: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/nl/boek/517/teunis>

¹⁹ Published by Querido; re-published in 2013 as *Brieven aan bijna niemand anders* by Querido.

into the snow on its way to its destination. There are letters in all shapes and sizes. The penguin writes on ice floes that have melted by the time they arrive, and the toad's furious letter swells up, starts to glow, flies up into the air like a ball of fire and falls, sizzling, into the river. This is Tellegen's most translated book of animal stories: as a letter thrown in the wind, it has been spread across the world, bringing many readers of all ages in contact with Tellegen's writing.

***De genezing van de Krekel [The Cricket Recovers] (1999)*²⁰**



In *De genezing van de Krekel* [The Cricket's Recovery / The Cricket Recovers] (1999), the cricket wakes up one day with a large and immovable feeling in his head. It bangs, drills, strikes, sticks, scrapes, scratches, grates, scours and much more. Whatever it may be, it tastes bitter and it will not go away. 'You are feeling somber,' the ant determines. All of the other animals do their very best to cheer up the cricket, for instance by organizing an anti-somberness party. Even the sun wonders if it is shining right, or if it should be 'sharper', 'fainter' or 'waterier'. Tellegen offsets the cricket's depressed state with the indestructible optimism of the elephant who, again and again, attempts to dance pirouettes in a tree top. The book was awarded the Golden Owl in 2000.

"In a professional journal for psychologists *The Cricket Recovers* has already been called the best book about depression ever written. Even more than in his poetry for adults, Tellegen succeeds not only in finding words for how this somberness feels, but also for what loneliness is. He wrote a brave story in his typical precise, sensitive and – regardless of all the sadness – humorous style." (Judith Eiselin, *NRC*, April 23, 1999)

Composer Richard Ayres wrote his first opera titled *The Cricket Recovers* based on the book, commissioned and premiered by Aldeburgh Almeida Opera in 2005 and followed by a series of productions including at the Brengenger Festspiele, Staatsoper Stuttgart, the Holland Festival and Theater Basel.

Illustrator Gwen Stok was so impressed by Tellegen's story that she decided to turn it into a graphic novel (expected in March 2019). She wanted to especially aim her adaptation at children with dyslexia, who may be more prone to developing depressive symptoms and for whom graphic novels are a very suitable form of reading.

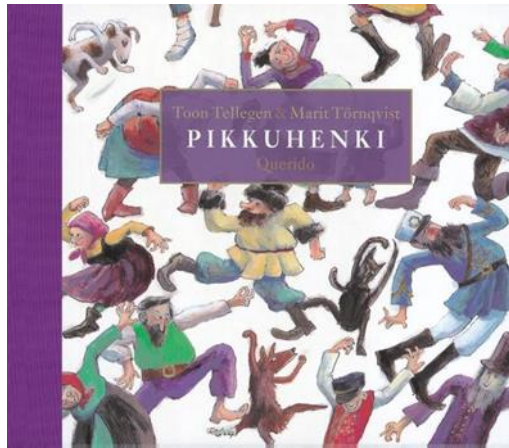


***Pikkuhenki [Pikkuhenki] (2005)*²¹**

With *Pikkuhenki*, Toon Tellegen has created a classic and unusual fairytale about two young heroes, Pikkuhenki and Iwan, who 'long ago, in a land far from here' set off into the world, where they are confronted with fear, sadness, doubt, light and darkness and, strengthened by their travels, turn safely

²⁰ Published by Querido, latest (22nd) edition in 2018.

²¹ Published by Querido, latest (4th) edition in 2006.



homewards. Iwan has lost his mother in an unknown country that is ruled by a tyrannical emperor. Pikkuhenki (Finnish for 'a little spirit') is a tiny invisible witch whose minuscule size makes her doubt her status as a witch. Her invisibility means that Pikkuhenki can fly into people's thoughts via their nose or ear and can influence them. Floating around in the heads and thoughts of people and animals, she haphazardly tries out her powers. When Pikkuhenki meets Iwan one day and flies around amongst his sad thoughts 'about being smacked and going to bed without dinner, and about dying and never going back home and about freezing', she changes Iwan into a hero, who frees the land from the cold-blooded emperor

and finds his mother again. One of Tellegen's original ideas is Pikkuhenki's invisibility. This means that readers have the freedom to complete the story by using their own imagination. Marit Törnqvist's strong illustrations, with their sense of colour, reflect Tellegen's text, sometimes in a very detailed way²².

Pikkuhenki has been very well-received: in 2006, it was on the shortlist for the Golden Owl, Marit Törnqvist received a Golden Paintbrush for the illustrations, and the German translation was selected for 'Die besten sieben'. In 2007, the German translation was nominated for the Deutsche Jugendliteraturpreis, and the Swedish version won a Peter Pan Silverstar.

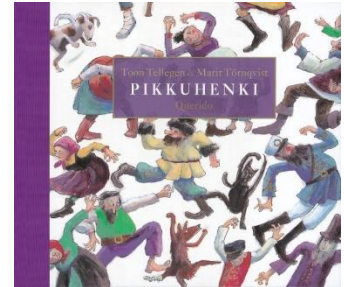
²² Description by Mirjam Noorduijn. Source: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/nl/boek/444/pikkuhenki>

Books Sent to the Jury

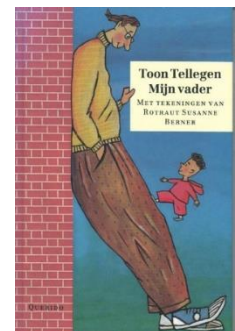
1. **Bijna iedereen kon omvallen** (illustrated by Anne van Buul)
Amsterdam, Querido, 2003, 14th ed.



2. **Pikkuhenki** (illustrated by Marit Törnqvist)
Amsterdam, Querido, 2006, 4th ed.



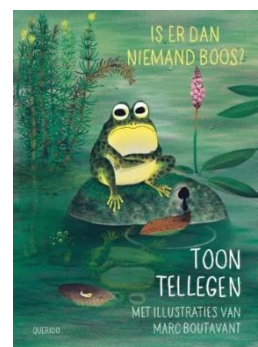
3. **Mijn vader** (illustrated by Rotraut Susanne Berner)
Amsterdam, Querido, 2015, 6th ed.



4. **De tuin van de walvis** (illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen)
Amsterdam, Querido, 2016, 3rd ed.



5. **Is er dan niemand boos?** (illustrated by Marc Boutavant)
Amsterdam, Querido, 2018, 6th ed.



Selection of Reviews of the Books Sent to the Jury

Trouw, 12 January 1994 [**Nearly Everyone Could Fall Over – Dutch review**]

Listening to the Taste of Honey

Lieke van Duin

Of course, it could not be any other way: that comes from the animal stories of Toon Tellegen. No other author writes so surrealistic for children. In no other children's book is there so much, such pure and in vain thought, and in no other children's story does that matter so little.

Toon Tellegen's animal stories are unique: dreamy, fleeting, visual, full of nature descriptions and philosophical juggling with language and logic. There is only one of each animal species and they are all about the same size. The elephant falls quietly through the roof of the snail's house to land in his lazy chair, or flies through a hole in the cobweb. And the squirrel drinks a cup of brackish tea together with the octopus on the bottom of the sea.

Shocking events do not occur, what the animals experience consists of a series of miraculous events without point, cause or effect. The animals sometimes want something, but can easily be distracted from their intentions, and that does not matter. There are many funny conversations: attempts at contact that usually do not work out very well. Only the squirrel and the ant, despite talking and thinking right past one another, have a close friendship.

The poet Ed Leeflang made an attempt in a lecture once to compare Tellegen's animal stories with his poetry for adults. Similarities he sees in the narrative, jumping from one thing to the next, and in the fact that actions are not finished. What dominates in Tellegen's 'universe' is, according to him, "the incapacity to develop a happy relationship". But in the children's stories the characters suffer less from this than in the poems and moreover, humor is more abundant, according to Leeflang.

For 'Nearly everyone could fall over', Tellegen's recently published fifth collection of animal stories, this goes as much as for his previous ones. 'Nearly everyone could fall over' is, in that respect, more of the same ('Miss Kachel' being an exception). The examples mentioned here, for example, all come from the new collection of stories, but are characteristic of all five.

Even so, most of the new stories are once again special. Overall, the fan of Tellegen's stories knows what to expect, but you still get pleasantly surprised. The heron does not eat the frog, but talks to him - about the art of falling over, no less, which he would love to master. When the beetle gets thirsty in the desert, he does not try to drink, but starts thinking about the kinds of thirst that exist. The sweetest wish of the water snail is to be able to ripple, but in another story it is the elephant that melts from the heat and lies rippling in the sun. And that waves can be made to appear out of the bushes, and shimmers "out of a small box that had been lying underground for a long time" is

is typically Tellegen, but the connoisseur does not predict that either.

Yet the animals have something consistent in their character. The elephant always wants to climb up, in a tree or in the air, falls regularly and then always has a bump on his head. The long-horned beetle is a kind of doctor who repairs broken or depressed animals. The ant wants to travel, but has such a hard time saying goodbye to the squirrel. And the turtle experiments with anxiety, insecurity and feeling unhappy.

There is a lot of falling in this book, down and up, that does not matter. Despondency, melancholy and other forms of gloom are cultivated with care, but are never dramatic, just as if there is a layer of airiness, a wink, a smile. And more of the same of this never gets boring.

Twelve stories are about the ant and the squirrel; they write each other quite a few letters, not so much about the content as they are about the attempt at communication. Ed Leeflang is right that these attempts often fail, but with squirrel and ant the underlying friendship proves so strong that it is resistant to that failure. On a small piece of birch bark fits no more than: "Dear ant, the piece of bark on which I write is small, but still I would like to wr." A defective message, which is effective, given the answer: "Dear squirrel, thank you for wr." Similarly, in the story in which the ant writes the squirrel: "I am sick", the communication is seemingly flawed, but the unconscious understanding is touching. It is an exceptionally beautiful story in which the ant wants the squirrel to say that he is a brave sick person. The squirrel does not quite know what 'sick' is, but does what the ant wants: to say "You are brave" and give other forms of attention. And that turns out to be such an effective medicine that the ant is already better by the end of the afternoon. In stories like this there is no such thing as 'the incapacity to develop a happy relationship'.

A single story is weaker, like that about the world-weary beetle who lets himself sink into the mud, although he is being called. Because this story has no tension and no ending, you suddenly realize that the other stories do have that, even though at first glance little happens.

The illustrations this time are not by Mance Post, but by the young illustrator Anne van Buul, who stood out earlier by her powerful illustrations in [a book of children's poems and songs]. It is a shame that her drawings are so similar to those of Mance Post. Anne van Buul has enough personality to do something unique with those animals.

Trouw, 1 October 2005 [**Pikkuhenki – Dutch review**]

Pikkuhenki's Magic Power Frees the People

Bas Maliepaard

On the first page of *Pikkuhenki*, Toon Tellegen puts his readers on the wrong track. The eerily laughing witches that he presents, give the impression that you are entering yet another 'normal' book about witches. Moreover, he compares the warty, screeching creatures, that dash by on their broom sticks, with fluttering butterflies. Black indeed, yet still a careless imagery.

Who reads on, however, quickly discovers that this is a true Tellegen: a delectable, Russian-tinted fairytale, written in supple sentences that are done most justice when read aloud.

Witch Pikkuhenki is so small that no one has ever seen her. One day she goes on a trip to find out if she is a real witch. On her miniscule broom stick she whizzes into the nose and head of a dog. Floating around among his thoughts, she decides to give her powers a try. She orders the dog to tear loose from his chain and bite anyone he encounters. The poor dog goes crazy and only falls down in exhaustion when Pikkuhenki flies on. And as though that is not enough, the beast gets a beating from his boss three times a day as punishment.

The same trick Pikkuhenki repeats with a dancing bear, who also gets a beating when he returns to his senses. But then she meets, in a country where an emperor oppresses his people, the little Iwan. Pikkuhenki flies into the boy's mind, but decides to use her power better this time and to free the people from the cruel emperor.

The illustrations accompanying the story are enchanting: they seem to change for the reader's eyes. The longer you look, the more you see. The gray crowd that stands around the dancing bear suddenly turns out not to be so drab. The people who are close to the bear wear bright colors; the doors in the background are not gray, but green. And in a seemingly empty, winter street, a piece of gold shines: the windows reflect the shining towers of the palace. This is how Marit Törnqvist always seduces the reader's gaze. *Pikkuhenki* is a beautiful book. Perhaps the best witchbook of the coming Children's Book Week.

Update: on 23 May 2006, Marit Törnqvist the Golden Paintbrush for her illustrations in *Pikkuhenki*.

For 7-year-olds and up.

NRC, 27 May 1994 [My Father – Dutch review]

Touchingly Absurd Stories by Toon Tellegen. Father Can Do Everything

Marjoleine de Vos

We all had a father when we were little. Some fathers were present more than others, some could do more than others, some fathers were bigger and stronger, there were even fathers at the fire department or the police or fathers who were very rich. But such a father as Joseph's, no, he was not among them. The father of Joseph can do everything. Not 'so to speak', but really. Everything. He saved the world. He has brought an elephant back to Africa. He threw a window out of the window. He gave all his money to a poor man. He balanced on three chairs and a globe in the circus. And he is also the greatest man who exists.

That Joseph's father is so great, we know from Joseph himself. He tells all kinds of things about his father, about what he can do, and did, in Toon Tellegen's new children's book: *My Father*. It is Tellegen's third 'other' children's book, that is, no animal-stories-children's-book. *Miss Stove* was about a mean teacher, in *Jannes* [Johnny] the little elephant's (children's) world was the subject. These were both good books, but they were not as special as the almost surrealistic animal stories, in which heavy animals simply decide to live up in the air, the turtle worries that his shield might start to leak one day, the ant practices forgetting but does not know what he actually wants to forget, and in which everyone keeps celebrating birthdays with cakes, although they can turn out so hard that no one can get a piece of it. "I indeed should have baked it a little differently," said the rhinoceros with downcast eyes."

My Father equals the animal stories in freedom of imagination and in the naturalness with which rather peculiar things happen. Tellegen is the equivalent of a writer like Daniil Charms who, for example, lets old women drop out of windows, or makes triangles and sticks pop out of an old man: "with a certain old man, a ball popped out of the nose, that fell on the ground." The miraculous adventures of Plume, a character of Henri Michaux, too are similar to the experiences of the ant in Tellegen's animal world, although both writers are slightly worse than Tellegen. That is, they make more terrible things happen. With Tellegen, the miracles are not so creepy, at least not in his children's books. In his poems it sometimes gets pretty gruesome.

Peanut Butter

In Tellegen's children's books, no one will die or permanently break, although Joseph's father breaks into two pieces. That happened when Joseph's mother wanted to embrace him. She calls the doctor ('my husband has broken in half, can you come quickly, yes, the father of Joseph ... o ...') and he sews him together again. Joseph pays attention, because then maybe he can do it himself next time. He ends this story with the simple statement that when his father was whole again he ate his sandwich with peanut butter and then another with chocolate sprinkles. "I remember it well."

It is a rather bizarre story, but Tellegen has the ability to make the bizarre completely acceptable. Moreover, many of Joseph's stories are easy to understand psychologically. For a little boy, his father, whom he greatly admires, is big, very big even. That is therefore exaggerated to colossal measures. Such a boy wants to feel protected by his father and so he invents fearful stories in which thieves threaten him but in which, always, his father comes to rescue him. All these stories fit into

the 'irrealis' of child's play: "You were the king and I was the queen." And so Joseph says: "There was a crook under my bed." Just when it is about to go terribly wrong with this dangerous villain and Joseph can only muster a smothered 'help', father rushes in and throws the crook out of the window with one hand. "'Do you see how I swing him away?' my father asked. 'Yes,' I said. 'Low over the ground. That is how you throw out villains. Never straight up. Will you remember that?'"

Joseph never needs to be afraid, he makes that very clear to himself time and time again. His father will always ensure that nothing can happen to him. This whole book is a long dispelling of fear, fear of poverty, desolation, for crooks and swimming instructors. That fear is dissolved in an almost boundless admiration. "What should I be afraid of? That we would fall? That could not be? My father had never fallen, has he? My father walked over thin silk strings between the tops of the highest mountains. 'Falling? No, I have never heard of that. What is that?' he would say when they were to warm him." They are touching and absurd, Joseph's trips-in-the-mind to the frightening parts of reality. He certainly does not want to get there, and he does not have to, because there is his father.

Just Somebody

Besides successful child psychology, this book offers literary miracles. Tellegen makes a kind of performance of every thought and every feeling. In the magazine *Optima* he recently published a story about his grandfather who wandered around in an empty circus and suddenly noticed that he was in the middle of the arena, while the artists were sitting expectantly in the stands. The director announced him as the artist 'Just Somebody' who would perform his number 'Nothing'. Grandfather does his best and indeed, even his silliest failures can count on warm applause and enthusiastic acclaim. That story seems to express the essence of Tellegen's work: the fact that someone lives is an event worthy of full attention. We do not just pass by that indifferently. We are not going to pretend that we already know what it means to get bigger, to talk confidentially with your father, to miss someone or to be afraid.

When Tellegen starts his investigations, the reader notices that he had not thought so well about what he considered to be the most normal thing in the world. After all, many things that simply are the case, are not matter-of-course to Tellegen. Everything can be questioned and investigated. That attitude also prevents him from ever offering an answer. His stories always end just like that, nothing has been solved, there is no point, only something has happened. The 'breathtaking and blood-curdling number ... Nothing!'

My father also has no ending in which something definitely changes. However, Joseph's fears gradually change in the book. At the beginning it is mainly villains and fire and sums he worries about, later he is more often afraid that his father will disappear. 'They', for example, take his father away once at night. But Joseph also reassures himself in this. His father can, and will, always come back. "He knows a thousand ways for that."

I believe that. Tellegen knows a thousand ways in which such types as the father of Joseph can come back. In animal form, wrapped in strange stories, written down in peculiar poems. Unfortunately, probably no longer so delightfully illustrated by Rotraut Susanne Berner. But we must not wish the impossible. One book like this is already special enough.

Trouw, 16 May 2015 [The Whale's Garden – Dutch review]

Garden of Eden on a Whale's Back

Bas Maliepaard

A fountain he already has, but the whale is missing the garden around it. That's why he writes the grasshopper that runs a store with everything that animals want to buy. With a heap of garden stuff, the grasshopper ventures to the middle of the ocean and there, on the back of the whale, he plants a true pleasure garden, full of hollyhocks, honeysuckle and apple trees and 'a shed with a small window with cobwebs and a door that clings'.

We already know that Toon Tellegen writes delicious animal stories in an accessible but layered style. And also that Annemarie van Haeringen, with her characteristic dancing lines, is one of the best illustrators in our country. They even proved earlier that the combination of their talents yields strong picture books: *Suddenly the Elephant Lit Up* (2004) and *How Wonderfully We Dance* (2010). It is therefore hardly a surprise that their newest collaboration, *The Whale's Garden*, is another stunning book.

There are those wonderful Tellegen phrases that tilt the world a little bit. The beetle wants to buy a table in the grasshopper's shop 'where he could lay down his head if he wanted to be sad about something', the grasshopper a hat 'that he could throw high up in the air if he had to cheer about something'. Tables and hats can have those purposes too, and you can want to be sad.

Through a mirror the whale can admire his garden and, for a short while, his joy is great. But Tellegen then steers toward the lesson of this fable: the whale can no longer jump up if he is happy or angry or lie on his back to look at the stars. In short: he can no longer be himself, and is the garden worth all that?

The cheerful illustrations contain witty details: the grasshopper's tail-coat, the wheelbarrow that serves as a tugboat, the collection of bizarre fish. Van Haeringen alternates small illustrations and a lot of white with full-page images. Particularly special is how she lets lines flow out in the seawater and how she plays with color: the ocean changes from black and gray to bright blue or soft yellow and even white on an illustration where the sky turns grass green.

For 6-year-olds and up.

Publisher Weekly 'Shelftalker', 26 June 2015 [The Day No One Was Angry – English review]

The Day No One Was Angry

Elizabeth Bluemle

Once in a while, you'll pick up a children's book and know instantly it was not written (or perhaps illustrated) by anyone who grew up in this country. These books sometimes telegraph their not-United States-Americanness by having ambiguous endings, or delving into unapologetic melancholy or darkness, or taking on existential themes. I love *these* books, because the good ones — and I have only seen good ones, because the rest wouldn't have made it through the import vetting process — refresh the brain like seltzer and invite us to step outside narrative habits we aren't necessarily aware of inhabiting. They also respect the capacious nature of a child's inquisitive, thoughtful mind.

At ALA Midwinter this January, a Gecko Press book on the Lerner table caught my eye immediately because of its retro feeling (both in palette and style) cover that reminded me of picture books I'd pore over at my grandmother's house as a child. I also liked the title, *The Day No One Was Angry*. It's always intriguing when a title pronounces itself by way of something it is not. I opened the book expecting to find a happy or at least tongue-in-cheek happy animal friendship story. Ha! Not at all.

Leafing through the pages, it became clear immediately that each of the animals in these very brief stories, from the hyrax to the elephant to the cricket to the shrew to the hippopotamus and beyond, is very angry indeed. Some are angered by their own folly — an elephant who climbs a tree despite all of the logical reasons he argues with himself for not doing so, has time for one joyful pirouette before crashing unceremoniously to the ground below. Others, like the beetle and the earthworm, don't address the why of their fury but are so angry they scorch the very earth they're standing on — and then, after a blazing afternoon of competitive fury, clap each other on the shoulders, satisfied with their companionable, enraged blowing-off of steam. There's an aardvark who is only happy standing on his head, and he stays that way because standing on his legs makes him angry. He informs a squirrel acquaintance (who is bewildered by the headstand business and helps the aardvark to his feet, only to unleash a tornado) that he prefers to be happy or "the consequences are incalculable."

The bright, affectionate art by Marc Boutavant provides a perfect counterpart to these stories. In one tale, there's a lobster with a suitcase, a sort of traveling salesman of temper. He knocks on a mouse's door — a mouse who, in the illustration, is happily painting a glorious outsized floral arrangement — and puts his case on the table.

"I'm the lobster," he said. "Can I interest you in some anger?"

"Anger?" asked the mouse, who knew the lobster well.

"Yes," said the lobster crustily. "Anger. You want to get angry now and then, don't you?"

"Yes," said the mouse, "but if I want to get angry, I do — just like that. It happens all by itself."

"But is it always the right kind of anger?" asked the lobster, looking keenly at the mouse.

The mouse hesitated.

"As I thought," said the lobster. "Not the right kind." He opened his suitcase. "I'll show you what I have."

The lobster takes out an assortment of angers.

"Does anyone ever step on your toes while you're dancing?" he asked.

"Yes," said the mouse.

"For that I have a mild anger, which leaves as quickly as it arrives," said the lobster, showing him a thin, light-red anger. "Rather pretty," he added.

Then, glancing at the mouse, he asked, "Have you ever forgotten to pack something when you've gone away?"

"Yes, often," replied the mouse. "How did you know?"

"I have just the thing for that," said the lobster. A gray, wrinkled irritation billowed from the suitcase.

[...]

The lobster showed him a purple rage, a green-tinted jealousy, and a white fury.

Right at the bottom of the suitcase, the mouse saw something light blue.

"What's that?" he asked.

"That's not anger." The lobster coughed. "It's sorrow. And not for sale. But seeing as it's you..."

"I'll take it," said the mouse.

"To tell the truth, it's actually melancholy," said the lobster, "which is deeper than sorrow."

He handed the mouse the light blue, transparent melancholy, closed the suitcase and took himself off.

The mouse went and sat by his window. He draped the melancholy over his shoulders and stared into the distance.

It was a warm morning in early summer, with not a breath of wind.

"Ah. . ." said the mouse, sighing deeply.

In the title story, "The Day No One Was Angry," which comes at the end of the book, all of the creatures inexplicably find themselves without anger and aren't sure what to do with themselves. It's weirdly hilarious, a perfect ending to a book that invites readers to noodle around with their own relationship to anger in all of its various forms. This isn't a book every child will gravitate to, but the ones who do will find that it lingers. Like the lovely classic, *The Little Prince*, this is a book unafraid of deeper emotions and ambiguities.

Sometimes Americans are afraid of diluting children's happiness with books that touch on sorrow or anger; but what we are really afraid of is bursting the bubble of our own illusion that children are a protected class and can be shielded from the tougher things in life. Books like these allow an entry into pondering human nature, tricky relationships, and the murky territory of feelings — but in a manner that isn't self-indulgent or wallowing, but amusing, clever, and smart.

The author, Toon Tellegen, is a Dutch writer who has made his way across the pond a few times before and was a finalist for the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award for lifetime achievement in children's literature.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 8 June 2015 [The Day No One Was Angry - German review]

Kinderbuch von Toon Tellegen: Die Wehmut ist ein Schal

Lena Bopp

Rezepte gegen den Ärger, nicht nur für Trotzköpfe: Mit dem Kinderbuch „Man wird doch wohl mal wütend werden dürfen“ sagt Toon Tellegen den Bosheiten dieser Welt den Kampf an.

Von allen Tieren, die ihr Dasein allein verbringen, ist der Klippschliefer vermutlich das einsamste. Wer weiß schon, was ein Klippschliefer ist? Und wer sollte es in der weiten Steppe, in der sein Haus steht, je erfahren? Der Klippschliefer kennt seine Gegend und weiß genau, dass es hier niemanden gibt, der sich für sein Elend interessiert. Er ist allein, wenn er abends auf den Hügel steigt und auf die Sonne schimpft, weil sie untergeht: „Nicht untergehen! Nein! Nein! Lässt du das bitte bleiben! Ich warne dich!“ Aber die Sonne denkt natürlich nicht daran, zu bleiben, sie verlässt den Klippschliefer jeden Abend. Und man kann sich ja vorstellen, wie es sich das anfühlt, die Enttäuschung darüber und auch die Wut.

Umso erstaunlicher ist es, dass der niederländische Kinderbuchautor Toon Tellegen diese Gefühle nicht etwa auflöst. Sondern das erste Kapitel seines jüngst ins Deutsche übersetzten Buches „Man wird doch wohl mal wütend werden dürfen“ mit einem Unbehagen enden lässt. Sein Klippschliefer - ein Tier, das der Illustrator Marc Boutavant in matt-dunklen Farben als ein mausähnliches Wesen ins Bild gesetzt hat - bleibt mutterseelenallein zurück. Und auch der Elefant, der im folgenden, zweiten Kapitel wider besseres Wissen auf eine Pappel klettert, herunterfällt und sich eine Beule holt, bleibt allein auf dem Boden liegen - „während die Zweige und Blätter der Pappel von oben auf ihn herunterfielen“.

Nützliche Bosheiten

Eine erste Ahnung davon, dass weder die Enttäuschung noch die Wut oder der Schmerz unveränderliche, gleichsam gottgegebene Zustände sind, bekommt der kindliche Leser erst im fünften Kapitel. Denn in der Geschichte vom Krebs sind Gefühle eine Ware, die man kaufen kann: die Wut, die der Krebs anbietet, ist hellrot und dünn, der Ärger runzelig und grau, die Wehmut hellblau und halb durchsichtig. Und weil man Letztere anlegen kann wie einen Schal - die Maus etwa „wickelte sich in die Wehmut und schaute in die Ferne“ -, kann man sie auch wieder ablegen. Indem Tellegen und Boutavant den unguuten Gefühlen, die der Krebs als „Bosheiten“ bezeichnet, also eine Gestalt geben, machen sie sie beherrschbar. Die Wut? Lässt sich wegsingen, ins Meer werfen, aufessen, zusammendrücken oder mit einer anderen Farbe übermalen. Sie lässt sich auch einfach belächeln. Etwa dort, wo das Nilpferd und das Nashorn einander auf einem schmalen Pfad nicht Platz machen wollen und so lange sitzen bleiben, bis sie müde werden, umkehren und sich darüber freuen, eine so nette Bekanntschaft gemacht zu haben.

All die Bosheiten, das lehrt Toon Tellegen, mögen somit zwar Zumutungen sein, weil sie einsam und ratlos machen - ein Zustand, den er durch die offenen Enden seiner kurzen Kapitel geschickt imitiert. Aber sie sind, das lehrt auch der Zeichner Marc Boutavant, ebenso formbar wie nützlich. Und dieser Gedanke dürfte nicht nur Trotzköpfe interessieren, sondern auch die Phantasie all jener anregen, die es mit ihnen zu tun haben.



Dear elephant,

Thank you for your letter.
I'm certain I'd like to dance
with you on my roof one day.
I'm almost convinced of that.
I think I'm a very good dancer.
But unfortunately I don't think
it's such a good idea just
at the moment.

The snail

Copyright © 2011 Boxer Books Limited

Source: excerpt from 'Dear Snail', in Tellegen, Toon, *Letters to Anyone and Everyone*, illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg, translated by Martin Cleaver. London: Boxer Books, 2011, p. 11.

