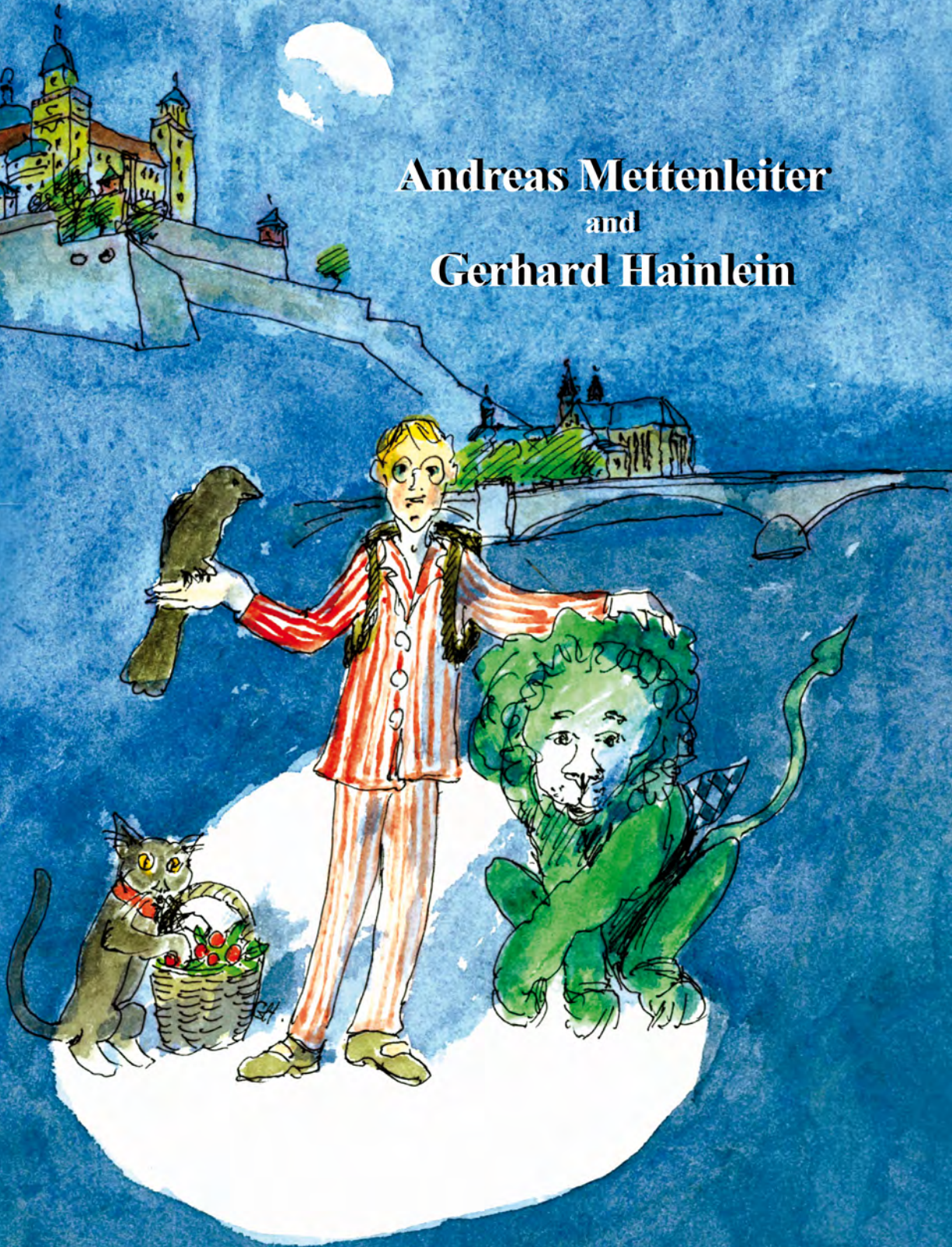


Kilian's Midsummer Night's Dream

Andreas Mettenleiter
and
Gerhard Hainlein



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Kilian's Midsummer
Night's Dream
A Würzburg Picture Book
(not only) for Children

by
Andreas Mettenleiter

illustrated by
Gerhard Hainlein

and translated by
Jim Bernard

AKAMEDON
2018



Through the thick branches of the cherry tree the full moon shines in through an open window. A gentle summer wind moves the curtains of the nursery. Kilian is sleeping soundly, even though he is a bit excited because tomorrow is his name-day, the 8th of July – Kiliani!

A moonbeam tickles the boy's nose but he only sneezes and turns over. Tom the cat gently nudges him on the cheek and Kilian wakes up and wonders. Tom sits in front of him as if he wants to say something but only looks intently at the alarm clock at the bedside. When it turns to midnight he opens his mouth: "Get up quickly, we have a lot planned for today." Kilian looks at him with wide eyes and puts on his glasses: "Since when have you been able to speak – or am I still dreaming?" Tom answers "I'll tell you later." Next to him is a large basket with freshly picked cherries. Although it looks very heavy, the boy finds he can carry it quite easily. But that's not the only thing that's strange tonight ...

Kilian looks out of the window at the Lion Bridge (Löwenbrücke) and the silver ribbon of the River Main. It is strangely silent everywhere. "Don't forget your sandals, the pillow and the backpack," urges Tom and sneaks past the parents' bedroom, from which a light snoring can be heard. On the doorstep Hasso, the dog, lies sleeping in his kennel. "Now I want to know what's going on" says Kilian and stops. Tom explains, "Today is a special day for Sunday Children and because you were born on a Sunday that allows you to see and experience things that actually do not exist."

Kilian looks incredulous. "For example, bringing lifeless things to life" says Tom, running toward the big black metal crow that Mother has hung in front of the cherry tree to drive off the blackbirds. He touches her with the tip of his tail and she starts to beat her wings. "Thank you, Tom! I am Abrax! I am happy to come with you." Kilian wonders. Then he asks Tom, "I'm a Sunday Child, but why aren't you still asleep like Hasso?" "Well, maybe I'm a Sunday Child too." The cat smiles and winks at him. "But come on, your parents will not wake up until we're back," he assures him, and starts walking.



As they walk along past the Grafeneckart Tower to the market, they pass 'Schorsch'. He bends down as Tom purrs around his legs and scratches the cat's head. Then he takes the pipe out of his mouth, doffs his hat and greets the others. "I heard you were coming" he says smiling.

"How is that?" Abrax asks mischievously. He knows full well that Schorsch has a huge third ear, with which he can hear everything that is said and happens in the city.

"Well, of course, with my eavesdropper ear" explains Schorsch good-naturedly, pointing to the ear behind him.

"Are you a spy then?" Kilian asks. "No," replies Schorsch with a laugh, "definitely not! A spy listens on behalf of other people who pay him and to whom he has to tell everything afterwards. I only listen on behalf of myself."

"And can you really hear everything?" Kilian wants to know, sounding a little worried.

"Everything" confirms Schorsch. "I hear what the leaves in the beer garden whisper to me, what the birds twitter to me, what the dogs, who drink at my pool, entrust to me, what the tourists are saying and what the lovers murmur. And I also hear the door to the pantry creak when the mayor has a secret snack, when the bishop scratches his head while preparing the sermon, thinking hard and searching for the right words, and when the master locksmith Karl curses because a hammer has fallen on his big toe, but ...,"

"But?" asks Kilian curiously.

"But I'm just telling the story that I think I should tell. Sometimes I even write something in the paper," he adds, patting the newspaper rolled up in his coat pocket.

"But you cannot believe everything you read in the paper" Kilian retorts. "At least that's what my father says" he adds quickly.

"Your father is certainly right about that" laughs Schorsch, pulling on his pipe, "but it's always useful to think about what you tell and what you do not."

"That's true!" Kilian agrees and decides to think about it. Shyly, he gives Schorsch a handful of cherries before the four have to move on again.



The author, Andreas Mettenleiter (right), is a physician and medical historian. He has written books and newspaper articles about Würzburg and its history. *Kilian's Midsummer Night's Dream* is his first book for children.

The illustrator, Gerhard Hainlein (left), is a retired general practitioner from Würzburg. He studied at the Munich Academy of Arts before deciding to turn

to medical practice. His drawings are to be found in poetry books and works of fiction and non-fiction. He is the grandfather of eight grandchildren.

The translator, Jim Bernard (center), is British but lives near Leiden in the Netherlands. He is a retired Chemical Engineer who is currently studying a letter correspondence between P. F. von Siebold and Prince Hendrik of the Netherlands.

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