

SAKI



Sredni Vashtar

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Lesemethode von Ilya Frank

ENGLISCH

Saki

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*Aus dem Englischen übersetzt von
Ulrike Wittmann*

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Conradin was ten years old (Conradin war 10 Jahre alt), and the doctor had pronounced his professional opinion (und der Arzt hatte seine professionelle Meinung verkündet; **to pronounce** [prə'naʊns] — *aussprechen, verkünden*; **pronunciation** [prəˌnʌnsɪ'eɪʃən] — *Aussprache*; **professional** [prə'feʃən(ə)l]; **opinion** [ə'pɪnjən]) that the boy would not live another five years (dass der Junge keine fünf Jahre mehr leben werde). The doctor was silky and effete (der Arzt war schmeichelnd und verweichlicht; **silky** — *seidig, sanft, schmeichelnd*; **effete** [ɪ'fi:t]), and counted for little (und galt nicht viel; **to count** — *abzählen, erfassen, gelten*), but his opinion was endorsed by Mrs. de Ropp (aber seine Meinung wurde durch Frau von Ropp bestätigt; **to endorse** [ɪn'dɔ:s]

— *beigeben, beipflichten, bestätigen*), who counted for nearly everything (die fast alles galt; *nearly* [ˌnɪəli]). Mrs. De Ropp was Conradin's cousin and guardian (Frau von Ropp war Conradin's Kusine und Vormund; *cousin* [ˌkʌz(ə)n]; *guardian* [ˌɡɑːdiən] — *Beschützer, Vormund*; *to guard* — *behüten, beschützen, bewachen*), and in his eyes she represented those three-fifths of the world (und in seinen Augen repräsentierte sie diese drei Fünftel der Welt; *represent* [ˌreprɪˈzɛnt]) that are necessary and disagreeable and real (die notwendig und unangenehm und echt sind; *necessary* [ˌnɛsɪsəri]; *disagreeable* [ˌdɪsəˈɡriːəb(ə)l]); the other two-fifths (die anderen zwei Fünftel), in perpetual antagonism to the foregoing (in ständigem Widerspruch zur Vorhergehenden; *perpetual* [pəˈpɛtʃʊəl]; *antagonism* [ænˈtæɡəˌnɪzəm] — *Feindseligkeit, Widerspruch*; *foregoing* [fɔːˈɡəʊɪŋ]), were summed up in himself and his imagination (wurden in ihm selbst und seiner Vorstellungskraft zusammengefasst; *to sum up* — *addieren, resümieren, zusammenfassen*; *sum* — *Summe*; *imagination* [ɪˌmædʒɪˈneɪʃən]).

Conradin was ten years old, and the doctor had pronounced his professional opinion that the boy would not live another five years. The doctor was silky and effete, and counted for little, but his opinion was endorsed by Mrs. de Ropp, who counted for nearly everything. Mrs. De Ropp was Conradin's cousin and guardian, and in his eyes she represented those three-fifths of the world that are necessary and disagreeable and real; the other two-fifths, in perpetual antagonism to the foregoing, were summed up in himself and his imagination.

One of these days Conradin supposed he would **succumb to the mastering pressure of wearisome necessary things** (Conradin nahm an, dass er irgendwann dem beherrschenden Druck von ermüdenden notwendigen Dingen erliegen würde; *one of these days* — an einem dieser Tage, irgendwann; *suppose* [sə'pəʊz]; *to succumb* [sə'kʌm] — unterliegen, erliegen, nachgeben; *to master* ['mɑ:stə] — meistern, beherrschen, bewältigen; *wearisome*

[ˈwɪərɪsəm]) — such as illnesses and coddling restrictions and drawn-out dullness (so etwas = *solche Dinge* wie Krankheiten und verhätschelnde Einschränkungen und schleppende Eintönigkeit; *illness* [ˈɪlnɪs]; *restriction* [rɪˈstrɪkʃən]; **drawn-out** — lang gezogen, schleppend; **dullness** [ˈdʌlnəs] — Dummheit, Eintönigkeit). Without his imagination (ohne seine Vorstellungskraft), which was rampant under the spur of loneliness (die unter dem Ansporn der Einsamkeit ungezügelt war; *rampant* [ˌræmpənt]; **spur** [spɜː] — Abzweigung, Ansporn; **to spur** — anspornen, ankurbeln, beflügeln; *loneliness* [ˌləʊnlɪnəs]), he would have succumbed long ago (wäre er schon lange unterlegen).

2

One of these days Conradin supposed he would succumb to the mastering pressure of wearisome necessary things — such as illnesses and coddling restrictions and drawn-out dullness. Without his imagination, which was rampant under the spur of loneliness, he would have succumbed long ago.

Mrs. de Ropp would never (Frau von Ropp hätte nie), **in her honestest moments** (in ihren ehrlichsten Momenten; *honest* [ˌɒnɪst]; *moment* [ˌməʊmənt]), **have confessed to herself** (vor sich selbst zugegeben; *confess* [kənˈfes]) **that she disliked Conradin** (dass sie Conradin nicht mochte; *to dislike* [dɪsˈlaɪk] — *ablehnen, nicht leiden können*), **though she might have been dimly aware** (obwohl sie sich dessen dunkel bewusst sein mochte; *dimly* [ˌdɪmlɪ]; *aware* [əˈweə]) **that thwarting him "for his good" was a duty** (dass ihn "zu seinem Besten" zu bremsen eine Pflicht war; *to thwart* [θwɔ:t] — *behindern, durchkreuzen, bremsen*) **which she did not find particularly irksome** (die sie nicht besonders belastend fand; *particularly* [pəˈtɪkjələli]; *irksome* [ˌɜ:ksəm] — *ärgerlich, lästig, belastend*). **Conradin hated her with a desperate sincerity** (Conradin hasste sie mit verzweifelter Aufrichtigkeit; *desperate* [ˌdɛspərɪt]; *sincerity* [sɪnˈserəti]) **which he was perfectly able to mask** (die er perfekt zu verbergen im Stande war; *perfectly* [ˌpɜ:fɪktli]; *to mask* [mɑ:sk] — *blenden, kaschieren, verbergen*).

Mrs. de Ropp would never, in her honestest moments, have confessed to herself that she disliked Conradin, though she might have been dimly aware that thwarting him “for his good” was a duty which she did not find particularly irksome. Conradin hated her with a desperate sincerity which he was perfectly able to mask.

Such few pleasures (die wenigen Freuden; *pleasure* ['pleʒə]) as he could contrive for himself (die er für sich selbst arrangieren konnte; *contrive* [kən'traɪv]) gained an added relish from the likelihood (gewannen zusätzlichen Genuss durch die Wahrscheinlichkeit; *to add* — *addieren, anfügen, hinzufügen*; *relish* ['relɪʃ]; *likelihood* ['laɪklɪhʊd]) that they would be displeasing to his guardian (dass sie seinen Vormund verärgern würden; *displease* [dɪs'pli:z] — *missfallen, verärgern*), and from the realm of his imagination she was locked out (und aus dem Königreich seiner Vorstellungskraft war sie ausgesperrt; *realm* [reɪlm] — *Bereich, Königreich*) — an unclean thing (ein

unreines Ding), **which should find no entrance** (dass keinen Einlass finden sollte; *entrance* [ˈɛntrəns]).

4

Such few pleasures as he could contrive for himself gained an added relish from the likelihood that they would be displeasing to his guardian, and from the realm of his imagination she was locked out — an unclean thing, which should find no entrance.

In the dull, cheerless garden (in dem eintönigen, freudlosen Garten; *cheerless* [ˌtʃɪərlɪs]), **overlooked by so many windows** (überschaut von so vielen Fenstern; *overlook* [ˌəʊvəˈlʊk]) **that were ready to open with a message not to do this or that** (die bereit waren, sich mit einer Nachricht zu öffnen, dieses oder jenes nicht zu tun), **or a reminder that medicines were due** (oder einer Erinnerung, dass Medizin fällig war; *reminder* [rɪˈmaɪndə]; *medicine* [ˌmedɪsɪn]; *due* [djuː] — *passend, fällig, schuldig*), **he found little attraction** (fand er wenig Anziehendes; *attraction* [əˈtræktʃən] — *Attraktion, Anreiz, Anziehung*). **The few fruit-trees that it contained** (die

wenigen Obstbäume, die er enthielt) **were set jealously apart from his plucking** (wurden eifersüchtig vor seinem Pflücken bewahrt; **to set apart** — *ausscheiden, aussondern, bewahren*; *jealously* [ˌdʒeləsli]), **as though they were rare specimens of their kind** (als ob sie seltene Exemplare ihrer Art wären; *specimen* [ˌspesɪmɪn]) **blooming in an arid waste** (die in einer ausgedörrten Ödnis blühten; *arid* [ˌærid]); **it would probably have been difficult to find a market-gardener** (es wäre vermutlich schwierig gewesen, einen Marktgärtner zu finden; *probably* [ˌprɒbəbli]) **who would have offered ten shillings for their entire yearly produce** (der zehn Shillings für den gesamten jährlichen Ertrag geboten hätte; *entire* [ɪnˈtaɪə]; **produce** [prəˈdjuːs] — *Erzeugnis, Ergebnis, Ertrag*).

5

In the dull, cheerless garden, overlooked by so many windows that were ready to open with a message not to do this or that, or a reminder that medicines were due, he found little attraction. The few fruit-trees that it contained were set jealously apart from his plucking, as though they were rare specimens of

their kind blooming in an arid waste; it would probably have been difficult to find a market-gardener who would have offered ten shillings for their entire yearly produce.

In a forgotten corner, however (in einer vergessenen Ecke allerdings; *however* [haʊ'evə]), **almost hidden behind a dismal shrubbery** (fast verborgen hinter einem trostlosen Gebüsch; *almost* ['ɔ:lməʊst]; *dismal* ['dɪzməl]; *shrubbery* ['ʃrʌbəri]), **was a disused tool-shed of respectable proportions** (war ein nicht mehr benutzter Werkzeugschuppen von respektabler Größe; *to disuse* [dis'ju:s] — *nicht mehr gebrauchen, benutzen*; *respectable* [rɪ'spektəbl]; *proportion* [prə'pɔ:ʃən]), **and within its walls Conradin found a haven** (und in seinem Mauern fand Conradin einen Zufluchtsort; *haven* ['heɪv(ə)n] — *Oase, Hafen, Zufluchtsort*), **something that took on the varying aspects of a playroom and a cathedral** (etwas, dass die variierenden Aspekte eines Spielzimmers und einer Kathedrale annahm; *aspect* ['æspekt]; *cathedral* [kə'θi:drəl]). **He had peopled it with a legion of familiar phantoms** (er hatte ihn mit einer Legion vertrauter

Phantome bevölkert; **to people** — *besiedeln, bevölkern*; **people** — *Volk, Leute*; **legion** ['li:dʒən]; **familiar** [fə'milɪə]; **phantom** ['fæntəm]), **evoked partly from fragments of history and partly from his own brain** (teilweise aus Fragmenten der Geschichte und teilweise aus seinem eigenen Gehirn heraufbeschworen; **to evoke** [ɪ'vəʊk] — *ausrufen, heraufbeschwören*; **fragment** ['frægmənt]), **but it also boasted two inmates of flesh and blood** (aber er prahlte auch mit zwei Insassen aus Fleisch und Blut; **to boast** [bəʊst] — *angeben, aufweisen, prahlen*; **inmate** ['ɪn,meɪt]; **blood** [blʌd]).

6

In a forgotten corner, however, almost hidden behind a dismal shrubbery, was a disused tool-shed of respectable proportions, and within its walls Conradin found a haven, something that took on the varying aspects of a playroom and a cathedral. He had peopled it with a legion of familiar phantoms, evoked partly from fragments of history and partly from his own brain, but it also boasted two inmates of flesh and blood.

In one corner lived a ragged-plumaged Houdan hen (in einer Ecke lebte eine struppig gefiederte Houdan Henne; **ragged** ['ræɡɪd] — zerlumpt, struppig; **plumage** ['plu:mɪdʒ] — Gefieder, Federkleid), on which the boy lavished an affection (die der Junge mit einer Zuneigung überhäufte; **to lavish** ['lævɪʃ] — verschwenden, überhäufen, überschütten; **affection** [ə'fekʃən] — Liebe, Zuneigung, Gunst) that had scarcely another outlet (die kaum ein anderes Ventil hatte; **scarcely** ['skeəslɪ]; **outlet** — Steckdose, Ausweg, Ventil). Further back in the gloom stood a large hutch (weiter hinten in der Dunkelheit stand eine große Kiste), divided into two compartments (in zwei Kompartimente unterteilt; **compartment** [kəm'pɑ:tmənt]), one of which was fronted with close iron bars (von denen eines nach vorne vergittert war; **to front** [frʌnt] — konfrontieren, heucheln, als Fassade dienen; **bar** — Balken, Stange, Bar).

This was the abode of a large polecat-ferret (dies war die Unterkunft eines großen Iltishybrids; **abode** [ə'bəʊd]; **polecat** [ˌpəʊlˌkæt] — Iltis; **ferret ferret** — Frettchen), which a friendly butcher-boy had once smuggled, cage and all, into its present quarters (das ein freundlicher

Schlachterlehrling einmal, samt Käfig und allem, in sein jetziges Quartier geschmuggelt hatte; *butcher* [ˌbʊtʃə]), **in exchange for a long-secreted hoard of small silver** (im Austausch für einen lang heimlich beiseite geschafften Schatz an kleinem Silber; *to secrete* [sɪˈkri:t] — *abscheiden, absondern, insgeheim beiseite schaffen*; **hoard** [hɔ:d] — *Hort, Schatz, Vorrat*).

7

In one corner lived a ragged-plumaged Houdan hen, on which the boy lavished an affection that had scarcely another outlet. Further back in the gloom stood a large hutch, divided into two compartments, one of which was fronted with close iron bars.

This was the abode of a large polecat-ferret, which a friendly butcher-boy had once smuggled, cage and all, into its present quarters, in exchange for a long-secreted hoard of small silver.

Conradin was dreadfully afraid of the lithe, sharp-fanged beast (Conradin hatte entsetzliche Angst vor dem geschmeidigen, scharfzahnigen Biest; *beast* [bi:st]), **but**

it was his most treasured possession (aber es war sein meist-geschätzter Besitz; *to treasure* [ˌtreɪzə] — *hegen, pflegen, schätzen*; *possession* [pəˈzeʃən]). **Its very presence in the tool-shed was a secret and fearful joy** (seine bloße Anwesenheit im Werkzeugschuppen war eine heimliche und ängstliche Freude; *presence* [ˌpreɪzəns]; *fear* — *Angst*), **to be kept scrupulously from the knowledge of the Woman** (die penibel vor dem Wissen der Frau verborgen werden musste; *scrupulously* [ˌskruːpjələsli]; *knowledge* [ˌnɒlɪdʒ]), **as he privately dubbed his cousin** (wie er seine Kusine bei sich nannte; *to dub* — *nennen, synchronisieren*; *privately* [ˌpraɪvətli]). **And one day** (und eines Tages), **out of Heaven knows what material** (aus weiß der Himmel welchem Material), **he spun the beast a wonderful name** (spann er dem Biest einen wundervollen Namen; *to spin* — *drehen, schleudern, spinnen*; *wonderful* [ˌwʌndəfʊl]), **and from that moment it grew into a god and a religion** (und von dem Moment an wuchs es zu einem Gott und einer Religion heran; *religion* [rɪˈlɪdʒən]).

Conradin was dreadfully afraid of the lithe, sharp-fanged beast, but it was his most treasured possession. Its very presence in the tool-shed was a secret and fearful joy, to be kept scrupulously from the knowledge of the Woman, as he privately dubbed his cousin. And one day, out of Heaven knows what material, he spun the beast a wonderful name, and from that moment it grew into a god and a religion.

The Woman indulged in religion once a week at a church nearby, and took Conradin with her (*die Frau frönte einmal in der Woche der Religion in einer nahegelegenen Kirche und nahm Konradin mit; to indulge* [ɪnˈdʌldʒ] — *nachgeben, verwöhnen, frönen*), **but to him the church service was an alien rite in the House of Rimmon** (*aber für ihn war der Gottesdienst ein fremdes Ritual im Haus des Rimmon; to bow down in the house of Rimmon* — *ein Lippenbekenntnis ablegen, nur so tun als ob; alien* [ˈeɪlɪən]). **Every Thursday** (*jeden Donnerstag*), **in the dim and musty silence of the tool-shed** (*in der*

trüben und muffigen Stille des Werkzeugschuppens), **he worshipped with mystic and elaborate ceremonial before the wooden hutch** (huldigte er mit mystischem und aufwendigem Zeremoniell vor der hölzernen Kiste; **to worship** ['wɜ:ʃɪp] — *anbeten, verehren, huldigen; mystic* ['mɪstɪk]; *elaborate* [ɪ'læbəreɪt]; *ceremonial* [ˌsɛrɪ'məʊniəl]) **where dwelt Sredni Vashtar, the great ferret** (wo Sredni Vashtar, das große Frettchen, hauste; **to dwell** — *aushalten, hausen*).

9

The Woman indulged in religion once a week at a church nearby, and took Conradin with her, but to him the church service was an alien rite in the House of Rimmon. Every Thursday, in the dim and musty silence of the tool-shed, he worshipped with mystic and elaborate ceremonial before the wooden hutch where dwelt Sredni Vashtar, the great ferret.

Red flowers in their season and scarlet berries in the winter-time were offered at his shrine (roter Blumen zu ihrer Jahreszeit und scharlachrote Beeren in der

Winterzeit wurden an seinem Schrein dargeboten; *scarlet* ['ska:ɫɪt]; **to offer** ['ɒfə] — *anbieten, andienen, darbieeten*), **for he was a god** (weil er ein Gott war) **who laid some special stress on the fierce impatient side of things** (der besonderes Gewicht auf die heftige ungeduldige Seite der Dinge legte; *fierce* [fɪəs]; *impatient* [ɪm'peɪʃənt]), **as opposed to the Woman's religion** (im Gegensatz zu der Religion der Frau; *oppose* [ə'pəʊz]), **which, as far as Conradin could observe** (die, soweit Konradin das beobachten konnte; *observe* [əb'zɜ:v]), **went to great lengths in the contrary direction** (große Anstrengungen in die entgegengesetzte Richtung unternahm).

10

Red flowers in their season and scarlet berries in the winter-time were offered at his shrine, for he was a god who laid some special stress on the fierce impatient side of things, as opposed to the Woman's religion, which, as far as Conradin could observe, went to great lengths in the contrary direction.

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