



PRESSINFORMATION

ABOUT THE BOOK:

Picture book about saying goodbye, letting go and remembering:
'I'M IN THE HOUSE' by Jekaterina Griskjane

It took almost three years. The 38-year-old illustrator Ekaterina Griskjane went through a sea of tears in many small steps to create this very poetic and emotional book.

Her intention was to give even young readers an idea of what dying and death mean and to comfort them in a sensitive way. The result is not just a book for children – it is for all of us.

For children, dying and death are something abstract. It often doesn't seem as threatening to them as it does to adults. They pay close attention to what is happening around them, ask questions and want to know exactly what is happening. But how do you explain it when you are looking for answers yourself? Nevertheless, it is important to talk to children about how they imagine dying and death.

Jekaterina Griskjane tells the story of a journey in beautiful pictures. It is a fantasy journey that ends with a farewell to a loved one, but also tells us that those we carry in our hearts stay with us forever.

Katja and her grandfather are best friends. They spend a lot of time together until one day Grandpa becomes terminally ill. When Katja learns that Grandpa will soon be living far away in a "special place", she comes up with a plan to save him. Grandpa needs a little house nearby where he can feel safe and stay forever. An adventurous search begins. In the end, Grandpa dies. Even though Katja no longer sees him, he is still with her – he lives in her heart.

The search for the house, the little adventure that the protagonist Katja experiences in the story with her grandfather, is understandable for children, and the idea of a little house in the heart where he lives on is comforting. It often helps to alleviate grief if the deceased continues to have a place in our lives. In an interview, the author tells us a little more about the creation process, the story and also about herself. After all, this is not only her first book, but also a very personal one.

'The book is not just a story, but a bridge between generations that helps children and adults to experience, learn and grow together.'
(Natalia Palcevskaja, Founder & CEO Chayka.lv)



JEKATERINA GRISKJANE: 'I'M IN THE HOUSE'
PICTURE BOOK FROM 7 YEARS, 48 PAGES,



ANSPRECHPARTNER: ANDREA KERN
TENGERS 8, 42781 HAAN, TEL: +49 162-4434383,
KLEINESCHRIFTEN@GMAIL.COM, WWW.KLEINESCHRIFTEN.COM



Interview

with the Latvian author and illustrator Jekaterina Griskjane

"People leave us - but they leave a big imprint in our hearts ..."

How did you come up with the idea of making a picture book about such a sensitive and difficult subject?

Jekaterina Griskjane: The idea for the book came about 4-5 years ago when I drew a little girl playing bingo with a dear old monster (they played it a lot). Then I took a book course and wrote a story about my grandfather, although I originally wanted to do a book about my grandmother. But as I started exploring myself and my childhood and sinking into childhood memories, the story about my grandfather emerged. My grandfather was the family's favorite person and my best friend. A psychologist helped me with this. Because writing this book was also therapy for me (for those who have not yet parted with a loved one, the book provides a great opportunity to find closure). In this way, I was able to heal my childhood traumas.

What was particularly important to you when writing the book? And why did it take so long?

Jekaterina Griskjane: We worked on this book for more than three years. Why so long? Because many people from different countries worked on this project. It took the time and effort to make it a mature book that is also worthy of the subject. I always try to achieve a perfect result, and this book is no exception. When I started writing it, the most important thing for me was (and still is) that it lives and the whole world can see it. Perhaps it will help others who have lost a loved one. It does not bring back the deceased, but it can help to understand in a difficult moment what is actually incomprehensible and yet something quite natural: people leave us - but they leave a big imprint in our hearts.



Jekaterina Griskjane

more information about the author:

https://www.behance.net/jekatergriskja?locale=de_DE
Instagram:
<https://www.instagram.com/artketdesign/?hl=de>



ANSPRECHPARTNER: ANDREA KERN
TENGEL 8, 42781 HAAN, TEL: +49 162-4434383,
KLEINESCHRIFTEN@GMAIL.COM, WWW.KLEINESCHRIFTEN.COM



Is it only a book for children?

Jekaterina Griskjane: The book is not only for children. Parents who read it together with their children can also empathize with the theme of the book. Diving back into childhood for a brief moment to experience all the emotions with the protagonist. There are parents who are afraid to explain to their children what death is and how it happens. This book can tell it without words, through the illustrations alone.

They describe the situation very well and help children (and adults) to understand what it is all about. It can be used by children without them having to read it.

So do you think it is important and right to talk to children about death?

Jekaterina Griskjane: In my opinion, you should explain death to children and talk to them about it (in an appropriate way). Sooner or later they will have to come to terms with it, and the more clearly you explain it in a way that is appropriate to the child's age, the easier it will be for them to accept it. Children need to be picked up in their own language!

Would you describe "I'm in the house" as a comforting book?

Jekaterina Griskjane: Yes, it is. I think this book makes us realize that human life is not eternal, sooner or later it will end. But nevertheless, beloved and close person will remain in our hearts forever. I really believe that they see us from heaven, help and support us, are happy for us.



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