

A week of Saturdays (*Eine Woche voller Samstage*)

Written and illustrated by Paul Maar and Nina Dulleck, Verlagsgruppe Oetinger (1973)

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Country: Germany

Recommended by: Michaela Pschierer-Barnfather

Target age group: 8+

Genre: middle grade fantasy

About: Mr Greenbottle is a timid and unadventurous man. Then, one Saturday, a strange creature appears in his life: a Satur. It's cheeky and noisy, but despite Mr. Greenbottle's initial misgivings they spend a marvellously weird and wonderfully mischievous week together.

A week of Saturdays, the first in a series of 10, is truly joyful and fun to read, but also challenges some preconceived ideas. Educational and playful, magical but down-to-earth, it has all the ingredients of a modern children's classic. Millions of copies have been sold and it has been translated into several languages, but sadly not into English – yet.

Interested publishers can contact: Tina Amor, Oetinger's representative for the UK market, tina@tibooks.co.uk.

Michaela Pschierer-Barnfather, an experienced translator from Austria, would love to bring this book, which she greatly enjoyed as a kid, to children in her adopted country. For more information or a longer sample contact her at michaela@germanenglish.co.uk or [here](#).

SAMPLE TRANSLATION

“We have to inform the zoo. It must have escaped. Nobody keeps something like that as a pet, that's for sure!” said a lady who was standing right at the front of the crowd. So apparently it was some kind of animal.

“It seems to be a species of monkey,” an older gentleman observed. “A species of monkey? With a snout? No, I think it's a frog or something like that,” said another gentleman.

“No, no, no, it can't be a frog; it's got fire-red hair. Have you ever seen a frog with hair? And such a big frog at that?” Well, this was becoming more and more interesting – an animal that looked like a frog and a monkey at the same time! “Shame on you!” a somewhat overweight lady intervened. “Two grown-up men talking like this about a small child. It's disgusting!”

“A small child? Maybe you need your eyes checked!” retorted the gentleman, who thought that the creature was a monkey. But the somewhat overweight lady ignored this last remark and, bending down towards the creature, she said, “What's your name, my darling?” Mr Greenbottle still could not see anything, but suddenly he could hear a rather distinctive voice. It was clear and piercing and said, “I am not your darling, bah!” Everybody's mouths dropped open in amazement and someone shouted out, “It can speak!!” “And in proper English too,” someone else added, utterly astonished.

“Well, just as I said,” the somewhat overweight lady observed, clearly satisfied. She bent down again and said invitingly, “Say something, sweetie!” The same clear and piercing voice replied, “Fatty, fatty!”

“Are you talking about me?” the somewhat overweight lady asked, her face turning red. Some people were sniggering. Then the voice began to sing,

“Fatty, Fatty, Fatso
One day went to Mexico
And there on a beach of shale
She found a Beluga whale.

Fatty, Fatty, Fatso
Climbed on its top to sit, No,
Did the Beluga say
Move, I’m starting to fray.

Fatty, Fatty, Fatso
Didn’t listen, but sang a calypso
For revenge the Beluga did thirst
And so, it promptly burst.”

“How rude,” uttered the somewhat overweight lady. Then she turned around and stomped off. This was Mr Greenbottle’s opportunity. He quickly moved into the gap, pushed slightly forward and suddenly found himself right in front of the singing creature. Now Mr Greenbottle could understand why the others had been struggling to decide what it was. It was very difficult to describe indeed, as it was neither human, nor animal.

Shall we try anyway? Ok, let’s begin with the head: There was a wide, round face peppered with blue dots; two quick eyes, small but bright; a giant mouth; a nose that looked rather like a snout – or maybe a very short trunk; fire-red hair, sticking up like the spines of a porcupine; and two sticky-up ears. Then, the body: A very noticeable, big, green, bulging belly; arms and legs like a child; feet like those of a giant frog. The chest and belly were smooth and green, but the back was red and hairy, like a young orangutan’s.

Having finished its little ditty, the creature was sitting on the ground and, with mischief in its eyes, it looked at each person in turn.

“Well, it definitely isn’t an animal,” one of the bystanders observed. “Otherwise, it wouldn’t be able to talk.”

“So, are you saying it’s a child?” asked someone else from the crowd.

“No, it’s not a child.”

“What is it then?”

“Maybe it’s come from Mars. A Martian!”

“Stop talking nonsense,” intervened a very strict looking gentleman, adding, “This being is not from Mars. Believe me, I know about these things. I am Dr Trout, teacher of sciences at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School.”

Upon this, the being in question began dancing and hopping around, singing loudly,

“Science teacher,
Science teacher,
Isn’t he a stupid creature!
Dr Trout, Dr Trout,
In his head there is a drought.”

Then it sat down again, resting its hands on its belly, and resumed scanning the crowd.

“Will you stop these silly songs!” Dr Trout shouted angrily. By way of an answer, the Non-Martian stuck out a long yellow tongue at him.

“Tell us your name immediately!” Dr Trout ordered. The strange being just laughed at this and resumed its dancing and singing.

“Oh, you are so dumb;
dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb.
So, I dance and hum;
hum, hum, hum, hum, hum.

Dr Trout was really rather angry now. He said, “So, we’re all dumb, are we? And I suppose you are the most intelligent being on this planet, yes? Please, tell us then, what makes us all so dumb?”

“I know who you are, but you don’t know who I am,” the Definitely-Not-An-Animal replied, laughing. Then it began to sing again,

What a shame,
They don't know my name!
They stand around looking glum,
Dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb.
Isn't it a shame
They don't know my name.

“Don't think that we are going to go through every possible name, because we won't!” Dr Trout said crossly. “You may have read too much Rumpelstiltskin. But that's not how it's going to work here. If you don't tell us your name, we're going to call the police!”

“Oh, the police,” said the little creature. “You really think the police know my name?!”

“But maybe I know,” Mr Greenbottle blurted out. He had just had a thought. How did it go again? Sunshine on Sunday, a bright moon on Monday, accounts for T.U.E.S Ltd on Tuesday, Mr Wedneson on Wednesday, thunder on Thursday, and a fry-up on Friday, so... Satur on Saturday. That's got to be it!

And aloud he said, “I bet you are a Satur!”