

Translated excerpt

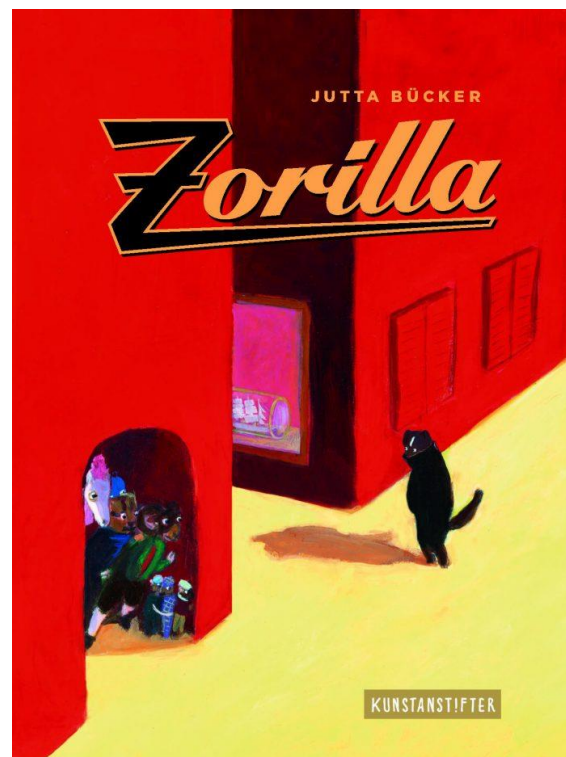
**Jutta Bücker**  
**Zorilla**

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**Jutta Bücker**  
**Zorilla**

Translated by John Reddick



**I**n einer großen Stadt nahe am Hafen lebte der Zorilla.  
Niemand wusste, wann und woher er gekommen war.

Seine Behausung verließ er nur selten, meist erst nach Sonnenuntergang, aber immer mit dunklem Mantel und hochgestelltem Kragen. Begegnete ihm jemand auf der Straße, schaute er ihn mit ernster Miene an, griff in seine Manteltasche und umklammerte etwas.

War es vielleicht ein Messer oder gar eine Pistole?  
Man wusste es nicht.







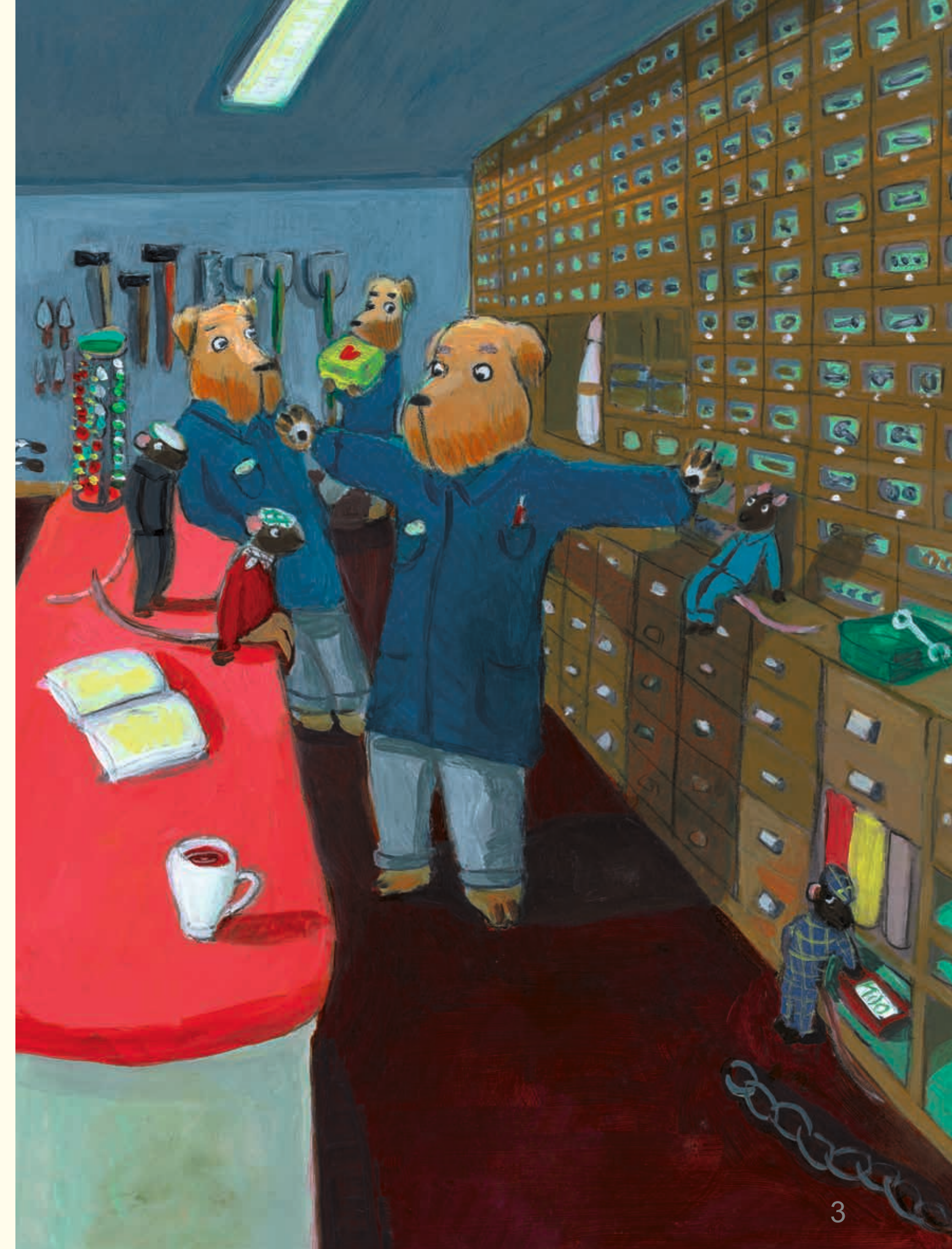
**W**eil er aber so gefährlich aussah und mit niemandem sprach, wurde viel über ihn geredet.



**I**n letzter Zeit war der Zorilla auch tagsüber unterwegs und kaufte Dinge ein, die er eilig in seine Behausung trug. Kaum hatte er einen Laden verlassen, stürzten die Leute hinein und wollten wissen, was er sich besorgt hatte.

Von den Verkäufern erfuhren sie, dass es Bretter, eine gewaltige Menge Sand, Nägel, Scharniere und eine schwere Kette mit eisernen Gliedern waren.

Was hatte der Marder bloß vor?





**S**ie fanden einen Schmelzofen, davor Reste von  
zerschlagenem Glas und eine riesige, seltsame Wanne.  
Vom Zorilla selbst war weit und breit nichts zu sehen.  
Nur sein dunkler Mantel hing über dem Tisch.







**Hätten sie nur einmal  
den Zorilla gefragt ...**

**ODER: WAS AUCH GESCHAH**

The zorilla lived in a large town close to the harbour. No one knew where he had come from, or when.

He rarely left his lair, doing so as a rule only after nightfall, wearing a dark coat with a turned-up collar. If he chanced on anyone in the street he would give them a forbidding stare while jerking his hand into his pocket and grabbing hold of something.

Was it a knife by any chance? Or even a pistol? No one knew.

But because he looked so dangerous and never spoke to anyone he was the subject of much speculation.

Recently the zorilla had been out and about during the day as well, buying items that he quickly carried back to his lair. No sooner had he left the shop than people rushed in wanting to know what he had bought.

Planks, the shop staff told them, planks, a vast quantity of sand, nails, hinges, and a heavy chain with iron links.

What ever was the creature up to?

Everyone feared the worst. The rats imagined him building a crate, shutting them inside, and dumping it in the harbour.

The zorilla's neighbours recounted another grisly event of recent days: the creature had carried large sacks into his house that gave off a fearsome grating noise, and shortly afterwards they had heard the spine-chilling crash of shattered glass.

After a while they couldn't bear the uncertainty any longer. Under cover of darkness the harbour-dwellers went creeping up to the house to discover at long last what was going on.

But just as they were about to start peering through the cracks in the door they were met with vivid flashes of light and intense heat.

Hiding wherever they could, the frightened mob watched to see what would happen next. At first, nothing at all.

Then suddenly: there was the zorilla, standing in the doorway. Was that a smile of satisfaction on his face? It didn't bode well... Something awful was surely going to happen very soon.

None of them found any sleep that night, and no one dared open their shutters next morning for fear that the wretch might be standing outside their window. Only on hearing a babble of voices outside did the animals venture from their houses, driven by insatiable curiosity.

It was the zorilla's neighbours, announcing that the creature had disappeared. Everyone went rushing to his house.

There they found a furnace, fragments of shattered glass, and a huge, weird tub-like contraption. There was no sign whatever of the zorilla himself. Nothing but his black coat, draped across the table.

If only they had asked the zorilla...

Or: The rest of what had happened: