

MY ANIMAL GARDEN

Verses by Bruno Schönlink
Illustrations by Pia Roshardt

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The White Hare

Just now on the Alp he has entered hip-hopping,
On grasses munched up and with long ears a-twitching.
How bright shone the sun up in heaven high o'er,
Gave warmth to the flowers and also his fur.
Then, all of a sudden, cold Winter returned
And snowed in Sir WHITE HARE. The wind – how it roared!

He whiffled his nose, let his body lie covered.
Sir WHITE HARE by snow is not easily flustered,
Since snow keeps him warm and his coat is like snow
And deep under snow there are roots quite enow.
He stayed on the mountain with food him to sate
'Til hard frozen snow could now carry his weight.

How *has* he spread out his hind paws for departure –
Look! how he slides down, as on snowshoes, I ask you!
He browses in woodland, in haycocks he delves
And there he finds friendship and beds and good eats.
He fixes himself on the ice with his claws,
Stands upright if, midday, the sun's heat gives cause.

In Spring he is once again earth brown in colour
He boxes and scrapes, wants a wife for his hollow.
His lady WHITE HARE soon her wish will fulfil:
Four young, small as Mice, in the month of April.
On each forehead glisters a spot white as snow.
They hip to their Mother and hop from her. Lo!
If no Weasel eats 'em, they'll eat the grass bare.
Thus, from a WHITE-HARE-let comes, Autumn, Sir HARE!

Marmots

The Choughs fly to their mountain home,
The Winter storm attacks the Pine –
Sir MARMOT has no need to roam;
He knows no cold – he's dug in fine.

They sleep rolled up within the hay,
So cold and stiff they barely breathe,
'Til Foehns around the mountain play:
We melt the snow, there's space to live.

Their hearts in Winter slowly throb,
Now tick and tick with hasty beat.
The entrance, which they walled up,
Is oped again – the light to greet.

The first blinks out into the day,
He sniffs and listens, Watching Out.
A flowery prospect, all so gay,
Grass stirs that has survived the drowth.

He ventures out, clear is the land,
No bird of prey, no Man in view.
Now jump up others from behind,
Rejoice that Spring is born anew...

The mountain path a Cowherd wends
And herd bells join and sound in tune,
His path the glacier intends –
Then Whistling! from scree and stone.

Then Whistling! from cliff wall drear,
From house in summer that they built,
Alarm and Whistling! – last one there,
Sir MARMOT, he who spied him first.

The Autumn finds 'em fat and round.
They carry hay to Winter's nest.
E'en though the fields in flowers abound,
They soon wall up the entrance fast,
And sleep a sleep so wondrous true,
Deep, once again, these six Moons through.

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Pia Roshardt (illustrator)

Children's Books with Marmots (and a White Hare)

Richard L. Hewitt

Kamuzu Academy, Malawi

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<http://pia-roshardt.snakeshead.org>

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