



by Zoran Drvenkar

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Children's & Young Adults'

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The Boys in Shorts and the Totem of Okkerville

Die Kurzhosengang und Das Totem von Okkerville

review

The latest instalment in a series of wonderfully imaginative adventure stories, *The Boys in Shorts* follows the fortunes of a gang of four eleven-year-olds in the fictional town of Okkerville in Canada. The friends Island, Cement, Rudolpho and Snickers are caught up with ghosts, vampires, demons, werewolves, wicked sheriffs and the villainous Pauli Gang. The plots throughout the series are fantastical, making the books natural further reading for children who have enjoyed Harry Potter; but the supernatural elements here are more down-to-earth. Rather than a hidden world of wizards, where magic has its own laws, these stories present a world where ghosts wave to you across the street and the neighbourhood recluse may be a vampire or just an eccentric old lady.

All three books in the series so far, which has already gained an enthusiastic and dedicated following in Germany, are warmly recommended for an English-language readership: *Die Kurzhosengang* (The Boys in Shorts), *Die Rückkehr der Kurzhosengang* (Return of the Boys in Shorts) and *Die Kurzhosengang und das Totem von Okkerville*. Drvenkar already has a profile in the US and UK, as the author of adult thrillers *Sorry* (Knopf/Blue Door, 2012) and *You* (forthcoming).

about the author

Zoran Drvenkar is the brilliant mind behind the two pseudonyms Caspak and Lanois. He was born in 1967 in Croatia and moved to Berlin with his parents at the age of three. He has been freelancing as an author since 1989, writing novels, poems, stage plays and short stories for children and teenagers and also adults. He has received many awards for his books, including the Oldenburg Children's and Young Adult Book Prize, the German Youth Literature Prize and the Friedrich Glauser Crime Story Prize.

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