



by Charles Lewinsky  
January 2007 / 160pp  
Children's & Young Adults'

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## To Earth and Back

### *Einmal Erde und zurück*

#### review

This is the story of Michell, who comes from another planet to stay unannounced with the narrator, a writer, to gain a deeper understanding of our race. He is 499 years old when he/she arrives, but is a child, not an adult. Where the child comes from, people are born as adults and gain their freedom as children.

Michell takes nothing for granted and looks at the world from an innocent child's point of view. If he is hungry he can't see why it is wrong to eat thirty-three pieces of bread and jam or, equally, to pinch money from a bank to give to a starving beggar. Nor why people rather than trees should be consulted when the council plans to build a new road that will create more pollution not for the people but for the trees. And why should animals be behind bars in a zoo when, unlike people behind bars in a prison, they have done nothing wrong?

Michell looks very like a 'normal' child except for the pictures on his magic T-shirt, which move and appear to be alive. The world according to Michell is in many ways a far less absurd one than the one we inhabit and is explored by Lewinsky with wit and delightful humour. No wonder the narrator is sad when his guest says it is time to return to his planet to celebrate his 500th birthday.

The illustrations add their special quirkiness to the tale and we can be pleased that what started life as a radio play has so successfully transferred to the printed page.

## press quotes

*'Charles Lewinsky turns the world on its head – hilarious.'* – *Tages-Anzeiger*

## about the author

**Charles Lewinsky** born in Zurich in 1946. He works as a playwright, film director and newspaper editor and has written novels, plays for the theatre, and many TV scripts and radio plays. His novel *Johannistag*, published in 2002, was awarded the Swiss Schiller Foundation Award and his most recent novel for adults, *Melnitz* (2006, Nagel & Kimche – reviewed in nbg Spring 2006) was critically acclaimed and will be published in Italy, France, Sweden and the Netherlands. This is his first children's book.

## rights information

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