

The Story of
SINTERKLAAS

Written by
SJOERD KUYPER

Translated by
LAURA WATKINSON

Illustrations by
EMANUEL WIEMANS

Idea
PAM EVENHUIS



ISBN 9789047626701
First edition 2018

Published by Rubinstein Publishing bv, Amsterdam by arrangement
with Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House Inc.,
New York, New York, U.S.A.

All rights reserved.

© Text by Sjoerd Kuypers

© English language translation, Laura Watkinson, 2018

© Illustrations by Emanuel Wiemans

Layout Sonja van Hamel

www.rubinstein.nl
www.sintinamsterdam.nl



‘Girls and boys,’ says the teacher. ‘I have a question for you.’ All the children sit up straight. ‘Who,’ he asks, ‘is coming to town on Sunday?’ No one knows the answer. ‘On a boat,’ says the teacher. Erm... Hmm... ‘With his Piets,’ he adds. Now everyone knows: ‘Sinterklaas!!!’





‘Very good,’ says the teacher, ‘and I have another question for you: Who is Sinterklaas?’ The children all start shouting at once: ‘Sinterklaas is really old. He’s got a beard. He has a big red hat and it’s called a mitre. He rides a horse. He comes on a boat. The people who help Sinterklaas are all called Piet. He carries a staff in his hand. Sinterklaas is really nice. Because he gives us presents!’



Pinar says, ‘Sinterklaas was born in Turkey.’ No one speaks for a moment. Then Linda says, ‘But he always comes from Spain!’ ‘And tulips come from Turkey too,’ says Pinar. ‘Sinterklaas isn’t a tulip!’ shouts Ramon. Everyone bursts out laughing. When they are all quiet again, the teacher says, ‘Pinar’s right.’ Huh? What?

‘It’s true,’ says the teacher. ‘Sinterklaas was born in Turkey.’ ‘And when he was born, he already had a beard,’ says Pinar. ‘No,’ says the teacher, ‘I don’t think he did.’ The children shake their heads. They don’t think so either. A baby with a long white beard – they’ve never heard of such a thing.



‘But Sinterklaas does live in Spain!’ says Linda. ‘I think,’ says Appie, ‘that, after he was born, Sinterklaas sailed on a steamboat to Spain.’ ‘Not a steamboat,’ says the teacher, ‘because Sinterklaas is so old and he was born so long ago that there weren’t any steamboats yet. He sailed on a ship with eight sails.’ Wow!

‘When Sinterklaas sailed to Spain,’ says Appie, ‘he went to Morocco too.’ ‘He certainly did,’ says the teacher. All the children start shouting at the same time again: ‘And China! And Iran! And Suriname! And Poland! And Somalia! And Iraq! And Curaçao! And Groningen! And Syria! And Italy!’ ‘Yes,’ says the teacher. ‘Sinterklaas went to all of those places. He went on a journey around the world.’



‘So why does Sinterklaas only come to the Netherlands now?’ asks Linda. ‘I know why,’ says the teacher, ‘but I’m not going to tell you.’ ‘Why not?’ ‘The story’s too sad.’ ‘Tell us! Tell us!’ say the children. ‘We like sad stories.’