

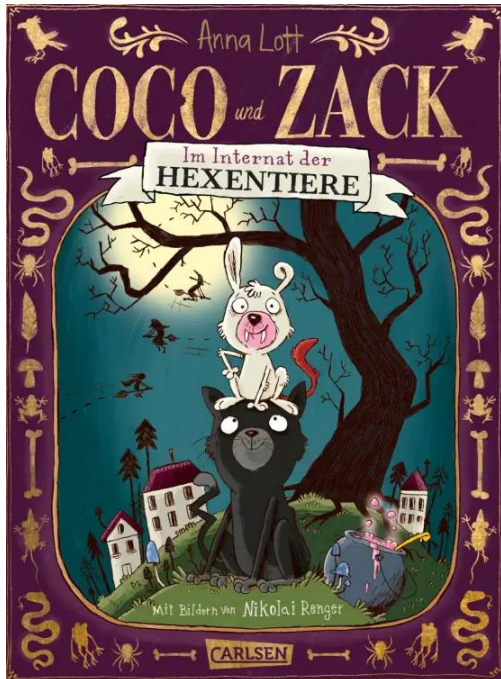


**Anna Lott: Vol. 1 Coco and Zack: The  
Boarding School for Witches' Helpers**  
Illustrations by Nikolai Renger

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**Bd. 1: Coco und Zack – Im Internat der Hexentiere**

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**ENGLISH SAMPLE TRANSLATION**

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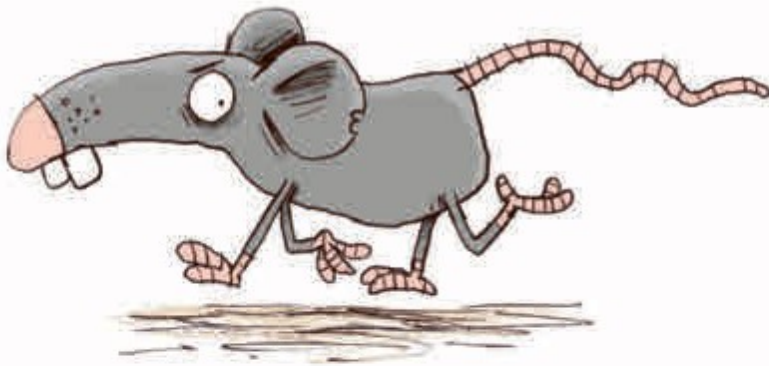
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*Anna Lott*

# COCO and ZACK

The Boarding School for Witches'  
Helpers

*Illustrations by Nikolai Renger*



**CARLSEN**



# The letter

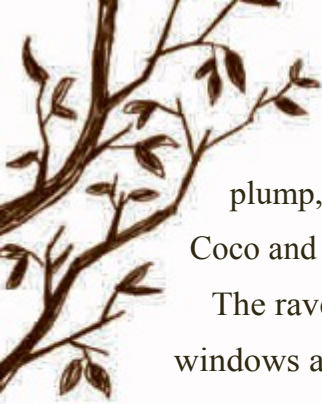
That afternoon, as Zack speeds down the hill from the magic castle to the witches' village, he suddenly hears a strange noise.

*Ffffffffffffffffffffffffff!*, it rustles above him.

Zack stops, looks up and is startled.

A witches' broom bursts out of a large, smoky cloud, on which sits a most unusual creature. It actually looks like a cat, but it has black feathers like a raven and - what kind of head is that? It looks like the head of a toad!

Zack quickly hides behind a large stone. From there, he watches as the raven-cat-toad looks at one little house after another with its big googly eyes. Finally, he gets his witches broom into position and zooms down the steep slope. Straight to the



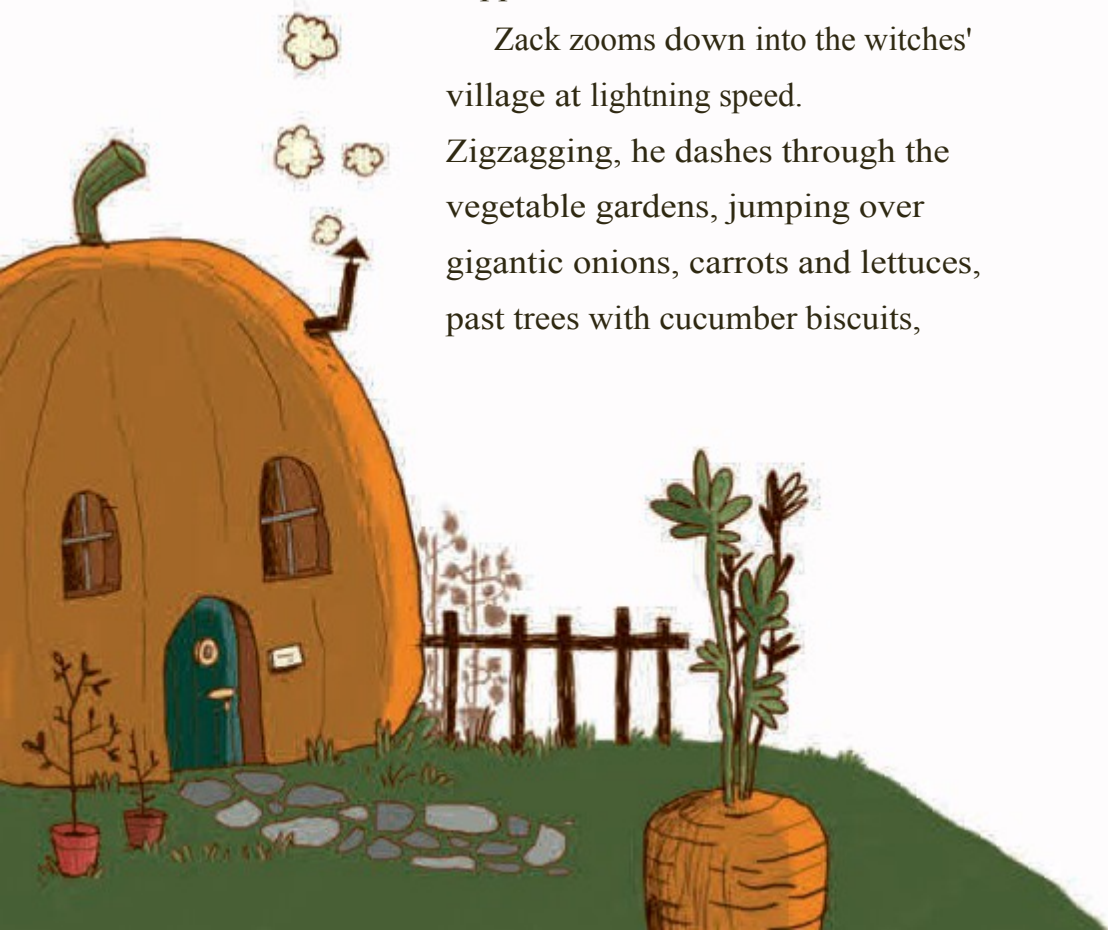
plump, orange pumpkin, in which his best friend  
Coco and her witch Puffschmaus live!

The raven-cat-toad wizzes in through one of the  
windows and out through another only a blink of an eye  
later. Then, with a hissing *Ffffffffffffffffffffffffffffff*!, it  
disappears back into the grey cloud from which it came.

The next moment, a loud screech can be heard from the  
pumpkin. It's Coco! What  
happened?

Zack zooms down into the witches'  
village at lightning speed.

Zigzagging, he dashes through the  
vegetable gardens, jumping over  
gigantic onions, carrots and lettuces,  
past trees with cucumber biscuits,





plum drops and pear chips. He sprints towards the pumpkin, bounces head first through the cat flap in the front door, slithers down the hall, almost collides with the witch Puffschmaus, who is hurrying into her vegetable garden with a tattered witches' hat - and finally comes to a halt in the kitchen.

Cheering loudly, the black, dishevelled cat whirls towards him and flaps its arms around his neck.

"Oh Zack! I'm in! I'm in! I'm in!" Then she dances around the kitchen and sings:

"At last it's tiiiiime! Finally, I'm biiiiiiiig!" Zack hasn't got a clue why his best friend is so jolly. Suddenly he sees that there is a crumpled ball of paper on the kitchen table.

"Just listen! Just listen!"

Coco takes the ball of paper and throws it to him. Zack catches it skilfully and pulls apart the grubby brown paper. There are cats, ravens, toads and snakes on it. And there is also a black chicken. All scary witch animals. Hoo! Zack feels the hairs on the back of his neck stand up.

"You have to press on the spider! There!"

Coco impatiently points to a small black spider with glowing red eyes in a corner of the letter. Zack hesitates, because he thinks the spider is pretty creepy. So Coco presses on it.

The next moment, the paper starts quivering in Zack's paws. And then - can you believe it? - the letter starts to sing!

*"As soon as the sun goes down  
and the moon is in the sky, the  
school bus picks you up,  
because you are a witches'  
helper.*

*So pack quickly, chop, chop!  
The school bus only stops once!*

Zack has no idea what it all means. School bus? Witches' helpers? Hat? Coco presses the little creepy spider seven more times, and while the letter sings and sings, she dances around the kitchen, whooping and warbling along as loud as she can:

*"So pack quickly, chop, chop! The  
school bus only stops once!"*

Finally, out of breath, she stops in front of him.

"Don't you understand? I'm going to boarding school for witches' helpers!"

"Boarding school for witches' helpers? What's that?", Zack asks.

"Well, a school for witch animals where you live and learn!", Coco shouts and whirls through the kitchen again.

Zack takes a closer look at the creepy letter. He looks at the scary snakes, cats, ravens, toads, the black chicken and the little spider. They are all witch animals. Just like Coco. But there is no magic rabbit anywhere! When Zack realises what this means, he begins to cry profusely.



# Scary Zack

"Oh Zack, what's the matter with you? Aren't you happy at all?" Startled, Coco finishes her dance and stops in front of him.

Zack would never have thought that there were so many tears inside him. They gush and splash out of him. A large puddle is already forming on the floor. A little blurred, he can see his reflection in it: a white, cute rabbit with long ears and a small fluffy tail. And next to it, his best friend Coco, the black, dishevelled cat.

"Don't you understand?" he sniffs and points to the witch animals on the invitation. "You are a witch animal! Just like the snakes, toads, rats and the black chicken. That's why you can go to the boarding school for witches' helpers. But I'm a magic rabbit who works for a wizard!"

"So what?" Coco looks at him helplessly.

"You still don't get it? I can't go!" sobs Zack. "We have to split up. "

"Hogwash! We are the best friends in the whole world! And best friends are never separated! Otherwise they'll have me to deal with!", Coco shouts. To confirm her words, she stretches her tail bolt upright in the air, makes a gigantic hump and hisses as eerily as she can. Zack nods. Coco is right. Best friends, such as they are, are never separated!

"So you'll stay here with me!" he shouts with relief and wipes a little snot from his pink nose with his paw. Not knowing where to put it, he smears it into a bunch of carrot greens standing in a vase.

"Stay here? What makes you think that? Never!" Outraged, Coco glares at him. "At the boarding school for witches' helpers you learn how to practice witchcraft! I really want to be able to do that!"

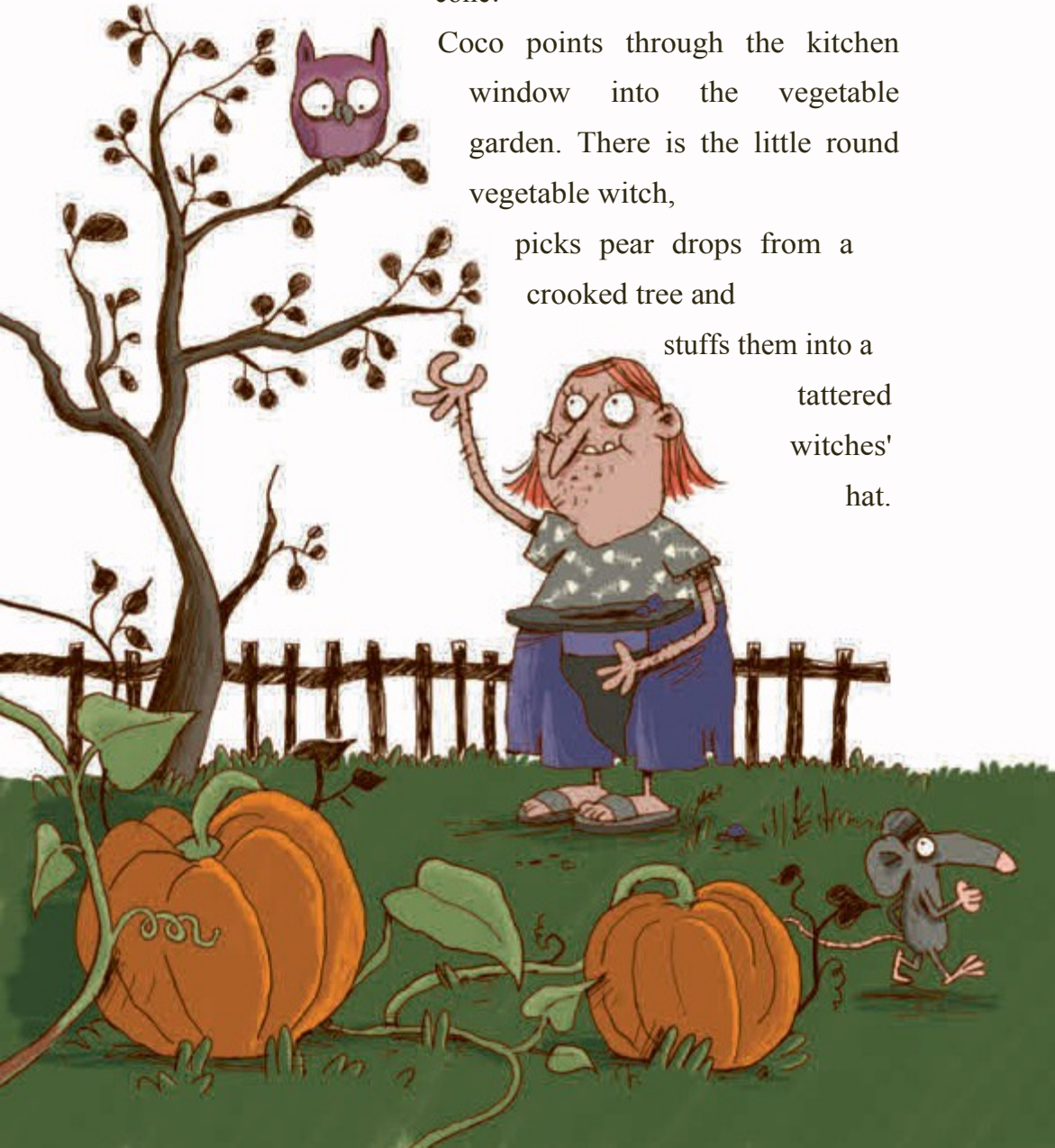
"But why? You have a witch who can do that!", Zack shouts.

"Witches? You call that witchcraft? Just look:  
Puffschmaus can't even conjure me a proper school  
cone!"

Coco points through the kitchen  
window into the vegetable  
garden. There is the little round  
vegetable witch,

picks pear drops from a  
crooked tree and

stuffs them into a  
tattered  
witches'  
hat.



"But if you're at that boarding school, I'm all alone!", sniffs Zack.

All of a sudden he is afraid. He doesn't want to be without his best friend. Never! Coco is not only his best friend. She's his home! Every free minute that he's not working for his magician, Zwickel, he's with her.

"Hogwash! Didn't you listen?", Coco shouts.  
"Best friends are not separated. You're coming with me, of course!"

"Who, me?! But I'm not a witch animal," says Zack. He is completely confused now.

"Of course you are!" giggles Coco.

And before Zack knows what is happening to him, she has already pulled him into the bedroom with her. There, she opens a brightly coloured cupboard, rummages around in it a bit and pulls out a grey, naked rat tail.

"You stick it on. And before that I'll shave off all your hair. Then you'll be a naked witches' rat!" she giggles.

"Have you gone mad?!" cries Zack in horror.

"I'm not a rat! I'm a rabbit!"

"Hmm." Coco thinks.

Then she pulls out a scarlet foxtail.

Triumphantly, she holds it up in the air:

"You can wear this! You'll look like a cat!"

The next moment Zack feels Coco knotting the foxtail to his rear end.

"But ... but," Zack stammers.

"And now say AHHHH!", Coco interrupts him.

"But ... but ... ahhhhh", Zack stammers.

"Very good!" Coco shoves a set of vampire teeth into his mouth. "And now you have to hiss!" she shouts.

Zack is so bewildered that he does what Coco tells him to do.

"Chhhhhhhhhh!", he hisses.

Phew, how it scratches the throat!

"Galactic!" Coco pats her paws together enthusiastically. "And now it's the paws' turn. A scary animal needs sharp claws. Hold still!"

Sighing, Zack holds out one paw after the other to her

and Coco files them into shape with a long, sharp rat-tooth. When she is finished, Zack scratches the floor with one paw. Hoo! There's a real scratch in it now!

"Oh Zack, you're going to be the scariest witch animal in the whole world!", Coco giggles. Then she suddenly looks at him thoughtfully. "But what do we do about the ears? Hm, that's not so easy ..."

Zack feels Coco tugging at his long ears. Finally, she rolls them into two snails and wraps a hair tie around each.

"Oh Zack, you're ... you're - come quickly!"

Coco is beside herself and beckons him into the bathroom with her. Zack follows her curiously. What has Coco done to him? Once there, he looks at himself in the milky mirror - and is startled. What is that snow-white, scary cat? Or is it a goat? Or even a devil?! The creature has horns sticking out like a billy goat, sharp teeth like a vampire, sharp claws like a monster and a tail that glows red as if it were on fire. Cautiously, Zack lifts his paw. The creature in the mirror does the same.



He humps his back and hisses. So does the creature in the mirror. Zack realises: that's him, Zack! And he's scarier than all the witch animals in the world.

"Now we just have to sneak you onto the school bus unnoticed!" squeals Coco delightedly. "And I already know how!"

