

Juris Kronbergs

*From*

**THE BOOK  
OF CLOUDS**

*Translated by Mara Rozitis*

## Clouds in the Sky

The clouds that billow slowly by  
Look down on us from up on high,  
They hear us laugh and hear us fight  
Even when it's dark at night.

Do they ever give a toss,  
If we suffer any loss?  
This I doubt.  
Day in and day out they go about  
Their own airy affairs.

Never stopping, but always there,  
Sheepy and fleecy or thin as hair.  
It's their norm to transform:

Sometimes as big as the Pacific,  
Vaporific and quite terrific,  
Or small as an ox-eye,  
Or multiplied all over the sky  
Like multilateral mackerel.

Some clouds like to rage and roar,  
Others hulk down so forlorn  
And softly sulk till dawn  
Till not a drop of them is left.



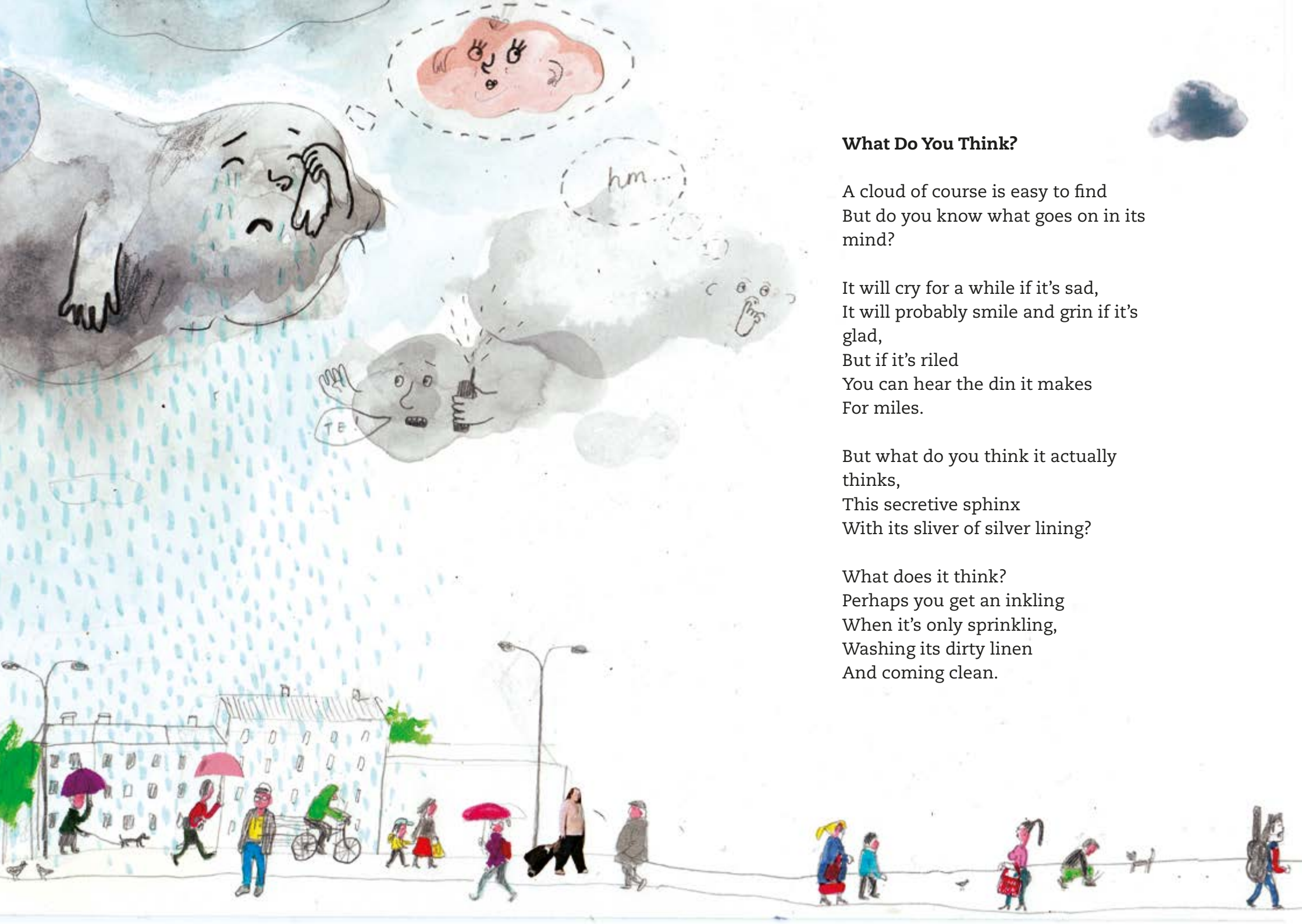
Clouds are fitfully flighty types,  
Some thunder and blunder along  
Others just dawdle, hardly crawling at all.

If you feel a shadow passing by,  
It could be a cloud  
That wants to say Hi!









### What Do You Think?

A cloud of course is easy to find  
But do you know what goes on in its  
mind?

It will cry for a while if it's sad,  
It will probably smile and grin if it's  
glad,  
But if it's riled  
You can hear the din it makes  
For miles.

But what do you think it actually  
thinks,  
This secretive sphinx  
With its sliver of silver lining?

What does it think?  
Perhaps you get an inkling  
When it's only sprinkling,  
Washing its dirty linen  
And coming clean.

## It's Easy For Clouds

It's easy for clouds to transfigure,  
To disperse and reassemble  
Into a shape that begins to resemble  
Something you recognize.

I don't know how,  
But clouds can in an instant change  
From being clouds to something  
strange:  
A plate on a cake, a bearded snake,  
A wonderful wizard, a whiskered  
drake,  
A whizzing lizard, a whirling  
sheikh.

I once saw a cloud  
Turn into a song,  
Quite a soulful  
Barcarole.  
It was so moved to tears  
As it crooned the tune,  
It got carried away  
Not a shred of it stayed.

## Cloud Flags

Cloud flags flapping in the breeze  
Mean that a meeting of clouds  
Has been convened.  
Here they come, all showered and clean.

They have been summoned to discuss  
Things that have little to do with us,  
Like what can be done about:

Mountain height capping  
Sun dogs yapping  
Thunderclapping  
Windspeed restrictions  
Warm front predictions  
Jet stream constrictions

And the vexing question  
Of air space congestion.

These meetings can be long and tedious,  
Rarely acrimonious, for clouds are mostly  
Courteous, but so long winded,  
They do tend to drone on  
And send themselves to sleep.  
Then the heavens open and weep,  
It's raining, it's pouring  
And all the clouds are snoring.