

2024 BOOK WEEK WRITING COMPETITION

THE HIDDEN WORLD

"Geez, it sure is hot today!" May said as she shrugged off her woollen jacket. "I agree. The sun has been shining really strong lately." Grace pointed out. The two girls were strolling through the lush green park, with no worries on their mind. It was school holidays, and the girls certainly deserved a break from their overwhelming school work.

"There is the creepy old house that everyone thinks is haunted." Grace pointed at the abandoned, shabby house, secretly hidden behind the trees.

"The doors aren't meant to be open, are they?" May said, eyeing the slightly open door, but already knowing the answer to her own question.

"Ummm... no." Grace stated, "Reckon we should check it out?"

"Sure! I wanna tell my parents that I'm going for about ten minutes, so they don't get suspicious, okay?" May told Grace.

"Same" Grace replied.

They crept up to the house, and silently tiptoed in. It turned out to be almost completely empty, apart from a small cupboard tucked into a corner. Cobwebs covered the one-room house, giving it a sense of immense spookiness.

"I really don't wanna stay here much longer. It gives me the creeps. Let's -" Grace didn't finish her sentence because a high pitched noise screamed from the cupboard. The girls looked at each other, in both fear and confusion, and slowly crept towards the cupboard. The noise got louder and louder, as they got closer and closer. Grace put one hand on a handle, and May took the other handle.

"On three," Grace said, "We pull."

"One," May muttered.

"Two," Grace said, shaking.

"Three!" They both shouted and pulled the scratched doors open.

"AARGHH!!" They screamed as a blinding blue light filled the tiny room. The duo seemed to be getting pulled closer to the light... too close... way too close... Then suddenly, they both disappeared.

Spinning. Blue. Falling. What way is up and down?

"Ooff!" May said as she landed on something soft. She sat up, rubbed her head, and heard screaming from above her. It was Grace. Who landed directly on top of May.

"Ooh... you okay, May?" Grace asked, picking herself up.

"Yeah. You?" She asked, squashed.

"I'm fine. Where are we?" Grace said, looking around.

"Oh my gosh Grace! Look up! The sky is a fluorescent green!" May said, not believing her eyes.

"Looks like we're on an island? But islands don't have green skies. Nowhere has green skies!" Grace said.

The girls looked around and saw that they had landed on sparkling golden sand. A shimmering portal was in the base of an oddly shaped tree trunk.
"See ya! I'm getting off this island!" May got up and ran to the portal.
As she went to get in, it was like a forcefield blocked her, so she went flying back.
"I can't get out," she whined. "We're stuck here!"
"Ok. Let's try and stay calm, and look at our environment" Grace said, taking deep breaths, knowing that overreacting won't help anyone.
"Wait, is that a bird with four legs and a tail?" She said, pointing at the sky.
"No, That's a... that's a flying dog!" May laughed. "See those birds on the ground? They're barking!"
"What?! It's like everything is upside down here!" Grace shook her head in disbelief.
"I like it, but I don't. It doesn't make any sense!" May said.
The two girls picked a direction, and started aimlessly walking, knowing that staying put probably won't help them get out.

A long, tiring hour later the brave duo heard a distant howling.
"W-what was that?" May stuttered as they walked past charming pastel pink trees.
"I don't know. The sound came from over there." Grace pointed at a large apple tree, its trunk a fetching blue. They crept towards it, and peeked behind. A miniature fox lay there, whimpering. Its delicate arm was curled up in a way it definitely shouldn't be. You see, Grace and May were very kind at heart, so they gently knelt down beside this helpless fox, studying its arm. Not only were these girls the kindest, they were as smart as Einstein, which means in the real world, they would know just how to deal with this problem. But this isn't the real world.
"Ow... looks like foxy here was climbing a tree, then fell." May said sadly.
"Well, she could've been flying, for all we know!" Grace pointed out, raising her hands.
"We need to help her." May looked at the whimpering fox.
"How? I'd know how to do this in the real world, but not here!" Grace put her face in her hands.

"Have you tried de twee sap?" A squeaky voice came out from the darkness.
"Who said that?!" Grace asked, picking up a rock. "I know boxing! Sort of."
"Me. I said it." A purple, (yes, purple!), raccoon stepped into the light.
"Oh my gosh I'm gonna faint." May whispered.
"Have you tried de twee sap to heal de fox?" the raccoon repeated politely, not understanding why they didn't answer the first time he asked.
"Umm... no?" Grace said, not believing that she was talking to a raccoon.
"Cut down a twee, rub sap on the fox's arm. You will not be able to leave this place until you heal de fox." the raccoon squeaked.
"Why? What does the fox need to do?" Grace queried the light purple raccoon. She was losing patience, she just wanted to get out of this place.
"She needs to do de magical dwum beat, to open your portal," the raccoon answered. "Well, you guys best get onto it. I'm assuming you guys need to leave?," the raccoon continued, raising his eyebrow.
"Oh no! We've been gone for almost 2 hours! Our parents are going to be so worried!" Grace bit her nails.
The raccoon laughed. "Don't worry, miss, but time moves much faster here than in your own dimension. You have only been here for 5 minutes!"
"Oh phew!" May sighed with relief. "Now let's help this fox!"

The raccoon departed the girls, leaving to his secret burrow, so the smart duo walked to a slim tree.

"How are we going to cut it?" May asked.

"Well I thought we could just pull a little bit of bark off the tree, and collect the sap from there." Grace said.

They pulled a small piece of bark off, and sap came streaming out like a waterfall.

"Gee, alot comes out of it!" May pointed out.

"Ok. Maybe we should collect as much as we can, then rub it on the fox so she can do ... what's the fox supposed to do again?" Grace asked.

"Her magical drum beat on the tree trunk." May said smartly.

The strong duo found the fox, who was still crouched behind the same apple tree they found her at, and May (who was just a little bit stronger than Grace,) gently picked up the fox and walked the short distance back to the tree. They cupped their hands under the thickly flowing sap, which was a crystal-clear blue. They got the fox's arm, and as soft as they could, rubbed the sticky mixture on her deep cut. After they were done, they stepped back and looked at the fox.

"Why is nothing happening?" May asked, looking at the cut, which just had a heap of blue stuff on it.

"I don't kn-" Grace was going to tell May that she didn't have the slightest idea, but she abruptly stopped, because a shimmering blue light was twisting around the fox's injury.

"Oh my..." May gasped.

The fox leaped up, like it had just been pricked by a pin.

"Aww, so cute." Grace said as the fox leaped around with joy.

"Yeah. Now, should we take Ms Fox here to the portal?" May questioned.

"Let's do that. I know that the portal is in the direction of that really thick tree over there."

"Okay fox. Time to do your thing!" Grace said happily.

The girls had reached the portal so the fox, who had excitedly followed the girls on the walk, pranced up to the tree trunk. She raised her hands above her head and... Smack! She hit the tree so hard, the hollow sound rang out across the whole island. Satisfied with her first hit, she nodded to herself, and as quick as a flash, hit the tree again, her hands moving in a blur. The sound was amazing, like when you go to a concert and see that awesome drum solo. After a couple of minutes, she finished with a loud bang! The portal seemed to grow bigger and brighter, like it was getting ready for someone to jump in it. The fox stepped aside and pointed to the portal. Then she showed them a thumbs up.

"I think she said the portal is ready." May said happily, still awestruck by the amazing drumming.

"Thank you so much, fox!" Grace said gratefully.

The fox nodded, as if to say "Thank you for healing me. Now you may go."

Knowing her business was done, she shot away.

"Man, what an adventure!" May shook her head, grinning.

"See what can happen when you go to the park with your bestie?" Grace laughed.

"You mean, to be teleported into another dimension?" May raised her eyebrows.

"Yeah." Grace chuckled. "Come on. We have been waiting for this portal to open this whole time!" she said, moving towards the portal. She stopped for a moment.

"I was thinking, we're still on school holidays, so wanna come back tomorrow?"
Grace asked cheekily.

"Oh yeah!" May did a little dance.

"On three," Grace smiled, bringing back the memory of them at the cupboard, "We jump in."

"One" May made a stupid face.

"Two" Grace laughed.

"Three!" They both jumped in.

Turns out, the Raccoon was right! They had only been gone for 10 minutes!
And they all lived happily ever after.

Wait, this isn't a fairy tale.

What?! Director, I'm confused!

The End