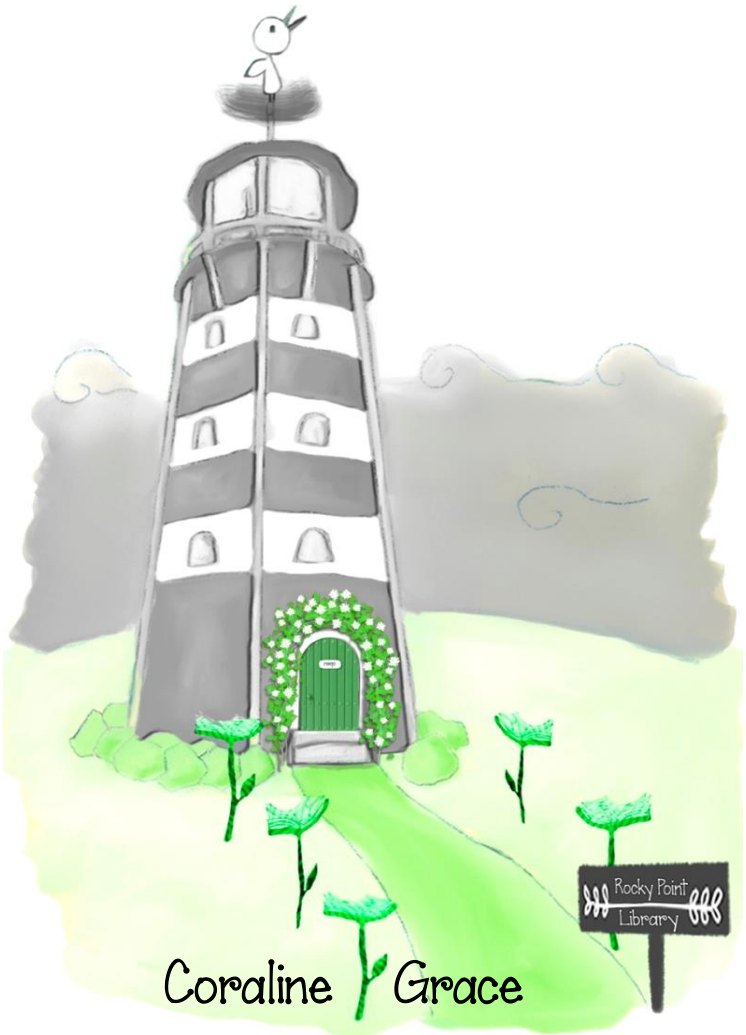


# Pixie And The Green Book Mystery



Coraline Grace

To my family.  
And to my library for excusing overdue  
books.

The inspiration  
Hayao Miyazaki  
C. G.

Pixie And The Green Book Mystery

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# Contents

## Chapter 1

*Too Many Apples* ..... 1

## Chapter 2

*Library Romp* ..... 7

## Chapter 3

*Out of Sorts* ..... 13

## Chapter 4

*One Shoe Cindi* ..... 27

## Chapter 5

*A Page For Rabbit* ..... 37

## Chapter 6

*Alice's New Pencil* ..... 45

Chapter 7

*Winding It Up* ..... 53

Chapter 8

*A Gift* ..... 61

Chapter 9

*Fairy Visit* ..... 75

# Chapter 1



## Too Many Apples

“Oh, crumbs!” Pixie mumbled.

“Why is everything going wrong today?”

The morning started out rather crummy when she showed up to school wearing apples from her bows to her toes. It wasn't out of the ordinary for Pixie to have apples on her clothes. But she had never worn so many. In fact, she was quite

fond of them. After all, Pixie's real name was Marigold. Just like the apple.

Pixie's classmate, Jack, noticed the apples during a math test. He began to point and snicker. Soon others erupted in laughter.

Alora, Pixie's BFF, gave her thumbs up and whispered, "Just ignore them, Pixie, okay?"

To make matters worse, the teacher, Miss Gruff, called Pixie to the front of the classroom and fussed at her for disrupting the class. "I've never seen such muttering and slouching. Now go sit down and finish your problems!" Miss Gruff had a stormy face and didn't like kids. Pixie was used to being the teacher's pet, except in this class.

She sat back down at her desk and picked up her blue pencil. *It was fish face Jack's fault*, Pixie thought, but said nothing. Nobody likes a tattle tale. *What does he know? He has eyes like a fish and doesn't blink.*



Pixie blamed her big sister, Caroline, for the fashion disaster. Apparently, wacky clothes and knee socks are *GC* in

seventh grade. *GC* stands for girlcentric and means cool. But this was not the case at Strawbridge Elementary. Pixie glanced at the ticking clock. *Ugh, it was only 10:09 a.m.*

Later, at the water fountain, Pixie took four gulps of water and PING!

“Oh no,” she cried looking down at her soggy pencil. It was a special blue fuzzy pencil. Her Aunt G had sent it from one of her exotic travels.

Gracie Bell Jingles was her real name, but Pixie called her Aunt G for short.

Pixie was sure great kings and queens had used this pencil to





sign important papers.

“Super gross!” she huffed, pulling it out of the mucky drain. “My day has gone from bad to worse!”

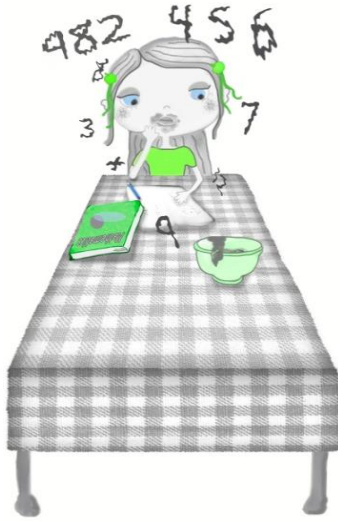
Alora kept trying to cheer Pixie up. She even gave her a soft-centered piece of chocolate from her lunch box. It was useless. Pixie watched Jack show off his hot pink laced shoes at the lunch table. *Pink's a silly color*, she said in her head. And to make matters worse, one of Pixie's loopy ribbons fell into her caramel dip. The only time she perked up was when the school bell rang at the end of the day.

Usually, she and Alora counted how many acorns they could crunch under their shoes walking home. But today she ran home by herself.

Pixie didn't even stop to catch the falling leaves.



## Chapter 2



### Library Romp

Pixie opened the front door just as her mom was coming out of the kitchen. “Welcome home, Miss Pixie. Get to your homework straight away, please!”

Today they had plans to romp the library for garden books. This is when she and her mom emptied the shelves making book piles to take home. Some-

times they romped for specific things like fairies. And sometimes they just romped whatever caught their eye. Normally, Pixie would be tickled pink about flower-filled books. But not this day.

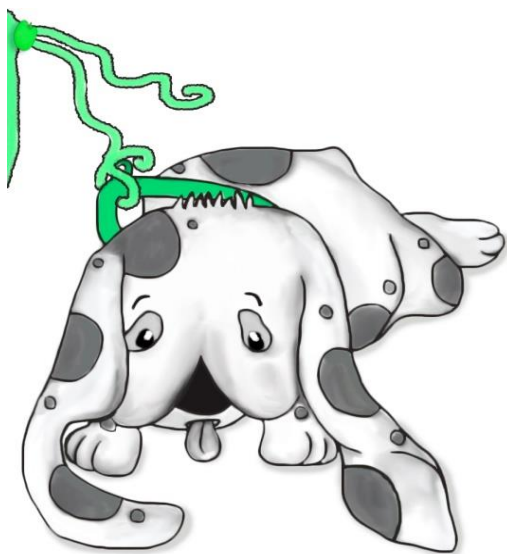


She went into the kitchen and plopped her books on the table. There was some chocolate cake batter left in the mixing bowl. So with one hand in the bowl and the other holding a pencil, she began her homework. After working for what seemed like an

eternity, Pixie finally finished. Adding three-digit numbers takes time. She was dog tired.

Math wasn't too difficult. She just didn't see the purpose of fat numbers. Reading mounds of library books, now that made perfect sense.

Pixie's tummy was still growling, so she walked over to the fridge. She wanted to make ants on an apple log before going to the library. Peanut butter apples, topped with raisins was the perfect after school snack. But before she could open the pantry, SMACK! She tripped over their droopy hound, Nutmeg. Her hand smashed into Caroline's half eaten PB&J sandwich on the counter. *What a gooey mess!* Looking down, Pixie saw her sock charm was hooked on the dog's collar.



She tugged it, breaking the green string that tangled around him. And stuffed it in her pocket. But it would take more than string to get him off the cool tile. That dog loved melting on the kitchen floor. Nutmeg was not brown. He was covered with black and white spots. Caroline won him in the town's *Pie In The Sky* contest two years ago and named him Nutmeg. That was her

secret spice. But to Pixie, he was an Oreo kind of dog.

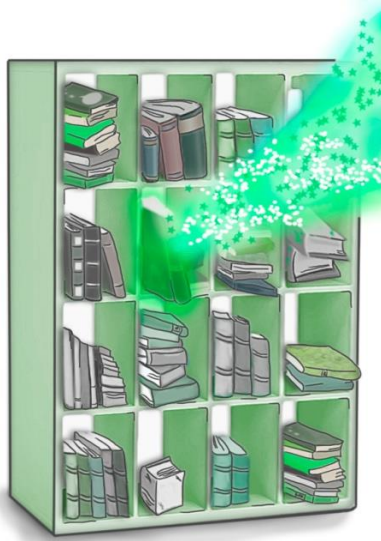
It was time to set off for the library. And the thought of a happily ever after story brought Pixie a half smile. She loved reading books of all kinds, especially fairy tales. Sometimes, she even checked out super scary books. These would keep her up all night long hiding under the covers. Thankfully, that wasn't very often. A trip to the library might be what she needed to cheer herself up.







## Chapter 3



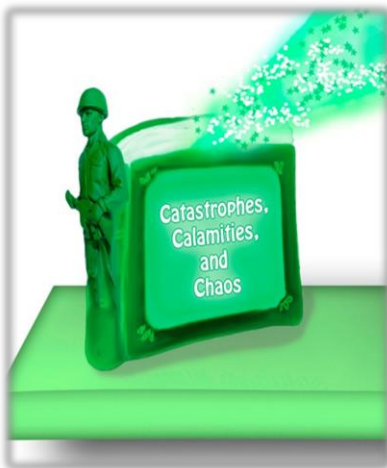
### Out of Sorts

The smell of honeysuckles hanging in the archway and paper met her nose as the library door opened. This was Pixie's home away from home. She was happy here. When they arrived, Pixie skipped off to the children's section and her mom went to look for garden books.

Pixie collapsed on a huge yellow

pillow that almost swallowed her up. She looked around and something was different. There was no one else there and Pixie felt like she was being watched. The sun streamed in through the large stained-glass window overlooking the children's section. Pixie followed it with her eyes. The sunbeam stopped over a dark green leather book. She had never seen this book before.

Pixie had read most everything and explored every nook of the library.



A mysterious glowing book was something new. So, she rose up from the squishy pillow and walked over to check it out.

It stood upright like a tall soldier. She pulled the book from the shelf. It was so massive she dropped it on the floor. A puff of dust swirled in the air. It tickled her face.

“Whoops!” she giggled and sneezed.

A new librarian was staring at her from behind the checkout counter. Even he was unfamiliar. The usual librarian, Miss Rita Goode, was nowhere in sight. Pixie saw the title, *Catastrophes, Calamities, and Chaos* was glowing. These were very BIG words for an almost nine year old girl. So, she decided to ask the new library gentleman what they were.

The librarian snarled at her, “Don’t you know little girl?”

Pixie shook her head.

He glared through the bottom of his

glasses and growled, “That’s what’s wrong with kids these days. Don’t read enough. One of these days, there will be no books to read!”

The librarian was dressed in teacher clothes and smelled like stale popcorn. He was bald except for a tuft of silver hair above each ear. And his pasty white skin made him look like he’d never seen the sun. Pixie was curious why a line went through



the middle of his glasses, but did not want to upset him anymore. So, she returned to the pillow and opened the book. After studying the first picture, she began to read.

*Once upon a time,  
Princess Cinderella was*

*walking through the woods when she came across a White Rabbit that was in a panic about being late.*

*“Oh my whiskers, I’m late!” gasped the White Rabbit.*

She jumped when someone tapped her on the shoulder. A girl who looked to be about her age stood with her arms crossed. She had wavy blonde hair and was wearing a blue dress with puffy sleeves. Pixie thought she had seen this girl before, but couldn’t remember where.

“What are you reading?” the girl asked.

“It’s a story about Cinderella. And she’s talking to a rabbit that won’t stop looking at his pocket watch,” Pixie replied.

The girl glanced at the picture in the book. “There you are!” she shrieked.

“Do you know whose rabbit that is?”

She reached out to take the green book, but Pixie held it tight. They tugged it back and forth for a minute.

“Let go!” the girl said.

“No!” Pixie answered.

“I need to see it!” the girl demanded.

“It’s important. I know that rabbit!”



Pixie pulled the book out of her hands. “Okay,” she said. “You can look at the picture, but I’ll hold it.”

The girl stared at the open page. Pixie watched, baffled. Where had she come from in the first place? She didn’t hear the jingle of the library door before the girl appeared.

“Her name is Cindi and she is talking to MY White Rabbit,” the girl snapped. “How dare she!” She stomped her foot. “They do not belong in that book.”

Then, before Pixie’s eyes, the strange girl jumped into the book.

“My goodness!” Pixie cried out.

The librarian turned down the aisle pushing a squeaky book cart. He hissed at Pixie to be quiet. “Close your mouth and stop yapping.” His eye slits glowered

at her. “Shush! And read your book.”

She had never seen eyes like this. They were jade green and glowed just like a cat’s eyes in the dark. Pixie had to get out of sight. Clutching the green book, she moved to the teen section in the back of the library. Normally, it was full of noisy boys playing Dragon Keeper cards. But today it was empty. In the corner was a blue couch and she raced over to it. It was mammoth. Her feet dangled, not able to reach the ground. Pixie swiftly opened the



book and peered back down at the page. The girl who was standing next to her was now in the story. She was waving her finger at Cinderella, or as she



had called her, Cindi. She looked out of sorts. Pixie started again.

*Once upon a time, Princess Cinderella was walking through the woods when she came across a White Rabbit. He seemed to be in a panic about being late for something. Then suddenly, Alice in Wonderland appeared. "Why is my rabbit here with you?" Alice demanded. Cinderella's mouth curved up nervously.*

*"The rabbit says that he is lost and he is late. I am lost, too. Do you know where our story books are?" Cinderella whispered.*

Pixie shook her head. Of course! That's why the girl seemed familiar. *Alice in Wonderland*. She had just reread that book last week. Pixie pinched her hand thinking she was dreaming. "Ouch!" she said under her breath. "I am awake and

now have a red mark to prove it.”

She turned the crinkly page.

*“I can talk for myself you know,” the White Rabbit said crossly.*

*“Well, in that case you had better go and find our books so that we can get back into our stories,” Alice replied.*

*The White Rabbit looked down at his feet, and his hands began to shake. “I..I.. can’t!” he wailed. “He might catch me!”*

*Alice and Cinderella looked at each other. “The Book Guardian!” they said in unison.*

“Wait, wait,” interrupted Pixie. “Who is the Book Guardian?”

Three heads popped out of the open page and Pixie fell backwards. Cindi, Alice,

and the White Rabbit pointed to the librarian.



And before she could stop herself, Pixie blurted, “Why are you afraid of him?”

“Getting caught could mean big trouble!” Alice said sharply. She continued, “When the Book Guardian puts the glowing green book on the shelf, fairy tales come to life. That’s when he tries capturing us characters inside the book. And once inside, we forget where our books are shelved.”

Cindi tried to speak. But Alice kept on. “The Guardian’s clever. He knows book characters fill up pages with their words. And the more they talk, the more pages are added to the green book.”

“Let me add that climbing out of pages is exhausting,” Cindi put in. “But if characters don’t escape the book before it stops glowing, they turn into numbers in the back of the book.”

“And their storybooks disappear,” the White Rabbit finished.

“Why is he doing this?”  
Pixie asked.  
She had lots of questions but time was running out.



“There’s no time to explain. We have to return to our stories before the book stops glowing,” answered Alice.

The White Rabbit looked at his pocket watch. “Yes, yes the little hand is almost on the nine!”

“Oh, my!” Pixie did not want to see her new friends turn into numbers in the mysterious book.

“It’s time like this we need the Seven Dwarfs,” Alice chimed in.

Pixie looked around and didn’t see any dwarfs. And how could the Seven Dwarfs help at a time like this? It fell silent, and the cart noise grew louder. This meant the Guardian was near.



## Chapter 4



### One Shoe Cindi

Pixie was not sure how she got tangled up with the book world. But she was tingling with excitement. She knew all her fairy tales and wanted to help them find their story books. After all, she was the best reader in the whole second grade.

“I will help you get back into your books.” She thought back to some of her

mystery stories. “That’s it! Duck back into the green book and I’ll sneak over to the computer and look for your books.”

Pixie did just that. She crept over to computer and began pecking the keys. Numbers popped up on the screen. It showed that *Cinderella* and *Alice in Wonderland* were both checked out. So she cracked the book to tell her friends. But they didn’t respond. Alice was scolding them for getting caught in the book.

*“The pastries smelled delicious,” Cindi was saying.*

*“How were we to know the tasty desserts were a trap?” asked the White Rabbit.*

*“You two must not be so gullible. The Book Guardian will get you right where he*



*wants you and SLAM! You're caught,"*  
*Alice replied.*

Pixie grabbed a yellow square of paper from the writing box. She scribbled down the book numbers. Time was running out. Oh, no! The Guardian was heading to the front desk to reload the cart. Pixie remembered her secret reading spot from when she was younger. She scurried over behind the magazine rack and opened the green book. She quietly called her friends to come out.

"The coast is clear," Pixie assured them. Then she broke the news that their books were checked out.

"Oh, that's how the Book Guardian tries confusing us," Cindi said in her small voice. "He changes the status of our books so it looks like the books aren't here."

“But it’s not true,” Alice said. “Our books are here. We just have to find them.”

White Rabbit tapped his pocket watch and thumped his foot.

Pixie knew what this meant. “Let’s get moving, the clock is ticking.”

Cindi clapped her hands. “Thank you! But let’s rush so I don’t miss curfew.”

Pixie carried the big green book, along with the three fairy tale characters, toward a row of shelves. Swiftly, she wound through

the aisles. On a lofty shelf, a blue book fluttered. Pixie climbed up a rolling ladder and grabbed the book. It had a picture of a glass slipper on the binding and *Cinderella* in pale

1 2 3 4 5  
6 7 8 9 10



blue letters. “Found one!” she said.

She opened the first page and took a second look. The book was alive! Two tall men wearing pointy hats marched in front of a crystal castle. And big black chains held up what looked like a billion-ton draw bridge. The sound of a snapping alligator echoed in the moat below. Pixie had always dreamt of living in such a place.



“Wow, you have such a magnificent home!” said Pixie with a smile.

Cindi replied, “This is where I end up at the end of the story. I come from what you would call a fixer upper. Except, I was the fixer.” She curtsied like a proper princess and leapt back into her story.

WHEW! Pixie closed *Cinderella* and put it safely back on the shelf. Alice and the White Rabbit were still half in and half out of the green book.

“That One Shoe Cindi is most peculiar,” Alice said.

“Why do you call her One Shoe Cindi?” Pixie asked.

“Okay, I’ll tell you the story,” Alice said. “The short version, of course.”

“Yes, the short version,” Pixie agreed.

“Cindi went mad living with her

wretched step-mother and two sisters. First, she began forgetting to wear both shoes. And then she started wearing strange clothes with animal prints. But with the help of some friendly mice, she learned to sew. She thought perhaps selling wacky clothes could make life better. Spending the rest of her life doing chores and house fixing is not the life she wanted.”

Pixie nodded. She did not like doing chores either.

“Things got better when Brownie, the Third Little Pig moved to town,” Alice continued. “Brownie used to run a bakery with his two brothers, until they were eaten by the Big Bad Wolf. And not wanting to be next on the menu, Brownie started *VAC*, or the *Villain Awareness Company*.

He called the Seven Dwarf body guards from *Snow White* and asked for help.

Underdogs like himself needed protection. Except, he was an underpig. Anyway, the Seven Dwarfs agreed to join *VAC* and rid the land of evil villains by banishing them into other books.”

“That’s why Cindi wanted the Seven Dwarfs to help,” Pixie said.

Alice kept on. “And they did just that. Cindi’s wicked step-mom and sisters were

tossed onboard the *Jolly Roger* pirate ship. And were last seen scrubbing the poop deck. It’s believed the captain has an iron hook for a hand and a pet alligator.”



“That’s the *Peter Pan* story!” Pixie interrupted.

Alice stared at her and finished. “Cindi’s dream of opening up a clothes shop came true. COOL THREADZ. She still walks around with one shoe, even though the towns-people call it odd. But that doesn’t matter to Cindi, it’s her way.”



Pixie listened to Alice's strange words. This is not how she remembered the Cinderella story. However, she liked how Cindi didn't care what others thought of her clothes. A thought popped into her head, *APPLE THREADZ could be GC at Strawbridge Elementary.*



# Chapter 5



## A Page For Rabbit

From out of nowhere, the Guardian whipped around the corner. Pixie quickly dipped down. Her pulse pounded knowing he was now after them.

“Hurry, hurry, you must get us into our book before he catches us!” exclaimed Rabbit.

“If not, you will have a book without

words,” Alice added.

There on the binding of a little red book, engraved in golden letters, were the words *Alice in Wonderland*. Pixie bent down to a low shelf and gave an excited shriek. “Got it!” she said and beamed. Alice abruptly called White Rabbit to follow as she jumped inside the book.

**SWOOSH!**

Like a tiger, the Guardian pounced on the White Rabbit and

grabbed him by the ears.

“Gotcha! Looks like Alice will have to do without her White Rabbit from now on.”



The hair on Pixie's arm felt prickly. Trying to help her fairy tale friends was turning into a scary story.

Cindi darted out from behind a shelf and yelled, "Put down that White Rabbit or the Red Queen will have your head!"

The Guardian bellowed out a deep laugh. "You are just an absent-minded girl who can't even remember to put on both shoes."

And yes, Cindi was wearing only one shoe. Pixie watched Cindi's face turn red as a tomato. Cindi took off her glass slipper and chucked it at him.

The slipper missed the Guardian and smashed into the rolling ladder. It shattered into a million pieces. Just when things couldn't get anymore weird, they did. Seven dwarfs began climbing out of

the book return bin. They had baskets of colorful apples. Pixie saw all different kinds including the Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Fugi, and Braeburn. She knew her apples.

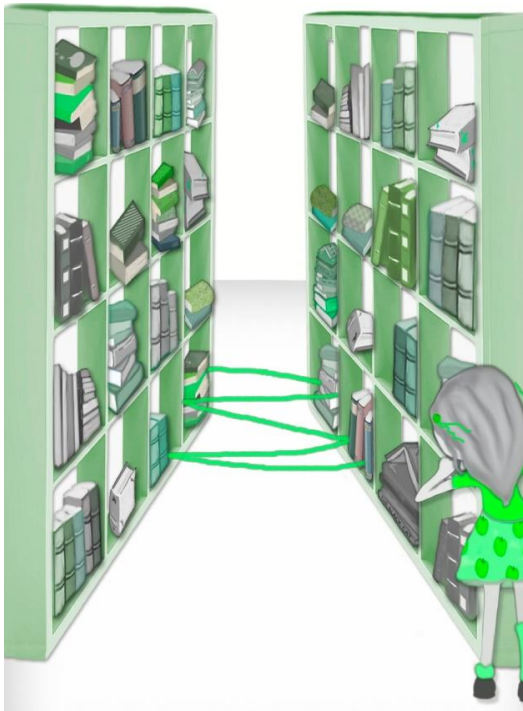


“Where did these come from?” Pixie remembered *Snow White* and how the Evil Queen poisoned her with an apple. She guessed that *Snow White* was in the book bin. But now was not the time to look.

Dwarfs began scaling the towering shelves. And Sleepy started making a sling shot using computer cords. Except, he kept falling asleep. Pixie chuckled at his thunderous snoring. *How can anyone sleep through this?*

Apples began flying. The Guardian was pelted from all directions. He couldn't hold on any longer. The White Rabbit squirmed out of his arms and dropped to the floor.

Pixie had to think fast. The Guardian was on the move about to catch the White Rabbit again. *I knew this would come in handy!* She pulled the string from her pocket. Quickly, she zigzagged it across the bottom shelf.



*Hopefully this will stop him.* She crossed her fingers. “JUMP!” Pixie yelled to White Rabbit racing down the aisle. He leaped over the green string and landed in her arms. The Guardian was running towards them, but didn’t see the thin web in his path. WAM! He hit the ground.

“Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, The Guardian must go!” hollered Sleepy from the highest step of the ladder. With his slingshot loaded with apples, he opened fire. PEEEEuUuUuUUm! Apples piled on top of the Guardian until he couldn’t move. It was no use. He was trapped. Now all he could do was watch, knowing his fate was sealed for now.

Just then Cindi opened the red book and called out to Pixie, “Over here, toss him into the book!” Pixie closed her eyes. She flung the wobbly rabbit high into the air.

“Nooooooooo!” shrieked the Guardian.

He landed on the page and SNAP!  
Cindi slammed the book shut.





## Chapter 6



### Alice's New Pencil

The library was quiet. There was no sign of the dwarfs or the White Rabbit. And best of all, the Book Guardian was gone. Cindi stood in front of Pixie wearing a smile.

“The fairy tale section is safe for now,” Cindi said, holding up an emerald green pencil. “Wait, why are you still here?” asked Pixie.

“It’s the magic pencil. Whoever has it can leave their story at any time. Except for the dwarfs, they can leave their books whenever they want.”

Pixie had never seen such a spiffy pencil. “But where did it come from?”

“It belongs to Alice, she must have dropped it.” Her voice trembled. “I must get it back to her now.”

And just like before, Cindi curtsied and disappeared down the aisle.

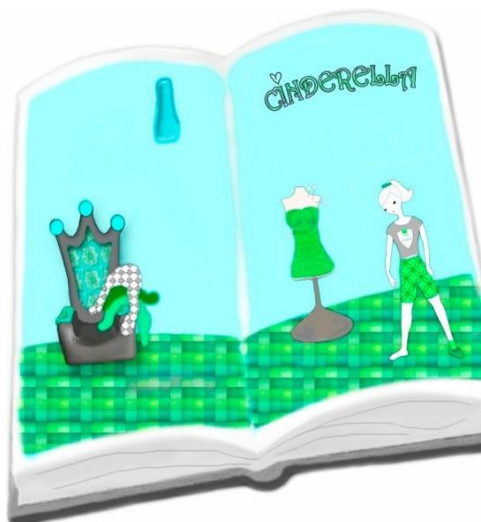
“Will I see you again?” Pixie called out.

There was no reply. Pixie let out a long breath. Her friends were back in their books. They were safe for now.

Then she saw it. The green book lying on the floor. Crouching down, Pixie flipped through the pages. Strangely, they were

now all blank. No pictures. No words. And the title was faded. She put it back to its original resting place. On the next library visit, she would come back to the book.

*What happened to everyone?* Pixie plucked both *Cinderella* and *Alice in Wonderland* from the shelf. She opened *Cinderella* and whispered “Cindi,” and nothing happened. Flipping the pages, something caught her attention. Cindi was wearing a tennis shoe and running clothes. On her shirt, *Over Armor* was written in tiny red letters. This was very unusual. *Perhaps she’s gone into the sports clothing business*, thought Pixie. After all she was pretty fast. This needed further investigating, but the library was closing soon. So she tucked it under her arm and opened the other book.



Pixie began skimming *Alice in Wonderland*. She called out, “Alice!” this time much louder. “White Rabbit!” But nothing happened. Nothing seemed unusual, until she got to the *Mad Hatter’s Tea Party*. It was a feast fit for a Mad Hatter, except there was no Mad Hatter. There were mini cakes, gummy worms, Little Red’s cookies, sugar cubes, and tea. And the table was set for nine. Alice was

busy writing a letter. The pencil danced across golden paper. *She must be writing something important.* Then Pixie saw it.

“That’s my blue pencil!” Pixie slid her hand into a holey pocket. Alice was now using her favorite pencil.

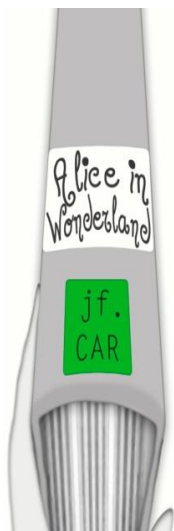
The White Rabbit looked content. Not like the nervous bunny she had met earlier. He was busy nibbling on cakes when Pixie read the caption BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. A watch with green numbers wrapped around his wrist. Looking at every detail, she tried finding Rabbit’s pocket watch. It was gone. But she did find six dwarfs munching on Red’s Cookies. Except for Sleepy. He was snoozing on a hammock hanging from an apple tree.



Pixie closed the book. She studied the green square on the cover. This wasn't something new. All the library books were color coded this way.

Green squares were fairy tales, blue were gardening books, and so on. Pixie crinkled her forehead. The glowing book, the pencil, and the squares were all green.

*Does the pencil and glowing book change color to match the type of book?*



She wondered. But there was no one there to answer her question.

A pesky noise buzzed her ear. SHOO! Flapping her hand, she tried swatting the pest away. Pixie's mind visited a story. As it often does. She had just read about a bug that talked in people's ears. Could the insect be trying to tell her something?





# Chapter 7



## Winding It Up

When Pixie turned back to the book shelf, she was perplexed. Was it a dream? Had she imagined it all? Where she had placed the green book was now an empty space.

Her mom walked towards her. “Did you read any good stories today?” she asked.

Pixie answered. “Yes, Mom. I met Cinderella, Alice, and her White Rabbit!”

“Met them?” Mom asked. “You mean you read about them.”

Pixie knew her mom would find it difficult to believe the events of the last hour, so she kept the adventure to herself.

The librarian, Miss Rita Goode, began checking out their books. She had never shushed Pixie and always helped with BIG words. Pixie loved how she wore dangly earrings. Today orange feathers hung from her lobes.

“Oh, I love 796.357 and 795.421,” Miss Goode whispered.

Pixie’s mom responded, “I’m thrilled I found 777.296. It’s full of fall fairy gardens.”

Pixie knew these were Dewey Decimal numbers. Her mom talked about the card

catalogue once. It was how they organized books back in the old days.

“Why not just call them by their names?” Pixie asked.

Pixie’s mom explained, “Remember when I told you Miss Rita and I helped with the summer reading program? After shelving 1,000 books, we got our Junior Librarian badges. We were the youngest kids to ever earn them.”

“We were just a little older than you, Pixie,” Miss Rita added.

“Calling books by number became our thing. We pretended to be spies uncovering a library heist about to go down. It never did,”



continued Pixie's mom.

“Remember how a soda and a bag of popcorn was left for us every afternoon on this counter? We think it was the children's librarian, Mr. Skippy, but he never admitted it,” Miss Rita said.



Pixie noticed two faded circles on the wooden counter. She rubbed her finger around the twenty year old water rings. Then looking down at her wrecked sock,

Pixie hoped her Mom wouldn't notice. *My string trap!* She remembered and raced back to retrieve it. Pixie gave the web a tug and began reeling it in like a fish. **POP!** Her hand now looked like a blob of seaweed. She made sure to put it in the pocket without the hole.

Finally, the chatting ended. Miss Rita handed over their books and gave Pixie a wink.

That's when her Mom noticed. "Look at your sock!" It now came to her ankle.

"It's not my fault. Nutmeg's collar messed it up," she replied.

As they walked down the library steps, Miss Rita ran out behind them. She handed Pixie a green pencil.

"You dropped this," she said. It was

the magic pencil. And before Pixie could utter a word, Miss Rita went back inside. The library doors were now locked.



“Now you have two lucky pencils,” her mom said.

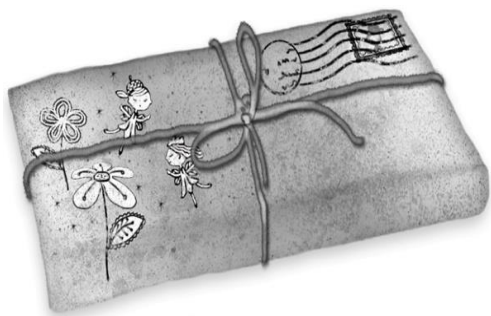
Pixie squeezed her lips together. Her mom would never believe that Alice

in Wonderland had taken the blue pencil inside her book. In fact, she was still having a hard time making sense of all that happened.





## Chapter 8



### A Gift

When they got to the car, Pixie hopped in the back seat. Next to her was a brown paper package wrapped in orange twine. It was covered with tiny doodles. The fairies and flowers looked like the work of a fairy.

“What’s this?” Pixie asked. “It’s a gift from your Aunt G,” answered her mom.

*I wonder where it came from?* But like usual, there was no return address.

Just a faded stamp and squiggly lines.

Pixie loved getting packages from her aunt, even though she couldn't remember her. Her Aunt G was there when she was born and then left to travel the world. This just added to the mystery of Gracie Bell Jingles.

Carefully peeling off the paper, she tried to not tear the pictures. Something



amazing was uncovered. A blue book with a silver locket. Fairies and flowers were stamped into the cover.

“It’s my very own journal!” Pixie squealed. She was used to writing in spiral

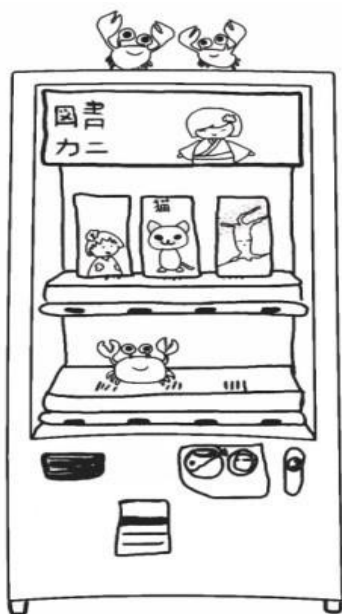
notebooks. This was stupendous. It was ocean blue and the key shined like a twinkling star. And moving the book back and forth made the fairy wings flutter. For a brief moment Pixie thought about not using it. But that didn't last long. She took the key and turned it in the lock. The book opened to a pink page and POOF! A shower of glitter burst out.

Pixie pulled the green string from her pocket. She tied one end of the string to the key. And with the other end, she wrapped it around the locket. "Now the key won't get lost." She began to write with the green pencil.

*Dear Blue,*

*This is my first day writing in here. I named you Blue. It's my favorite color and you are blue. I'm Pixie, but my name for*

*real is Marigold. I'm almost 9 years old and Alora is my BFF. I live in Texas near the beach. But I wish I lived in Japan. They have machines with apples and books. Some even have crabs. Alive!*



*Today started bad, but ended up good. Kids at school made fun of my apple clothes. Mostly Fish Face Jack. I will try to make him blink tomorrow.*

*Here's my make him blink face.*



*Guess what? I met Alice in Wonderland, Cindi, and the White Rabbit today. It's true. At the library. Also the 7 dwarfs. They came out of their books. The Book Guardian was trying to trap them inside a glowing green book. He did get the White Rabbit. But Cindi and I saved him. Everyone is back in their books. SAFE.*

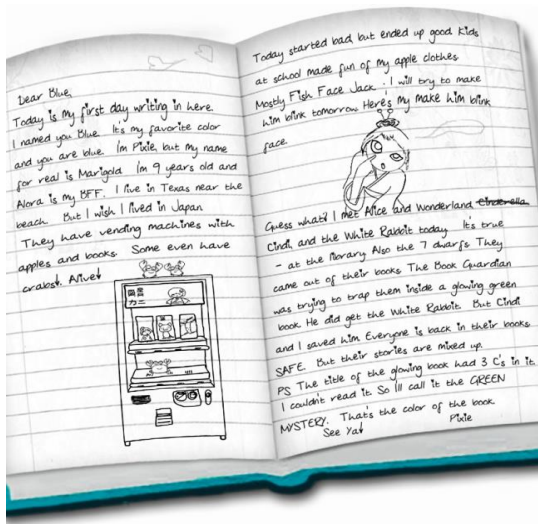
*But their stories are mixed up.*

*P. S.*

*The title of the glowing book had 3 C's in it. I couldn't read it. So I'll call it the GREENMYSTERY. That's the color of the book.*

*See Ya!*

*Pixie*



Mom interrupted. “Dad is working late, so let’s stop and pick up pizza for dinner.”

Pixie loved the kind with mushrooms

and tomatoes. She bubbled and said,  
“Seven days without pizza makes one  
weak.”

“I guess your day turned out pretty  
well, right?”

“Right, books just make everything  
better.” And grabbing her mom’s hand,  
they went inside the Leaning Tower of  
Pizza. Pixie gazed at the Leaning Tower  
of Pisa mural on the brick wall. Standing  
with her feet together, she began to lean  
sideways.

“Hey, Mom, look at me! I’m the  
Leaning Tower.”

“Don’t lean too far!” warned her  
mom.

And sure enough, Pixie did. But  
luckily, she caught herself on the crumbly  
wall.

“Do you think the tower will ever fall down?” she asked her mom.

“It’s not going to collapse. The tower’s been leaning for over 800 years.”

Pixie imagined pizzas sliding out of the tower into her mouth. *YUM!* She could already taste piles of cheesy veggies.



As they left the pizzeria, Pixie spotted a folded gold note on the ground.



“What’s this?” A red wax seal held it together. And it had the initials **AW** on it. Pixie had never seen a wax sealed letter before and couldn’t wait to read it. She tucked it in her pocket.

Balancing two pizzas, Pixie slid into the car. OUCH! She pushed the steamy boxes off her lap. Home was a few blocks away. Just enough time to read the golden letter.

*Dear Pixie,*

*Please help? It’s the Book Guardian! Sleepy was napping in the closet and awoke to the Guardian’s mad words.*

*“Soon book characters will be out of their stories.” Sleepy stayed hidden under the desk.*

*The Guardian began writing in a*

*leather book. "I'll start with fairy tales," he cackled. Sleepy's eyes grew wider. The pencil and book turned an emerald green color. Then the Guardian clutched the book and dropped the pencil in the drawer. "Fairy tales will be trapped inside electronic gadgets forever!" he said, shuffling out the door. Sleepy quickly snatched the pencil out of the drawer. It's the pencil you now have. You can use it to fix our jumbled stories.*

*We don't know why he's trying to trap us inside screened devices. Maybe you could investigate? I've never met a girl that loves reading more than you. That's why I'm putting our fate in your hands.*

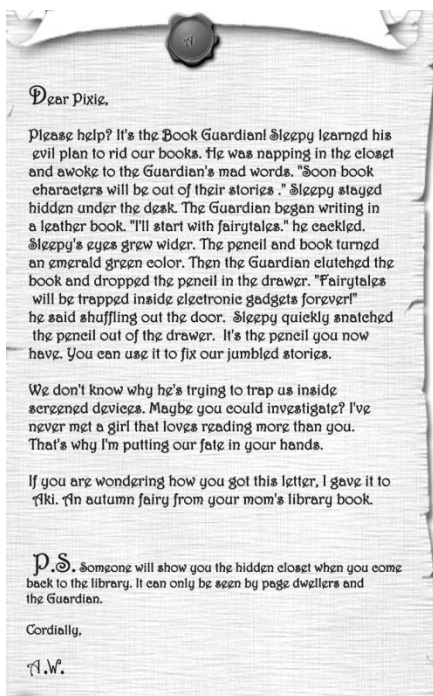
*If you are wondering how you got this letter, I gave it to Aki. An autumn*

*fairly from your mom's library book.*

*P. S. Someone will show you the hidden closet when you come back to the library. It can only be seen by page dwellers and the Guardian.*

*Cordially,*

*A. W.*



Pixie slid the letter in between the pages of her journal. *A magic pencil and a fairy all in one day!*

Twisting the shiny pencil, green light sprinkled all around her. She looked around for shimmering wings and dangling legs. That's how she imagined fairies, but knew they only let themselves be seen when they wanted to.

"Mom, why don't kids like to read books like me?" she blurted from the back seat.

"Well, not everyone shares your enthusiasm for books. People like different things," her mom answered.

"That's true. Alora likes running and says reading is wordy and sitty," Pixie added.

Pixie felt her tummy flutter. The

thought of no paper books squeezed her heart. She loved turning the soft pages. And how they carried her deep into the story. *I have to stop the Guardian. But how?*



## Chapter 9



### Fairy Visit

Beep Beep! The car turned into the driveway. Pixie tossed her things in her bag. Caroline was waiting outside to snatch the pizza. And so was Nutmeg. Pixie opened the door and popped out.

“Go put your things away and wash hands before dinner,” Pixie’s mom reminded her.

Pixie rushed up the stairs and threw

her bag on the bed. The sound of laughter rolled through the house. Her mom and Caroline were getting into the pizza. Pixie knew Caroline could eat a whole one by herself, so she washed her hands and scooted to the kitchen.

Mmm! She joined them in stretching cheese across their plates. “We picked up a lot of good books at the library today,” her mom said.

Pixie smiled looking at the stack of books on the table. “And look, they are leaning like the Tower of Pisa.”

Suddenly, the books began to wobble. They toppled over and hit the ground.





Except for *Fairy Gardens And Beyond*.

Caroline chuckled when it fell on Pixie's plate. It landed open to a page filled with fairies. Something caught Pixie's eye. A fairy with orange and silver wings was sitting on a basket of apples. It was Aki from Alice's letter.

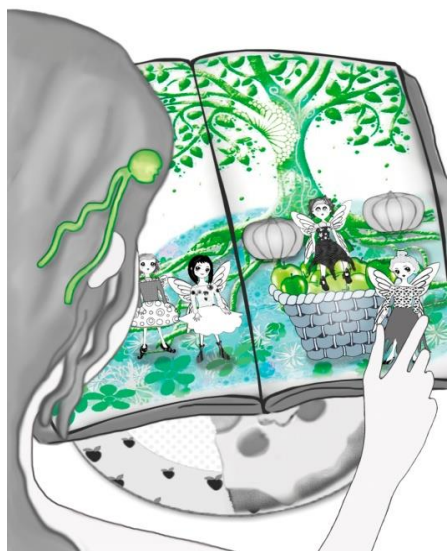
"Pixie, please wait until dinner is over to read," exclaimed her mom.

Before closing the book, Pixie glanced at the picture. Her eyes locked on a fairy

with pearly wings.

She rubbed her finger over the soft page.

There was something familiar about those apple green eyes and long eyelashes looking back at her.



After dinner, Pixie snatched her books. She wanted *Fairy Gardens And Beyond*, but her mom was using it to plan the fall garden. Back in her room, Pixie slid her library books on the shelf. She plopped on the bed. The fairytales needed fixing. Pixie took out her journal and opened the lock. Specs of glitter dotted the page. *Cinderella* was the most jumbled, so with the magic pencil she began the story.

*In a far away land, Cinderella was a servant to a cruel woman and two ugly sisters. Meanwhile, the castle was planning a fancy ball. Every maiden in the kingdom was invited. The prince was to choose a bride. But Cinderella did not have a fancy dress to wear.*

Pixie stopped. She remembered Cindi

liked fashion. *I'll give her a gown with flair.* "Perfect!" She sketched a ruffled ball gown with leopard print. But not too many spots.



It was getting late. There was one more story to fix, *Alice In Wonderland*. And Pixie knew exactly what this should look like. "It's just a picture for Alice's story," she told herself and began to draw.

On the top of the page, Pixie wrote *Chapter 7 A Mad Tea Party*. She started on the long table and drew odd chairs. An arm chair was put at the head of the table. Then she added the rabbit, the mouse, and Alice. The Mad Hatter would come later. Time flew by as Pixie worked.



Just then her mom came in to say goodnight. Pixie held up her picture. “I’m almost done!”

“Wow,” her mom said. “That’s an amazing tea party!” She gave Pixie a proud smile. “How about I hang it on the fridge?”

“No! You can’t. It’s for a special project I’m working on.” Pixie replied.

“Well okay, but maybe you could make another picture?” Her mom asked. She reminded her it would have to be another night.

Pixie nodded. “I’ll draw a picture of fairies from your garden book. You can put that on the fridge.”

“That would be nice.” Her mom smiled and kissed her on the head. “Now get to bed, sleepy head.”

Pixie looked at her picture. The table was set with mismatched china, napkins, and silverware. Playing cards scattered the table. The menu included tea, bread, jam, and cakes. But something was missing. Pixie thought hard. *Apples!* She remembered an apple tree hanging over the table. A big tree was added with apples on the table. It was the perfect feast.

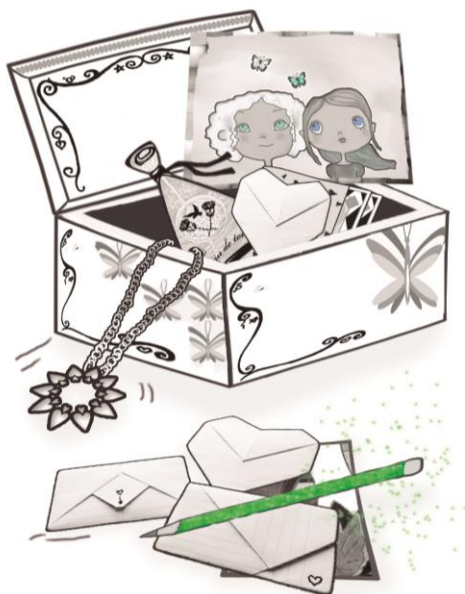
*Now let's bring the Mad Hatter to the party.* Pixie gave him twinkling eyes and long fingers. He wore a strange suit and bow tie.



And for his hat, she made a card with the

numbers 10/6. This was the hat's price tag in old money.

Pixie was proud of her work and grinned ear to ear. It was not in color. Alice would add this when the page went back inside *Alice In Wonderland*. Though, Pixie wasn't sure how the fixed stories would get back inside their books. She closed her journal and bounced across the room. A carved wooden box sat on the dresser. This memory box was for important things. It was filled with notes, pictures, and



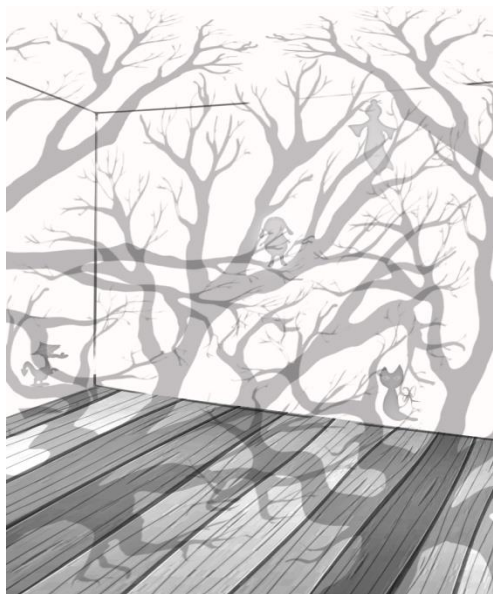
small trinkets from her Aunt G.

Pixie lifted the latch. *You'll be safe in there.* She dropped the green pencil inside. A magic pencil had to be kept in a safe place.

Pixie slipped on her pajamas. She tucked the journal under her pillow. Melting in the covers was a great way to end a day of mystery. Her bedroom filled with moonlight. The wind blew the tree outside her window. It was strong enough to move limbs. Shadows danced on the floor. They took shapes and then changed to something else.

A whip of light suddenly twirled into the shape of a fairy. Boing! Boing! Boing! It bounced around the room and landed under the pillow.





“You can come out,” Pixie said, carefully lifting her pillow. The fairy shadow was Aki from *Fairy Gardens and Beyond*.

Aki whirled up to the ceiling. Pages fluttered in her hands. It was Cinderella’s fixed story and the Mad Hatter’s picture. Just to be sure, Pixie checked her journal. The pages were gone. Green swirls began

to circle the pages. They looked like rings inside a tree. Except, these were glowing and moving.

Pixie watched the book world and real world come together.

Aki zipped over to the bookshelf. Her shadow was able to fit between the pages. She slipped into one book and then another.

*Alice In Wonderland* fell to the floor when Aki flew out of it. Pixie rushed over to check it out. “Wow!” Her tea party picture was now inside the book. And Alice was adding color with a paintbrush.

It was the same thing for the other fairytale. *Cinderella* was now fixed, and Cindi loved her new dress.

Aki jingled above Pixie’s head.  
“So you put my pages inside the books.”

Pixie said and smiled.

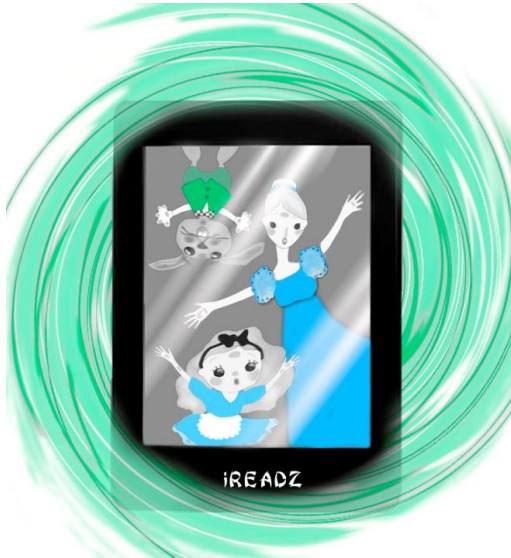
Aki replied with a few jingles. They sounded like the library bell, except smaller. Pixie didn't speak fairy, but she could tell Aki was pleased the books were fixed.

Aki spun in circles and flew to the door. She gave one last jingle and slipped through the key hole. "Goodbye," said Pixie and waved. *I bet she's going*

*back to her book. Fairy Gardens And Beyond* was downstairs. Yes, even fairies need their rest.



The fairytales were no longer jumbled, but Pixie's mind raced around Alice's words. *Why would the Guardian want to put fairy tales inside electronic gadgets?* There was no charm in reading on an iREADZ. Besides, once Caroline dropped hers in the washing machine. This would have been a watery end of the fairytales if they were trapped inside.



*I'm going to embark on a quest,* Pixie told herself. She was going to save the library books from the Book Guardian. On her next trip to Rocky Point Library, she'd start by finding the hidden closet.

"I'll keep my detective eyes open," she said with heavy eyes. Pixie had enough excitement for one day. The Green Mystery had come to an end. Like a mouse, she burrowed under the blankets and drifted asleep.

The End... but the next mystery awaits.

## Words You May Not Know...

**ordinary** - (page 1) normal or nothing special.



**“girlcentric”** - (page 4) girly fashionable clothes.

**romp** - (page 7) to move around with joy and energy.

**catastrophes** - (page 15) events that cause suffering.

**calamities** - (page 15) damage caused by an event.

**chaos** - (page 15) the state of disorder and confusion.

**gullible** - (page 28) easily tricked.

**magnificent** - (page 32) beautiful or

elaborate.

**curtsied** - (page 32) greeting someone by bending the knees with one foot in front of the other.

**underpig** - (page 34) a pig that doesn't stand a chance of winning a fight.

**engraved** - (page 38) to cut or carve on the surface of a hard object.

**bellowed** - (page 39) to shout in a deep voice.

**investigating** - (page 47) looking for facts to find out about something.

**heist** - (page 55) a robbery or burglary.

**enthusiasm** - (page 72) intense excitement about something.

**flair** - (page 79) a stylish dress.

**scattered** - (page 82) spread out in an untidy way.

**burrowed** - (page 89) hide underneath something to find comfort.



## Write On...

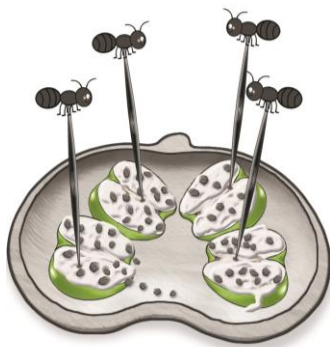
1. Pixie was not feeling good about herself at the beginning of the story. One of her classmates was making fun of her apple clothes. Was there ever a time when someone made you feel mad or upset? What happened?
2. What character do you relate to most in the story? Write a list of 5 things you have in common.
3. If you could jump into a fairy tale story which one would it be? Draw a picture of you on the book cover.
4. Think of another end to the story that is different from the one the author wrote. Write at least one paragraph.

5. Make a colorful illustration of an exciting scene in the book on white cardstock. Be sure to put the title and author of the book on your picture. Then cut into puzzle parts. Put your puzzle in the class reading center for others to enjoy.



## Cooking With Pixie...

### *Ants On An Apple Log*



### Here's what you'll need:

green apples

peanut butter

raisins

knife for spreading

### Here's what you have to do:

1. Check with a grown-up before you start this.

2. Wash and slice apples.
3. Spread peanut butter on sliced apples...  
That's your log.
4. Now put the raisins on the log in a row...  
Those are your ants.
5. Enjoy your snack!

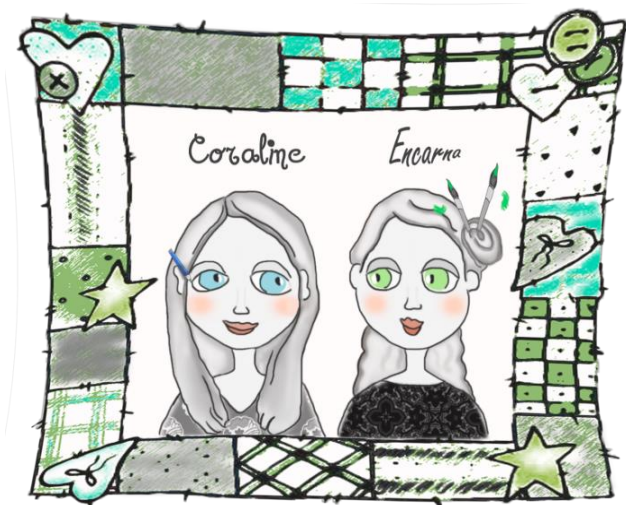
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## About The Author

**Coraline Grace** is from the great state of Texas. She lives in a wonderland forest surrounded by towering oaks, shrimp boats, tree frogs, and hummer birds. Coraline's happily married, has 4 kids, loves everything books, and is obsessed with Japan. Someday she plans on traveling there, and not sure if she'll return. She holds a B.A. in child psychology and a Masters in Education with an emphasis on reading, supporting her passion of learning and facilitating children into becoming lifelong readers. When she's not romping the library, she's playfully crafting words in her hobbit-like home.

## About The Illustrator

**Encarna Dorado** lives in Andalusia, a village with great heritage located in southern Spain. Most of her time is spent with her teenage son and husband of 17 years. Encarna is a master of many trades with her highest interests in the arts. She loves to draw, swim, beach comb, and sail the ocean blue. Encarna studied Image and Sound at Jerez de La Frontera and Applied Arts in Cadiz. When Encarna's not illustrating Pixie mysteries, she's out dancing and listening to live music, each tapping into her creative impulses. Oh, and she's also an expert at cooking scorpion fish.



Coraline & Encarna  
Author & Illustrator

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