

**Computer Worship
&
Pod Dragons In Rune County**

**Story and artwork
By K.L. Raines**

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A fantastic abundance of things float from the pink sky in Rune County: silicon chips and Motherboards, floppies in containers, passwords, cipher blocks, Petri dishes for later uses, lab manuals, and seeds packages; then it rains. In addition, the seeds sprout: it is a tangled much of everything in the backyard of No.5 Noah Street. That wonderful Goth castle has visitors with old souls: little furry nerdy wordy pod dragons who have lived before. Tywoppet and Wywick are reincarnations with skill sets sent on a mission to study the world they find, namely, the garden of Joshua Shagnasty IV. Given the preoccupations of food and enchanted eggs, spiral storms of leaves and crows, pet computers and, of course, Joshua's cat, Percival, the dragons collect artifacts in their supply pouch and write invisible sentences the air. Joshua lives in the Goth castle on No.5 Noah Street with his aunt Abigail, cousin Katie, and his cat. Katie, as the dragons will discover, is an excellent storyteller:

The smallest pod moved. First, a nose came to light, then two paws and a furry green face. A little raspy voice was heard among the sweet peas.

"Tywoppet! Wake up before the sun moves another inch!"

A furry dragon's paw poked the emerald green dumpling-shaped pod.

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“The sun is exactly at midheaven, wake up! It’s a new world!”

A plump baby dragon named Tywoppet emerged partially from his pod. He yawned, rubbed his eyes with tiny dragon paws, blinked, and looked through the vines.

“It’s a corn dolly, harbinger of spring. Is that what you wanted me to see, Wywick, a scarecrow?” asked Tywoppet in a husky voice.

Wywick moved a leaf and pointed to a place beyond the vines where a five-year-old boy moved seashells in the sand. He had blond hair, wore red shorts, a white sweater and socks with orange sneakers.

Tywoppet moved a leaf to see well.

“Is he the gardener?” he asked.

Wywick yawned and brushed a leaf from his nose.

“Yes,” said Wywick. “So for now we must be on our best behavior: the flute, please.”

Tywoppet pulled a small vine and the apple and sage green supply pouch came to him. It opened. A flute was found and given to Wywick who started to play. The melody floated above the vines, sketched on golden notepaper, danced in circles in the air, about the bees and the butterflies. The flute music found the boy; he ran to the wild tangle of vines, found a path in, looked about himself, and in amazement, looked up.

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“Toys! New toys!”

Wywick stopped playing and looked over the edge of his dumpling-shaped pod.

“We are not toys. We are called The Dumpling Dragons. Would you be so kind as to lift us down? It’s time for our arrival into the world, but in the proper order: First, I, Wywick; second, Tywoppet; and third, our supply pod and flute.”

The boy stood, staring up at Wywick who turned his head a little and washed a paw.

“And, who are you?” he asked.

Joshua bowed until he could see his yellow shoelaces, then stood in the leaf- patterned shade and said the following words:

“Pleased to meet your acquaintance, I’m Joshua!”

He shook the paw of one of the dragons, then carefully lifted the skinny, green-furred, purple-feather-winged, and green-eyed Wywick and placed him on the ground. Then Joshua lifted the plump, gray-furred, emerald-feather-winged, and green-eyed Tywoppet and sat him by the seed packages. Such a color as purple or emerald found a proper place down their backs to the tips of their tails: purple for Wywick, emerald green for Tywoppet.

Joshua found the miniature silver flute and the apple and sage-colored supply pouch, and sat them near Wywick. The toy box was opened; a place made ready for lunch, then the boy sat on a box nearby and looked inside a rumbled paper sack.

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“Dragons, I have marshmallows, ginger snaps, dog biscuits, grape juice, water, blackberry jam, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!”

Joshua tied a bib under each dragon’s chin. Tywoppet sipped grape juice from a doll’s teacup, listening to the meadowlark and the honeybees that came to the flowers of the honeysuckle vines. With a

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small knife, Wywick covered a ginger snap with blackberry jam, left it on his plate, walked to the silver flute, placed it in the supply pouch, and pulled it closer in. He peered inside.

“Let’s see . . . sweaters, astrolabe, bell, and book we have so need of yet.”

A parchment revealed itself. Wywick lifted it from the pouch and carefully spread it on the ground, then placed a small stone at the four corners.

“The map of Hopes, Dreams, and Wishes relates to the uppermost thoughts of our minds at this very second!” said Wywick.

Tywoppet nibbled on the edge of a ginger snap.

“I was born second,” he said.

Wywick looked at him, his tail moved just a little.

“There is some purpose in it. You are my understudy and one day you will be just like me!”

Tywoppet shrugged.

“I won’t drink that carrot juice and I won’t give up my jelly doughnuts with chocolate frosting!”

Wywick paid no mind to Tywoppet as he traced an ‘X’ pattern on the map.

“See, Joshua? This represents treasure in the forest. The Goddess Serendipity told us the way here. We just needed the proper package of seeds!”

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Wywick sipped grape juice and nibbled a dog biscuit. Tywoppet ate three marshmallows all in a row, while looking in a small hand mirror.

“I have green eyes!”

Wywick looked into the mirror.

“Yes, I have green eyes too. Joshua, do you want to see?”

Joshua left his collection of seashells and looked into the mirror.

“I have something . . . hum, something!”

The dragons giggled and danced around the map. Blackberry jam dropped from its perch of Tywoppet’s peanut butter covered ginger snap onto Wywick’s map. Wywick tried to lift the jam with a dry leaf.

“Fiddlesticks! This shows that we are plum in the middle of a little place called--.”

Joshua climbed to a large flat rock and spread his arms.

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“Dragons, we live in Wistful Wambly and the entire pink sky belong to Rune County! And do you want to know what happens during the full moons here? There is a visit to that big pile of old computer equipment that reaches the heavens in the middle of The Brainfill Forest of Isaiah just past the wasteland and everyone just camps out there. They wait for things to hatch out of that tremendous moat,

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especially after a rainstorm. And then they read poetry and cast runes and pennies here and there just in case and then they pray for more rain so they can pitch tents and wait for the live creatures to hop out of there and speak. I have been told it is pretty much a soupy goop in that moat, but from it comes the wisdom of the ages. The words are written and bound in a book. And, when everyone learns all they can from the sages, why then they are in a situation of Brainfill. It is a very rare condition, I have to tell you.”

Wywick and Tywoppet pondered the idea in silence and looked about them to the lush, green world and the forest beyond and almost in unison, they spoke:

“Brainfill! Brainfill! Brainfill!”

After awhile, the dragons were dancing in a circle. Joshua jumped from the rock, grabbed Wywick, and hugged him.



“Toys, new toys!” he shouted.

Wywick looked up at him.

“We are not toys. We came to keep you company in this garden of yours. Tell me, is this where you live?”

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The boy pointed to a place beyond the cornrows to a funny looking old Goth black stone castle.

“I live there with Auntie Abigail, my cousin Katie and Percival the Cat. I remember the day I came here. I came with suitcases!” he said.

Tywoppet’s ear moved a little as he studied the fine lines of Joshua’s right kneecap.

“Did the wind bring you?” asked Tywoppet.

“No, I came on the train with a name tag pinned to me right there.”

An index finger pointed to a spot on the red shorts.

“And then I lived happily ever after.”

Joshua put seashells in a circle and jumped to the middle. The ocean breeze played gently about the edges of the garden.

He continued his story.

“There’s a secret spice room in the house. It takes a special key to open the door. And when the door opens then I stand on a box and look up and up and there are jars and more jars and a thread and a needle just for mending things.”

The dragons gathered near the feet of Joshua and looked up.

“Could you tell us more?”

Out from the satchel came the drawings Joshua carried about everywhere.

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“See? It’s an entire room of things!”

Wywick and Tywoppet held the drawing between them and pondered every jar. Wywick was the first to speak.

“My, what a splendid place! It’s a secret place?”

Joshua took a bite of peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a sip of grape juice.

“Yes, it’s a secret place. One day I looked inside and Abigail had a measuring spoon for spices to put into cookies! She bakes cookies and gives them to me and the gargoyle that lives on the roof. And you know what else happens? Every week on Cleaning Day, Katie and Percival the Cat cleans up and down and all around the house! One day, I followed them, and the closet door came open and the things inside went grrrrrr!”

Joshua giggled and danced about the brightly colored sea glass. The dragons stood in perfect formation for listening to stories; they, side by side near the strawberry bed. Joshua told once more of the creatures who lived in the closet.

“Grrrrrr!”

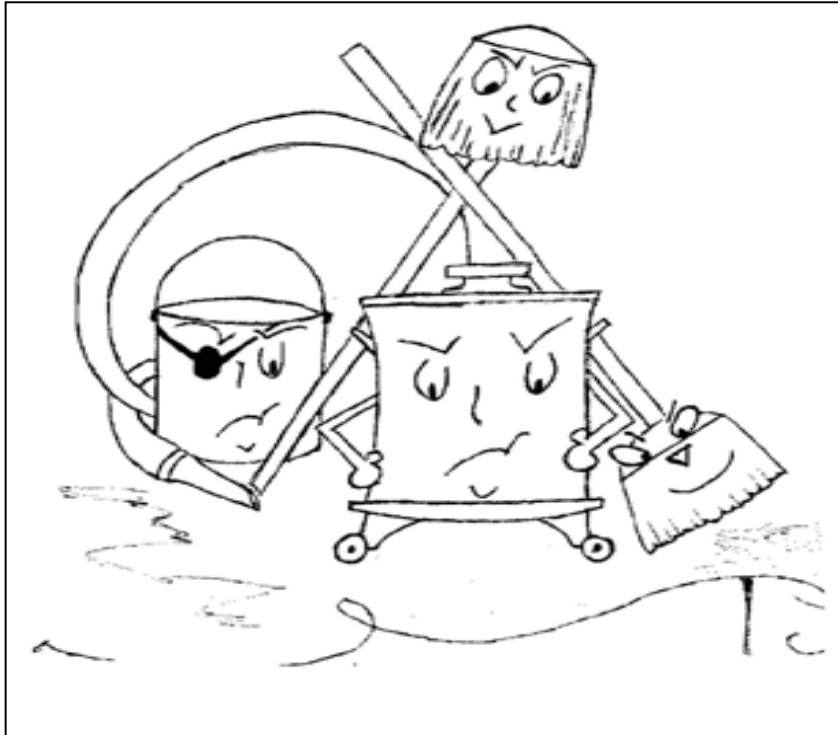
Wywick’s purple tail tip moved. His left ear moved too.

“Now, let me see the artifact, I mean, the drawing of the adventure you had that day.”

Joshua opened a burgundy satchel; a drawing came to the light of the sun that traveled across the

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afternoon sky. Wywick studied the drawing of the Things. Tywoppet looked over his shoulder.



“Tywoppet, make a note.”

Tywoppet licked a left front paw and began to write in the air as Wywick said the words.

“We wish to visit such Things one day, the ones who live in the closet on Cleaning Day and we wish to meet Katie and the cat named Percival.”

Tywoppet was still writing in the air.

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“Did you remember to cross the t’s?” said Wywick.

Tywoppet peered at different places in the air.

“Yes, Wywick.”

Joshua looked at the pink sky to the pattern of birds flying over and continued his story.

“Katie is the artist who lives with us in the attic.”

Wywick gave the drawing to Joshua and looked at him rather curiously.

“All of you live with her, in the attic?”

“No, she lives in the attic with that adopted computer of hers and boxes and posters and treasure chests and chocolate candy and teacups!”

Wywick carefully tied Joshua’s shoelace that had unraveled itself.

“I’m very curious about something; what exactly is a poster?” asked Wywick.

Joshua smiled.

“Oh, that’s easy. Here, I’ll show you.’

A poster happened from a red and gray striped paper sack; it was rolled and tied with dark red string. Joshua untied it and carefully rolled it open. The dragons held it tightly between them and gazed very seriously, Wywick tracing with his right front paw the path of the string held by the bird in the drawing, it attached to the hammer over the dog’s head.

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“The House of Dog,” Wywick said, mostly to himself.

Wywick looked at Tywoppet, and then looked to the place where Joshua lived.

“Just how many steps is it to the attic?”

Joshua pointed past the rows of corn to the Goth castle on No. 5 Noah Street. A pet blue gargoyle Munster perched on the roof over the front door.



“It’s to the very top.”

Wywick sighed.

“Well then, yes, I see it.” he said. “We can’t possibly climb that many steps. We will have to go in someone’s pocket. We will go someday but not today. We still have many things to do.”

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The dragons looked about the garden, Wywick found little cards to play with; Tywoppet found a telescope to look through; nearby sat a teapot, alphabet blocks, and a Venus flytrap

Wywick tapped his chin with a paw.

“Tywoppet! Make note!”

Tywoppet jumped down from the Amber Hunt book, his right front paw began to write in the air as Wywick recited the following words:

“We will tell Joshua what dragons need! Dictionaries!”

Tywoppet nodded in approval.

“Yes, yes! Dictionaries with pictures! We turn ourselves In-Visible just to read them!”

“We have dictionaries like that in the study,” said Joshua.

Wywick stopped his pacing from the petunia bed to the rose bushes and stared up at Joshua.

“Have a silence session, will you? I’m trying to think!”

Tywoppet dotted the i’s in the air, went back and erased a letter then replaced it with the proper one.

Wywick continued his list of things dragons want.

“I like carrot juice. Tywoppet likes jelly doughnuts with chocolate icing.”

Joshua stood beside Tywoppet, watching as he wrote messages in the air.

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“You forgot the comma, Tywoppet! There, put one there.”

The comma was placed just so.

Wywick walked near the purple coneflowers and continued his list of what dragons want.

“And we like picnics on a summer day, peppermint leaves, steam baths, crystal balls, onyx rings, reading news on the wind, writing letters before breakfast and collections of amber. I wish to add to this list when the phases of the moons are right, signed Wywick, the Dragon.”

Wywick turned about to watch the invisible sentences.

“Did you dot the i’s?”

“Yes, Wywick” answered Tywoppet.

A butterfly lit upon Wywick’s nose then flew away. He chased it to the lavender flowers, moved a leaf, and crawled past a tangle of vines.

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“Tywoppet! Come, look what I found!”

The other baby dragon ventured into the vines of honeysuckle near the yellow-blossomed furze shrub and found a pair of royal purple suede slippers near *The Book of Kells*, a strange coffee pot and a rune-engraved Celtic cross.

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“Oh my, Wywick. What wondrously soft shoes! They would make a comfy bed with a proper pillow.”

Tywoppet tied and untied the laces. Wywick felt the toe of the slipper and read aloud the runes he found near the top of the shoe.

"*Wunjo, Dagaz, Jera*. It means Joy, Light of Day, and Harvest.”

Tywoppet crawled inside one of the slippers and sighed blissfully. Wywick washed a front paw.

“I have a feeling the shoes are spoken for,” Wywick said “but I do agree they are the best bed idea thus far.”

A little voice came from the center of the garden near the apple tree.

“Dragons, dragons, come back! I love you!”

Wywick and Tywoppet looked at each other. Again, the voice happened.

“Dragons, dragons, come back! I’ll share my treasures with you!”

The dragons danced a jig about the slippers and the coffee pot. Joshua found his prized box of things and opened it with a key. Soon, the dragons came to see. Tywoppet held a red sock. Wywick looked inside to the plant seeds, sand dollars, and miniature books. The spiders and bugs climbed over the seed packages.

“Oh, look! One crawls and the other wiggles!” said Wywick.

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Wywick stood as tall as he could, sniffed the sea breeze, and remembered the delightful red geraniums.

“Just who belongs to those shoes? I mean, who owns them?”

Joshua made a circle of seashells and stood inside it.

“Katie owns them. She makes things happen.”

Wywick moved closer to Joshua and looked up.

“How?”

“She writes in her diary.”

“And things happen?” asked Wywick.

Joshua watched the leaves swirl about in the wind.

“I think she made this garden. Katie has giant amethyst rocks on her desk and she puts her diary there.”

Wywick’s purple tail tip moved ever so slightly as he contemplated the bees working about the yellow-blossomed furze shrub.

“She makes things happen just by writing?” asked Tywoppet.

“Yes, that’s Katie! She is my cousin, you know. She was here the very first day I came. The cat helps her sometimes. When Katie adopted that computer and when she brought it home and turned it on and the face looked at Percival, the kitty

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ran all the way down the stairs and didn't come back for a long time."

"Tell me about the face in the computer. Have you seen it?" asked Tywoppet.

"Yes, I saw it two nights past Cleaning Day. It does not scare me. Its name is Elf-Shelf. It has a mind and everything!"

From the burgundy satchel came the drawing. Wywick and Tywoppet held the cartoon.

"Katie's computer looks like this?" said Wywick.

Joshua shook his head.

"No, Elf-Shelf lives inside and its part of something, that's what Katie told me.

That face is part of a world that talks to itself! It comes from a world of pings and maps and overturned teacups!"

"Did it talk to you?"

"Yes, it talked to me about networks and bridges and bugs! It can see into the room, dragons! It knows about the boxes, the clutter, the teacups, the big round glass window, and the blue gargoyle that lives on the roof! I heard it one day and it talks to Katie all the time. Elf-shelf is very smart!"

Joshua smiled as if he had made the world that Elf-shelf lived in.

The dragons looked at each other. Wywick was the first to speak.

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“Would Katie mind very much if we borrowed this drawing? It’s so wonderful, the pink box shape with a smile.”

Joshua shoveled sand into a bucket.

“Yes, you may burrow it.” he said.

Wywick knew the proper word was ‘borrow’ instead of ‘burrow’ but didn’t say anything, busy as he was folding the prized artifact into the dragon’s supply pouch.

Joshua stood up and then brushed the sand from his orange sneakers.

“I’m thirsty!” he said.

Out came the water jug from one of the rumpled paper sacks. The jug had a design of watermelon slices painted on the glass. Joshua and the dragons took turns sipping water from a doll’s teacup.

Katie’s Rune Book was propped open while Wywick read from it. Joshua picked up a spoon from the toy box and lifted a jar of honey. The bees buzzed about the heads of the dragons until Joshua poured honey on a tree twig and put it some distance away near the red garden pagoda, the bees following after. He returned to find a familiar feline face in the tall grasses.



“Hello, Percival! Meet my new toys, Wywick and Tywoppet!”

Wywick glanced at Tywoppet who was playing with a spider.

“Should we tell him we are not toys?” asked Wywick.

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“No. He seems happy enough. Perhaps he thinks everyone is a toy.”

The black cat with a purple collar looked from one dragon to the other, especially at Wywick’s tail because it kept moving.

“Meow! Meow?” he said.

Joshua stood between Percival and the dragons.

“Dragons, meet Percival the house cat except when he’s in the garden, then he’s the garden cat.”

The dragons bowed. They looked up to see a pair of cat’s eyes that blinked at different times; one was yellow; the other one, blue. Wywick backed away two steps.

“Well then, it’s time we should be going; time to tidy up our pods.”

Wywick and Tywoppet turned to leave; Percival purred and batted Wywick’s tail since it kept moving. Wywick turned about and looked up at the cat.

“No one plays with Wywick’s tail! The direction of my tail, why it is an indication of things to come! That’s what it is!”

The plump Tywoppet nodded in agreement.

“Yes, oh yes! The tail and ears moving about, that’s a real problem solver for dragons.”

Percival grabbed Tywoppet with both paws and washed his face. Wywick considered the situation.

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“Tell me, do you wish help? Would you like the spell to make yourself In-Visible?”

Tywoppet mumbled a reply.

Joshua looked about the garden.

“I know what to do,” he said.

He dipped a flat stick into the honey, walked over, and brushed it on the cat’s nose. Percival ran into the tall grasses. Joshua burst out laughing so loud that the gopher that lived in the garden’s onion patch came above ground to see what the commotion was about.

It was about this time that Tywoppet drew a deep breath, inspiration finding him and poetry happened:

**“If you fancy yourself a King,
Dip in purple
If you fancy yourself a Wit,
Dip in green
If you fancy yourself The World,
Dip in ink!”**

Wywick peered into Tywoppet’s eyes.

“You’ve been eating marshmallows! How many?”

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“Seven! I see the many aspects of the world so much better: that being a multifaceted continuum of color, energy fields, and the Theory of Everything--.”

Wywick pinched Tywoppet’s right elbow, there in plain view of the bumblebees and butterflies and the sun that traveled through the sky drawn by a large chariot.

“Ouch!” screamed Tywoppet.

Wywick glared at him.

“Have a silence session, will you? I’m trying to think!”

Wywick looked from the garden gate to the cabbage patch to the greenhouse to the dill plants and along the fence until his gaze fell upon Joshua’s favorite scarecrow, Mr. Cornhatch. The garden gate squeaked open. Wywick took the lead; Tywoppet came second with the supply pod. As Wywick proudly walked past the gate, he said:

“The flag, please!”

Tywoppet searched the pouch and found a flag of a dragon holding a crystal ball, and stuck the pole in the sand.

“I’m so glad we moved,” Wywick said. “My inner compass says this is the perfect place. The cabbage leaf will provide shade and a roof if it rains.”

Tywoppet, meanwhile, found a dab of sticky on his furry gray chest. After a while, a thought happened.

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“I would rather turn myself In-Visible and read the dictionary at Joshua’s house.”

“Oh, we will, Tywoppet. We will.”

Tywoppet walked about the scarecrow with Percival who batted acorns in the sand, leaping in the air and pouncing on them; he knocked over one of Joshua’s boxes. Tywoppet came nose to nose with a turtle. Wywick watched a spider climb a cabbage leaf, and then his attention came to Joshua who pulled the bags, satchels and other things he always brought with him just past the garden gate and he heard Wywick’s raspy dragon’s voice.

“Could you tell me about Katie? She lives in the attic?”

Joshua sat on a bench and nibbled a peanut butter cookie.

“Yes, she lives there. Remember, I told you?”

Wywick did not pay the least attention to the question. Another one was forming in his mind.

“And where do you suppose she is this time of day?”

“She could be anywhere. What time is it?”

Wywick and Tywoppet both looked to the sun and had to compare it to the place it had been at noon.

“Its one inch past midheaven,” Tywoppet said
“Where is she when the sun is one inch past?”

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Joshua stuffed an entire coconut macaroon into his mouth. After some few moments, an answer happened.

“She would be in a pea pod boat floating on the stream, past the bridge near the castle and a calico cat watches her!”

The boy brought a picture from the pocket of his red shorts. The dragons gathered around it. Tywoppet spoke first.

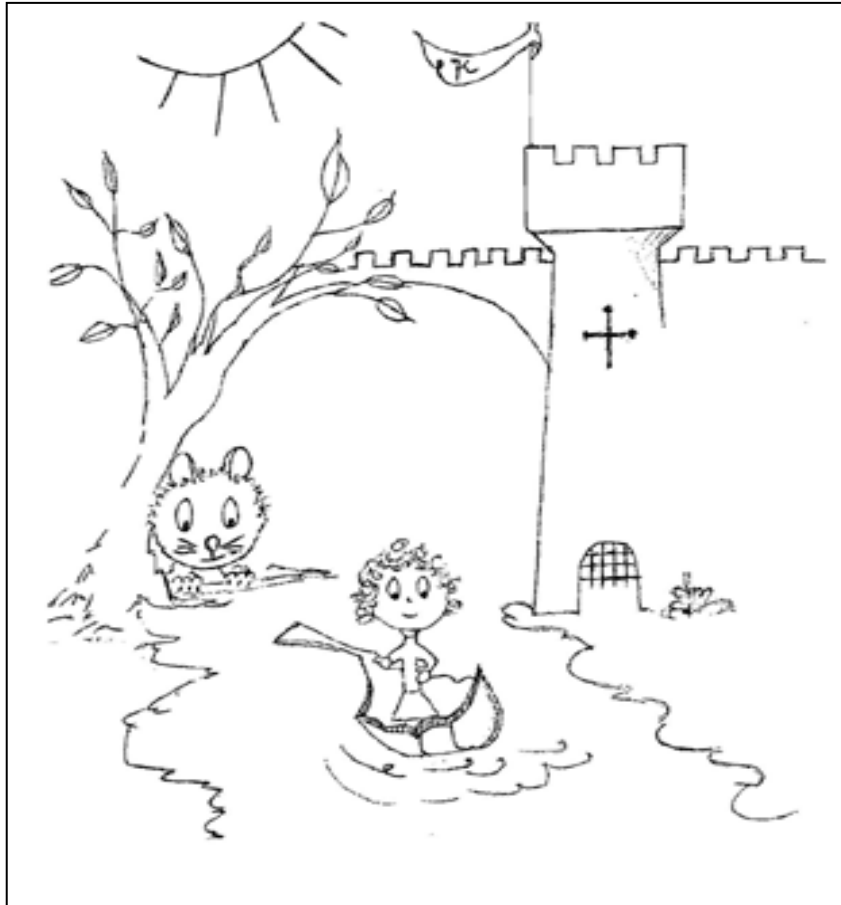
“Katie looks like that? What an interesting girl!”

Wywick stared at Tywoppet.

“Could it be,” said Wywick, “That any girl who could float down a stream in a pea pod boat would be interesting?”

Tywoppet nodded.

“Yes. She writes in a diary and makes things happen.”



Wywick's nose twitched almost as much as his purple tail did.

“Do you mean that you believe everything Joshua has told you?”

“Yes, of course. It is a story, don't you see? We're in a story!”

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Wywick paused to think.

“You have progressed so well in your studies, Tywoppet. I’m proud of you.”

Tywoppet bowed.

“Thank you, Wywick.”

Joshua left the bench and picked up Wywick, turned him over, put him down, then picked up Tywoppet and turned him over, until a gray furry belly appeared.

“Where do the batteries go in?” Joshua asked.

Wywick tugged at Joshua’s white socks and looked up.

“We don’t have batteries. We are alive. We are as alive as you are. Do you have batteries?”

For once Joshua looked worried.

“I don’t know,” he said.

He put Tywoppet down. Wywick thought of a question.

“Do you think Percival is a toy?”

“No, he’s a cat.”

“Do you think the scarecrow—?”

“Mr. Cornhatch?”

“Yes, do you think it is a toy?”

Joshua walked over to Mr. Cornhatch, considered the scarecrow, and smiled.

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“I love Mr. Cornhatch. I don’t know what he is.”

It was about this time that a paper sack came to view, one that sat in the middle of the path to Joshua’s house. In a minute, Tywoppet gathered the supply pod by the top, pulling it after him; down the path, he went. Wywick followed.

“Tywoppet, where are you going?”

“To read the dictionary in the study.”

“Did you learn the spell to make yourself In-Visible?”

Tywoppet stopped in the path.

“I can be a phantom.”

“No, I tell you that won’t do. You’ll forget yourself and what will happen if Aunt Abigail finds you?”

An ocean breeze that traveled about the edges of the garden caught Joshua’s blond hair.

“I know what will happen! Abigail will swat you with her broom, just like she swats the mice!”

Joshua giggled.

Wywick frowned and shook he head.

“Oh no, we can’t have that happen! We have come so far, Tywoppet. In the proud heritage of Dragons, we can’t let ourselves be swatted!”

Wywick grabbed the supply pouch and pulled it away from the yard gate. Tywoppet stood and looked wistfully at Joshua’s house, one that held dictionaries with pictures in them. Tears formed in

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his eyes until Joshua picked him up and brought him to a paper sack filled with stone eggs: amethyst, aventurine, emerald, hematite, and pink quartz.

“Here, Tywoppet, choose an egg! They belong to Katie.”

Tywoppet picked the pink quartz egg and a butterfly lit upon his nose and flew to the very top of the red garden pagoda. Tywoppet sighed, hugged the egg, closed his eyes, and had a dream, a dream of dark clouds, bumblebees, and Mistletoe, his girl cousin. He opened his eyes to find Wywick peering closely at him.

“Tywoppet, were you dreaming?”

“Yes.”

“What were you dreaming about?”

“Mistletoe, who lived at the hermitage and copied manuscripts; she was a scribe of the highest degree! When a letter went missing, an entire city was drawn at the edge just so a tree branch could hold the letter where it should be.”

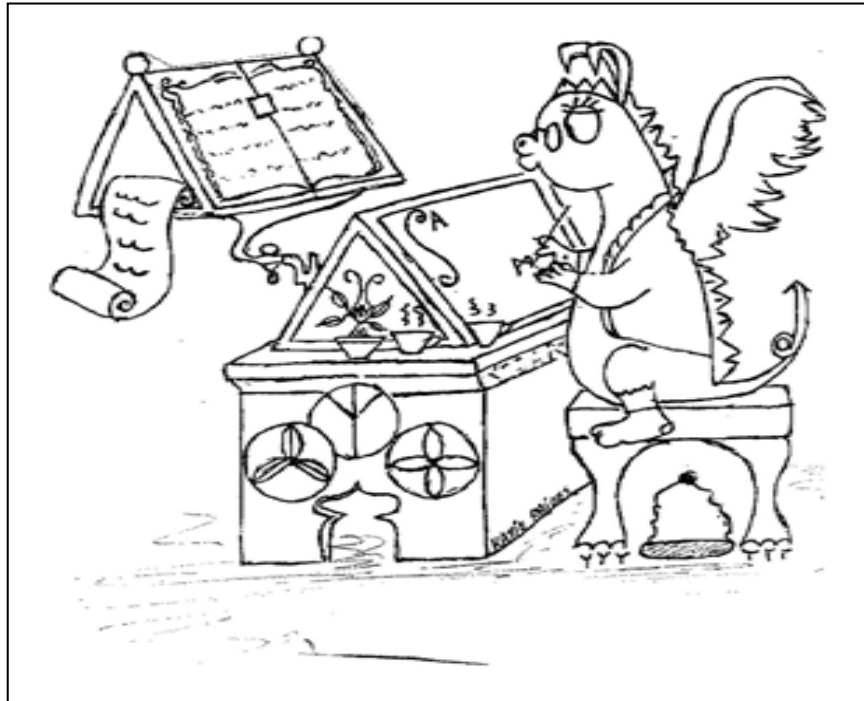
Wywick’s right ear moved.

“Such pleasant work, that.” he said.

Tywoppet nodded in agreement, still holding his prized pink quartz egg.

“She was an artist!” Tywoppet said.

“Yes,” agreed Wywick “Anyone who could copy manuscripts by paw and ink would have to be



talented. Tell me, have you had dreams about her before?”

Tywoppet’s shiny emerald green wings moved as he remembered a scene from his dream.

“Yes.”

“Well then, you’re coming along nicely.”

“But, I like being an understudy, Wywick.”

Wywick started to walk away then turned about.

“You are supposed to. It’s one of your lessons.”

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Wywick walked about the garden, past the crocus, the pink geraniums, and the ivy patch. Joshua picked him up and hugged him then turned him over to inspect his belly.

Wywick looked up into Joshua's happy face and washed a paw.

"Tell me, what is it that interests you now?"

Joshua traced his index fingertip at exact center of Wywick's green furry belly.

"Do you have batteries?"

Wywick considered shortly, rolling his eyes about.

"No, but what is a battery? No dragons I know of have them."

"A battery you put in here."

Joshua made an "X" spot. Wywick looked down at the invisible mark.

"But whatever for?"

"For energy," said Joshua.

"But, I don't need batteries. I drink carrot juice and Tywoppet eats jelly doughnuts. Would you turn me over? I'm starting to get dizzy."

Joshua carefully turned Wywick over and it was about this time that Wywick glanced about himself, and to the ground below; the wind made miniature whirls about the leaves, groups of circles of leaves floating over the box turtles.

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Wywick sniffed the air and listened to the rustling leaves of the trees. He could see very well from where he sat on Joshua's arm and it seemed to him that the wind brought the very sky with it: The blackbirds from afar came in a spiral to find Mr. Cornhatch and after circling about the scarecrow, left for the treetops.

"Put me down! It's a message!" Wywick said.

Joshua put him on the highest flat rock and Wywick nibbled a ginger snap as the first wind rattled the garden gate in its travels about the fringes of the garden, ruffling cabbage leaves, dancing among the ferns, racing through the morning glory vines, playing about the tall grasses. It was from the tall grasses that the feline Percival looked at him.

Wywick chewed the ginger snap thoughtfully. He turned to see hundreds of butterflies come from their hiding places and watched them so that his gaze came upon Tywoppet who stood motionless, holding the pink quartz egg



Wywick ran to him.

“Tywoppet, drop the egg, it’s an enchantment!”

Tywoppet blinked, still clutching the egg to his chest.

Another gust of wind brought a teddy bear tumbling past, Joshua chasing after. Wywick grabbed the egg and let it drop to the ground.

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The wind stopped

Tywoppet walked past the ivy, and past the strawberry bed to a place, he had never been before, just north of the red garden pagoda. Wywick traveled a different path. Joshua followed him, hugging his teddy bear the entire time, one of its eyes dangling by a string. Wywick found Tywoppet watching the pattern of leaves on the ground. Wywick held a leaf to his ear and said the first thing that came to mind.

“This one says we are a little late. Well, of course we are. We came that way.”

Joshua dusted off his bear and brought it to the dragons.

“I have teddy bears, but I like you better.”

Wywick and Tywoppet received a pat on the head. Wywick looked up at Joshua.

“Why do you like us better?”

The boy in the red shorts looked to all the botanical wonders that surrounded him.

“You are my new toys! New toys!”

Wywick nodded approvingly.

“Yes, but could you tell us more about teddy?”

“He sleeps with me next to my pillow.”

Tywoppet peered at it.

“It sleeps? Is it awake now?”

K.L. Raines

Joshua poked the bear's eye into place.

"Yes, he is alive. He lives under my bed with the others and do you know who else lives under my bed? A tiger cat and I feed it food pellets!"

Wywick and Tywoppet whispered together, the tip of each tail moved.

Did the leaf really say we were late?" asked Tywoppet.

Wywick nodded.

"Yes. It knows, the trees know and the flowers know!"

Wywick tugged at one of Joshua's white socks.

Where is Katie now?"

Joshua glanced to the sun.

"It's a half inch later. I think she floated on the stream in a pea pod boat already. She might be visiting that cubicle of hers, then after work, she comes home to that adopted computer called Elf-shelf. Did you know she lives with teacups and boxes and a great heap of chocolate candy wrappers, megabytes, memory sticks, and floppies?"

A giggle happened, mostly from Joshua.

"I love her and I love you!" he said.

Wywick's shiny purple feathery wings moved a little.

"I've become rather fond of her, too. Tywoppet make note." said Wywick.

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Tywoppet walked back and forth, carefully studying the air in front of him. He licked a front paw and started to write the things that Joshua likes: Katie, Wywick, and Tywoppet in that order. After a time, Tywoppet stood back and considered his work, not far from the carrot patch.

“Oh, there’s an ‘i’ I haven’t dotted.” he said.

Tywoppet peered into the air, erased a spot, and dotted another.

“There, that’s better.”

Joshua, meanwhile, found a stick and started to underline certain words in the invisible sentences.

Wywick stared at every line.

“What are you doing to my notes?”

“That’s what Katie does to the words that are special.”

“But, don’t you see? Not every word needs to be underlined!”

Wywick grabbed the stick, pulled it to the red garden pagoda, and left it there. When he returned, Joshua was in the middle of another story.

“And you know what else I did? I found a room with spider webs and dust and everything! No one ever cleans that room. It has candles and bottles with ships in them.”

Wywick watched the clouds and the birds in the pink sky for some few moments.

K.L. Raines

“Did you need a key to open the door?” asked Wywick.

Joshua unwrapped another peanut and butter and jelly sandwich, took a bite, chewing it thoughtfully.

“I climb on a box and turn the knob, and the door opens! One time the moon looked in the window at me.”

Wywick blinked and one ear moved. His left wing moved too.

“It did? What shape was the moon?” he asked.

Joshua quirked an eyebrow and touched a fingertip to his chin.

“It looked like a letter ‘C’.”

Tywoppet remembered something.

“Just like ‘C’ for cat!”

“Shhhh!” whispered Wywick. “Do you want him to come and wash our faces? Why would that be so?”

Tywoppet looked at his own furry gray chest.

“I think I have jelly stuck somewhere.”

“Yes, you may have jelly stuck somewhere, but that doesn’t mean we want a cat to wash our faces. Oh, my. What has become of you, Tywoppet?”

Tywoppet’s emerald green tail moved.

“It was that enchanted egg.”

“Just imagine that egg all gone”

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Tywoppet imagined a giant pencil eraser erasing the pink quartz egg and he felt better all over.

“Do you feel better?” asked Wywick.

“Yes, I feel splendid”, answered Tywoppet.

It was about this time that the voice of the storyteller continued.

“And do you know what else I did? I went to my room, it’s all the way almost to the top and I looked out the window and do you know what I saw, Dragon ships, and castles!”

K.L. Raines



From the burgundy satchel came the drawing.

The dragons looked at it very carefully, and then returned it. Wywick tugged one of Joshua's white socks.

"And then what happened?"

"I took a nap."

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The boy yawned, the dragons yawned, and Percival the Cat came from where he had been in the tulip bed to wash the dragons' faces before they could say much about it on his way to Joshua's house for a bowl of cream.

