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“Quest of the Endangered Five.”

26 pages

Long, long ago deep in a secret valley there was a dragon with a crisis on her paws that she did not know how to prevent it. Her watcher Artemis who was of the human race told of twins, one boy and one girl who could help the dragon's plight. The dragon sent him to fetch them at once.

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Meanwhile the twins Sophie and Alex played in an enchanted forest happily dancing through spindly grass chasing butterflies in the sun. They raced to the crest of a nearby hill, where a luminous being appeared from within a gnarled willow tree. The children stopped in awe, overwhelmed by his magnificence. The silence was deafening and seemed as if it would last forever. They stood still eyes riveted on the Spirit figure.

"My name is Artemis," the figure spoke with wisdom in his voice. "Sophie, Alex, I seek your help for a dear friend of mine. You may not know it but you have a great gift you hold supernatural powers. You are very powerful twins. My friend desperately needs your help and wishes to send you on a very important quest. Will you come?"

"Of course we will." Sophie and Alex replied excited at the thought of magic. They followed Artemis. He led them to a pond surrounded by thick layers of trees, animals of all types began to surround them as if drawn by some kind of invisible force field. Artemis silently held out a hand to each child and together without any words being spoken they hovered over the middle of the pond and disappeared in a stream of golden light. Reappearing a short time later in a different and most unfamiliar place. The children gazed bewildered at the surrounding scenery.

Snow capped mountains that reached the clouds. The white dazzling snow contrasted the brilliant blue sky where the clouds danced. Artemis and the children trekked down into the valley below the mountains where the scenery was altogether very different. Ferns layered the floor of the valley, huge Jurassic trees stretched up into the sky. The high canopy of deep green forest stood over the three figures like a giant. On the forest floor huge palm fronds reached upwards to the sun. Moss and lichen covered the dark damp forest floor and deep layers of dead leaves crackled beneath their feet.

The children had a feeling that they were not alone when they heard a heavy panting and thumping footsteps drawing closer. A huge roar bellowed through the forest. Terrified the children huddled together, frightened as the ground shuddered beneath them.

“ Whatever it is it’s going to be huge.” Uttered Sophie, her bottom lip quivering. She was close to tears. The forest was too dense and lush for them to run so they cuddled closer, for safety, in each other’s arms. They stood still hoping that the creature, whatever it was, would pass them by. Suddenly the bush in front of them was squashed under a huge scaly, sharp- clawed paw, which was followed quickly by a second. The children were flabbergasted their wide eyes scanned the magnificent creature’s colossal body. It had scaly-clawed paws that were a golden brown colour and a slender body that was layered with feathers in bright rainbow colours. Hues of blue-greens, all shades of purple, through to orange. It also carried a lengthy tail, which came to a point at the end. An arched neck that led to its head, all in all, it looked like something out of a fairytale. Its head featured two medium

sized golden horns, two smallish ears, shiny aqua eyes and a striped rounded beak that matched its sleek feathers. There was no terrifying monster to contend with as they had previously thought. The panic and fear retracted from their bodies. She was beautiful but not of their world. A fantastical creature! Alex cautiously reached out to touch her reptilian like scales. She was warm her scales felt smooth as she breathed and her muscles moved the quilted patterns that covered her body shimmered in the incandescent sunlight that peered through the trees. She was graceful for such a large creature.

After they had gazed long and hard at her, she spoke to them.

“Sophie, Alex, my name is Nehma. Welcome to my home,” she uttered in a wise and gentle voice.

“What is this magnificent place?” asked Sophie in bewilderment at her surroundings.

“This is the Valley of the Dragons’,” Replied Nehma.

“You mean there are more of you?” asked Alex with an element of surprise in his voice.

“Yes but they are not in the valley at present that is why I need your help,” the great creature replied sadly. “Follow me and I will explain why you are here,” said Nehma as she shifted her large body turning in the direction from which she had come.

Artemis and the children followed as Nehma strode through the lush forest careful not to demolish it by her brilliant swinging tail. They came to a clearing which had

a crystal pond in the middle of this was however no ordinary pond. It was most certainly magical and the children could tell because as they looked at it, its shimmering waters changed colour from sapphire, aqua, fuchsia to melon and many, many more vibrant colours. They all sat by the pond listening attentively as Nehma told the story.

“Many billions of years ago even before the dinosaurs were around, dragons reigned over the earth. Every corner of the globe was filled with tranquil forests just like this one. Then the world began to change and evolve, other species began to develop and inhabit the earth. This was not good for the world’s dragon population. We began a path to rapid extinction,” said Nehma.

“Do you mean there were others like you?” said Alex.

“Oh yes,” Nehma replied. “There were billions of us. But now due to pollution, human evolution and natural disasters our numbers have been reduced to a mere six. That is why I need your help. The other five dragons reside alone in separate countries. If they are not rescued and brought to this valley where they will be safe then they will die out within a few short years. At the moment they are not happy in their homes mostly due to the human population remodeling their habitats from lush natural landscapes like my home into concrete jungles. They cannot survive in this manic environment.”

“Why does your habitat remain unchanged Nehma?” questioned Sophie.

“I am the head dragon Sophie and I possess great supernatural powers. I protect my home with spells and special forces. Artemis is the only human who I have given the

power to enter the valley, without him you would not be able to get in.” Nehma informed them.

“So if you want to protect this place from humans then why are we here?” queried Alex.

“You have been chosen wisely by Artemis to carry out an important quest for me,” Nehma replied.

“Tell us of this quest Nehma,” Sophie enquired intriguingly.

“Your quest is to rescue the other five dragons and I warn you, it won’t be easy. So before you set off, Artemis and I will instill powers within you that will aid you in your quest. You will both spend the next three days here in the valley learning how to use these powers,” the great dragon explained.

“Do you accept this quest?” asked Artemis.

“We do,” parroted Sophie and Alex.

They took a break to eat, enjoying a great feast of luscious fruits and other delicacies from the forest. After lunch Artemis, Nehma and the children walked until they reached a circle of large, smooth, clear quartz stones in the rainforest. In the middle there was a luminous spherical oracle upon a golden tree stump. Artemis instructed Sophie and Alex to step into the circle and approach the oracle. The children did so and as they moved closer the clear sphere filled with rippled clouds that changed in colour from pink, to blue, to deep purple then green much like the pond they had seen earlier.

“Place your hands upon the oracle close your eyes and breathe deeply,” said

Artemis.

The children followed his instructions and waited. For while they felt nothing. Then magically, powerful energy shot from the oracle into their fingertips and throughout their bodies. It made them feel strong and full of energy. They opened their eyes to find their bodies were floating through the air just above the oracle in a pool of rainbow light. Their feet came back to touch the moist warm earth. Their initiation was completed. They spent the next three days studying spells, practising orbing from one place to another, talking to people and animals telepathically and strengthening the powers the oracle had instilled within them.

The first part of their quest was to begin in Australia. They were to rescue Bunyip from Catherine Gorge in the dusty outback.

“Why is he in need of rescue?” questioned Sophie as the twins followed Artemis on a walk through the forest.

“The gorge where Bunyip resides is full of the tastiest fish any dragon could ask for. Bunyip is rather gluttonous and has eaten himself into a dangerously obese state, this is not good for his health and he has nearly been speared by some aborigines. His home is no longer safe for him,” Artemis explained in a wise all knowing voice. “Were here!” he announced.

They were standing in front of what looked like an ordinary rock face on the outskirts of the valley but this was not so as they soon found out.

“Where exactly are we?” questioned Alex looking at Artemis with a scrunched up face.

“This is your transport,” stated Artemis pointing at the dimpled rock before them.

“Pardon me Artemis,” said Sophie as politely as she possibly could, “I don’t see any thing.”

There was no need for the great man to utter a word he walked forward and placed his hand on a patch of the rock. A blue beam shot from his gently wrinkled palm and the rocks before them morphed away exposing two golden doors.

The children stared in awe.

“What is it?” asked Alex his jaw dropping as he spoke.

“This,” said Artemis.

“Is the teleporter elevator,” a chubby little gnome interrupted as he emerged from behind the golden doors.

“It will be your transport to each of the countries you will visit,” Artemis explained.

“Superior technology this teleporter can take you any where in the world in three minutes sometimes less,” the gnome explained pompously.

“Wow!” the children gasped simultaneously.

“Are you ready to begin children?” Artemis asked them.

“You bet,” replied the twins who were both excited and apprehensive about their first journey.

“Remember if you have any hassles you can telepathically summon me,” Artemis reassured them, “Have you got plenty of supplies?”

“I think so,” Sophie replied hoping that she had not forgotten anything.

They boarded the teleporter elevator, Artemis waved them off and the doors closed.

The walls of the teleporter were made up of millions of crystals, amethyst, jade, sapphire, agate and quartz stones. The tiny space was alight with coloured beams.

The twins were intrigued by it.

“Don’t touch!” the plump gnome shouted as Alex cautiously reached out his index finger to touch the warm radiantly glowing walls.

The children stood still and silent whilst the gnome slotted a strange jagged crystal into a shaft, this made the elevator take off with a gentle hum. In what seemed like a single second they had travelled from New Zealand to Australia, the teleporter reappearing in a cave high up in Catherine Gorge. The walls at the mouth of the cave were decorated in Aboriginal rock paintings coloured in reds browns and whites they had an earthy feel and told a story. It was clear they knew of Bunyip he appeared in their art.

The twins stepped out to the edge of the rock face and gazed right out to the horizon. The landscape had red sandy earth and few trees it was like a desert. Below them was the gorge incised by rock cliffs. They absailed down to the bank and scoured the rippling waters looking for the creature. Bunyip must have sensed their presence because he soon emerged from out of the water right in front of them with a fish in his mouth. His sudden appearance stunned Sophie and Alex they jumped back from the edge and stared open mouthed at him. Not as beautiful as Nehma he was shaded in brown scales that were dull but his eyes were bright, pigmented

yellow. His face was kind, he had fins like a fish a tail like a crocodile and a rather bulbous belly. The twins could see what Artemis had meant about his gluttonous eating habits.

Once the children had realized that Bunyip, like Nehma was kind and friendly dragon, they spoke to him.

“Alex and I have come to take you to the valley of the dragons,” Sophie explained to Bunyip. As he skimmed awkwardly along the rippling water struggling to cope with his overweight body.

“That’s lovely of you,” Bunyip replied huffing and puffing, he was out of breath.

“But I don’t see how you will be able to get me out. If I am removed from the water for too long I will die from a lack of oxygen just like a fish.”

“Don’t worry,” said Alex, “I’ve got a plan. Sophie can you get the spell book that Artemis gave us from your back-pack and start looking up shrinking spells.” Alex instructed his sister who knew what he was getting at.

Sophie soon returned with a book in her hand opened to a particular page, she approached the water where Alex was standing with a small jar of water and read the incantation aloud:

“Tiny miny tiny be

Make this huge Bunyip

Like a goldfish be!”

They stood and waited, nothing happened.

Suddenly Poof! The humongous dragon became a little brown dragon. Alex scooped him up and plopped him into the jar. They climbed back up to the teleporter and went back to the Valley of the Dragons rather pleased with themselves.

Right away Sophie unscrewed the lid of the jar and placed Bunyip in the Valleys mystical coloured pond. He immediately returned to his former size, thanked the children and vowed to begin a new healthy chapter in his life.

“That was easy,” said Alex

“ Who do we help next?” questioned Sophie.

They were to visit China next. Artemis warned that this would be one of their hardest missions. Chisai the world’s smallest dragon lived deep in a Chinese valley guarded by evil monks. Usually monks are very friendly and peaceful men and these monks once were, but on their journey through the sacred Chinese Mountains they came to a river. This river was too wide and deep to cross and so they decided to walk along following it to see where it led. At the end of the river there was a cave with two golden mountain lions guarding it.

“ We warn you do not enter the bowels of this sacred cave the numerous treasures inside are cursed and will turn your peaceful souls greedy and evil,” The regal lions warned.

But the monks believing that this would not happen to them, because they had been trained not to hoard material possessions ignored the warning of the lions and entered. Inside sparkling jewels of every colour in the rainbow illuminated the cave.

The ground instead of being covered in dirt was covered with millions upon millions of gold and silver pebbles. The monks walked on; growing greedier and greedier as they went each filled his pockets with gold, silver and jewels until they came to a pond filled with pearls. In the center lay a tiny dragon named Chisai, who said she that she was the creator and protector of all the wondrous treasures within the cave. She warned that if they did not flee they would be forever condemned and turned to stone. But it was too late they had already become too greedy. They seized the little dragon and took her to their mountain cave, forcing her to produce more and more jewels each day. Being so small she was no match for the monks and her protective powers grew weak. Chisai would soon die if the children did not save her. Artemis explained that the monks would not give her up without a fight.

It turned out that Artemis was right, it took the children three days to find the dark and dismal hideout of the evil monks. Sophie and Alex watched from a distance the comings and goings of the greed enriched monks and formed a cunning plan. Each day at noon, eleven of the twelve monks journeyed down to a nearby stream to bathe in its crystal waters and collect wild berries and roots foods from the forest to eat. This would give the children a chance to sneak up on the cave and try to save the tiny little dragon from the powerful stronghold. Alex would distract the monk guarding Chisai whilst Sophie rescued her. They watched awaiting their chance.

The next day at before noon the children snuck up towards the ghastly cave and hid behind a large boulder until eleven of the monks had left. They crept inside the cave

and snuck up towards the cage where Chisai was kept. Alex performed a sleeping spell on the guarding monk and who dropped to the floor with a thud. Sophie crept towards Chisai's cage and unlatched the lock but just as she was about to take her out the guard awoke, whipped out his sword and lunged at Sophie. Alex in an attempt to save his sister from certain death put a spell on his sword making it as heavy as a tonne of lead so he could not lift it from the ground. The monk began to scream at them in Chinese, which they could not understand but they were sure that a swift escape was necessary.

Sophie grabbed Chisai and the three of them held each other tightly orbbed into a shot of yellow light and became invisible so as they could escape safely. They watched from afar as the other monks returned to find Chisai gone. Enraged the vicious and cantankerous monks began to scour the dense surrounding forest looking for her.

"She is weak," said Sophie. "We must get her to the valley quickly."

"You are right," agreed Alex.

So without haste he telepathetically summoned an eagle flying overhead. It swooped down and offered to help in any way. Sophie sprinkled a tube of dust from her back pack over Alex and Herself which made them about Chisai's size and they all climbed on top of the eagle's back flying Chisai safely to the valley of the dragons in the nick of time.

The weary children collapsed onto the ground not wanting to move one single inch. They were completely exhausted after their close encounter with the manic monks. They had a feast and rested for a while.

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Yeti was the next dragon in need of rescuing. Stranded in a dark cave in the icy, snow covered Himalayas of Siberia. He had been injured when a keen snowboarder unknowingly used him as a jump. Artemis warned that he would be hard to find. A pure white-feathered dragon with glassy blue eyes, he blended well into his surroundings. Yeti was in grave danger of being discovered by the many humans using the crowded ski slopes. If discovered he would be unable to escape his broken wing would prevent him from flying away.

“Farewell and good luck,” said Artemis. “You’ll need it,” he muttered just loud enough for them to hear. Sophie and Alex boarded the Teleporta elevator and waved to Artemis and Nehma as the stout gnome pressed the inserted the crystal and closed the doors. The children donned on their snow gear in preparation for the sub-zero weather they were about to experience.

“Triple thermal to keep you toasty warm!” Alex read the tag out aloud as he put on his jacket gloves and beanie.

“We have now arrived in snowy Siberia,” announced the pompous little gnome.

“Please vacate the teleporta elevator at once,” he ordered.

With that the chubby little fellow opened the doors and the children got out. An unexpected chilly gust suddenly swept the children off their feet rolling them down a

hill in the blizzard. When they finally came to a stop they dusted the snow from each other's backs and proceeded to board a nearby ski lift. Thinking that the top of the mountain would be the most probable place to find the injured dragon.

Alex retrieved a map of the slopes out of his backpack scanning all of the areas with caves. Unfortunately, there were hundreds of caves dotted all over the mountains.

Each seemed identical to the next.

"Let's just start at the top and work our way down Alex, it's probably the best way," said Sophie.

"You're probably right Sophie but it will take us days to find him with all of these caves," Alex replied.

"Then we better get started," Sophie said in a motivating tone trying to convince her skeptical brother.

They began to scour the Alps looking in every cave they could find. After about twenty empty caves they stopped and wearily perched themselves on a large boulder. Sophie opened the thermos and poured them both a cup of steamy hot chocolate. They drank thinking so hard about how to find Yeti that their heads began to hurt. All of a sudden Artemis appeared.

"Sophie, Alex, I sensed that you were unhappy and I came right away," he said in his wise old tone.

"We have searched all day and we have not found Yeti," said Alex.

"Alex think back to when you were in China and the amazing rescue of Chisai. It looked difficult for a while but in the end it all turned out right. Sometimes we just

have to be patient until the right solution comes along, remember what I taught you.” and with that Artemis vanished.

“We could melt the snow,” said Sophie. “Then Yeti would be easy to find.”

“People would get suspicious Sophie,” said Alex.

They thought for a little longer. Then all of a sudden Alex leapt from the boulder spilling his hot chocolate.

“I’ve got it,” he said. “When we were training in the valley Artemis taught me how to telepathetically summon animals, if I do that you can cast a spell that will make them talk and we could ask them to lead us to Yeti,” said Alex.

“Brilliant plan Alex,” said Sophie. “I’ll look up a spell right away”. Sophie opened her book of spells and incarnations that Nehma had given to her. Meanwhile Alex summoned the animals.

It was getting dark when a pair of snow leopards arrived. A little scared by their big teeth Sophie cast a spell upon them.

“Eye of leopard on this night

Talk to us help make things right”.

“Hello,” spoke the leopards in deep husky voices. “We heard your calls and came right away.”

“We are searching for a dragon whose name is Yeti, he is hurt in a cave somewhere around here and needs our help,” said Sophie.

“We were hoping you could lead us to him,” said Alex.

“We know him well he is not far from here. We can take you there but be warned he is very proud and may not accept your help,” the leopard replied.

They soon arrived at the mouth of a cave, as they entered they saw millions of stalagmites hanging from the roof. They went deeper into the bowels of the cave, the air instead of being crisp and cold it was warm almost humid. They knew Yeti was close. They proceeded into the next corridor of the cave and there he was a medium dragon about the size of a horse, sleeping with his broken wing nestled by his side.

Alex approached to look at the wound. Yeti awoke startled by Alex.

“What do you think you are doing?” he said in a grumpy old voice.

“We’ve come to help you,” said Sophie. “Nehma sent us to take you back to the valley of the dragons don’t be afraid”.

“I’m not afraid and I don’t need your help, go away and leave me alone,” the dragon bellowed at Sophie.

“But your arm!” said Alex. “It’s hurt we can tend to it for you.”

“I can fix it myself!” the dragon replied in a proud tone.

Sophie who saw that they were not getting anywhere in a hurry used her powers to freeze the dragon still. The twins then bandaged and secured the dragon’s wing.

Alex opened the portal and they took the dragon to the valley.

Nehma met them on their arrival.

“What happened?” said Nehma. Looking at Yeti who was as stiff as a board.

“He would not let us help him so I had to freeze him,” said Sophie.

Nehma reversed the freezing spell.

“Where am I and what have you done to me, I told you I don’t need your help!”

Yeti bellowed at the twins. “I insist you return me to my home at once.”

“That’s enough Yeti,” said Nehma as calmly as she possibly could. “You can not go back to the Alps it’s too dangerous there now, look at your wing you could die if you keep getting injuries.”

“Look past your pride,” said Artemis. “The children did what was best for you.”

“I know,” said Yeti. “Sophie, Alex forgive me its just that my home is so dear to me.”

“We understand Yeti,” the twins replied. “But at least you are not alone anymore you have good friends here.”

With that the children left to sleep after their exhausting mission knowing that tomorrow they would be off again.

* * * * *

Next stop Hawaii the chubby little elevator gnome announced. Alex scanned the note Artemis had left them to provide details on the next dragon.

The note read:

Dear Sophie and Alex,

There is a box in the teleporter elevator. It contains fire retardant clothing that you may need for the next step in your quest. You will go to Hawaii to rescue a two-headed dragon named Twinsa. She is trapped in an inlet inside a volcano which is dew to irrupt any day know. You must waste no time the lava rises fast.

Good luck to you both. Artemis.

P.S. you will have to handle this job alone as I will be attending to some urgent matters and will be out of telepathic range. See you back in the valley.

“If we make it back!” exclaimed Alex.

“Your never optimistic Alex. Well be fine we have the gift of magic on our side just look at all we have accomplished so far,” Sophie gently reminded her distraught brother.

“We have now reached sunny Hawaii,” the plump gnome announced twitching his albany mustache.

“What beautiful weather, I wish we had time to enjoy it,” remarked Sophie as they exited the teleporter.

“By the looks of the smoke rings coming out of that gigantic volcano I’d say we have no time to admire the scenery,” Alex insisted with urgency in his voice as he hurried Sophie along.

Sophie looked up aghast at what she saw the volcano puffed out thick gray smoke rings every few seconds. She grabbed her spell book, the ground began to rumble and shake beneath their feet. She fumbled quickly through the pages until she had found the perfect incantation.

“Morphious forfious,

Birds we shall be

Morphious Scorpius,

Change Alex and me!"

She called out loudly, waving her index finger. Within just moments their bodies transformed, arms developing into wings, noses into beaks, presto! They were now gallant eagles. The pair made no haste in flying straight to the mouth of the volcano to survey the situation. They looked beneath them through the smoke, which had turned from rings into thick dense clouds. They saw molten rocks and fiery lava quickly rising to the surface.

The twins lost no time and right away flew into the bowels of the turbulent volcano in search of Twinsa. It was not long before they found the spectacular two-headed creature poking both heads out of the inlet where she had taken refuge from the searing heat. The twins in their eagle bodies flew down and perched themselves on a ledge. Sophie changed them back in to human form and they discussed a plan of escape with Twinsa.

"Hello Twinsa! My name is Alex and this is my sister Sophie. We have been sent by Nehma to rescue you from disaster," Alex informed her.

"I cannot tell you how grateful I am but I fear that there is no escape for me. The lava rises so fast!" Twinsa exclaimed.

"Do not fear we will help you, can you fly?" Sophie questioned the lovely red and orange dragon.

"I cannot," replied Twinsa as she blinked soot out of her golden eyelashes. "My wings have become stiff from being trapped here within the inlet for so long. I have been unable to stretch them right out and fly."

“ Sophie come quick!” Alex called to his sister alarmingly. Sophie ran to Alex who was at the edge of the inlet, she looked down the lava was barely a meter from them.

“ We have to get out of her fast!” said Alex. “I have an idea! If I freeze the lava for as long as possible you can shrink Twinsa, morph us back into birds and we can carry her out with our beaks,” Alex said rather proud of his Idea.

“ Alex It’s too dangerous we might burn our feathers on the way out if that happens we will fall into the lava,” Sophie told him.

“ What ever will we do!” the children exclaimed unison.

“ I wish we could summon Artemis he would know what to do,” said Alex rather glumly.

“That’s it!” cried Sophie. “Remember when we were in Siberia and Artemis orbed in to help us?”

“Yes,” replied Alex unsure of what exactly his sister was trying to say.

“ That’s what well do, we can each put our arms around one of Twinsas’ necks and orb her with us,” Sophie instructed her brother.

“We better hurry,” said Alex. “The lava has almost reached us.”

Within a few short moments the three vanished from the volcano inlet reappearing in the Valley of the Dragons once again. Twinsa was most grateful to be in the valley again. She thrust her two necks around the twins in a most loving and grateful embrace and thanked them repeatedly for saving her life.

“ It takes great bravery to rescue someone, risking your own lives in the process. I sincerely thank you for that,” Twinsa told them as she stretched out her golden

wings and flew gracefully above them, diving through the puffy white clouds above the safe haven of the valley.

The children collapsed onto the ground exhausted after their treacherous life-endangering rescue. They had just closed their droopy eyes when Artemis arrived. "Children I am sorry to say this but I am afraid you will be unable to rest this time. You must head off to your next journey at once," Artemis sadly informed the weary children.

"Why so soon Artemis?" Alex questioned him, "we just got back."

"I know forgive me children!" the figure of wisdom exclaimed. "But there has been an unexpected glitch," He continued on, "you see whilst you were gone I too went on a mission to find a rare crystal called Zamagate which is necessary to keep the teleporta elevator running. We have no supply of it left here in the valley and I can not get any more until tomorrow," the wise figure concluded.

"So we'll just wait until then," Sophie stated as she rolled back into a comfortable sleeping position.

"No problem," Alex agreed yawning as he closed his heavy eyelids.

"That's not possible I'm afraid. You see the final dragon, Brynack is his name, is trapped within the Bermuda triangle. We have only one canister of portal dust to rescue him but it must be used on the ninth hour of the ninth day of the ninth month in 1999." The wise old figure informed the sleepy pair.

“ We only have five hours Artemis, how will we make it in time without the teleporta elevator?” Sophie asked springing quickly from her position on the ground.

“ You will have no choice but to go by plane,” Artemis replied. “You must hurry!”

“Where do we find the dragon once we are within the triangle?” Alex asked.

“ That I do not know, I have never been in there and those who pass over it never return to tell the tale. This will be a blind mission kids,” the wise man spoke with frustration sadly realizing that even the wisest of people don’t have all the answers at times. There was a silence among them as the children wondered if they would ever see the mystical valley or their family ever again.

“ There is one thing I do know,” Artemis sparked up and cried out, “It is most important too, the dust will only hold the portal opened for one hour, if you are not out in time unfortunately you will be lost within the Bermuda triangles confines forever.”

They prepared to set off. The triangle was uncharted territory. Unsure of what they would face within it they packed every spell potion and magical tool they could carry. It was not long before they had opened the portal and entered the triangle. Forgetting their time limit they stared at the abominable landscape all shades of blacks, browns and greys not at all magnificent like the valley. The ground was not hard and sturdy rather dank and muddy their feet squelched and sank into it with every step as they began to search for the final dragon. There was an eerie feel about the place, which inside formed an invisible triangular prism shaped box.

Outside the box they could see the ocean with boats and people enjoying themselves on the coast off beautiful Bermuda. Children just like Sophie and Alex played gaily in the gleaming sun splashing about in the tepid waters. When compared to the real world the triangle was like something out of a horror story.

“Only forty minutes left,” Alex cried.

They hurried themselves not wanting to be trapped in the depressing atmosphere for all eternity. They searched everywhere calling the dragon’s name as they scurried as fast as they could through the dense muddy mangrove-like woods. The time began to slip away from them thirty minutes, twenty minutes and fifteen minutes. They called out to Brynack louder and louder in fear and frustration of their sinking plight. It was about ten minutes to go when Sophie caught a glimpse of something off in the distance. She began to run to it! Alex following quickly at her heels. They had finally found the missing dragon.

The twins were rather surprised when they finally reached the dragon, who peacefully slept not even stirring in their presence. He was the most beautiful of all the dragons the pair had seen. As he lay there in front of them, his nostrils gently flaring with each deep snore, they took a minute to gaze at his sheer magnificence. His colouring was an amazing kaleidoscope of greens. Every scale tipped with silver, rather stunning for a dragon, the size of a horse, Alex thought to himself as the creature started to wake.

Sophie wondered how such a glorious creature could find such a dismal place his home. But as he began to tell his story she realized that the triangle was no home to him, he described it as more like a prison. So as not to waste too much more time Sophie quickly explained their mission.

“Brynack!” she said. “Alex and I are sent here by Nehma to take you back to the Valley of the Dragons where you will be happy again.”

“Nice dream but impossible!” the dragon replied in self-pity, “I am afraid there is no escape from this dastardly place,” the dragon concluded with loud weary sobs. Thick streams of tears trickled down his beautiful face.

“Oh yes there is,” cried Alex, “we have opened an escape portal on the other side of the sludgy swamp, but there is only a few minutes left or we will be stranded here for all eternity never to escape.”

“We could fly their Brynack,” Sophie stated.

“Those trees are in the way, if I tried to fly through them I would surely break a wing,” the dragon sobbed.

“Can't you just fly over the top of them,” Alex queried feeling rather clever with himself.

“No I can not! The trees touch the top of the triangles' confines. There is no space between them and the invisible wall that traps us here,” Brynack replied.

Each of them sat quietly sobbing a triangle of desperate souls. They were too distraught to think clearly. The dragon had the most to lose. He pondered his plight. Without warning he drew in a deep breath and then let out a huge trail of

fierce flames. The blaze of flame was charring the entire landscape in front of them. A path to safety had opened up. Their tears soon dried up as they boarded Brynacks back. Sitting high between those beautiful spreading translucent wings they zoomed through the escape portal in a wink of time.

Through the darkness of night the exasperated three flew gazing at galaxies of shimmering stars high above them. The twins slept nestled safely on Brynack as he flew towards the Valley of the Dragons.

The next morning the twins awoke in their own beds not sure if they had dreamt the adventure. As Sophie looked, from her open window up at the dragon mobile chiming in the breeze she was sure the tiniest dragon winked!

Reflection statement.

In order to develop an original composition that fulfilled the outcomes of the English Extension Two Major Work I chose to write a short story in the Fantasy Genre. I chose this genre to suit my intended audience namely children in the eight to twelve year age bracket.

My work is modeled on the fairytale genre hence the clichéd opening “Long, long ago.” But in keeping with the Boards requirements that the work must be original, I have chosen to somewhat transform this genre by mixing traditional fairytale scenery and characters with modern day civilization and its inhabitants. I feel that making this transformation enables the intended audience to be more able to relate to the compositions main themes and issues whilst still keeping it fun and most importantly interesting.

I wanted to provide my audience with valuable and insightful information using my short story as the vessel. I also wanted to develop a quality composition that met the Boards' requirements and a composition I could be proud of. I feel that my composition fulfills my aims by taking the reader on a mystical journey teaching them valuable lessons through my themes following the typical narrative plot structure. These themes consist of, Gluttony which I explore using the dragon Bunyip of Australia, greed which is seen through the manic Chinese monks and wrath seen in the character of Yeti the Siberian Dragon. In sections of the story such

as the trip to Hawaii to rescue Twinsa and then off to Bermuda narrowly saving Brynack, I explore more general but nevertheless important lessons such as kindness to one another and give the message of hopefulness there is always something better around the corner. I feel that adopting this new age fairytale style presents these issues in a less confronting manner. The Bermuda dragon also serves as my complication the uncertainty that is faced in that scene is similar to feelings that some of us might have here in the 'Real World' at times. But the validation serves as a gentle reminder that good will always triumph over evil (in keeping with the Fairytale Genre). The final validation of my story, which is that when things are done morally and correctly chaos situations can return to order but everything takes work. This is the realization the children come to after their quest is complete. The last paragraph of my composition is representative of the feeling that is commonly experienced when things go from bad to good when we least expect it. The children who are not sure if it was all a dream or not feel this way because, sometimes we feel in a horrible situation that there will never be happily ever after. This conclusion serves as proof if you like that it happens sometimes.

When choosing the locations of each individual dragons habitat I chose countries children today would be familiar with. The reason I did this was to enable readers from all around the world to enjoy my composition. I would like to have it printed in foreign languages as well as English so my audience could become more widespread. Description of these settings is a very important feature of my composition. Ideally I would have liked to be able to illustrate my work with

coloured illustrations. As the Board of Studies does not include this in its criteria as an option I was unable to format my work in this manner. To make up for this I have gone into as much detail as I feel the intended audience could handle when describing scenery such as the "moss and lichen, which covered the forest floor." Sometimes during the process of writing description became a problem. This was due to the fact that the intended audience would not have been capable of understanding more complex descriptive language, if I had used it. Unless of course they had a dictionary and Thesaurus to translate whilst reading it. Some examples of words I would have liked to have used are: alabaster instead of white, azure rather than blue. Also rather than using anaphora of words like soft I would have replaced them with supple and greed would have been replaced with insatiable or overindulgent. My main problem was having to tone down my high levels of vocabulary so that my audience would be able to understand and the composition would flow.

The lexical chain in my piece is the flowing concept of the twins, Sophie and Alex, who are the protagonists in the quest, continuing their journey to its completion to help good triumph in the end. This is seen in every paragraph both in dialogue, description of events and scenery, all which show the continuing journey to complete the "Quest of the Endangered Five." Hence the title.

A fundamental contributor to my final work was my extensive research process.

This research involved investigation of types of appropriate literary devices I should

use such as simile, alliteration, onomatopoeia and rhyme to enhance my composition. I had to learn the basics of supernatural power concepts and read other compositions that detailed the Fairytale Genre to gain insight into this style of composition. This research greatly helped the development of the final piece of work and outlined areas I needed to address in my composition. After my initial research into the Fairytale Fantasy format I came to the conclusion that in keeping with the intended audience I would need to use a low modality. I felt that a high or medium modality would be too harsh and difficult for the audience to understand and lessen the compositions affect on them.

The Extension Two syllabus outcomes state that: A student must present an extended composition demonstrating depth, insight, originality and skills in independent investigation. I feel that through my composition I have fulfilled these outcomes well. *Depth* can be viewed in my new age fairytale concept *insight* can be seen in my manipulation of language in relation to that concept. My work is nothing but *original* thoughts that through the composition process were drafted and redrafted until I reached an appropriate standard of composition that showed my language *skills*. To research necessary components I had to conduct an extensive *independent investigation*. In conclusion my major work composition meets all of the outcomes set in the Board of studies for this subject.

ENGLISH EXTENSION 2 — Short Story

[View Sample](#)

Band E1/2

Sample 4

Title: Quest of the Endangered Five

The candidate aimed to compose a fantasy fairy-tale for 8 to 12 year olds. The independent investigation was limited to research of the basics of supernatural power and the reading of the fairytales rather than demonstrating investigation of the targeted audience and the narrative form.

The candidate composed a substantial major work that is appropriate to purpose and medium.

The Reflection statement demonstrated an ability to articulate the candidate's process of composition.