

A large, dark, textured brushstroke background, resembling a thick, black ink splatter or a heavy charcoal stroke. The texture is grainy and uneven, with some areas appearing more saturated than others. The overall shape is roughly circular but irregular, with several pointed and rounded protrusions extending outwards.

ELLA AND  
OWEN

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little bee books

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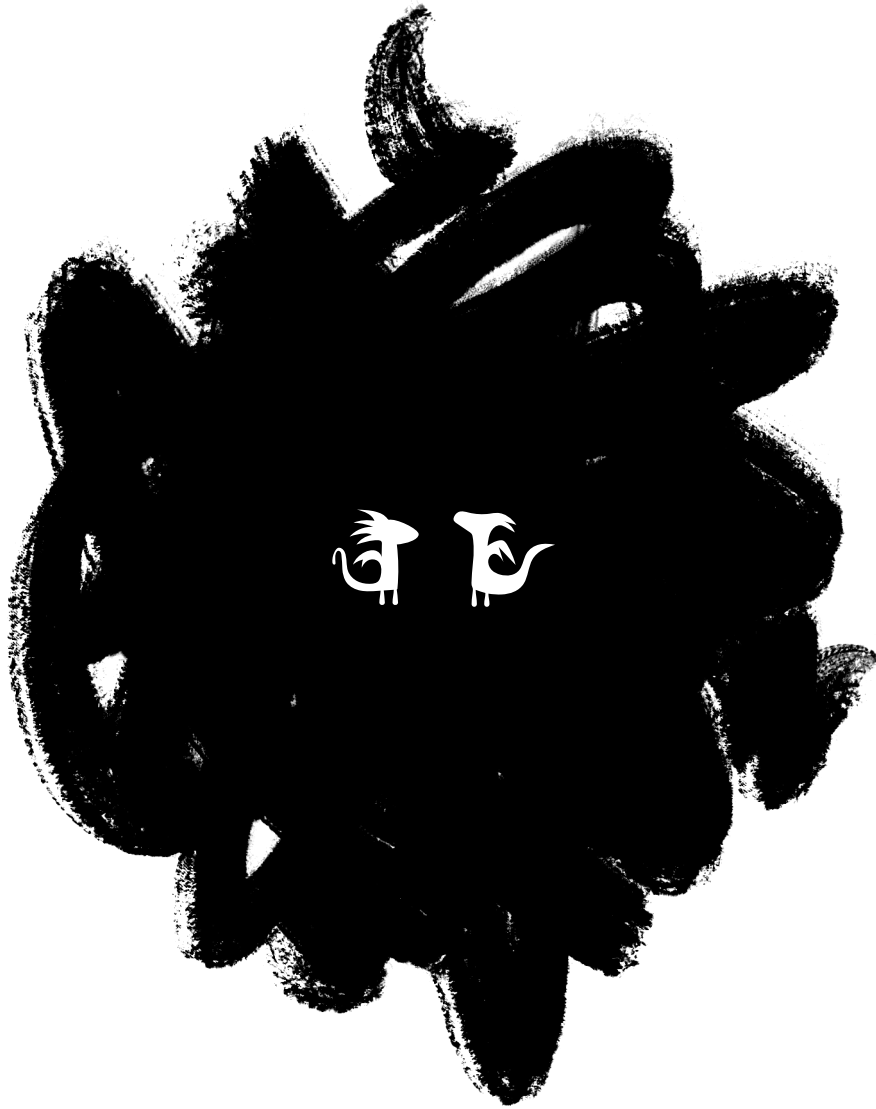
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# ELLA AND CLOWEN

## THE CAVE OF AAAAAH! DOOM!



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# WHEN DRAGONS SNEEZE



On the other side of Fright Mountain, through the Fog of Screams and past the Waterfall of Destruction, was a place where only knights in shining armor dared to go when they wanted to impress a princess.

At the bottom of the other side of the mountain was Dragon Patch. Dozens of dragons lived there in dozens of stone houses.

That's right.

*Dragons!*

Do you know all there is to know about dragons? Here are a few important things:

They have really stinky breath—actually, really stinky *fire* breath.



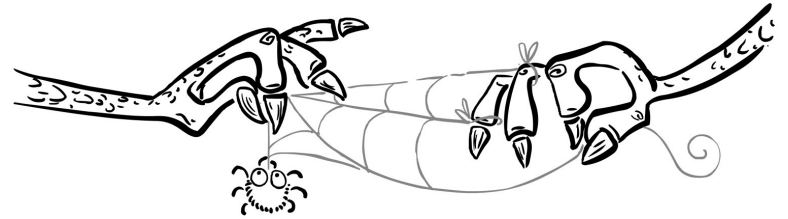
You can ride them like a flying horse!



They have wings.



And claws.



And their favorite dessert is pickled-fish Popsicles!

Is there more?

You bet! They sometimes get sick. And when fire-breathing dragons sneeze, you had better run for cover. . . .



"ACHOO!"

A ball of fire shot from Owen's mouth. It shot across his bedroom, out the window, and then lit on fire a toadstool that his sister, Ella, was sitting on.



"Blazing scales! You made me drop my spider snail!" Ella said as her eight-legged pet slimed away. Very slowly.

"Sorry," Owen said.

"You've been sick since forever," Ella said. "At least five whole days. And fire sneezes are *not* normal."

"But I'm okay being sick," Owen said.



Owen may have been okay being sick, but there was a long list of things Owen *wasn't* okay with. The top three were:



Owen was very okay having a cold because it meant he could stay in bed and read. All day. Owen *loved* to read about hairy trolls, magical fairies, and heroic dragons. He especially loved books about dragons who defeated knights in shining armor.



“Mom says if I keep the slugs out of my ears and eat my slime, I’ll be flying around in no time,” Owen explained as he lifted a large rock and slurped the green gunk on the bottom. Owen’s nose wiggled. He was going to sneeze again. “Ah... ah... ah...”

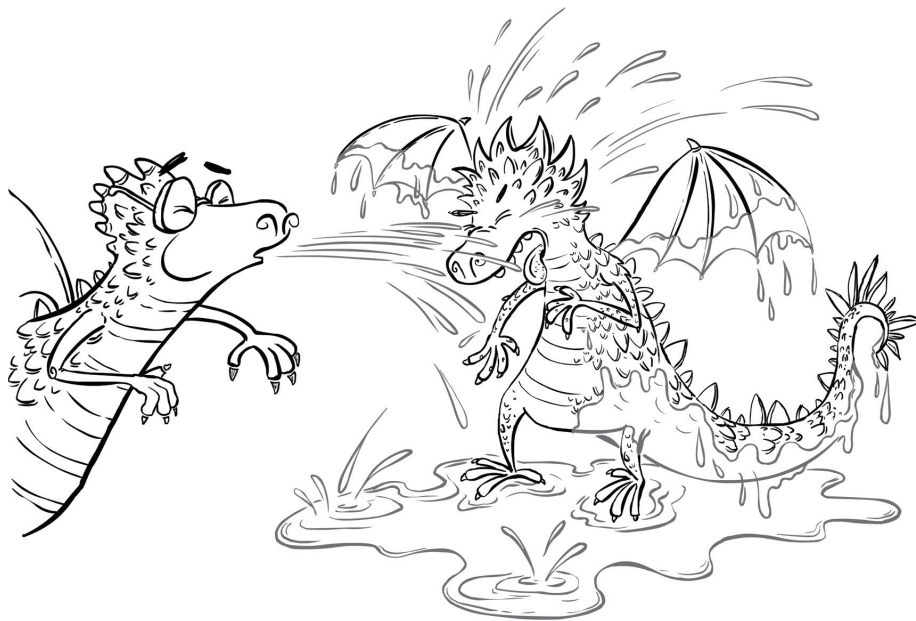
Ella flew into Owen's bedroom cave and grabbed a bucket of cold swamp water that was sitting by his bed. She threw it into his open mouth before he could sneeze flames. Steam puffed from his ears.



“There! That should do it!” Ella said.

Owen quickly shook his head. “ACHOO!” he sneezed.

A spray of water shot from his mouth and soaked Ella.



“Yuck! Sick brother!” Ella shook like a wet pixie at Lava Lake.



“Mom says I’ll be fine in, like, a day or two . . . or ten.” Owen turned away from his sister, cracked open a very good book about a dragon who defeated an evil wizard made of vegetables, and began to read.

“I don’t want you to be sick anymore,” Ella said.



“Aww . . . thanks for caring, sis!” Owen said.

“Well, it’s kinda mostly because I know Mom will make me do your chores if you’re sick,” Ella admitted.

Owen looked straight ahead and ignored his sister.





She tried to get his attention again. “So, I’ve heard of a cave where a mystical wizard dragon has a secret cure for everything. He once changed a frog into a toad. He even turned a potato into something called a French fry—or so I’m told.”

“Sorry, I don’t want to go,”

Owen said and went back to reading his book.

“But it’ll be an awesome adventure!” Ella said.

“Now for *sure* I don’t want to go,” he said.

“And exciting!” Ella added.

“I double even *more* don’t want to go.”  
He turned a page in his book. The evil wizard made of vegetables had just cast a broccoli spell.

“*And* we can collect ogre toenails for your ogre toenail collection,” Ella said and sighed.

“Ogre toenails?”

Owen closed his book and sat up in his bed.

“Oooh! *Now* I want to go!”

The excitement of the toenails made his nose twitch.

Then twitch again. Then “*ACHOO!*”

Fire shot from his nose, and the force of the sneeze threw him across the room. He bounced off the wall and tumbled across the cave.



“Well, this place is just called the, uh, Cave of, uh, Caves,” Ella explained. “Because it’s a cave full of caves. That aren’t evil.”

“I don’t know.” Owen began to have second thoughts. “It sounds kinda iffy. . . .”

“*Ogre toenails . . . !*” Ella reminded him with a hopeful smile.

Owen got excited again. “What are we waiting for? Let’s go!”

The two rushed from their cave, wings flapping.

Ella never told Owen that she made up the name the Cave of Caves. She also never told him the cave was *really* called the Cave of Aaaaah! Doom!

But don’t worry. Owen figured that one out soon enough.

