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Small Small Rainbows

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SIAN BEVAN



Hello!

I use very small stories to clear out the clutter in my head. During lockdown, I started sharing these through a daily newsletter - which I tried to write with the criteria that the stories should try to cheer up the reader:

Throughout June 2020, thanks to support from Imagine, I created a children's version. More silliness, more monsters...but with the same idea at their heart: to offer a bit of sunshine on rainy lockdown days.

I've compiled them here for your enjoyment. Each story is followed by a few questions to help start a conversation after reading. I hope they lead to some cosy chats, and maybe the creation of your own mini tales.

I know there are a lot more activities available than there are hours in the day, but I hope these stories open a few minutes of calm.

SianyB xxx

STORY ONE

Elephants

Elliot liked to imagine that he had a pet elephant. When people asked what his favourite animal was, he would point to his imaginary elephant, roll his eyes and say: "Well, I have to say elephant, don't I?"

Sometimes people would laugh nervously, and other people just stared at the space where his imaginary elephant was and looked confused.

One day he was sitting on his favourite bench, brushing away the imaginary elephant's trunk (it was feeding time) when a crinkled up person in a warm stripey coat sat next to him. Elliot glanced over at the coat, who had taken a mint out of its pocket and was slowly unwrapping it. The person was much smaller than the coat, so it was a bit tricky to know which bit to say hello to.

“Would your elephant like a mint?” asked the coat/person.

Eliot spun to look at the coat/person.

“Can you see my elephant?” Eliot asked, quite suspiciously.

“Can you see mine?” replied the person/coat.

They both nodded very wisely and continued to sit.

Tiny Story Chats

- 1. Do you have an imaginary animal? If not, what animal would you pick?**
- 2. Do you think Eliot really does have an imaginary elephant?**
- 3. How do you think Eliot feels at the end of the story?**

STORY TWO

(not) Making Friends

Aisha found it tricky to make friends. This was a bit because, when she was 4, she met the most perfect person in the whole world, and being pals with anyone after that was just...disappointing.

Her Mum would send her on playdates with nice kids who shared their toys and asked her polite questions. Aisha would just sigh and look out of the window and ask if it was time to go home yet.

One day Aisha's Mum sat her down on the floor for a conversation so serious they had to hold hands for it.

"Aisha, love, what can I do to help you make friends? Please."

"Mum, I don't need friends. I already met the perfect friend, I'll just wait until I see them again."

"What? Who?"

And so Aisha tried to explain to her Mum about her perfect person,

but when she said it out loud, the details got a bit fuzzy and she couldn't quite remember their name or if she'd met them on holiday, or at the bus stop, but they definitely had loads of fun one summer when she was 4. They definitely went swimming, saw a show with clowns in it and nestled under a soft blanket one warm evening to sleep under the stars.

"Oh Aisha."

Aisha looked at her Mum and then realised what she was about to say.

"Oh," said the girl.

"Yes love. That was me."

And years of giggling and rolling and shouting and yelling and films and popcorn all rolled over her, and Aisha smiled, and then both of them laughed and laughed.

"Ok, fine," said Aisha. "Let's make more friends."

Tiny Story Chats

1. What's the trickiest thing about making new friends?
2. How do you think Aisha feels at the end of the story?
3. What's your favourite memory with another person?

STORY THREE

My Hamster is a Pirate

This is a message to the adults in the house - you might need to be sitting down. Or maybe lying down. Or maybe curled up in a ball under the table like the dog does when it's Bonfire Night. Right. Here we go.

I tried to tell you when we first got him: that Hamster is a Pirate. And you were all: no no, darling, it's just a hamster and so I rolled my eyes and called him Timmy.

Then I told you he kept arranging his straw to make tiny boats. And you were all: oh darling, what on earth happened to that nice vase?

THEN I told you he had made a small flag with a skull and crossbones on, using paper he stole from my table. And you were all: that's a lovely story darling, but could you please brush your teeth now?

Well, last night I got woken up with a very quiet 'oo-arrrrgh' in my ear; and there was Timmy, sitting right on my pillow. He'd made a wee cutlass from a lollipop stick and some old foil and he was waving it around. He started pointing to my moneybox and showing me his cute little teeth. What could I do?

Anyway, this is just to let you know that I've decided to become a pirate too. Not sure when I'll be back, or if I'll fit on the boat, but Timmy gave me this wink which seemed to say 'this will be an excellent adventure, matey'. Wish me luck!

Lots of love,

Your favourite kid.

XXX

PS: not sure yet if I'll become a hamster too. Probs not.

PPS: please have breakfast ready, just in case.

PPPS: the vase was probably Timmy. Pirates love breaking vases from Nana.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Do you think the hamster really was a pirate?
2. How do you think the kid telling the story felt when he was trying to tell people about his hamster?
3. What kind of animal would make the best pirate?

STORY FOUR

Making a Mix

Gigi sometimes laughed so much that tears ran down her face, and grown-ups came up to her all worried.

She would try and tell them she was ok, but their faces looked so serious that she would start laughing again. Then the grown-ups would look all offended and say things like 'I was only asking' and she would try to say sorry but the laughter had taken control of her bones and she could only wobble her head a bit and then turn away.

One day she met a boy who couldn't stop crying. He wasn't even that sad, but tears had taken over his eyes and wouldn't stop falling out. She went to say hello, but tripped a bit on the way and ended up laughing louder and louder. He tried to join in but accidentally cried instead. She tried to ask if he was ok, but it just made extra giggles come out of her head.

It was - Gigi decided - a disaster.

All the laughter and all the crying was pooling at their feet in a massive puddle. Soon it was up to their ankles, and the happiness and the sadness started to mix together. They started splashing. Then they did some splashing.

They kicked the glad and sad together until it foamed up, and then they danced with gentle smiles, as bubbles floated and glistened in the sunlight.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Have you ever started laughing and struggled to stop?
2. Is there anyone you know who balances out your feelings sometimes?
3. Do you think Gigi was being unkind when she couldn't stop laughing?

STORY FIVE

Traffic Lights

Samira loved traffic lights. Even when she'd been a tiny wobbly person, she'd pointed at every traffic light, shouting GO GO when they turned green. Most people who saw this thought it was just lovely and gave her a lovely smile. Other people had forgotten how to smile but that's ok.

When she was 10, Samira's family moved house. Their new place was on a busy road, right by a big, tall set of traffic lights. She begged for the bedroom at the front so the light from them would shimmer through her curtains at night. It became a habit that she could only sleep when they turned green. ('Go!' she whispered to herself as she closed her eyes).

One day, a new person became in charge of the town. Nobody was quite sure how he got there, but he had a crown and shouted a lot, so it seemed about right. He made a new rule: no more traffic lights. Everyone could go as fast as they liked, and if people got bumped into on the road...well, that was their problem.

"The fastest ones will win!" he said, and some people cheered. Most people didn't.

Soon, the roads became unkind. Most people tried to be polite and waved each other through, only to be pushed over by someone in a big car pulling a jetski yelling something about losers. Samira knew she was the one to help.

She went down to the busy road and pointed at one set of cars and yelled: RED. She pointed at another set and yelled GREEN. People realised what she was trying to do and started echoing her words, taking turns to go and waving cheerfully at each other as they went past.

Her voice got tired, so she went to get some pieces of card to point at people: green for go, yellow for get ready and green for...

“GO!”

A rumbling voice shouted behind her: It was the man in the crown. His face scrunched up like he was thinking, then he suddenly yelled loudly.

“I’ve had a brilliant idea!” he shouted. “We should use special lights so people know when to go! We could call them Lights of Traffic!”

Some people cheered. Most people didn’t.

“So stop looking at this small girl and remember it was ME who solved this terrible problem in our town!”

He went to walk away, looking very pleased with himself. As he did, Samira looked at other nice people and nodded. They all yelled GREEN!!! as loud as they could, and ran towards the man who’d

decided to be king. They took the crown off his head and picked him up and ran with him all the way to the town library. Quickly, they opened the door and threw him inside, closing the door and locking it before he knew what was happening.

Samira called through the door: "you can come out when you've read enough to realise what you need to do next." They took it in turns to go in and sit with him, giving him lovely sandwiches and helping him with the tricky bits of some of the books.

Two weeks later, he emerged. His hands were dusted in ink from the books and his face had drooped into something which looked like kindness.

"Yeah. I get it now," he said. "Sorry about that."

The whole town cheered. Nobody didn't.

Tiny Story Chats

I hope this story is a way of talking about fairness, along with the sense and bravery of a small girl. It is, of course, not ok to pick someone up and lock them in a library (I know it's sometimes tempting), so you can also have a chat about exaggerating in stories to make a point!

1. Why do you think the traffic lights were important?
2. How do you think Samira felt when she realised she could help?
3. What do you think we can learn from books and stories?

STORY SIX

Kirstin and the Pebble

Kirstin was walking along the canal path, which was straight and bright like an arrow to the sun. She was dawdling next to Auntie Hannah when she saw it. A small pebble, smoother than anything she'd ever seen on earth. It was - and this was probably the important bit - glowing gently with a pale blue light. She looked up at Auntie Hannah to tell her, but she was on her phone and looking grumpy so she didn't bother.

Walking slowly over to the pebble, Kirstin pulled her sleeves over her hands so she could pick it up. She turned it over and realised it was covered in strange writing and buzzed gently, the pale light growing brighter as she held it. Kirstin realised she could be holding something brought by aliens.

Thoughts buzzed around her head. She could be famous! She would be the person who found a link to another planet! She'd be in the papers and maybe someone would write a song about her!

She thought about the trips to meet important people, tucked up in suits which smelt of coffee. Conversations with secret spies who probably never said hello to bees, and people constantly camped outside her house, trying to take her picture when she was just having a think about clouds...

Nope. She simply did not have time for all that.

She dropped the pebble and skipped after Auntie Hannah.

Somewhere, very far away, an alien sighed.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Do you think the pebble was really from space?
2. What would you have done?
3. Would you like to be famous for discovering something?

STORY SEVEN

A Full Moon

"It happens every time there's a full moon, I don't know why," said Hannah sadly.

Her friends looked awkwardly at each other. Finally, Li Mei spoke up.

"Umm...Hannah, are you a werewolf?"

Hannah swallowed, then looked away and decided to tell them the truth.

"No...I'm...I'm...I'm a wereworm. Once a month I turn into a worm for a night."

There was a moment of silence, and then a lot of discussion. The pals decided three things:

1. They should make sure she had some nice soil to munch when she was a worm.

2. It's totally ok to be a worm.
3. She needed her own YouTube channel.

Hannah sighed happily and picked the last bits of dirt out of her hair.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What advice would you give your friend if they told you something like that?
2. What other animals do you think people could turn into?
3. Why do you think Hannah wanted to tell her friends?

STORY EIGHT

The Concrete Garden

Nana's backyard was magic. You wouldn't have known, looking at it. All concrete walls and concrete floor, and no sunlight so it felt like the sky was concrete too. It should have felt grey, grey, grey wherever you looked, but Nana would never have let that happen. She had a plastic flamingo and brightly coloured wooden trees. She's strung up a hammock with some sand underneath, so you could pretend you were on the beach.

But that wasn't what made it magic.

The thing about Nana is that she could twist things right around. You'd look at dinner, and think it looked gross, then she'd spin a wee story and BAM - you're a jungle explorer wolfing down rations. Same with her backyard.

"My concrete garden is full of secrets," she'd say. "It just depends on how you look at it..."

She was right. If you went in feeling sad, she would point out a small

blue plant pot you'd never noticed before, and whisk you off to the North Pole. Or, if you were feeling nervous, she'd guide you to the pile of rocks in the corner and let them take your troubles.

And when the world was feeling a bit too closed in, she'd take you to a mirror which hung on the wall. Nana would whisper in your ear, and ask you to look beyond your own reflection to the whole big beautiful space behind it, hidden in the concrete garden.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Why do you think Nana's backyard feels so magic?
2. Is there anything you like to look at, which helps you imagine being somewhere else?
3. If you had your own concrete garden, what would you put in it to cheer people up?

STORY NINE

The Fly

Once there was a fly who really wanted to join a band.

He looked in the mirror and told himself he could do anything he wanted to. He growled angrily in the mirror because he thought it looked cool, then flexed his wings a bit, just to see them shimmer.

But, it turns out, the drumstick was much bigger than him, his singing was terrible and it took a really long time to learn guitar. So, he went off to eat some jam. It was delicious.

The End.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What would be a good name for a band with flies in it?
2. Did you feel sorry for the fly at the end?
3. If you were going to make a band with insects in it, which insects do you think could play which instruments?

STORY TEN

Butterflies are not the only Beautiful Things

There was once a caterpillar called Thane who loved being a caterpillar. He loved everything about it. Eating leaves and crawling about, enjoying a bit of morning dew...life was great.

“Oh, but just you wait until you’re a butterfly!” everyone said, usually as they excitedly started to spin themselves up ready to transform. But Thane the Caterpillar didn’t want to be a butterfly. He already thought he was beautiful, he thought flying looked risky and those delicate wings? Well, they were just an accident waiting to happen.

One by one his friends tucked themselves into a chrysalis, and then came out going on and on about how they felt brand new and ooh, look at my wings aren’t I lovely?

He watched them soar high in the air, and heard them sing about their new freedoms. He looked about him and - just for a minute - wondered if he should do the same as everyone else...

...then he thought NAH and kept munching his leaf. He caught a glimpse of his reflection in a drop of water, all long striped and fuzzy. He gave himself a wee wink, and thought how lucky he was to be him.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Do you think Thane the Caterpillar should have become a butterfly?
2. Is there anything which lots of people do, which you don't want to?
3. What do you think is the hardest thing about doing something different from everyone else?

STORY ELEVEN

Notebooks

Writing stories was always how Amber got things out of their head. When it got too busy up there, or too angry, or too sad, Amber would grab a notebook and scribble a story which always ALWAYS had a happy ending. The imaginary dog would get rescued, the imaginary grown-ups would stop fighting and the imaginary bakery would always have the good doughnuts in.

As the notebooks filled up, Amber started to pile them in the corner of their room. Soon, they'd taken up a whole wall, and Mum asked Amber to please for goodness sake find a better place for those bloomin' books. So, Amber had walked to the field at the bottom of their street and started leaving the books there, covered in broken umbrellas they rescued from bins.

Months went by, and the books kept coming, making longer walls and then higher walls, and then staircases and turrets. Soon Amber had a whole building, with broken umbrellas for a roof. They sat in the middle, staring around at the walls which bubbled with imagination, smiling contentedly in the Palace of Happy Endings.

Tiny Story Chats

1. 1. Do you like stories which have happy endings?
2. 2. Is there anything you do to get thoughts and ideas out of your head? Some people dance, some people sing, some people scribble...
3. 3. Why do you think Amber was so happy at the end?

STORY TWELVE

Nettle

Nettle hadn't always been called Nettle. Their Mam had one name for them, and their Dad usually called them 'What Now?' or Big Sigh.

One time an old lady walking her dog had pointed at the nettles on the side of the path.

"I bet everyone tells you to watch out for those wee nasties, eh?"

Nettle - although they had a different name back then - had nodded slowly. Everyone knew those spiky leaves would leave an itchy rash, and make your skin bubble up like an argument.

The old lady came closer and whispered 'you just have to know how to handle them'. She picked some leaves and put them in a bag and off she went with a wink.

It had taken a few attempts but soon Nettle got the hang of it, sometimes sitting by the side of the canal path and gently stroking those wee nasties. One day, another kid sat next to them and stared

and stared at Nettle until they got the hang of it too.

The two of them defended their misunderstood garden in silence until one day a host of flowers bloomed a beautiful thank you. The two friend nodded to each other, smiled and walked away, cool hands twisted together.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Why do you think the main person in it wanted to have the name 'Nettle'?
2. Do you think you can become friends with someone by not really saying anything?
3. What's your favourite plant? Can you tell me why it's your favourite?

STORY THIRTEEN

Donkey

Everyone loved coming to feed the donkey. They would lean on the fence and chat the hours away with their neighbours. Occasionally, someone would wave a carrot at the donkey, and he'd shamble over and munch it, staring at them with his big, brown eyes.

What a lovely donkey, everyone thought.

Only Marty knew the truth. The donkey - he was sure of it - was a spy. One day, out of earshot of all the grownups, he'd asked the donkey, and the animal had turned to him and blinked twice, so he knew it was a true story fact. He didn't know who the donkey was spying for, but he was sure he was right. His Dad just laughed when he told him, and carried on complaining about the litter in the park to Mr Banks from number 46.

The next day Marty and his Dad went for a walk. His Dad commented on how much tidier the park was, like someone had come in the night to pick up all the mess. Marty was SURE it wasn't a coincidence. As they passed the donkey, Marty casually asked his Dad how he felt about people driving too fast down the high street. His Dad went on a five minute rant about how they needed

something to "slow those fools down."

Sure enough, the next day, there were new signs up and speed bumps shaped like carrots.

Marty knew what he had to do. This was his moment. He asked his Dad if they could go and feed the donkey. Once they got to the field, he casually started a chat with his Dad...

"Wouldn't you agree, Dad, that everyone in town would be happier and safer if there was free ice cream give out every Saturday?"

Hi Dad looked a bit confused and started talking about lawnmowers, while the donkey laughed and laughed.

The next day, Marty found a box on his doorstep with a very very small scoop of ice cream inside. There was a note, which just said NICETRY, KID.

Marty smiled, licked the melted ice cream and went to grab a carrot from the cupboard. There was someone he needed to say thank you to.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Do you think the donkey really was a spy?
2. How do you think Marty felt by the end of the story?
3. What animal do you think would make the best spy?

STORY FOURTEEN

A Small Hero

She was not the superhero the world wanted. She was not the superhero the world needed. She wasn't even, really, the superhero that anyone noticed. She was...

SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG!

Got a problem? In a pickle? Then leave out some cat food in a bowl, wait a few hours until it's dark and SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG will come to your rescue!

If a group of bullies are standing round shouting and being mean, SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG will roll right up to them and gently prickle their ankles until they get annoyed and go home. POW!

What if you come face to face with a total meanie, who's threatening to steal your hat? SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG will snuffle close to them and look so cute, the meanie will turn to goo and promise never to be mean again. KABLAM!

And if you're feeling a bit blue and just need cheering up? SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG is here to save the day! Her cuddles might be spiky but when she puts her paw on your hand, it makes everything ok. ZAP!

Thanks SLIGHTLY SUPER HEDGEHOG! You're SLIGHTLY AMAZING!

Tiny Story Chats

1. How did this story make you feel?
2. What do you think the smallest superhero animal could be?
3. If you were a slightly super superhero, what small skill would you have?

STORY FIFTEEN

The Frame

It was made in 1857. It was the most beautiful thing Giuseppe had ever made, covered in twists and turns and flecks of gold. He told his wife that he had finally done it: he had made the most perfect picture frame in the world, and he was ready to retire, happy that his life's work was done.

She pointed out that he was only 25 years old, so maybe he should calm down and go back to work.

The frame was sold to a very famous art gallery, which put a very famous painting in it of a very famous man. The man was not a good man. He stole riches, and he stole voices and the frame was ashamed that it was there to make him look important. The frame cast shadows wherever it could, and would let go of the painting in the middle of the night so the man would be lying on the floor when the crowds came in the morning.

The people at the art gallery were cross at the frame, and gave its job to another who was less beautiful but also less worried about how important men got their money. The frame was taken to the basement, to live with the rats and broken things but it didn't mind.

The rats were kind and the broken things were wise.

A long time later, a woman came to the basement, looking for something to go around her picture. She spotted the frame, and picked it up and gasped. Just as Giuseppe knew, all those lives ago, the frame was the most perfect picture frame in the world.

She took it up to the gallery floor, which was the same but different all at the same time, like a friend you haven't seen in ages. She put her picture in the frame and hung it on the white wall. The picture was full of hope and memory. Everyone who saw it tilted their head to one side and nodded and decided they would try and do better. The frame shimmered proudly in the light, its gold gleaming as it tightly embraced the picture.

It was worth the wait.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What kind of pictures would be in an art gallery if you got to pick them all?
2. Do you think the picture frame did the right thing?
3. What's your favourite picture which you've ever seen?

STORY SIXTEEN

This Game is Good

Right, I need you all to sit down and listen. I've invented this game and it's really good and I need to explain it so we can all play it together. No, Daniel, it doesn't have a name yet but that's not important. The RULES are the important bit so pay attention.

Ok, first of all you have to roll the dice and then these are what you HAVE to do:

If you roll a 6 you have to pretend you're duck and jump into the puddle of destiny. DO NOT SPLASH ABOUT.

If you roll a 5 you have to spin around a few times until you fall over and have to spend the rest of the day in bed.

If you roll a 4 you have to live in the woods forever. We will send food and blankets but no toilet paper.

If you roll a 3 you have to move forward one place.

If you roll a 2 then you have to sell all your things and give me all your money to spend on teapots.

And if you roll a 1 then you have to come here, give me a hug and tell me everything's ok.

No, Daniel, that IS NOT a weird game. Look I made a dice, you throw it first.

What do you mean the dice isn't right?

Oh, yeah...I might have just drawn a one on every side. Hmm... nevermind!

Throw the dice anyway?

Tiny Story Chats

1. What was your favourite rule in the game?
2. What do you think was the real reason the kid in the story made the game?
3. If you invented a game, what would the rules be?

STORY SEVENTEEN

Whispers

Jemma hated whispering. She hated how it was like breathing secrets, and how it tickled her ear and how it was often something mean.

There was a game which her friend Abby loved playing, where Abby would whisper nonsense into Jemma's ear; and Jemma had to pretend to look shocked to make other people jealous. Jemma would sometimes say NO and walk away and leave Abby looking like she might explode.

One day, Jemma was having a tough day so she sat under a tree for a bit. She was ripping a leaf up when she heard a gentle tinkly noise, right next to her head. There she was, just as you guessed: a fairy. A grumpy looking fairy with purple hair and tiny arms folded over her dressing gown.

"What's up with you, eh?" asked the fairy, in a voice which was a lot more angry than Jemma would have expected.

"Dunno, just fed up. My friend wants to play a game where we have to whisper to each other."

The fairy rolled her eyes. "URGH whispering is the WORST. It's just breathing secrets."

"That's what I said!" yelled Jemma excitedly.

"Alright, calm down pal," said the fairy. "Listen, take some of this and next time someone wants to whisper at you, throw a wee bit at them and they won't be able to whisper. They'll end up shouting whatever they were about to say."

Jemma went to say thanks, but the fairy had already tightened her dressing gown and marched off muttering about needing another hour's nap. Clutching her magic dust, Jemma headed back to her friends just as everyone was heading back into school.

As they arrived in, Abby leaned over to whisper in Jemma's ear, so she quickly threw some dust at her. Abby's face changed as her voice came out in a massive bellow and the whole class heard her roar out:

"JEMMA, I'M JUST GOING TO THE TOILET, I NEED A
POOOOOOO!!!!"

Abby went red. Jemma went red. Everyone was confused. Jemma felt terrible and silently promised to never stop someone whispering again. But, for now, there was only one thing she could do. She took a deep breath, held Abby's hand and screamed out:

“OK ABBY I WILL COME WITH YOU I NEED A POO TOO!!!!”

Jemma glanced out of the window and thought she saw a tiny purple haired fairy, doubled over laughing.

Well, thought Jemma, at least she's happier now.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What do you think about whispering?
2. If you could get magic dust from a fairy, what would you want it to do?
3. What do you think Jemma learnt during the story?

STORY EIGHTEEN

An Announcement

There was never a good time to say it, thought Lizzie, so she might as well say it now. She made a sound like a hamster coughing so people would know she wanted to say something.

"I think we need to rethink things."

The room went quiet. They all stared at her as a balloon slowly and loudly deflated. Lizzie knew she had to keep going.

"I mean, I know we said the party never stops but...pals. We've been having this party for FIVE YEARS. We've done Pass the Parcel 1,247 times! I'm quite tired."

At the back of the room, someone covered in cake and glitter stood on a chair and shouted in agreement:

"I would quite like to just sit and read a book for a bit!"

Soon everyone was nodding and smiling, trying not to slip on the bubble mix.

"I think I've probably been fired from my job!"

"I can't boogie any more! And my face hurts from smiling so much."

Slowly, the lights got turned back on, and Lizzie gently handed out blankets as everyone shuffled home, glad to be dialling down the fun to 'nice cup of tea' levels. She closed the door behind her and sighed happily.

Unfortunately, by the time she'd turned round, someone had turned their car radio on and a few people were starting to twitch into a funky dance.

"Stop! You can stop the beat! The party's over! You can be FREE!" yelled Lizzie, but it was too late. They were all back under the spell of the party witches, stuck in an groovy loop.

It took Lizzie another six weeks to get them all free, luring everyone out with jigsaws, good films and books about spaceships. Finally, they all crawled home, taking with them goody bags for the five year party which was - and they all agreed about this - probably too much fun.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Would you like to go to a five year party?
2. If you were a witch, what kind of spell would you cast?
3. Why do you think Lizzie was the one who could break the spell?

STORY NINETEEN

Some Secrets

Morgan wasn't sure what would be a good first question to ask the dragon at the bottom of the garden. There were, obviously, a lot of things to find out.

"Why are you so small? I thought dragons were massive?"

And then the tiny dragon, no bigger than a leaf but sparkling like the sun, told a tale of being chased for hundred of years. Of being blamed for princess kidnapping. He explained that small kids would come and be their pal - even bringing them strings and sealing wax - and then one day disappear, never to be seen again.

The dragons had collectively decided to use magic to shrink themselves down, so they could keep themselves to themselves. Occasionally, they'd see a child who was particularly lovely and grant them some good luck but, they'd discovered, it was easier to just keep out of the way.

At the end of his speech, the dragon looked at Morgan and smiled.

"So you see what I mean?"

Morgan sighed.

"I have to leave you alone now."

The dragon nodded, but added that he thought Morgan looked nice and asked if maybe some good luck would be helpful? Morgan gave the dragon a massive grin.

A sprinkle of magical dust fell all around them.

Morgan walked back to the house, but now...thanks to the dragon magic...

...with very slightly better hair.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What would you ask a dragon?
2. If you had the magic to give people good luck, what kind of luck would you share?
3. How do you think Morgan felt by the end of the story?

STORY TWENTY

Destiny

River's Mum was very fixated on the idea of destiny. Destiny, she explained, was what was written out for your life. Like everything you did was a story being read by someone, and your job was to make the most of every single page.

River imagined a massive giant with a storybook, slowly reading out the Exciting Adventures of River in a big, booming voice. Maybe the giant had just needed a laugh when he'd made River's trousers fall down that time during assembly, or when River had called the teacher 'Mum' and then gone very sweaty.

Well, River wasn't having that. Five hours later, there it was, written in wobbly red pen: The Terrible Adventures of Giant. River started to read it out loud, starting with page one...

"Giant realised his life was being controlled by the brilliant River and immediately did a massive burp..."

Very very very far away, on a hilltop covered in flowers, a giant burped and dropped his book in surprise.

River's Mum smiled. "Ah, destiny," she said.

Tiny Story Chats

1. If you could write a book which would control a giant's life, what would you make happen?
2. How do you think River felt about writing the story?
3. What's the best thing someone could write in a book about your life?

STORY TWENTY ONE

Dads

Hamad and Coco were talking about Dads.

They were trying to narrow down what would make the perfect Dad. They'd already crossed out things like 'have to be related to you', 'likes cards with boats on' and 'beard'. There'd been a long debate about 'have to know about lawnmowers' but they eventually decided just anyone who had a lawn should know that.

They boiled it down and down, until they were left with a thick, gloopy lump of truth. They had planned to make a spell to create the perfect Dad, who they decided should have the most perfect Dad name in the world: Clint.

They held hands and tried to think magic thoughts as they said aloud the sticky truth of what would make the perfect Dad...

DADS...ARE...KIND.

As they said it, the wind ruffled past them and wrapped them - just for a second - in the warm hug of a summer breeze. They each

checked the other one was ok, and Hamad warned Coco that she shouldn't forget to get home in time for tea. Coco rolled her eyes, and then brushed muck off Hamad's jacket in a way which was...they realised...

very

very

very

kind.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What do you think would make the perfect person?
2. What did you think of Hamad and Coco's friendship?
3. How did the story make you feel?

Rainy Day

It had been raining for 10 days straight when Sammi made the decision. It was time to rethink things.

Sammi had been staring out of the window, with her chin on her arm, waiting for the rain to stop so the fun could begin. She realised, after a long chat with the dog and Angela - her secret imaginary friend - that it was up to her to change how people thought about rain.

She gathered up everything she might need and headed to the garden at the back of the flat. There was nobody there, so she didn't need to worry about other folk or have her Mum yell TWO METRES SAMMI FOR GOODNESS SAKE every few minutes.

She lay down the bin bag like a towel, and opened two umbrellas like parasols. She lay down with her head under the umbrellas, so her book would stay dry and had a nice read for a bit. Then she stretched and said to Angela that it was time to swim.

Sammi splashed in the puddle, then sat down in the puddle and said BUBBLE BUBBLE in the puddle and tried to make the dog

fart to make it feel like a jacuzzi. She played pretend volleyball, built a sandcastle out of mud and then won the talent show for best... ummm...talent.

Her Mum came down and stared at Sammi, who looked like a happy, soggy mud monster. She opened her mouth to list all the problems with Sammi's rainbathing but then laughed and laughed as she hopped into the puddle pool too.

The MAIN problem with all this rain, they discovered, was that it did get pretty chilly after a while. Sammi's Mum suggested it was time they packed up the beach gear (two umbrellas, a bin bag, a book and a dog), headed back to the hotel (the flat) and had a delicious cocktail smoothie (a hot chocolate).

Twenty minutes later, a clean and dry Sammi was snuggled on the sofa and telling her Mum how she was going to do it all again tomorrow. Sammi's Mum smiled, hugged her and said: oh my darling who I love more than anything in the whole world...absolutely - and I say this with love - not.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What's your favourite thing to do in the rain?
2. Do you think Sammi made good choices?
3. How do you think her Mum felt at the end?

A Show

ROLL UP ROLL UP!

The poster was really, really tiny. Pinned to the bottom of a big oak tree, it was painted in wee gold letters and said:

Come on down to the Smallest Puppet Show in the World!

Only one customer for each performance!

It will dazzle and delight!

Go THIS WAY ----->

Of course I had to follow the arrow. Every few steps there was another poster which said:

Yes! Keep going!

Then, by the side of a holly bush, there was a teeny tiny hut which said TICKETS HERE! I lay down on my belly and whispered that I would like a ticket for the show please. A tinkly sound came back

and a ticket the size of a crumb appeared.

I opened a wee red curtain just behind the ticket office and a tiny trumpet started playing. A group of puppets which were as big as your littlest finger started to dance and...

Well. That's all I can tell you. The show was so absolutely completely beautiful. If the rest of the world saw it they might find it too perfect and then we'd never get anything done. The puppets give a warning at the end: the show is so full of kindness and happiness that mean people find it so confusing that they walk around in circles for three days afterwards.

So, I'm telling you this: if you happen to see a tiny poster at the bottom of an oak tree then I hope you enjoy the show. AND if you see a tiny poster at the bottom of an oak tree, and then see someone walking around in circles near it? Well...then...you know.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Would you like to have seen the puppet show?
2. When something's really beautiful or very lovely, how does that make you feel?
3. What would be the perfect show for you?

STORY TWENTY THREE

Warrior

The wind howled and the thunder rolled as Dora stood at the cliff-top, ready for battle. She clutched her axe, while the other villagers huddled behind her. They were all very glad she was ready to do the battling because - although they would LOVE to have helped - they couldn't really be bothered.

But Dora was ready. Ever since the warning had come, she had sworn to protect the place she loved.

Just then, she saw someone from the next village. He was walking towards her slowly. She shouted over the gathering storm.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM OUR VILLAGE? GO NOW, AND LEAVE US IN PEACE.

The stranger looked a bit embarrassed, and shouted back:

SORRY, IT WAS A WEE BIT WINDY AND I THINK YOU MIS-HEARD US. WE ASKED IF YOU FANCIED A KITE, NOT A FIGHT.

He sheepishly waved a lovely red kite in Dora's direction.

Dora dropped her axe and muttered 'oh thank goodness, I could NOT be doing with a battle today' and ran to get her kite too.

The villagers all agreed that if it had kicked off, they probably - almost definitely - might have helped.

The kites flew high in the sky and the storm passed over and out to sea.

Dora's kite flew the highest of all.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What kind of person do you think Dora was?
2. Do you think the weather changed the mood of the story?
3. How did you feel when it turned out there wasn't really a fight about to happen?

STORY TWENTY FOUR

This Story

"This story is about anything," Archie told his Auntie Lou when she asked what he was writing. She looked confused, so he explained.

"Everyone who reads it sees it in a different way. They can't help it. People just put their own lives in it. That means, that this story is about anything and it's perfect."

Auntie Lou looked at Archie's notebook which said...

It could have been better but it wasn't and look! Now it's all ok.

He was right - it was about anything.

"It's perfect," said Auntie Lou.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What do you like writing stories about?
2. If you read Archie's story, what was it about for you?
3. What do you think makes a perfect story?

Crab King

There was something wrong on the Island of Crabs. Weird things were happening, and the sea felt angry.

The King of the Crabs gathered everyone together and put on his most King-y voice.

"I think we all know what I'm about to say," he said, scuttling from side to side to really make his point.

Nobody actually did know what he was about to say. Nobody wanted to admit that they didn't, so they just nodded along.

"You know what we need to do, my friends" said the King, raising his claws in the air. He had practiced this in his cave. The Queen had told him it looked most magnificent if he raised his claws in the air and pointed at the sun. He loved being magnificent.

Everyone twitched a bit nervously, but tried to look as though they were absolutely in full support of whatever was happening. The King

raised himself up as high as he could go and yelled something into the wind which nobody could hear, and then skittered back to his cave.

"Well, I think that went well," he said to the Queen.

"Did they realise you have no idea what you're talking about?" asked the Queen.

"Not a clue. Totally got away with it." The King stretched and settled down for a lovely nap.

The sea monsters around the island swam away, disappointed that they'd failed to scare the crabs. Maybe, they thought, Seal Island might be more fun.

Tiny Story Chats

1. What did you think of the King of the Crabs?
2. Why do you think the other crabs pretending to know what he was talking about?
3. If you could visit an island ruled by animals, which animal would you like it to be?

Changes

The trees kept whispering that a change was coming.

The birds heard them and spread the message further, all the way out to sea.

The waves shouted that they could feel it too. A change WAS coming. It WAS, it WAS, it WAS, they crashed over and over on the beach.

Meanwhile, Dewi lay curled up in her bed, listening to all the noise. She looked over at the gown hanging on the back of her door, ready for her graduation. Her Mum had laughed that she made it look like a superhero cape, but Dewi secretly thought that was a good thing.

She sighed happily, and went back to sleep.

She didn't yet know that she would be the change they were all waiting for.

Tiny Story Chats

1. Have you ever heard any noises outside which sounds like nature's trying to say something?
2. What kind of change do you think Dewi could be bringing to the world?
3. What change would you like to bring to the world?

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There are additional resources on the Imagine website, to help inspire your family to create their own Small Small Rainbows.

www.imagine.org.uk/artists/projects/ideas-fund-2020-small-small-rainbows/

Imagine is the national organisation in Scotland, which promotes, develops and celebrates theatre and dance for children and young people.