

NOVEMBER

LEVELLED TEXTS

A - Grades 3-4

B - Grades 4-5

C - Grades 5-6

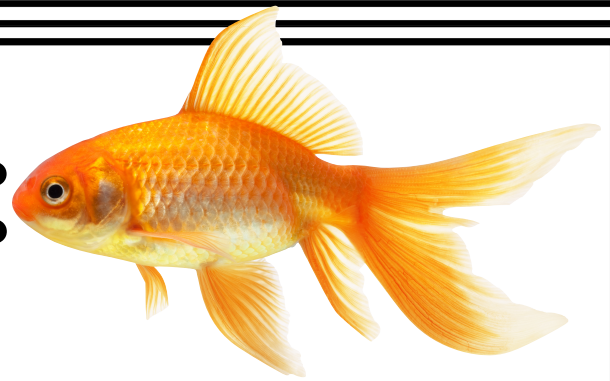
NOVEMBER

WEEK 1

GOLDFISH:

an invasive species

by Tricia Orr



Goldfish are household pets around the world. Goldfish are a part of the carp fish family. You can find them in many different places. They are native to Asia. In China, goldfish have been pets for over a thousand years. They are still a symbol of luck.

Goldfish were brought into North America about 200 years ago. But these once-special fish have become a household pet. Pet goldfish are placed into bodies of water by people who don't want them. So now, goldfish are an invasive species. You can find goldfish invasions across Canada. There have also been many bad invasions in the USA and Australia.

HISTORY OF GOLDFISH IN NORTH AMERICA

In the late 1800s, goldfish were often given out as gifts or prizes. This helped people to think of goldfish as being disposable. We now know that these fish are an invasive species. They leave a big impact on fragile habitats.

GOLDFISH IN THE WILD

Goldfish have special traits that allow them to do well in the wild. Unlike other fish, they can survive in water that is cold and warm. They can survive in water that is not clean. Goldfish eat a wide range of food. It is easy for goldfish to do well in any water habitat.

Goldfish that you have at home are small. But goldfish in the wild can grow up to 400 mm long and weigh up to 2 kg. Wild goldfish are a different colour too. The fish you buy at the pet store is gold. These wild goldfish are

GOLDFISH *an invasive species*

olive green or gray. All goldfish have a small mouth with no barbels (whiskers). They have a deep forked tail and long fins with jagged spines.

IMPACTS OF GOLDFISH

Goldfish are an invasive species because they change the water habitat. Goldfish swim along lake and river bottoms. This uproots plant life and makes the water cloudy. Without the sun through the clear water, the water plants don't grow. Cloudy water triggers a lot of algae growth. Goldfish are omnivores, so they eat both plants and animals. Eating such a wide range of food means they compete with the native fishes for their food. Goldfish also pass on parasites that harm local fish.

Goldfish have a lot of babies. This makes things problems worse. There are too many goldfish and not enough native species. Girl fish lay up to 40,000 eggs per year. This is higher than most other types of fish. There are more goldfish because other animals don't eat them. This gets worse with each new family of fish. This is because many goldfish live long enough to have babies.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Taking goldfish out of a water habitat is hard. People are trying to study goldfish in the wild. With more data, people can start to control goldfish invasions.

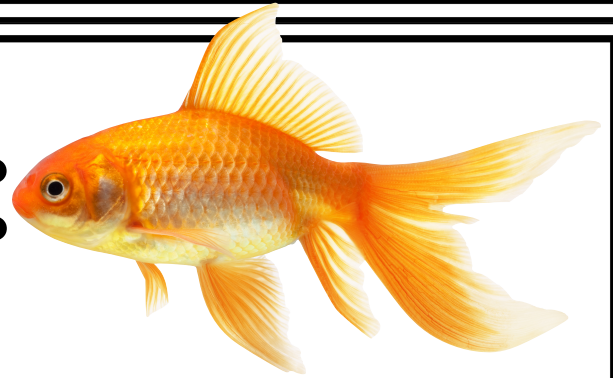
Pet owners should take care of their fish. The best idea is to give healthy fish to other people. You could give them to a new owner, or pet store. Do not flush goldfish down the toilet. They may stay alive and make a new home in the wild.

We can help by learning how to spot goldfish in the wild. This way we can stop taking goldfish into new bodies of water. Boaters should look at their boats and trailers. They should make sure plants and animals (including fish) are not trapped, then carried to new bodies of water.

GOLDFISH:

an invasive species

by Tricia Orr



Goldfish are household pets around the world. Goldfish are a part of the carp fish family. You can find them in aquariums, ponds, and water gardens. They are native to eastern Asia. In China, goldfish have been pets for over a thousand years. They are still a symbol of luck.

Goldfish were brought into North America in the mid-1800s. But these once-special fish have become a common household pet. Pet goldfish are let go into bodies of water by people who don't want them. So now, goldfish are an invasive species. You can find goldfish invasions across Canada. Some places like Lake Erie and Lake Ontario have wild goldfish. There have also been many bad invasions in the USA and Australia.

HISTORY OF GOLDFISH IN NORTH AMERICA

In the late 1800s, goldfish were often handed out as gifts or prizes. This helped people to think of goldfish as being disposable. We now know that goldfish are an invasive species. They leave a big impact on fragile habitats.

GOLDFISH IN THE WILD

Goldfish have special traits that allow them to do well in the wild. Unlike other fish, they can survive in water that is cold and warm. They can survive in water that is not clean. Goldfish eat everything and feed on a wide range of food. This makes it easy for goldfish to do well in any water habitat it lives in.

Goldfish that you have at home are often small. But goldfish in the wild can grow up to 400 mm long and weigh up to 2 kg. Wild goldfish are a different colour too. The fish you buy at the pet store is gold. These wild goldfish are

GOLDFISH *an invasive species*

olive green or gray. All goldfish have a small mouth with no barbels (whiskers). They have a deep forked tail and long fins with jagged spines.

IMPACTS OF GOLDFISH

Goldfish are an invasive species because they change the water habitat. Goldfish swim along lake and river bottoms. This uproots plant life and makes the water cloudy. Without the sun through the clear water the water plants don't grow. Cloudy water triggers a lot of algae growth. Goldfish are omnivores, so they eat both plants and animals. Eating such a wide range of food means they compete with the native fishes for their food. Goldfish also pass on parasites that harm local fish.

Goldfish have a lot of babies. This makes things problems worse. There are then too many goldfish and not enough native species. Female goldfish lay up to 40,000 eggs per year. This is higher than most other freshwater fish species. The number of goldfish stays high because they lack natural predators. The cycle gets worse with each new generation. This is because many goldfish survive long enough to reproduce.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Removing goldfish from a water habitat is difficult. People are trying to study the behaviour of goldfish in the wild. With more information, people can start to control goldfish invasions.

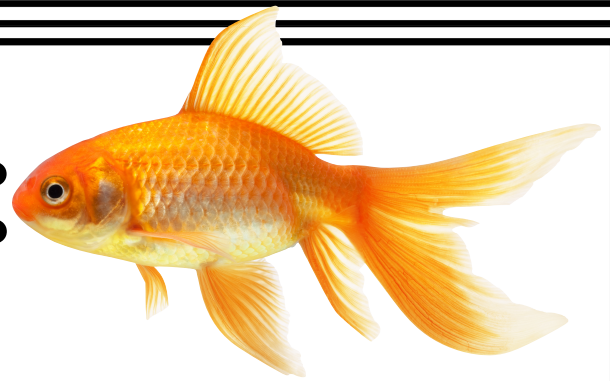
Meanwhile, pet owners should take care of their fish. The best idea is to give healthy fish away. You could give them to a new owner, or a pet store. Do not flush goldfish down the toilet. This is because they may survive and create a new home in the wild.

We can help by learning how to identify goldfish in the wild. This way we can stop spreading goldfish into new bodies of water. Boaters should inspect their boats and trailers. They should make sure plants and animals (including fish) are not trapped, then carried to new bodies of water.

GOLDFISH:

an invasive species

by Tricia Orr



Goldfish are household pets around the world. Goldfish are a part of the carp fish family. You can find them in aquariums, ponds, and water gardens. They are native to eastern Asia. In China, goldfish have been bred as pets for over a thousand years. They remain a prized symbol of luck and fortune.

Goldfish were brought into North America in the mid-1800s. But these once-exotic fish have become a common household pet. Pet goldfish are often released into ponds, lakes, or streams by people who no longer want them. So now, goldfish are one of the worst invasive aquatic species in the world. You can find goldfish invasions across Canada. Some places like Lake Erie and Lake Ontario have wild goldfish. There have also been many bad invasions in the USA and Australia.

HISTORY OF GOLDFISH IN NORTH AMERICA

In the late 1800s, goldfish were often handed out as gifts or prizes. This helped people to think of goldfish as disposable. We now know that goldfish are an invasive species. They leave a big impact on fragile ecosystems.

GOLDFISH IN THE WILD

Goldfish have certain features that allow them to thrive in the wild. They can survive large changes in water temperature. They can put up with poor quality water. Goldfish feed on a wide range of fish eggs, larvae, snails, and water plants. This makes it easy for goldfish to thrive in any ecosystem they live in.

Goldfish that you have at home are often small. But goldfish in the wild can grow up to 400 millimetres long and weigh up to 2 kilograms. Wild goldfish are also a different colour from the fish you buy at the pet store. They are

GOLDFISH *an invasive species*

typically olive green or gray rather than the usual bright orange. All goldfish have a small mouth with no barbels (whiskers). They have a deep forked tail and long fins with jagged spines.

IMPACTS OF GOLDFISH

Goldfish are an invasive species because they change the ecosystems. Goldfish tend to swim along lake and river bottoms. This act uproots vegetation and clouds water with sediment. This disrupts aquatic plant growth. It releases nutrients that trigger a growth of too much algae. Goldfish are omnivores, meaning they eat both plants and animals. Eating such a broad range of food means they compete with native fish species for food. Goldfish pass on parasites that harm local fish.

These problems are worse because of the goldfish's ability to reproduce in great numbers. Female goldfish lay up to 40,000 eggs per year. This is higher than the average freshwater fish species. Goldfish numbers stay high because they lack natural predators. The cycle gets worse with each new generation. This is because many goldfish survive long enough to reproduce.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Removing goldfish from an ecosystem is difficult. Research is being done to understand the behaviour of goldfish in the wild. With this information, better strategies can be used to control goldfish invasions.

Meanwhile, it is crucial that pet owners act responsibly. The best practice is to give healthy fish away. You could give them to a new owner, pet store, or aquarium. Experts advise against flushing goldfish down the toilet. This is because they may survive their journey and create a new home in the wild.

We can help by learning how to identify goldfish in the wild. This way we can prevent spreading the invasive species into new bodies of water. Boaters should inspect their boats and trailers. They should make sure plants and animals (including fish) are not trapped, then carried to new bodies of water.

NOVEMBER

WEEK 2

*An alternate text for *In Flanders Field* will not be provided in order to retain the integrity of the classic original poem.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

BY MOLLI COLPOR

Henry's alarm clock RINGS precisely at 7:00 a.m. Henry's dog Daisy leaps up onto the bed and licks his face. 'Good morning!' she says.

"All right, I'm up!" Henry says as he wipes away the dog's slobber. Henry begins his daily routine by making his bed. He likes his room neat and tidy. Then, he walks downstairs and enters the kitchen. He feeds Daisy before having a cup of coffee. He eats a bowl of cereal with his nose in the newspaper. When he's done, he does the dishes and puts them back inside the kitchen cupboards. Henry likes his kitchen neat and tidy.

Next, Henry and Daisy go for a walk. Every day, they walk in a clockwise loop around the block. Henry also likes routine and order. When they return, they go straight to the backyard. Now Henry's favourite part of the day begins: working in his garden.

First, Henry puts on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. Then, he uncoils a long green hose with a fancy spray nozzle. Finally, he waters each of the plants in his big, beautiful garden. Henry hums while water rains down over the flowers, vegetables, trees, and vines.

Next, Henry trims dying leaves and pulls out invading weeds. When he is finished, he stands back and admires his immaculate garden. Henry likes his garden neat and tidy.

Suddenly, Henry notices that his tulips have been run over! And even worse, all the dahlias that were next to them were gone!

Henry is stunned. Something or someone has left a big hole in his garden. It is immaculate no more.

Daisy appears at Henry's side to comfort him.

"I don't get it," Henry says to Daisy. "Who could have done this?" He itches his head as he contemplates.

"Maybe the neighbours saw something," he concludes.

Henry wants to get to the bottom of this mystery. So, he sets out on another loop around the block. First, he knocks on Mrs. Petersen's door.

"Morning Mrs. Petersen," he says.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

"Morning Henry," she responds. She notices that he's upset and asks him what's wrong.

"Something went digging through my garden! It trampled on all of my tulips and took my dahlias with 'em!" he explains. "Did you see anything?"

"Why, you've got the most beautiful garden in town!" she replies. "But no, I didn't see anything. I'm sorry, Henry."

Henry thanks her and says goodbye. As he approaches the next house, Henry's street looks longer than ever before.

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Henry returns home later that afternoon. No one saw or heard a thing. To cheer himself up, he buys new flower seeds at the store.

"Well, guess there's nothing else we can do," Henry says to Daisy. He heads outside to plant the seeds.

Daisy barks and runs upstairs. She returns a few moments later dragging her dog bed into the kitchen. She drops it beside the big bay window that looks out into the garden. Daisy declares herself as a guard dog.

"Thanks, pal," Henry says. He pets her head and gives her a treat.

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WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry bolts up in bed. It's still dark outside but Daisy is howling.

WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry scrambles into the hallway and down the stairs. He follows Daisy through the kitchen and out into the yard. He fumbles for the light switch. The patio light flickers on. Daisy barks loudly at something in the shadows.

"Who's there?" Henry calls. "Who's in my garden?"

Slowly, two small figures step out from the dark. A young boy and a young girl.

"What are you doing in my garden?" Henry yells. "Speak up!"

But the children are motionless. Sensing their fear, Daisy trots over and says hello. Henry sees that the children are afraid of him. He softens.

"She's harmless," he assures them. "Why don't you come on in? We can call your parents and get you home."

The children hide, still fearful. "Don't worry, we don't bite."

Daisy tugs on the young boy's sleeve and leads them inside.

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HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

The children dunk biscuits in their milk in the living room while Henry speaks to someone on the phone.

"That's okay. Okay goodbye." He says and hangs up.

He turns to the children sitting on the couch.

"So, it's Martin and Olivia, huh? I think it's time we get you home and into bed. Whaddaya say?"

The children nod and stand, looking embarrassed.

Henry puts on his coat and leads them out the door and around the block, clockwise.

A few minutes later, they arrive at a small and worn-down house behind a peeling picket fence. The children let themselves in and close the gate behind them. Martin unlocks the front door and enters. Olivia stops on the porch and turns.

"I'm sorry sir," she says timidly. "We won't go in your garden again." Then she disappears inside.

. . .

The next morning, Henry and Daisy take their morning walk around the block. As they pass Mrs. Petersen, she calls out, "Good morning Henry! Did you solve your garden mystery?"

"Indeed, I did!" Henry replies. "The rugrats who stole my flowers came back in the middle of the night. Caught 'em red-handed right in my garden!"

"Which kids?" Mrs. Petersen asks.

"Martin and Olivia from down the road. Know 'em?" Henry replies.

"Those poor children," Mrs. Petersen begins. She walks over to Henry and whispers, "I heard their mother June just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. She doesn't seem well."

Henry's face falls. He remembers his father, who fought in World War II. His father had shared many stories about battle. But he also spoke of friends who were never the same after the war.

Henry and Daisy go straight home. Henry has so much on his mind. He doesn't even notice that he's walking the block counter-clockwise! He marches straight into the garden and puts on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. But instead of watering his plants, Henry starts digging up flowers.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

Daisy looks on in confusion. Henry pulls flowers up from their beds, exposing their roots to sunlight and air. Half of Henry's garden lays in a messy heap. Henry fills a wagon with soil and gently places the flowers inside.

"Come on, Daisy. I've got a plan!" he says.

Daisy barks yes and the two set off, a wagon of flowers in tow.

Martin and Olivia walk home from school. It's a sunny day, but they look glum.

"Sorry my plan didn't work," Martin says.

"It's okay," Olivia replies. "Maybe if we save our allowance, we can buy flowers for mom next month."

"But next month's not soon enough," Martin worries. "Can't we get her something else?"

"But dad always gave her flowers..." Olivia says.

Just then, they arrive at home and realize there's an intruder in their front yard.

Martin stands bravely in front of his sister and peers over the fence.

"Hey! Who's there!" he calls out. Then he hears a familiar WOOWOF.

They see it's just Henry and Daisy. They have planted colourful flowers all across their front yard!

"They're so pretty!" Olivia squeals.

"Wow, thank you mister," Martin blushes.

"Mommy, look!" Olivia exclaims.

Their mother June comes onto the front porch. "What's going on?" she asks.

"Well, I was thinking about why Martin and Olivia were in my garden," Henry starts. "I think I could teach them how to take care of their own," Henry says.

June looks at her garden in awe. The newly planted flowers brightens their once-gloomy home. Even better, her children are smiling.

"Now we can cheer you up everyday!" Olivia beams.

Henry gives Martin and Olivia their own pair of gloves and their first gardening lesson begins.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

BY MOLLI COLPOR

Henry's alarm clock RINGS precisely at 7:00 a.m. Henry's dog Daisy leaps up onto the bed and licks his face with her slobbery wet tongue. He knows this is Daisy's way of saying, "Good morning!" and although he hates the slobber, he loves his dog.

"All right, I'm up!" Henry says exasperated as he wipes away the disgusting dog slobber. Henry begins his daily routine by making his bed with great precision because he likes his room neat and tidy. Then he continues his daily routine by he walking downstairs and entering his immaculate kitchen. He feeds Daisy before having a cup of coffee and a bowl of cereal, while having his nose buried in the newspaper. When he's done, he does the dishes and puts them back inside the kitchen cupboards. Henry likes his kitchen neat and tidy, "Tidy Room, Tidy Mind" he recites to Daisy.

Next, Henry and Daisy go for a walk and every day they walk in a clockwise loop around the block. Henry also likes routine and order. When they return, they go straight to the backyard and Henry's favourite part of the day begins: gardening.

First, Henry gets ready to garden in his backyard by putting on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. Then, he uncoils a long green hose with a fancy spray nozzle and waters each of the plants that fill his enormous and beautiful garden. Henry hums, while water rains down over the flowers, vegetables, trees, and vines like a soft spring rain.

Next, Henry trims decaying leaves and pulls out invading weeds. When he is finished, he stands back and admires his immaculate garden proud of the work he has accomplished.

Henry likes his garden neat and tidy with his flowers in rows and organized by height, colour and season.

As he walks around to the front of the house to work on his front garden, Henry gasps, he is flabbergasted at the sight he sees. Henry's tulips have been trampled and even worse, all the dahlias that were next to them were now gone!

Henry is stunned. Something or someone has left a gaping hole in his garden. It is no longer immaculate as he liked.

Daisy appears at Henry's side to comfort him.

"I don't understand," Henry says to Daisy disheartened. "Who could have done this?" He scratches his head as he contemplates what he will do next.

"Maybe the neighbours saw something," he concludes.

Determined to get to the bottom of this mystery, Henry sets out on a second clockwise loop around the block. First, he knocks on Mrs. Petersen's door.

"Morning Mrs. Petersen," he says.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

"Morning Henry," she responds. She notices that he's upset and asks him what's wrong.

"Something went rummaging through my garden! It trampled on all of my tulips and took my dahlias with 'em!" he explains. "Did you see anything?"

"Why, you've got the most beautiful garden in town!" she replies. "But no, I didn't see anything. I'm sorry, Henry."

Henry thanks her and says goodbye. As he approaches the next house, Henry's street looks longer than ever before.

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Henry returns home later that afternoon. No one saw or heard a thing.

To cheer himself up, he buys new flower seeds at the store.

"Well, guess there's nothing else we can do," Henry says to Daisy as he heads outside to plant the seeds.

Daisy barks and runs upstairs. She returns a few moments later dragging her dog bed into the kitchen and drops it beside the big bay window that looks out into the garden. Daisy declares herself as a guard dog.

"Thanks, pal," Henry says. He scratches her head and gives her a treat.

...

WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry bolts up in bed. It's still dark outside but Daisy is howling.

WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry scrambles into the hallway and down the stairs. He follows Daisy through the kitchen and out into the yard. He fumbles for the light switch. The patio light flickers on. Daisy barks furiously at something in the shadows.

"Who's there?" Henry calls. "Who's in my garden?"

Slowly, two small figures step out from the dark. A young boy and a young girl.

"What are you doing in my garden?" Henry bellows. "Speak up!"

But the children are motionless. Sensing their fear, Daisy trots over and says hello. Henry realizes that the children are afraid of him; he softens.

"She's harmless," he assures them. "Why don't you come on in? We can call your parents and get you home."

The children cower, still fearful. "Don't worry, we don't bite."

Daisy tugs on the young boy's sleeve and leads them inside.

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HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

The children dunk biscuits in their milk in the living room while Henry speaks to someone on the phone.

"That's okay. Okay goodbye." He says and hangs up.

He turns to the children sitting on the couch.

"So, it's Martin and Olivia, huh? I think it's time we get you home and into bed. Whaddaya say?"

The children nod and stand, looking embarrassed.

Henry puts on his coat and leads them out the door and around the block, clockwise.

A few minutes later, they arrive at a small and worn-down house behind a peeling picket fence. The children let themselves in and close the gate behind them. Martin unlocks the front door and enters. Olivia stops on the porch and turns.

"I'm sorry sir," she says timidly. "We won't go in your garden again." Then she disappears inside.

. . .

The next morning, Henry and Daisy take their morning walk around the block. As they pass Mrs. Petersen, she calls out, "Good morning Henry! Did you solve your garden mystery?"

"Indeed, I did!" Henry replies. "The rugrats who stole my flowers came back in the middle of the night. Caught 'em red-handed right in my garden!"

"Which kids?" Mrs. Petersen asks.

"Martin and Olivia from down the road. Know 'em?" Henry replies.

"Those poor children," Mrs. Petersen begins. She walks over to Henry and whispers, "I heard their mother June just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. She doesn't seem well."

Henry's face falls. He remembers his father, who fought in World War II. His father had shared many stories about battle, but also spoke of friends who were never the same after the war.

Henry and Daisy go straight home. Henry has so much on his mind, he doesn't even notice that he's walking the block counter-clockwise! He marches straight into the garden and puts on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. But instead of watering his plants, Henry starts digging up flowers.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

Daisy looks on in confusion as Henry pulls flowers up from their beds, exposing their roots to sunlight and air. With half his garden in a messy heap, Henry fills a wheelbarrow with soil and gently places the flowers inside.

“Come on, Daisy. I’ve got a plan!” he says.

Daisy barks yes and the two set off, a wheelbarrow of flowers in tow.

Martin and Olivia walk home from school together. Even though it’s a sunny day, they look glum.

“Sorry my plan didn’t work,” Martin says.

“It’s okay,” Olivia replies. “Maybe if we save our allowance, we can buy flowers for mom next month.”

“But next month’s not soon enough,” Martin worries. “Can’t we get her something else?”

“But dad always gave her flowers...” Olivia reasons.

Just then, they arrive at home and realize there’s an intruder in their front yard.

Martin stands protectively in front of his sister and peers over the picket fence.

“Hey! Who’s there!” he calls out. Then he hears a familiar WOOF.

They realize it’s just Henry and Daisy—who have just planted dozens of colourful flowers all across their front yard!

“They’re so pretty!” Olivia squeals with excitement.

“Wow, thank you mister,” Martin blushes.

“Mommy, look!” Olivia exclaims.

Their mother June appears on the front porch. “What’s going on?” she asks.

“Well, I was thinking about why Martin and Olivia were in my garden,” Henry starts. “I thought I could teach them how to take care of their own,” Henry declares.

June looks at her garden in awe. The newly planted flowers immediately brightens their once-gloomy home. More importantly, her children are smiling.

“Now we can cheer you up everyday!” Olivia beams.

Henry gives Martin and Olivia their own pair of gloves and their first gardening lesson begins.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

BY MOLLI COLPOR

Henry's alarm clock RINGS precisely at 7:00 a.m. Henry's dog Daisy leaps up onto the bed and licks his face. '*Good morning!*' she says.

"All right, I'm up!" Henry says as he wipes away dog slobber. Henry begins his daily routine by making his bed. He likes his room neat and tidy. Then, he walks downstairs and enters the kitchen. He feeds Daisy before having a cup of coffee and a bowl of cereal, while having his nose buried in the newspaper. When he's done, he does the dishes and puts them back inside the kitchen cupboards. Henry likes his kitchen neat and tidy.

Next, Henry and Daisy go for a walk. Every day, they walk in a clockwise loop around the block. Henry also likes routine and order. When they return, they go straight to the backyard and Henry's favourite part of the day begins: gardening.

First, Henry puts on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. Then, he uncoils a long green hose with a fancy spray nozzle and waters each of the plants that fill his enormous and beautiful garden. Henry hums while water rains down over the flowers, vegetables, trees, and vines.

Next, Henry trims dying leaves and pulls out invading weeds. When he is finished, he stands back and admires his immaculate garden. Henry likes his garden neat and tidy.

Suddenly, Henry notices that his tulips have been trampled! And even worse, all the dahlias that were next to them were now gone!

Henry is stunned. Something or someone has left a gaping hole in his garden. It is immaculate no more.

Daisy appears at Henry's side to comfort him.

"I don't understand," Henry says to Daisy. "Who could have done this?" He scratches his head as he contemplates.

"Maybe the neighbours saw something," he concludes.

Determined to get to the bottom of the mystery, Henry sets out on a second clockwise loop around the block. First, he knocks on Mrs. Petersen's door.

"Morning Mrs. Petersen," he says.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

"Morning Henry," she responds. She notices that he's upset and asks him what's wrong.

"Something went rummaging through my garden! It trampled on all of my tulips and took my dahlias with 'em!" he explains. "Did you see anything?"

"Why, you've got the most beautiful garden in town!" she replies. "But no, I didn't see anything. I'm sorry, Henry."

Henry thanks her and says goodbye. As he approaches the next house, Henry's street looks longer than ever before. He hangs his head low and continues to ask neighbour after neighbour if they witnessed anything.

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Henry returns home later that afternoon. No one saw or heard a thing. To cheer himself up, he buys new flower seeds at the store.

"Well, guess there's nothing else we can do," Henry says to Daisy as he heads outside to plant the seeds.

Daisy barks and runs upstairs. She returns a few moments later dragging her dog bed into the kitchen and drops it beside the big bay window that looks out into the garden. Daisy declares herself as a guard dog.

"Thanks, pal," Henry says. He scratches her head and gives her a treat.

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WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry bolts up in bed. It's still pitch black outside but Daisy is growling like a bear and barking louder than a motorbike down the freeway.

WOOOF! WOOOF! WOOOOF!

Henry scrambles into the hallway and dashes down the stairs following Daisy who is barking furiously. He follows Daisy all the way through the kitchen and out into the yard. He frantically fumbles for the light switch but then finally finds it and flicks the light switch. The patio light flickers on and Daisy barks intensely at something she sees in the shadows.

"Who's there?" Henry calls worriedly. "Who's in my garden?"

Slowly, two small figures step out from the dark shadows of the garden. Henry sees that it is a young boy and a young girl with muddy knees and hands.

"What are you doing in my garden?" Henry bellows loudly. "Speak up!"

But the children are frozen in spot and look terrified. Sensing their fear, Daisy calms and slowly ambles over to say hello, tail wagging. Henry realizes that the children are afraid of him and Daisy, so he softens his approach.

"She's harmless," he assures them. "Why don't you come on in? We can call your parents and get you home."

The children cower, still fearful. "Don't worry, we don't bite."

Daisy tugs on the young boy's sleeve and leads them inside.

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HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

The children dunk biscuits in milk in the living room while Henry speaks to someone on the phone.

"That's okay. Okay goodbye." He says and hangs up.

He turns to the children sitting on the couch.

"So, it's Martin and Olivia, huh? I think it's time we get you home and into bed. Whaddaya say?"

The children nod and stand, looking embarrassed.

Henry puts on his coat and leads them out the door and around the block, clockwise.

A few minutes later, they arrive at a small and worn-down house behind a peeling picket fence. The children let themselves in and close the gate behind them. Martin unlocks the front door and enters while Olivia stops on the porch and turns.

"I'm sorry sir," she says timidly. "We won't go in your garden again." Then she turns and quickly disappears inside.

. . .

The next morning, Henry and Daisy take their morning walk around the block. As they pass Mrs. Petersen, she calls out, "Good morning Henry! Did you solve your garden mystery?"

"Indeed, I did!" Henry replies. "The rugrats who stole my flowers came back in the middle of the night. Caught 'em red-handed right in my garden!"

"Which kids?" Mrs. Petersen asks.

"Martin and Olivia from down the road. Know 'em?" Henry replies.

"Those poor children," Mrs. Petersen begins. She walks over to Henry and whispers, "I heard their mother June just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. She doesn't seem well, when she does come out of the house she looks weak and tired."

Henry's face falls. He remembers his father, who fought in World War II. His father had shared many stories about battle, but also spoke of friends who were never the same after the war.

Henry and Daisy go straight home. Henry has so much on his mind, he doesn't even notice that he's walking the block counter-clockwise! He marches straight into the garden and puts on his sun hat, gardening gloves, and tool belt. But instead of watering his plants, Henry starts digging up flowers.

HENRY AND HIS FLOWER GARDEN

Daisy looks on in confusion as Henry pulls flowers up from their beds, exposing their roots to sunlight and air. With half his garden in a messy heap, Henry fills a wheelbarrow with soil and gently places the flowers inside.

“Come on, Daisy. I’ve got a plan!” he says.

Daisy barks yes and the two set off, a wheelbarrow of flowers in tow.

Martin and Olivia walk home from school together. Even though it’s a sunny day, they look quite glum.

“Sorry my plan didn’t work,” Martin says.

“It’s okay,” Olivia replies. “Maybe if we save our allowance, we can buy flowers for mom next month.”

“But next month’s not soon enough,” Martin worries. “Can’t we get her something else?”

“But dad always gave her flowers...” Olivia reasons.

Just then, they arrive at home and realize there’s an intruder in their front yard.

Martin stands protectively in front of his sister and peers over the picket fence.

“Hey! Who’s there!” he calls out. Then he hears a familiar WOOWOF.

They realize it’s just Henry and Daisy—who have just planted dozens of colourful flowers all across their front yard!

“They’re so pretty!” Olivia squeals with excitement.

“Wow, thank you mister,” Martin blushes.

“Mommy, look!” Olivia exclaims.

Their mother June appears on the front porch. “What’s going on?” she asks.

“Well, I was thinking about why Martin and Olivia were in my garden,” Henry starts. “I thought I could teach them how to take care of their own garden,” Henry declares excitedly.

June looks at her garden in awe and disbelief. The newly planted flowers immediately brightens their once-gloomy home. More importantly, her children are smiling.

“Now we can cheer you up everyday!” Olivia beams and June smiles.

Henry gives Martin and Olivia their own pair of gloves and their first gardening lesson begins.

NOVEMBER

WEEK 3

ELEPHANTS

Elephant Care in Captivity:

Though each type of elephant is unique, both are majestic and intelligent creatures. It's no surprise that both require the same amount of care while they are under human protection.

Food and Water:

Due to their size, elephants must eat a lot to stay healthy and strong. On average, they eat between 149 kg and 169 kg (that's 330 to 375 pounds) of food daily. Elephants don't need much sleep, but spend sixteen to eighteen hours feeding each day. Elephants consume grasses, small plants, bushes, fruits, twigs, roots, and tree bark.



Elephants must also drink a lot of water. They drink 70 to 100 litres per day. It is important for elephants to eat and drink regularly throughout the day. As a result, their powerful trunks are made for drinking. An adult male elephant can drink up to 212 litres of water (the equivalent of 53 milk jugs) in less than five minutes!

Grooming:

Though these pachyderms have thick skin, they are still susceptible to sunburn and bug bites. To prevent getting sunburns and bug bites, elephants roll in mud. Mud baths also help keep elephants cool in hot weather. When mud is not enough, special sun block can be put on by their caregivers.

Baths also help elephants stay cool. They bathe regularly and often rub against each other to scrub their skin. If elephants need some more help, humans can use heavy-duty brushes and scrubbing pads to clean them.



ELEPHANTS

Exercise:

Elephants must get enough physical exercise to stay healthy and happy.

Special exercises can be given to elephants to help them with this.

Injuries were found in elephants that belonged to the circus. Elephants have nearly 150,000 muscles located just in the tip of their trunks. All of their many muscles must be exercised on a regular basis.



Elephants also require ample mental exercise. Various games can keep their brains active. Elephants can also be taught to connect words with objects and gestures.

Finally, group dynamics are an important part of life for elephant herds in the wild. Elephants under human care also need emotional stimulation.

Medical Care:

Sometimes, elephants require extra medical attention. Trained doctors can prescribe medicine and treat elephants for a variety of ailments.

Elephants sometimes need help taking care of their feet. Elephants walk on their toes like cats and dogs. This is unlike humans who walk with their feet flat on the ground. Humans take care of an elephant's pads and nails with a special kit. This kit includes farriers' tools, rasps files, and hoof picks. This helps to stop and clean up infections.

Elephants carry so much weight on their limbs and joints. So, they can be given muscle therapy and ultrasound treatment. This helps to reduce inflammation and scar tissue.

AN UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIP

Light spilled into the valley as the sun rose over the Wuyi Mountains. Pei and his father Li Wei each carried backpacks with camping supplies towards their home nearby. Suddenly, they heard men shouting through a thicket of trees. Li Wei halted.

“Poachers,” he whispered to his son. He brought a finger to his lips. It was a signal to stay quiet until the poachers had passed.

A few minutes later, Pei and Li Wei were once again on the move with no sign of any poachers. When they passed through a clearing, they saw broken branches and trampled plants. Pei thought it must have been a large group of poachers. Then, a very large pinecone caught his eye. It was 300 mm long, and was the biggest pinecone he had ever seen! But the moment Pei touched it, he realized it wasn’t a pinecone at all! A scaly pangolin uncurled from a tight ball. It yelped and Pei jumped back.

“Ahhh!” Pei yelled. Luckily, Li Wei was right behind him.

“Shhh,” his father said calmly. “There are poachers nearby. And we don’t want them to find this little pangolin, do we?”

Li Wei knelt down beside the scared animal. It resembled a small anteater, but its backside was covered in a set of scales. Its suit of armour is what made it look like a pinecone from afar.

“Look, son. His foot is broken,” said Li Wei.

“Can you fix it, pa?” Pei asked.

“Yes, but not here! Quick! Pass me a blanket,” his father instructed.

Pei dug a blanket out of his backpack. Li Wei placed the blanket over the pangolin gently, then scooped it up in his arms. They walked briskly, carrying the injured pangolin with them. They eventually emerged from the dense forest. Pei could see their house in the distance. He felt safe again.

“Pa?” Pei began, “Why do poachers want a pangolin?”

“Because they’re greedy,” Li Wei responded. “People believe pangolin scales have medicinal powers. So, poachers sell pangolin scales on the black market.”

Pei didn’t know where the black market was but vowed to file a complaint if he ever found it.

It wasn’t long before they reached home. They went straight to the shed in their backyard. Li Wei gently placed the pangolin inside and locked the door. Then he put a finger to his lips again. Pei knew this meant that the pangolin would be their little secret.

At dinner, Pei told his sister, mother, and grandmother about their camping trip. He mentioned every detail—except the poachers in the forest and the pangolin in their shed.

When everyone else was asleep, Pei followed his father to the shed. The pangolin was on a nest of blankets, exactly where they left him. Li Wei secured a small splint to its hind leg and left some food and water nearby. “What shall we name him?” Li Wei asked.

“Wu Yi,” Pei decided quickly. “To remind him of home.”

Since they had done everything they could, it was time to go to bed. Pei fell asleep quickly, but his dreams were filled with angry poachers. He woke up terrified. It was still dark outside but he was worried about Wu Yi. He crept out of bed. He did not want to wake his little sister An, who was snoring on the other side of the room. He tiptoed through the house.

The sun was just beginning to rise when Pei slipped into the shed. He found the pangolin curled up in a ball on its bed of blankets. The water was gone, but the food was still there.

“I guess you don’t like chicken?” Pei said. He watched Wu Yi quietly, not sure what to do. Suddenly, an ant crawled onto Wu Yi’s blanket. Wu Yi stuck out its long tongue and snatched the ant up quickly.

Pei saw ants crawling around the shed, but none of them were close enough. Not even for a pangolin. He thought and thought until an idea finally came to him. Pei ran to the kitchen and returned with a bag of sugar. He carefully poured a thin trail of sugar from the shed door all the way to Wu Yi. Then he sat down and waited.

Eventually, the ants found the sugar trail and it led them to Wu Yi. Pei was fascinated each time Wu Yi stretched his slim tongue out and swiped up an ant. When Wu Yi was full, Pei left the shed to tell his father about their pet pangolin's breakfast.

Pei returned every morning and evening to leave a new sugar trail for Wu Yi. He knew that Wu Yi needed food to heal. Then one day, Pei found Wu Yi crawling around the shed. He was snatching up ants and termites and any other bugs that he could find. Then he slowly walked towards Pei. Wu Yi seemed curious instead of afraid.

"AHHHHH!" An suddenly yelled. She was standing in the shed doorway.

Wu Yi immediately curled up into a tight ball. He tucked his head under his long armoured tail. Pei was also startled. Before he could react, An ran into the house screaming. By the time Pei got to the kitchen, his secret was out.

Pei's mother paced around the kitchen. She was furious that Li Wei had brought a wild and dangerous animal into their home. An was terrified and clutching mother's legs. Li Wei hated fighting and was very quiet.

When Pei's mother ran out of new things to say, it was his grandmother's turn. Instead of scolding him, she spoke in a soft voice.

"Long before cars, planes, and trains, pangolins were believed to be the world's greatest explorers," she began. "People believed that they travelled all around the world using underground tunnels. In fact, their Cantonese name means 'one who digs through mountains'. Pangolins always had our deepest respect. Besides, you wouldn't be here without a gift from a pangolin."

Everyone listened intently as grandmother continued her story.

“When great grandmother Ming was a young girl, she fell sick. She tried every single medicine. Doctors and healers across China couldn’t cure her mysterious illness. Then, one day, she saw a pangolin in the garden. It left three scales behind for her. Great grandmother Ming had heard about the healing power of pangolin scales. She crushed a single scale into a fine powder and brewed a potent tea. The tea healed her and the scales were passed down from generation to generation.”

Before anyone could question her story, Grandma pointed to her necklace. The pendant was shaped like a flower petal. It was made from a shiny brown material. Pei had always thought it was a precious stone. Now, he suddenly realized what it had always been—a pangolin scale!

Li Wei made a big pot of tea. As the family drank, they discussed what would be done about the pangolin in the shed. They all decided that they should nurse Wu Yi back to health then return him to his home in the forest. But when they went to the shed, the door was open and Wu Yi was gone!

“Wu Yi!” Pei called out over and over again.

Li Wei put his hand on his son’s shoulder.

“Don’t worry, son,” he said. “Be happy that Wu Yi is back on his feet.”

“He’s probably gone to his family,” An added.

“I loved those early mornings when it was just me and my boy,” Pei said. “But I know he’s better off living in a big forest. Guess I’ll go tidy up the shed.”

When he entered the shed, he found a small gift from Wu Yi. Wu Yi left a single scale behind as if to say, ‘thank you’. Pei ran into the house with his very own pangolin scale, grinning wildly.

AN UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIP

Light spilled into the valley as the sun rose over the Wuyi Mountains. Pei and his father Li Wei each carried backpacks with camping supplies towards their home nearby. Suddenly, they heard men shouting loudly through a dense thicket of trees. Li Wei halted.

"Poachers," he whispered to his son. He brought a finger slowly to his lips. It was a signal to stay quiet until the poachers had passed.

A few minutes later, Pei and Li Wei were once again on the move with no sign of any poachers. When they passed through a clearing, they saw dismembered tree branches and numerous trampled plants. Pei thought it must have been a large group of poachers. Then, a very large pinecone caught his eye. He estimated it to be 30 cm long, and was the most gigantic pinecone he had ever observed! But the moment Pei touched it, he realized it wasn't a pinecone at all! A scaly pangolin uncurled slowly from a tight pinecone like ball. It yelped and Pei jumped back.

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"Look, son. His foot is mangled," said Li Wei.

"Can you fix it, pa?" Pei asked.

"Yes, but not here! Quick! Pass me a blanket," his father instructed.

Pei rummaged through his backpack for his emergency blanket. Li Wei placed the blanket over the pangolin gently, then scooped it up in his arms. They walked briskly, carrying the injured pangolin with them. They eventually emerged from the dense forest. Pei could see their house in the distance. He felt safe again.

"Pa?" Pei began, "Why do poachers want a pangolin?"

"Because they're greedy," Li Wei responded as a scowl crept across his face.

“People believe pangolin scales have medicinal powers. So, poachers sell pangolin scales on the black market.”

Pei didn’t know where the black market was but vowed to file a strongly worded complaint if he ever found it.

It wasn’t long before they reached home. They went immediately to the shed in their backyard. Li Wei gently placed the pangolin inside and locked the door securely. Then he put a finger to his lips again. Pei knew this meant that the pangolin would be their little secret.

At dinner, Pei recounted for his sister, mother, and grandmother all about their wonderful camping trip. He mentioned every detail—except the poachers in the forest and the pangolin hidden secretly in their shed.

When everyone else was asleep, Pei quickly and quietly followed his father to the shed. The pangolin was resting quietly on a soft nest of woollen blankets, exactly where they left him. Li Wei secured a small splint to its hind leg and left some food and water nearby. “What shall we name him?” Li Wei asked.

“Wu Yi,” Pei decided quickly. “After the valley we rescued him from; to remind him of home.”

Since they had done everything they could, it was finally time to go to bed. Pei fell asleep quickly, but his dreams were filled with very angry poachers. He woke up terrified. It was still dark outside but he was extremely worried about Wu Yi. He crept out of bed. He did not want to wake his little sister An, who was snoring loudly on the other side of the room. He tiptoed quietly and quickly through the house.

The sun was just beginning to rise when Pei slipped into the shed. He found the pangolin curled up tightly in a ball on its bed of soft blankets. The water was gone, but the food was still there.

“I guess you don’t like chicken?” Pei said. He watched Wu Yi quietly, not sure what to do. Suddenly, an ant crawled onto Wu Yi’s blanket. Wu Yi stuck out its long sticky tongue and snatched the ant up quickly.

Pei saw ants crawling around the shed, but none of them were close enough. Not even for a pangolin. He thought and thought until an idea finally came to him. Pei ran to the kitchen and returned with a bag of sugar. He carefully poured a thin trail of sugar from the shed door all the way to Wu Yi. Then he sat down and waited.

Eventually, the ants found the yummy sugar trail and it led them to Wu Yi. Pei was fascinated each time Wu Yi stretched his slim tongue out and swiped up an ant. When Wu Yi was full, Pei left the shed to tell his father about their pet pangolin's breakfast.

Pei returned every morning and evening to leave a new sugar trail for Wu Yi. He knew that Wu Yi needed food to heal. Then one day, Pei found Wu Yi crawling around the shed. He was hastily snatching up ants and termites and any other bugs that he could find. Then he slowly walked towards Pei. Wu Yi seemed quite curious instead of afraid.

"AHHHHH!," Pei's sister, An suddenly screamed frantically. She was standing in the shed doorway.

Wu Yi immediately curled up into a tight ball. He tucked his head under his long armoured tail. Pei was also startled. Before he could react, An sprinted into the house screaming loudly for their mother. By the time Pei got to the kitchen, his special secret was out.

Pei's mother paced irritably around the kitchen. She was very furious that Li Wei had brought a wild and dangerous animal into their peaceful home. An was terrified and clutching mother's legs. Li Wei hated fighting and was very quiet.

When Pei's mother ran out of new things to say, it was his grandmother's turn. Instead of scolding him, she spoke in a soft quiet voice.

"Long before cars, planes, and trains, pangolins were believed to be the world's greatest explorers," she began. "People believed that they travelled all around the world using underground tunnels. In fact, their Cantonese name means 'one who digs through mountains'.

Pangolins always had our deepest respect. Besides, you wouldn't be here without a gift from a pangolin."

Everyone listened intently as grandmother continued her story.

"When great grandmother Ming was a young girl, she fell dangerously ill. She tried every single medicine. Doctors and healers across China couldn't cure her mysterious illness. Then, one day, she saw a pangolin in the garden. It left three scales behind for her. Great grandmother Ming had heard about the healing power of pangolin scales. She crushed a single scale into a fine powder and brewed a potent tea. The tea healed her and the scales were passed down from generation to generation."

Before anyone could question her story, Grandma pointed to her necklace. The beautiful pendant was shaped like a flower petal. It was made from a shiny brown material. Pei had always thought it was a precious stone. Now, he suddenly realized what it had always been—a pangolin scale!

Li Wei made a big pot of tea. As the family drank, they discussed what would be done about the pangolin in the shed. They all decided that they should nurse Wu Yi back to health then return him to his home in the forest. But when they went to the shed, the door was open and Wu Yi was gone!

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"Don't worry, son," he said. "Be happy that Wu Yi is back on his feet."

"He's probably gone to his family," An added.

"I loved those early mornings when it was just me and my boy," Pei said. "But I know he's better off living in a big forest. Guess I'll go tidy up the shed."

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"Ahhh!" Pei yelled. Luckily, Li Wei was right behind him.

"Shhh," his father said calmly. "There are poachers nearby. And we don't want them to find this little defenceless pangolin, do we?"

Li Wei knelt down beside the terrified animal. It resembled a small anteater, but its backside was covered in a collection of scales. Its suit of armour, covered in flower petal shaped scales, is what made it look like a large pinecone from afar.

"Look, son. His foot is mangled and looks broken," said Li Wei.

"Can you fix it, pa?" Pei asked. "You can fix anything!"

"Yes, but not here! Quick! Pass me a blanket from within your backpack," his father instructed.

Pei rummaged through his backpack for his emergency blanket. Li Wei placed the blanket over the pangolin gently, then scooped it up in his arms. The scales were very sharp and could cut Pei or Li Wei if it felt threatened or became aggressive. They walked briskly, gingerly carrying the injured pangolin with them in their arms. They eventually emerged from the dense forest and Pei could see their little house in the distance. He didn't realize just how much running into the poachers had scared him until he finally felt safe again upon seeing his home.

“Pa?” Pei began, “Why do poachers want a pangolin?”

“Because they’re greedy,” Li Wei responded as a disappointing scowl crept across his face. “Some people believe the scales of the pangolin have special medicinal powers. So, poachers capture as many little pangolins and sell the pangolin scales on the black market. This is why the pangolin is an endangered species.”

Pei didn’t know where the black market was but vowed to file a strongly worded complaint if he ever found it.

It wasn’t long before they reached home. They went immediately to the shed in their backyard. Li Wei gently placed the pangolin inside and locked the door securely. Then he put a finger to his lips again and Pei knew this meant that the pangolin would be their little secret.

At dinner, Pei recounted for his sister, mother, and grandmother all about their wonderful camping trip. He mentioned every detail—except the poachers in the forest and the pangolin hidden secretly in their shed.

When everyone else was asleep, Pei quickly and quietly followed his father to the shed. The pangolin was resting quietly on a soft nest of woollen blankets, exactly where they left him. Li Wei secured a small splint to its hind leg and left some food and water nearby. “What shall we name him?” Li Wei asked.

“Wu Yi,” Pei decided quickly. “After the valley we rescued him from; to remind him of home.”

Since they had done everything they could, it was finally time to go to bed. Pei fell asleep quickly, but his dreams were filled with very angry poachers taking all of the pangolins. He woke up terrified and noticed it was still dark outside. He was still extremely worried about Wu Yi and decided to go and check on him to see if he was safe. Pei crept out of bed, not wanting to wake his little sister An, who was snoring loudly on the other side of the room. He tiptoed quietly and quickly through the house.

The sun was just beginning to rise when Pei slipped into the shed. He found the pangolin curled up tightly in a ball on its bed of soft blankets. The water was gone, but the food was still there.

“I guess you don’t like chicken?” Pei said. He watched Wu Yi quietly, not sure what to do. Suddenly, an ant crawled onto Wu Yi’s blanket and Wu Yi stuck out its long sticky tongue and snatched the ant up quickly.

Pei saw ants crawling around the shed, but none of them were close enough for the injured pangolin to capture and eat. Pei needed an idea. So he thought and thought, until a solution that would see the pangolin eat, finally struck him. Pei ran to the kitchen and returned with a bag of sugar. He carefully poured a thin trail of sugar from the shed door all the way to Wu Yi. Then he sat down and waited.

Eventually, the ants found the yummy sugar trail and it led them to Wu Yi. Pei was fascinated each time Wu Yi stretched his slim tongue out and swiped up an ant. When Wu Yi was full, Pei left the shed to tell his father about their pet pangolin's breakfast.

Pei returned faithfully every morning and evening to leave a new sugar trail for Wu Yi. He knew that Wu Yi needed food to heal before he could successfully be returned to the wild. Then one day, Pei found Wu Yi crawling around the shed. He was hastily snatching up ants and termites and any other bugs that he could find. Then the pangolin slowly walked towards Pei and seemed quite curious instead of afraid.

Meanwhile, Pei's sister had arrived, standing in the shed doorway, so quietly that Pei hadn't noticed.

"AHHHHH!" she screamed loudly and frantically upon seeing the dangerous pangolin in the shed.

Wu Yi immediately curled up into a tight ball. He tucked his head under his long armoured tail. Pei was also startled. Before he could react, his sister An sprinted into the house screaming loudly for their mother. By the time Pei got to the kitchen, his special secret was out.

Pei's mother paced irritably around the kitchen furious that Li Wei had brought a wild and dangerous animal into their peaceful home. An was terrified and clutching mother's legs unwilling to let go. Li Wei hated fighting, and knew better than to argue with his wife, so he was very quiet.

When Pei's mother ran out of new things to say, it was his grandmother's turn. Instead of scolding him, she spoke in a soft quiet voice.

"Long before cars, planes, and trains, pangolins were believed to be the world's greatest explorers," she began. "People believed that they travelled all around the world using underground tunnels. In fact, their Cantonese name means 'one who digs through mountains'. Pangolins have always had the deepest respect of the Chinese people and our family. Besides, you wouldn't be here without a gift from a pangolin."

Everyone listened intently, hanging on her every word, as grandmother continued her story.

“When great grandmother Ming was a young girl, she fell dangerously ill. Her family tried every single medicine to cure her mysterious illness. Doctors and healers across China couldn’t cure her despite their concerted efforts. Then, one day, she saw a pangolin in the garden and it left three scales behind for her. Great grandmother Ming had heard about the healing power of pangolin scales. So she crushed a single scale into a fine powder and brewed a potent tea. The tea healed her and the scales were passed down from generation to generation.”

Before anyone could question her story, Grandma pointed to her necklace. The beautiful pendant was shaped like a flower petal. It was made from a shiny brown material. Pei had always thought it was a precious stone. Now, he suddenly realized what it had always been—a pangolin scale!

Li Wei made a big pot of tea. As the family drank, they discussed what would be done about the pangolin in the shed. They all decided that they should nurse Wu Yi back to health then return him to his home in the forest. But when they went to the shed, they noticed that the shed door was open and Wu Yi was gone!

“Wu Yi!” Pei called out over and over again.

Li Wei put his hand on his son’s shoulder to console him.

“Don’t worry, son,” he said. “Be happy that Wu Yi is back on his feet.”

“He’s probably gone to his family,” An added.

“I loved those early mornings when it was just me and my new pet,” Pei said. “But I know he’s better off living in a big forest. Guess I’ll go tidy up the shed.”

When he entered the shed, he found a small gift from Wu Yi. A single scale was left behind as if to say, ‘thank you’. Pei ran into the house with his very own pangolin scale, grinning wildly.

NOVEMBER

WEEK 4

BEA AND THE BEES

The spring air was crisp, and the sun was shining. It was a perfect Saturday afternoon. Ten year-old Beatrice was reading in the garden. Just then a big honeybee landed on the tip of her nose. Most people would panic at the sight of a bee. Beatrice stayed very calm. In fact, she was rather used to them.

Beatrice's parents had been beekeepers her whole life. Bees had visited her in her garden for as long as she could remember. This was because her parent's honeybee colony was nearby.

Beatrice looked cross-eyed as she examined the bee on her nose. She saw that it was a female worker bee. She could tell by its barbed stinger.

But one of the first things her parents taught her was the importance of treating bees kindly. She kept this in mind as she wiggled her nose.

The honeybee zoomed away, and Beatrice breathed a sigh of relief. She watched as the bee buzzed from one flower to the next. It was collecting nectar, which Beatrice knew would become delicious honey.

The thought of honey made Beatrice's tummy grumble. It was time for a snack. She stood up and walked to the kitchen. She hopped on a stool and opened the cupboard. She found what she was looking for on the top shelf: a jar of peanut butter.

Beatrice took two slices of bread and coated each with a thick layer of creamy peanut butter. Then, she added a drizzle of honey on top. She slapped the two slices of bread together to complete her masterpiece.

Beatrice was putting the peanut butter away when her father entered the kitchen. She couldn't help but notice that her dad seemed worried about something.

"Is something wrong, pa?" Beatrice asked.

"Not at all, honeybee," her father said. But Beatrice knew her father well. She could tell there was something heavy on his mind.

He gave her a kiss on the forehead. Then he grabbed his jacket from the hook by the door. This was quite odd. He usually went back to the bee colony each afternoon. Today he didn't put on his protective suit and gloves. His hat with a veil to keep the bees away hung on the hook by the door.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"There's a meeting I have to attend. Gotta go, I'm running late!" he said as he left.

Beatrice returned to reading in the garden and wondered what the meeting was for.

When dinnertime came, the family sat around the kitchen table. It was silent as her parents put the food and drinks on the table. Beatrice's parents were not their usual carefree selves.

"Is everything okay?" Beatrice asked.

Her parents looked at each other.

"Well, honey, we're concerned about the bees," her mom began. "Our bee colony has shrunk this year."

"It's happening all over the country," her dad added. "Everyone at today's Beekeepers' meeting seemed to have the same problem."

Beatrice felt a knot in her stomach. She knew they couldn't survive as beekeepers without a thriving colony.

"What's happening to them?" Beatrice asked.

"Scientists think it's bee-killing chemicals sprayed on farm fields," her mom explained. "But factory farming isn't the only problem. Diseases, climate change, and habitat loss are factors too."

Beatrice frowned. This was a big list of big problems.

"What can we do to fix it?" she asked. But her parents didn't have an answer.

"Don't worry, honeybee. We'll figure something out," he reassured her.

When Beatrice woke up the next morning, she was filled with fiery determination. She wanted to help the bees. She jumped out of bed and made her way to the bee colony. To protect herself from getting stung, she put on a protective suit and gloves. She wore a hat with a veil to shield her face and neck.

She approached the bee boxes on their property. Unlike hives in the wild, these were large wooden boxes that her father had built. Beatrice watched the bees at work. Hundreds of bees were flying in and out of the bee boxes. It looked the way it had always looked. In fact, nothing seemed to be wrong at all.

Beatrice stood guard beside the bee boxes to ensure that the bees were protected.

An hour later, her mom appeared.

"What are you doing?" she asked her daughter.

"I'm keeping an eye on the bees," Beatrice explained.

Her mom chuckled. This only made Beatrice frown. She knew she wasn't being very helpful.

"Can we help them collect nectar?" she asked.

"I'm afraid you need a *proboscis* for that," her mom told her.

"What's that?" Beatrice asked curiously.

"It's their tongue. It works just like a straw," her mom told her. Beatrice admired the busy bees.

"They must get tired," she said.

Beatrice crossed her arms and started brainstorming.

"I have an idea!" she exclaimed. "Let's bring the flowers to them!" She decided that if she couldn't harvest nectar herself, she could at least make life a little easier for the bees.

Later, Beatrice and her mom made a trip to the flower store. Beatrice bought as many flowers as she could. Then she spent the entire afternoon planting flowers in their garden. At the end of the day, Beatrice noticed bees buzzing happily around the garden. She was tired and her hands were dirty. She was proud of her little project but felt there was more to be done.

It was Beatrice's turn for show and tell at school the next day. Beatrice stood in front of her class covered from head to toe in her beekeeper suit. Some of the kids at the back of the room laughed.

"This outfit might look silly," she began, "but it's worn by people brave enough to work in a swarm of stinging bees!"

The class paid close attention while Beatrice taught them about the tradition of beekeeping.

"Have you been stung?" one student asked.

"Is there really only one queen bee?" another chimed.

Beatrice answered every question. Then, she told her class about the bee crisis where there were less and less bees each year.

She concluded, "Bees play an essential role on our planet. Without them spreading pollen, plants would die, and so would the animals. We must all do our share to protect the bees."

When her presentation ended, the class was buzzing with ideas to save the bees.

Their teacher, Mrs. Wilson, took over the conversation at the front of the classroom and said, "Thank you, Beatrice. That was an excellent presentation. What if we dedicated our next class project to helping the bees?"

"I have an idea!" Beatrice exclaimed.

Two weeks later, Beatrice was ready to present her project. As moms and dads entered the classroom, they were greeted by a bright poster that read: BEE SMART: "Connect, learn, protect!"

The classroom was plastered with posters about bees. Students were handing out pamphlets and presenting about the bee crisis.

On the far side of the classroom, students were fundraising for a city garden. Some students sold handmade beeswax candles. Others sold baked goods made with honey.

Meanwhile, Beatrice was selling jars of honey from their bee farm. Each jar had a hand-made label that said: BEE SMART.

Bea's Parents walked over to their daughter and gave her the biggest hug.

"Good job, honeybee!" her father said.

"We are SO proud of you, Bea!" her mother cried.

Beatrice beamed.

BEA AND THE BEES

The spring air was crisp, and the sun was shining. It was a perfect Saturday afternoon. Ten year-old Beatrice was reading quietly in the garden when a big honeybee landed suddenly on the tip of her nose. While most people would panic at the sight of a bee, Beatrice stayed very calm. In fact, she was rather use to them.

Beatrice's parents had been beekeepers her entire life. And bees had visited her in her garden for as long as she could remember. This was because her parent's honeybee colony was nearby.

Beatrice looked cross-eyed as she examined the bee on her nose. She saw right away that it was a female worker bee. She could tell by its barbed stinger.

But one of the first things her parents taught her was the importance of treating bees kindly. She kept this in mind as she wiggled her nose gently.

The honeybee zoomed away, and Beatrice breathed a sigh of relief. She watched with curiosity as the bee buzzed from one flower to the next. It was collecting nectar, which Beatrice knew would eventually become delicious honey.

The thought of honey made Beatrice's tummy grumble. It was time for a snack. She stood up and walked to the kitchen. She hopped on a stool and opened the cupboard. She found what she was looking for on the top shelf: a jar of peanut butter.

Beatrice took two slices of bread and coated each with a thick layer of creamy peanut butter. Then, she added a drizzle of honey on top. She slapped the two slices of bread together to complete her masterpiece.

Beatrice was putting the peanut butter away when her father entered the kitchen. She couldn't help but notice that her dad seemed worried about something.

"Is something wrong, pa?" Beatrice asked.

"Not at all, honeybee," her father said. But Beatrice knew her father well. She could tell there was something heavy on his mind.

He gave her a kiss on the forehead, then grabbed his jacket from the hook by the door. This was quite odd because he usually returned to the bee colony each afternoon. And he usually wore a protective suit, gloves, and hat with a veil to keep the bees away.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"There's an important meeting I have to attend. Gotta go, I'm running late!" he said as he left.

Beatrice returned to reading in the garden and wondered what the meeting was for.

When dinnertime came, the family sat around the kitchen table. It was silent as her parents put the food and drinks on the table.

Beatrice's parents were not their usual carefree selves.

"Is everything okay?" Beatrice finally asked.

Her parents looked at each other glumly.

"Well, honey, we're concerned about the bees," her mom began.

"Our bee colony has shrunk again this year."

"It's happening all over the country," her dad added. "Everyone at today's Beekeepers' Association meeting seemed to have the same problem."

Beatrice felt a knot in her stomach. She knew they couldn't survive as beekeepers without a thriving colony.

"What's happening to them?" Beatrice asked.

"Scientists think it's bee-killing pesticides," her mom explained. "But industrial farming isn't the only problem. Diseases, climate change, and habitat loss are factors too."

Beatrice frowned. This was a big list of big problems.

"What can we do to fix it?" she asked. But her parents didn't have an answer.

"Don't worry, honeybee. We'll figure something out," he reassured her.

When Beatrice woke up the next morning, she was filled with fiery determination to help the bees. She jumped out of bed and made her way to the bee colony. To protect herself from getting stung, she put on a protective suit and gloves. She also wore a hat with a veil to shield her face and neck.

She approached the bee boxes on their property. Unlike hives in the wild, these were large wooden boxes that her father had built. Beatrice watched the bees at work. Hundreds of bees were flying in and out of the bee boxes. It looked the way it had always looked. In fact, nothing seemed to be wrong at all.

Beatrice stood guard beside the bee boxes to ensure that the bees were protected.

An hour later, her mom appeared.

"What are you doing?" she asked her daughter.

"I'm keeping an eye on the bees," Beatrice explained.

Her mom chuckled. This only made Beatrice frown. She knew she wasn't being very helpful.

"Can we help them collect nectar?" she asked.

"I'm afraid you need a *proboscis* for that," her mom told her.

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"It's their tongue. It works just like a straw," her mom told her. Beatrice admired the busy bees.

"They must get tired," she said.

Beatrice crossed her arms and started brainstorming.

"I have an idea!" she exclaimed suddenly. "Let's bring the flowers to them!" She decided that if she couldn't harvest nectar herself, she could at least make life a little easier for the bees.

Later, Beatrice and her mom made a trip to the flower store. Beatrice bought as many flowers as she could. Then she spent the entire afternoon planting flowers in their garden. At the end of the day, Beatrice noticed bees buzzing happily around the garden. She was tired and her hands were dirty. She was proud of her little project but still felt there was more to be done.

It was Beatrice's turn for show and tell at school the next day. Beatrice stood in front of her class covered from head to toe in her beekeeper suit. Some of the kids at the back of the room laughed.

"This outfit might look silly," she began, "but it's worn by people brave enough to work in a swarm of stinging bees!"

The class paid close attention while Beatrice taught them about the tradition of beekeeping.

"Have you been stung?" one student asked.

"Is there really only one queen bee?" another chimed.

Beatrice answered every question carefully. Then, she told her class about the declining bee crisis.

She concluded, "Bees play an essential role on our planet. Without them spreading pollen, plants would die, and so would the animals. We must all do our share to protect the bees."

When her presentation ended, the class was buzzing with ideas to save the bees.

Their teacher, Mrs. Wilson, took over the conversation at the front of the classroom and said, "Thank you, Beatrice. That was an excellent presentation. What if we dedicated our next class project to helping the bees?"

"I have an idea!" Beatrice exclaimed.

Two weeks later, Beatrice was ready to present her project. As moms and dads entered the classroom, they were greeted by a bright poster that read: BEE SMART: "Connect, learn, protect!"

The classroom was plastered with posters about bees. Students were handing out pamphlets and giving presentations about the bee crisis.

On the far side of the classroom students were fundraising for a community garden. Some students sold handmade beeswax candles. Others sold baked goods made with honey.

Meanwhile, Beatrice was selling jars of honey from their bee farm. Each jar had a hand-made label that said: BEE SMART.

Bea's Parents walked over to their daughter and gave her the biggest hug.

"Good job, honeybee!" her father said.

"We are SO proud of you, Bea!" her mother cried.

Beatrice simply beamed.

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Beatrice's parents had been beekeepers her entire life, and bees had visited her in her garden for as long as she could remember. This was because her parent's honeybee colony was nearby her special reading spot in the garden.

Beatrice looked cross-eyed as she carefully examined the little bee on her nose. She saw right away that it was a female worker bee because she saw its barbed stinger.

But one of the first things her parents taught her was the importance of treating bees kindly. She kept this in mind as she wiggled her nose gently hoping the bee would fly away.

The honeybee zoomed away, and Beatrice breathed a sigh of relief. She watched with curiosity as the bee buzzed from one flower to the next. It was collecting nectar and pollen, which Beatrice knew would eventually become delicious honey.

The thought of honey made Beatrice's tummy grumble so it must be time for a snack. She stood up and walked to the kitchen. She hopped on a stool and opened the cupboard. She found what she was looking for on the top shelf: a jar of peanut butter.

Beatrice took two slices of bread and coated each with a thick layer of creamy peanut butter. Then, she added a drizzle of honey on top and she slapped the two slices of bread together to complete her masterpiece.

Beatrice was putting the peanut butter away when her father entered the kitchen. She couldn't help but notice that her dad seemed quite worried about something.

"Is something wrong, pa?" Beatrice asked.

"Not at all, honeybee," her father said using a nickname he had called Bea since she was a baby. But Beatrice knew her father well and she could tell there was something weighing heavy on his mind.

He gave her a sweet kiss on the forehead, then urgently grabbed his jacket from the hook by the door. This was quite odd because he usually returned to the bee colony each afternoon. And he usually wore a protective white suit, gloves, and hat with a mesh veil to keep the bees away.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"There's a tremendously important meeting I have to attend. I've Gotta go, I'm running late!" he said as he left.

Beatrice decided to return to her special reading spot in the garden after her snack was done. She curiously wondered what the meeting her dad was attending to was all about.

When dinnertime finally came, the family sat around the kitchen table. It was strangely silent as her parents put the food and drinks on the table. It was odd because Beatrice's parents were not their usual carefree chatty selves.

"Is everything okay?" Beatrice finally asked, annoyed at the awkwardness of her family mealtime.

Her parents looked at each other and frowned worriedly with glum expressions on their faces.

"Well, honey, we're very concerned about the bees," her mom began. "Our bee colony has shrunk again this year."

"It's happening all over the country," her dad added. "Everyone at today's Beekeepers' Association meeting seemed to have the same problem."

Beatrice immediately became nervous and felt a knot tighten in her stomach. She knew her family couldn't continue working as beekeepers without a thriving bee colony.

"What's happening to them? Can't we just get more bees from somewhere?" Beatrice asked.

"Scientists, who research this, think the problem is the bee-killing pesticides used on the farm fields," her mom explained. "But big industrial farming isn't the only problem, diseases, climate change, and habitat loss are factors too."

Beatrice frowned because this was a huge list of very big problems not likely to be solved quickly.

"What can we do to fix it?" she asked. But her parents didn't have an answer.

"Don't worry, honeybee. We'll figure something out," her dad reassured her.

When Beatrice woke up the next morning, she was filled with fiery

determination to help the bees. She jumped quickly out of bed and made her way outside to the bee colony. To protect herself from getting stung, she put on her protective white suit and gloves. She also wore a hat with a mesh veil to shield her face and neck.

She carefully approached the tall stacked bee boxes that lived just beyond the large family garden. Unlike hives in the wild, these were large wooden boxes that her father had built. Beatrice watched the hundreds of bees at work flying frantically in and out of the various bee boxes. She wondered what had changed because it looked the way it had always looked. In fact, nothing seemed to be wrong at all.

Beatrice stood guard protectively like a security guard beside the bee boxes to ensure that the bees were protected.

An hour later after she had stood guard with nothing happening, her mom appeared.

"What are you doing?" she asked her daughter.

"I'm keeping an eye on the bees," Beatrice explained proudly.

Her mom cheerfully chuckled. This only made Beatrice frown, disappointed at her mother's callous reaction. Although, she knew she wasn't being very helpful by standing beside the bee boxes.

"Can we help them collect nectar?" she inquired.

"I'm afraid you need a *proboscis* for that," her mom told her.

"What's that?" Beatrice asked curiously.

"It's their tongue and it works just like a straw to suck up the nectar from the flowers," her mom told her. Beatrice admired the busy bees.

"They must get tired," she said.

Beatrice crossed her arms and started brainstorming.

"I have an idea!" she exclaimed suddenly. "Let's bring more flowers to them!" She decided that if she couldn't harvest nectar herself, she could at least make life a little easier for the bees.

Later, Beatrice and her mom made a trip to the garden nursery. Beatrice bought as many flowers as she could. Then she spent the entire afternoon planting more flowers in their garden. At the end of the day, Beatrice noticed bees buzzing happily around the newly improved family garden. She was tired and her hands were coated in a thick layer of dirty garden soil. She admired the little project she had proudly constructed but still felt there was more to be done.

It was Beatrice's turn for show and tell at school the next day. Beatrice stood proudly in front of her class fully covered from head to toe in her beekeeper suit. Some of the kids at the back of the room laughed.

"This outfit might look silly," she began, "but it's worn by people brave enough to work in a swarm of stinging bees!"

The class paid close attention while Beatrice thoroughly taught them about the tradition of beekeeping.

"Have you ever been stung?" one student curiously asked.

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Beatrice answered every question carefully. Then, she told her class about the declining bee crisis.

She concluded, "Bees play an essential role on our planet. Without them spreading pollen, plants would die. Then the animals that eat those plant will die too. We must all do our share and be more responsible in protecting the bees."

When her presentation concluded, the class was buzzing with ideas to save the bees.

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The classroom was plastered with posters about bees. Students were handing out pamphlets and giving presentations about the bee crisis.

On the far side of the classroom, students were enthusiastically fundraising for a community garden. Some students sold beautiful handmade beeswax candles. Others sold yummy baked goods made with honey.

Meanwhile, Beatrice was selling jars of honey from their bee farm. Each jar had a hand-made label that said: BEE SMART.

Beatrice's parents walked over to their daughter and gave her the biggest hug.

"Good job, honeybee!" her father said.

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Beatrice simply beamed with pride.