



QUEEN BEE

a collection of short stories

second edition



by
Marie Rippel
and
Renée LaTulippe

ALL ABOUT  Reading
Level 2 Vol. 2

This book belongs to



QUEEN BEE

a collection of short stories

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Marie Rippet: “Ruben and the Secret Gift” – “Mrs. Marvel’s Garden”
“Storm in the North” – “In My Backpack”
“Pumpkin and the Kitten” – “Life on *The Blue Whale*”
“Wild Rice Harvest” – “Rawhide”

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“Storm in the North” – “In My Backpack”
“Pumpkin and the Kitten” – Cricket’s Picnic”
“Wild Rice Harvest” – “Rawhide”

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To the reader –

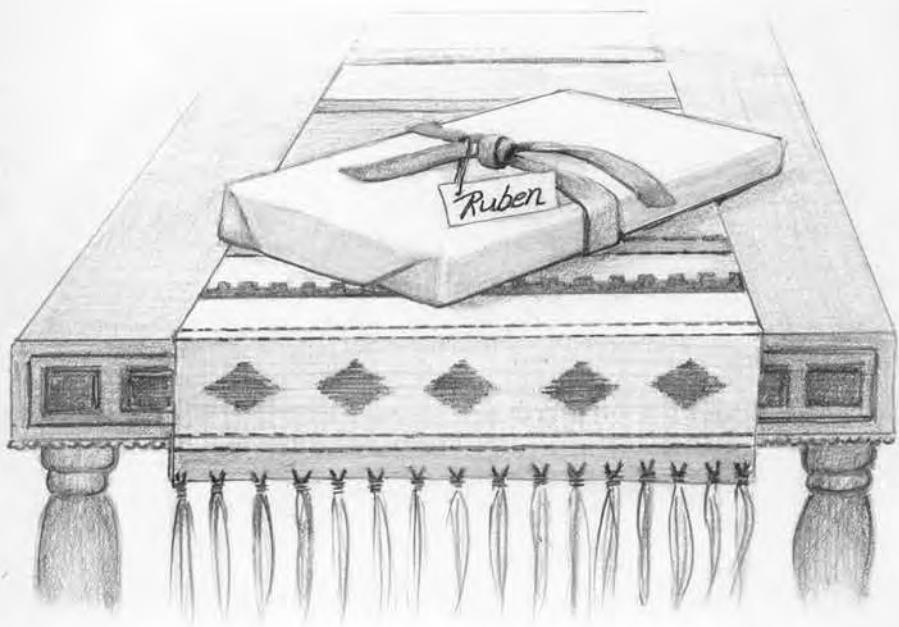
*may you be inspired
to embark on
your own adventures*

Contents

1.	Ruben and the Secret Gift.....	9
2.	Mrs. Marvel's Garden.....	31
3.	Storm in the North.....	53
4.	Under the Carpet.....	71
5.	In My Backpack	84
6.	Pumpkin and the Kitten	87
7.	Cricket's Picnic	105
8.	Life on <i>The Blue Whale</i>	121
9.	Wild Rice Harvest	139
10.	Rawhide	153
11.	Queen Bee	171



Ruben and the Secret Gift



“What’s in this box?” Ruben said to Mom.

“You will have to open it to see,” Mom said.

“Is it for me? Is it from you?”

“Your name is on the tag. But it’s not from me. Open it!” said Mom.

“A hand lens!” said Ruben. “And here’s a note...”

*“With this hand lens
you will find
fun and secrets
that never end.”*

“Is this gift from Dad?” Ruben said.

“No.”

“Is it from my sisters?”

“No. I can’t tell. It’s a secret,” said Mom.

Ruben held the hand lens. It had black plastic trim and a glass lens.



“This is the best gift ever! I am glad it’s mine! It will be fun to use.”

“Yes, I think you will have fun with it.”

“Mom, can I have some paper? I will keep notes on what I see under the lens,” said Ruben.

Mom gave him a notepad.



With a grin, Ruben said, “I am off to find *fun and secrets that never end*, just like the note said!”

He slid the hand lens and notepad into his bag. “I will see what I can find in the desert.”

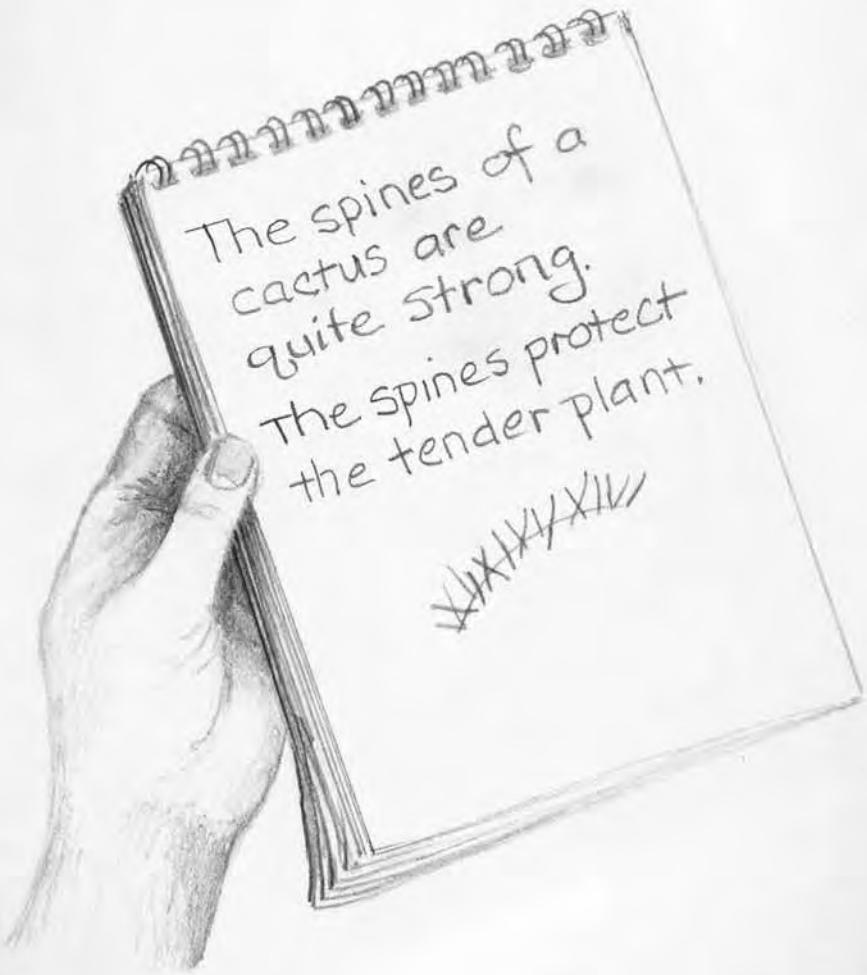
“Fine,” said Mom. “Don’t get lost. And here is a cheese sandwich for your lunch.”

Ruben stuck the sandwich in his pocket.

“Be home by six,” said Mom. “My sister Zumac and her husband will be here, and Don is not a fan of the desert. If we can, let’s make him feel at home. Don’t be late.”

“OK. I will be home in time!” He left with a wave.

“What will a cactus be like under my hand lens?” Ruben said to himself.



“I see an insect that has taken shelter in the spines. Hold on while I add you to my notepad!”



“Here is a desert aster! I will get close with my lens.”



He wrote, “Under the lens, an aster glitters like gold.”

"I see a jackrabbit! I will add him to my notepad."





“A killdeer! To keep her eggs safe, the killdeer pretends she broke her wing. She thinks I will chase her and will not see the nest in the sand.”

“I will add this to my notes.”

After a while, it was time for lunch.
Ruben sat in the shade of a desert
bush.

As he ate his sandwich, Ruben's
mind went back to the hand lens.
Who gave him the gift?



“Let me think ... the person who gave me the hand lens must have left fingerprints behind. I can check for fingerprints!”

Ruben *did* see fingerprints on the hand lens.

“Which prints belong to me, and which prints belong to the secret person?”

“Well, those fingerprints on the black plastic must be mine. But I see a fingerprint on the glass. This big print came from a finger that is not mine.”

A plan came to him.

“On TV, in the event of a crime, you can use tape to lift fingerprints from glass. I will do that! I will move the fingerprint to paper so I can see it better!”



Ruben ran home. He got some black dust and tape.

Steps to lift fingerprints:

1. Take black dust and shake it over the fingerprint.
2. Shake off the leftover dust.
3. Take a bit of tape and stick it over the fingerprint.
4. Lift the tape, and the fingerprint will be stuck to the tape. You will see the lines of the fingerprint.
5. Stick the tape with the fingerprint onto white paper.



Rap-rap-rap.

It was Zumac and Don!

Mom ran to meet them. Ruben was close behind.



“Zumac! My sister!” said Mom as she gave her sister a big hug. “I am so glad to see you. It has been so long!”

“And I am glad to see you! But Don is not so glad to be in this hot desert.”

“I will not be in the desert for long,” said Don. “I will melt!”

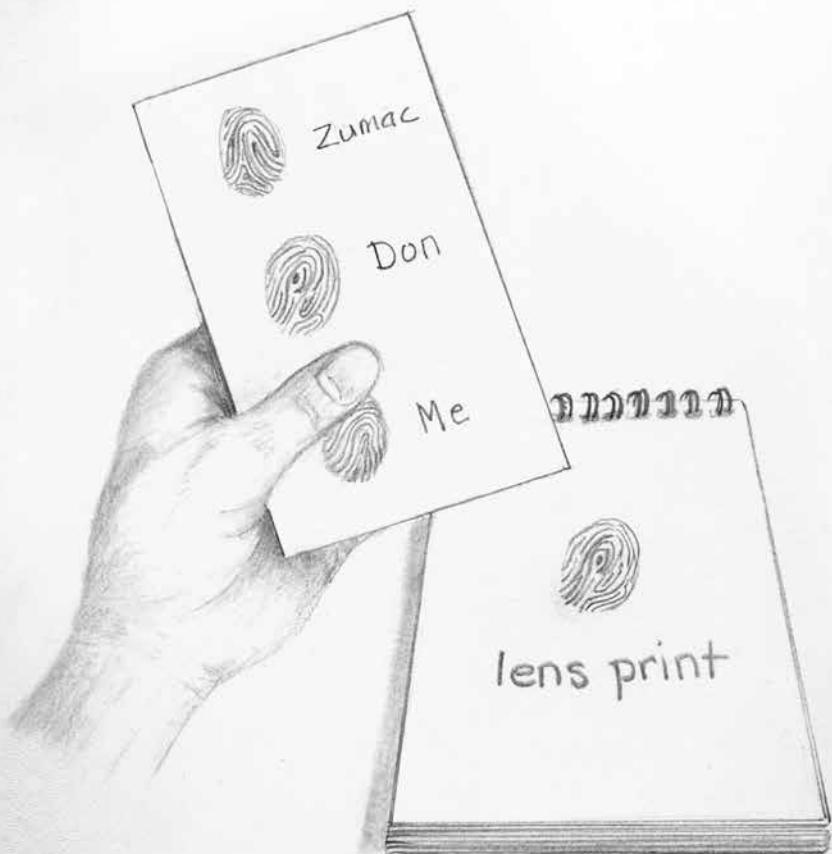
“Well, sit and relax while I get dinner.”

Ruben said to Don and Zumac, “Can I take your fingerprints?”

“Ruben!” said Mom. “Don and Zumac just got here!”

“It’s OK. It will be fun,” said Don.

Ruben held Don's and Zumac's fingerprints next to the print that came from the hand lens. The fingerprints told him the gift was from ...



...Don!

“This hand lens is the best gift I ever got. Thank you!” said Ruben.

Then Ruben slid his notepad from his bag and handed it to Don and Zumac.
“This is a gift for both of you!”

Don was silent. He flipped from one sheet of the notepad to the next. It was a side of the desert that Don had never seen before.

The cactus spines. The insects. The asters. The jackrabbit and the killdeer. The shimmer of the desert sun.

“Ruben, I need to thank *you*! You just gave me the gift of the desert,” said Don.



The End





Pumpkin and the Kitten



Pumpkin was a pet cat. He had orange and black stripes and sharp teeth like a tiger, but there was not a wild bone in him.

Pumpkin did not have to hunt for his supper, and he never felt a twinge of hunger. He did not have to hide from dogs or live in a barn. He had a safe home and lots of snacks. Nick and Kate met his needs. Pumpkin was glad to be a pet cat.

Pumpkin had the best places to sleep.

He slept on the porch in the sun.

He slept in a basket in the shade.

He slept in square boxes.

He slept in soft laps.

No place was off limits.



Pumpkin had catnip to find and fake mice to chase. He had yarn to shred. Pumpkin made up fun games for himself like “Hide and Seek,” “Bat the Bed Fringe,” and “Swing on the Drapes.”



He had time to push paperclips and pencils off the desk and see them roll. And he did not have to share a thing.



Life was sweet...

...until the morning that Pumpkin woke up from a nap and Nick had a kitten in his arms. It was a big shock to Pumpkin. Nick put the kitten in a box with a blanket, and Kate put a dish of milk by her.





Kate said, “Pumpkin, she can be your sister! She is a cute kitten.”

But Pumpkin did not think that was true. A plan came into his mind to rid himself of the kitten.

I will just pretend she is not here.

Then I will hiss at her and make her see that I am in charge.

I will bare my large teeth at her.

I will chase her and make her run fast.

I will scare her until she hides.

I will bite her and make her cry. I will make her wish she never came. Then, at last, I will be rid of her.



Nick said, “Pumpkin, stop it! I see your glare! You be kind to the kitten! Understand?”

Pumpkin did not understand.

“You will like her after a while. Give it time. And remember that we still love you,” said Kate as she gave Pumpkin a pat.

On stiff legs, Pumpkin left to take a nap on the porch.



After a time, it got cold on the porch, but Pumpkin did not go back in. His legs felt like ice, but he did not even go in for supper. He did not forgive Nick and Kate. He gave himself a short bath and then went back to sleep, still mad.



In his sleep, Pumpkin began to feel less cold. It felt like a thick blanket was on his back. It felt nice!



Then he woke up with a jolt. The kitten was in bed with him. It was the kitten that made him feel less cold.

Pumpkin was torn. Do I scold her for this, or do I act like she is not here?

OK. The kitten can share the bed
with me for a short time.

Pumpkin forgot to be mad.

He even gave the kitten a lick.

The kitten woke up and gave him
a lick back.



And Pumpkin forgave Nick and
Kate and the kitten.





The End



Rawhide



My name is Rawhide. I'm a ranch dog. I'm the boss of this place. I protect the kids and keep things in order.





Mr. and Mrs. August drove off in the truck. They left me in charge of the kids. There is a ranch hand, but he's not much help.

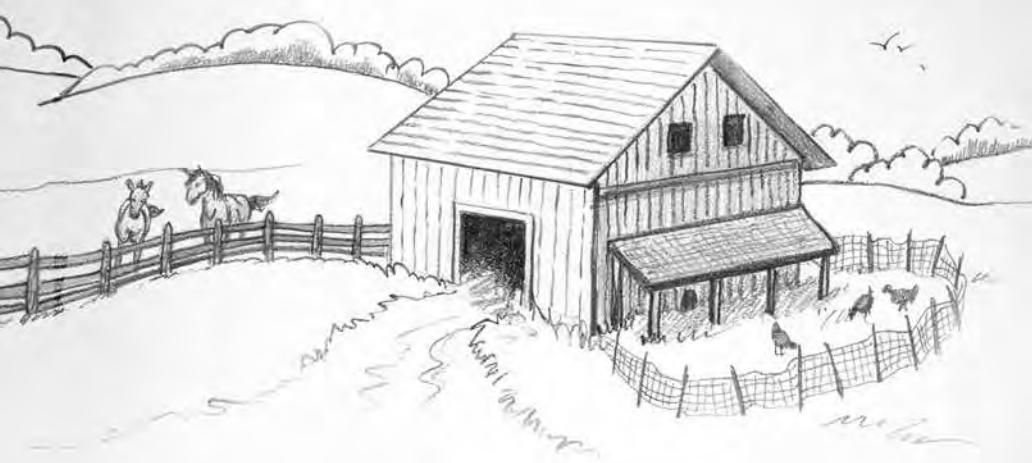
While the kids have pancakes, I go
for a short stroll.

I spot a large rat by the sawmill. I
chase it over a pile of sawdust. He
won't be back while I'm on the job.









I dust off my paws and go on with
my tasks.

The cat is drinking from the fish
pond. That will not do!

I bark at the cat to scold her. She
ignores me, so I make her go back to
the barn. That won't happen twice!



The ranch hand enters the chicken pen. I crawl over to spy on him. He is nabbing the eggs! I'll put a stop to that!

I creep over the straw and jump at him. He drops his basket and flees.

The kids are having fun on the lawn.
I see a huge green snake coiled up
by the seesaw.



I pause ... then I jump onto the wild snake and haul it off. I have saved the kids!



Just then, the truck chugs up the lane. Mr. and Mrs. August step out—but who is with them?

They call her Aunt Sue, and she has a blue shawl. Her arms are filled with boxes and bags. This upsets me!



The kids seem to like her. I don't understand why! I have never seen her before!

The kids take the boxes from her. Stop! I have not checked the boxes yet to see if they are safe! I must tell the kids to stop.



Aunt Sue sets a box in front of me
and opens it. It smells like bacon. I
love bacon!

Perhaps she isn't as bad as she
seems. In fact, I love Aunt Sue!

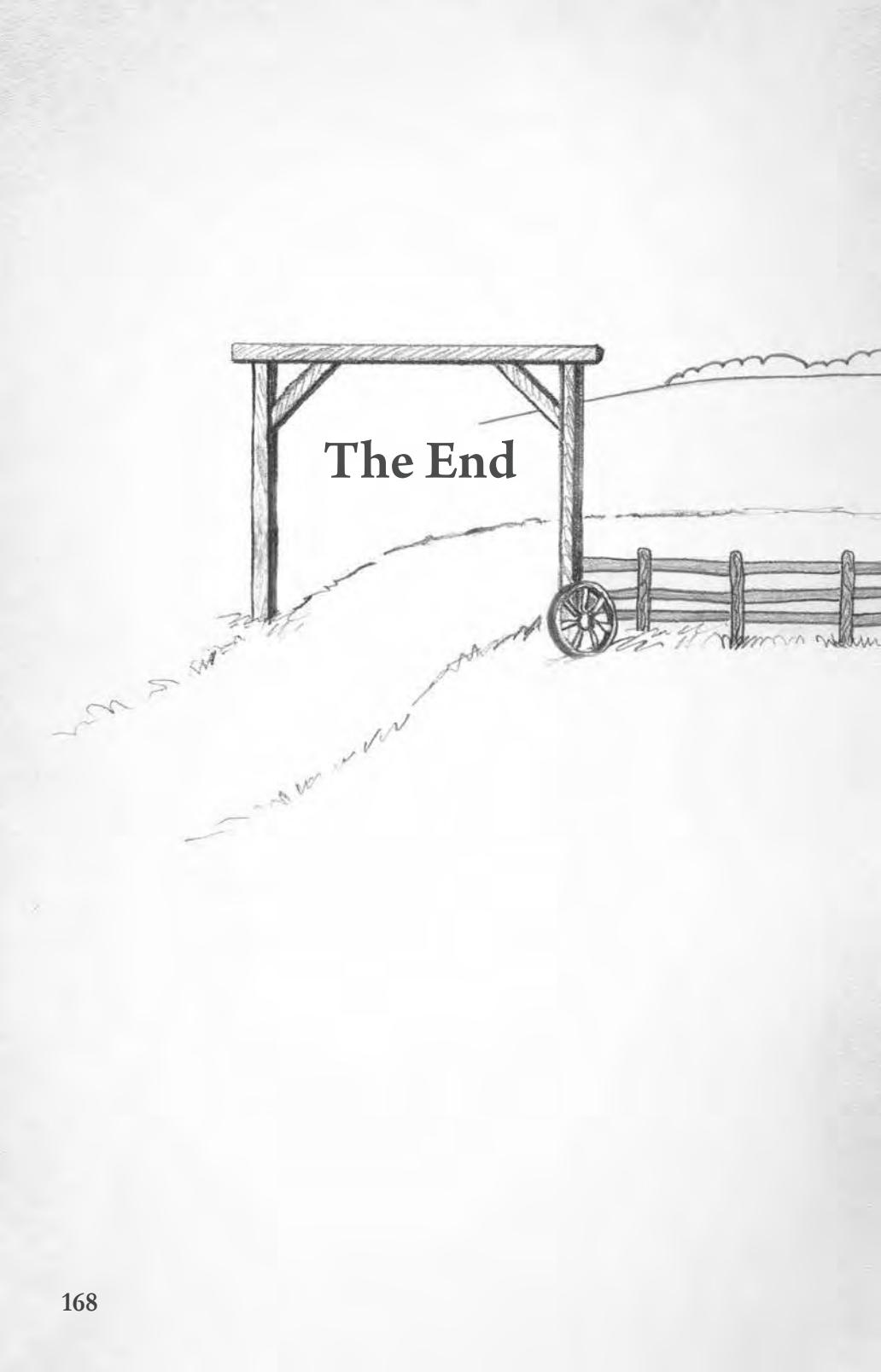




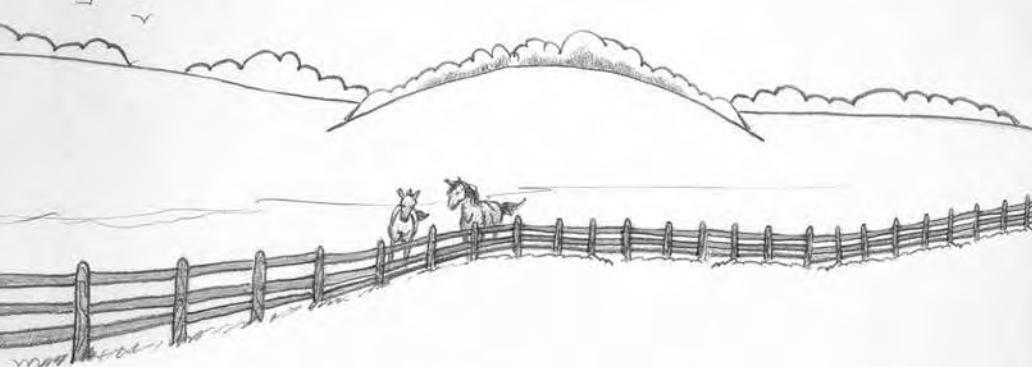
We all go inside to wash up for supper. I sprawl on my bed while Mrs. August stirs the sauce.

I am tired. Yawn!

I must rest up so I can start over in the morning.

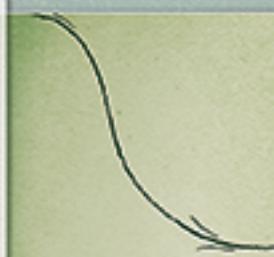


The End





What happens when...



...a cricket plans a picnic?

...a new kitten comes to stay?

...a queen bee leaves her hive?

...two spies search for their mascot?

...a strange bump appears under the carpet?

Find out
inside!



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