

Lady, *Lucy's* Quest



Karen Gross

Illustrated by
Ji Woo Jasmine Shin
and So Young Jang

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Dedicated to all the future

Lucys

Long long ago, in the time of
Kings and Queens and castles,
there was a spirited
young girl named *Lucy*.

More than anything else in the world,
Lucy wanted to be a Knight.

In her dreams,
she slew dangerous dragons;
she fought fierce battles;
she saved starving lions.





“You cannot be a Knight,”
her father and mother told her tartly:
“Girls cannot be Knights.
It’s in the Kingdom’s Book of Rules.”
Her little brother, Neville the Devil,
pulled at *Lucy’s* hair and teased,
“Anyhow, you could never pass
the terrible tests of knighthood.”

But *Lucy* was determined.
She went directly to Sir Winston,
the oldest and wisest Knight in the Kingdom,
who kept the Book of Rules in his castle.
“Please, Sir Winston, show me
where in the Book of Rules it says
a girl cannot become a Knight.”



Sir Winston started searching the big Book.

But hard as he hunted, he could not find
one Rule saying girls could not be Knights.

He mumbled to himself,

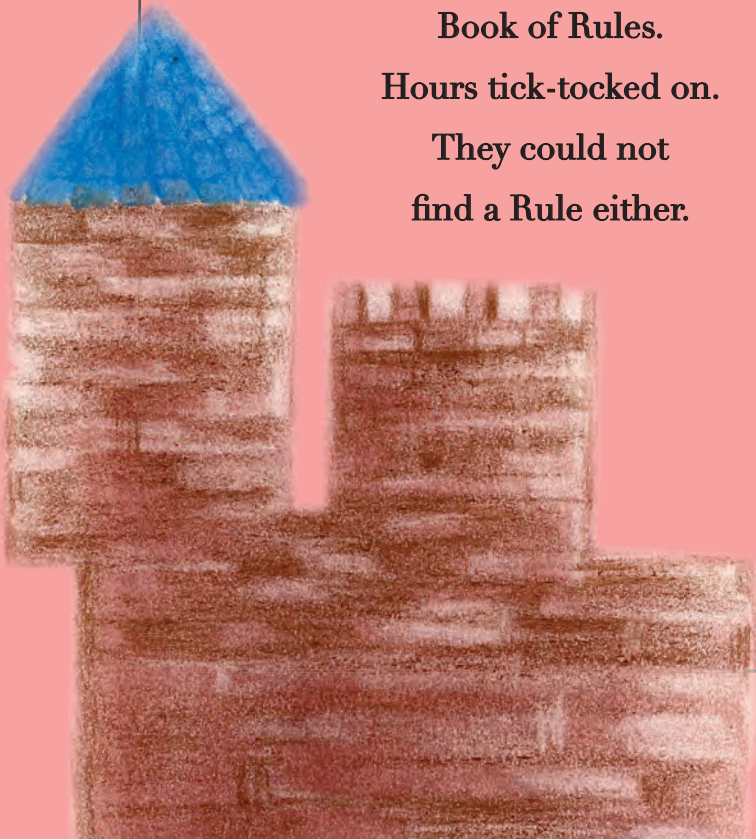
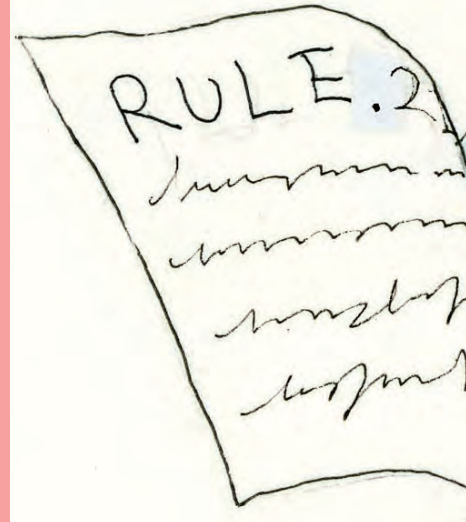
“There must be a Rule
in this big Book somewhere.”

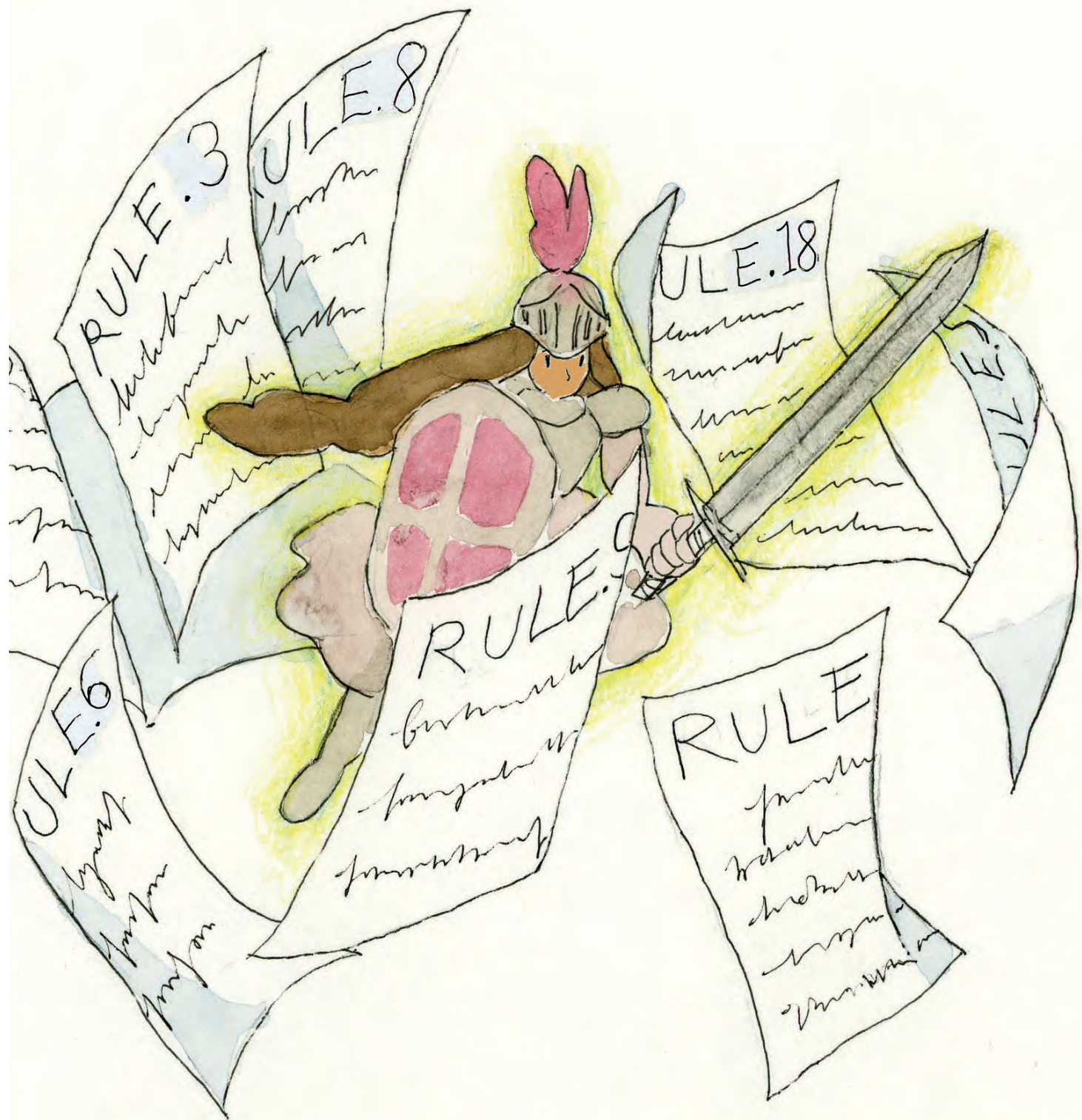
He called for the other Knights of the Kingdom
to come to his castle.

They too searched the
Book of Rules.

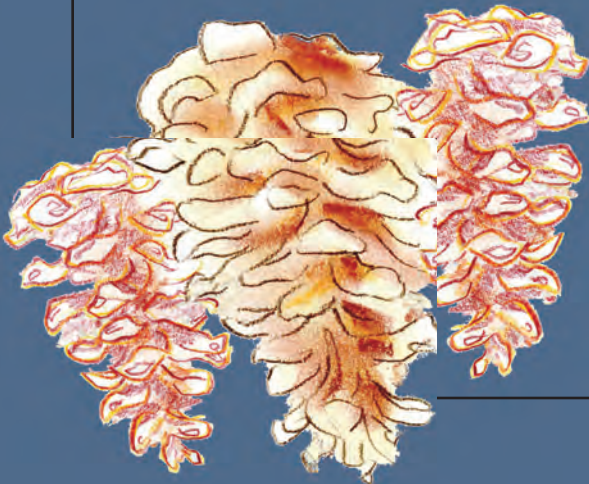
Hours tick-tocked on.

They could not
find a Rule either.





“Since you cannot find a Rule
preventing girls from becoming Knights,”
Lucy observed as dusk approached,
“I should at least be allowed
to take the tests of knighthood.”



Sir Winston, focusing his gaze on *Lucy*,
shrugged his shoulders and said:

“The three tests of knighthood are hard to pass.

You need **endurance, strength** and **courage.**”

“At least let me try,” she replied rapidly,
staring straight back at him.

Sir Winston glanced at the other Knights.

“Let her try,” he whispered and winked.

“She will never pass
all three tests.”



The next morning, all the townspeople
gathered to listen to Sir Winston
announce the first treacherous test:

The test of **endurance**.

He decreed:

“Lucy, you must stay in the Dangerous Dark Forest
alone for one whole day and night.
All you can take with you is this sack,
smaller than the size of a sparrow.”





Lucy was excited about her journey
into the Dangerous Dark Forest.
She carefully selected the items
for her small sack:

A blue flight feather,
a green glass jar and
some nuts and seeds.



All the Knights and townspeople and her family
watched her walk off into the
Dangerous Dark Forest.
Neville taunted his sister:

“You don’t even have a sword in your sack.”

Her parents were worried.
None of the townspeople were sure she would survive.



But, *Lucy* had a plan:

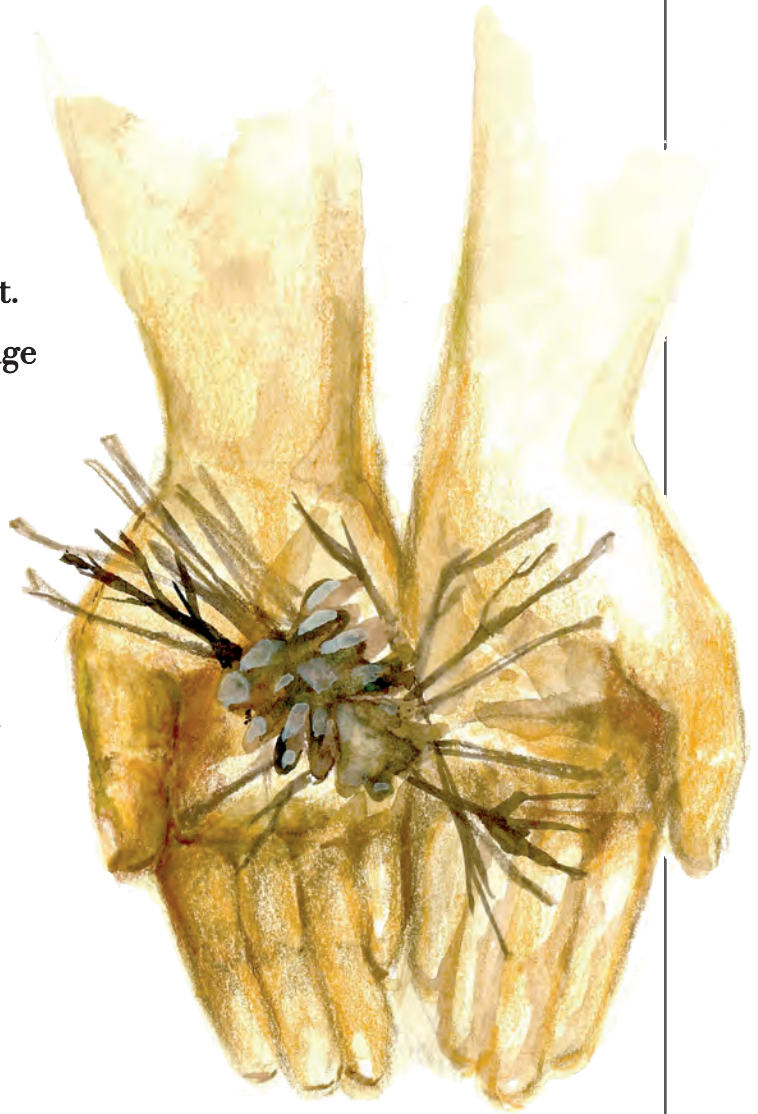
She walked deep into the forest.

She found a large tree with huge
overhanging branches.

She collected some pinecones
and twigs and created a nest.

She put her blue flight feather
in the corner to indicate
this was her home for the night.

She captured some fireflies
in her glass jar
and then she nestled
into her nest
and waited.



A squirrel came by and
she offered him a nut, which he took and
immediately whistled for his friends
to join him.

She gave all the
squirrels some nuts.

Then, a bluebird swooped down and
saw the feather. *Lucy* gave him some seeds.
He chirped for his fellow birds to join him.

She gave them seeds too.

Shortly after, a rabbit hopped along and
Lucy offered her some seeds and nuts,
and she too called
her rabbit friends.





Within a short while,
Lucy was surrounded by
birds and animals of all colors, shapes and sizes.

As nightfall came,
she sang to them and fed them,
and they kept her warm and they protected her.

Her firefly jar, sitting behind her feather,
lit up her nest like a glowing moon.



The next morning,
Lucy emerged from the forest.

All the birds and animals
waved goodbye to her
at the forest's edge.

Her parents were shocked but relieved.

Her brother, Neville, could not believe
his eyes and twisted his tongue.

The other Knights were stunned
into silence.

Sir Winston winced.



Several days went by and Sir Winston announced that
since *Lucy* had passed the first test,
she could undertake the second test:

The strenuous test of **strength**.

He decreed:

“*Lucy*,” he asserted,
“there is a boulder at the entrance
of the Dangerous Dark Forest.

By dawn, it needs to be moved
so deep into the Forest that no one
will ever be able to see it again.”

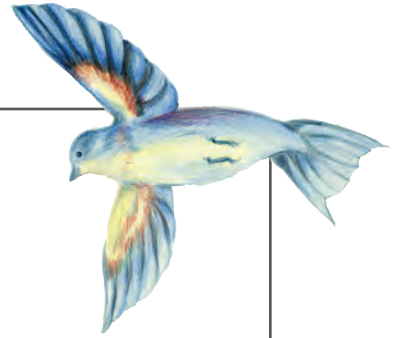


Everyone looked at the boulder that Sir Winston demanded be moved.

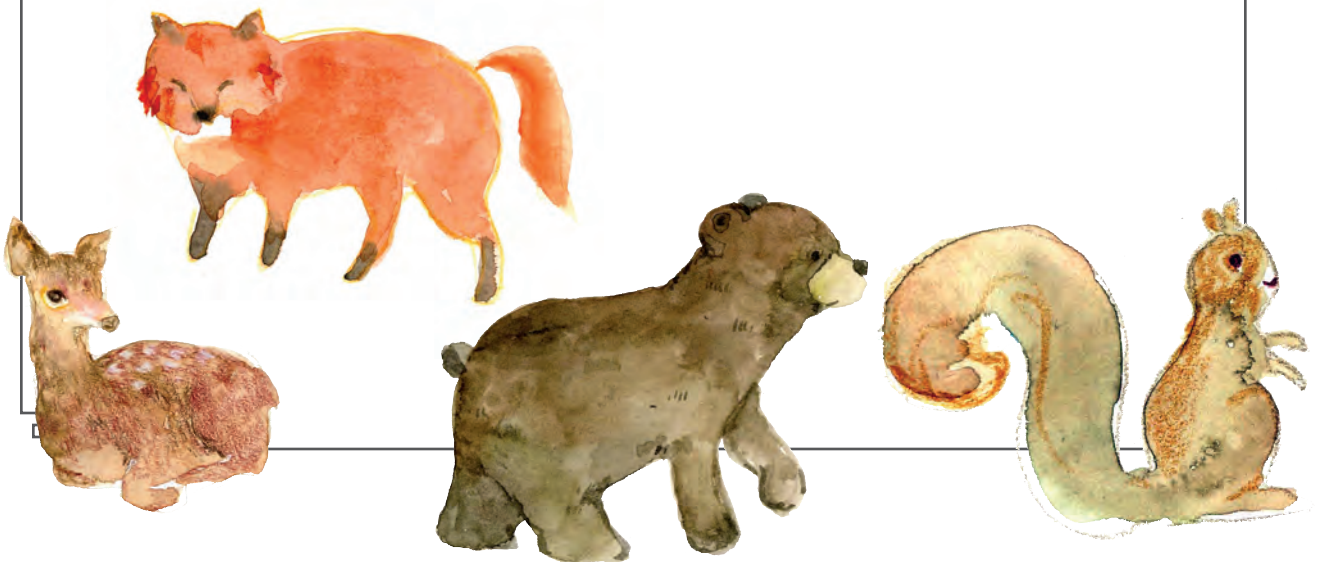
It was an impossible tough task; the boulder was way taller and wider than *Lucy*. Everyone went to bed, sure they would return to find the boulder exactly where they left it.

Some even wondered why this test was so hard.





That night, there was no moon. *Lucy* waited for the darkness of night to arrive and then whistled for all her forest friends to gather. She showed her dilemma to them and they offered their help. Together, they dug a trench on one side of the boulder.



Then, *Lucy* scoured the Forest floor
and found a long strong stick and placed it under the boulder.
She and all the other animals and birds of the Forest
jumped up and down on the strong stick,
taking turns when they got tired but gleefully watching each other
launch into the night sky. Hours passed and slowly,
the boulder started to sway toward the Dangerous Dark Forest.



The bigger animals pushed the sides of the boulder and bit-by-bit, inch-by-inch, the boulder rolled beyond the entrance to the forest. It was hard work but they made progress. Then, *Lucy* and her animal and bird friends covered the boulder with a net of greens and flowers and moss.

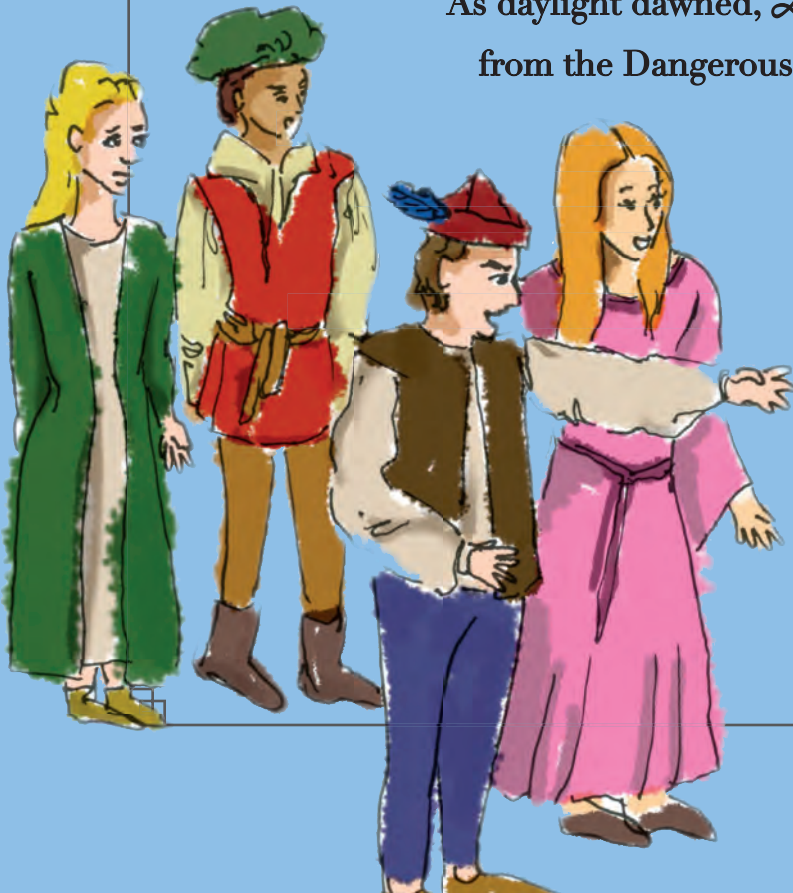


The boulder was transformed
into a beautiful hillside
where the creatures of the forest could rest and relax.

Lucy gave all her friends of the forest some seeds and nuts,
thanking them for their help.

As daylight dawned, *Lucy* emerged
from the Dangerous Dark Forest

to greet the townspeople,
her family and
Sir Winston
and the other Knights.





All the people peered down at the huge hole in the ground where the boulder had been housed. They scoured the forest's edge; it was nowhere to be seen. Neville was incredulous. Everyone shuffled around, awed by the absence of the boulder. Sir Winston took a step back and surveyed the scene.



That left one more test:

The test of **courage**.

Sir Winston needed to divine a most difficult test.
When he settled on the toughest test he could create,
he called together all the townspeople and
Lucy, her brother Neville the Devil, and her parents.

He decreed:

“*Lucy*, you need to do a courageous act
and then bring us proof of your courage.”



Lucy was concerned for the first time in her Quest.

No courageous acts came to her mind.

She had never killed a wild boar.

She had never been brave in a battle.

She had never even used a warrior's weapon.

She had never slain a slithery dragon.

She had never built a fire with flames.

She thought and thought, tugging on her hair.

What had she done that was courageous?



She pondered and pondered but nothing she had done
seemed sufficiently brave.

Then, an idea struck her.
She went to Sir Winston and told him
she was ready to prove her courage.

Sir Winston gathered all the other Knights.

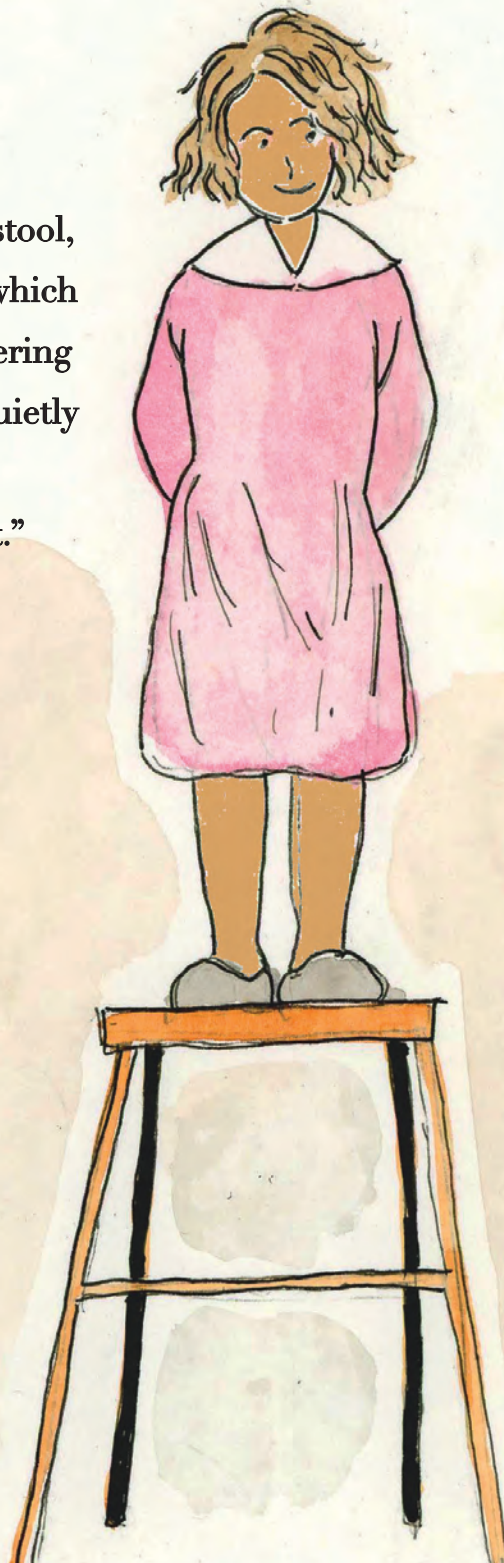
Lucy's parents and her brother, Neville the Devil, joined the group.

So did all the townspeople.

Sir Winston looked at the crowd in a
most serious way and asked *Lucy*,
“What is the most courageous
thing you have ever done?”



Lucy stepped up on a small stool,
turned to the group gathered which
included her forest friends peering
from the edge and answered quietly
but firmly and bravely,
“I tried to become a Knight.”



Everyone looked at each other.

Someone whispered:

“She’s right; it did take courage to try to become a Knight.”

Soon, everyone was whispering.

The Knights were pondering the problem too:

If they challenged her courage, they would not be truthful;

if they admitted she acted courageously,

she would become a Knight.

It was almost dark when Sir Winston announced
that he had a decision.

He proclaimed, with a clear, convincing voice and
a wee hint of admiration:

“*Lucy*, you are right;

it took courage to try to become a Knight
and you have passed the tyranny of tests I set out for you.

We would be honored if you would join us
as a Knight of the Kingdom.”



And so it was that *Lucy* was knighted
and Lady *Lucy* lived a long and happy life as a Knight,
doing good deeds and helping hundreds of others
with both courage and grace.



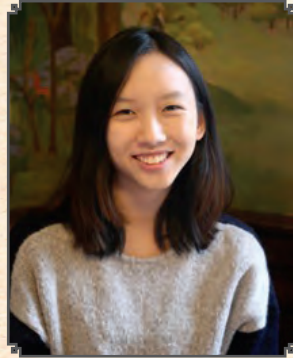
Karen Gross



The author has taught and continues to teach across the educational pipeline. In Spring 2016, she will be teaching at Bennington College in Vermont. She writes, consults and advises on how to improve student success and has a forthcoming book from Columbia University Teachers College Press titled *Shoulders to Learn On* (pub. date 2016) on this very topic. A former college president and Senior Advisor to the US Department of Education, she currently serves as Senior Counsel to Widmeyer Communications, a Finn Partners Company and as an Affiliate to the Penn Center for MSIs at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. She blogs/writes for many education outlets including Huff Po, WPo, InsideHigherEd, Unplugged, DiverseEducation, Evollution, NAIS, and CollegeAD.

The author is proud that two high school seniors at the Emma Willard School have so ably illustrated the Lady Lucy story. This book and the process of its creation provide a concrete example of the kind of deep collaboration that can occur in education, where the teacher is a learner and the learners are teachers. The illustrators, led by Lindsey Slaughter, a gifted art teacher, have made Lady Lucy and author's story come alive. The author and the two illustrators and their teacher see Lady Lucy as a symbol of the power of the possible that rests within all of us.

Ji Woo Jasmine Shin



Jasmine was born in Korea and began her studies in the United States when she was 12 years old. Currently a senior at the Emma Willard School and headed off to college, Jasmine has had a deep interest in art since early childhood and is honing her skills through use of many different art medium, including digital graphics. She has been deeply influenced by comic book art and cartoons and hopes that her drawings here can influence creativity in others. Reflecting on her experience as an illustrator, she observed that her images are designed to showcase empowerment and independence, and she hopes her illustrations and those of So Young can enable children everywhere to see the value of the very qualities that have served these illustrators well in their own lives.

So Young Jang



Born in Korea, So Young came to the United States from Seoul with her mother and sister when she was 9 years old and is currently a senior at the Emma Willard School. She plans to pursue her interest in art in college. A frequent visitor back to her home nation, So Young sees her work as reflective of the two different cultures in which she has lived, enabling her to be at once free and detailed. Through this illustration project and strongly influenced by her mother's teachings, she wants children everywhere to use their imaginations and hopes her illustrations will enable that to happen. For So Young, the process of collaboration has been invaluable, showcasing the importance of art and thought as a collaborative effort across nations and people.

Lady, *Lucy's* Quest

is the story of a feisty young girl who wants to be a Knight in the Middle Ages. She confronts many hurdles but ultimately finds success because she is able to solve problems in unique and unexpected ways. Through her actions and words, she demonstrates the importance of pursuing one's dreams and the power of the possible for children everywhere.



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