

For Timothy Caelan Williams, who makes me laugh.

And for Dhyana and her class 5, 2008 at the Shearwater Steiner School, NSW Australia, with love.

### Acknowledgements:

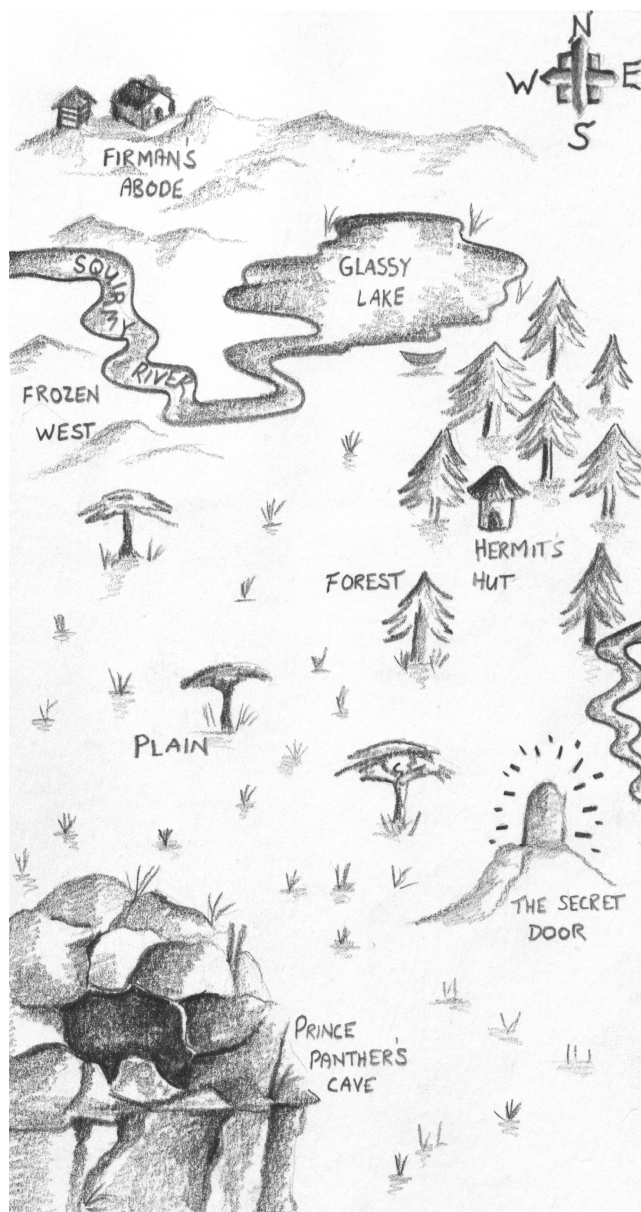
My thanks to Cindy Walker at Whole Spirit Press in Colorado for her outstanding vision and ongoing support, and to Mali Kate Biggin-Johnston in Australia, for being such a great reader of the first draft.



**About the Author and Illustrator:** Shelley Davidow was born in South Africa. Her books for children, young adults and adults have been published in Africa, the UK, the USA and Australia. In 2002 she was nominated by Macmillan/Picador/BBC World for the Macmillan Writer's Prize for Africa, for her young adult book **In the Shadow of Inyangani**. (Macmillan 2003). She has an MEd from Sunbridge College in New York and has taught in schools, colleges and universities across the world. She now lives on the East Coast of Australia with her husband and son. Visit [www.shelleydavidow.com](http://www.shelleydavidow.com).

**About the Phonetic Readers:** The first set of six readers, published in 2006, use simple words that the early reader will easily grasp. The words have been carefully chosen by a reading specialist to help students advance from the short vowels, to the silent “e”, to the vowel combinations. **The Secret Pet**, is the first chapter book in this series. It’s a continuation of the phonetically-based principles that focus on the phonetic vowel teams such as ea, ie, oe, ue, digraphs, open and closed syllables and more. **The Secret Door**, is the second chapter book in this series. It continues with the phonetically-based principles that focus on, ar, or, er, ir, ur, oo, ou, ow, oi, oy, au, aw, and ea words.

**About our Reading Specialist:** Mary Spotts has been a remedial reading teacher for over fifteen years, taking countless classes and seminars to keep current in the field she loves. Her deep understanding that struggling readers still need good stories—even if the books are phonetically based—has been the inspiration in the creation of these books. Mary has been a constant guide, ensuring that the books address specific phonetic principles while retaining a gently humorous story line.



# Table of Contents/ Phonetic Concepts

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	<b>A Snarl in the Dark</b>	<b>1</b>
	(ar, as in dark, ar, sounds like er as in cellar)	
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	<b>Cal's Error</b>	<b>13</b>
	(or, as in scorn, or, sounds like er as in error)	
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	<b>The Magic Herb</b>	<b>27</b>
	(er, as in herb)	
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>The Firman</b>	<b>37</b>
	(ir as in first)	
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	<b>The Left Turn</b>	<b>48</b>
	(ur, as in turn)	
<b>Chapter 6:</b>	<b>By the Light of the Moon</b>	<b>58</b>
	(oo as in moon)	
<b>Chapter 7:</b>	<b>From Woods to Moor</b>	<b>68</b>
	(oo as in woods)	
<b>Chapter 8:</b>	<b>A Foul Trick</b>	<b>78</b>
	(ou, as in ouch, ow as in flower)	
<b>Chapter 9:</b>	<b>The Boy and the Fox</b>	<b>88</b>
	(oi as in soil, oy as in loyal)	
<b>Chapter 10:</b>	<b>The Reward</b>	<b>99</b>
	(au as in taunt, aw as in claw)	
<b>Chapter 11:</b>	<b>By the Glow of the Moon</b>	<b>109</b>
	(ow as in glow)	
<b>Chapter 12:</b>	<b>Treachery and Treasure</b>	<b>119</b>
	(ea as in head)	



# Chapter 1: A Snarl in the Dark



Nine-year-old Mina could not fall asleep. Her sister, Jo, was already out like a light. It was nine at night, and Mina had read to the end of her book. It was a good book, full of magic. Outside, the summer sky was almost dark, but a full moon lit up her room.

She could see the back yard in the white light of the moon. Then she heard

something—a far off sound like a snarl, or a howl.

Mina sat up, and her book fell off the bed. Then she gave a start. “It sounds like there’s a dog in the yard. That must be Tim’s dog, Ned!” she said. Tim was eleven. He lived next door. Tim had lots of pets. He even had a pet snake, Jake. Sometimes Jake the Snake hid in Tim’s shirt and went to school with them all. Mina, Jo and Tim all went to the same school. Jo and Mina loved Tim’s pets.

Sometimes Ned, who was a sweet dog, came to play in Mina’s yard. “Why would Ned be here at night?” Mina said to Jo.

But Jo was still asleep in the bed next to hers, snoring her eight-year-old head off.



The next moment Mina heard a loud bark. The sound seemed to come from the old workshop, at the back of the house. “Maybe Ned got shut up in the workshop,” she said to herself.

Mina got out of bed. She went softly across the carpet and out of her room. Now that she was nine, she wasn’t afraid of the dark. She went out of the house into the back yard. Then she heard it again—a loud bark not too far away.

Mina walked across the yard. Her feet were wet, and the moon was big and bright. Its light fell on the old workshop at the back of the house. Mina heard a faint snarl. The sound came from inside the old workshop.

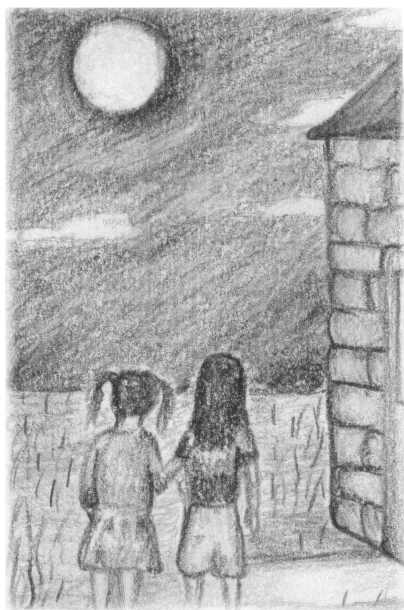
“You should not be creeping across the yard in the dark. It’s not smart!”

Mina gave a start and saw the shadow of her little sister.

“It’s not dark. And you should be in bed, Jo!”

“Speak for yourself,” said Jo and took Mina’s arm. “I heard it too.”

“I think Ned got shut up in the workshop,” said Mina.



“Let’s get him out,” said Jo.

The two sisters crept around the garden to the workshop. They could hear their parents talking in the living room. The girls peeked into the workshop. All they saw was the big white moon in the dark window. Then they heard it again...a bark and a snarl coming from somewhere inside the workshop.

“Let’s get Ned out,” said Jo.

The girls went to the door and opened it. The moon cast stark shadows on the ground.

“Come on out, Ned!” Jo said. Ned was not inside. There was a bark again. This time it came from the cellar under the workshop.