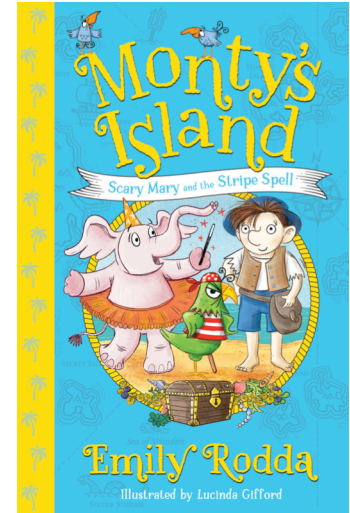


Scary Mary and the Stripe Spell: Monty's Island 1



April 2020
Paperback
Recommended for 5-8-year-olds

ISBN 9781760529857

By Emily Rodda
Illustrated by Lucinda Gifford

Summary

On a tiny island far away, in a sea that ripples with magic, Monty never knows what he might find...

Monty, Tawny and friends receive some startling news: Scary Mary and her pirate crew are on their way, looking for a new island to call home. What can they do? Hiding is not an option - especially when Bunchy accidentally turns the whole island stripy with her new magic wand. It's going to take one of Monty's best ideas to save them!



Scary Mary and the Stripe Spell opens with a cinematic flourish — the narrator is looking down from on high on the tropical majesty of Monty's Island and then swoops closer to introduce the varied cast of characters living there, including a fearless lion, a clever cook, an elephant magician, a shipwrecked pirate who is really a parrot with a wooden leg, a young beachcomber called Monty and, ominously foreshadowing a battle to come, the Hairy Horrible.

Along the way there are jungle-covered island tropes a-plenty: pirates, buried treasure, and messages in a bottle, as well as more eccentric things constantly throwing up delightful surprises on each page.

Emily Rodda is simply a master of her art. Few others compare when it comes to writing stories packed with engaging details, and providing hooks (but not the sort that pirates have) at the end of each short chapter to encourage even the most reluctant reader to keep reading and find out what will happen next.

Lucinda Gifford's black and white ink and pencil illustrations support as well as extend the story of Monty's Island, all the while adding to the book's sense of charming whimsy.

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Use in the curriculum

This is the first book in the new Emily Rodda Monty's Island series.

It is suitable in the early primary classroom as:

- an early read-alone reader or a read-aloud book in class to support beginners.
- an introduction to other series (see Further Reading, below), and discussion about what a series is.
- as part of a theme study of 'tropical island' stories, pirates, fantasy, kids and animal adventures, magic and spells

Themes

- adventure • pirates • magical worlds • living in a community • simple & sustainable living

Activities

Before reading *Scary Mary and the Stripe Spell: Monty's Island 1* show your class the book's front cover and ask them what sort of story they think this is going to be?

- Will it be funny or serious, realistic or make-believe? What makes them think that?
- Which of the characters on the cover do they think is Monty and what sort of island do they think he lives on? Is it warm and tropical on the island or cold and miserable?
- What clues on the cover are there to tell you that?

Comprehension Questions: Chapter 1

- Who lives in the jungle on Monty's Island? (page 3)
- Why are the Argue Birds called that? (page 4)
- What is a Special Find? (page 6)
- Why does the Horrible hate the beach? (page 7)
- What does Monty find on the beach on page 9?

Comprehension Questions: Chapter 2

- Why does Clink keep sending the bottle and note out to sea? (page 11)
- Why does the bottle and note keep coming back to shore? (page 13)
- What does Monty find after the bottle and note? (page 14)
- What is the signal tree? (page 16)
- Does Clink the Pirate bother to wave to Monty and Tawny? (page 19)

Comprehension Questions: Chapter 3

- If it isn't a bird, what is Pink Bird? (page 22)
- What sort of creature is the Laughing Traveller? (page 24)
- Who does the Laughing Traveller warn Monty about? (page 24)
- Why do Scary Mary and her crew need a new island? (page 25)
- What is Scary Mary not good at doing? (page 26-7)

Discussion questions

1. Sometimes the way words are shown on a page help tell you more about the story.
 - Turn to page 4 and explain how the words 'WAKE UP! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!' and 'Not yet, not yet, not yet', are different to all the other words on that page.
 - What does the way they look tell us about how the birds have said them?
2. Compare the images of Bunchy on pages 56 and 67.
 - Can you find three things that the illustrator has changed in the second image to make it clear that Bunchy is not in control of the magic wand?
3. Who would you say is the kindest character living on Monty's Island? Who is the meanest? Who is the smartest?
 - In each case give an example from the book as proof.
4. In your own words explain how Monty tricked Bunchy into undoing the stripe spell.
5. Why is it funny when the Laughing Traveller says to Monty and Tawny, 'Glad you had a quiet day!' at the end of the story?
6. Why do you think that Monty and Tawny don't tell Laughing Traveller what happened that day?
7. Would you like to live on an island like Monty's Island? What would be the good things and bad things about it?
8. *Scary Mary and the Stripe Spell* is the first in a series of Monty's Island adventures. What do you think might happen next to Monty and his friends?

Extension activities

1. Write your own letter in a bottle. Before starting think very carefully about what your message should be and what you want the person who finds it to do.
2. Create your own diorama of Monty's Island, remembering to include your favourite characters.
3. Let your imagination go wild and draw the Hairy Horrible.

Further reading

Other first read-alone books:

Condon, Bill. *One More Friend*, Scholastic Omnibus Books, 2016. Part of the Aussie Mates series. Illustrated by Lucinda Gifford.

Fienberg, Anna. *Madeline the Mermaid*, Allen & Unwin, 2010. Illustrated by Ann James.

Fienberg, Anna. *The Complete Adventures of Figaro and Rumba*, Allen & Unwin, 2017. Illustrated by Stephen Michael King.

Series:

Denton, Terry. The Wombat and Fox series – available in an omnibus edition *Wombat and Fox: The Whole Story*, Allen & Unwin, 2017

Fienberg, Anna. The original Tashi series – available as 16 individual books or in various omnibus editions.

Gibbes, Lesley. the Fizz series – four individual books, Allen & Unwin 2016



In the classroom...

Hobbs, Leigh. The Mr Badger series – available in an omnibus edition *The Big Book of Mr Badger*, Allen & Unwin, 2015

For more independent readers:

Fienberg, Anna. *Horrendo's Curse*, Allen & Unwin, 2002

Jones, J.C. *Run, Pip, Run* and *Pip and Houdini*, Allen & Unwin 2015 & 2017

Rodda, Emily. *The Glimme*, Scholastic, 2019. Illustrated by Marc McBride

Rodda, Emily. *Pigs Might Fly*, HarperCollins Australia, 2017

Author's inspiration

'I've always been fascinated by islands. I love the fact that they are small worlds of their own, with a limited number of familiar inhabitants and the occasional visiting stranger. Very like the world of a young child, in fact, with the additional twist that the world of a young child is by its very nature full of surprises, wonders, excitements, adventures, scary bits and magic.

'So that's what Monty's Island is – a small world set in a magic sea, where adventures happen. It's a place where your best friend is a lion, where your eccentric group of friends-and-family includes a would-be magician who happens to be an elephant and a bad-tempered shipwrecked pirate who's a parrot with a peg leg. It's a place where a monster lurks in the jungle, where Marigold the Clever Cook serves you three meals a day at the Island Café, where the waves leave all sorts of useful Finds on the beach, and where a dolphin brings news, warnings and gossip from the outside world.'

— Emily Rodda

The author

Emily Rodda is one of Australia's best-known children's book authors. She has written over 100 books, including the internationally best-selling Deltora Quest and Rowan of Rin series, and has won the Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Award for Younger Readers a record six times.

Photo credit: Alex Rowe



The illustrator

Lucinda Gifford is the author and illustrator of many well-loved books for kids. Many years ago, Lucinda studied architecture in Scotland, where she learned to draw fancy buildings and moody scenery. She also likes to draw dragons, cats and magical frogs – despite never having studied witchcraft. Now based in Melbourne, Lucinda works from a small home studio full of books, plants, dragons' blood and newts' tongues.