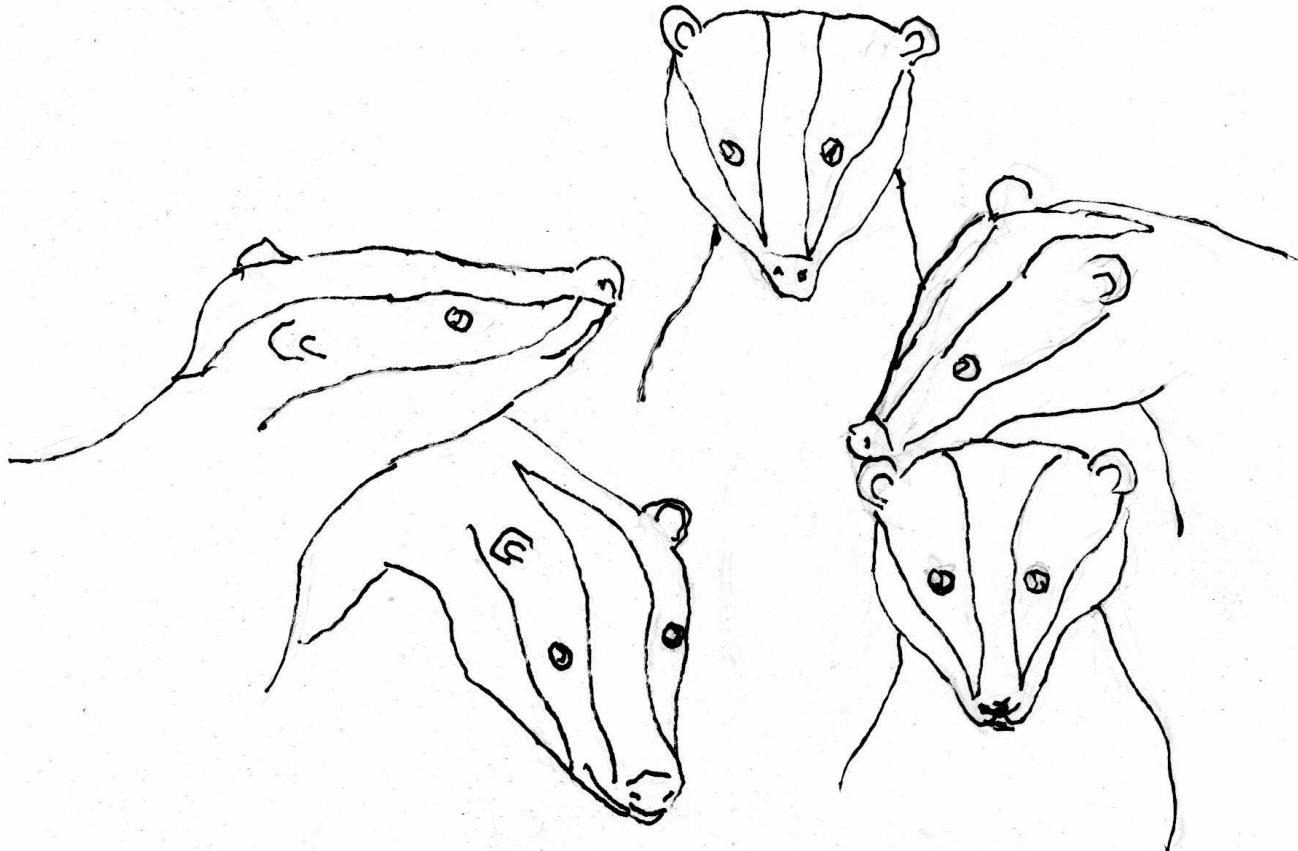


BADGER



MAGIC

By

Linda Knight

I was inspired to write this story by the badgers that visit my garden. I hope you enjoy reading it and colouring the pictures.

I started writing children's stories some years ago and really enjoy creating different characters in the world of make believe. I also write poetry in many different forms. I live in Belper, Derbyshire and get my inspiration from roaming the countryside and seeing the wildlife that lives in the trees, hedgerows, and stone walls.

A handwritten signature of the name "Linda" in black ink.

Story

Written & Illustrated by

Linda Knight

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Badger Magic.



Badger Magic.

Deep down in the badger sett Bruno was doing some keep fit exercises. He was big and strong, and the leader of the group that lived there. Mo and Mary kept the sett clean, collecting grass and leaves to line the floor, while Cassie and Henry kept guard and went out searching for food, letting the others know where to find it.

The sun had just set on the horizon and it was getting dark. Bruno's face was glowing with excitement as it was a full moon, and the countryside around would be lit up in a bluish light. As he was running from the badger sett, a small bright light came towards him. It glistened like a thousand diamonds in the moonlight, and suddenly it stopped and hovered just in front of him. He stared at it for a moment wondering what it was. As it started to move away across the field, he decided to follow it. He glanced back at the badger sett and shouted loudly to the other badgers to tell them what he was doing, then he ran off after the sparkling light.



Bruno's four friends heard what was happening and they all tried to get out of the sett at the same time, falling over each other and rolling around on the grass. They shook themselves off, looked at one another and burst out laughing. Mo sniffed the air, Mary sniffed the ground, Cassie looked up at the moon, and Henry said, "Come on everyone let's follow Bruno." The four badgers set off and followed the track that Bruno had taken across the field.

When they reached the old wooden farm gate, Mo and Mary felt hungry and started scuffing and digging the soil with their long pointed clawed feet, trying to find some worms to eat.

"I'm not going any further," said Mo, "I'm having my supper then going back to the sett."

"I'm staying with Mo too, Bruno will be back soon," agreed Mary as she carried on digging.

"What do you want to do Cassie?", asked Henry.

"Well, I want to know what's happening, and I think we should go on and follow Bruno."

"I agree. See you later Mary and Mo."

By the time they had finished their discussion, Bruno was in the distance heading towards the woods and they ran after him.



Suddenly a silver light surrounded them, and they found that they couldn't move. They were being lifted up into the air, and as the ground disappeared from underneath them, they were transported to a strange land.

When Mo and Mary looked around after their digging spree, they couldn't see any of their friends.

Mo sniffed the air. "I wonder what's happened to Henry and Cassie."

"Oh, don't worry about them, I expect they've caught up with Bruno by now and are searching for some food," mumbled Mary as she licked her lips after eating a worm.

They waited around for a while to see if their friends would return, but there was no sign of them, so they went back to the sett to see if they had returned by another way.

When they arrived at the sett, it was empty and Mary said, "What shall we do now?"

"Let's wait here for a while to see if they still turn up."

"Why wait around here when we are already here," said a voice from nowhere.

A startled Mo replied, "Who said that?"

“Me,” said the voice.

“Who’s me?

“Henry.”

“I’m here too,” added Cassie.

“But we can’t see either of you, and we’ve been looking everywhere, wondering where you were,” said Mary.

“Cassie and I were suddenly taken off to a land where everything was completely white.”

“How very strange, I’m surprised you could see anything at all, with everything being the same colour,” replied Mo.

“We could, but I don’t know how. It must have been magic. Some large birds swooped down and tried to pick us up and carry us off, but we suddenly turned invisible and managed to escape and find our way back here,” said Cassie.

“Come on Cassie, we’ve still got to find Bruno. He must still be in the woods.”

“Yes Henry, I agree.”

“Mo and I will stay here in the sett in case he returns.”

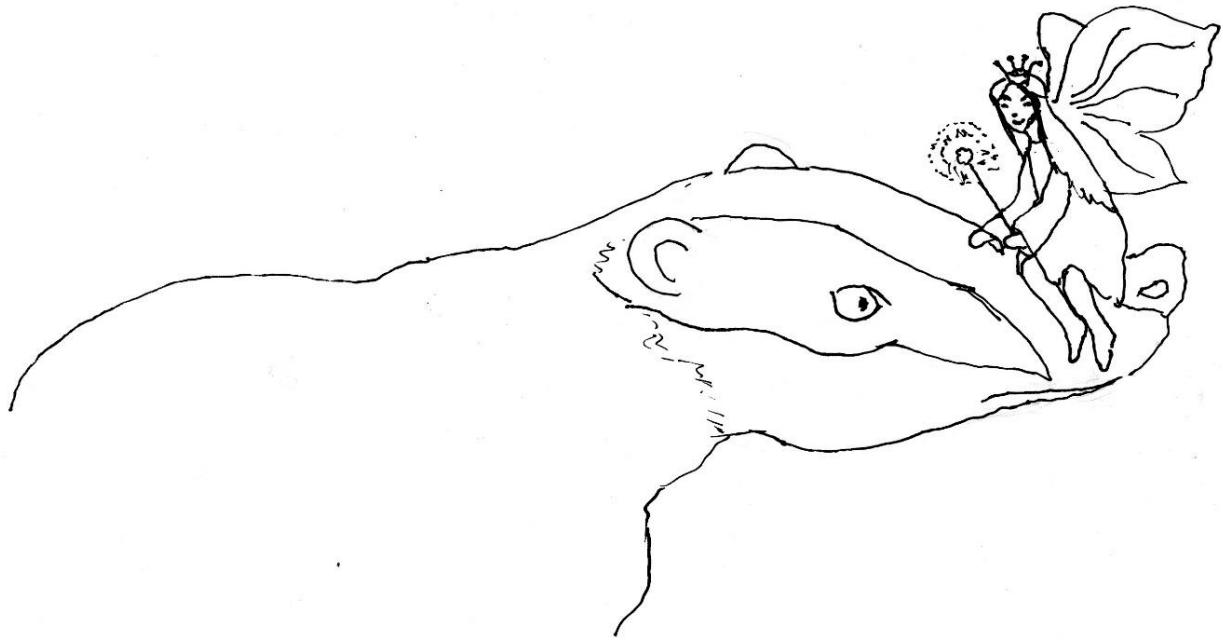
“See you later then,” said Henry.

Mo and Mary waved them goodbye again even though they couldn’t see them.

Bruno had followed the light deep into the trees, and there in a clearing the moon shone down on a magical sight. Fairies were in the air everywhere. They were flying from the trees, gathering in a large circle around The Queen who was sitting on a white flower in the centre. The sparkly light floating ahead of him, joined the others in the circle.

Bruno sniffed the air, sniffed the grass, then laid down on the ground and waited to see what was going to happen next.

After a while the fairy queen flew from the flower and landed on Bruno's long black and white nose.



“Why did the light lead me here?”, asked a curious Bruno.

“We want your help. You are big, strong and brave and we need you to stop what’s happening in the white land.”

“I don’t know what you mean,” said Bruno.

“Ah, but we do,” said a voice from nowhere.

“I know that voice, that’s Henry.”

“Hi Bruno, it’s Cassie, I’m here too. We were swept away to that strange place, and made invisible by some magical force.”

The fairy queen flew over to them, smiled, waved her magic wand, and they became visible to everyone again.

“Oh, thank goodness for that, and thank-you.”

Henry added, “Yes, thanks from me too!”

“Nice to see you two again,” said Bruno.

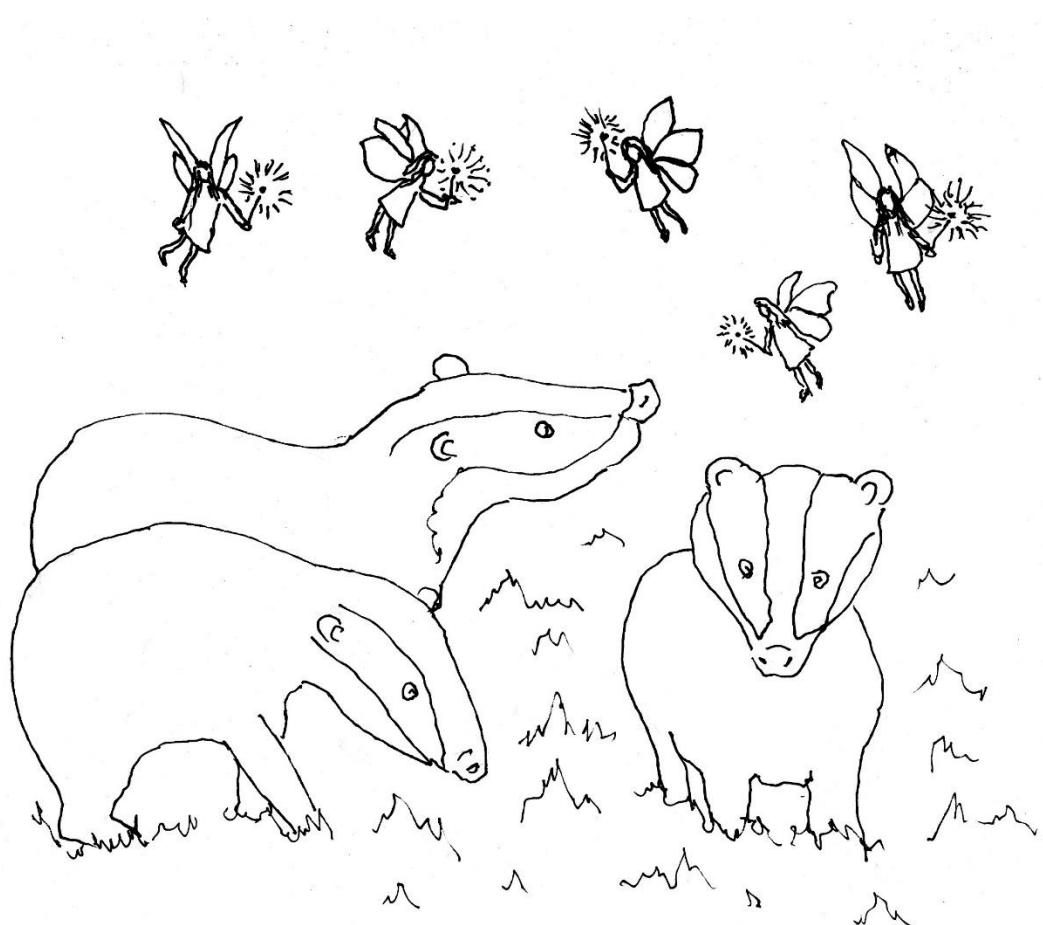
The three badgers hugged one another, and then the fairy queen settled on Bruno’s nose again saying,

“I would like the three of you to go down a large hole that has appeared beneath the crooked old oak tree, to the land of no colours, and destroy the evil that is casting this spell. Even some of my fairies have lost their glow trying, and have

become white. The magic is spreading out of the hole and turning everything white near here, so we need to do something quickly. My bravest fairies are going to go with you.

"We could try." They all agreed.

The fairy queen flew above the three Badgers, waved her magic wand over them and they glistened like a thousand diamonds. Their fur reflected all the colours in the rainbow. This was the powerful magic that would stop them from becoming white.



Bruno, Cassie and Henry left the clearing, found the oak tree and started their journey down the hole. It was very dark down there, but their bright coats lit up the way for them. The fairies followed them like little glittering stars.

They arrived at the other end of the tunnel and all they could see were shapes of white moving around them. Some white badgers met them and led them to the highest place around where they could see a white castle on the horizon, the other side of a forest. One of the white badgers turned to them and said, "That's where the king lives."



“He’s draining everything of its colour, so that he can use it to gain power over every living thing. He has locked all the colour away in a special cave under the castle and it’s guarded by two large flying birds, with huge beaks and giant claws. We have tried to get close to the castle to see what is happening and have tried to enter the cave, but the birds just scare us away.”

“Well, the fairy queen has asked us to come to help you all to regain your colours,” said Bruno. “We wish you luck in your quest and hope you succeed,” replied a white badger.

“We’ll try and do our very best to stop the bad magic from spreading,” said Cassie. “We also have some special friends who have come along to help us.”

They all rested for a while, then the white badgers waved them goodbye. Cassie, Henry, Bruno and the fairies left to go on their journey towards the castle. They gradually got used to seeing everything in white as they went along, and met some other animals along the way. They found their way through the forest with the help of some squirrels who darted along with them through the trees, and then they followed a long

trail that led upwards towards their destination. By then they felt tired, so they all rested for a while underneath some bushes. Bruno, Cassie and Henry fell asleep, but the fairies kept awake to watch over them. When they woke up Bruno sent two of the fairies on to see how much further they had to go. Suddenly there was an awful screeching noise coming from the sky. Henry and Cassie knew exactly what it was, the two evil birds that had tried to catch them earlier. The birds swooped down and caught the two fairies with their large talons, and took them off to the castle. “We must move fast and reach the castle as quickly as we can,” whispered Henry, “before we are discovered too.”

The fairies were sad about losing their friends, but they flew behind the Badgers as they moved forward. The castle loomed ahead of them, a tall evil looking place, with mist that hung over the towers. A chill surrounded the whole area, and it made them shiver.

They stopped for a moment and hid under some trees.

“Anyone got a plan?” asked Bruno.

“Let’s head for that hole over there by the turret on the corner of the castle,” said Henry. So that’s what they did, and just as they managed to hide in the hole, the two large birds screeched and flew over the top of them and onwards towards the forest.

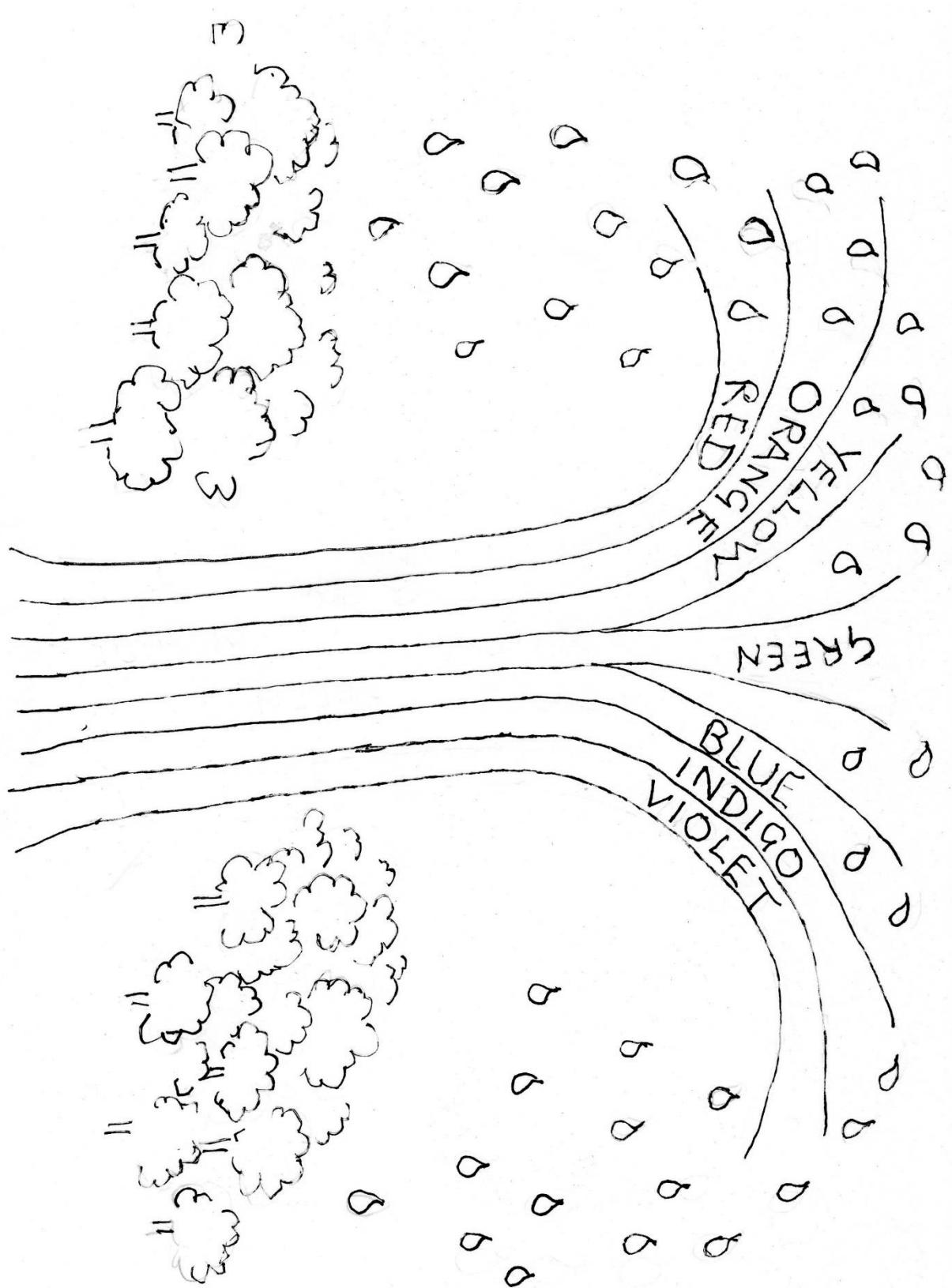
“Let’s see where this hole goes,” suggested Cassie, so they all went along the tunnel that they hoped led up into the castle. Henry looked around with his nose held high, sniffing the air. The way ahead was clear, so they continued to a large old wooden door that was slightly open, and went inside. They could see the king sitting on a large seat in the middle of the room, and there were the two missing fairies caged up by his side. They all quietly crept up behind him and waited for the right moment to pounce.

The king scowled at the two fairies, saying menacingly, “I am going to take the colour and magic from you both so that your power will increase my kingdom of whiteness that is flowing over the world.”

The two fairies in the cage looked passed him and were amazed to see the badgers and some of their friends there. They felt so happy that they

glowed in their finest rainbow colours. Their friends did the same as they flew over and hovered in front of the king. The badgers ran around to face him, and made themselves look as large as they could, snarling and baring their teeth, and with their special magical coats, they glowed bright rainbow colours too. The King was dazzled by all the colours, so he shaded his eyes with his hands. As he did so, the fairies cast a spell over him, and he vanished in a pure white light. The badgers chewed through the ropes that held the cage door closed and as the fairies pushed it open, they flew out and joined their friends. All of them gathered round in a circle of rainbow light, singing a magical song. As they flew round and round, faster and faster, the song got louder and louder.

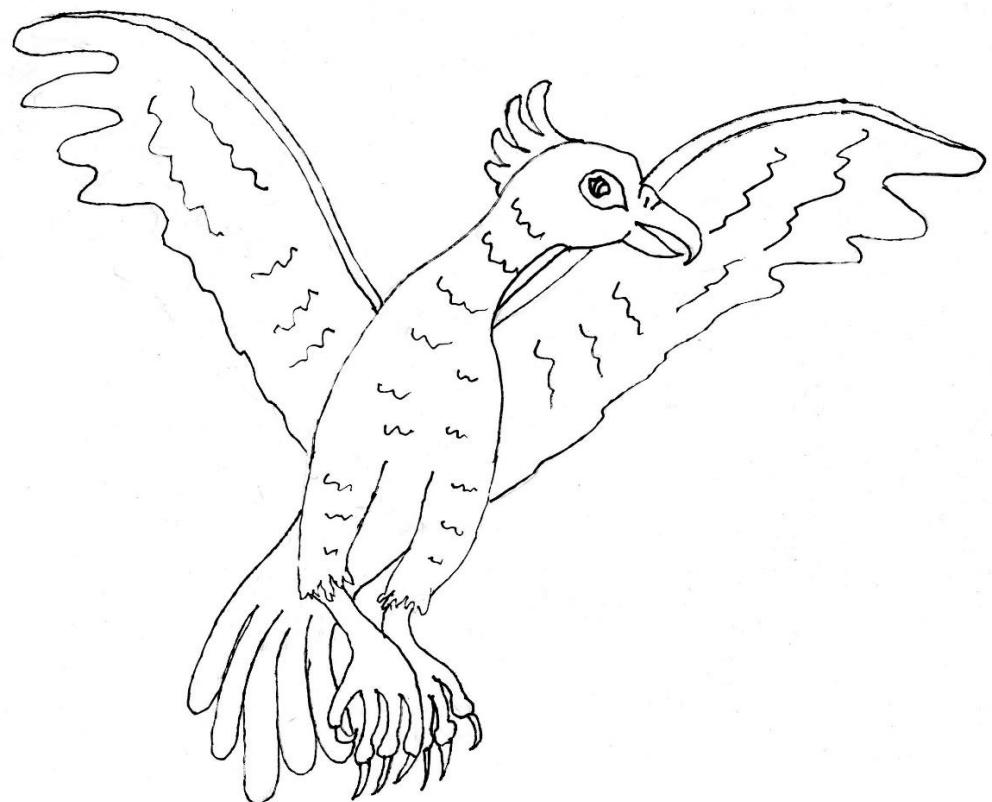
**“Circle of light, change all the white,
Into rainbows of what they should be,
Take badness away, let good save the day,
And cast nature’s colours back free.”**



The colours that had been locked away in the cave erupted through the ground like a huge rainbow fountain, high into the sky, and came down as raindrops spreading colour back into everything

“We’ve done it, we’ve actually managed to change the bad magic to good. Thank you for helping us,” said Bruno to the fairies.

They all left the castle, and looked around in the sky to see if the evil birds were there, but they must have disappeared when the king did, or that’s what they thought. Suddenly there was a shriek from above, and there they were, two large brown birds, circling and swooping above them. They had their claws outstretched ready to grab one of the badgers and their large round green eyes were fixed on Bruno. One flew down and Bruno managed to duck out of the way then the other one tried without success. As they tried again, all three Badgers stood in a line, snarling and clawing into the air with their powerful feet. Their fur still shone brightly like magical rainbows, and the fairies flew in a line above them glistening like a diamond necklace. The birds were so



confused that they flew into each other and landed on the floor in a big heap of feathers. The fairies made their circle of light again. They joined hands and flew round and round, faster and faster singing....

**“Circle of light, shrink these bad birds,
Back down to their normal size,
Let them live in the forest
To sing every day,
And make them helpful and wise.”**

The birds were no longer large and nasty, they had been changed into small brown birds who looked at the badgers, tweeted a little song, and flew off into the forest.

Bruno and his friends set off on their journey home, and when they had reached the edge of the forest some more badgers appeared on the track ahead.

The white badgers were no longer white, but grey white and black, and they ran up to meet Bruno and all his friends. They were so happy that they had their colour back, they decided to celebrate and have a party in the forest. All the animals and

birds gathered there, and Bruno, Henry, Cassie and the fairies had a lovely time together.

Bruno decided that it was time to leave the celebrations and said, “It’s time for us to go back to our own land now.”

“Thank you so much for all you have done for us, and have a safe journey home,” replied one of the badgers.”

They all shouted goodbye and left to go up the tunnel that led them back home. When they reached the woods, the fairy queen and all the fairies came to greet their friends and the badgers. Everyone was pleased to see that they were all safely home.

Bruno, Cassie and Henry ran across the fields back to the sett where Mo and Mary greeted them with big badger hugs. Dawn was showing on the horizon and the tired badgers went to sleep for the day. When evening came and the sun set on the hilltop again, the badgers all woke up. Bruno, Cassie and Henry sat with Mo and Mary, telling them all about their adventures in the land of whiteness, then they all went out into the fields and woods to search for some food.



Linda left it until she was in her fifties to start serious writing. She had always enjoyed painting, but now, having had several stories published and many poems, she found she could illustrate them as well.

Her love of animals and gardening is reflected in her work.

www.knight-gkla.co.uk/lindas-page.htm

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