

THE GOLDEN KEY

SHE Once upon a time.

HE Once upon a time.

SHE That's how her stories always started.
Once upon a time.

HE Great Aunt Agatha.

SHE Many years ago.
Always
it was many years ago.

HE Great Aunt Agatha's stories
were always about many years ago.

SHE Once upon a time
many years ago.

HE And her little nephew Mossy
would look up from his homework:

 Is this another of your make-believe adventures,
Great Aunt Agatha?

SHE It happened before you were born,
Mossy.
Now finish with your homework
and listen.

 In the cottage next door to Mossy
lived Tangle.

 She was an untidy girl
and her thoughts were always in a muddle.

HE Mossy thought Tangle was just plain scruffy
and not very nice.

SHE Tangle thought Mossy was just plain stuck up
and not very kind.

HE I bet you don't know dividing-bys and taking-aways
I bet you don't know timeses and multiplications
I bet you can't even add up

SHE My...
Well I
Oh!!!

HE Tangle's mother died when she was little.
Tangle's father worked away.

SHE She was supposed to be looked after
by two French maids.

MAID 1 Ze washing up, ma petite. Finish up ze washing.

MAID 2 Ze cobwebs, ma petite. Be brushing of ze cobwebs.

MAID 1 But firstly, mademoiselle, you will be bringing me a coffee.

MAID 2 And for me, mademoiselle, you will be bringing me a – 'ow do you say – a cup-of-tea.

 Immediatement!

MAID 1 Immediately!

SHE The only place where Tangle found peace
was high in the branches of an old pear tree
that grew in her garden.

 Especially in spring time
when she could hide herself
amongst the froth of the blossoms.

HE From high in the pear tree
Tangle could hear Great Aunt Agatha's stories.

SHE Once upon a time
many years ago
lived a raggedy little boy
in a tumble-down cottage

HE As raggedy as Tangle
next door?

SHE Don't be unkind Mossy
it's not her fault.
But yes
as raggedy as Tangle.

 Hunger gnawed at his stomach.
He had nothing to eat.
Not a crust of bread
not a peel of potato
nothing.
Life couldn't have been more miserable.

 Then one day
through the broken window
of the tumble-down cottage
the raggedy little boy
saw a rainbow.

 Not just any rainbow mind.
This rainbow stretched all the way
from one side of the valley to the other
and arched high in the sky
in a blaze of colour.

HE Red, orange, yellow
Green, blue, indigo, violet.
Those are the rainbow colours.

SHE Yes Mossy
how clever you are.

HE It lights up the sky after a storm.

SHE I'm glad you've been paying attention at school.

HE Now just as Great Aunt Agatha
was describing the rainbow
a most extraordinary thing happened.

SHE Tangle was the first to see it
from high in the pear tree
amongst the froth of the blossoms.

 Look...
Bright...
colours...
all...

HE You're listening again.
You shouldn't be listening.
Great Aunt Agatha's stories
are just for me.

SHE Rainbow ...

HE Yes rainbow.
That's what the story's about, silly.

SHE No look.
In the sky
rainbow.

HE And there it was
soaring above the trees
the hugest
brightest
multi-colouredest rainbow
that anyone ever had seen.

But there hasn't been a storm
There isn't any rain.

SHE Beautiful

HE There has to be rain.
That's how it works.
The raindrops bend the sunlight.
I know.

SHE The rainbow sings
listen
the rainbow sings

HE You're stupid.
The rainbow doesn't sing.

SHE Listen.

HE Tell her she's stupid
Great Aunt Agatha.

Rainbows don't sing.

SHE No I won't tell her she's stupid, Mossy.
She can hear something that you can't.

Are you going to listen to my story?

MAID 1 Tangle
where are you?
You will come 'ere zis very moment.
Tangle
I am in need of my feet rubbed.
Where are you?
Where is it you are 'iding?
Tangle
Tangle
Tangle

SHE It's all right Tangle
we won't say anything.

The story.

HE That rainbow shouldn't be there.

SHE That's just what the raggedy little boy said.

That rainbow shouldn't be there
he said
There hasn't been a storm.

That
said his great aunt

HE He had a great aunt too?

SHE Yes he did.
That
said his great aunt
is the Magic Rainbow of the Golden Key.

HE I never heard of it.

SHE Just what the raggedy little boy said.

At the foot of the rainbow
his great aunt told him
on a bed of emerald green moss
lies a Golden Key.

HE I bet that's not true.

SHE And the Golden Key
opens a door to a cave
inside which
is the most precious thing in the world.

The cave is called
The Chamber of the Most Precious.

HE There isn't really a key at the foot of the rainbow.

SHE How do you know.

HE Of course there isn't.

SHE A voice piped up
from amongst the froth of the blossom
at the top of the pear tree.

Precious.
Most precious in the world.
Golden Key.

HE It's just a silly story Tangle.
There isn't really a golden key.

SHE But Tangle scrambled down from her hiding place
scrambled down the trunk of the tree
squeezed through the hedge that surrounded her garden
and was running towards the woods
where the rainbow shone
for all to see.

HE Silly girl.

SHE You're very quick to call her silly, Mossy.

HE She is silly.
She can't even talk proper.

SHE There's a lot goes on inside her head.
She can't always explain herself.

HE There's nothing goes on inside her head.

SHE You know that do you?

HE It's obvious.

SHE Maybe. Maybe not.

HE She thinks she can find the foot of the rainbow.

SHE And why shouldn't she?

HE Because the rainbow moves.
If I move then the rainbow moves.

Because it isn't really there.

SHE Of course it's there.
You can see it.

HE But it's not in one place.

SHE This sounds like nonsense to me.

HE No it's not nonsense, it's science.
I'll prove it.

SHE How?

HE I'll walk towards the rainbow
and I'll never get there.

SHE And what will that prove.

HE That you can't reach the foot of the rainbow.

SHE You can't perhaps.

HE No one can.
Look, I'll show you.

And Mossy took his compass and Mossy took his map
because Mossy never went into the woods without his compass and his map
and Mossy set off towards the rainbow.
Because that's the sort of child Mossy was.

It's a simple matter of science
and plain common sense
Just a simple matter of science
and plain common sense

The foot of the rainbow moves
so I'll never be able to reach it
The foot of the rainbow moves
so no matter how far I wander
I'll never reach the rainbow.

SHE Tangle meanwhile
was stumbling through the woods
trying to keep the rainbow in sight.

HE	Rainbow	a matter of science
	reaching to the sky	and plain common sense
	Rainbow	a matter of science
	reaching to the sky	and plain common sense
	carry me away	the foot of the rainbow moves
	carry me away	so I'll never be able to reach it
	carry me away	the foot of the rainbow moves
	a bridge	no matter
	to reach	how far
	the land	I wander
	of dreams	I'll never reach the rainbow
	reaching for the rainbow	

HE Tangle's escape

had not gone unnoticed.

MAID 1 Where is it you are
you mad-making maggot?

MAID 2 Come back 'ere himmediately
you lazy crow-scarer.

MAID 1 You 'ave ze work of ze 'ouse to make
No time to chase ze rainbows.

SHE Tangle tried to hide herself behind a tree.

MAID 1 We are on your track
you dirty rag-muffin.

SHE The branches of a particularly fearsome-looking tree
clawed at her clothing.

 Get off me.
Let me go.
No.

HE But it was no use.
The tree wrapped its branches around her so tightly
that before long
she found herself quite trapped
and unable to move.

 The useful thing was
that the branches hid Tangle
from the maids.

MAID 1 Ze little varmint she 'as vanished
quite into ze sin air.

MAID 2 Let us only leave her.
Per'aps ze animals are going to eat 'er all up.

MAID 1 I would like to be agreeable wiz you.
But what is it 'er papa will be doing wiz us
if she is disappeared?

MAID 2 Sacre bleu, 'ow right it is you are.
Tangle, my little mouse, come to me.

MAID 1 I sink zis is ze way she is making of ze tracks.

SHE Meanwhile
things weren't working out for Mossy
quite as he thought they would.

HE The sun's beginning to set.
It's getting darker.

 But the rainbow's getting brighter.

SHE It shouldn't happen like that.

HE It shouldn't happen like that.

 If the sun gets weaker
then the rainbow should get weaker too.

 Instead it's getting stronger.

 And worst of all
it's not moving.
I'm getting closer all the time
and it's not moving away.

SHE That's not right.

HE That's not right.

 I can see the foot of the rainbow.

 Look
 there it is.

 The foot of the rainbow rests on a rock.
 A rock covered with emerald-green moss.

SHE Just like in Great Aunt Agatha's story

HE Just like in Great Aunt Agatha's story.

 But there couldn't be...

 it doesn't make sense...

 a key
 a golden key

 No
 of course there isn't
 I knew there wouldn't be.

 What's this?

HE	The key	
SHE	the golden key	I'm trapped in the branches
	The key	And held by the trees
	I found the golden key	I'm trapped in the branches
	I've reached the rainbow	And held by the trees
	I've found the rainbow	I must reach the rainbow
	I've touched the rainbow	Have to find the rainbow
	I never	I must touch the rainbow
	believed	Most precious
	it could happen	Most precious
	to me	Most precious
	But I found the golden key	Most precious golden key

SHE Just at this moment
 the moon rose high in the darkness of the sky

HE The rainbow vanished in an instant

SHE all the colour fled from the wood
 and everything seemed suddenly
 in black and white.

HE Mainly black:

 Time to head for home.

 Out with the compass
 Good job I brought it
 I must navigate a route
 South by Sou' West

 So that'll be ...

 Hey, hold still will you.

What the ...?

The needles going crazy.
It's whizzing round and round.

I've no idea what direction I've got to go in.

Perhaps I can work it out from the moon.

What...?

Oh I don't like that.
I don't like that at all.

It's after the key

the Golden Key that unlocks
the Chamber of the Most Precious

I bet it's after the key
You'll never get it!

SHE Tangle didn't like it much either.

It looks like a...
No I can't tell...
It's coming this way.

HE It's suddenly so cold.

SHE The moon's disappeared.

HE A night as black as coal.

SHE What's happening.

HE Help
Help

SHE Help

HE Help me.

SHE Help me.

HE Somebody

SHE Somebody

HE Please

SHE Please

HE Help me

SHE Help me.

HE And do you know what?
Just when all seemed lost
Help was at hand.

SHE In the shape of a flying-fish.

Not just the kind of flying fish
That leaps out of the sea a few feet at a time

This was a fish with feathers
And with wings or fins that flapped.

HE And what's more
this was a fish
that glowed in the dark

SHE Oh it more that glowed

HE How right you are
It very much more than glowed.

SHE It was incandescent.

HE Incan what?

SHE Very bright.

HE Very bright.

SHE So bright it lit up the woodland.

HE The shadow in front of the moon disappeared.

SHE The tree was so startled it let go of Tangle.

TANGLE AND MOSSY FIND EACH OTHER

HE You?

SHE You.

HE What are you doing here?

SHE The rainbow.

HE And what on earth does this fish think it's doing?
This doesn't make sense.
Fish belong in the water.

SHE It's flying.

HE It must be a bird dressed up as fish.

SHE That's clever.

HE Yes, that'll be what it is.

FISH Don't be ridiculous.

HE I beg your pardon?

FISH Follow me.

HE Oh right.

You don't argue with a fish that flies

SHE You certainly don't.

Tangle and Mossy followed the fish
through the wood

It was almost as light as day
the fish glowed so bright.

HE Just when Mossy was beginning to think
that he could walk no further.

SHE Look
House
Palace

HE It's a cottage

SHE Big

HE Yes big. It's a big cottage.

SHE Follow fish.

HE How do we know what's inside?

FISH Follow.

HE Yes, follow.

SHE And in they went.

HE Oh I'm not sure about this.

SHE It's all right.

HE There's too many strange things have happened to day.
 The rainbow
 The giant shadow in front of the moon
 The fish that flies
 What would my science teacher say?
 It doesn't make sense.

SHE Life doesn't always make sense, little Mossy.

HE Tangle?

SHE We want life to make sense
 We try to make it make sense.

HE Tangle, is that you talking?

SHE But life is sometimes too untidy.
 Raggedy little bits of life
 that we can't tidy up.

HE Tangle?

SHE Mossy?

HE I've never heard you talk like that.

SHE Not me.
 In my head.
 Her voice.

HE Whose voice?

SHE Where is she?

THEY FIND THE GRANDMOTHER ICON

HE Who are you?

SHE You can call me grandmother.

HE Not you Tangle.

SHE Her voice.
 Listen.

HE You're speaking her words?
 Why?

SHE I'm using Tangle to speak to you Mossy.

HE Why do you call yourself Grandmother?
 You're a young woman.

SHE I'm two thousand and twenty three years old.

HE Impossible.
 You're as young as my mother was
 when she went away.

SHE You found something today Mossy.

HE You know?

SHE At the foot of the rainbow.
You found the Golden Key.

Mossy.
The Key.
You found the Key.

HE I did
yes.

SHE But where's the lock?
Where's the keyhole
that unlocks the Chamber of the Most Precious?
What use is a key by itself?

HE It's a very beautiful key.

SHE Very beautiful
but it also has a job to do.

HE Where do I look for the lock?

SHE A good question.
Where to look for the lock.

And how to look for the lock.

HE I've got my compass and my map.
They'll help.

SHE Your journey will take you
far beyond the reach of maps.

HE But I've still got my compass then
to point me in the right direction.

SHE If you know what direction to follow in the first place.

HE I'll work it out.

SHE Tangle will be able to guide you.

HE Tangle?
She doesn't know anything.

SHE Mossy.

HE Well you don't.

SHE I wouldn't help you anyway.

HE I wouldn't want you to.

SHE You're just so rude.

HE You're just so useless.

SHE Listen you two.
Whether you like it or not
the only chance you have
of finding the Chamber of the Most Precious
is to search for it together.

HE But...

SHE Many try.
Very few succeed.
It is quite impossible to find it on your own.

I have something for you Mossy
and something for you Tangle.

Take them and put them on.

HE Thank you.

SHE Thank you.

HE Tangle.
That suits you.
You look...

SHE Yes?

HE You look really...

SHE What?

HE Nice.

SHE Oh.
Good.
And you.

HE What?

SHE That suits you too.

HE Oh.

SHE Makes you look kind of...

HE Kind of?

SHE Yes. Kind of.

HE Thank you.
We'd better make a start.

SHE One last thing.

The Shadow-Master.

HE I don't understand.

SHE You both saw the Shadow-Master last night.

HE The giant shadow in front of the moon.

SHE Exactly.

HE It was frightening.

SHE Exactly.

And more to the point
The Shadow-Master saw you.

Fortunately my flying fish
lit up the wood
and scared him off.

But he knows you have the Golden Key
and he will do everything in his power
to stop you opening the Chamber..

HE What must we do?

SHE That
you will find out for yourselves.

There are plenty of other people and creatures who'll help you.

Find The Old Man of the Sea
ask him about the lock.
And when you meet him
ask him to send me some more flying fish.
Some of my helpers are getting old and need a rest.

Goodbye.

Look after each other.

HE Mossy and Tangle stepped out into the forest
into the brightness of a brand new day.

Somehow they both felt quite a bit older
than when they'd stepped into the house
the night before.

Which way then Tangle.

The Grandmother said you'd know the way.

SHE Yes she did.
Why did she?
Why did she think I would know?

HE You don't?

SHE Ah. There's the answer.

HE Where?

SHE What the squirrel just said.

HE Tangle please. This isn't a game.

SHE Didn't you hear?
Say it again.
There.

HE Squirrels don't talk.
It's a biological impossibility.

SHE It's a what?

HE It's not possible.

SHE We follow the sun to the edge of the forest.
then head for the mountains of Vansett.
Beyond the mountains of Vansett lies the ocean
and there we will find the Old Man of the Sea.

HE You made all that up.

SHE You know I couldn't.
The squirrel told me.
Believe me.

HE That really suits you, you know.

Come on.

Take my hand
We'll help each other find the way
Take my hand
Our journey starts right here.

Take my hand

together we can win the day
Take my hand
to find what we hold dear.

On the road (the road ahead)
the Shadow-Master lies in wait
We've no fear (no fear at all)
for friendship conquers hate.

On the road (the road ahead)
the Shadow-Master lies in wait
We've no fear (no fear at all)
for friendship conquers hate.

Take my hand
together we can win the day
Take my hand
to find what we hold dear.

HE We've reached the edge of the forest.

And look,
in the distance,
the mountains of Vansett.

SHE Where are they.

HE In the distance.
Rising like clouds
from the darkness of the valley.

SHE Can you really see them?

HE Of course.
Can't you?

SHE No I don't think I can.
But I can hear something.
Voices.
Someone's coming.

HE Which way?

SHE Behind us
coming through the forest.
It's the maids – they're after me.

HE Down into the valley
quick
it's the only way.

SHE So straightaway
Tangle and Mossy
hurtled down the hillside
to the valley below.

HE while at the very same moment
the maids came crashing through trees behind them

MAID 1 Great 'eavens, what you 'ave put me through.

MAID 2 Zere will be punishings for you.

MAID 1 You will making ze washing up till Christmas time.

MAID 2 And scrubbing ze floors till ze New Year.

HE The valley that Mossy and Tangle found themselves in
was quite unlike any countryside
they'd ever seen before.

SHE It was almost completely flat.

HE A few little rises here and there.

SHE But that was all.

HE And not a single tree.

SHE Not a single bush.

HE Not a hedge

SHE or a fence

HE just miles and miles of meadow

SHE open grassland

HE The sun shone bright

SHE a blue sky

HE not a cloud in sight.

SHE but

HE but

SHE But
the ground was swarming with shadows.

HE Seething with shadows

SHE Alive with shadows.

HE Where do these shadows come from?

 There's nothing to make a shadow
no trees
no clouds
nothing

SHE They're people
shadows of people

HE Beautiful people
gentle people

SHE Where do these people live
whose shadows we see?
There aren't any houses

HE I know that shadow
stop
mother
don't go away
my mother's shadow
let me see you
mother
let me remember

 You warm my heart with your smile
Your gentle hands wipe away
the tears that I cry
when I'm hurt
the smell of the bread you bake
to smother with jam
the cakes that you make
and the fresh fragrant smell of your hair
and I know that you care
safe in the strength of your arms
safe from a world that threatens me harm

SHE Was your mother really like that?

HE I hope so
I don't know
I was so little
it was such a long time ago
I can't remember.

SHE She's a shadow Mossy.

HE I know that Tangle.

SHE Don't get all sad about a shadow Mossy.

HE I can't help it Tangle.

SHE It isn't even real.
It's not scientific Mossy.

HE You wouldn't understand.

SHE Father
You're there
you've come back
Father
I've missed you
let me remember

You know the stars in the sky
you know their names and you know
when I ask you why
why leaves fall
You answer all that I ask
why summer is hot
why winter is cold
and then why the wind blows through my hair
and I know that you care
safe in the strength of your arms
safe from a world that threatens me harm

HE My mother,
your father
they're not really here Tangle.

SHE They must be somewhere

You know the stars

HE You warm my heart

SHE you know their names

HE You wipe away
the tears

SHE you know

HE when I'm hurt

SHE why leaves fall

BOTH you answer all that I ask
why summer is hot
why winter is cold.....

HE and the fresh fragrant smell of your hair

BOTH and I know that you care
safe in the strength of your arms
safe from a world that threatens me harm.

SHE We must carry on Mossy

HE I don't want to carry on.

SHE I can hear the maids
They're in the valley
among the shadows.

HE I want to stay here.

SHE This is a trick Mossy.
The Shadow-Master
these are his creatures.

Show me on your compass the way to go Mossy.
Show me the way to the mountains of Vansett.

HE Take it.

SHE I don't know how to work it Mossy.
I need you to show me.
Mossy I need you.
They're coming.
The maids
they're here.
Mossy!

HE With a terrible scream of triumph
the maids seized hold of Tangle
and in the blink of an eye
they'd whisked her away
far beyond Mossy's reach.

Tangle
Tangle
where have they taken you?

Tangle I'm sorry
I was watching the shadows
I wasn't watching out for you.

SHE She's left you Mossy.

HE Who's that?

SHE She left you
just like your mother left you.

HE That's not true.

SHE She's no real friend.

HE My mother didn't leave me
she had to go.

SHE Is that what you believe?

HE It's what I know.

SHE You don't know what to believe anymore
do you Mossy?
In the Valley of Shadows.

HE That's who you are.
The Shadow-Master
I know not to believe you.

I'm not afraid you know.

SHE Oh yes you are.
You're terrified.

HE You're not going fool me.
I'll find my way out of the Valley of Shadows
I'll find Tangle again.

SHE Of course you will.

You want Tangle
I'll help you find her.

HE You will?

SHE Give me the key.
The Golden Key you found at the foot of the rainbow.
Give me the key
to the Chamber of the Most Precious
and I'll take you to Tangle myself.

HE No I won't

I can't.

SHE So you'd rather have the key than Tangle?

HE The key belongs to both of us now.
It's not mine to give.

SHE It's no use to you without Tangle then.

HE I'll find her myself.

I'll ask the animals
I'll ask the birds
they'll tell me where she is

SHE You can't understand the animals and the birds.

HE I'll learn.
I follow Tangle's example.
I'll learn.

SHE Then say goodbye to your mother.
Say goodbye for ever.

HE This isn't my mother
She reminds me of my mother
but she's a shadow.

Tangle is flesh and blood
and needs my help.

I must go.

And so saying
Mossy turned firmly away from the beautiful shadow-people
and clambered up the sides of the valley
in order to find out
where to go next.

SHE Tangle
meanwhile
was being dragged along
at breakneck speed
by the maids.

MAID 1 So now
'ow to be getting you back 'ome.

MAID 2 You 'ave been chasing the wild goose
mademoiselle.

MAID 1 Give me your compass.

SHE No.

MAID 1 I say give me your compass little missy.
Don't you come all ze clever clogs with me.

SHE No I won't.

MAID 1 Oh you won't, won't you.
We'll be seeing about zis.

MAID 2 Now I am not wanting to 'urt you of course.

MAID 1 I 'ope you won't be making of us.

SHE That's not even good English.

MAID 1 Not good English?
You are telling me what is not ze good English?

MAID 2 You what can hardly tie two words togezer?

MAID 1 You're also stupid to know what makes ze good English.

SHE I am not stupid.

MAID 1 You are stupid

MAID 2 You are naughty

MAID 1 You are crazy

MAID 2 You are lazy

MAID 1 You are dirty

MAID 2 You are wicked

MAID 1 and ze world is a much 'appier place
if never you 'ave hever been born.

SHE I'm none of those things
thank you very much.
You told me I was for so long
that I almost believed it.
But I can see clearly now.

You're pathetic little bullies
the two of you.
Off you go home.
Go on the pair of you.
Toddle off home
and start doing some of the work my father pays you for.

MAID 1 Oh no we can't go 'ome.
Your papa.
What is it 'e will be saying
when we are back wizout his little girl.

SHE I expect he'll be furious.
But I hope in time that he'll come to understand.

I'm on an adventure.
There's someone I have to find
He needs my help.

Now go!

HE And they went.
Racing back to her father.
And that was the last Tangle ever saw of them.

SHE Good riddance.

HE Mossy at last climbed out of the Valley of Shadows

From a ridge above the valley
he looked towards the dying sun.

The Mountains of Vansett.
That's where he would head.

SHE Tangle looked around her.
She scrambled to the top of a hill.

There in the distance
bathed in the red light of the setting sun
the mountains of Vansett.
That's where she would head.

BOTH Wait for me
and somehow I will find a way
Wait for me
be sure that I'll be there

Wait for me
I'll journey to you night and day
Wait for me
and do not doubt I care.

SHE Tangle fairly skipped along
as though she had wings on her feet

I must find the Old Man of the Sea
he'll have the answers
he'll know where Mossy was
and where to look for the lock

Excuse me birds
the Old Man of the Sea
am I going in the right direction?

Beyond the mountains
thank you.

HE Mossy could only stumble along
unused to so much exercise.

His ankles were sore
and he could feel great big blisters
coming up on his feet.

The Old Man of the Sea
he'll know what's what.
Old people always have the answers.

Excuse me birds
Birds hello
Excuse me
Tweet tweet
Twit tu-who
cuckoo
cluckcluck
quack quack
If only I could make them understand.

SHE Tangle reached the mountains of Vansett
a good six hours before Mossy.
She was there in time for lunch.
Except there wasn't anything to eat.
Or drink.
She suddenly realized how hungry she was.

Birds
I don't want to be a nuisance
but you couldn't fetch me some berries
or some nuts could you?
I'd be ever so grateful.

At this very moment
Mossy suddenly found himself
in the middle of a thick mist.

HE The Shadow-Master.

Another of your tricks to slow me down.

The question is which way to go.
I don't have a map or a compass
and the mist is so thick
that I can't see even five yards in front of me.

But it's this way
I can just tell
I don't need a compass
or a map
I can just tell.

SHE And he was right.

HE though his problems weren't over yet.

SHE Meanwhile Tangle
after she'd finished her lunch
of berries and nuts
stood on the top of the very highest peak
of the Mountains of Vansett.

Behind her a great big fog.

She didn't know it
but Mossy was in the middle of all that fog.

In front of her
many thousands of feet below
the sea
stretching to the edge of the world.

She flung herself down the mountainside
running, sliding, scrambling as fast as she could
she was very lucky not to hurt herself.

And the sun had hardly moved in the sky
before she found herself on a beach.

A long, long sandy beach
with the surf rolling in.

A beach entirely empty of people
apart from a young fisherman
mending his nets.

I'm looking for the Old Man of the Sea.

HE And why would that be?

SHE I have a message to give him
from the Grandmother.

HE Is it more flying fish she's after?

SHE How did you know?

HE Typical.

I don't hear from her for a hundred years or so
then when I do
there's no 'how are you'
or 'won't you come round for tea'
just an order for more flying fish.

SHE Do you know her well?

HE She's my little sister.

SHE So you're the Old man of the Sea?
How old are you then?
Cos she's two thousand and twenty three.

HE Well now I come to think on it
I must be about heading
for my five thousandth birthday.
Doesn't time just fly!

SHE I find it very difficult to judge how old adults are.
I think you look younger than that.

HE Thank you very much.
Now you've a couple of questions to ask.

SHE Yes I have.
Number one, where's Mossy.
Number two, where to look for the lock
that the Golden Key will fit.

HE Two questions but one answer.

There's an island
the Island of Calm
in the middle of the Sea of Tranquillity
that's where you need to be.

SHE Is it a long way?

HE It's not very far
but it's difficult to reach.

The waters on the way can be very choppy
and there are some treacherous currents.

SHE I'm a good swimmer.
I got a badge.

HE No
best swimmer in the world
wouldn't start a chance.

SHE A boat?
I could row.

HE No my dear
You need help.

Let's see what we can do.

HE WHISTLES

A GIANT SKATE ARRIVES – IN THE FORM OF A SKATEBOARD

This gentle beast of the sea is what we call a Giant Skate

this particular Giant Skate is rather a bored skate

But this is the creature to carry you
to the Island of Calm
in the Sea of Tranquillity.

Climb up on his back my dear
and hold tight.

SHE Onward
forever onward
I'm travelling
onward
to the Island of Calm

Onward
across the ocean
across
the ocean
to the Island of Calm

HE Poor old Mossy
was still battling through the mist.

The Shadow-Master was determined
to make life as difficult as possible.

SHE You're lost Mossy
Admit it
you've no idea where you are.

HE I may not know where I am
but I know where I want to get to
and I'm heading in the right direction.

SHE You'd rather be back home with your books.
A comfortable chair to rest in.

How are your blisters Mossy?

HE They hurt
I won't deny it
But you're wrong about wanting to be back home.

I'm having an adventure

I'm not just reading about it
or listening to Great Aunt Agatha
I'm actually having an adventure all of my own.

SHE What a brave little boy you are Mossy.

Very well
my bold little adventurer
let's see how you cope with this!

HE What Mossy hadn't seen through the mist
was a gaping hole that opened up
in the ground in front of him.

SHE Down he fell

HE down the deepest hole that you can imagine.

In fact even deeper than that.

And as he fell
so the hole got hotter and hotter

SHE this hole was leading him
towards the very centre of the earth.

HE But Mossy didn't fall
as you or I would fall
if we tumbled downstairs
or worse
fell from a window

SHE He didn't fall exactly
he more like floated.

HE I know why it is I'm floating.
It's the heat from the bottom of the hole.
Heat rises
so it's trying to hold me up
at the same time as I'm falling down.

How very interesting.

SHE Thump

HE He banged his elbow against the edge of the tunnel

SHE It was really getting unbearably hot

HE Any deeper and he was going to fry

He grabbed at a ledge of rock
to try to stop himself

SHE The ledge broke away in his hands

HE He grabbed again

SHE the same thing happened

HE At the third time of trying
he managed to hold on tight
without the rock crumbling.

SHE He pulled himself up onto the ledge

HE and found there to be an opening in the rock

SHE He squeezed through the opening
into the cave beyond.

HE Not just a cave
more like a cathedral
carved out of the limestone
the roof so high above his head...

SHE Head...head...

HE that it disappeared into the darkness.

In the middle of the room

something

something alive

an animal?

or a person?

A baby

a little toddler.

What are you doing here all on your own
little baby?

Where's your mummy wummy?

SHE What are you doing here I'd like to know?

HE Excuse me?

SHE I'd like to know
why you've come barging into my home
without so much as a please or a thank you?

HE I'm here by accident.

I was lost in the mist.

SHE Ah,
the Shadow-Master.

HE Yes
and I fell down a hole.

SHE Ah

the Portal of Doom.

HE Really?

SHE Yes
the Portal of Doom
that's what we call the hole you fell down.

So now I know who you are.

Mossy
the Finder of the Golden Key.

HE Yes
I suppose I am.

SHE Let me see it.

HE I'm not exactly sure who you are.

SHE So you won't let me see the key?

HE Where I live babies don't talk.

They sort of gurgle
and go mama baba
and that sort of thing.

SHE Well that's just where you come from.
I am the Oldest Man in the World.

HE That's really difficult to believe.
Old men have white hair
and long white beards.

SHE Like Father Christmas?

HE And if they don't
then at least they're all creased and wrinkly.
Why have things become so difficult to believe?

SHE There are all kinds of strange things in the world
that are difficult to believe.

But show me the key.

Trust me.

HE Yes I do.

SHE Do you know how rare these are?
Once in a blue moon.
At the most.

And you're looking for the lock.

HE First I must find Tangle.

SHE Tangle?

HE She's a girl I know.

SHE A friend?

HE She lives next-door to me.

SHE Is she a friend?

HE She didn't used to be.

SHE Is she now?

HE I guess she is.

Yes she is.
 She most definitely is.
 I must find her.

SHE And the key?

HE Never mind the key
 I must find Tangle.

SHE You've a journey to make under the sea.

HE Then I'll make it.

SHE You'll find your friend
 on the Island of Calm
 in the middle of the Sea of Tranquillity.

HE Is she already there?

SHE She's on her way.
 She's riding across the sea
 like a mermaid on a big skate's back.

 You shall travel under the sea
 through a tunnel of crystal.

 Here's a friend to show you the way.

HE A snake.

 I've been told never to play with snakes.

SHE Good advice.
 But on this occasion you may.

HE Like a tongue of flame
 the snake flickered across the floor of the cave
 with Mossy in pursuit.

 Not too fast
 give me a chance

SHE The snake led Mossy into a narrow passageway
 that descended deeper and deeper underground

HE till all of a sudden

SHE the walls of the passage
 became quite transparent
 slabs of crystal
 like blocks of purest glass

HE and through this translucent crystal
 the sea
 teeming with fish
 and turtles
 and eels
 and crabs and lobsters
 and sharks and whales
 and seals and dolphins
 and a great big squiggly octopus
 that came up for a good look at Mossy.

SHE Mossy travelled through the tunnel
 in wide-eyed wonder

HE Onward
 forever onward
 I'm travelling
 onward
 to the Island of Calm

Onward
under the ocean
under
the ocean
to the Island of Calm

Stepping out of the tunnel
Mossy was dazzled by the glare of daylight.

He found himself standing
on a grassy hill
with a cliff behind him
looking towards the sea

SHE Where Tangle was
 at that very moment
 stepping off the dolphin's back
 onto the whiteness of the sand.

She saw him.

She ran up the beach
to reach him.

HE You're safe.

SHE Now I am.

HE We can start our search again.

SHE For what?

HE The lock.

SHE It's here.

HE Where.

SHE Somewhere on this island.
 The Old Man of the Sea.

HE You found him?

SHE Yes.

HE The Oldest Man in the World
 told me I'd find you here.
 But he didn't say anything about the lock.

SHE The Oldest man in the World.

HE Yes.
 Mind you I didn't ask him about the lock.

SHE You only asked him about me?

HE Yes
 I suppose I did.

SHE Look
 In the cliff face
 jewels sparkling
 it's a keyhole
 this must be the keyhole.
 Behind it lies
 the Chamber of the Most Precious.

HE There's something else.

SHE I hear it.

HE A black cloud blotting out the sun.

SHE A wind
 A tempest.

BOTH The Shadow-Master!!!

HE I thought we'd seen the last of him.

SHE Quick, the key.

 So this is where the Chamber of the Most Precious is.

 I might have guessed.
 On the Island of Calm
 in the Sea of Tranquillity.

 Well I don't much care calm.
 And I've no time at all for tranquillity.

 I much prefer things to be topsy-turvy.

 I shall blow you both into the sea.

HE Tangle
 Your hand
 Give me your hand

SHE I can't reach

HE The key's in the lock.

SHE I can't reach you.

HE Tangle!

SHE Mossy!

HE You can do it.

SHE Yes I can
 I've come this far.

HE I've got you.

SHE Turn the key.

HE And the key had only just started to turn in the lock
 when they found themselves safe inside
 the Chamber of the Most Precious.

 Tangle?

SHE Mossy?

HE What can you see?

SHE A cave.

HE Nothing else?

SHE No.

HE Nor can I.

SHE Perhaps we're in the wrong place.

HE Perhaps there's another door to open.

SHE I can't see another keyhole.

HE Neither can I.

SHE Mossy?

HE Tangle?

SHE The cave is not completely empty.

HE No it isn't, is it.
I see what you mean.

There's you.

SHE And there's you.

HE The Most Precious.

You.

SHE No you.

HE Us.

SHE Friends

HE Friends?

SHE Friends are precious.

That's what's in the Chamber of the Most Precious.

Two friends

Take my hand
We've helped each other find the way
Take my hand
Our journey led us here.

Take my hand
together we have won the day
Take my hand
we've found what we hold dear.

And that

HE said Great Aunt Agatha

SHE is the end of the story.

HE What story.

SHE The story of the Golden Key at the Foot of the Rainbow
Mossy.
I wish you'd pay attention.

HE But it's not just a story
Great Aunt Agatha.
This isn't one of your Once-Upon-a-Time adventures.
It really happened.

SHE Did it now.

HE Yes it did.
It really did.

Didn't it Tangle.

SHE It did
It really did.

HE The

SHE End.

