

collection la petite caboche

PYRO RUNS AWAY

a pyro and glucosina adventure

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La Caboche



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text

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Pyro is getting ready for a trip. On the kitchen table of his cave, the little dragon has laid out a great big red handkerchief with bright orange stars, into which he's packing his personal effects. As he puts each item of toiletry in a pile, Pyro runs down the list, as if singing a nursery rhyme :

– A toothbrush, for travelling. Some toothpaste, for brushing. Safety matches to get my tummy fire going ! And an itsy-bitsy, teenie-weenie suit, for bathing.

As he finishes his song, Pyro rolls up with great difficulty an extra-large trunk complete with big suspenders and a hole in the bottom for his long tail.



He suddenly notices that he forgot to pack his little plush dragon : it's still sitting there on the table, all green, like him. Smiling, Pyro places the dragon with the rest of his belongings before putting an oversized explorer's helmet on his head.

As he's about to tie the bundle together, Pyro has a thought.

– Maybe I should bring some provisions for the road ? Hmmmm... I think I'll bring some fruit ; it'll be good for my diet.

From a bowl of fruit on the table holding little else, Pyro picks out a bunch of ripe grapes and a spotted pear.

– There ! That should be enough to hold me for a long trip ! When I come back, I'll have such a nice waistline !

All set to go, Pyro ties the bundle to a walking stick and exits his cave. Locking the door behind him with a giant key, the dragon then skips merrily over to his friend's house, atop the nearby hill.

Outside of her strange home, Glucosina has set up an array of odd equipment : some funny little vials, an old bunsen burner, a mortar, and even a home-made still. Today is a beautiful day and the sun is shining brightly, so Gluco has decided to enjoy some fresh air while she works. Lost in concentration, the plump little witch's nose is buried in a book of magical recipes.



– Hello, Gluco !’ greets Pyro happily. Are you ready yet ? Today is our special day : we’re going on vacation !

– Oh dear, replies Gluco. I'm so sorry, Pyro, I forgot to tell you : I had an amazing idea last night. It's for a really important experiment. You see, I'm trying to create a magic apple, one that grows back when you take a bite out of it. That way, apples can stay fresh forever !

– What ? cries Pyro. But why ? It's not like there's a shortage of apples around here !

– No, but with my invention, we could have apples all-year round, even during wintertime !

Pyro is very disappointed.

– But it's vacation time, grumbles the dragon. You promised me we could go ! You never want to go anywhere with me, Gluco... Well, if that's the way you want it, then I'll... I'll simply have to go without you ! I'm leaving for the far off lands, to look for my kin : the great dragons !

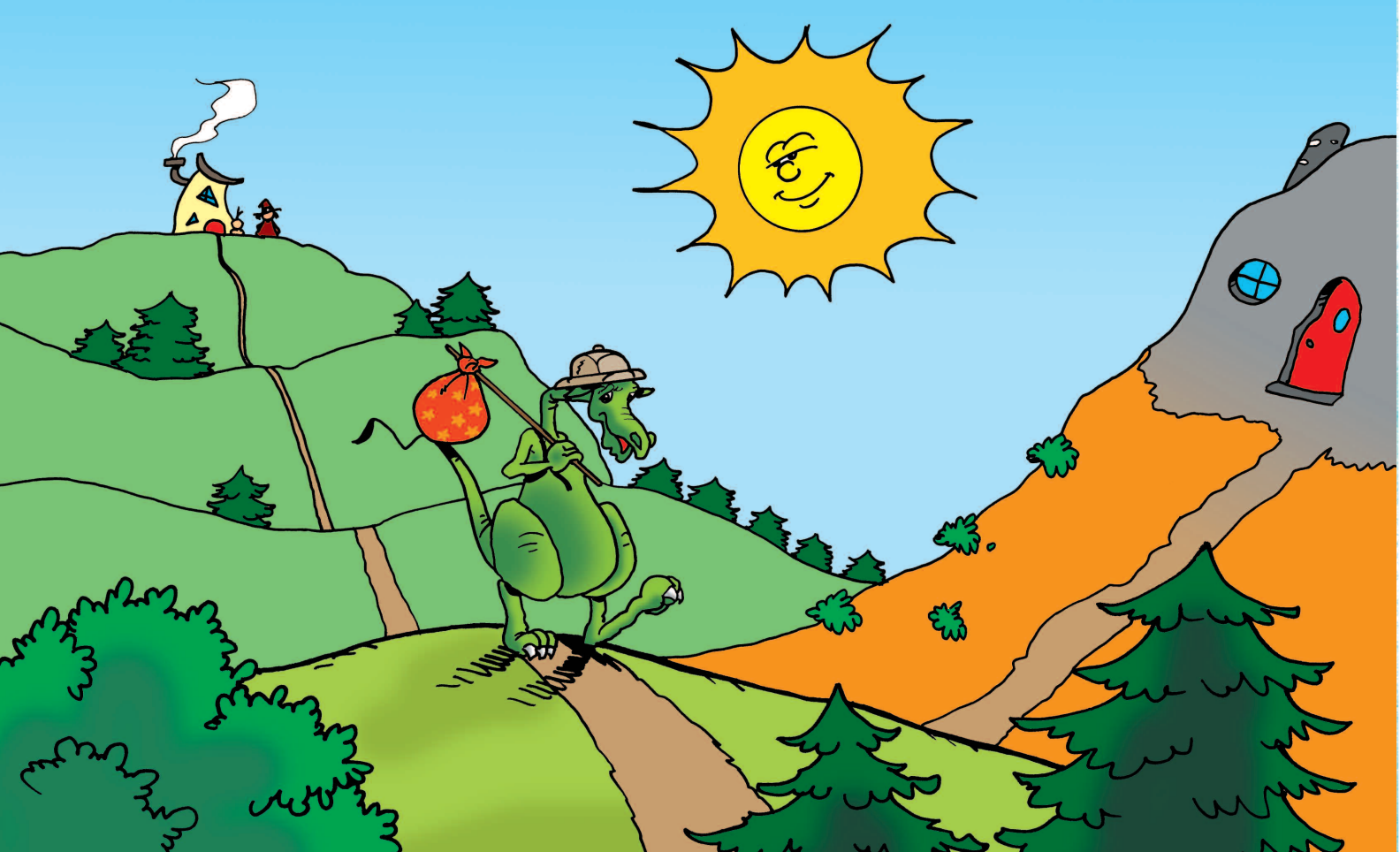
– If you say so, shrugs Glucosina, hiding a smile. But if you change your mind, Pyro, I'm sure I'll be free tomorrow...

– One should always strike the bacon while it's hot, counters Pyro snootily. Farewell, dear friend. I'm leaving now... Don't try and stop me...

Hesitating, Pyro slowly steps away, hoping that his friend will change her mind and call him back. But instead, Glucosina turns to him and flashes him a big smile.

– Have a nice trip, Oh ! great explorer !' says the witch mockingly, taking a little bow. Give my regards to your family.





The two friends don't even say goodbye. Preoccupied, Gluco goes back to her experiment, pursing her lips as she pours some liquid into a test tube.

Pyro hesitates for a moment. Then, determined to go on vacation even if he has to go alone, he turns around and heads back down towards the forest. As he walks, he starts singing a cheerful song to pass the time :

On the road, is where we walk,
Ho, ho, here we go,
On the road, is where we walk,
Go, go, ho, hey-oh !

As he reaches the edge of the forest, Pyro turns back a moment to stare at his friend's house. But Gluco's little home is gone from view now, hidden behind a small hill down which winds the trail he's been following. Pyro feels uneasy : this is the first time he's come this far without his friend.

– Well, puffs the dragon, it would appear that the all-mighty miss witchy-witch is too busy to worry about her best friend. So be it ; I'm not a baby dragon anymore. Adventure awaits !

Once in the forest, however, Pyro's confidence quickly evaporates. Dusk approaches, changing the color of the sky. Walking more slowly now, Pyro begins to sing softly to himself again. But this time, his heart's not really in it ; he keeps messing up the words. Stepping gingerly, the dragon's eyes dart about nervously.



In my bed, is where I sleep,

Ho, ho, ho, hello...

In my bed, I want to eat,

Ho, ho, ho, let's go...

Pyro decides it's time for a break. The dragon sits down on the soft ground and opens his bundle, but... Disaster ! What a poor explorer he turns out to be : the fruits are all squished and squashed, mashed like purée. On top of everything else, he forgot to bring any water to drink, or blankets to keep him warm !

– Oh, and what if it rains ? cries Pyro, his voice quavering.



Brushing aside some tall grass with his paws, Pyro suddenly notices an old tree trunk lying on the ground. It must have been a big tree once, before it fell. Holding his precious bundle tightly against his chest, Pyro lies down on his back and begins to squeeze himself inside the empty tree trunk head first.

He squirms and squirms, and finally manages to get all the way inside the improvised shelter. But his feet are too big to fit in ! It seems they're going to have to spend the rest of the night outside, along with his explorer's helmet, which he hooked on his left foot.

Inside the trunk, Pyro notices a knothole, where a branch used to be, ages ago. Through it, he can catch glimpses of the forest outside his shelter.

Pyro tries to sleep, but the cries of nocturnal birds keep startling him. Was that a branch, creaking and groaning ? Could there be some ferocious animals out there, waiting for him ?

– Hey, hey, there, there... W-who's out there, out there ? ? ?

There it is again : that strange rumbling noise ! Quickly, Pyro strikes a match, revealing his panicked face. Holding the match between his fingers, he slowly stretches out his paw to peer through the knothole. What if there's a big monster out there, trying to nibble on his toes and take his place ? !

The rumbling seems to be coming from inside the tree trunk now ! But how ? Pyro suddenly realizes that there are no monsters out there, there never were : it was simply his stomach, playing tricks on him the whole time. Just then, the match burns down to his fingers, and Pyro cries out in pain.

– Yeeeeooooowza ! ! ! !

Surrounded by darkness, with only a glimmer of nighttime coming in through the knothole, Pyro's eyes well up with tears.





Feeling all alone, he begins to sob quietly.

– It's not easy, adventuring all by yourself, blubbers the dragon. I should never have left my cave...

To top things off, rain starts pouring down all around him. Then, a clap of thunder echoes in the forest, making Pyro cry out sheepishly :

– Mommy !

The dragon faints on the spot. Nighttime falls.

Soon, the only noise that can be heard is Pyro's loud snoring. He sounds like a big tractor engine.



As dawn rises the next day, sunlight shines anew through the trees of the forest. Little droplets fall delicately from the leaves ; the rain has passed. Pyro, however, is still snoring.

Suddenly, a wisp of straw pokes through the knothole, and starts tickling his snout. Pyro snuffles, then snuffles, then tries to wriggle his way back out of the fallen tree trunk, squirming like a fish caught on a hook.



But as he squirms, the tree trunk begins to roll, and goes crashing against a big rock ! Even after all that, Pyro only managed to free his legs and his tail. With great effort, he manages to open his eyes and, through the knothole, notices the face of the Moon peering down at him, her head topped with a curious little pointy hat.

– Miss Moon, yawns Pyro sleepily. You wear a hat now ?

– Of course not, Pyro. It's me !

Fully awake now, Pyro sees that it wasn't the Moon after all who was bent over him, staring at him curiously, it was his friend, Glucosina. She came to his rescue ! She was the one who was tickling his snout ! Pyro tries to stand up but, trapped as he is inside the big tree trunk, he can't seem to find his balance.

– Allons-y, Alonzo ! shouts Glucosina. Alley-ooop, trunko !

Calling upon her limited magical powers as a rookie witch, Gluco incants a special formula to lift her friend up in the air. Turning him upright, she then slowly lowers him back to the ground to let him stand on his big feet.

Trapped in his wooden straightjacket, Pyro begins to flex his muscles, and soon, the old tree trunk shatters into a thousand pieces !

- Hou-ha ! exclaims the dragon. I don't know my own strength !
- The wood was rotten, Pyro. You're not a great dragon yet !
- I was so scared, Gluco. Thanks for coming after me.
- My poor little dragon, it's not like you went very far. You were only a few minutes away.





Pyro stares at his friend, his eyes wide with surprise.

– Really ? But it felt like I had walked for hours !

– Well, perhaps... But with your poor sense of direction, I think you went around in circles instead. When night fell, I went out looking for you, to see if you were all right. But when I found you, you were sleeping so soundly, so safe in your shelter, that I decided to let you spend the rest of the night in the forest. Now come on, you grumpy dragon, you. Let's get you back home ; you need some proper rest.

– And some food, groans Pyro. I went to bed without eating anything...

– I've almost finished my invention, adds Glucosina. Take a moment to get over your fright, Pyro, and this afternoon, I promise you, we'll take a break.

Pyro dries his tears with a corner of his handkerchief, then places the oversized explorer's helmet back on his head. Clutching his little plush dragon tightly to his heart, he soon follows his friend.

Later that day, Pyro and Glucosina decide to take some much-deserved time off. Wearing their favorite bathing suits, the two friends are playing in a nearby lake, happily splashing water at each other. On top of her head, Gluco wears a big shower cap stretched all over her pointy little hat to protect it from the water.

Laughing merrily, the two friends head back to the beach and lie down on their towels to dry themselves off for a while.

A few minutes later, Gluco sits up, excited.

— I forgot about my surprise ! she cries.

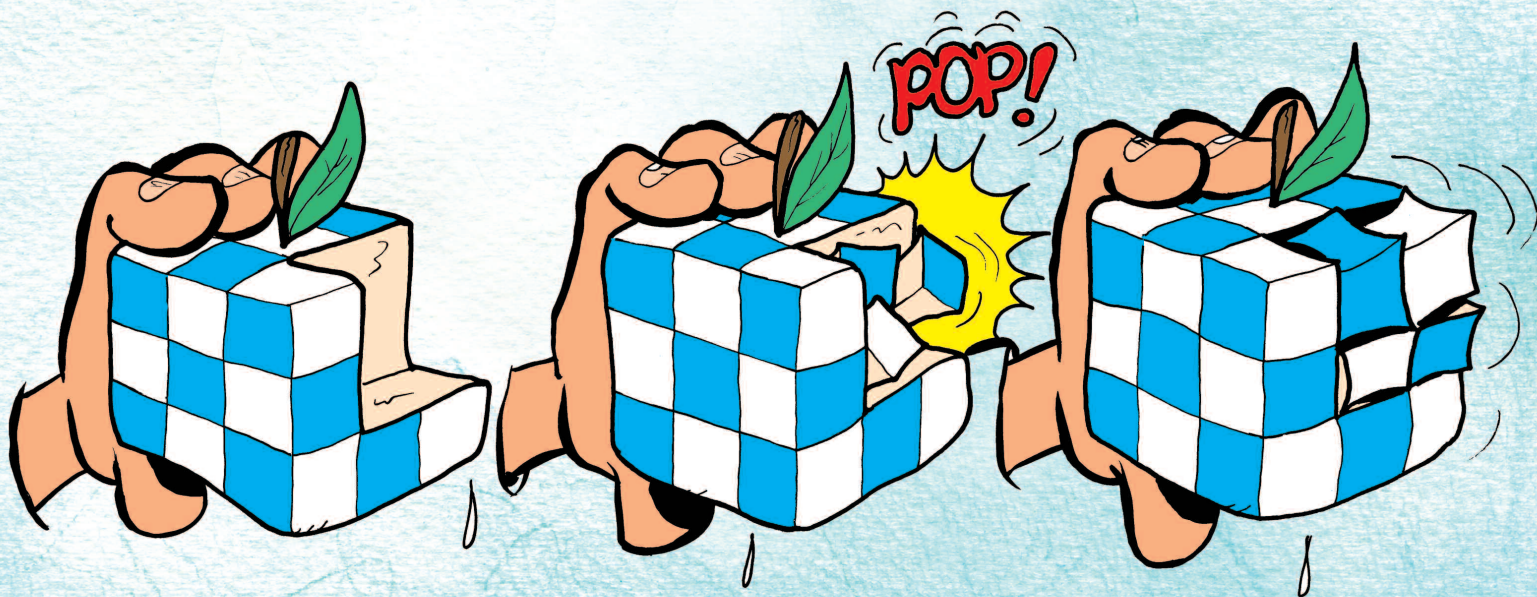
From her beach bag decorated with ornate runes and strange symbols, Glucosina takes out two apples... two SQUARE apples !

Both friends bite in hungrily.



But as they take a bite from their apples, the chew marks instantly disappear, and the fruits suddenly transform... into blue and white Rubik's apples!

The oddly-shaped apples are now entirely made up of tiny, bite-sized colored squares! As soon as they take a bite, the missing piece grows back, filling the hole with a small cube of apple.



– It's a little design flaw I haven't managed to correct yet, explains Gluco between mouthfuls. Maybe I used too much drool of toad in my formula. In any case, I still think my invention has merits. After all, apples will be much easier to store, now !

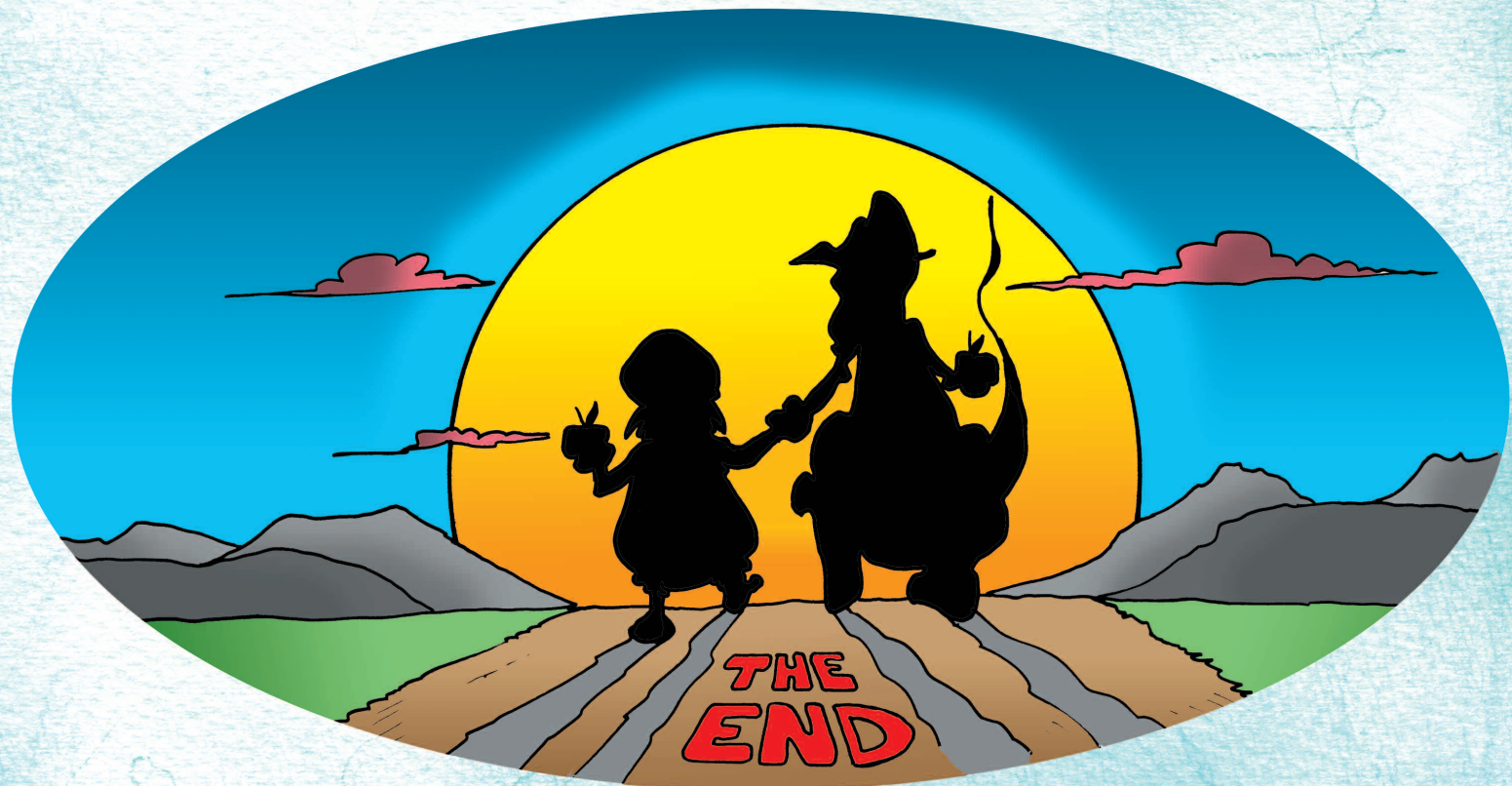
The plump little witch furrows her brow.

– Maybe I should invent square eggs while I'm at it ? And why not, maybe some sort of magical candy that replicates itself ? Hmmmm... Why not indeed ? I like candy... !

– That's a good idea, Gluco, but only in small quantities, warns Pyro. Glucosina sighs heavily.

– All right, all right, says the witch grumpily. But what an idea, though. Hmmmmmmmmmm, infinite candy...

As night starts to fall, Pyro and Gluco leave the beach, carrying a towel on their shoulder, and an almost apple in their hands. As the sun sets on the horizon, the two friends head back home, slowly walking hand in hand.



Friendship and helping each other out

The books in the series are designed to help young children from 4 to 7 years old to find confidence in themselves through the use of humor. This series is intended for parents who wish to teach their children how to learn and read a language free of limitations. The author is convinced that one should not be afraid of words, and that children are fully capable of learning a vocabulary that, at first, might seem a little daunting.

The author bases this assumption on his own childhood, as well as his personal experience with his children and those of his extended family. He firmly believes that regular implication by parents in their children's learning process can better prepare a child for the next step in their education, that being the first years of grade school.

The characters in these stories were inspired by comedic duos of the 1930's and 1940's, such as Laurel and Hardy, and Abbot and Costello. Pyro is a young dragon that lacks assurance, and who depends entirely on his plump best friend to help him out. Glucosina, an inexperienced mini-witch, lacks the necessary maturity to assume this role. But even though she might not possess all of the necessary skills quite just yet, she more than makes up for it with her rather determined mindset.

Essentially, the two characters are simply maladjusted friends who discover that friendship and a solid sense of humor can usually compensate for almost any short-coming.

The author



Collection jeunesse

4 years & over

Claude Daigneault

Une amitié explosive (2010)
Le grand projet (2011)
Pyro fugue (2013)

An explosive friendship (2013)
The big project (2013)
Pyro runs away (2013)

6 years & over

Lina Savignac

Les petits souliers roses et La chatte de Jeanne (2011)
Rutina, l'ânesse et Fridolin, l'homme de paille (2013)

Pyro is disappointed after Glucosina breaks a promise to go on vacation with him. Disgruntled, the little orphan dragon decides to head out on his own. But as night falls, things start going south quickly. In the dark of night, all cats are grey, and the shy little dragon could really use the help of his witch friend in order to conquer his fears.



*teach a child to read, and you teach
a child how to dream and open
up to the rest of the universe*