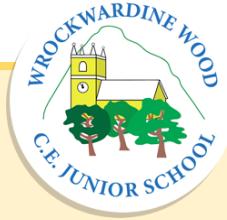


Sophie Anderson



Sophie Anderson is a master of captivating young minds through her enchanting tales. Specialising in the fantasy genre, she weaves magical worlds filled with mystical creatures and brave protagonists. Her books transport children to far-off lands where imagination knows no bounds. With a unique blend of folklore and original storytelling, Sophie's works inspire creativity and empathy in her young readers. Through her characters' adventures, children learn the importance of courage, friendship, and resilience. A must-read for any child, Sophie Anderson's books promise unforgettable journeys that instil a lifelong love for reading and the power of imagination.



Extract

My house has chicken legs. Two or three times a year, without warning, it stands up in the middle of the night and walks away from where we've been living. It might walk a hundred miles or it might walk a thousand, but where it lands is always the same. A lonely, bleak place at the edge of civilization. It nestles in dark forbidden woods, rattles on windswept icy tundra, and hides in crumbling ruins at the far edge of cities. At this moment it's perched on a rocky ledge high in some barren mountains. We've been here two weeks and I still haven't seen anyone living. Dead people, I've seen plenty of those of course. They come to visit Baba and she guides them through The Gate. But the real, live, living people, they all stay in the town and villages far below us. Maybe if it was summer a few of them would wander up here, to picnic and look at the view. They might smile and say hello. Someone my own age might visit – maybe a whole group of children. They might stop near the stream and splash in the water to cool off. Perhaps they would invite me to join them. "How's the fence coming?" Baba calls through the open window, pulling me from my daydream. "Nearly done." I wedge another thigh bone into the low stone wall. Usually I sink the bones straight into the earth, but up here the ground is too rocky, so I built a knee-high stone wall all the way around the house, pushed the bones into it and balanced the skulls on top. But it keeps collapsing in the night. I don't know if it's the wind, or wild animals, or clumsy dead people, but every day we've been here I've had to rebuild a part of the fence. Baba says the fence is important to keep out the living and guide in the dead, but that's not why I fix it. I like to work with the bones because my parents would have touched them once, long ago, when they built fences and guided the dead.



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