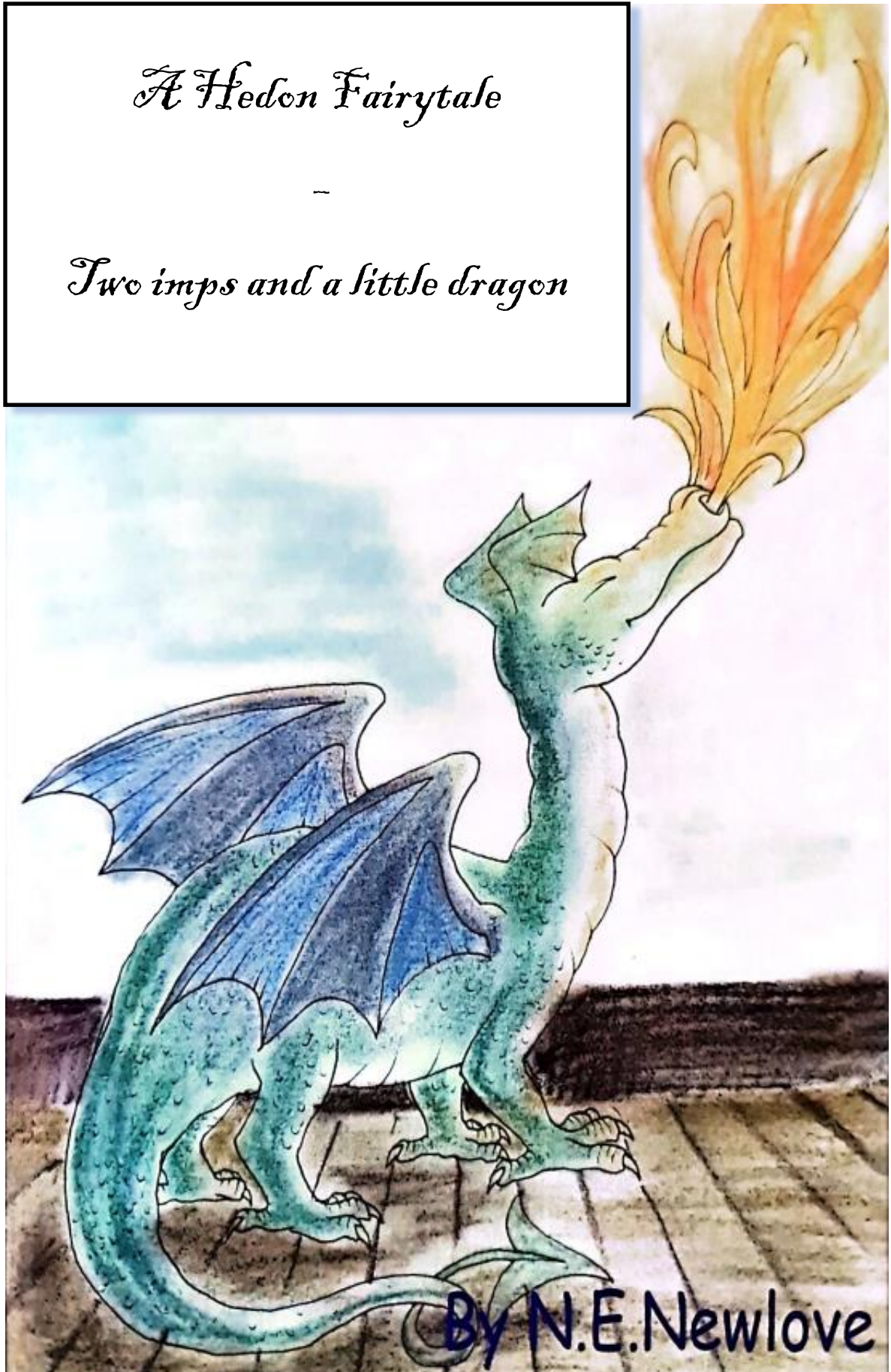


A Hedon Fairytale

Two imps and a little dragon



Long, long ago, in the days when everyone believed in wizards and fairytales, there lived a little dragon whose name was Daniel. His father had been killed by St George, and little Daniel was the very last dragon alive on earth. Now, Daniel didn't want to grow big and fearsome like his father, and be slain because he hurt people, so he went to visit the Wise Wizard of the South. Daniel told the Wise Wizard that he wished he could always be a little dragon, and that people would like him. Most of all, little Daniel didn't want to be slain by St George!

The kind Wise Wizard said, yes, he would help Daniel. The Wizard knew that Daniel had a kind heart, and that he had helped an old lady, one very cold winter when she had no coal or wood for her fire. Daniel, he'd heard, had boiled the kettle, toasted the bread and kept her little cottage warm all through the winter with his fiery breath.

The Wizard told Daniel to travel north, across a wide river, to a small town with cobbled streets and a jolly mayor.

'Now' the Wizard said, 'in that town there is a King who stands for everyone, and never turns away anyone who asks for help.'

The Wizard told Daniel that many people in the town were having a lot of trouble with two imps, who were always making rude faces at people passing by.

'If you could chase the two imps away, little dragon,' said the Wizard, 'all the people in the town would be very happy indeed, and they'd know you were their friend. No one would want to kill you, and your dream would come true.'

So, Daniel travelled north and after a long journey, arrived at the small town with cobbled streets. He found the mayor and asked:

‘Please tell me where I can find the king who stands for everyone, and never turns away anyone who asks for help And where can I find the two imps who make rude faces at people? I’d like to chase those imps away from your town, and make all the people happy again.’

The mayor replied:

‘Our church is called the King of Holderness, and if you go to the north side of the church, you’ll see the two imps, huddled together, high up on the church wall, making rude faces at the people below passing by.’

True enough, when the little dragon arrived at the church, he saw the two imps making faces, just as the mayor had told him.

The next day, Daniel met the mayor again, and asked:

‘Why hasn’t anyone chased the imps away?’

The mayor said:

‘There is a legend that, if any boy or girl walks round the church three times in a clockwise direction, after mid-summers day, makes a rude enough face at the imps, and says, loudly enough:

IMPS, IMPS, GO AWAY
NOT TOMORROW, BUT TODAY.
GO AND FIND ANOTHER PERCH,
FAR AWAY FROM THIS OLD CHURCH

the imps will run away to another town. But no one has been able to do it so far.’

So, there and then, Daniel made one big jump to try and frighten the imps away. But he was such a little dragon he only landed a few feet up the church wall. It was then Daniel remembered that he was afraid of high places. He was too frightened to move, so he clung on even tighter to the wall.

And that is where you'll find little Daniel today. In a way, Daniel got his wish: he never did grow into a big, fearsome dragon, and people like him and think of him with affection, as the little dragon who tried his best to make the people of the town happy again.

And the two imps? Well, they are still huddled together making rude faces at the people below.

