

## Dwarf Story

**W. W. Marplot**

Waxing Gibbous Books

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*In the exciting fantasy Dwarf Story, the mythical world intersects with our own as a legendary war draws near.*

In W. W. Marplot's imaginative middle grade fantasy *Dwarf Story*, humans and mythical creatures prepare for an epic battle on Long Island, New York.

Arty, a pragmatic thirteen-year-old, finds an angry, black-bearded dwarf with an ax in hand in his backyard. Emma, Arty's best friend, joins him after discovering why Arty did not attend school. Like Arty, she makes a mythical friend: a Spriggan, a type of a giant's ghost. More mythical creatures continue to appear as Arty and Emma work to determine what the creatures are and why they are in Long Island. They soon discover that, according to legend, the island is the set location for fairy wars.

The occurrence of fairy wars is predicted by dark, stormy weather. Separated from his friends as they try to run from a stranger, Arty watches as a storm gathers speed. The clouds roll in, thunder strikes, and heavy raindrops begin to fall. Meanwhile, Emma and the others watch as creatures appear and a battle begins.

Creative details result in tactile images of the mythical creatures. Thryst, the dwarf, is described as a short, stocky, spitting, bad-tempered creature; Sprugly, the Spriggan, is a hideous, small, orange-colored creature with a crooked face. The descriptions vary from how dwarfs and other mythical creatures are usually represented, giving the story a singular edge.

The story is thrilling as Arty and the team rush to find out the meaning of everything happening around them and as they discover that they are facing a powerful enemy—the Gwyllion, the old woman of the mountains, who is a vicious, revolting creature. The war draws near and the Gwyllion entices some of the story's leads.

Each character tells their story in turn, revealing their personalities and their perspectives on events. Arty is the analytical one: he uses scientific methods to understand why he is seeing a dwarf in his backyard. Emma is more imaginative, while Ted, a friend who is spying on them, barely has a clue of what is going on. Cry, a classmate who later joins the group, is less logical and more adventurous than Arty.

In the end, Arty and Emma are able to piece together the different clues and reach understandings about what is set to happen on Long Island—events in which Arty has a role. Short, suspenseful sentences build anticipation for what is to come, and Emma's explanations add to this tension.

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EDITH WAIRIMU (March 4, 2020)

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