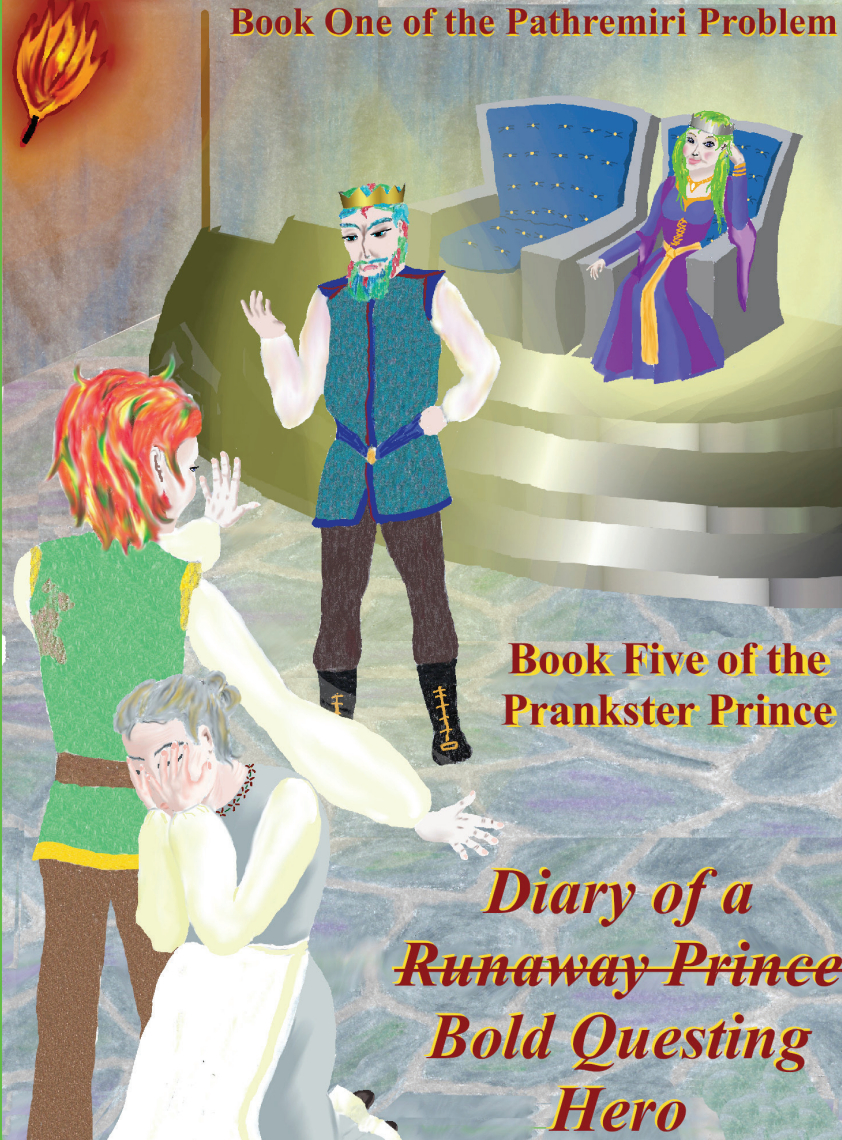


SNEAK PEEK THROUGH FIRST 3 DAYS OF THE DIARY!

AUTHOR OF A NOT-SO-SACRIFICIAL MAIDEN

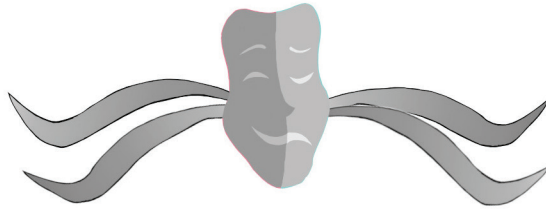
# MANGALA MCNAMARA

Book One of the Pathremiri Problem



Book Five of the  
Prankster Prince

*Diary of a  
Runaway Princee  
Bold Questing  
Hero*



### *Day 20 of our journey*

So, today Amanita was in a total grump and everyone tried to avoid her while we rode along what someone has finally explained is called the 'Tea Road.' Apparently, that's the name because the best tea is grown in that Darjil place where Valderon Raven'sWing enchanted the whole populace, and then it's transported up here for sale around the world.

Getting hold of a map has been nearly as hard as getting hold of a calendar.

And, honestly, I could probably just ask, and someone would show me one or explain, or something. But there hasn't been much of an opportunity to ask anyone. Commander Zaja likes it quiet at meals, and nobody goes against her. And I really want to see this stuff written down, so asking while we're riding is probably not a good idea; I haven't tried reading while riding yet, but my stomach gets tickly in a bad way, just thinking about it.

Though Puck does it all the time, since Chillabaien doesn't need direction any more than Twinklestar does.

Hunh. Which means if I could get over my guts, I could probably do it.

Anyways, I'm going to try talking to Daffyd in a few minutes. If we whisper, maybe I can get some more details of what's going on out of him. He seems to know what's going on, but when he tried to explain last night, we got those girl-guards pounding on the door and telling us to 'quiet down.'

***Nanny-goats, all of them.***

*DIARY OF A  
~~RUNAWAY PRINCE~~  
BOLD QUESTING HERO*

*Book Five of the  
Prankster Prince*

*(Book One of the Pathremiri Problem)*



MANGALA McNAMARA

RISING DRAGON BOOKS

## MANGALA MCNAMARA

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McNamara, Kerridwen Mangala

Diary of a ~~Runaway Prince~~ Bold Questing Hero by Mangala

McNamara Indiana: Rising Dragon Books, 2024

154p. 1 map

(McNamara, Mangala. The Prankster Prince; bk. 5)

Summary: Prince Thony and his friends have saved all the worlds in the universe – now he needs to get back to his Bold Quest to find a princess to marry (with a wealthy and powerful father so he can bring troops back home to save his land. But first he has to visit Amanita's homeland... where they don't like guys too much

ISBN 978-1-960160-53-9 (pbk)

1. Princes and princesses - Fiction. 2. Adolescent Rebellion - Fiction

ISBN 978-1-960160-54-6 (hc) ISBN 978-1-960160-49-2 (eBook)

Excerpt from: *Thony and the Much-Anticipated Adventure*

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*Diary of a ~~Runaway Prince~~ Bold Questing Hero: Book 5 of the Prankster Prince*

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Cover art and illustrations by the author

The Rising Dragon Logo was designed by Priyadevi McNamara

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For further information, email [RisingDragonBooks@gmail.com](mailto:RisingDragonBooks@gmail.com)

ISBN: 978-1-960160-53-9

First Print Edition: October 2024

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

DIARY OF A ~~RUNAWAY PRINCE~~ BOLD QUESTING HERO

For my son Rhodri, who actually falls on the floor  
laughing when I read these books to him.

And for all the rest of my kids – whose weird obsessions  
with *Diary of an 8-Bit Warrior* and *The Dork Diaries*  
inspired this book.  
(Okay, fine, I read most of them, too.)

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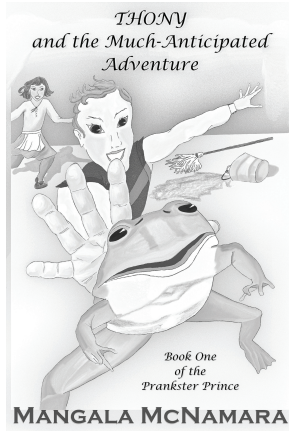
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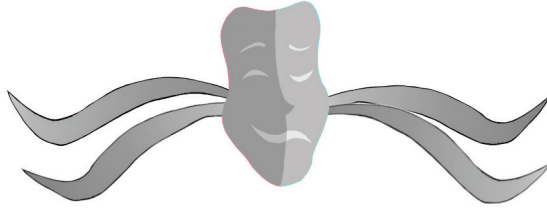
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**Okay,  
this is SUPER lame.**

Just because Amanita and I were talking about how incredibly *flat* and *boring* this place is, that Commander Zaja is forcing us to write it down instead of talk about it.

I mean, she was nice about it and everything.

I guess.

She had us all stop early for the night and went out into the market of the dinky little town (*I mean, it's more like the villages at home than Flowerdust, and they all keep telling me that was a small town*) and bought these little books of blank paper.

*(And seriously? Can it really be that small a place if they have **paper and books** for sale on the **street**?)*

Oh, and these pencil things that work like pens but without getting drippy or needing to be dipped or anything. Those are kind of cool.

And then she told us to sit down at the commonroom table in the inn and write down all our ‘complaints’ until we’d used them up and she didn’t have to listen to them anymore.

And even more unfair?

She made Prince Daffyd do it, too, and *he* hadn’t even been *saying* anything.

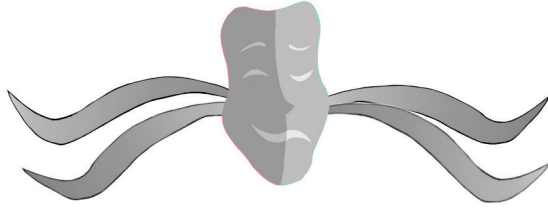
He didn’t object then, either – though Amanita and I did. He just looked resigned and started doing it.

And Puck just smirked at us from across the room.

I was going to refuse – I mean, can’t we even have a *conversation*? But then Amanita caved, and I got a look at that Commander Zaja. I never thought a *woman* could look that scary.

Well, I guess she’s not as scary as Captain Shalladra Stillheart. Or Lady Embersoul. Or the Dark-elf princess. But pretty scary, nonetheless.

And with my luck, she’s going to read all this after we hand in our ‘homework’ and then make me write *more*.



## Day 18

### *of our Journey from Flowerdust to Pathremir*

*(They tell me it's the twenty-fourth day of the third month of Spring, but they seem to keep track of time differently here and I haven't gotten my hands on a calendar yet, so who knows what that means. Except that it's Spring.)*

Well. Apparently, we 'get to' keep these little books. Commander Zaja rolled her eyes when I tried to give mine back last night and said something like "And you think I want to *read* more of what you're babbling about all *day*?"

And then she added an "Um, Your Highness," after Amanita and Puck both gave her the stink-eye.

I don't think she believes I'm really a prince.

And certainly not *Crown* Prince of Aldyrwald.

Nor does she really care.

Mostly that seems to have to do with me being a boy. She – and the other Guardswomen – treat Amanita with a great deal

more deference, even if the results are the same. I'd say it was because she's *theirs*, but Daffyd gets treated more like me.

Right after we set down our pencils, Commander Zaja sent us up to bed.

Like we were *six*.

And Puck gets exempted from all of this... because, well, I guess because he's himself. 'Prince Skiftglow' as they're calling him now. He said we can keep calling him 'Puck' if we want, even if it's not strictly accurate anymore.

I don't understand any of this.

I'm not even sure why I'm writing this stuff down...

Well, except for the fact that I get locked up in a room with Prince Daffyd just after sunset every night. With guards on the door – more of those scary-looking short women. I think Amanita gets locked into her own room with her own guards.

And I don't know *what* they do with Puck, but there is absolutely nothing to do in *our* room.

You'd think that Twinklestar would object to this treatment of his unicorn-maiden, but noooo.

*He* seems to think he's done me sufficient favors by staying in his big size form and consenting to wear a saddle (*that Puck had made specifically for him by the best saddler in Flowerdust*) and a hackamore, so I have reins to hold on with.

And apparently, he's casting some kind of illusion so that he doesn't look like a unicorn while we travel. Which you'd *think* would mean I wouldn't have to wear the stupid white *robe*. But Puck pointed out that the Pathremiri women treat me a little better when I have the stupid thing on, so I'm stuck with that.

And Twinklestar spends the whole day trying to make nice to Puck's fairy-horse, Chillabiaen. Which means he is totally ignoring how he's jouncing me around in the saddle. You can't post for a trot when your stupid steed decides to randomly

break into a canter or slow to a walk. Or do some dancing steps or...

Chillabaien is ignoring him as much as possible, for which I don't blame her. Twinklestar acted like he'd forgotten she existed when Rainsparkle showed up. Not that Chillabaien had been around at the time, but it was still pretty sleazy behavior in my book. And in Chilli's apparently.

Puck – who is stuck riding next to me while all of this is going on, thinks it's all terribly funny.

Well, he does until Chilli gives him a *look* over her shoulder and then they move up next to the commander. I'm not sure who I feel most sorry for at those moments. Puck, for having to talk to Commander Zaja, or Twinklestar, who always looks so dejected, for all that he *totally deserves it*.

Or me, who has to listen to my unicorn mooning on about his love-life for hours after that.

GODS, this 'falling in love' stuff is stupid.

At least at that point, Amanita usually comes over to ride with me. She's usually done fighting with her brother for awhile by then.

That gets kind of noisy, honestly.

Especially when it devolves into the two of them singing out obscure insults. 'Daffy Daffyd daffodil' at least seems a play off of his name, but why *he* calls *her* 'poisonous mushroom' I have no earthly idea.

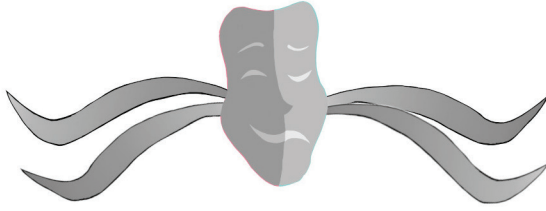
I can sort of see Commander Zaja's point actually. Or I could, if she weren't set on punishing someone along with Amanita – who is the one who always starts it.

Daffyd's not a bad sort... he doesn't leave dirty socks lying around or drink out of the water pitcher or anything. Or snore. But he's over there on the other bed scratching away in his own book, so I suppose he doesn't really want to talk.

MANGALA McNAMARA

And, oh, my GOD, but this is way too boring for all the work it took to run away from home... start on my Bold Quest and become a Hero.

They called us that in *Flowerdust* anyways...



## *Day 19*

### *of the Journey*

Well... this might be getting a little more interesting.

While we were riding today, Daffyd explained that we can't talk much after they send us to bed because the Guards will report us. The doors and walls of these inns are pretty thin, and those girl-fighters are apparently as nosy and gossipy as Mama's ladies-in-waiting back home. Girls are girls everywhere, I guess.

He says this 'journaling' business is the only way he managed to stay sane before he found us.

I don't know many details yet, but it sounds like leaving Pathremir to hunt for his little sister was *his* idea and he got saddled with this pack of nanny-guards because he did it the *proper* way and went through 'channels.' Meaning he got his grandmother-the-Queen's approval.

*I knew* sneaking out was the right approach.

Papa might have agreed with me – I mean, *he* went on *his* Quest to win Mama and he didn't take a whole troop with *him*. It's just the way things are done in the Mountain-Region. But Mama would have insisted.

And, to be fair, I suppose I could see why. Aldyrwald wasn't under threat of invasion if something happened to Papa when *he* was Crown Prince. He has six younger brothers, after all,

even if Uncle Louis is the only one who would probably have been acceptable as an alternate Heir, since he's the youngest.

Anyways, things might be getting more interesting because there is currently a big fight – er, *debate* – going on in the room next door between Amanita and Commander Zaja and Puck.

Daffyd has his ear to the wall, but I figure I'll get the details tomorrow and none of the names of people and places really mean anything to me anyways. I'm tired of listening to Amanita yelling about stuff for now.

We've apparently crossed over a border (*another* border... the countries on these 'Central Plains' are just as small and snarly as the ones at home) into a bigger and more stable country called 'Dysacha.'

Oh, there's Daffyd, and he's smirking. Something interesting must have been decided

Find out what happens next in

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