

HOW TO SAVE A DRAGON

Dragons don't
just live in fairy
tales...



ANNIE DALTON
Illustrated by Carl Pearce

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About the Book

Oscar can't believe his ears when he hears that dragons aren't just fairy tales. They're real, and hundreds once called World Nine home.

But that was before the dragon-chasers came; before they hunted down almost every dragon alive to steal their eggs and their gleaming rainbow-coloured skin.

There are people who are doing everything they can to protect what few dragons do remain. Oscar wants to help - and he may just get his chance ...



HOW TO SAVE A
DRAGON

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*This book is for Sophie & Izzie
(and for anyone who still believes in magic)*
AD

*For Ceri Ann
thank you for everything*
CP

How we came to World Nine . . .

Once upon a time I lived with my mum and my baby sister Ruby on a foggy grey world called Terra Nova. At night the hoot of foghorns drowned the swoosh of starships taking off and landing. Terra Nova is the intergalactic hub for starship travel – something Mum did a lot of in her work with the Cosmic Peace Police.

Then, out of the blue, Mum quit her job. She said she'd had enough of zooming around the universe stopping wars; it was time for a change. She'd found us the perfect house on a faraway planet called World Nine.

'From now on, Oscar, I'm going to be a stay-at-home mum,' Mum told me. 'I'm going to grow vegetables and bake bread and we're going to live happily ever after.' We caught a cab to the starport where Mum bought three tickets to a world so small the mapmakers hadn't even given

it a proper name. On our tickets the machine had just printed W9.

Our new home on tiny tropical World Nine turned out to be just as wonderful as Mum had promised. But after we moved in we started running into little problems the estate agent had forgotten to mention: mice, leaky pipes – and the fact that some of our neighbours were wizards.

It was our neighbour, Miss Coralie Creek, who let it slip about the wizards when she came to welcome us to the area. Miss Coralie tried to tell my mum that not all wizards were bad but Mum was so upset she stopped listening.

When I got up next morning, my mum was asleep at the kitchen table. She'd been making a list:

Reasons to stay on W9

NO FOG!!

Sun, sea, garden

Children happy

Reasons to leave W9
MAGIC!!!

I was in love with World Nine already, magic and all, so I was thrilled when Mum said she wasn't taking us back to Terra Nova. At least, not yet.

'We'll stay for a trial period to see how we get on. But I'm not sending you to the local school,' Mum said firmly. 'I'm not having you or Ruby mixed up with magic. I'll teach you at home.'

Just days after Mum found out about the wizards, a starship landed on our lawn. Mum's old bosses at the Cosmic Peace Police had come to beg her to do one last crucial mission.

Mum refused. She said there was no one on World Nine she trusted to take care of us.

I told Mum she had to do the mission. I'd figured out a way to keep me and Ruby safe from evil wizards until she got

back: we just had to hold a contest to find a genuinely trustworthy wizard.

Mum wasn't happy about it but she eventually agreed.

A teenage wizard called Ferris Fleet aced the competition, with the help of his magical wheelchair, Wonderwheels. Thanks to Fleet, Mum was able to zoom to the other side of the universe, where she successfully prevented a dangerous cosmic war.

I was relieved when my mum was safely home again, but I was disappointed too. I was going to miss having mad adventures with Ferris Fleet. Life was going to be really tame from now on.

That's what I thought.

I was wrong.