

Jane and the Dragon



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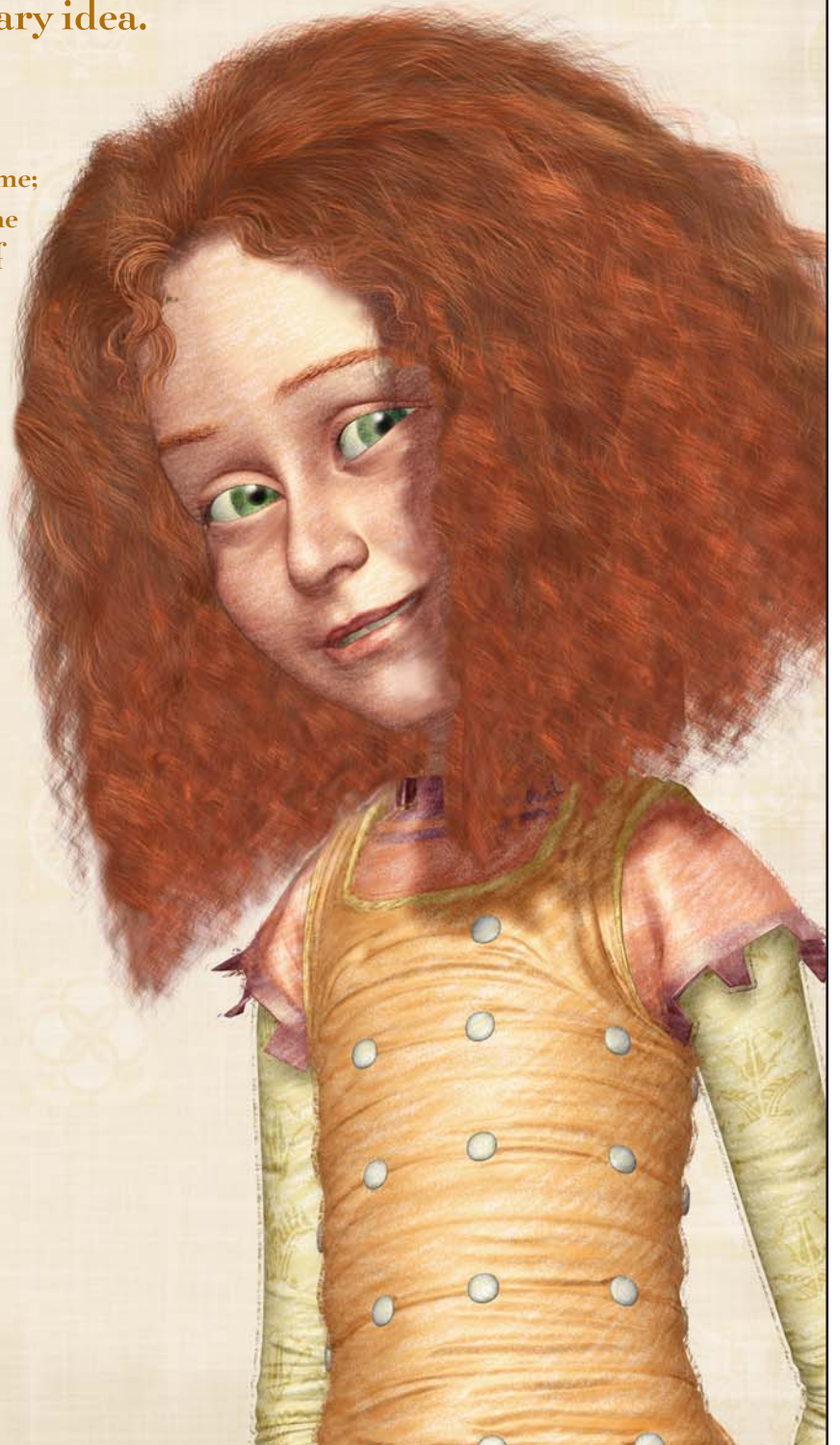
Nothing much has changed in the kingdom for years.
No wars, no revolts, no public sanitation.
Not one revolutionary idea.

The Royal family keep on having a good time; the knights and castle staff keep on giving the Royal family a good time; and the people of the kingdom try to have as good a time as they can when they are poor, medieval and without toilet paper.

There is a place for everyone and everyone knows their place.

But now...

...a twelve-year-old girl has decided it is time for a change.





Jane has been training to be a lady-in-waiting, but a lady is the last thing she wants to be. Jane wants to be a knight, a Knight of The King's Guard.

But this is a medieval world. And only boys can become knights, right?

Wrong! And I will challenge any nettle-head who tells me otherwise."

One day, when Jane saves the Prince from a giant green dragon, her wish is granted and Jane becomes an apprentice knight. Now she must prove herself to the King and to the knights, she must win over her parents and try to hold on to her friends.

The odds are stacked against her, but Jane does have a helping hand - she is the only person in the kingdom to have a dragon for a best friend.

In fact he is the only dragon left in the Kingdom, a bewildered dragon who is trying to figure out what he wants to be when he grows up - he's a mere puppy after all, just 300 years old.

So Jane and the Dragon are coming of age together, and this is their story.



Multi Oscar award winning Weta Workshop and multi Emmy award winning Nelvana have combined their film and television talents to present Jane and the Dragon - a 26 x 22 min. comedy/action series for 6-11 year olds.

The series takes place in a medieval world where the young Jane lives and works in an old castle. Beyond the castle walls lies a market town, and out beyond the town lies a rural kingdom that stretches away as far as a dragon can fly.

Jane and the Dragon's visual style marries motion-capture technology with a coloured pencil picture book texture. The result is a stunning new aesthetic for animated television that will immediately identify Jane and the Dragon.

The unique design style has been supported by close attention to period detail. Every object is faithful to the medieval setting; every utensil in Pepper's kitchen; every tool in Smithy's forge, has been designed for use in an authentic Jane world.

Routes through the sets and sight lines between the sets have been planned in exacting detail as if Jane's world was being created for a live action show rather than for animation. As a result, every camera angle reveals a larger world behind every shot.

To support the unique look, an instantly recognizable sound signature has been developed. No stock audio files have been used; instead, a landscape of musical stingers and sound effects is being created with period instruments.

Jane and the Dragon has also developed a signature dialogue style, a vocabulary rich with medieval expressions delivered in a contemporary manner.

There are no 'forsooths' or 'verrily's in Jane's world. By hog's bladder there are not!

“And any biscuit weevil who tells me to speak otherwise can bog off.”





Jane is a classic yet contemporary character, a strong role model for kids. She is smart, brave and independent, someone who stands up for herself and for her friends.

She will not back down, not for anyone, and while she has obvious girl appeal, she has boy appeal too: for Jane is a knight, a gutsy character battling the odds with a giant green dragon at her side.

So Jane is made of strong stuff, but she shares the same doubts and fears as any twelve-year-old. She is coming of age; she is figuring out the world and her place within it; she is learning to take responsibility for her actions and for her friendships. Being a knight is the easy bit, being a girl growing up - now that really is tough.

And there are times when it all gets too much, times when she feels the whole world is set against her. Her parents disapprove of her ambition to be a knight. The other knights seem set against it, especially the chauvinistic Ivon. The Prince is jealous, for if he can't be a knight then why should a mere girl? And the many villains throughout the land see a girl knight as an easy target.

Yes, the dice are definitely loaded against Jane.

“A plague of boils on them all! I humbly accept those odds.”

But life for Jane isn't just dramatic action, she is also out to have some fun. No matter what the situation, Jane faces it with a sense of humor - and she needs to - she is surrounded by witty, ridiculous characters who always need saving from themselves or from her giant, green dragon!



Jane

Jane is confident, capable and 'can do' about life. She will stand up to the boys and beat them at their own game. But this girl is no tomboy; she can dance and sing and be delighted and delightful - but only when no one is looking.

If she sees a problem, Jane takes action to solve it. Jane sees it as her duty to put things right. She always sticks up for what she thinks is fair, and tries her best to overcome the petty injustices of her medieval world.

So Jane is brave and outspoken, but she can also be reckless and incredibly stubborn. She will leap first and look later and can get herself - and her friends - into all kinds of trouble. But her friends stick by her, for Jane never makes a big deal out of being a knight and life is definitely more exciting when she's around.

And while being a knight is hard work, what Jane finds really tough is learning to be a twelve-year-old girl. All that messy emotional stuff! Emotions can be so embarrassing, and Jane gets emotional pretty easily. But knights don't cry - not ever. Not in public.



"I do not cry. I do NOT. My eyes get red from the wind. You try clinging to the neck of a dragon for half a league and see how your eyes like it! Try it, I defy you!"





Dragon

At 300 years young, Dragon is still learning how to be... a dragon. As far as he can tell he is the only one around, so he has to make it up as he goes along.

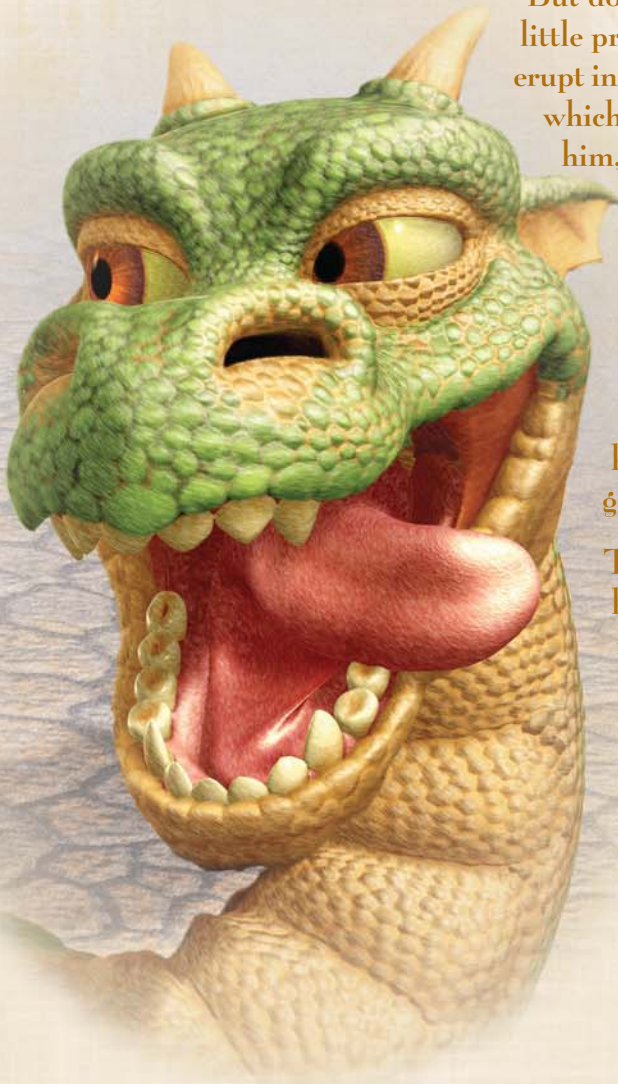
And there is just so much to go wrong. He's a puppy, he wants to play, but with growing wings, a whale of a body and breath that can burn a barn, hanging around him can be seriously dangerous. Especially when he lands - Dragon's landings are hardly graceful.

❧ "He might be a big clumsy lizard, but he is MY big clumsy lizard."

But don't ever tell him that, he can be over-sensitive and a little proud at times. He might smolder over a tiny remark, erupt in a fiery rage, or he may not react at all. No one can tell which way he will go? Jane can't. But she does understand him, she knows he's confused, that's all. What is the point of being a dragon if you can't fry an occasional farm and carry off the cattle?

So Dragon is not easy to deal with, but Jane loves him with all her heart. For Dragon loves life, he loves the smell of it, the taste of it, the terror and the trouble of it. And the guy has a wicked sense of humor. Human life? It's basically absurd. And who is going to tell a dragon to shut up? Only Jane.

To hear these two going at each other you would hardly believe it, but they have an unbreakable friendship. And even though they don't know it yet, they are bound together as dragon and dragon-master. They have a shared destiny, and one day soon they will come to understand it.





Smithy

Fifteen-year-old Smithy is - and let's be straight up about this - a hunk. Not that Smithy would ever admit to it, for Smithy is the strong and semi-silent type. He is the castle blacksmith, the stable hand and a squire to the knights. He keeps their horses shod, their swords sharp, their armor in good repair, and their reputations intact.

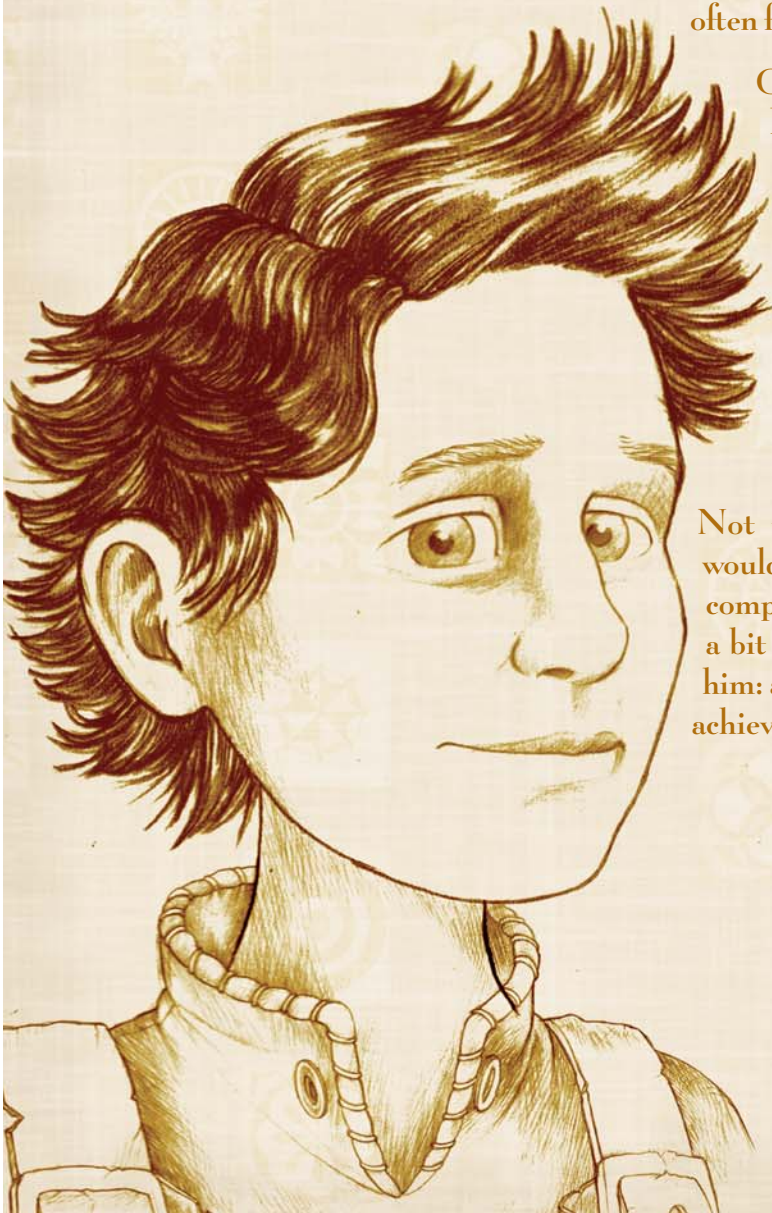
Smithy is a dab hand with machines. Give him some iron, rope or wood and he's a real Da Vinci; he can engineer all kinds of labor saving devices for the castle. And Smithy has a way with animals too, a calm confidence that all creatures seem to respond to - all except Dragon.

Smithy doesn't have much to say for himself, for his actions definitely speak louder than words. He is very down to earth and never listens to castle gossip - he takes people as he finds them, and he often finds them in need of his honest opinion.

Of all Jane's friends, it is only Smithy who challenges her decision to be a knight. He supports her, but she's a girl after all, so how good a knight can she really be?

“He is a beef-brain, a kind, quiet, and very annoying beef brain.”

Not that Smithy would ever consider it, but he would make a good knight himself; he enjoys anything competitive or physical and in his own quiet way can be a bit of a show-off, but his earthy charm always saves him: a grin, a laugh, a bit of tomfoolery to undercut his achievement. The boy is such a heartthrob!





Jester

Fourteen-year-old Jester is the Court Fool. He is a superb mimic, an acrobat, a razor sharp wit and a brilliant clown. For Jester, life is a stage, which can be a problem when you suffer from stage fright. Which he does.

And when Jester gets nervous, he talks too much. In fact, his mouth runneth over. It's tough being in showbiz, especially when the Court is such a picky audience. Why do they always want toilet jokes and ribald songs? Jester is far more inventive than that. Sure he can do the falling over, slapsticky stuff but what's wrong with subtlety and satire? Does nobody get it? No one in the castle seems to. No one but Jane.

"I keep telling him - stop trying. He just has to be himself, he is such an idiot and he is completely brilliant at it."

But even though Jester is the Royal Fool, he is no fool. There is a lot ticking away in that funny-hatted head of his. He is smart, insightful and particularly good at reading the politics of the Court. So he's the first person Jane comes to for advice when the going gets tough.

And that matters to Jester, because the boy has a secret he takes great pains to hide from the world: he has a tiny bit of a crush on Jane.



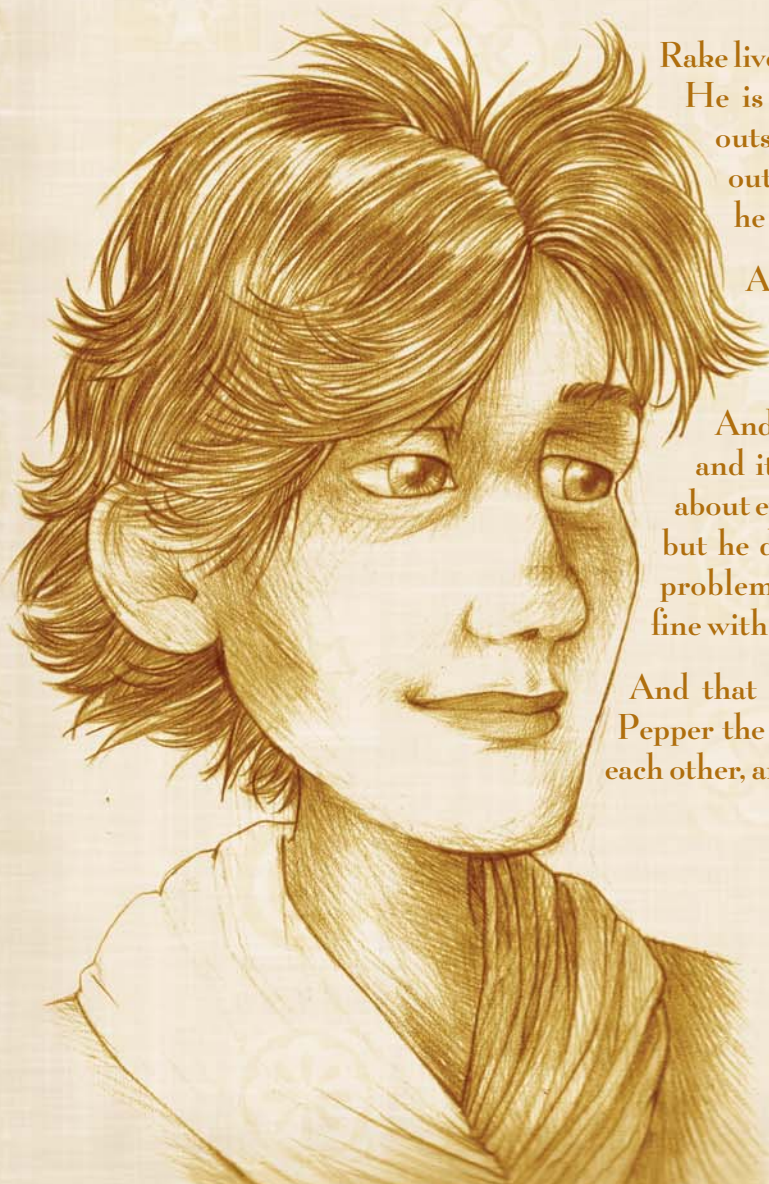


Rake

Thirteen-year-old Rake is the royal gardener. He is sweet, generous and a bit of a geek. And Rake is comfortable with that. In fact, Rake is comfortable with most things.

As the cliché goes - everybody is good at something. For Rake it's gardening. He can grow just about anything and everything: the juiciest apples; the glossiest spinach; the most beautiful sunflowers, even the biggest compost heap in the kingdom.

"Yes, Rake can grow anything - except himself; the boy is a beanpole. He needs a good helping of his own compost."



Rake lives for the garden, in fact Rake lives IN the garden. He is an outdoors type who eats outside and sleeps outside, and he looks and smells as if he eats and sleeps outside! It's not that Rake is dirty. No - it's just that he is the embodiment of medieval hygiene.

Actually, Rake is a little scared of going indoors. He feels safe out in his garden, outside with his flowers and his friends.

And everyone is friendly with Rake, even the Dragon, and it's easy to see why. For Rake gets on with just about everyone. He may not be the brightest boy around, but he doesn't try to be. If he's the butt of the joke no problem - anything that makes people happy is just fine with Rake.

And that makes him totally adorable to his biggest fan, Pepper the kitchen maid. Rake and Pepper were made for each other, and Rake can't believe his luck!

Pepper

Twelve-year-old Pepper is the Royal Cook and kitchen maid. A softly spoken, romantic and pretty kooky girl, this kitchen maid does things her own unique way. If the world is on a rock beat, then Pepper is on a reggae beat. And it's a very busy beat; with an entire castle to feed, Pepper is the original medieval multi-tasker.

The world to Pepper is there to be tasted; it's to be smelt, felt, sensed and sighed over. She will take a whiff of something and then pass out with the pong; the world is completely delicious! Even the smallest things can be treasures - the way icing pipes out of a bag, the patterns in the leaves of vegetables, the sound of shoes scuffing on flagstones. Pepper just can't help herself.

And she can't help asking questions. Which is why Pepper is a very good person to talk to if you need to know some gossip... or a very bad person to talk to if you want to avoid becoming gossip! Tact is a four-letter word Pepper will never understand.

While she works, Pepper loves to sing little ditties to herself - eccentric ditties which Rake listens to from the kitchen door, his heart beating faster with every note. And as Rake is scared of indoors, so Pepper is scared of outdoors. So they meet every day at the doorway, a claustrophobic and an agoraphobic; two happy peas in a very odd pod.



❧

"They are made for each other, why can everybody see it but them? All their sighing and silly, sideways glances. I could bang their sweet potato heads together sometimes. Just how timid can two people be?"

Princess

The Princess is six years old and as cute as a button - a very expensive button with ermine trim and gold thread. And she is having the time of her life. Of course she is - she's six and she's a princess! Loving it! The Princess is far too young to have any royal responsibilities. She has the run of the castle, an entire court to play with her, and only one worry in the whole world - an annoying older brother to keep away from.

This young royal is sweet, bright and determined to get her way. She has an innocent curiosity and can be brutally, beautifully honest.

And she loves girl stuff. She loves pretty clothes, ponies, beautiful jewelry, hair and make-up; all the things Jane finds so hard to deal with. The problem for Jane is that what the Princess wants, the Princess gets. So unless Jane can outwit her, she is forced to play along.

And Jane doesn't want to play, not with the Princess, not when she is training so hard to be a knight. Which is a problem, because this little Princess wants to grow up just like Jane. She has decided that Jane is her very best friend. Where Jane goes, she goes. What Jane does, she does. Jane even has a nickname for her - 'the shadow'. But this is one shadow Jane finds hard to shake off - especially when she's sworn an oath of royal allegiance to protect her.



"She is a cute little wick. If only she would go and be cute somewhere else!"



Prince

The Princess's nine-year-old brother is a brat - a royal brat, but a brat nonetheless. And one day the kingdom will be his. Luckily that day is a long, long way away.

As heir to the throne, the Prince has power disproportionate to his age and abilities. He is spoilt and scheming and loves telling everybody what to do. And then he wonders why no one likes him.

His Royal Righteousness is insanely jealous of Jane. Everyone thinks she is so special when he is supposed to be the special one! He is the Prince! This royal jealousy leads him to sabotage Jane's every move, or try to; for if the Prince can't be a knight with a dragon of his own, then why should some pesky, common girl like Jane. What a brat!

But his mother loves him, and his father too. And so whatever the Prince wants, the Prince gets. If he wants to play with the knight's catapult, then so be it. But guess who has to clear up the mess. Not the Prince, that's for sure.

This right royal brat is a constant thorn in Jane's side - a tormentor with temper tantrums. But Jane knows she is smarter than him, and if she can just control her own impatience she knows she can outflank and outwit the little pain at every turn.



"We have many names for our little Prince, any of which could land us in the dungeons."



Secondary Characters



Jane's Mother

Jane's mother is Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen and runs the Royal household. She does not approve of Jane being a knight. She is a formal woman who loves her daughter but rarely displays it.



Jane's Father

Her father is the King's chancellor, the keeper of the royal purse and a professional worrier. There is nothing this man doesn't worry about - especially his wayward daughter.



The King

A good-humored soul, this king has little patience for the affairs of state. He much prefers hunting, fishing and dancing - a lifestyle that has all but bankrupted the kingdom.



The Queen

This beautiful woman is the height of fairytale femininity, a soft, delicate flower. So Jane doesn't get her at all!



Theodore

The Captain of the Guard; this gentleman knight has noble history, but he's too old for the saddle now, and too proud to accept the fact.



Ivon

A blustering beefcake of a knight, Ivon loves weapons of every kind, the bigger the better! This muscle-head thinks only boys can train to be knights.



The Magician

Eccentric, forgetful, yet still the Court doctor, the Prince's tutor and a reader of signs and symbols. If only he could remember what they meant.



The Merchant

Greedy, rich and always scheming to get richer, this man owns the town but it's not enough. He wants to own King and castle too.





This is Jane's coming of age story, both as a girl and as a knight. Jane is the star of the show.

And in Jane's show there will be...

Struggle and achievement.

Jane will grow and achieve as a knight. She is still an apprentice, learning new skills every day, but she must also perform the duties of a qualified knight and put those new skills into practice. So Jane has to be brave and resourceful, she has to use her wits to overcome her lack of experience. She must develop both as a knight and as a person.

Conscience and drama.

Jane is driven by her conscience to act. She strives to do good. Jane has a strong sense of injustice and when she sees it, she must put it right. Jane empathizes with people and most of her actions are motivated by her desire to help others - especially her friends.

Friendship and loyalty.

Jane is very loyal to her young friends. Her close-knit group of castle staff share a real sense of family, they look out for each other, they know each other's funny ways and they get on each other's nerves. But Jane, of course, has one special friend who can sometimes test the love and loyalties of the whole group.

Togetherness and love.

Jane and the Dragon are best friends and share an unassailable bond. Their relationship is developing all the time. Together, they find out new things about each other and the world. Like most best-friendships when you are growing up, Jane and Dragon's is very intense, very rewarding and sometimes very painful.

Medieval history.

Jane lives in a medieval castle, a strictly hierarchical little world. She is a knight and most of her friends are castle staff with obligations attached to their positions within the castle society. As much as Jane sees the absurdities of her world, and as much as she would love to see these medieval attitudes change, there is a practical reality to her day to day life, and she has to deal with it.

Comedy.

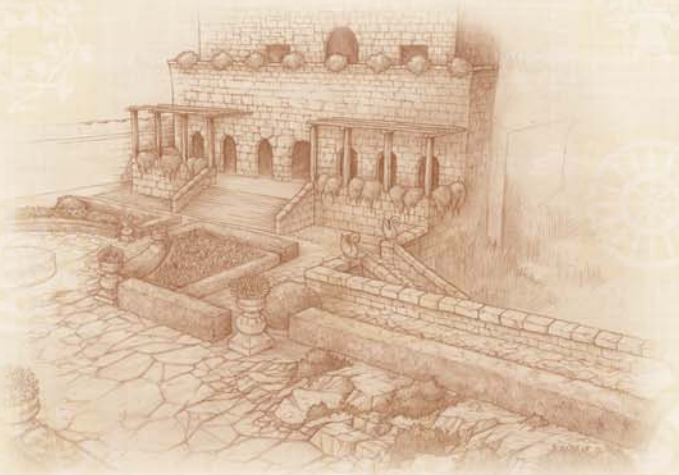
The things that medieval folk had to put up with sure can be funny! But most comedy will come from the characters themselves, and they really do need a sense of humour to cope with their day-to-day life. So, rather than a frenetic gag-based comedy, the humour comes more from the social dynamics between Jane and her friends, and the style of animation allows for a greater range of character expression. They can act funny!

Sample Stories



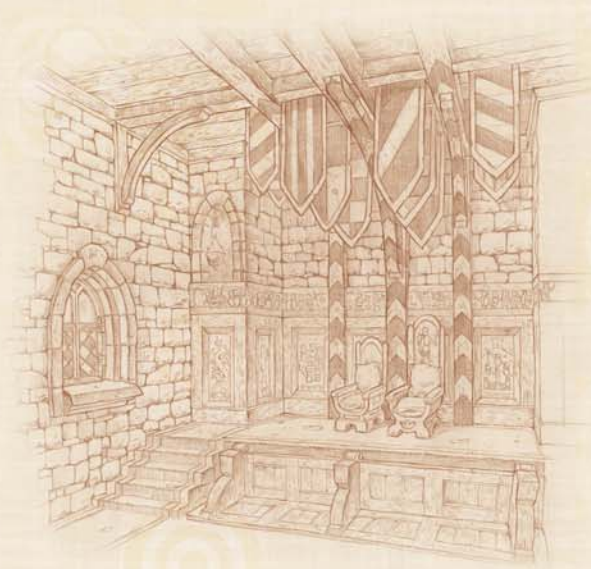
Tests and Jest

One of Jane's regular apprenticeship tests is due - the rescue of a damsel in distress. Everyone thinks Jane is nervous but she insists she is not - so stop saying she is! When Jane discovers that the Prince's endless trips to the kitchen for food are putting the already overworked Pepper under enormous strain, she decides to put herself on the line for her friend. The test's stakes become anything but routine. If she passes the test, then the kitchen will be off limits to the Prince. But if she fails, then Jane will swap her knight's armor for an apron in the kitchen. Jane's knight apprenticeship will be over. Now Jane really is nervous. Oh yes.



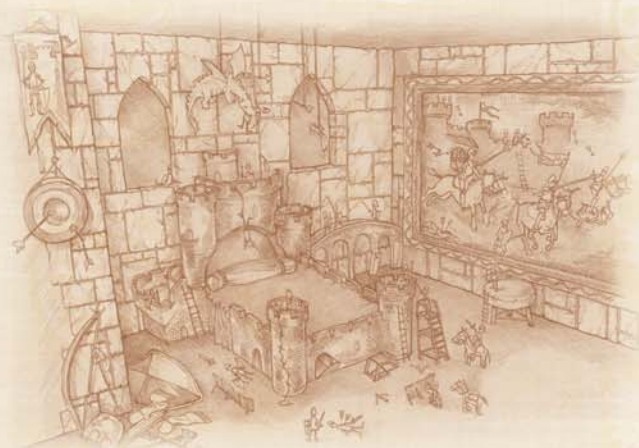
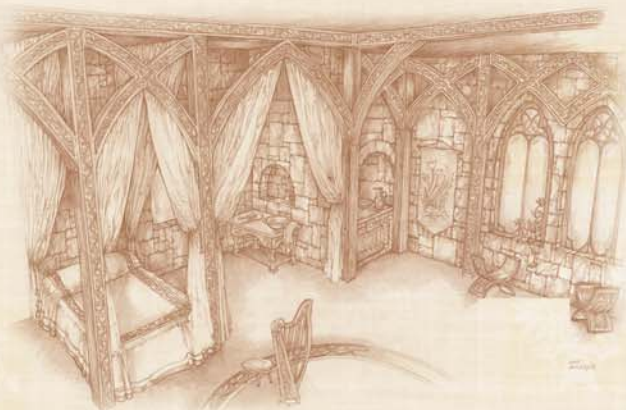
Jester Justice

Jane loves Jester's hilarious mimicking of Ivon and convinces him to do just one more performance for Smithy. Big mistake. Ivon catches Jester mid flow and demands his honour be avenged in a duel. Jester is terrified, and Jane feels terrible - she got him in to this now she has to try and get him out. So Jane tries everything she can to intervene. But Jester is not happy that Jane would have such little faith in him- he refuses to run away from the fight. Her friend is doomed! But come the big duel, Jester is more of an opponent than anyone may have thought. If only Jane had learnt to trust in her friend's resourceful cleverness more.



Home Guard

The royal hunting party is away for the day, and the King has left Jane in charge of the castle. Jane is nervous - it's a massive responsibility. But it's also just her and her friends for the day - cool! However, when Jane spots a plume of smoke on the horizon, she convinces herself an army is on its way to attack the castle. But turning your friends in to a fighting force is hard work. How will they repel an enemy when they're only a few kids with a bit of courage and a lot of imagination? Jane finally overcomes her inexperience and everyone's shortcomings to organize a good defense... except the attackers they defend the castle against are, ahem, the returning royal hunting party!



Brat For The Day

It's the Prince's birthday but there are no presents. Jane convinces her friends to make some so he won't be disappointed, but the Prince is unimpressed with the results. Instead he wants a ride on Dragon. But Dragon refuses, he is not a performing pony! To avert a crying fit, the King makes the Prince 'king for the day' instead. A collective groan is heard, an eight-year-old with absolute power - bright idea. The Prince's increasingly ridiculous proclamations test everyone's resolve, particularly Jane's when he makes her his personal retainer. Jane must go above and beyond the call of duty to save everyone's day, even the Prince's. If only she can get her friendship with Dragon back on track

I Don't Want To Dance

Everyone is hard at work getting ready for the castle ball. But Jane is distracted. Her knight's practice has gone badly; her footwork needs improving. So Jane decides to miss the ball and concentrate on her training instead. Jane's friends can't believe it, and the Princess especially feels let down. They plead for her to attend, but when Rake finds someone has been stealing his roses, Jane has her excuse and volunteers for duty to catch the thief. Jane uses some fancy dance steps to catch him; and it turns out to be Ivon picking flowers for his girlfriend. Jane celebrates by having one dance in the moonlight with the Princess. Who says Jane can't act like a girl and be a knight at the same time?





*The sky is the limit. We can be whoever we want to be - my dragon and me,
and no beef-brained, nettle-head is going to tell us otherwise!*

So Medieval.