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a book about dragons, fairies, wizards, definitions, and finding magic in everyday life

You might never see those magic fairies with the forms of tiny people and the crystal wings of flies, But nature's fairies are flying all around us, the Hummingbird, the Dragonfly, Butterfly, the narrow-waisted Wasp, the Chubby Beetle, lifting up its shells and spreading into flight.

Perhaps you'll never see a dragon with Leather wings and burning breath, But nature's dragons show themselves in many forms: the Gartter Snake, the Boa, the Iguana and Komodo Dragon, and whipllike tails, regal with their long and the Bearded Dragon with its mane of spines, the bones and teeth of ancient giant dragons like the Spinosaurus and the Mosasaur.

The mermaid and the unicorn Are real, though very rare. They just don't look the way they do in books... they're plump and gray and go by other names: Rhinoceros and Manatee.

Witches, sorcerers and wizards and enchanters are among us, but they don't wear cloaks or pointed hats (unless they feel like it).

Or could you still be a wizard if you did all those same astounding things, but in your own way, using only ordinary pieces of the ordinary world, enchanted only with your cleverness? Would you still be a wizard?

Do you need to ride across a field of clouds astride a knotted wooden straw-thatched broom, or write an incantation with an ancient quill on parchment that enchants your thoughts and sends them off in secret to another person's mind?

What does someone need to have to be a wizard? Do you need a dusty cloak, a wrinkled, pointed hat, a wand of ancient oak inlaid with gems? Or could you still be a wizard In faded jeans, a sweater and a pair of mismatched socks?

Do you need a glow of magic light that you can call forth from your wand to light the way in darkness? Do you need a crystal gazing ball to scry and spy into a far-off place?

What is a wizard? Have you ever seen one? How can you be sure if you're a wizard or you're not?

What is a fairy? Have you ever seen one? How can you be sure if something is a fairy or it's not?

What does someone need to have to be a fairy? Does it need clear and iridescent wings? Or could there be a wingless fairy that climbed the poppy-stems to see across the field and swung from spider-webs to play at flight?

Does it need to be as clever as a person, or could it still be a fairy if it had a simple little mind like butterflies and ladybugs? Does it need magic powers to grant wishes, and give gifts of spells to newborn princesses? Or could it live a plain and ordinary life, eat, sleep and raise its children just like any other creature?

Does it need a human shape? Or could it still be a fairy with the body of a cat, a squirrel, or a frog, or a raccoon, or some strange-looking thing you've never seen? Would that still be a fairy?

Does it need to be as tiny as the blossom of a bleeding-heart? Or could there be a fairy just as tall as you Who held your hand and walked the garden paths beside you, keeping up, with steps as long as yours? Would that still be a fairy?

Does it have to be gigantic, tower taller than a castle, with its teeth as big as swords? Or could there be a dragon that could curl up in your hands no bigger than a newborn kitten? Would that still be a dragon?

Or could a dragon live out in a desert, burrowed in the sand, or on an iceberg in the ocean, or in a garden, or a treetop nest and steal no gold except the golden grain it scavenges from farmland to bring home and eat by moonlight, instead of knights and damsels? Would that still be a dragon?

Does it need to live inside a mountain filled with hoarded gold like honey in a tree? Does it need to capture maidens, fight the knights who come to rescue, then devour them with relish like a beast?

Define a Dragon

What is a dragon? Have you ever seen one? How can you be sure if something is a dragon or it's not?

Does it need to scorch its food with breaths of flame to be a dragon? Or is it still a dragon if it has earthy ordinary breath and eats its dinner fresh and raw and all that flickers from its mouth is that quick-moving tongue to taste the air?

What does something need to have to be a dragon?

Does it need to fly across the sunset on webbed enormous bat-skin wings?

Or can it still be a dragon if its back is bare and it explores the forest or the ocean with its maw and claws and tail, and nothing else?

You may look around at plain and simple life and yearn to feel amazed by magic in the world, by strange and wild things you've never seen before ...and, yes,by all means, go explore, discover something new, and then, when that new thing gets old, keep finding newer things...

But don't forget, between discoveries, to learn to feel the wonder of the ordinary things you see each day, the fairies and the dragons in the garden, the miracle of writing, and the sorcery of speech, the magic everywhere that's just as wondrous as the magic in a story or a dream.

Their magic is in tools and in machines, and they can fly, make light from darkness, send their thoughts from one mind to another using only pen and paper, and they can see what's happening a thousand miles away, then travel there within a day.

And sometimes we still wish for wonder. But, if fairies like the ones in stories came out of hiding and we saw them every day, we'd be amazed a little while,

but then get used to them and find them just as ordinary as dragonflies and lizards and the neighbors from next door.

Their magic can be big or small, as complex as an airplane or as simple as a book. If you can read this, you have magic too.