A Fighting Words NI creative writing adventure



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Northern Ireland Executive







New Worlds A Fighting Words NI anthology

featuring contributions from Fane Street Primary School Scoil an Droichid Victoria Park Primary School Holy Family Primary School



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Foreword | Councillor Kate Nicholl, Lord Mayor of Belfast

At Belfast City Council, we've observed the New Worlds project come to fruition with delight.

We're bowled over by the incredible creativity and generosity of spirit between these pages; and it's our pleasure to have made this important project possible, in conjunction with Fighting Words NI.

Belfast has a historic and remarkable affiliation with creative writing and boasts a rich, diverse and accomplished writing community. Building on that affiliation, Fighting Words NI has brought four schools from across Belfast into dialogue with one another for the New Worlds project. This has been especially valuable after a time when community, communication, meeting and hearing new people – and encountering other people's imaginations – has been so severely restricted during the global pandemic.

The young people who have written the stories in this anthology have developed the brightest of ideas, imagined entirely new communities, and have sought to help, repair and make contact with places they have never been.

We are thrilled to read their stories about the spirit of community amidst great, imagined new worlds. And I hope that perhaps we'll find some inspiration in these pages as we work together to make Belfast an even kinder, more equal and more welcoming city.

Belfast Lord Mayor, Councillor Kate Nicholl





Foreword | **The Executive Office**

Fighting Words NI's New Worlds project has, despite the challenges of the Covid pandemic, brought together four different schools from four differing parts of Belfast to explore creative writing and expression. Together, 80 primary school pupils have travelled in their imaginations to explore 'new worlds' which they have never been to before – and the results are the amazing stories contained in this anthology.

Financial support from The Executive Office's Central Good Relations Fund has made this project possible, and the Central Good Relations team applaud the flair and remarkable connectivity and generosity that these children display in their writing.

It is these acts of imaginative transport that remind us that our future is in good hands with these young, confident and exciting voices!

We congratulate Fighting Words Northern Ireland on the delivery of this inclusive and innovative project which has been successfully completed despite the restrictions that have remained in place during the past year.

Central Good Relations Team, The Executive Office







Origin Stories

Dead Foot, imagined by Ms. Rafferty's Class, Fane Street Primary School

"The Adventure of Time"

Once upon a time, Linda saw her father talking to his friends about getting a blood sample. She went near them and asked what they were talking about.

"Nothing," her father replied, stopping one of his friends from answering. After that, the father told his friend: "Don't tell her!" He knew that she was a very curious person and would go to his office to find out.

In his office, there was a secretales from solat portal that took you to the new world and everyone was fighting over it. The portal was black and green, purple and blue, hidden behind a bookcase. Linda went through the portal with Lima, her tiger friend, but her Dad decided to take revenge! He took the portal away. He had a secret code on the door and had to put the numbers in.

Linda arrived on Dead Foot and looked behind her. The portal was gone! She panicked and started to look around for any clues. There were a bunch of animals combined. Five animals were fighting over food – mac & cheese! Linda and Lima watched as a half-eagle, half-hippo fought a half-robot, half-tiger. They thought they were crazy. The animals were fighting on the ground, crawling around like babies. Linda tried to split them up but it wasn't working – they kept coming back together.

They couldn't take it anymore. Linda and Lima put a potion in them so they could separate...

Credit: Conor Brannigan





Alteria, created by Ms. Gregory's class, Holy Family Primary School

"Patrice & the Glowing Forest"

Once upon-a-glow there was a magical glowing planet called Alteria, so you see. There was a hidden crystal in the forest called Diablo. There were some people that glowed too. They were smart in their own special way. When they ate the mushrooms it made them glow.

But a century ago four humans went missing when they were looking for the magic crystal.

Patrice was an ogre with ginger hair, 80s style flares and a positive mindset. She really liked humans even though the other ogres didn't.

(2)

Patrice found the old camera of the people who'd gone missing. The footage showed them at the Turning Clock City, within the rainforest. Their names were Kevin, Cod, Cosmo and Fritz. They had left a note with the camera which said, 'If we go missing...' but the location was smudged. Under the mud, near the camera, Patrice found part of a ripped map...

The End, conceived by Ms. McParland's Class, Scoil an Droichid

"The Quest for Life"

It was dark, there was no food and Sam was standing at the entrance to the headquarters down a back alley. There was a tunnel that went underground to a big, abandoned military bunker with computers and security monitors and other stuff that they needed to survive, like food and beds.

Something bad had happened. The End used to be filled with light and happiness.

Josh was sitting at a computer searching for any sign of life online...







An unnamed bar in the 1990s. created by Mr. Ryden's Class, Victoria Park Primary School.

"The Cat and Koala That Didn't Come Back" - the case of the stairwell that makes people disappear

In the 1990s, at a bar, there was a mysterious cat called Sir Maximus dressed in a bowtie. He was really good at tapdancing because he'd been dancing for 10 years, he loved how fun it was. Sir Maximus he danced 24/7! He was waiting for his friend Fluffy the orange koala. Fluffy came in and said happily to Sir Maximus. "Have you got the coconuts?!"

Fluffy was worried about dropping his coconuts in case they cracked. They were very breakable coconuts, and Sir Maximus had them packed in a metal box. Fluffy thought they were upstairs, so he went upstairs to check...

Four hours later, they had a performance soon and Maximus was worried they were going to miss it!

Sir Maximus went to check for his friend, and he found him upstairs juggling coconuts. It was all dark around him though, and Fluffy's fur had become colourless. Everything in that space was dull. Maximus felt confused. The room looked like it was never-ending...

"Fluffy! Wherever have you been?" he said in a posh English accent. a bit stressed.

"I couldn't find the green ones, so I got the brown ones", Fluffy looked completely relaxed.

"It's been four hours Fluffy! Where have you been? And why are you all black and white?!"...



Helping The Other Worlds



To whoever can read this!

I live in a futuristic, abandoned city called "The End" and we haven't had any electricity or light in as long as I can remember. The sky is so dark even the sun can't get through! I can't see very far ahead of me and I've broken my glasses five or six times...

I've spent many years underground in an old bunker, and the city is crumbling. We need to fix this so we can grow food and fix our world, but how?!

If you are reading this, please help!

A concerned and hungry citizen of The End

••••

I am writing this space-letter from a jungle-forest world called Dead Foot where there are hybrid animals all mixed together. There are half-eagle, half robots; half-hippo, half-walrus; even half-whale, half-panda!

The problem is that there isn't enough food on Dead Foot, and all the animals are fighting really badly over any scrap of food. I don't know what to do, and there's little food left for humans too! The animals' favourite food is mac & cheese but there's barely any left...

If this message is found by anybody out there, give us a sign!

A half-human, halfandroid explorer from Dead Foot

If this message is found by anybody out there, give us a sign!

Dear somebody!

I am from a normal-seeming world, but there is a staircase in the local bar that makes people disappear! I heard a rumour that it leads to a world that is entirely in black and white, and has no music...

People from my city have went missing down there, and some have disappeared looking for their friends, only Fluffy the Orange Koala has managed to escape the scary stairs... I have no idea how to get my friends back, or where this staircase leads. Please help!

Sincerely,

A concerned and increasingly lonely citizen of the 1990s...

....

I wonder if anyone will ever find this...

I am a lone researcher lost on a forest world called Alteria. It's a rainforest world that glows brightly at night. The mushrooms are bio-luminescent and the forest is never dark.

The problem is my human researcher friends have gone missing somewhere in this planet, and the only person keeping me company is a muck-eating mini-ogre called Patrice! She's nice, but I miss my friends from home...

What should I do? I don't know this planet or where to start looking...

Help!

An increasingly grey-haired researcher on Alteria

Victoria Park to Holy Family

- I, Fluffy along with Sir Maximus, are sorry to hear about your problems. But I think I found a solution. The mushrooms can help you... They keep you stuck in a time loop, in my time your friends were found 5 years ago. You must take all the mushrooms out of the forest then defeat Patrice's family, they are the time lords of Alteria!

I really hope you get our reply but! we are in danger also.
We'll happily come and help and then we'll take you back to our school, you'll get free access to our canteen and hot chocolate.
from a mysterious ginger and gold cat that used to be black and white...

- This sounds mysterious... I could help by sending some of our gadgets to you, we have lots but I think these will help: the first one is called the mushroom map, it's a map that has a petri dish on the side if you put a bit of glowing mushroom on it then type the name of your friend in (or even anyone!) it tracks their locations... Ta-da!



Scoil an Droichid to Fane Street

- We got your message! We can help by sending you some tech and mac and cheese. Actually, get your own stuff because we don't have stuff here. Just kidding- I'll send you tech but n othing else.

- I'm helping by sending lots of food so you can eat for your entire life. Sorry for asking this question, but how did your city end up like this? I want you to write to us so we can help fix it, and I hope you live happily ever after.

- You have half animals and we have monsters. We can help each other build weapons! If you see this please reply ASAP.

- We haven't lots of food but we have enough to share. As you can see we taped some food to the bottle...

– I'll send mac and cheese, vodka, and Toblerone. Supplies like DVDS (The Matrix), tents, sleeping bags, robot parts, more Toblerone, and toiletries.

- Dear explorer, we received your letter here in The End, we are running low on food as well, but I'm sure we have enough to share. I put half of everything we have in this bottle! (Including mac & cheese) We can't do any more, enjoy the food! I hope my world and yours will return to normal soon!

From The End P.S. I hope you're doing well



Holy Family to Victoria Park

- I got your message! I'm so sorry your friends have gone. I too have friends that have gone missing. I will do all I can to help, I will come to try to help on the date 3/3/92, hope to see you then. I will bring supplies!

_ _ _

From Fritz, <3

- Dear frightened beings of the 1990s, I am very concerned about the disappearing beings. But I am a magical man! I will bring a magical mushroom from my alternate dimension to help! Keep safe, Sir Cod.

- Recently I was sent a help message from an orange koala??? But seriously. I am from Glasstropolis, and we are on your side. We will nuke this staircase! Please advise quickly. *some time later* You replied quickly to say can we definitely fly everyone out before, do not worry! We are very advanced here at Glasstropolis, so we will open a portal if you send us your postcode.

- Dear concerned citizen of the 1990s, thank you for your letter! I am so sorry to hear that people are disappearing in your world! I have an idea... we have a Mr. Pinecone who is a pinecone dressed as a candy cane. He has loads of experience with disappearances. He can smell people from a mile away! So he could probably find these people? Mr Pinecone will also bring some glowing mushrooms to light up your staircase to see what's down there!

- Thank you for writing! We have crystals that can light up the whole city, we will bring one with us, and will come as soon as possible.

Scoil an Droichid to Fane Street

- This is a person from Dead Foot. We can help by sending some supplies that can last for a month. We can send you 7–10 pounds of glasses. Also, I have a question: how did your world end up like this?

- Linda here. I am writing a letter to you in The End and I didn't know you have lots of problems, and also not a lot of food or electricity. But I can still help you because my machine can make foods. Can I ask a question, is your weather stormy or cloudy?

- I will come to help with ten glasses and mac and cheese and things for your family. By the way, what happened to the sky and why are you underground?

– Firstly, what's your name? It will be okay. My friends and I will help. It's our job.





The Adventure Continues



Credit: Rebecca Samuel

The New Ending by Ilyas, Fane Street PS

One sunny day Linda, the brave traveller, had just woken up. She climbed down her tree where sleep and it had already been one whole month since she got trapped in Dead Foot. She had to find some food so she went to hunt. She walked and walked and found some bananas and to her surprise she saw a letter that said... Dear Linda, we hope this flew in the right direction. If you are reading this please help us, our planet is called The End.

Linda hurried and found some kind of flying machine. She hopped in it and fortunately the letter had the navigations, so in just 1 hour she made it to the End. Linda found Sam and gave her good food and supplies, then left saying Goodbye! Riding some hybrid animals...



The Cyborg Surprise by Finn M., Scoil an Droichid

Sam thought she knew where one of their old friends were. "I think I know where Hugh Man is" said Sam. Josh was confused, he thought Hugh Man was dead.

"Sam Hugh Man is gone" said Josh.

"No! I know where he is" she said, "He is at the ruins of the lab that made the apocalypse." Josh was so happy.

"Then if he's there let's go" said Josh.

They both rushed to their super fast car. They went to the ruins, and they saw Hugh Man getting cornered by a bunch of monsters! Josh and Sam ran over and killed the monsters. "Hugh Man," said Josh.

"Josh," said Hugh Man.

They hugged. Josh and Sam realised that Hugh Man was a cyborg. Then they took Hugh Man back to the abandoned bunker. They ate dinner together. Josh told Hugh Man about the giant monsters that made the city dark and bordered, and also the reason why there are monsters.

"The name of the large monster is Bob."

Josh told Hugh Man about the giant monsters that made the city dark and bordered

The Missing Pinecone by Casey, Holy Family PS

... "WHAT? IT'S RIPPED!!!" yelled Patrice. She was so muddled so she went to ask her best friend Mr. Pinecone, he owned a shop called Pine's Peppermints. When she got there she rang the bell, there was no answer. She rang again. Still no answer, so she broke in! *dramatic music scene!* When she got in she was quite angry so she shouted "Pines you are so lazy!" There was no answer.

"PINES!" He just wasn't there. "Where could he be..." She explored his shop and found a piece of the map and a random piece of the crystal. "What? Why does he have a piece of the crystal..."



Travelling to The End by Hudayfi, Fane Street PS

Linda and Lima tried to travel to The End, but they were still at the start. They were building a machine called Celesor. Linda is a brave girl and Lima is a very good tiger. Now they were at the problem! There was no electricity nor light! They had to work out how they were going to get that hungry child out of that futuristic city, The End. The hungry child has broken his glasses more than 20 times! Linda and Lima got new, unbreakable glasses.

Linda and Lima then travelled to The End... It was so cool! There were flying cars. It looked like somewhere familiar. Then they saw the hungry child! Linda remembers his name. Sam.... It was Sam! They walked up to Sam and Linda said, "We received your letter Sam. We brought you some unbreakable glasses."

Then Lima said, "And we brought you some food. It's mac and cheese! Is it your favourite? I hope it is!"

"Yes, it is my favourite!" said Sam, I really like it, mmmmmm, so yummy. I love it!" Then Linda turned to them both and said,

"Let's get out of here ... "

64 9 0

"Let's get out of here..."

Tobleronel76 for Life is Online by Áine, Scoil an Droichid

After hours of searching online Josh finally found someone. Their online name was Toblerone176 for Life. "I remember that user, it was my brother Toby". Josh thought he had been killed but now knows that he is alive, and might know where he is.

Josh got a bag and put some stuff in it like food and his iPad (but the only way he could charge it is if he goes outside and the thunder from the thunder storm hits the iPad so as it will have electricity and wifi, because wifi is a real problem in The End).

Josh told Sam that they needed to walk across the city to find his brother Toby and Sam said "What? You know that your brother is alive? Why did you not tell me! You need to tell me if we are going to cross the city because then I have to carry you and that takes a lot of my power!"

In a couple of minutes Josh's iPad was charged and he was at his old house! Before the apocalypse Josh's brother Toby had made loads of money from Toblerones so Josh moved into a mansion 4 years ago with his mum, dad, brother, Toby and dog Boba Fett (he is a really, really, really cute little pug). Also his little brother Cole who loved their family's new mansion and especially the pool. He had gone missing a day before the apocalypse and they were sad because they couldn't look for him...

Quest to Figure Out by Oliver, Victoria Park PS

"How do the stairs do that?" said Fluffy.

"I don't know..." said Sir M.

"Maybe one of us could be a sacrifice and stand on the stairs."

"What?! Are you crazy?" replied Sir M.

Fluffy goes to the stairs and drops his coconut but it doesn't disappear, so he stepped on the stair and then his leg disappeared and fell away into the stairs.

When he woke up he was in the planet Alteria. He was in a rainforest and very confused because it was 3:45a.m. and it wasn't dark. He went to the nearest tree and a man saw him and began to sniff him. His name was Mr. Pinecone. He invited me into his house but it blew up! Mr. Pine Cone died but his son didn't, he ran away.

"I need to leave this planet," Fluffy said, "I'm going to take one of these mushrooms I'm so hungry. Oh... why am I dizzy? Oh no."

Fluffy fell and became unconscious...

"Let's get out of here..."



Travelling by Luo Qing, Fane Street PS

One dark day, Linda and Lima had an idea. They found a machine. So they went in, they wanted to try it. But the machine didn't work because there was no electricity... There was no light too. Then Linda and LIma had another idea. Their plan was they needed to fight the monsters, but Linda and Lima were not strong enough to fight this monster. Then Linda and LIma found a hammer on the floor. Then Linda and Lima picked it up, now they need to find the monster! They finally found this monster, and then they got the hammer and fought the monster. Then the monster ran away to a very far place. Linda and Lima lived happy.

Betrayal by Deaglan, Holy Family PS

After Patrice found the map a cow ate her and we never heard of her again. So now we're with Jimmy who owns a futuristic city. But let's get some back story. He was the only explorer, well that's what he said. There was actually 2 Benny Sharp's but they fell out 5 years ago, but for Jimmy it's all coming up Milhouse. He's a multi-billionaire and owns a nation, well actually the earth. Oh you want to know how he got there?

Well him and Benny found the Diablo crystal, and Benny was being selfish and Jimmy told him to get out. There was a button and Jimmy pressed it and a force field came and locked him out. It took a while but he got it. Jimmy put in the work and put in the hours and took what was his. And how here we are. Jimmy is a famous guy with lots of money. He starred in 3 block buster movies. How could I forget - Jimmy is president of Glasstropolis! It is his city, and has the world's biggest McDonald's with the exclusive Big Mac with 5 puns. Isn't that incredible...

Linda and Lima lived happy.



The Disappearing Trick by Luo Qing, Fane Street PS

"What the fishing finger I'm in the room!" should Sir M. with an echo from the room. Sir M sees a mirror and goes up to it. It was dusty and Sir M. wipes it with the end of his jumper. He was shocked to see HE WAS DISAPPEARING from the room!...

3 hours later Sir Maximus woke up in a different dimension. That's when he spotted......Fluffy!

"Fluffy, we have to get out of here!" He screamed, but not as loud as he normally could...

The Travel to the End by Ahmed, Fane Street PS

One normal day at Planet Dead Foot it suddenly became dark and gloomy. Then I saw an envelope coming straight from the sky right at me. I felt the hybrid shaking from fright. As we all ran screaming the slow hybrids such as the snail/slugs were carried by hybrids such as the rhino/elephant. The envelope doubled its speed. I stop to see if the envelope and it did.

"So, the envelope was coming to me." I said, sighing. I got the envelope, opened it and it read You have to come to A2648BC. So I went there and saw a transportation machine. I went onto it with my best hybrid friend the tiger/Komodo dragon and we went to The End. The problem was actually not scary, the monster that stole all life from The End just wanted a friend. Now The End is peaceful and happy.



Now The End is peaceful and happy.

Chapter 2 by Ore, Victoria Park PS

"What are you talking about? Four hours? I think you mean four minutes!" said Fluffy very confused, "and I'm not black and white you are...".

Sir Maximus looked shocked as he looked around the room. "Fluffy look around this room looks never-ending!" exclaimed Sir Maximus. "We need to find a way to get out, we have a show soon."

As soon as he said that smoke appeared, and from it came Dr. Spot the evil dalmatian.

"Hello. We finally meet after all this time..... I am Doctor Spot." He said, evily. "How does it feel to live my colourless life?"

"What are you talking about?!" said Fluffy.

"I steal the colour and make them into my perfect rainbow, and when I have all the colour, I will shoot it to the sky and all the colour will be gone forever."

"But why though" said Fluffy.

"Because all my life I have been all black and white and people made fun of me for that!" shouted Dr. Spot. And with that he disappeared.

"Maximus, we need to get out!" said Fluffy.

"But how?" Maximus replied.

"I don't know, but we will figure it out" Fluffy said. They started to look around to find something they could use to get out...

Happy: The Search for Life by Caragh, Scoil an Droichid

5 people were online. His face was happy but Sam was very unsure why people were online.

Josh: Sam! People are online! Sam: I know... Josh: Sam, are you ok? Sam: Yep...

Josh was unsure why Sam was so unhappy about it, but all he wanted was people to be safe, but Sam did not seem to be the same way... At night Josh went outside to find these 5 people when Sam grabbed him!

Sam: What are you doing?! You're going to die! Josh: I don't care! They are the ones going to die! Sam: ... You're right, but I'm going with you. Josh: Yes! Come on!

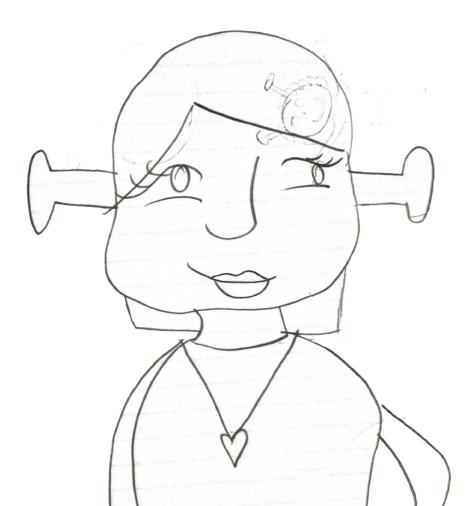
To be continued...



Mr. Pine Cone by Erin Rose, Holy Family PS

Patrice was curious. What was the map for? Why was it here? Who placed it here? Is it a trap?! Her head was going wild. She didn't know what to do... then out of nowhere a candy cane... no... a pine cone. She didn't know. Then the mysterious creature introduced himself: "Hello, I'm the one and only Mr. Pine Cone!" he said loudly, "and you are?"

Patrice was confused. "Hey, I'm Patrice," she said, "why are you shaped like a..." she paused, thinking it would be impolite. She then said to Mr. Pine Cone, "We need to find the rest of the map, it's probably in the forest somewhere." Mr. Pine Cone sighed. "How will we find it? Patrice decided to make a plan...





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Victoria Park Primary School:

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New Worlds is part of Fighting Words NI's school engagement programme, a set of creative writing workshops that explore 'difference' and 'similarity' between the pupils' worlds, and transporting one another imaginatively to other worlds. Schools were paired across communities and the entire city, and have begun an imaginative and creative dialogue. The four schools represented here represent a geographic and community mix across Belfast. The New Worlds project would not have been possible without generous funding from Belfast City Council and The Executive Office's Central Good Relations Fund.

We at Fighting Words NI are tremendously indebted and grateful to our funders; to the teachers at Victoria Park PS, Fane Street PS, Scoil an Droichid, and Holy Family PS; and to the tremendously gifted and inventive writers who have taken part in this project.











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