

## Praise for *The Witch's Boy*

‘With its family secrets, dark and enchanted forest and resourceful children, *The Witch's Boy* echoes the spirit and tone of old Grimm's fairy tales . . . This spellbinding fantasy begs for a cozy chair, a stash of Halloween candy and several hours of uninterrupted reading time.’  
– *Washington Post*

‘Barnhill creates an absorbing world of kingdoms and prophecies in which transformation comes through language, and through courage and self-awareness as well . . . [*The Witch's Boy*] should open young readers' eyes to something that is all around them in the very world we live in: the magic of words.’ – *New York Times*

‘The classic fantasy elements are all there, richly reimagined, with a vivid setting, a page-turning adventure of a plot, and compelling, timeless themes.’  
– *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

‘In a story of an unexpected hero, a thief's daughter, and some very tricky magic, Barnhill weaves a powerful narrative.’  
– *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

A *Washington Post* Best Book of 2014  
A *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of 2014  
A *Kirkus Reviews* Best Children's Book of 2014



## Praise for *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*

THE NO. 1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER AND  
NEWBERY MEDAL WINNER

‘This beautifully written, darkly funny coming-of- age story will enchant and entertain. And there’s a teeny, tiny dragon, too.’ – *Daily Mail*

‘A poignant, humorous fantasy with glints of Margaret Mahy, Neil Gaiman and Robin McKinley. This is a gorgeously satisfying novel, full of archetypal, bone-deep fairy-tale resonances.’ – *Guardian*

‘This is a truly beautiful and magical fairy tale that deserves to become a classic in the future.’ – *Books for Keeps*

‘Impossible to put down . . . *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* is as exciting and layered as classics like *Peter Pan* or *The Wizard of Oz*.’ – *New York Times*

‘. . . this epic coming-of- age fantasy had me charmed . . . A fairytale with a difference, this is about finding your power and what it is to belong, captured in richly textured prose in a beautifully realised fantasy world.’  
– *The Bookseller*

‘Guaranteed to enchant, enthrall, and enmagick . . . Replete with traditional motifs, this non-traditional fairy tale boasts sinister and endearing characters, magical elements, strong storytelling, and unleashed forces.’  
– *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review



The  
Witch's  
Boy

Also by KELLY BARNHILL

*The Girl Who Drank the Moon*

The  
Witch's  
Boy

Kelly Barnhill

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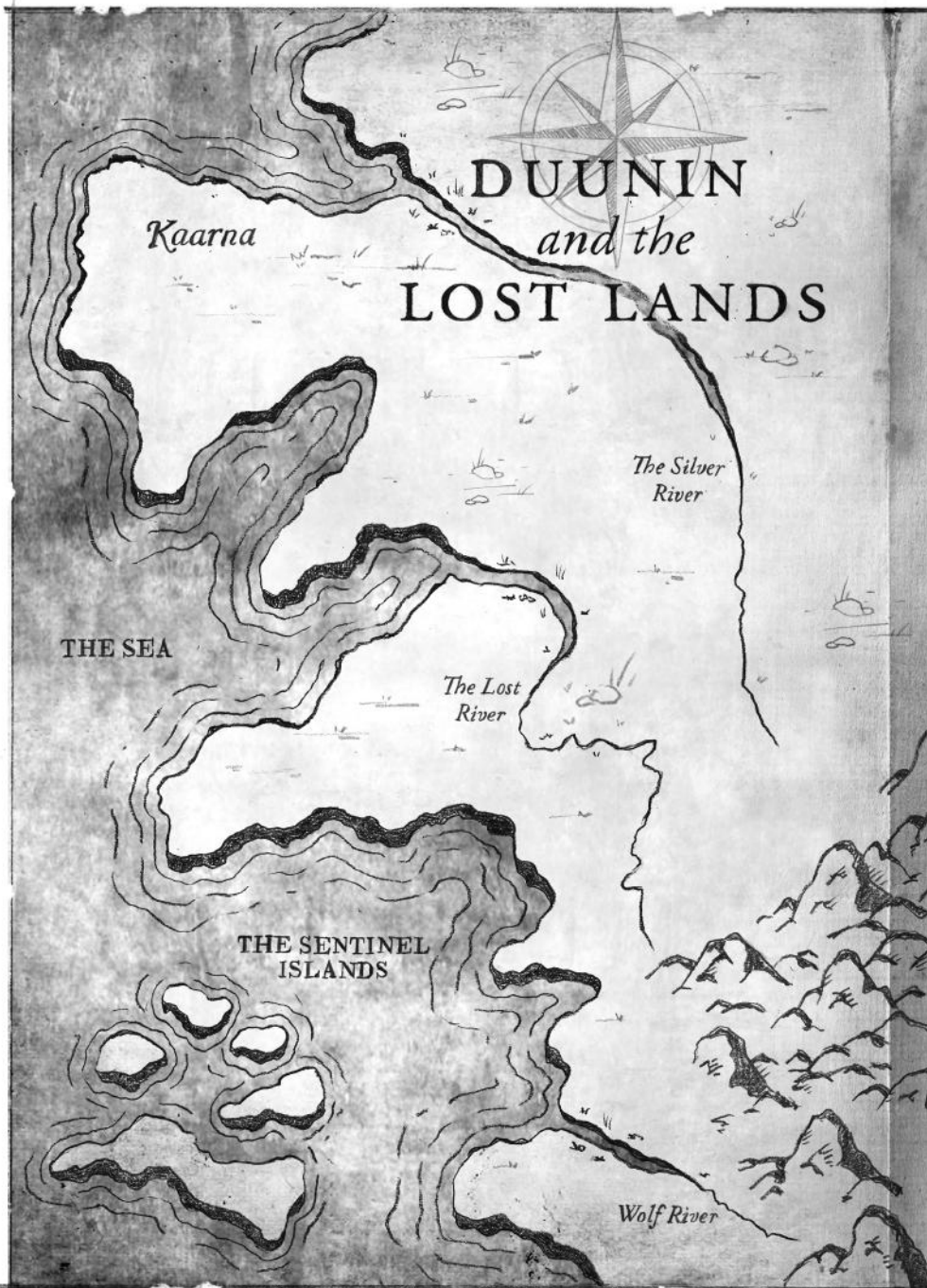
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*To Jake Sandberg—  
cousin, co-adventurer, associate schemer,  
and my first best friend—  
this book is lovingly dedicated.*



**DUUNIN**  
*and the*  
**LOST LANDS**

*Kaarna*

*The Silver  
River*

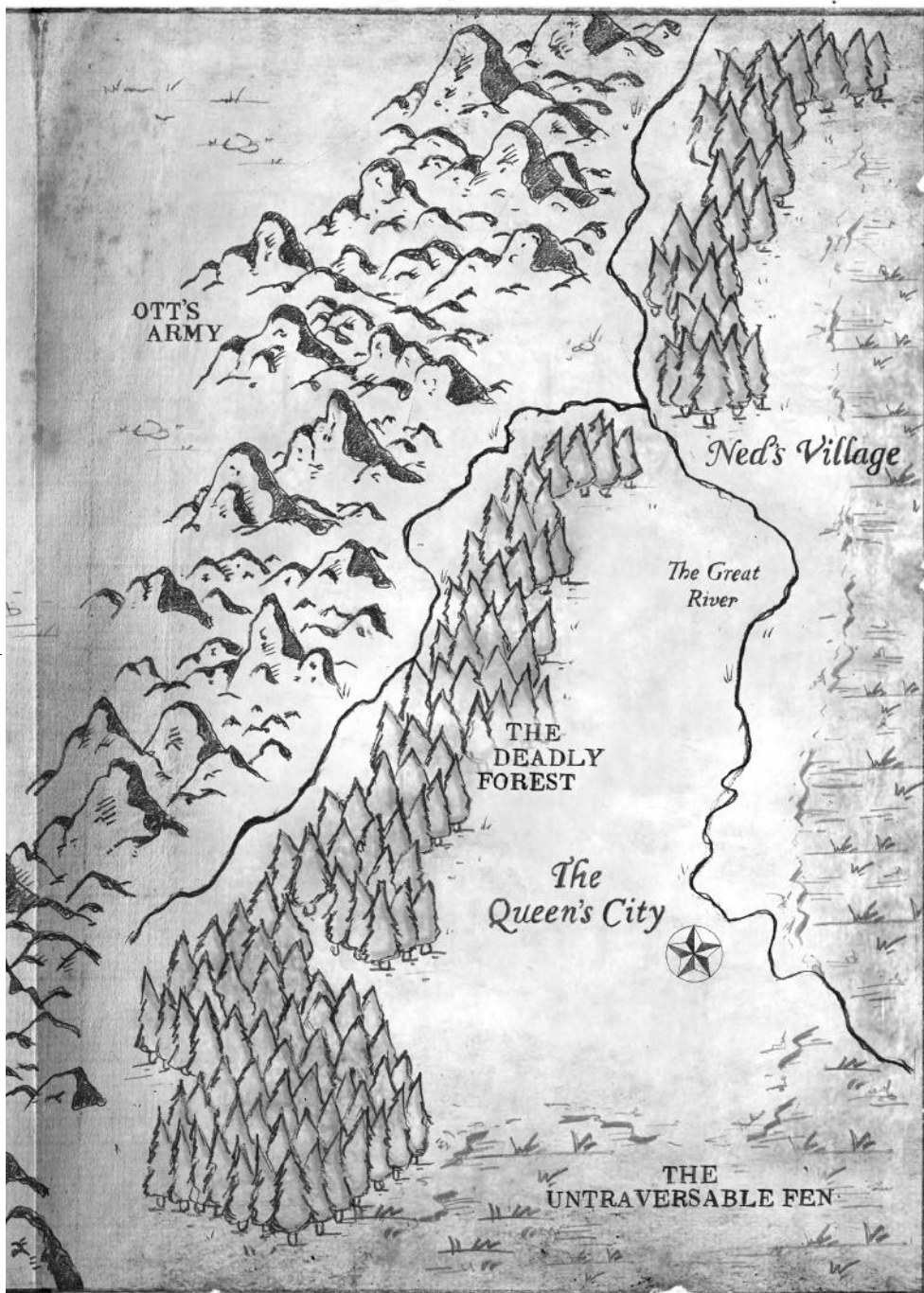
**THE SEA**

*The Lost  
River*

**THE SENTINEL  
ISLANDS**

*Wolf River*





OTT'S  
ARMY

*Ned's Village*

*The Great  
River*

THE  
DEADLY  
FOREST

*The  
Queen's City*

THE  
UNTRAVERSABLE FEN







# 1

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## THE TWINS

ONCE UPON A TIME there were two brothers, as alike to one another as you are to your own reflection. They had the same eyes, the same hands, the same voice, the same insatiable curiosity. And though it was generally agreed that one was slightly quicker, slightly cleverer, slightly more wonderful than the other, no one could tell the boys apart. And even when they thought they could, they were usually wrong.


“Which one has the scar on his nose?” people would ask. “Which is the one with the saucy grin? Is Ned the smart one, or is it Tam?”

*Ned*, some said.

*Tam*, said others. They couldn’t decide. But surely, one was better. It stood to reason.


“For god’s sakes, boys,” their exasperated neighbors would sigh, “will you stand still so we may look at you properly?”






The boys would not stand still. They were a whirlwind of shrieks and schemes and wicked grins. They would not be pinned down. And so the question of which one was the quick one, the clever one, the more wonderful one, remained a subject of some debate.

One day, the boys decided it was high time that they built a raft. Working in secret, and with great attention to detail, they constructed it using scraps of lumber and bits of rope and cast-off pieces of broken furniture and sticks, careful to hide their work from their mother. Once they felt the vessel was seaworthy, they slid it into the Great River and climbed aboard, hoping to make it to the sea.



They were mistaken. The vessel was not seaworthy. Very quickly, the rushing currents pulled the raft apart, and the boys were thrown into the water, fighting for their lives.



Their father, a broad, strong man, dove into the water, and though he could barely swim, struggled through the current toward his children.

A crowd gathered at the edge of the water. They were afraid of the river—afraid of the spirits that lived in the water who might snatch a man if he wasn't careful and pull him toward the dark muck at the bottom. They did not dive in to assist the man or his drowning children. Instead, they called out helpful comments to the terrified father.

“Mind you keep their heads above the water when you drag them back,” one woman yelled.

“And if you can only save one,” a man added, “make sure you save the *right* one.”

The current separated the boys. The father couldn't save them both. He kicked and swore, but as he reached one boy—the closer boy—his twin had been swept far down the length of the river and out of sight. His body washed ashore later that day, swollen and aghast. The people gathered around the small, dead child and shook their heads.

“We should have known he'd bungle it,” they said.

“He saved the wrong one. The wrong boy lived.”