

Chitra Soundar

Illustrated by Fay Austin

**NO
PETS
ALLOWED!**

BLOOMSBURY

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BLOOMSBURY EDUCATION
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Contents

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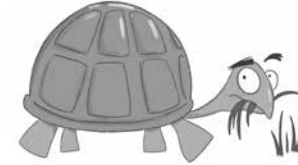
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Chapter One	5
Chapter Two	17
Chapter Three	25
Chapter Four	37
Chapter Five	48



Chapter One

Keva Kailash loved helping out at Grandpa's pet adoption centre – Wild Friends. Grandpa rescued abandoned pets and looked after them until he placed them in loving homes. Before Grandpa opened Wild Friends, he used to be a travelling vet, looking after pets on cruises or animals that had to travel far to return to the wild.



Keva lived with Mum and Grandpa in the flat above Wild Friends. She helped out with chores like cleaning cages and tanks, writing name tags in English and Latin and making fact sheets for each of the animals.

Keva loved all the animals that were brought to the centre – the big ones, the small ones, the long ones and the short ones. She loved pretty birds and ugly frogs. She loved creatures that crawled and those that swam. She loved critters, crocs, beetles, bunnies, elephants, giraffes... and the list went on.

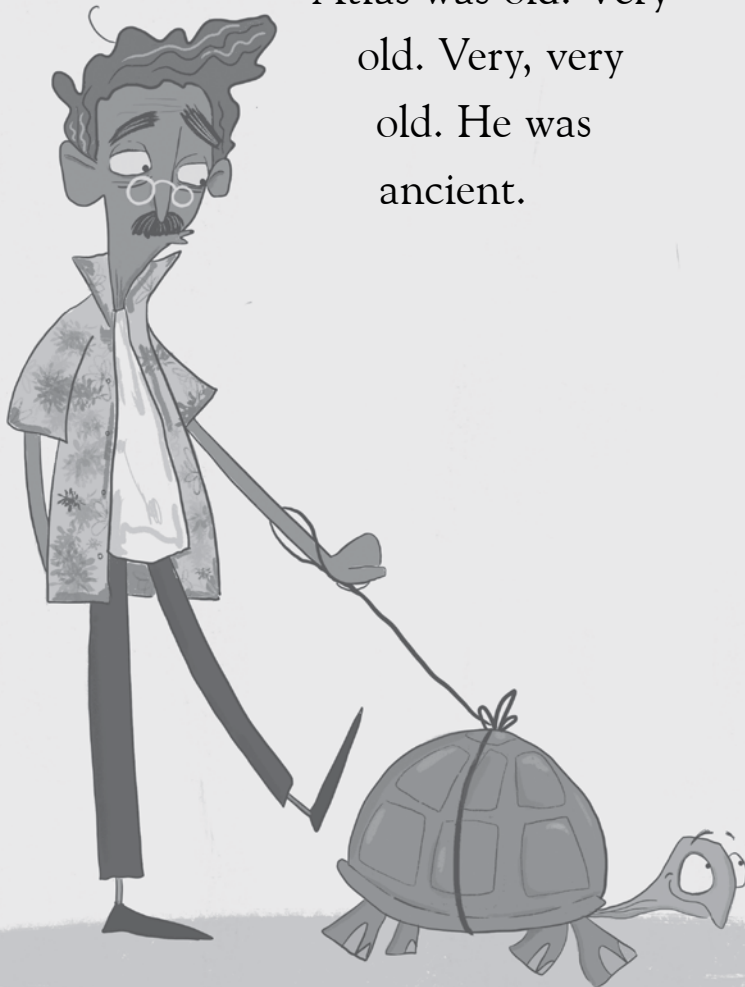


But the animal she loved the most was Atlas.



Atlas was not rescued and he was definitely not up for adoption. Atlas was Grandpa's pet tortoise.

Atlas was old. Very old. Very, very old. He was ancient.



Fact sheet for Atlas

Class: Reptilia

Genus: manouria

Species: manouria emys

Common name: Asian Giant Tortoise

Favourite food:

- Lettuce
- Dandelions
- Bamboo

Favourite hobbies:

- Listening to Grandpa's stories about his life on the sea.
- Going on walks with Grandpa every day.

Best friends:

- Grandpa (and now Keva too).

Grandpa and Atlas had been together ever since Grandpa was a little boy. Atlas even had a passport and went with Grandpa on all his voyages. Even now when Grandpa went on holidays, Atlas went with him in a mobile home that Grandpa had made just for him.



Inside the mobile home there was a water fountain, a grassy patch, some rocks and stones to climb and a food bowl. Keva often brought some lettuce for Atlas before school when Grandpa was opening the centre. It was good that Atlas liked lettuce because Keva wasn't very fond of it.

Saturdays were the busiest days at Wild Friends. But one Saturday, when Keva ran into the centre with a big bag of lettuce for her animal friends, Grandpa had not opened the front doors yet. He was placing food into cups for each of the animals.

“Why haven’t you opened the doors yet, Grandpa?”



“Ah, we’re closed for the day,” said Grandpa.

“But why?” asked Keva. She was hoping to hang out with Atlas and Grandpa.

Grandpa clucked his tongue. A lizard clucked back.

“I’m off to Cavendish General for the day,” said Grandpa.

“What’s that?” asked Keva.

Atlas looked up as if he too wanted to know.

“It’s a hospital, Keva,” said Grandpa. “Where doctors and nurses hustle and bustle doing stuff.”

Keva opened and closed her mouth like Atlas did.

“Are you poorly?” she whispered.

“Not at all!” said Grandpa.

“Then why are you going there?”

“To get my MOT,” said Grandpa.

“What’s MOT?” asked Keva.

Atlas looked up again, as if he didn’t know either.

“It’s when the doctors test me from top to bottom to see if I’m good to run for a few more years,”



said Grandpa. “Now off you go and do whatever you do on Saturdays.”

“I help out here,” wailed Keva.

“Not today, my sweet,” said Grandpa. “But if you want something to do, I have a job for you.”

“Yes, please,” Keva said quickly.

“Will you look after Atlas for me?” he asked. “I can’t take him with me to the hospital.”

That was very odd. Grandpa had never been without Atlas. But Keva was happy that Grandpa trusted her to look after Atlas.

“I’ll take good care of him,” said Keva, touching Atlas on his back.