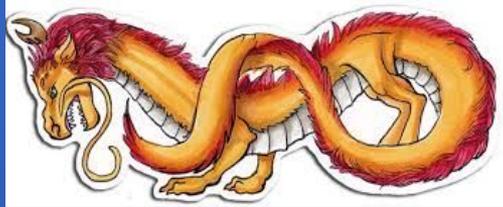


*The Tale of Arline
and the Bookmark
Dragon*



**By: John, Ali, Alex,
and Alexis**

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Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Arline who was born in Brooklyn. She loved to read and had two little brothers, one was 12 years younger, and the other was 5 years younger. One day, Arline was babysitting her brothers. Her mom came home and said to Arline, “Ok you are done watching the boys for the day. You can walk to the library if you want.” “Ok,” Arline responded but inside Arline thought, “YES!!” She was excited to get some new books since all her books were finished a long time ago.



Her brothers started scurrying across the apartment playing tag as Arline packed up her books and started to walk to the library. As Arline walked holding her library books, she saw a happy group of kids running to the nearby candy shop with handfuls of money. Arline didn't care because she didn't need money. She knew she could borrow 6 books at a time with no exchange. As she got about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way to the library, she had entered the Business District. Arline saw sharp dressed men and women heading home from work, but they all seemed to be running holding their briefcases.



At last she reached the library and walked up the nine big steps. She walked in and returned her books. Arline heard the brainy librarian say, “You should challenge yourself and read a 900 page book.” “Sure,” she responded in an amazed voice, she was ready for the challenge. She walked to the history section and opened up a British book as thick as her arm. She couldn’t wait to read it so she found a quiet sunny spot in the corner.



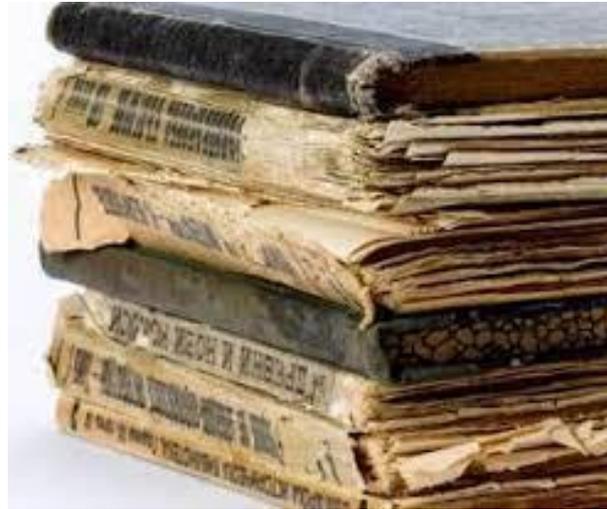
She excitedly opened up her new book. Arline started to read page one when all of sudden the library went dark and the pages in front of her eyes started to glow. Arline didn't know what was happening but she her felt her feet begin to float in the air. Arline closed her eyes because the light from the pages became brighter and brighter. Her body felt like it was in a swimming pool filled with warm water. She decided to open her eyes to try to figure out what was going on when she realized she was no longer in the library but instead inside the pages of her book.



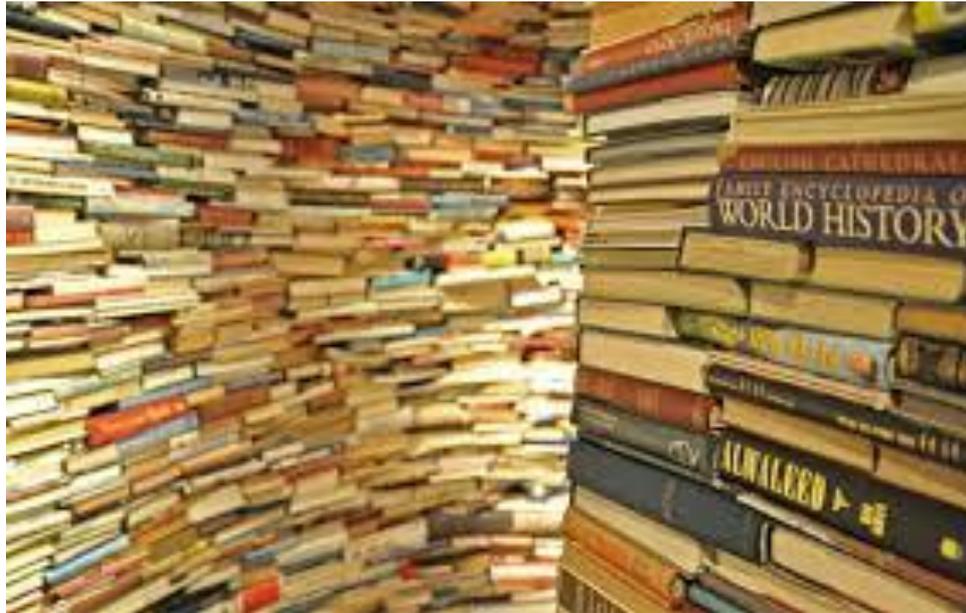
After Arline got sucked into the book, she was shocked to see a scary dragon made out of bookmarks, with books for wings. This Bookmark Dragon breathed out damaged books instead of fire. It was also 60 feet tall, made of all different colors, had sharp teeth made of the hard book covers and a gold key around his neck.



Arline said “Hi, Bookmark Dragon, funny seeing you here. I love reading all types of books.” The Bookmark Dragon suddenly breathed out the damaged books. Arline became upset because the books were so damaged that she cannot read them. Arline picked up the damaged hardcover books that the dragon flung at her head and threw them at his pinky toe. The dragon ate the books, and got bigger and grew a second head.



Arline was scared and covered her eyes. She thought, “What is this dragon going to do now?” Suddenly the Bookmark Dragon lowered his head and opened up his mouth. Arline tried to escape but the dragon was too fast. Arline went into the dragon’s mouth. Inside was a large library filled with all of her favorite books. The dragon closed his mouth and Arline was trapped inside with thousands of books. How will she decide what book to read first? Will she ever escape?



Arline looked around. She saw a book that's title was How to Escape from the Belly of a Dragon. She eagerly opened it and then gave a sigh of disappointment. The book was blank. Arline remembered her favorite fairy tale when she was younger. It was a story about a brave knight that went to rescue a princess who was held captive by a dragon. In the end, when the knight is cornered by the dragon, the princess picks up the knight's broken sword and starts tickling the dragon with it. The dragon starts laughing and is distracted so the princess and the knight are able to escape.



It's worth a try, Arline thought. She started to tickle the dragon. The dragon giggled and then started roaring with laughter. He was laughing so hard that he didn't notice he had laughed Arline right out of his belly. Arline spied a wooden door behind the dragon. It had to be the way out! Arline crept toward the door. Then she noticed it was locked. *There has to be a key around here somewhere*, she thought. Then she remembered the dragon wore a gold key around his neck. *Oh no! It had to be **the** key.*



Arline quietly walked back to the dragon. He was still laughing so Arline was able to steal the key without him noticing. Arline raced back to the door. She heard the dragon give an angry roar. Fingers trembling, she shoved the the key into the lock. *Creak*. The door swung open. Arline was through faster than you could blink. She was back in the library. Arline put the book back on the shelf and gathered up her things.



Arline could not believe what had just happened. It seemed like a dream. She waved goodbye to the librarian. Arline climbed down the nine big steps of the library, walked back home, and lived happily ever after.

