

# Tashi

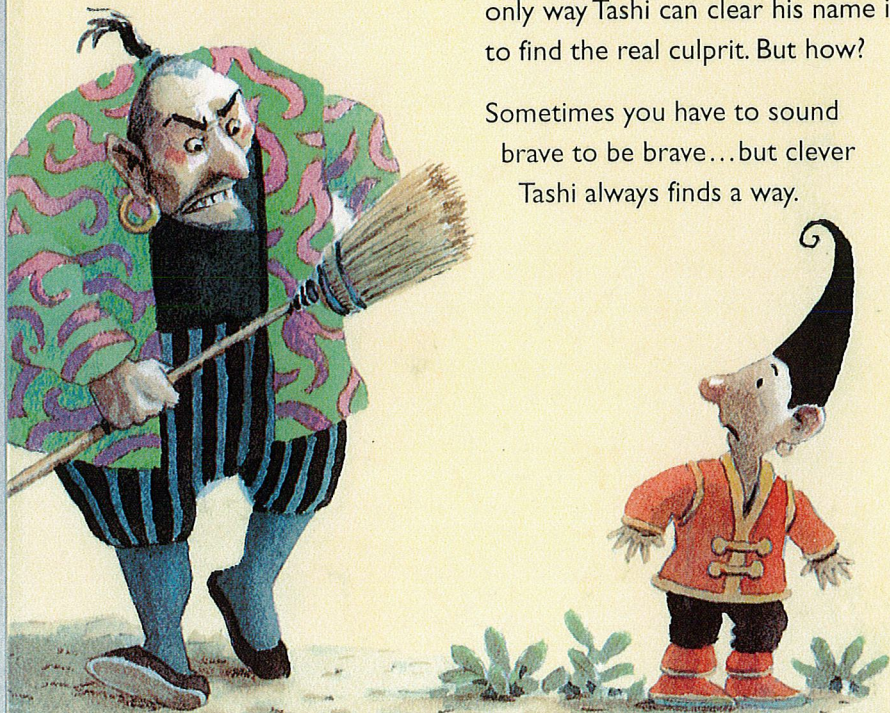
and the  
Mixed-up  
Monster

'Run, children,' said  
Wise-as-an-Owl. 'No, hide!'

Much-to-Learn has got it wrong  
again – he's magicked up a hideous  
monster that's bursting out of the  
garden workshop. And it's coming  
Tashi's way!

Then everyone believes that Tashi  
killed Soh Meen's golden carp. The  
only way Tashi can clear his name is  
to find the real culprit. But how?

Sometimes you have to sound  
brave to be brave...but clever  
Tashi always finds a way.



ALLEN & UNWIN

ISBN 978-1-74175-191-8



9 781741 751918

www.allenandunwin.com

Cover design by Sandra Nobes  
Cover illustrations by Kim Gamble

FICTION

THE BOOK GARDEN  
0634 2658  
£11.95

# Tashi and the Mixed-up Monster

Anna Fienberg  
Barbara Fienberg  
& Kim Gamble

# Tashi

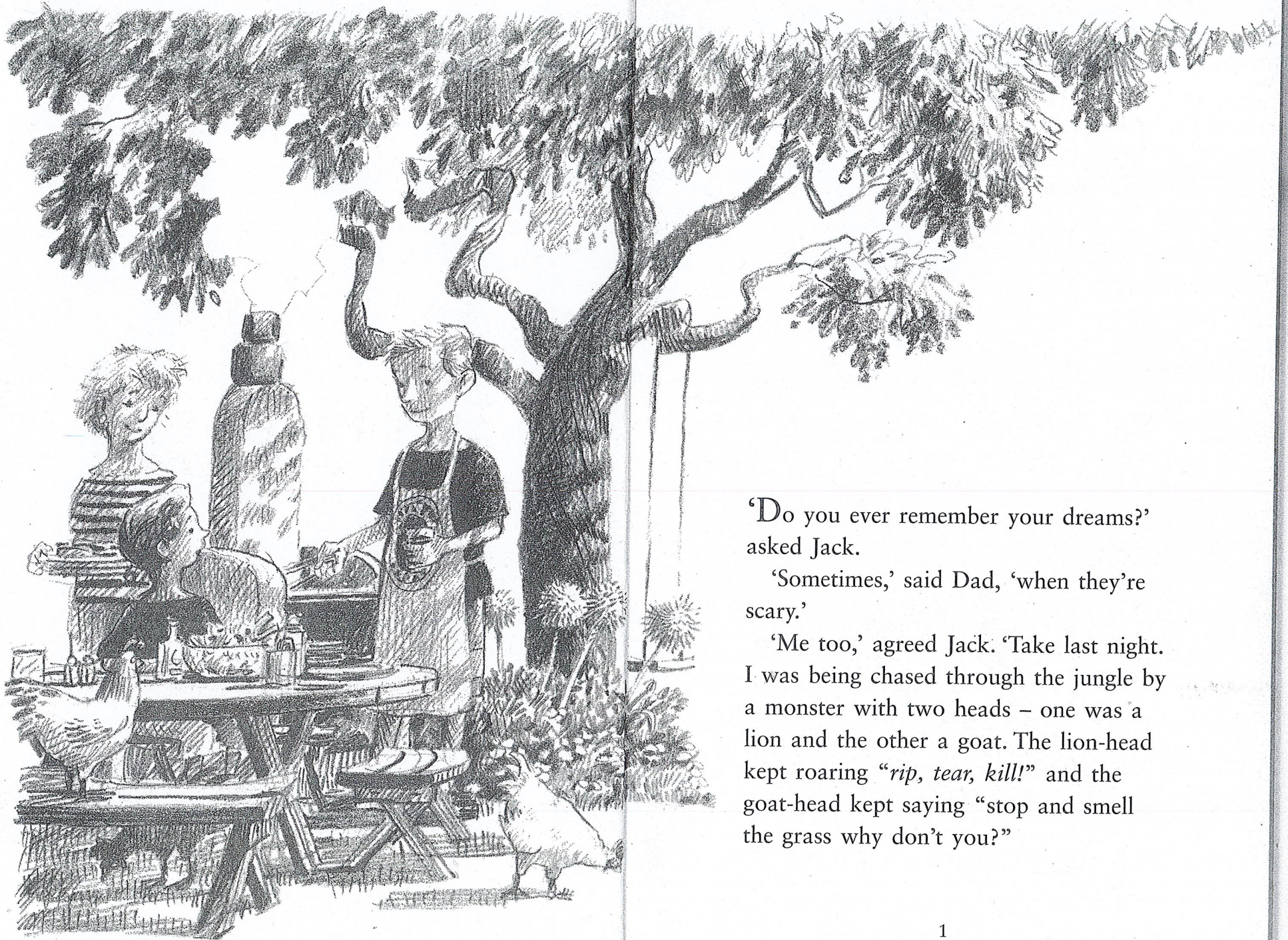


OUR LADY OF DOLOURS



1 4053 21193 5

F  
F  
F  
E



‘Do you ever remember your dreams?’ asked Jack.

‘Sometimes,’ said Dad, ‘when they’re scary.’

‘Me too,’ agreed Jack. ‘Take last night. I was being chased through the jungle by a monster with two heads – one was a lion and the other a goat. The lion-head kept roaring “rip, tear, kill!” and the goat-head kept saying “stop and smell the grass why don’t you?”’

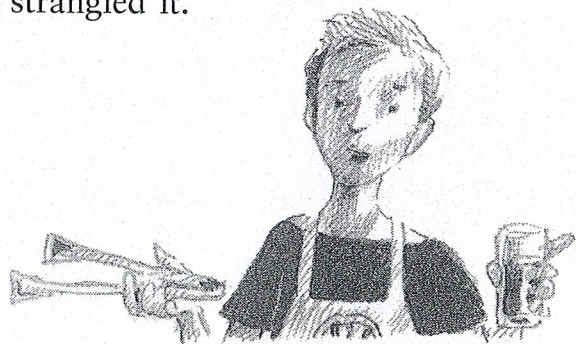
'Gosh. Which jungle was this? The African or the Amazon?'

'Oh Dad, what does it *matter*?'

'Well there's completely different animal life for a start. Take your typical Amazon forest—'

'Did it catch you in the end?' put in Mum.

'The monster? No. The two heads were so busy arguing, it got kind of paralysed. Then a python slid down from a tree and strangled it.'



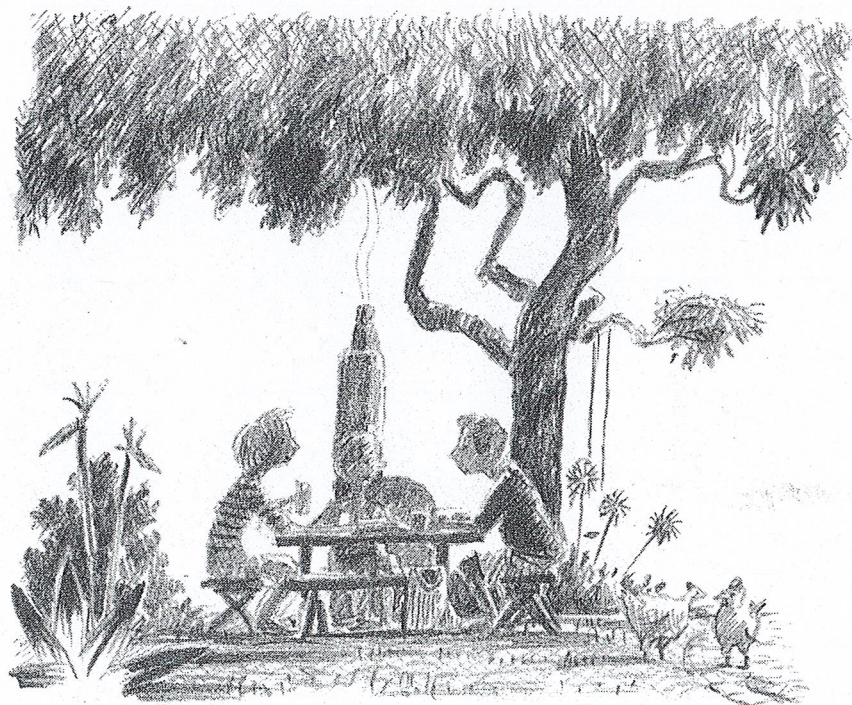
'Must have been the African jungle,' said Dad, 'what with the python and all.'

'That's not true, pythons are everywhere,' said Mum. 'We had one in our back yard when I was a girl.'

Dad shuddered. 'You never mentioned *that* when I came to visit.'

'You know, Tashi had troubles with a mixed-up monster,' Jack said. 'He was telling me about it yesterday.'

'*Aha*, maybe that's why you had the dream!' said Mum. 'What happened? Go on, we want to know everything.'



‘Well, see, it was like this. It was a sunny Sunday afternoon and Tashi, Ah Chu and Lotus Blossom were sprawled on the grass behind Wise-as-an-Owl’s house. They’d just had a big lunch and felt a bit sleepy – especially Ah Chu.’

‘Ah, that one!’ cried Dad. ‘He’d eat the bottom off a porcupine if it stood still for long enough!’

‘Yeah. Well, they could see Wise-as-an-Owl nodding over a book in his garden workshop, and his son, Much-to-Learn, puttering about behind him at a table. Ah Chu was yawning, almost asleep, when suddenly Tashi put his head to the ground. “Listen,” he said, “can you hear something rumbling?”’



'A second later, Wise-as-an-Owl burst out of the workshop. "Tashi, children, *run!* – no, it's too late. *Hide!*" He pulled them over to some thick bushes.

"What is it?" Tashi asked.



'Wise-as-an-Owl groaned. "Oh dear, I should have seen it coming. Much-to-Learn has been reading ahead of his lessons in the Book of Spells. It seems he's found the chapter on how to create a Chimera."

'The three friends looked at each other anxiously. "What is a Chimera?"



"It's a creature from the past – a fearsome, fire-breathing monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat and the tail of a serpent."

"Wah! How big is it?" Tashi wanted to know.

'Wise-as-an-Owl's voice quavered. "This one is almost as big as the workshop."



“Suddenly the workshop walls split apart and the roof shot up in the air. A huge snarling lion’s head appeared above the skyline.

““Or maybe even a bit bigger,” Wise-as-an-Owl faltered.



“The head sent out a thunderous roar that rolled out, echoing and re-echoing across the fields.

““Do you think Much-to-Learn got away?” Tashi asked in a small voice.

“No. I left him hiding under the table.” Wise-as-an-Owl’s face quivered and his eyes filled. “I don’t know how long he can stay out of sight.” The old man’s knees suddenly folded beneath him and he sank onto the grass. “Help me up, Tashi. I must go back to my son.”

“Tashi and Lotus Blossom put their arms around him and looked at each other fearfully over his head.

“What can we do, Wise-as-an-Owl?” Tashi asked. “How can we get rid of this creature?”



“I can’t say for sure,” Wise-as-an-Owl moaned. “There is a magic formula somewhere for dealing with the monster, but it’s not the sort of thing you study every day. And I couldn’t stop to take the Book of Spells before leaving.”



“No, of course not,” Tashi agreed. “I wonder what a Chimera eats. Do you know, by any chance?”

“Well, lions eat animals and people, and goats eat grass and cardboard,” Wise-as-an-Owl sighed. “It will be one or the other, I suppose. Help me up, would you?”

“That roar didn’t sound like a grass-eater to me,” Ah Chu gulped. “And it sounded hungry.”

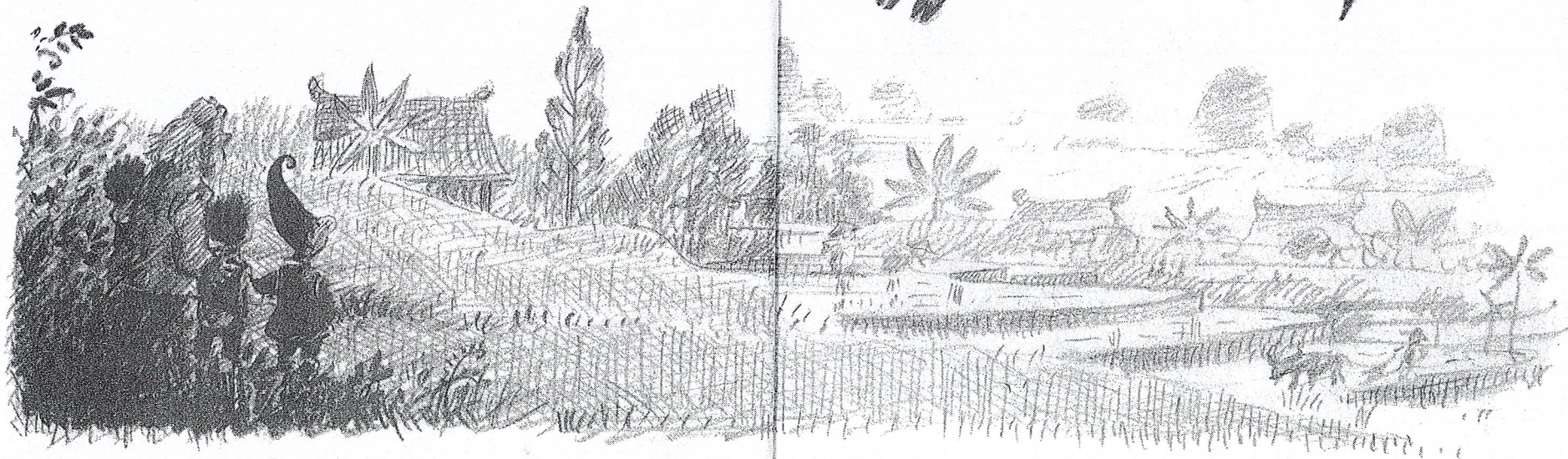
“You can’t go just yet, not while that...thing is there!” Tashi said.

‘But Wise-as-an-Owl climbed back through the bushes. He had only taken two shaky steps when the shell of the workshop fell away and the Chimera rose to its full height, unfurling a pair of monstrous wings.

“You didn’t say anything about *wings*, Wise-as-an-Owl!” squeaked Lotus Blossom.

“That’s because they shouldn’t be there,” the old man sighed. “Much-to-Learn has got it all wrong again.”

‘They clutched each other as the Chimera tested its wings, and then flew out across the rice fields.





“Do you think it will come back?”  
Ah Chu whimpered.

“Yes, I think it will,” Wise-as-an-Owl  
nodded. “This was its birth-place after all.  
But I must use this chance to bring my  
son out.”

“And get the Book of Spells,” Tashi  
added. “I’ll come with you.”

‘Ah Chu took a deep breath. “We’ll wait  
here and keep watch.”

“To warn you if it comes back,” Lotus  
Blossom promised.



‘Tashi heard Much-to-Learn before he  
saw him amongst the splintered planks and  
shattered glass of the workshop. He was  
moaning and cursing, trying to wriggle out  
from under the broken table.

“My son, thank the gods, you’re *safe!*”  
cried Wise-as-an-Owl.

‘While he lifted the wood away, Tashi  
searched for the Book of Spells, his ears  
pricked anxiously for the sound of flapping  
wings. He found the book under a pile of  
rubble, undamaged except for a sooty hoof  
print right over the page *Mixed-Up  
Monsters.*



‘Wise-as-an-Owl was gently examining his son. “*Ouch!*” Much-to-Learn yelled as he tried to move his right arm. It was broken; Tashi could see it dangling and useless. But they had no time for making slings, Ah Chu’s urgent whistle told them that. Much-to-Learn flung his good arm around his father’s neck and they hobbled back to their hideaway.

‘Two heartbeats later, the Chimera glided down to its birth-place amongst the ruins of the workshop.

