

The Worlds We Leave Behind

AUTHOR

A.F. HARROLD

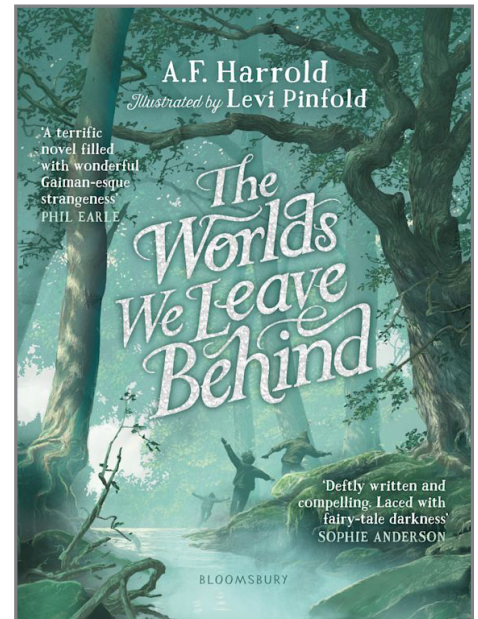
ILLUSTRATOR

LEVI PINFOLD

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Upper Primary



SYNOPSIS

Hex never meant for the girl to follow him and his friend Tommo into the woods. He never meant for her to fall off the rope swing and break her arm. When the finger of blame is pointed at him, Hex runs deep into the woods and his fierce sense of injustice leads him to a strange clearing in the woods—a clearing that has never been there before—where an old lady in a cottage offers him a deal. She'll rid the world of those who wronged him and Hex can carry on his life with them all forgotten and as if nothing ever happened. But what Hex doesn't know is someone else has been offered the same deal.

When Hex's best friend Tommo wakes up the next day, he is in a completely different world but he only has murmurs of memories of the world before. Moments of déjà vu that feel like Tommo's lived this day before.

Can Tommo put the world right again? Back to how it was? Or can he find a way to make a new world that could be better for them all?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A.F. Harrold is an English poet (1975–present). He writes and performs for adults and children, in cabaret and in schools, in bars and in basements, in fields and indoors. He was Glastonbury Festival Website's Poet-In-Residence in 2008, and Poet-In-Residence at Cheltenham Literature Festival in 2010. He won the Cheltenham All Stars Slam Championship in 2007 and has had his work on BBC Radio 4, Radio 3 and BBC7. He is active in schools work, running workshops and slams and doing performances at ungodly hours of the morning, and has published several collections of poetry. He is the owner of many books, a handful of hats, a few good ideas and one beard.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Levi Pinfold has been drawing from imagination for as long as he can remember. His published picture books are *The Django*, *Black Dog* and *Greenling*. *Black Dog* won the prestigious CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal in 2013. Born in the Forest of Dean, he has somehow found himself living in northern NSW. He likes paintings, books, music and some cats.

STUDY NOTES

- Why do you think Sascha wanted to follow Tommo and Hex?
- Hex worries that he has '...burnt a bridge too far' with Tommo. What does he mean? Do you think he's right?
- Were Sascha's brother and sister right to confront Hex about Sascha's accident? Explain your ideas.

- Why does Hex think that the world is laughing? (p 60)
- Why does Tommo think Hex's dad is 'about as far away from Tommo's dad as you could get'?
- 'Maria came at them like a meteor. There was thunder in her eyes...' The author has used a metaphor and a simile here. Can you work out which is which? What effect do these writing tools have?
- The author has created a new word 'mirroriness'. What do you think it means?
- Agent Mimi Jofofski talks about déjà vu. Can you find out what this means? Have you ever experienced this feeling?
- Why do you think the written story stops for a few pages and the illustrations take over? (p 193–196)
- Is Tommo right to try and make a deal with Missus to save Hex?
- In this story Hex thinks he has ruined his friendship with Tommo. Is this really the case? Explain your thinking.
- What does the fact that Tommo has memories about Hex when nobody else does say about their friendship?
- Draw a cluster of trees with good solid trunks to create a forest. On each trunk write a word or phrase to describe a quality that you think makes a good friend. Then, draw two or three rope swings in your trees. On each one, write something that you see as a challenge to a friendship.
- Hex knows that he sometimes doesn't think before he does things. He always feels bad about these things afterwards. Look at this passage from p 35 as an example.
- Have you ever done something without thinking it through properly? How did it impact other people? What can we do to put things right in these situations? How can we try to avoid things like this happening?
- Levi Pinfold's illustrations are all tonal pencil drawings. What do you think these illustrations bring to the book?
- Choose from one of the following scenes and have a go at drawing it in a similar way using pencils and rubbers.
 - p 8–9 Tommo and Hex go to the brook in the woods with Sascha following them.
 - p 42–43 Hex finds himself in the clearing with the cottage.
 - p 83 Hex wakes up in the middle of the night.
 - p 107 Tommo is flying high on the rope swing.
 - p 117–118 Tommo is inside the strange cottage with Missus and Leafy.