

would have been stabilized. A wink from the dream collector in the form of a gift from Zachary's parents would be more effective than the story's neglect of the idea of responsibility.

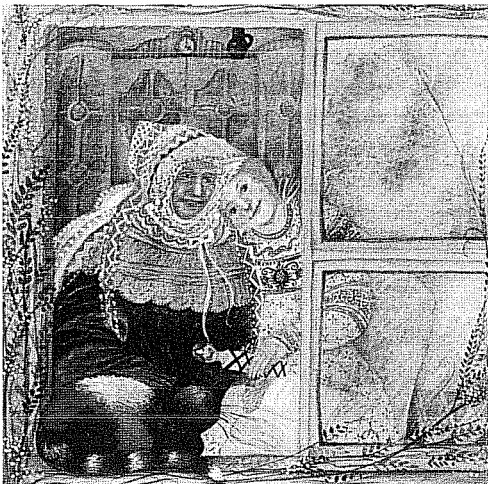
Eden Merritt is a student at the University of Guelph, working on her MA in English Literature. She plans on becoming a teacher once she obtains her degree.

Imaginative Fancies and Historical Forays: Alison Lohans's *Sundog Rescue*

Sundog Rescue. Alison Lohans. Illus. Vladlyana Langer Krykorka. Annick, 1999. Unpag. \$15.95, cloth, \$6.95, paper. ISBN 1-55037-571-7, 1-55037-570-9.

Alison Lohans's *Sundog Rescue* explores the relationship, built on matriarchal lines, between the present and the past. Written for a four- to seven-year-old age group, the story features Melissa as its protagonist, a young girl both fearful of and mesmerized by the shadows her fruitful imagination casts on even the most mundane of settings. For Melissa, there is no safe place; she is isolated by an imagination her immediate family dismisses and disdains. The only one who understands Melissa is her grandmother, and it is through their shared sense of fear and fancy that a connection is made. Melissa's grandmother shares tales of her own Granny Babi to help Melissa fit herself into a family history of creative women. The author is not subtle in her gendered choices; Melissa's father and brother cannot understand her or her creativity and are portrayed unsympathetically.

While Lohans's instincts about storytelling lead her into some poetic imagery, her writing does veer into uncertainty. Her constant shifting between time



*Illustration from
Sundog Rescue*

periods results in an ambivalent experience for her reader: one is never entirely sure whose story is being told. Orality misleads Lohans as well. More than midway through the story, Lohans introduces onomatopoeia, a device which appears contrived; it sticks out from the rest of the story in both tone and style. Also problematic, the climax of *Sundog Rescue* hinges on a plot element that smacks awkwardly of misplaced melodrama; resolution is reached through the imposition of an archetypal device, straining the depth of the story.

Vladyana Langer Krykorka provides the illustrations in *Sundog Rescue* and manages to smooth out some of Lohans's mechanical flaws. She successfully captures the tension upon which the story is built, choosing to shift her colour choices in order to distinguish between the past and the present. Melissa's imaginative forays are drawn in vividly eerie shades of blue, underscoring the protagonist's sense of isolation, while historical reminiscences are drawn in shades of yellow: they each feature more than one character and reinforce a sense of security, supporting Lohans's guiding ideology about the value of history and family.

Sundog Rescue offers validation of young imaginative fancies. Although sometimes frightening, the reader does not doubt the beauty of Melissa's special world. Thus, despite some faults perhaps more glaring to the adult reader than the child, Lohans and Krykorka have presented a story that interweaves the real and the ethereal, and in so doing have created an "otherworld" that casts shadows and sheds light — a story that has much to offer a young mind itself seeking connections.

Kate Wood recently completed an MA in English at the University of Guelph. Her thesis is on L.M. Montgomery and turn-of-the-century popular culture.

Flights of Fantasy in Time and Place

Just Imagine. Deanne Lee Bingham. Illus. Helena Below. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1998. 24 pp. cloth. ISBN: 1-55401-381-3. *I Wished for a Unicorn*. Robert Heidbreder. Illus. Kady MacDonald Denton. Kids Can, 2000. Unpag. 32 pp. \$15.95 cloth. ISBN: 1-55074-543-3. *The Trailer Park Princesses*. Peter Marlowe. Illus. Leanne Franson. Annick, 2000. Unpag. 32 pp. \$16.95, \$7.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 1-55037-617-9, 1-55037-616-0.

The three story books reviewed here appeal to the imagination of young listeners and readers, ages four to eight years. In each of the tales there is a central motif. Pete Marlowe's experience in archaeology and his many travels glimmer in *The Trailer Park Princesses*. Twin girls from a trailer park imagine they were actually four identical sisters. The two have been separated from their siblings and their royal origins by a cataclysmic earthquake. They travel through time and space, finding themselves in such dislocated historical moments as ancient Egypt and a Wild West town. Clearly anyone in their trailer park, on the school bus, or in their class might