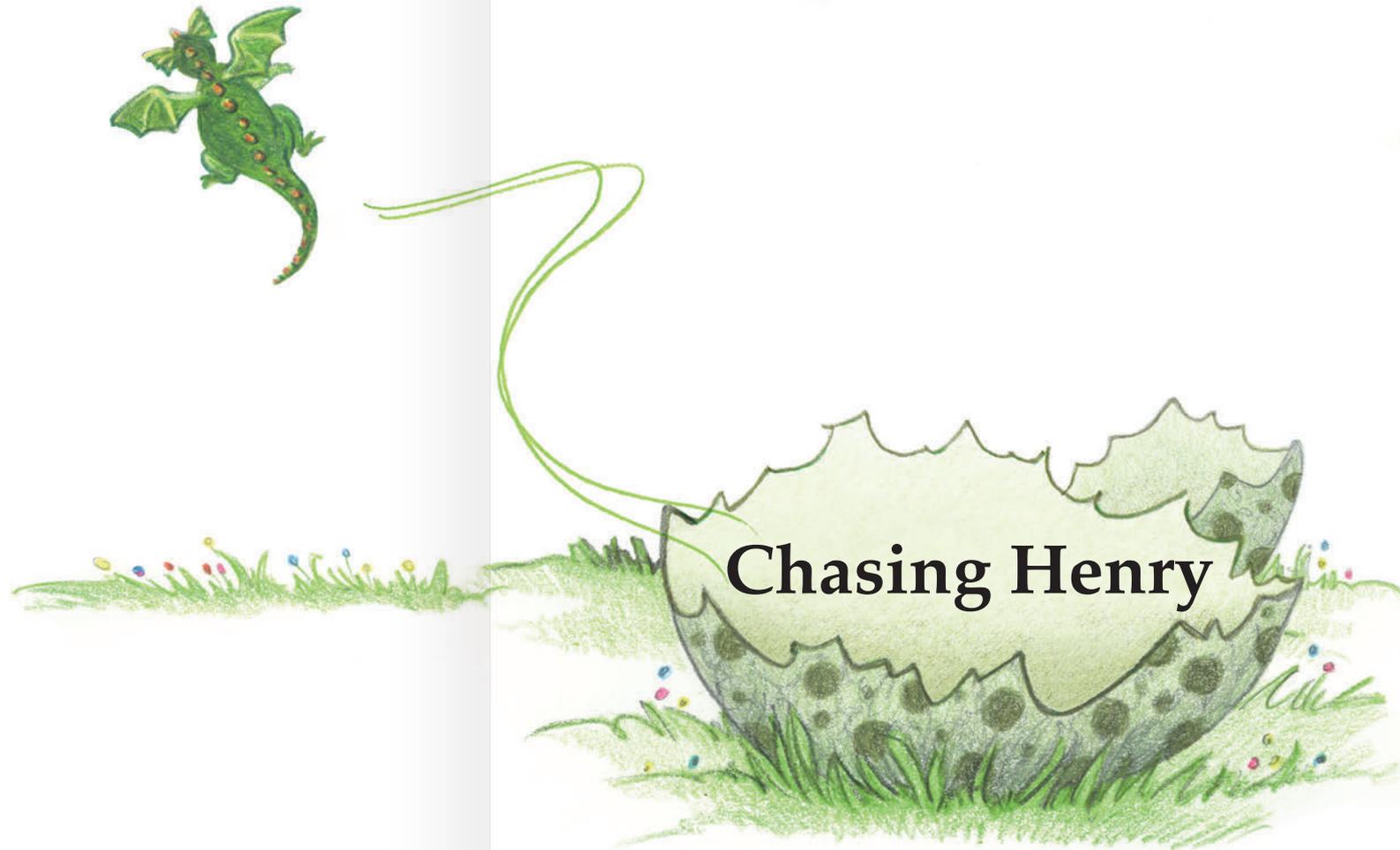


Level 3 *Chasing Henry* Sample

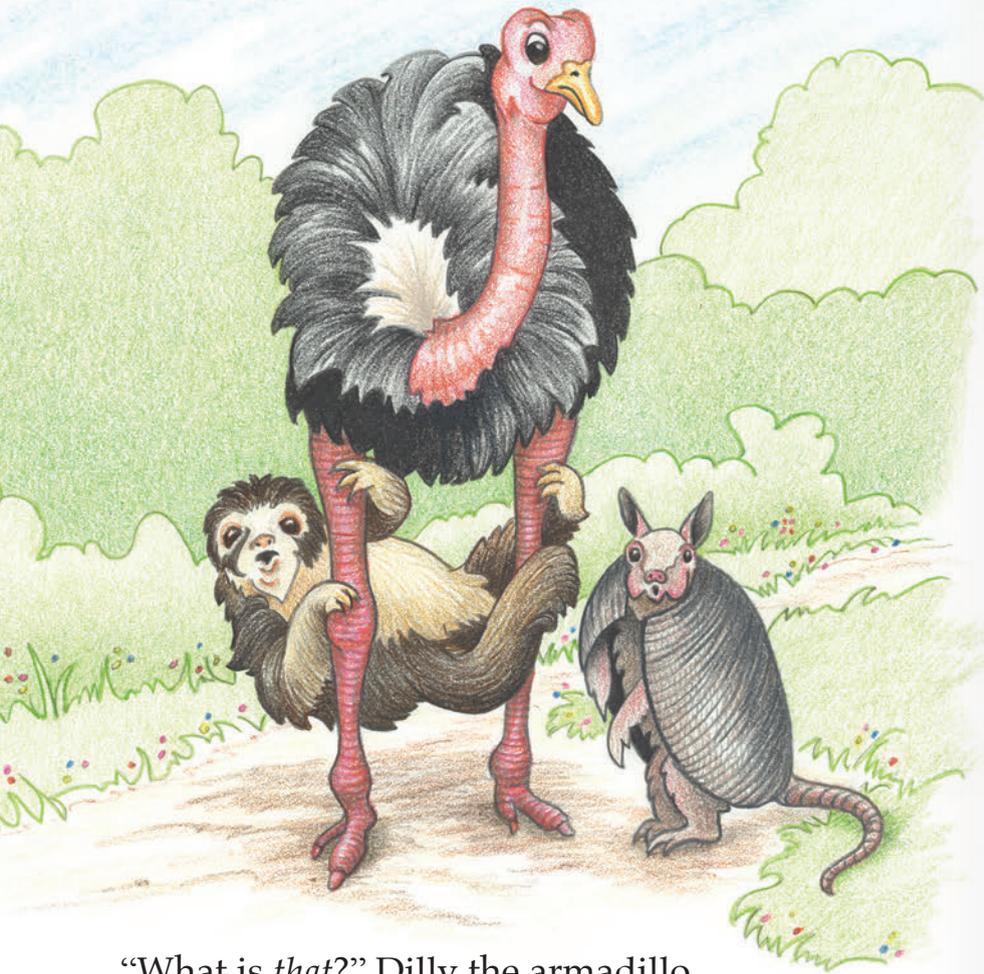
In this sample you will find:

- Chapter 7: “Chasing Henry” *Chasing Henry* pages 102-119
- Chapter 9: “The Mailbox” *Chasing Henry* pages 136-151





It was a warm summer day when the three friends spotted it. There it was—just down the path, sitting in a shaft of sunshine.



“What is *that*?” Dilly the armadillo asked, quivering in her shell.

Seth the sloth just stared.

“Why, it’s the biggest egg ever!” Opal the ostrich said.



She rubbed the egg gently. “This egg needs some tender loving care. If we just let it sit here all by itself, whatever is inside won’t come out!”

“Do we *want* it to come out?” asked Dilly.

“Yes, we do,” said Opal. “We’ll sit on the egg to keep it warm, and we’ll do it in shifts. I’ll start.” Opal settled herself on top of the egg.



When it was time for Seth's shift, he had his own way of keeping the egg warm. "I'll just hang out here," he said as he draped himself over the egg. Now he could take a nap *and* keep the egg warm.

"Of all the strange things I've done, this one takes the cake." Moments later, he was dozing.

When it was Dilly's shift, she gathered soft moss and piled it on top of the egg to keep it warm. Then she scuttled off to keep an eye on the egg from a safe distance.

And so it went for many days. Then one morning, the egg rumbled! Dilly jumped three feet in the air. "The egg is moving! Run!" she wailed.



Seth and Opal ran over. The egg rolled one way and then the other.

“It’s okay, Dilly! Today is the day we get to meet our baby!” said Opal proudly. “I’m on pins and needles!”

Seth pointed at a crack in the egg. “Hey! It’s coming out!”

It *was* coming out! A pointy nose stuck out of the opening in the egg, and then a green face. Next a little arm popped out, and then a little ... wing?

The rest of the shell gave way and a strange green baby wobbled to his feet and blinked in the sun.

“It’s a four-legged green thing!” fretted Dilly. “Maybe we should run!”

“Hold your horses,” said Seth. “He’s not going to harm us.”



The baby stared back at them with his round, dark-blue eyes. His scaly skin shone in the sun and he wagged his thick tail.

Then he began to flap his wings. He flapped them harder and harder until he rose into the air.



“Run after him!” yelled Dilly, too scared to move.



Seth started to chase the flying green baby, but he was too slow and couldn't keep up. “Opal, it's up to you!” he called.

Running swiftly on her long legs, Opal chased the baby until he landed safely in a conifer tree.

“Well, one thing's for sure,” said Opal as she gasped for air. “It's not an ostrich!”

“I think it's a Henry,” said Seth, yawning. “And he's tiring me out with all this flying to and fro.”

“What's a Henry? Should we run?” asked Dilly.

“A Henry is a green thing that can fly,” said Seth.

“I think it's the sweetest Henry I've ever seen,” said Opal.

“He *is* sort of cute if you like green things that fly,” said Dilly.

“We *love* green things that fly,” stated Opal. “And Henry is our baby now, so it's up to us to take care of him.”

Henry was a happy baby. It didn't take long for Opal, Seth, and Dilly to grow fond of him.

"He's the apple of my eye," Opal liked to say.

But as he got bigger, Henry became more of a handful.

For one thing, Henry's manners at suppertime were shocking! The friends gathered horsetail plants, figs, and grubs for Henry's snacks. Henry pounced, gobbled, and chomped, flinging specks and spit every which way.



"Don't make a mess, Henry!" said his friends.



Henry's sneezing was a problem, too. He sneezed every time he got a tickle in his nose, sending out flames and setting fire to whatever was in his path. It was an even bigger problem when Henry had a cold.

"Don't set everything on fire, Henry!" said his friends.

But Henry's strong wings were the biggest problem of all. He loved to fly, but he kept getting lost! Opal, Seth, and Dilly spent much of their time chasing him down and bringing him back home. Keeping track of Henry became a daily chore.



“Don’t get lost, Henry!” said his friends.

Between picking up after Henry, putting out fires, and chasing him down, Opal, Seth, and Dilly were tuckered out. They wanted Henry to behave nicely, but their scolding didn’t help at all.

Henry seemed to grow sadder and sadder. He was so sad that he didn’t even fly as much, and he barely nibbled on his grubs and figs. Even his sneezes seemed smaller.

“What do we do now?” asked Dilly one day as Henry sat quietly sniffing.

“I’ve been thinking,” said Seth. “Maybe we are scolding Henry too much. After all, he is a Henry. He can’t help the way he gobbles his grubs. He didn’t ask to fly. It’s not his choice to sneeze fire. He’s just made that way.”

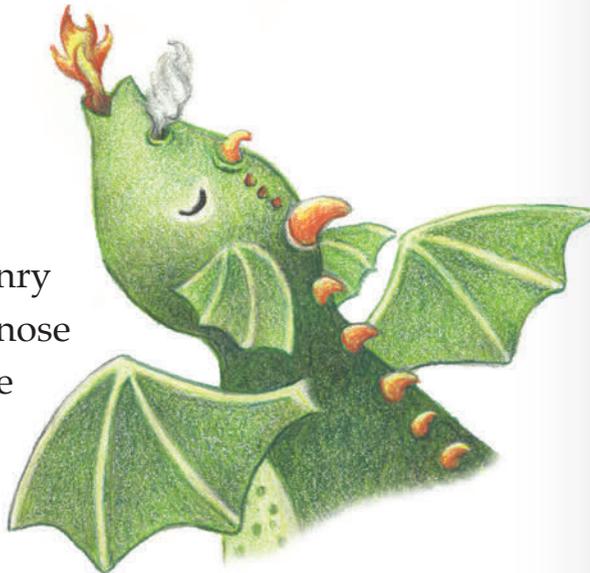


Opal jumped up. “Seth! You are so wise! That must be the problem! We shouldn’t scold Henry for being a Henry—we should just *show* him how to be a Henry with better manners!”



That day, Dilly tucked a fern under Henry’s chin like a napkin and showed him how to munch his grubs with his mouth closed.

Opal showed Henry how to point his nose in the air when he had to sneeze.



Seth made a map for Henry and showed him the safest places to fly and the best ways to get back home.



Henry was the best student. Before long, he could tuck his own fern under his chin. He could point his nose at the sky to sneeze. And he could fly safely without getting lost.

“Henry, you are such a smart baby,” said Opal one day. “Let’s celebrate with a picnic!”

Dilly let Henry roast the figs and grubs with a very small sneeze. Henry tucked his fern napkin under his chin and ate without smacking.

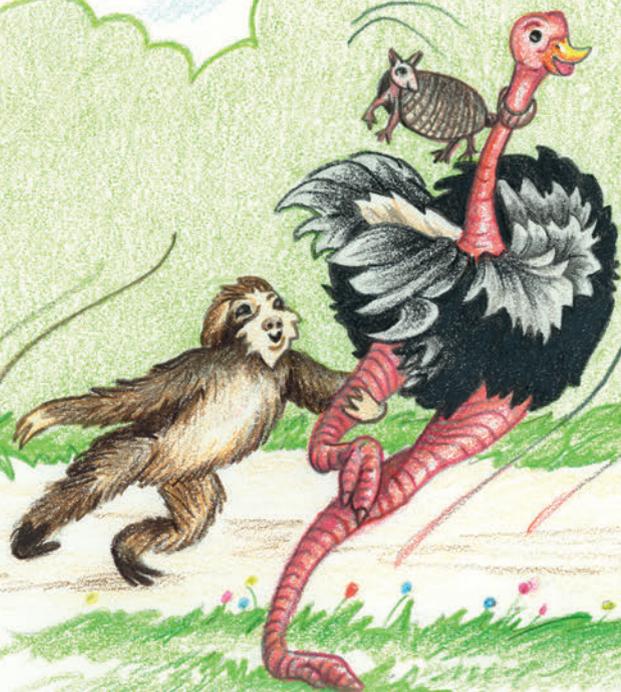
When they had finished their picnic, Seth said, “This is your day, Henry. What would you like to do now?”

Henry’s eyes twinkled. He began to flap his wings.

“Oh, he wants us to chase him—just like we used to!” said Opal. “Let’s go!”



The End





The Mailbox





One summer morning, Nancy woke to a loud rumble. She peered out the window to see where the noise had come from.

“Oh, it’s just the mail truck,” she said.

But wait ... the mailman had a HUGE box in his hands. And he was in front of her house! Could that box be for her? What was in it? It could be anything!

Nancy saw the mailman try to put the box in the mailbox. It didn’t fit. That box was just too big and the mailbox was just too small.



The mailman stuck a slip of yellow paper in the mailbox and drove off.



“Mailbox too small,” the note said.

“Well!” Nancy blurted. “If I want that box, we’ll need a bigger mailbox.”

Nancy got dressed in a hurry and ran to the shed in the back yard. "I'll bet I can make a big mailbox with the stuff in here," she said to herself.

The first thing she found was an old gerbil cage.

"I could turn this into a mailbox!" Nancy said.

Nancy sawed and hammered.

She sanded and scraped.

She nailed and painted.



Then Nancy sat back to admire her mailbox.

"There! This is nice and sturdy. I'll bet that huge box will fit in here."



Nancy placed her mailbox on the street curb and dusted herself off.

"See you tomorrow, Mr. Mailman!" She smiled to herself. "See you tomorrow, HUGE box!"

The next morning, Nancy jumped out of bed as the mail truck rumbled to a stop.

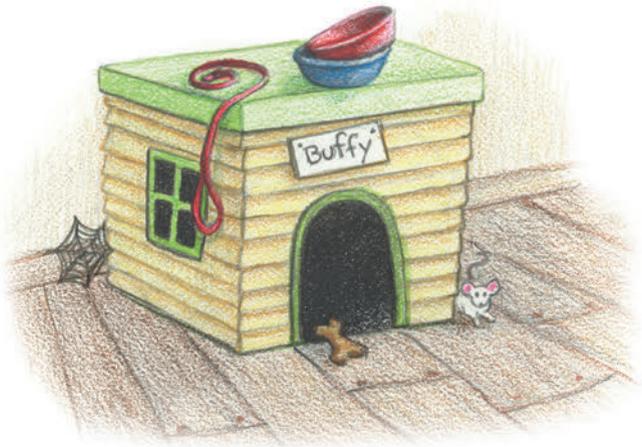
"The huge box must be here! I can't wait to see what's in it!" Nancy raced down the stairs.

When she opened the mailbox, all she found was a slip of yellow paper.

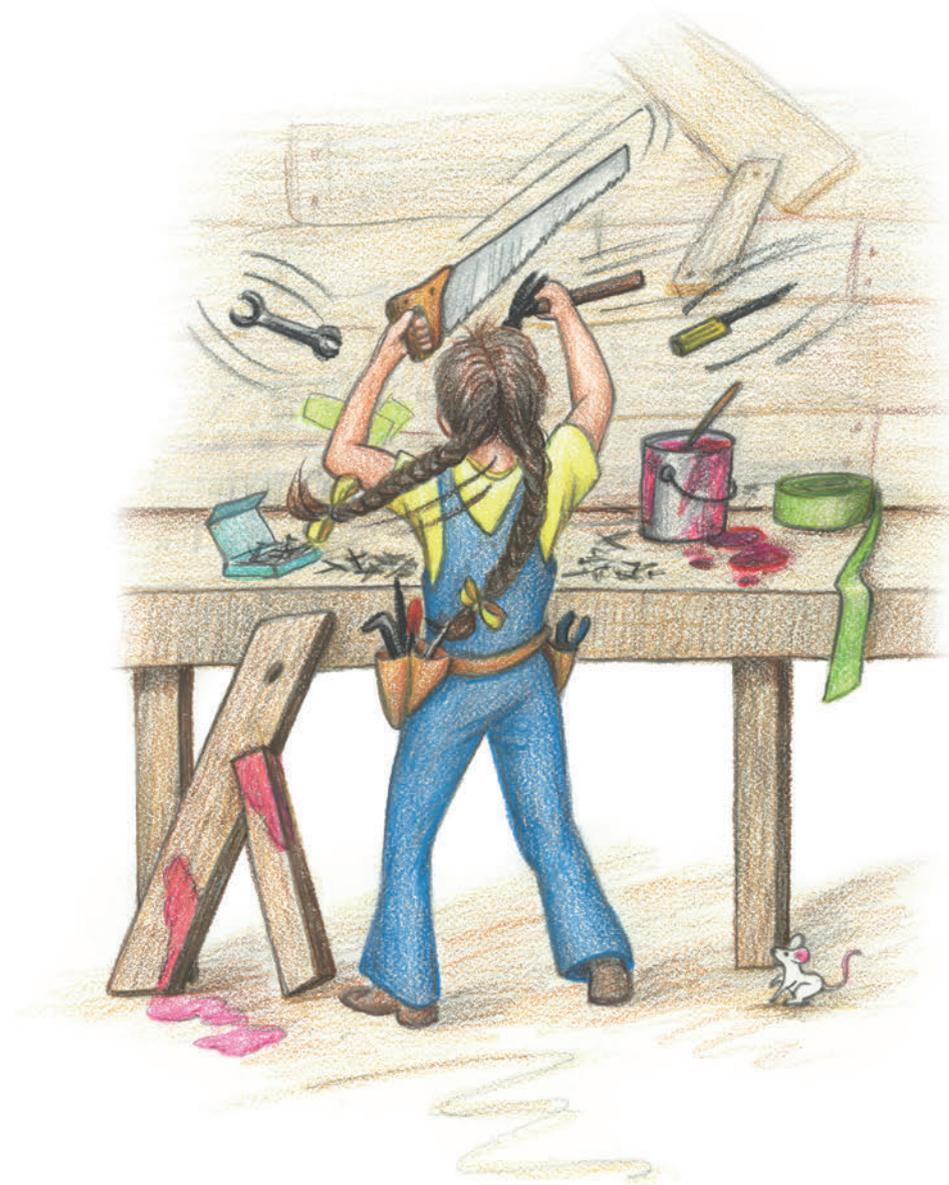


Still too small! How could that be? Nancy grabbed the gerbil cage mailbox and ran back to the shed. This time she found an old doghouse.

“Hm. If I add this doghouse to the gerbil cage, I’ll have a very big mailbox.”



Nancy sawed and hammered.
She sanded and scraped.
She nailed and painted.



“There! If this doesn’t do the trick, nothing will!”

Nancy lugged her mailbox to the front yard and propped it up on the curb. “Now let’s just see if I get a slip of yellow paper in *this* mailbox!”



The next morning, the mail truck didn’t come. Nancy lurked by the window until lunch time, waiting to see the mailman. She ate a burger. She fed the turtle. She lurked by the window some more. Where was that truck? Where was the huge box?

After lunch, Nancy rode her bike up and down the block ... until she saw the mail truck at the end of her street.

She just couldn’t miss it this time! Nancy’s legs pumped the bike faster and faster. But by the time she got to her house, the mail truck was gone. And there was nothing in her big gerbil cage-doghouse mailbox ... nothing but a slip of yellow paper.



“Oh, no! I’ll never get the huge box this way! This is getting urgent,” said Nancy. “I will make the biggest and best mailbox that mailman has ever seen.”

Nancy found a pile of old lumber.

She hammered and sawed and nailed all the parts into place.

She painted her mailbox purple and red and blue and orange.

When she was done, Nancy was tired and dirty. But she was happy because she had made the best and biggest mailbox in town.



The next morning, Nancy was up at seven o'clock. She went downstairs to wait for the huge box.

She had some yogurt.

She brushed the purring cat.

She waited some more.

At last she saw the mail truck turn the corner.

"It's here!" she yelled as she jumped up and down.





The truck stopped. The mailman got out.
And he put that huge box in the best and
biggest mailbox in town.

“At last!” Nancy said. “It’s here!”

She ran outside and dragged the huge box
back into the house. She had a big smile on
her face as her father came down the stairs.

“At last!” said Nancy’s father. “The big
mailbox I ordered is here!”

“What?” said Nancy.



And now Nancy has the best and biggest
birdhouse in town!



The End





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