

The background is a light blue sky filled with large, stylized green leaves of various shades, from light lime to dark forest green. The leaves are rendered in a low-poly, geometric style. Three small, simple line-art butterflies are scattered across the scene: one near the top left, one near the top right, and one near the bottom right. The title 'The GARDEN TROLL' is written in a large, pink, sans-serif font. 'The' is smaller and positioned above 'GARDEN'.

The
GARDEN
TROLL

Vicki C. Hayes







MEET THE



Garden Troll

Age: Really, really, *really* old

Favorite Foods: Rotten leaves and dry twigs

Greatest Fear: The wizard

Future Goal: To cause lots more trouble

Best Quality: Hosts his brother's birthday party every year

CHARACTERS



Jenny

Age: 12

Special Skill: Can wiggle her ears

Most Private Secret: Actually glad her dad married Ellen

Future Goal: To own a horse farm in Oregon

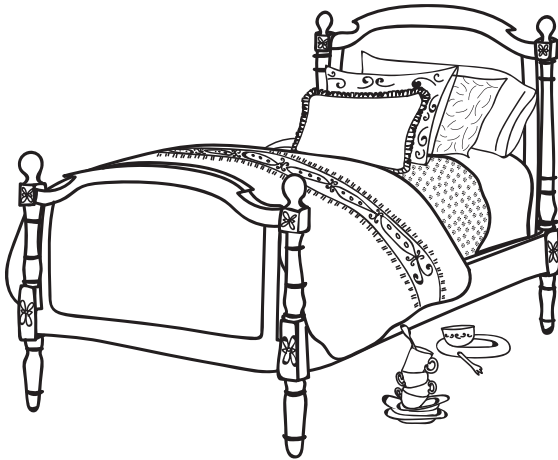
Best Quality: Knows when she is wrong

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THE WISH

Jenny was in trouble again. It didn't matter what the twelve-year-old did. She couldn't please her stepmom, Ellen.

"I did clean my room," said Jenny.

"Yes," said Ellen. "But you left dirty dishes under your bed."

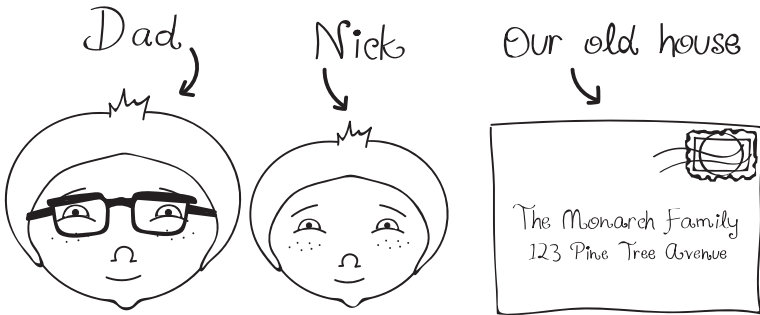


“I did fill the dishwasher,” said Jenny.

“Yes,” said Ellen. “But you forgot to start it. You need to take a little more care.”

“Leave me alone,” yelled Jenny.

Jenny stomped out the back door. She hated Ellen. She hated this old house. She was happy with Dad. She was happy with her little brother, Nick. She was happy with their other house. Then Dad had to go and marry Ellen. Their mom had been dead a long time. But still ...



Dad said they needed a fresh start. He

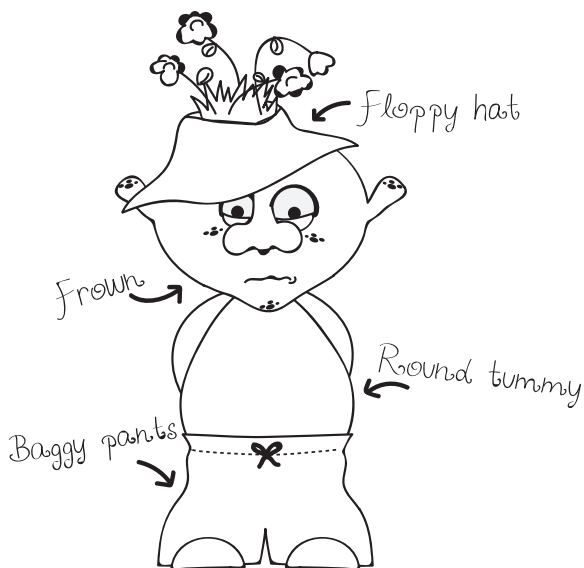
said they needed a new house. He said Ellen liked this house. Ellen was an artist. She said the house was charming. Dad agreed with Ellen. Even Nick liked the house. But Jenny didn't. The house wasn't charming. It was old. And it was ugly. Even the yard was a mess.



Jenny walked to the back of the yard. There was an old garden. It was full of weeds. It was full of stones. It looked the way Jenny felt. It looked sad and messed up.

The stone walls were mostly gone. There

was one stone post left. It was four feet high. And covered with ivy. On top sat a little stone man. He had a round tummy. He wore baggy pants. And a floppy hat. Jenny thought he looked like a troll. He was frowning. Jenny thought he looked funny.



“You are the only thing I like,” said Jenny.
“You are the only thing I like about this old place.”

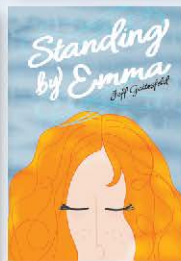
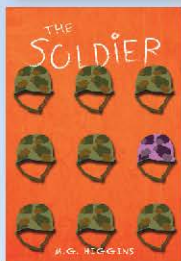
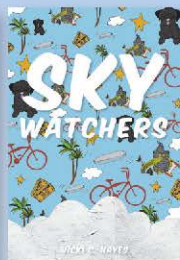
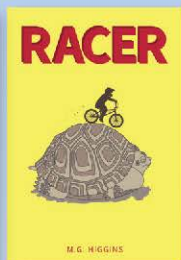
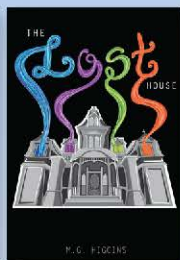
Jenny patted the troll's head. "I don't like this house. I don't like this yard. And I don't like Ellen," Jenny told the troll.

The troll didn't say anything. Jenny liked that. She traced his frown with her finger. "I'm always in trouble," Jenny said. "It's not fair. I wish Ellen would get in trouble!"



Suddenly the troll felt hot. Jenny pulled her hand away. She stared at the troll. But he looked the same. Did he really get hot? Jenny touched the troll again. Then she heard a voice.

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The GARDEN TROLL

Stepmothers are horrible. Mine is super mean. She's always mad at me.



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