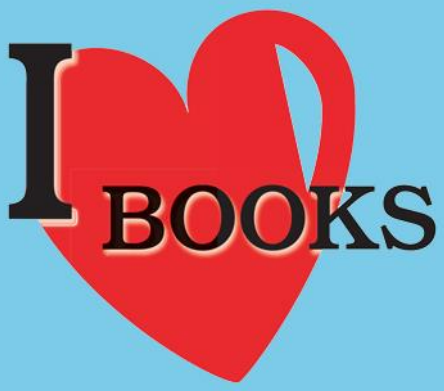

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Opening extract from

The Gruffalo's Child

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The Gruffalo said that no gruffalo should
Ever set foot in the deep dark wood.
"Why not? Why not?" *"Because if you do*
The Big Bad Mouse will be after you.
I met him once," said the Gruffalo.
"I met him a long long time ago."

"What does he look like? Tell us, Dad.
Is he terribly big and terribly bad?"

"I can't quite remember," the Gruffalo said.
Then he thought for a minute and scratched his head.

"The Big Bad Mouse is terribly strong
And his scaly tail is terribly long.

His eyes are like pools of terrible fire
And his terrible whiskers are tougher than wire."

One snowy night when the Gruffalo snored
The Gruffalo's Child was feeling bored.

The Gruffalo's Child was feeling brave
So she tiptoed out of the gruffalo cave.
The snow fell fast and the wind blew wild.
Into the wood went the Gruffalo's Child.

Aha! Oho! A trail in the snow!
Whose is this trail and where does it go?
A tail poked out of a logpile house.
Could this be the tail of the Big Bad Mouse?

Out slid the creature. His eyes were small
And he didn't have whiskers – no, none at all.

"You're not the Mouse." *"Not I,"* said the snake.
"He's down by the lake – eating gruffalo cake."

The snow fell fast and the wind blew wild.
"I'm not scared," said the Gruffalo's Child.

Aha! Oho! Marks in the snow!
Whose are these claw marks? Where do they go?
Two eyes gleamed out of a treetop house.
Could these be the eyes of the Big Bad Mouse?