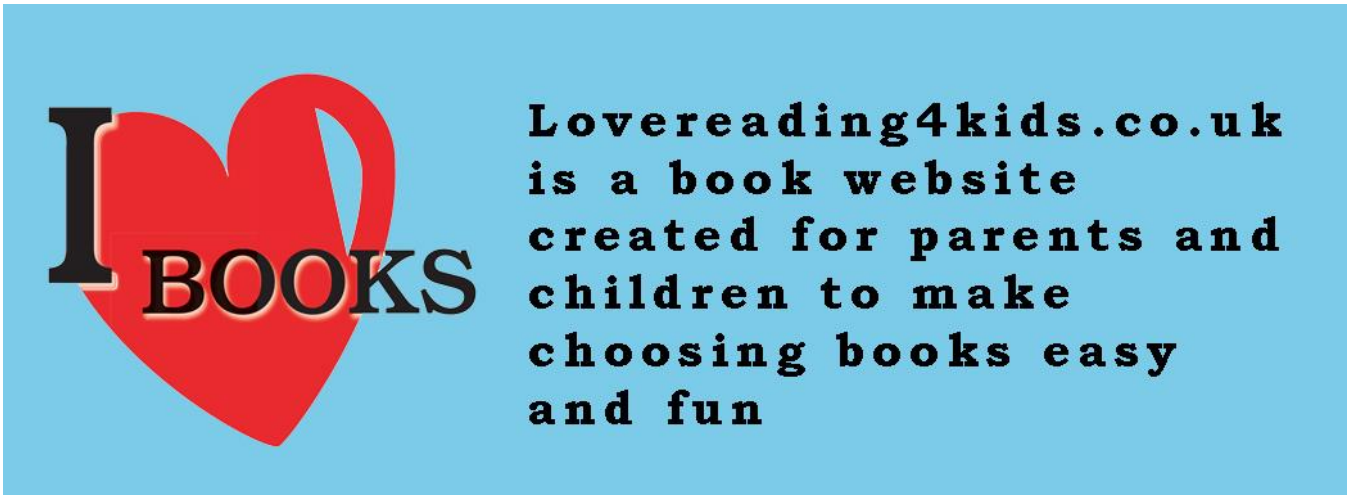


Opening extract from

Where's Gilbert? (the Not So Little Princess)

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Published by

Andersen Press Ltd

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Lovereading4kids.co.uk



This edition published in 2017 by
Andersen Press Limited
20 Vauxhall Bridge Road
London SW1V 2SA
www.andersenpress.co.uk

First published in 2015 by
Andersen Press Limited

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data available.

ISBN: 978 1 78344 523 3

Printed and bound in Malaysia by
Tien Wah Press

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Chapter 1



One bright summer's day, everyone in the castle was busy doing the things that you would expect them to be doing. The King was in the counting house counting out his money. The Queen was in the parlour eating bread and honey. However, the maid had got someone else to do the laundry as it was her day off!

The Not-so-Little Princess Rosie was sitting in the sunshine under the big rose bush. She was thinking up stories and telling them out loud to Gilbert, her teddy, who was looking into her eyes and listening very carefully.



She had just got to the part in her story where Prince Billy had fallen down a big hole, landed upside down in a puddle of mud and been rescued by the fire brigade, when she saw her friend Ollie coming through the vegetable garden. He was doing his usual funny walk. Grabbing her teddy, Rosie jumped to her feet and waved at him.





She was just about to go and meet him, when she looked down at the bear in her arms.

"I can't let him see me with a teddy!" she said to herself. "He'll think I'm a baby."

Feeling very silly, she stuffed poor Gilbert into the bush behind her and hoped Ollie hadn't seen . . .

"What's THAT?!" said Ollie jumping from one foot to the other. He pointed to the bush where Gilbert was hanging by one arm.

"What's WHAT?!" asked Rosie.

She had to think fast or Ollie would find out that she still played with her bear.

"THAT!" he said and dived into the rose bush before she could stop him.

He pulled out Gilbert and smiled.



"Ah, poor old ted," he said. "How could you dump him in a bush, old bean – that's just mean! I expect he has been a good friend to you . . ."



Rosie pretended she didn't care. Snatching Gilbert out of Ollie's hands, she stuffed him back in the bush.



"Oh well, he isn't mine!" said Rosie, going pink in the face. "He belongs to my baby brother, Prince Billy . . . er . . . he lost a leg so I was stitching him up . . . erm . . . not my brother of course, HE didn't lose a leg . . . the teddy . . . he lost a leg and um . . ."





What a fibber, thought Gilbert.
How could she say all that about me?
There is nothing wrong with my legs.
And he went into a sulk.

Ollie just looked at Rosie with his jolly smile spreading over his face. Rosie wasn't sure if he believed her fib at all.