Red Sky at Night, Poet's Delight



ALEX WHARTON

Illustrated by

IAN MORRIS

Firefly

First published in 2024
by Firefly Press
25 Gabalfa Road, Llandaff North, Cardiff, CF14 2JJ
www.fireflypress.co.uk

Text copyright © Alex Wharton 2024
Illustration copyright © Ian Morris 2024

The author and illustrator assert their moral right to be identified as author and illustrator in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act, 1988.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form, binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

All characters in this publication are fictitious and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

A CIP catalogue record of this book is available
from the British Library.

ISBN 9781915444356
ebook ISBN 9781915444363

This book has been published with the support of
the Books Council of Wales.

Typeset by Becka Moor.
Printed by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, Surrey CRO 4YY.

CONTENTS

Foreword

Mr Slime	8	Black Belt	27
Ant	10	The Long Way Home	28
Lighthouse	12	Hector's Ghost	30
Fruit Buffet	13	Snow	32
Maybe	14	Football	34
Bright Forest	16	Off the Tube	35
Far Away	17	Piano	36
Basketball	18	Poem	37
Old Tractor	19	Too Much TV	36
The Birds	20	Wood	39
Life	22	This is Me	40
Ouch!	23	For a Quiet Day	42
Welsh Dragon	24	Poetry Hill	44
Inspire	26	Young Oak	48

Mr Slime

At night I'm the slimy king
of the kitchen. You think you
know it all. You know nothing!

Don't come downstairs
at midnight (if you value your life
Stay well clear. Out of sight!

I'm unfriendly. Other slugs
shake in their boots when
they see me. So back off, pal!

I'm a mischief, a real problem.
A tough cookie, no nonsense!
I eat salt for breakfast.

Last night, I slept in the dog's
bed.
They can keep it.
I'd rather sleep on glass!

I'm moody. Spiders won't
even look at me. I could never
be squished. Don't even try!

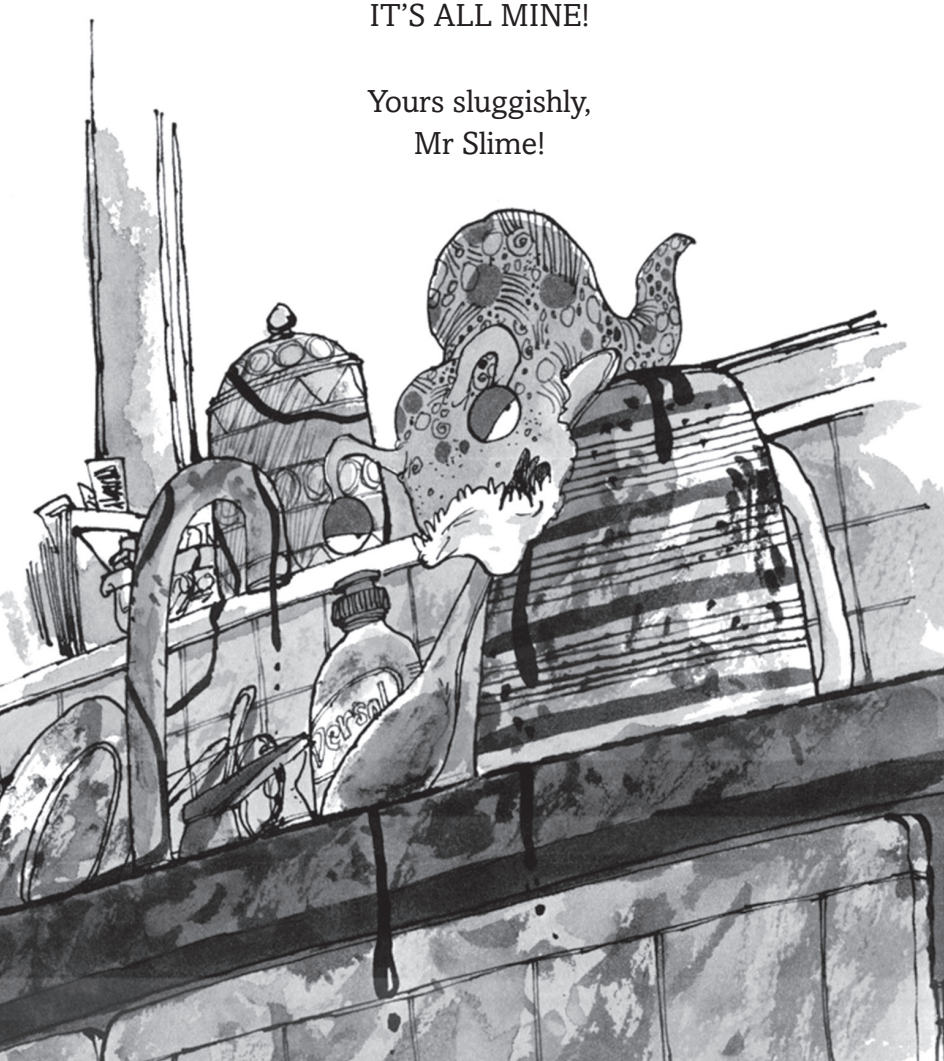
I'll stare you down with my
slug-eyes. I could never



be poisoned. I'm toxic!
I lick the food from fallen
spoons and howl at
the moon (as all slugs do).

So don't cross the line!
From the cooker to the wall,
and the fridge to the door…
IT'S ALL MINE!

Yours sluggishly,
Mr Slime!



Ant

I'm
Busy, busy
all the time.
Carrying things
ten times my size.

A leaf or piece
of mouldy bread.
An injured ant
with a broken leg.

Sometimes I don't
know where I'm going.
Busy, busy is all
I'm knowing.

Up, down, left, right,
zig-zag-zoo.
There's always
something else to do.



Lighthouse

Beaming into midnight black,
landing on things. A bobbing

boat. Or the momentary tip
of a wave. Or the momentary

fingertip of my wave. In and out of light.
I've never been in the lighthouse.

But I can imagine how the stairs rise.
An upward twist. A narrowing climb.

One day, I'll live in that slim thing,
where corners don't exist. I'll listen

to seagulls, and the whispering shore.
And I'll shine a light, then shine some more.



Fruit Buffet

A banana, an orange,
an apple and pear,
a mango and melon
sliced up into squares.

A peach and a plum,
strawberries and grapes,
guava, papaya
chopped neatly on plates.

Passionfruit, apricot,
olives and cherries.
How much of this fruit
can I fit in my belly?

