
THE Moonlight MYSTERY AGENCY
The Puzzling Paw Prints
Little Gems
VASHTI HARDY
Illustrated by Agnes Saccani





For Shania, with hugs



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Illustrated by
Agnes Saccani

Barrington Stoke

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CONTENTS

1	Worry Pants	1
2	The Way to Moonlight	13
3	BIG, BIG, BIG Paws	27
4	The Growler	41
5	Broken Branches	55
6	Flufferhug	65
7	No More Worry Pants	79

CHAPTER 1
Worry Pants

The sun shone in Hana's garden. Hana sat on a picnic rug with her little brother, Arlo.

Arlo was looking at butterflies and bees with Dad.

It was a perfect day, except for one thing. Hana felt worried about starting a new year at school.

She would be in a new class. There would be a new teacher, new children and a new classroom.



"I don't want to go back to school," said Hana suddenly. "I think I'll stay at home. In fact, I'll leave school and go to work on a farm."

Dad looked up from the flower patch. "You're too little to leave school."



Hana frowned. “But maybe I won’t like my new class.”

“You need to show Arlo what to do,” said Dad. “He starts nursery tomorrow.”

“No nursery! Yuk nursery!” said Arlo. He crawled over to Hana on the picnic rug. He frowned just like her.

Dad shook his head. “You two are a pair of worry pants.”

"What are worry pants?" asked Hana.

"You two are." Dad smiled. "It means you worry too much."

Dad bit into his apple – *crunch!* "Wait and see. Perhaps you'll love your new class and Arlo will love his nursery too."

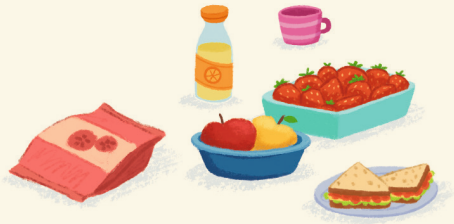
Hana thought for a moment. "No, I won't."

Arlo cried and said, “Yuk nursery,” again.

Dad sighed. “Why don’t you enjoy the garden picnic for now? You can see how you feel tomorrow.”

But Hana knew she’d feel the same.

*



That night, Hana went to bed and pinned her moon badge on her fluffy pyjamas.

The badge was a present from a cat called Ace. Ace was a talking cat, and he'd come to Hana's bedroom window one night. He'd given her the moon badge and invited her to join the Moonlight Mystery Agency.

That night they'd gone on an adventure together to solve a mystery in a magical land called Moonlight. It had been the best night ever.

Hana loved being a detective. She wished it would happen again. She didn't want to think about starting a new class at school.



The moon rose over the rooftops. Hana hugged her favourite teddy – a cat called Tibby.

What if Ace never came again? She felt full of worry.

Hana looked up at the ceiling. It was midnight blue with gold stars.

She closed her eyes and thought about Ace until she fell asleep.

A tinny tap of claws on her window woke her up.