



## Pixel and the Puzzle of Words

By Liezl Coetzee



Lily loved stories more than anything. But the letters in her books looked like a jumble of wiggly black lines. "They don't make any sense!" she sighed, pushing a book away.



Suddenly, a tiny, shimmering creature flew out from the pages of her book! It was a little dragon, no bigger than her hand, made of sparkling, colorful letters that blinked and swirled.





Lily pointed at the book. "I can't read them," she said sadly. "They're just wiggles." Pixel zoomed closer. "They're not wiggles," he said. "They're puzzle pieces! Look, this one," he said, tapping a big 'C', "makes a 'cuh' sound, like for 'cat'."



As Lily whispered "cuh," the letter 'C' on the page glowed! A fuzzy, purring kitten made of light leaped from the book and curled up on her rug. Pixel nibbled the glowing energy from the letter and zipped around happily. "Yummy!"



"Let's try another!" said Lily, excited now. Pixel pointed to an 'A' and a 'T'. "A says 'ah' and T says 'tuh'," he explained. Lily put them together. "C-ah-t... CAT!"



WHOOSH! The glowing kitten became a big, friendly cat that rubbed against her legs. The letters in the book glowed brightly, and Pixel munched on the delicious story-light, his colors becoming vibrant and strong.



Together, they found more words. "S-U-N" made a warm, golden sun float up to her ceiling. "M-O-O-N" made a silvery moon appear outside her window, even though it was daytime.



Soon, Lily's room was filled with sparkling trees, shimmering rivers, and friendly animals, all made from the words she and Pixel had unlocked together. The wiggly lines weren't scary anymore; they were magic keys!



"Thank you, Pixel!" said Lily, hugging her book. "Now I know the secret to reading!" Pixel, full of story-energy, did a happy loop-the-loop. "And thank you, Lily," he chirped. "For sharing the story with me!"