

# Sam's Dragon Dance

## Anything is Possible With A Dragon

**William Lorne Goudie**  
Newfoundland Author and Illustrator

### **Travel Novel**

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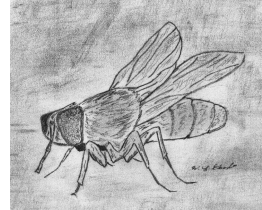
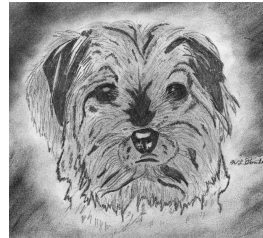
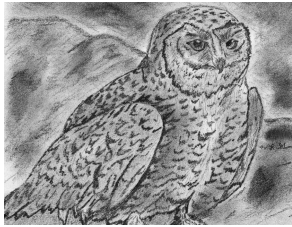
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### Picture Gallery:



Sketch art by W. L. Goudie

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### Appreciation from the author:

I thank you for your decision to read my novel, Sam's Dragon Dance. The novel is in school across Canada being taught in Language Arts course as an in-class novel study and as an independent novel study. I further wish to express my appreciation to all the students, teachers, and general readership for their reviews and comments. I trust your reading experience was rewarding for you all.

I offer the following information as a background to the writing of Sam's Dragon Dance. I am sure this will answer some of the questions you may have.

### Why Write the Novel, Sam's Dragon Dance?:

Sam's Dragon Dance was written as a result of a request from one of my grade nine Language Arts students after hearing a lesson of writing short stories. The class, upon hearing the request, collectively encouraged me to write a story for them. Thus, over the Christmas holidays of December 21, 2008 - January 8, 2009 I wrote Sam's Dragon Dance... editing took much longer.

## **The Beginning:**

I first had to formulate a story outline; a plan of action. I feel the best results come from a story plan. I had countless ideas and material to write on, but when I considered my audience (my grade nine L.A. class), I selected bullying and young love to be the focal point of the drama and storyline. These two topics/issues, can never be discussed too much or overdone, for they are a constant... in young lives. I scribbled my thoughts on paper, revised and began to write.

I love to write. The infinite library of words, the varying structures of the written language and the process of writing are collectively a fascinating palate of communication possibilities. Each word when combined with others create blends of verbal texture able to evoke emotions through vivid imagery, dialogue and plot development. The whole experience is sure to provoke various effect upon readers. Personally, often it is not necessary what I am writing about (the topic) that intrigues me, but rather the freedom to express what exactly I am feeling, thinking at that particular moment in time. It's personal and honest. The written word is expressive and final, once it is written, it is written.

## **Publication:**

I originally published Sam's Dragon Dance with AuthorHouse in the USA, but I found them to be extremely expensive and *seemed to be more concerned about their dollar margin than truly helping the author. I have since stopped my association with them and decided to self-publish. I recently printed some copies with a local printer. The AuthorHouse copies have a blue cover page. I used these copies as edit masters for a second publication with my new printer (black cover page with new graphics).*

Writing and publishing a novel was an educational experience. I have learned a lot about both processes. What was once a passionate self-rewarding hobby has now turned into something totally unexpected - an avenue to communicate with others in a meaningful dialogue.

## **Inspiration for the Novel:**

The story was inspired by a number of bullying cases I have witnessed in schools over the years. I wanted to write about a theme that was relevant, important and directly related to every student. Some of my students thought that the topic was not related to their experience. However, we discussed the issue and realized that bullying impacts everyone and is everywhere; whether one is directly involved (victim or perpetrator) or indirectly (witnessing bullying and choosing not to do anything about it). I wanted the novel to teach something and entertain, at the same time.

I endeavored to write a novel that could be read within 5-10 hours. I initially thought of the novel as a travel novel; something which could be pulled out in a hotel room, a tent, etc., something to occupy one's thoughts for a moment of time. My target group was ages 10 -16 (grade five to ten), acknowledging the novel's level of reading and the diverse reading levels of students. Some students may be challenged by the reading, while others will breeze right through it. This is the nature of reading, based upon ability.

## **Characters:**

Sam, the main character, is loosely based on my perception of a student that was in one of my classes; an all-round nice guy. I believe we all have goodness and wonderful qualities within each of us. We just have to learn to tap those resources.

Katie is based upon a number of female characters I know who are dealing with self-confidence and self-esteem issues. Even though they are beautiful people, they struggle to see that beauty, which is so evident in their smiles and personality.

Fleabag is a combination of two dogs. When I was younger, I had a female dog called Mandy. Mandy was loyal and ever present. She had two litters of pups. She died of old age. I loved Mandy and cherish her memory. Mandy's personality comes through in Fleabag. Shadow is the other dog. Shadow is a young puppy which lives on my street. Shadow loves people and people love Shadow. Shadow seems to have a limitless supply of energy. When I was writing Sam's Dragon Dance I often would look outside of my window to see the children playing with Shadow in the snow... or more appropriately put, Shadow playing with the children. Both, the dog and the children happy and content in their play.

**Side note** - The name "Fleabag" is meant as a "term of endearment"; name of care, respect and love - and not as an insult to the dog. I thought the name was unique and fitted Fleabag's humble beginnings, in the same way a dog can be called "Lucky" to acknowledge it surviving a difficult birth against all odds.

Two-Fingers - one of my favorite characters. Two-Fingers provides for four lessons in life: First lesson - We can never know, completely, the struggles one may go through and the impact these struggles may have on one's life. Second lesson - Our experiences help shape who we are as an individual. Third lesson - There is a dark side to all of us, just as there is a good side. Fourth Lesson - There are not always answers to life's questions. However, the search for these answers may be more important than finding the answer itself, even though the searcher may not know this truth. It is much like the saying, "It is more important to run the race than winning the race."

The other characters in the novel are composites of people I have either known or created from imagination. Originally, each of the characters did not have nicknames. I thought about this for a long time. In the end, I decided to give each character nicknames to let readers identify with a character in the story that they probably were most like. We all like to dream and sometimes be who we are not. Dreaming is a healthy part of growing and putting things together in life, as well as, providing an avenue of escape from troubles.

The idea to have a group called the "Dragons" was a spin-off from the old glee or social teen clubs of the fifties and sixties (The Thunderbirds, The Rebels, etc.). The Dragon's represent groups in school like the basketball teams, hockey teams, etc, but not as dominant.

### **Structure:**

My students are constantly asking me to tell them stories or jokes. I have lots; a never ending supply. Many are non-fiction (true/real) and some are fiction (not real/imagination). I have been telling the story of the young peasant boy for about twenty years. His story is every changing, as is the way of all stories told in the oral tradition. The peasant boy's story could easily be a novel in itself.

As I was developing the story line for Sam's Dragon Dance before Christmas break, my students insisted that I include some element of the peasant boy life. I did this by paralleling the main character's life, Sam's, with the peasant boy's. As you can see, they share many similarities. In addition, some of my students did not like reading non-fiction stories, thus I chose to include a bit of fiction (fantasy) for them. I was attempting to reach as many students as possible.

### **Setting:**

The town of Raimer was inspired by three Canadian towns two I lived and the one I live currently in: Springdale, NL., Stewart, British Columbia and Grand Falls-Windsor, NL.. As a young boy, my family moved from Springdale, NL to a small mining town in British Columbia. The tiny valley town was nestled between two towering snow capped mountains. Imposing as these mountains were, they were a protective force from the harsh winter storms. The valley was my paradise. The little town had a junkyard, my "playground". The town of Raimer had a saw mill. With the struggles in the logging industry which Grand Falls-Windsor was experiencing, I thought it would be a small memorial on my part - an author's indulgence. Springdale had basically one main street, therefore, Raimer would have one. As for the name Raimer, I got the name from a traveling evangelist, John Raimer.

Both Springdale and Stewart had ice-cream parlours, hence, the introduction of Mr. Puffy's Ice-cream Parlour. I enjoy a milkshake, a banana split or a chocolate dipped cone once in a while. The ice-cream parlour represented a place of rest, a haven to relax and breath. When such places are threatened, those that hold these places dear to their hearts act.

In any community the school, along with the church, recreational center shopping areas and hospital are the hubs of human activities. For students, it is defiantly the school. I have been blessed to attend and teach in schools that offer activities for students outside of the regular school hours. I felt the school and the relationships the Dragon's developed in school should be the glue which held the story together. Subtle as it was in the scheme of the whole story, the story of Two-Fingers and Ms. Bethany had a purpose in promoting the idea that teachers care and can make a difference in their students' lives, both in and outside of the school setting.

## **Themes:**

Several themes are presented in the novel. Some of the most obvious are those associated with dealing with bullying issues, treating others with dignity and respect, coping with young love, the relationship between man and his pets, good citizenship, self-esteem, and just growing up in a diverse and complicated world.

## **Conflict:**

Man vs. Man - Sam struggles with Bubba and Katie  
Man vs. Nature - Bubba with Fleabag  
Man vs. Himself - Katie dealing with her self-esteem  
Man vs. Society - Bubba's violence unacceptable to the masses.  
Man vs. His sense of idealism - Sam's wanted a perfect world.

\*\* There seems to be a lot of possibilities for discussions on conflict.

## **Diction and Dialogue:**

### *Diction*

I realize some of the words may be new. I told my students that I would be introducing some words to them. I created a word bank and placed the words accordingly - that was the teacher within me. There was a strong sense of direction and purpose in writing this novel - structure and grammar. The language arts outcomes were very much on my mind. I am a teacher and wanted this novel to teach a number of language arts concepts.

### *Dialogue*

I thought much on the aspect of dialogue for this novel. I did not want to be complicated nor did I want the novel to be too wordy or cluttered with unnecessary conversation. This was a difficult thing to do, for by nature I enjoy listening to and participating in conversation that utilizes clever diction. My final decision was influenced/inspired by several movies I had watched prior to the Christmas break. These were old movies from the silver screen. The dialogue was direct, pure, truthful and simple. In this era of cinematography, movie writers and directors did not mix words. I liked this honest approach, even though it is a little unrealistic. If only we could say what was really on our minds in a concise, constructive, polite, loving and meaningful manner, then what a world it would be. Too often, spite, hatred and vengeance rules the unbridled tongue. Here are two quotes to think about: "The tongue is a two-edged sword," and "The tongue can melt butter."

**Author's Comment:**

Sam's Dragon Dance will not appeal to everyone. Like other novels, Sam's story will successfully capture the imaginations and attention of some, while unsuccessfully for others. However, everyone who reads the novel can come away with something on how to be a better person and why.

Therefore, I greatly appreciate you taking time to read my novel. I wish you all the best. Remember to be the best person you can be, reach your potential because you can influence others to be the best they can be. We are all closely linked with each other. Let's make the world a better place to live.

Please send your comments to: **lornegoudie@hotmail.com**

God bless you all,

William Lorne Goudie  
**Sam's Dragon Dance**

# **Sam's Dragon Dance: Anything Is Possible With A Dragon**

William Lorne Goudie

Author and Illustrator

## **Questions to Consider:**

- 1.) Why did the author decide not to give Sam a nickname?
- 2.) What are you doing to combat bullying?
- 3.) Why are you a special person?
- 4.) Why did the author decided not to complete Two-Fingers'' stories of the peasant boy?
- 5.) What have you done today to make the quality of life of a friend, classmate, teacher, brother/sister, parent, etc. better?
- 6.) What role did Fleabag play in the story?
- 7.) Which character from the novel do you associate yourself being most alike? Why?
- 8.) If you could change the any part of the story, which part would you change?
- 9.) What part of the novel did you enjoy the most?
- 10.) Are their people in your school or community like Sam, Katie, Wizard, Two-Fingers, Bubba and Mr. Puffy.
- 11.) How are the lives of Sam and the young peasant boy similar and different?
- 12.) What lessons did Sam and the other Dragon's learn through their ordeal with Bubba?
- 13.) How did Fleabag enrich the Dragon's lives?
- 14.) How has the novel Sam's Dragon Dance affected your life?

### **Sam's Dragon Dance - Extension Activities**

- 1.) Several themes are developed throughout the novel, such as bullying, overcoming obstacles, love, secrecy, and individuality. Select one and write a social commentary.
- 2.) Develop a slideshow for the novel.
- 3.) Create a poster, promoting anti-bullying.
- 4.) Visit your local animal shelter and offer some volunteer hours.
- 5.) Write a journal entry expressing your love for a pet.
- 6.) Write a character sketch on one of your favorite characters.
- 7.) List some positive things you can do when dealing with a bully.
- 8.) Draw a picture of your favorite scene from the novel.
- 9.) Write a persuasive argument outlining why it is okay to be an individual. Present your argument to a friend.
- 10.) Write an encouraging note to a friend.



## **Sam's Dragon Dance - Word Search**

C	T	D	R	A	Y	K	N	U	J
E	G	S	J	E	S	S	I	C	A
V	T	A	W	R	A	I	M	E	R
W	H	G	B	U	M	Y	X	F	Z
E	G	D	R	A	G	O	N	S	B
C	I	F	P	Y	E	P	I	U	U
N	N	N	Z	V	F	L	B	Q	L
A	K	A	T	I	E	B	F	E	L
D	N	T	U	L	A	E	J	K	Y
L	V	X	P	A	T	C	H	E	S

### **Wordlist:**

**BUBBA**

**BULLY**

**DANCE**

**DRAGONS**

**SAM**

**FLEABAG**

**JESSICA**

**KATIE**

**PATCHES**

**JUNKYARD**

**RAIMER**

**TAN**

**KNIGHT**

## **Sam's Dragon Dance - Word Bank**

### **Chapter One:**

rookeries	horizontal	microcosm	immense	premature
maneuver	retrospect	chaotic	demeanor	scenario
ravenous	intrigue			

### **Chapter Two:**

dilapidated	mongrel	predator	dilemma	transparent
anxious	resuscitated	raptors	rhythmic	symptoms
compromise	rambunctious		succumbed	

### **Chapter Three:**

assaulted	aromatic	sedative	unbeknownst	ammunition
jesting	unwittingly	fantasy	radar	heir

### **Chapter Four:**

impulsive	obnoxious	pestering	righteous	cordial
perplexing	alienation			

### **Chapter Five:**

maniac	infatuation	novelty	anonymous	warranted
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### **Chapter Six:**

toiling	trepidation	aggravated	prompted	sustain
drudgery	intrusive	regalness	enthralled	enraptured
vendors	pints	strategically	ramparts	undulating
protruded	pittance	potency	commerce	opulence
vigilant	antiquities	superstitious	coniferous	dexterity
adrenaline	enraptured	proximity	poignant	malcontent

### **Chapter Seven:**

prehistoric	harassment	rummage	consummate	saunter
foray	choreographed			

### **Chapter Eight:**

unabated	exuberance	divulged	obligatory	translucent
telepathic				

### **Chapter Nine:**

silhouetted	apex	tumor	recuperate	transfixed
torrents	monumental			

**Chapter Ten:**

circumvent	mechanisms	spectacle	berth	humiliated
intimidation	fabricated	scrutinizing		

**Chapter Eleven:**

quaint	destiny	banished		
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**Chapter Twelve:**

whelping	innuendo	rampant	permanent	admiration
reconciled	parapet	tranquility	revelation	manuscripts
tarnished	secluded	desecration	nimble	implications

**Chapter Thirteen:**

insanity	mobster	phantom	abduction	
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**Chapter Fourteen:**

preservation	alcoholic	symptom	incisive	stagnation
incoherently				

**Chapter Fifteen:**

fretted	chrome	illumination	daunting	bygones
judicial	unhinging	predicament	inflict	crescendo
punctuate	profanities	misfortune	pledge	contemplating
confession	dysfunctional			

**Chapter Sixteen:**

alleviate	elevate	vaulted	hoard	robust
booms	hemp	vertigo	thermos	mediocre
deployed	corvette	perceptible	apprised	merits
reallocated	supremacy	elation	defiant	sarcastic

**Chapter Seventeen:**

optimistic	exhaust	equivalent	chauffeured	manipulated
placid	informants	emanating	calibrate	geniuses

**Chapter Eighteen:**

privilege	biases	prejudices	distorted	apparatus
continent	reminiscing	pathetic	tuxedo	