

The  
**Grumpy  
Gnome**

**Goes on Holiday**

Written and illustrated by  
**Della Jayne Hales**



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Dedicated to:  
*Rosalie & Poppy*  
*Theodore*  
*Oliver*



Many thanks to Dr Gary Tennant  
for brushing up my English!



## About the Author

Della comes from Hertfordshire and works for a not for profit mediation service.

This is Della's second book, the first being *The Grumpy Gnome's Garden*.

Della's main hobby is crafting, and she always has a project on the go, i.e. greeting cards, children's clothes, furniture restoration, dolls, soft furnishings, needle felting, embroidery, illustrating, etc, etc. Della adores working in her studio situated deep in the heart of Ashridge Forest. Della's craftwork can be viewed on her website:

[www.serendipitoustradingcompany.co.uk](http://www.serendipitoustradingcompany.co.uk)

Della loves spending time with her young granddaughters, who often come for a sleepover.

Della enjoys travelling and this book is based on a visit to Le Palais Idéal, near Lyon, in France.


## Chapter One

# The Grumpy Gnome Goes on Holiday

The Grumpy Gnome worked very hard making things out of wood all day. He rarely took time off to do anything else and had not been on holiday for a long time. Once upon a time he was very lonely and didn't have anything in his life but work to occupy his time.

Things had been very different ever since his friends the Fairy Princess, Captain Robert and First Mate Ron had been visiting. Nowadays, he was friendly with lots of people in the neighbourhood and community. He received an invite to a party or local celebration almost every month!

Scoobit, the Grumpy Gnome's beloved cat, had come to live with him and kept him company. Scoobit liked play fighting with the



Grumpy Gnome and also having his beautiful white fur brushed. All Scoobit's meals were freshly prepared by the Grumpy Gnome and never came from a tin.

The Grumpy Gnome's garden kept him very busy too. Now it had been transformed from a wilderness to a nice space by the Fairy Princess, there were lots of plants that needed watering every day.

He had lots of visitors who came to see his garden, which had become quite famous after the Fairy Princess had made the Apple Fizz and sold it outside the gate.

The Help the Gnomeless charity had even awarded the Grumpy Gnome a medal for all the money he had raised from the sales of the Apple Fizz and then donated!

One weekend, the Fairy Princess came to visit him. She seemed very excited about something.

"I believe it's your birthday soon, Grumpy Gnome. I have planned to go away to France for a few days, and you are coming too," she said.

The Grumpy Gnome opened his mouth to say something, but the Fairy Princess carried on.

"I don't want any excuses or grumpery, you are coming and that's the end of it! It will do you good. I have arranged to visit my good friend, Madame Craccodile of Lyon. We are going to

see a famous garden that she told me about. As we all love gardens so much, Marko the Wisp, Captain Robert and First Mate Ron are coming too," she continued.

The Fairy Princess paused and peered at the Grumpy Gnome to see his reaction. He thought for a moment and then asked, "Who will look after the garden and Scoobit whilst we are away?"

"Don't worry about that, I have it all arranged. My friend, the Welsh Dragon, is coming round. She will take care of everything," replied the Fairy Princess.

The Grumpy Gnome couldn't think of any more excuses to get out of going away and reluctantly agreed. When he finally came round to the idea, he started to feel quite excited and even said he would drive there in his car, Miss Morag Minor.



The Fairy Princess had planned to transport them all to Madame Craccodile's with her Fairy Power, but she loved riding in Miss Morag Minor.


Miss Morag Minor was the Grumpy Gnome's pride and joy. She had beautiful sage green paintwork, with a wooden frame. The Grumpy Gnome housed her in his garage tucked up in a woollen tartan rug. He always kept her paintwork and chrome polished and shiny.

The day before they were due to leave, the Welsh Dragon arrived.

"Prynhawn da!" she said as the Fairy Princess greeted her at the door.








“What does that mean?” whispered the Grumpy Gnome looking confused.

“It means ‘good afternoon’ in Welsh,” the Fairy Princess whispered back.

The Welsh Dragon was eccentric (like most of the Fairy Princess’ friends). She was dressed in a Welsh tartan kilt, a Welsh rugby shirt and a hat that made her lovely, shaped head look like a daffodil. She wheeled in her suitcase and was carrying two large carrier bags full of Welsh gifts, such as cheese, biscuits, and sweets.




“You shouldn’t have, but thank you,” said the Fairy Princess giving the Dragon a hug. “We ought to be giving you gifts for helping out!” she added.

“I know how much you like them,” said the Dragon softly. “I’ve also got a catnip toy for Scoobit,” she added, dangling a mouse on a stick in front of him. Scoobit immediately caught it with one of his huge pink paws and, biting hard, held it in his mouth.

“We’ll have a lot of fun together Scoobit,” said the Dragon tickling him behind one of his pink ears. He started to purr, still gripping the toy mouse firmly in his mouth.



They walked around the garden and the Fairy Princess showed the Dragon how to fill, and where to empty, the slug traps. It was late



spring and all the plants in the garden (including the weeds!) were very busy sprouting their new shoots. There was plenty of work to do every day to keep the garden maintained.

For dinner, the Grumpy Gnome cooked roast lamb, which as you may know is a baby sheep. It is well known that Welsh people are very fond of sheep and this one had come from Wales, according to the butcher.

“This is lush!” exclaimed Dragon. She ate all the food on her plate. The Fairy Princess could not eat all her food and didn’t want to upset the Grumpy Gnome by leaving any. When he wasn’t looking, she scraped the food from her plate onto Dragon’s. Dragon ate the leftovers and the Grumpy Gnome looked pleased at the empty plates.



Captain Robert and First Mate Ron arrived early the next morning. They were wearing matching red and white stripey tops and French berets. First Mate Ron had drawn thin moustaches on their faces with an eyebrow pencil.

“We thought we’d dress in proper French style,” said First Mate Ron, puffing out her chest with pride. Captain Robert just rolled his eyes and said nothing.

Marko-the-Wisp came dashing through the gate carrying an old, battered suitcase. He

was wearing a red and white stripey top and a French beret too!

“Snap,” squealed First Mate Ron!

They stood looking at each other giggling.

“I don’t have a moustache though,” said Marko-the-Wisp, eyeing First Mate Ron’s upper lip decoration enviously.

“We can soon sort that out,” said First Mate Ron, getting her eyebrow pencil out of her bag and licking it. “Hold still while I draw one on you!”

She drew one half of the moustache on Marko-the-Wisp’s top lip. Just as she was doing the other half, Marko-the-Wisp sneezed, and the pencil went right across his cheek!

“Oh dear, you’re a bit wonky,” said First Mate Ron, “But it suits you!”

“Marvellous!”, exclaimed Marko-the-Wisp.

The Grumpy Gnome loaded the luggage into the car but there were so many cases and bags that he had to tie some onto the roof. They all said goodbye to Dragon.

Scoobit was nowhere to be found. The Grumpy Gnome felt sad not to have seen him before they left.

Finally, they all got into the car and drove off to the ferry port on the coast.

Dragon went back into the cottage to prepare Scoobit’s breakfast. She went out the back and called him, but there was no sign of him.

“Strange,” thought Dragon and guessed he must be out hunting somewhere. She fetched the watering can and started to water the thirsty plants.

## Chapter Two

# France

The holiday party were on their way to the port which was a long journey. First Mate Ron had bought a large tin of sweets which she passed round. The Fairy Princess played her ukulele, and they were all having a singsong. The time passed quickly.





Presently, First Mate Ron shouted, "I can see the sea! Look!" pointing in excitement. They all craned their necks and saw the silver line on the horizon glistening in the sunlight.

They soon reached the ferry port and drove Miss Morag Minor up the gangplank to board the ferry bound for France.

They all went up on deck and watched as the ferry pulled away from the port to begin its voyage. The sea was very calm and there were hardly any waves. Seagulls followed the ferry, crying out as they flew around.

They watched as the port faded further and further into the distance until they could no longer see land.

After a couple of hours of sailing, they reached France.

They waited in the queue of cars to get off the ferry and then drove off down the gangplank.


The Grumpy Gnome said, "I'm hungry".

"So am I," added the Fairy Princess. Everyone else nodded in agreement.

First Mate Ron spotted a little café nearby. "There, that place looks nice," she said. The Grumpy Gnome parked up outside.

"I need to fetch my handbag from the back," said First Mate Ron. She got out of the car and opened the back door. As she reached in to get her bag, she gasped and jumped back!







“We have a stowaway on board!” squealed First Mate Ron, pointing to the back of the car with her mouth wide open. They all dashed around the back of the car and stared inside.

There, stretched out, washing one of his back paws, was Scoobit! He just ignored them staring at him and carried on washing himself.

“We can’t turn back now,” said the Grumpy Gnome gazing lovingly at Scoobit (who was now washing his other paw). “We’d better get word to the Welsh Dragon, otherwise she will be worried about him,” he added.



“Look, there’s a souvenir shop across the road, we can get a postcard and send it to her. If we post it first class it will be there by the morning,” said First Mate Ron.



Off she went inside the shop and came out a few minutes later looking very pleased clutching a small paper bag containing a postcard of the Eiffel Tower along with a postage stamp.

“Alternatively, we could text her,” sighed the Fairy Princess to herself. “She’ll know straight away, then!” She sent Dragon a text without First Mate Ron noticing, not wishing to dampen her spirits.

They went in to the café (including Scoobit) and sat down at a table. First Mate Ron wrote out the postcard, added Grumpy Gnome’s address and stuck the postage stamp to it.

“Bonjour!” said the waiter, eyeing First Mate Ron, Marko-the-Wisp and Captain Robert in their bizarre ‘French’ outfits.

“That means ‘Hello’ in French,” whispered the Fairy Princess. “Bonjour!” they all replied back to the waiter, much to his amusement.

The Fairy Princess ordered coffee and croissants for them all, plus some warm milk for Scoobit.



“In France, they dip their croissants in coffee,” announced First Mate Ron, dunking her croissant in her coffee before popping it into her mouth.

“Sounds a bit weird!” said Marko-the-Wisp, also dipping his croissant in his coffee. Unfortunately, he left it in there a bit too long and it plopped into the cup! “Oops!” he exclaimed and had to eat the rest of it with a teaspoon.



When they had finished, they paid the bill and left the café. First Mate Ron put the postcard to Dragon in the post box.

They got back into Miss Morag Minor and then drove down towards Lyon. It took several hours but by evening time, they finally reached Madame Craccodile's house.

Madame Craccodile was waiting for them, along with her friend, Nosferatus, and two cats, Babbine and Newt. Babbine was very fat and shy. Newt was curious (even by cat standards!) and circled the room walking around the tops of Madame Craccodile's cupboards, looking down on everyone. They were both pleased to see Scoobit and came to greet him.

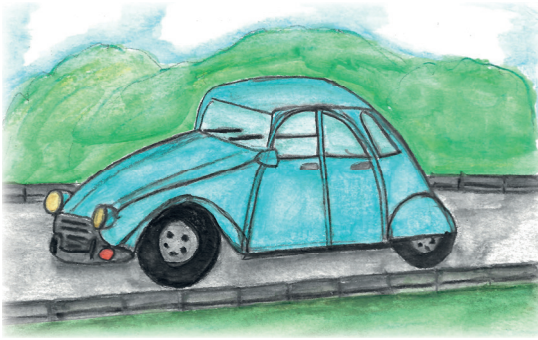
Nosferatus was a wonderful chef and he had prepared a meal for them. They had snails in garlic and cream. Then fried frogs' legs, with French bread and cheese. For afters, they had fresh raspberry mousse.

"We will leave early tomorrow morning," said Madame Craccodile. "I have beds ready for you all to sleep in tonight."

They went to their beds, tired from the journey, and all fell asleep almost as their heads touched the pillow.

The next morning, they had a breakfast of bread, cheese, and cold meat.

Then they got ready to set off. Nosferatus, Madame Craccodile, Babbine and Newt were travelling in Nosferatus' old 2CV car.



Nosferatus got in his car and started the engine. It spluttered a bit, then stopped. He tried to start it again and the same thing happened. He wound down the window, leaned his head out and shouted, "Poussez, poussez!"

The Fairy Princess asked Madame Craccodile, "What does 'poussez' mean?"

"It means push!" replied Madame Craccodile wearily.

They got out of Miss Morag Minor and stood behind the old 2CV car. They started to push the car along the road. First, it went slowly, but as they gained momentum, it went faster and faster. They were laughing so much whilst they were pushing that people had stopped in the street to watch the spectacle.

Suddenly, the 2CV sprang into life and chugged off up the road. They were still pushing with all their might and fell flat on their faces in the middle of the road, still laughing helplessly.

Finally, they set off with the 2CV leading the way and Miss Morag Minor following. It was quite a long way to the famous garden and so they had planned to make some stops along the way.

However, there were also some unplanned stops. Nosferatus' 2CV broke down every few miles and they had to keep getting out to 'pousser'.

The third time it broke down, Nosferatus opened the bonnet and peered in scratching his head.

"We're never going to get there at this rate," muttered the Fairy Princess to herself.

Nosferatus had gone to the boot to fetch a spanner. When his back was turned, she took a small pinch of fairy dust out of her bag and blew it all over the engine.

Nosferatus came back and tapped the spanner a couple times on the engine, which wasn't going to achieve anything.

"Bon," he said and got back into the car. He tried the engine and it sounded like a racing car! He sped off up the road at high speed and had to stop after a while to let Miss Morag Minor catch up with them.

## Chapter Three

# Parc de la Tête d'Or


The first planned stop was Lyon City Park (or the Parc de la Tête d'Or).

The Fairy Princess wanted to take some photos of the red squirrels that she had been told lived there.

The park had botanical glass houses, a small zoo and a large boating lake. They walked round the zoo, looking at the animals for a few hours.

There were lions, tigers, a crocodile pond, giraffes, elephants, and many different types of birds.





As they stood looking at the giraffes, Marko-the-Wisp said, "That one looks very friendly," and gave it a wave. It bent its head over the fence and sniffed Marko-the-Wisp. Then it licked him with its enormous, black tongue covering him in giraffe slobber!

"Eeeeergh!" shrieked Marko-the-Wisp.

First Mate Ron, the Fairy Princess and Madame Craccodile managed to dry him off with some handkerchiefs, but they decided it was a good time to leave the zoo.

As they were coming out of the zoo exit, the Fairy Princess saw a group of red squirrels in a small wood of evergreen trees. She pulled out her camera and slowly stalked over to the squirrels.

As she approached the little group, they all scuttled away up the trees, except for one.

She pointed her camera at the squirrel. He was standing on his hind legs looking at her, almost as if he was posing to have his picture taken. The Fairy Princess clicked the camera, and a message came up on the screen saying, 'memory card full'.

"Oh no!" she exclaimed, "What a time to run out of memory!" She reached into her bag and rummaged around for her spare memory card. She tried to change the cards over, but she was trying to do it so quickly that her hands kept fumbling. All the while the squirrel kept posing!

She finally loaded the spare memory card into the camera and took several pictures of him.



He was such a handsome creature with bright red fur and long tufty ears.

However, he appeared to be quite angry and glared at her almost like he wanted to chase her off! She wished she had some nuts to give him, but only had peppermints which she doubted he would like. She quickly walked away to join the others, delighted with her photos. The squirrel still stood there watching her walk away, possibly wishing she'd had some nuts too.

Following that, they all went to the boating lake and hired three swan shaped paddle boats. They paddled all the way round the edge in a line, one behind the other. The cats didn't want to go in the boats, so just sat in the sunshine on the shore watching them.



When they got back to the jetty they got out of the boats and went to find Scoobit, Babbine and Newt, who were still sunning themselves by the edge of the lake.

As they were leaving, they saw an ice cream parlour, which they couldn't resist.

They each ordered a Knickerbocker Glory as a treat, before setting off on their journey once more towards the famous garden.