

Early★Reader

Message in a Bottle

Jack and Harry send messages in
bottles to each other, across the sea.
One day, Harry's bottles stop coming,
so Jack goes to visit him and discovers
Harry has a secret!

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RRP £5.99
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Elizabeth Dale

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By Elizabeth Dale

Illustrated by
Mona Meslier Menuau



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'Message in a Bottle'

An original concept by Elizabeth Dale

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Published by MAVERICK ARTS PUBLISHING LTD

Studio 11, City Business Centre, 6 Brighton Road,
Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5BB

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+44 (0)1403 256941

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available at the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-84886-725-3

Maverick
publishing
www.maverickbooks.co.uk



This book is rated as: White Band (Guided Reading)

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Chapter 1

There was almost no one on the beach that evening. Jack loved the beach when it was empty, and so did Toby. Toby ran ahead, wagging his tail madly and sniffing all the interesting smells.

“Fetch, Toby!” Jack yelled, throwing a stick into the waves.

Whoops! Jack threw it further than he’d planned. Toby ran in, then quickly scurried back again as big waves rushed towards him. Jack laughed as the little dog just made it. And then he frowned. A bottle was lying next to Toby on the sand.



‘More rubbish in the sea!’ thought Jack crossly.

As he reached down to pick it up, Jack saw some paper in the bottle. He tipped it out expecting to find more rubbish. But it was a letter.



Hi, I'm Harry. Will you be my friend? Please message me back.

Jack looked around him. He wondered if someone had just thrown the bottle into the sea. But there was nobody about. Could this really be a message from someone a long way away? To him? All his life Jack had longed to find a message in a bottle. And now he had! Or was it a joke? Well, there was one way to find out.

He reached in his pocket and found a pencil and wrote on the note:

Hi, I'm Jack. I'd love to be your friend!

And then he put it in the bottle and threw it back into the sea.



Chapter 2

Jack was excited when he took Toby to the beach the following afternoon. He walked up and down the beach, but there was no bottle waiting for him, and no message.

At last, even Toby was tired. So Jack turned to go home. And then he saw it, lying on the sand. The bottle! With more paper inside! He cheered and took out the message, which read:

Hi Jack!

Great to hear from you. Tell me all about yourself. Do you like swimming and fishing? I've just been fishing and found the prettiest seahorse. Here's a picture. Tell me what you found today! What have you been doing?

Your friend, Harry.

Jack frowned.
His life seemed so dull compared to Harry's.
Imagine finding a seahorse!
He'd never even seen one.

