

8

Then he opened a little book that belonged to one of his brothers. Ben looked at the cup one more time and said, 'I'm so lucky to have one book to read, but I'd like one hundred more books so I can learn all about the world, please.'

Suddenly, a hundred books fell from between the leaves in the tree above him. Ben couldn't believe it. He was so pleased.



He laughed and laughed, put the old cup in his pocket, carried the books home, sat down by the fire and read them all.



When Ben's older brothers came in through the door, Ben was still reading. They were angry. 'Where's our dinner? Where's our vegetable soup?' they shouted. Ben looked up and said, 'I found an old cup in the field today. I think it understands about wishes. It gave me a hot chocolate, a warm coat and 100 really interesting books. I'm learning all about the world. It's amazing! I know all about its lands and its oceans and about all the creatures that live on the Earth as well now. So ask the silver cup for your dinner.'





The two older brothers looked at Ben's new coat, his new books and then at the silver cup on the table. One of them picked it up. He was angrier now. 'We have a wish, too. Give us our dinner. We want it this minute!' he said.

The empty bowls were suddenly full of delicious vegetable soup. The brothers couldn't believe it.

'Cup,' the oldest brother shouted. 'Give me a room full of money.'

'Give me more money than my brother and a room full of candy,' the other brother said.

Suddenly, there was candy and money everywhere. The brothers began to fight.

'Give me that cup,' one shouted.

'No!' the other one said. 'It's mine. It's not yours. Give it to me!'



The cup fell on the ground and broke, and all the candy, the money, the delicious vegetable soup, Ben's warm coat and the interesting books disappeared. They were nowhere in the house.

I felt really sad when my uncle told me that part of the story.

But then he added, 'But the cup couldn't make all the stories about the world disappear from Ben's head. And when Ben was a man, he visited all the countries in the world and wrote lots of stories about the animals and people who lived there to tell to children.'

I never knew my uncle's first name. I just called him Uncle. Perhaps, just perhaps, it was Ben.



