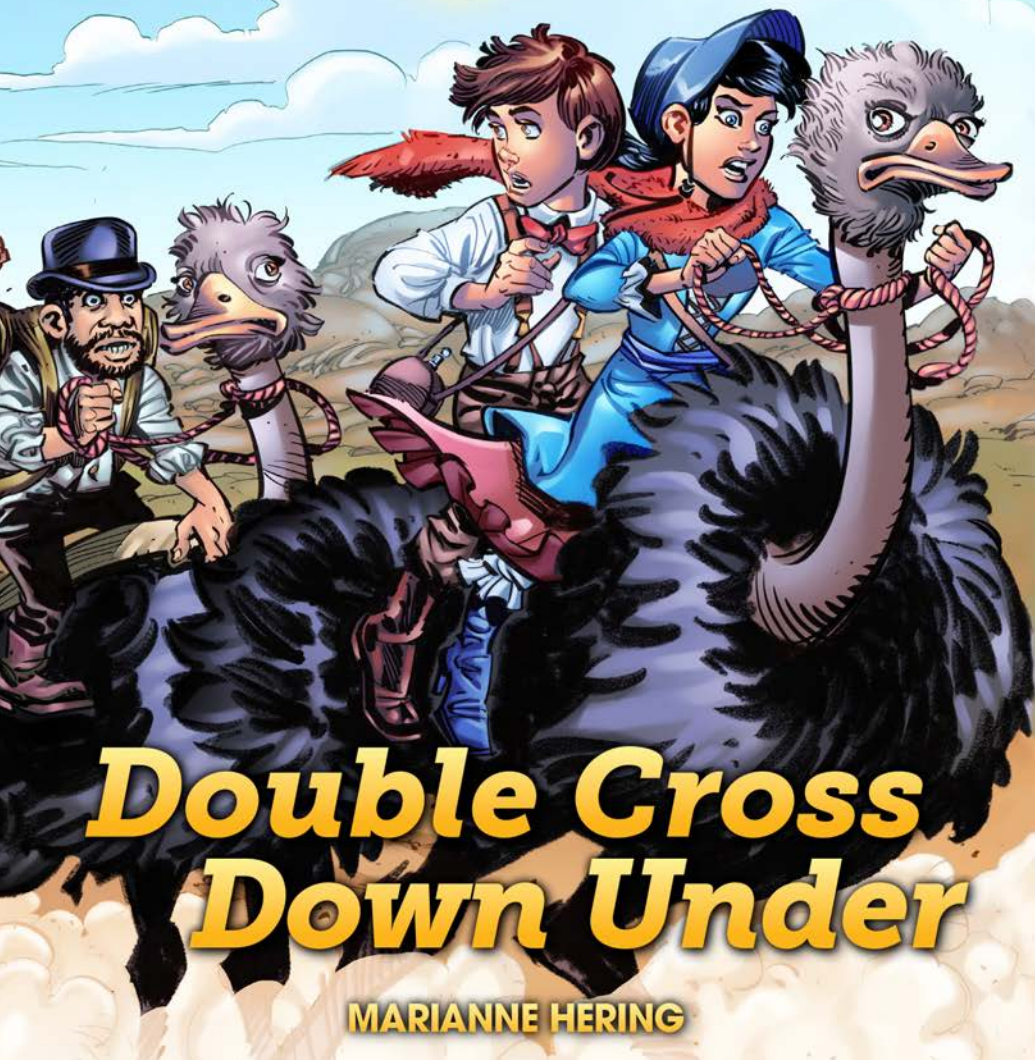


Adventures in
ODYSSEY

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY PRESENTS

33

THE IMAGINATION STATION



Double Cross Down Under

MARIANNE HERING

OVER 1 MILLION SOLD IN SERIES



Double Cross Down Under

BOOK 33

**MARIANNE HERING AND MARSHAL YOUNGER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY SERGIO CARIELLO**

**FOCUS
ON THE FAMILY®**

*A Focus on the Family resource
published by Tyndale House Publishers*

To the one who enraptures my heart and
is a missionary (of sorts) in Australia.

MKH

Double Cross Down Under

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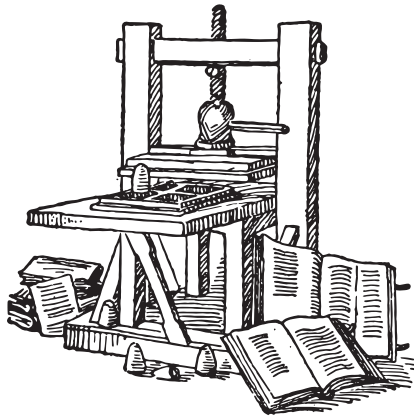
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Prologue



In Patrick and Beth's previous adventure—*Courage at the Castle*—the cousins visited England in 1535. Patrick met William Tyndale in Belgium. And the cousins met King Henry the Eighth and Queen Anne Boleyn. They also helped Bible smugglers Molly and Stephen escape danger.

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Amelia is a meddling scientist and government agent who was with them in England. She received an emerald bracelet from King Henry the Eighth. The cousins returned to Whit's End without Amelia.

Back in Odyssey, Whit told the cousins he had sent Amelia somewhere else. Here's the ending of that adventure.



“Amelia is on her own in the other Imagination Station,” Whit said. “She thinks she’s in control with the old remote she found when Beth was with Molly. But I sent her somewhere fit for troublemakers.”

Beth remembered the lights on the dashboard. “Amelia’s light is green. Does that mean she’s safe?”

Whit stroked his chin. “She’s safe for now.

Prologue

But she'll soon find a way to put herself in danger.”

“Where?” Beth asked.

Whit told them.

Beth gasped. She felt a bit afraid.

Patrick did a fist pump. “That’s great! I’ve always wanted to go there!”



Root Beer Floats



“This is so *dardy*, Mr. Whittaker,” Patrick said. (He was using the Australian slang for “cool.”) “Can we go now? I want to see the wild creatures in the outback.”

“You’ll have to wait just a bit,” Whit said. “I’m completing an update for the Model T Imagination Station.” The inventor was working on a laptop.

Patrick looked over Whit’s shoulder. All he could see on the display was computer code.

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The Australian outback sounded much more exciting.

Patrick turned to his cousin. She was sitting down on a nearby chair. “Beth, you don’t look ready.”

She shook her head slowly. “I’m sorry, Patrick. It seemed like we were in England for ages. Can we at least get something at the soda shop first?”

Whit finished typing something. “Good idea, Beth. I need a few more minutes here.” He nodded at the cousins. “Come back in twenty minutes. Then the Imagination Station will be ready.”

Patrick wanted to protest. But he knew that would be disrespectful. “Okay, let’s go, Beth,” he said.

The cousins walked up the stairs and turned a corner. They went into the ice cream parlor. Their friend Eugene was at the counter.

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Eugene was an adult, but he'd been on some adventures. He and the cousins had met Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, and Nikola Tesla.

Eugene had two root beer floats waiting for them. Extra foam floated on top.

"How did you know we'd want these?" Beth asked.

"I didn't," Eugene said. "But Mr. Whittaker did. They are his treat to you."

Patrick and Beth looked at each other with curious expressions.

"Mr. Whittaker is always one step ahead of us," Patrick said.

Then Beth shrugged and said, "No surprise there. He has always been a bit mysterious."

Eugene said, "Mr. Whittaker asked me to point out the scoop of ice cream. See how it floats? Hence the name *root beer float*."

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Patrick picked up one of the drinks off the counter. He said, “That’s because the bubbles in the root beer are pushing it up.”

Eugene shook his head. “Incorrect,” he said. “The bubbles are of no importance.”

Patrick said, “Well, they’re important to me. They make the foam!”

The cousins took their root beer floats and sat at a round table. They perched on green metal chairs. Patrick drank his root beer quickly. Then he dipped out the ice cream with a spoon.

But Beth waited. She didn’t sip. She didn’t scoop off the foam or use a straw. She just stared at the glass.

Eugene left the counter area and came over to the cousins’ table. “Why aren’t you drinking your root beer float?” he asked Beth.

Beth tapped the glass. “I want to see what happens to the ice cream,” she said. “The

Root Beer Floats

bubbles are almost gone. Will the ice cream sink soon?”

She looked at Eugene and smiled an apology. “Sorry that I don’t believe you. I need to see for myself.”

Eugene held up his first finger and said, “Aha! A density experiment. Whichever substance has the lower density will rise. Right now, the ice part of the ice cream has about the same density as water. It is floating, but part of the scoop is below the water level.”

“What if the ice cream melts?” Beth asked.

“Watch and see,” Eugene said.

Patrick set his spoon on a paper napkin.

“We don’t have time to wait that long,” he said.

“Mr. Whittaker gave us only twenty minutes.”

Beth wrinkled her nose. “You’re right.” She picked up her glass and blew on the foam. “I’ll finish this quickly.” She took a big sip.

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“Just don’t make a noisy burp,” Patrick said.

Beth smiled and looked up. “How about if I wear a very quiet mustache?” A strip of light-brown foam clung to her upper lip.

Patrick laughed.



When Beth was finished, she wiped off the foam with a napkin. The cousins cleared their table and headed to the exit.

“Bye, Eugene,” Patrick said.

“Thank you!” Beth added.

Eugene waved his farewell.

Back at the workshop, Whit motioned for the cousins to climb inside the Model T.

“You’re programming a way to keep Amelia out of the Imagination Station, right?” Patrick asked.

Whit smiled and winked. “Not quite,” he

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said. “I just need to keep a closer watch on her. Are you still up for the job?”

Beth wished Amelia wouldn’t always act so selfish. She wondered, *Will Amelia ever change?*

“Can we *pleeeeee* go now?” Patrick asked. His hand grabbed the steering wheel. “I want to see cool lizards, like a thorny devil or a bearded dragon.”

Beth shuddered. “I like the kangaroos and koalas. But I don’t want to see reptiles unless we can talk to them. Then I’ll know we’re safe.”

“As you wish,” Whit said. He reached into his pocket and took out an earbud. The special device helped translate languages. It also allowed the users to understand animals a bit.

“Whose turn is it to use one?” Whit asked.

Beth felt a rush of excitement flush her cheeks.

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“It’s Beth’s turn,” Patrick said. “I had it on the last adventure.”

Whit offered the bud to Beth. It was the size of a small marshmallow.

“Keep this away from Amelia,” he said.

Beth nodded and said thank you. She put the bud in her ear.

She thought she saw Patrick frown. His mouth curved like an upside-down horseshoe. But the scowl lasted only a second because he asked, “Now, Mr. Whittaker?”



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Whit shut the Model T's door. "Have fun!"

Patrick pulled the black knob. Suddenly a rainbow of colors started to spin on the windshield. It was like looking into a kaleidoscope. The machine lurched. Then it seemed to roll.

Like driving through time, Beth thought.
Suddenly everything went black.