

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

A knock on the door

by Garf Collins

“Good God. It’s Jim. Where on earth have you sprung from?” said Giles in surprise as he opened the front door. “Hey Anna, look who’s here,” he shouted, as he helped Jim in with a massive backpack.

Once they were sitting comfortably with a cup of tea, Jim reached into a pocket of his bulging cargo shorts and produced a well-worn map. He spread this out as he tucked his hair more securely into his colourful bandana.

“This is just the outline of the journey. I started there in Jakarta and made my way through Java by rail and bus. Then I took a ferry across to Bali where I lived for a few months before carrying on to the small islands.” He paused to pull a photo out of the pocket of his tie-dyed shirt. “While in Bali I met this lovely woman and we travelled the rest of the time together.”

“That’s all very well Jim,” said Anna as she looked dubiously at the photo, “but surely you can’t keep on going walkabout as you call it. You’ll have to get another job to live. You can’t be a hippy forever.”

“Not necessarily Anna. I could easily go back to Bali and live for the rest of my life with ease just doing bits of tour organisation here and there. I know Ni Luh would like that... Hello Felix give me a hug,” he said as his eight-year-old nephew entered the room.

Felix decided the game in his bedroom was much more exciting than listening to grownups talking but as he left he heard Uncle Jim say, "In any case, the recipe for an interesting life is from time to time to create the opportunity for something different to happen. It's what I call a serendipity space."

"Serendipity space?" thought Felix, "what can that be?" He knew about space – it was one of his favourite things but he hadn't ever heard of serendipity space. He looked up his science book but couldn't find it anywhere so he got out his parents dictionary and read;

Serendipity; the facility or phenomenon of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.

"How could you find something like that above the Earth's atmosphere?" Felix thought with a puzzled frown.

"What's serendipity space Mum," he asked next morning.

"Sorry I don't have the time to talk about Uncle Jim's daft ideas now," Anna said as she hurried him into the car for the school run.

Felix was puzzled all day about the meaning of serendipity space but came to no good conclusion. When he was back at home in his bedroom, Uncle Jim came in and gave him a space-ship construction toy.

"Thanks, Uncle. That's exactly the one I wanted," he said, and he forgot all about his quest for the meaning of serendipity space as he thought happily that he had two whole hours to play before tea.