



A PUDDLEBEND STORY

THE SHADOW THAT FOLLOWED

WREN MARLOWE



PUDDLEBEND



The Shadow That Followed



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PUDDLEBEND

For the little ones who stop to wonder.



The Shadow That Followed

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Written and illustrated by Wren Marlowe.

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The title and dedication are set in Fraunces.



At the creek in Puddlebend, Nix was having a wonderful time playing by herself.

She followed a beetle along the pebble wall. Then she skipped after a butterfly.





Soon, her feet were tired.
Nix sat on a flat stone in the sunshine.

Something dark lay on the ground
beside her.
It had funny feet.





“Who are you?” Nix asked.
It said nothing.

Nix leaned closer. It leaned closer too.
She waved one paw.





It waved back!
Nix nearly slipped off her stone.

“Hello!” she called.
Still, it said nothing.
“Can’t you talk?”





Nix curled her tail.
The dark shape curled its tail.

She stretched it out again.
So did the shape.
“You’ve got a tail like mine!”





She hopped down from the stone.
The funny feet hopped too.

Nix stood very still.
So did the shape.
“Are you copying me?”





Sora was watching from the creek's edge.
“What have you found, Nix?”

“Someone with my feet. And my tail. But it won’t say hello!”





Sora stepped beside her.

“That’s your shadow,” she said. “The sunshine can’t shine through you. So there’s a dark shape on the ground.”

Nix looked from herself to the shape.
“My shape?”





Sora lifted one long foot.
Her shadow lifted a long foot too.

Nix laughed.

“Yours has long legs!”

“And yours has a curly tail,” said Sora.





“Can I make mine hide?” asked Nix.

She stepped into the shade under the gum tree.

The ground was dark there already.

Nix looked for the funny feet.

She couldn't see them.





Nix peeked out at the sunny grass.
“Maybe it needs sunshine.”

She stepped out from under the tree.
There was her shadow again, right beside
her feet.
“There you are!”





Nix waved both paws.
Two shadow paws waved back.

She gave a little hop.
Her shadow hopped too.
“I can make it play!”





Sora spread her wings and lifted off.
Her shadow spread two great wings over
the grass.

Nix looked up. Then down.
“Wait for me!”





Sora flew low along the bank.
Nix scampered after Sora's
shadow, laughing.

Now there were wings to chase!
And all the way along the bank, Nix's own
funny feet came too.



EVERYONE AT THE CREEK



Bramble

COMMON
WOMBAT

The steady big-
kid guardian



Skip

MUDSKIPPER

The tiny little
brother who
cannot wait his
turn



Cinder

COATIMUNDI

The nosy
neighborhood
explorer



Sora

SANDHILL
CRANE

The tall
watchful big-
sister neighbor



Hush

TAWNY
FROGMOUTH

The tall
nervous big
cousin who
thinks nobody
can see him



Tuck

SHORT-BEAKED
ECHIDNA

The littlest
cousin who is
always a bit too
close



Nix

SUGAR GLIDER

The littlest
rocket sibling

ABOUT THE CREEK

Puddlebend is a slow bend in a warm creek where the water is shallow enough to stand in and the mud is soft enough to sit down in. Everyone who lives there is small. Everyone who lives there is working something out.

These stories are about the ordinary, difficult business of being a friend: waiting your turn, going back for what you dropped, letting someone hold you when you are all spikes.

WREN MARLOWE

Wren Marlowe makes quiet, funny picture books at the water's edge: small creatures working out how to be together.



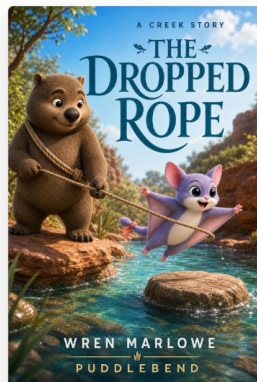
ALSO IN A SKY STORY



The Cloud That Would Not Stay



The Landing Branch



The Dropped Rope



The Missed Leaf



PUDDLEBEND

puddlebend.com

Digital edition

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a stork and a mouse walking along a dirt path. The stork, with grey feathers and a red-tipped beak, is on the left, looking towards the mouse. The mouse, a small purple creature with large ears and a pink bow, is on the right, looking back at the stork. They are walking on a path that leads towards a blue lake with rocks in the water. The background is a lush green forest under a bright blue sky with soft clouds. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a sunny day.

A PUDDLEBEND STORY

The Shadow That Followed

Funny feet. A curly tail. A very quiet follower.

Something is following Nix along the sunny bank. It waves when she waves, but it never says hello.

With Sora beside her, Nix discovers what makes a shadow—and turns a puzzling little follower into a game.

Written and illustrated by Wren Marlowe

PUDDLEBEND

A Puddlebend picture book
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