

DARRYL'S DARING DEED

Story and
Illustrations by

Paul Phillip Schifferli

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ISBN 0-9765304-7-3

Published by:

WME Books
Windsor Media Enterprises, LLC
Rochester, New York
USA

Available online at: www.WMEBooks.com, as well as other booksellers and distributors worldwide.

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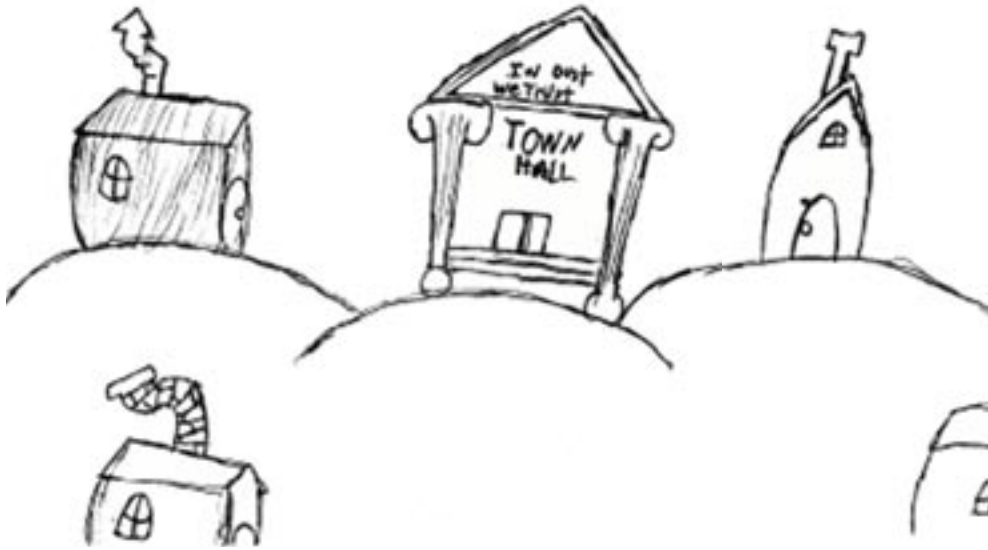
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Once upon a time, in a house very much like your own, on the fuzzy carpet floor, underneath the couch, lived a small village of people...Complete with stores and homes and a church with a steeple.

These were not people like you or me...they were very, very small... and made out of dust. Tiny dust people that live just like us - full of happiness and fun and lots of good stuff.

Look, here, alone
just outside of town,
stands one of the
dust people, lost in
thought and feeling
quite down.

It's Darryl, but
why is Darryl so sad?



Now don't rush ahead, the story - both the good and the bad - must be
told by Darryl himself. Let's go back to Darryl...

"Yip, Yap, Yop." Darryl turned at the sound of a little bark. There at his feet is Royce, Darryl's joyful dust puppy. Darryl smiled and patted his pup. "You're a good boy, Royce," he says. But, it doesn't seem to cheer Darryl up.



Now, the reason Darryl was feeling so low was that he wanted to be brave and go out on a quest.

The town mayor had exclaimed, "It's out of the question!" Which made Darryl pause.

Still, that wasn't the worst of it. Darryl, would have ignored the mayor and up and left, anyway, except he had something else to worry about.

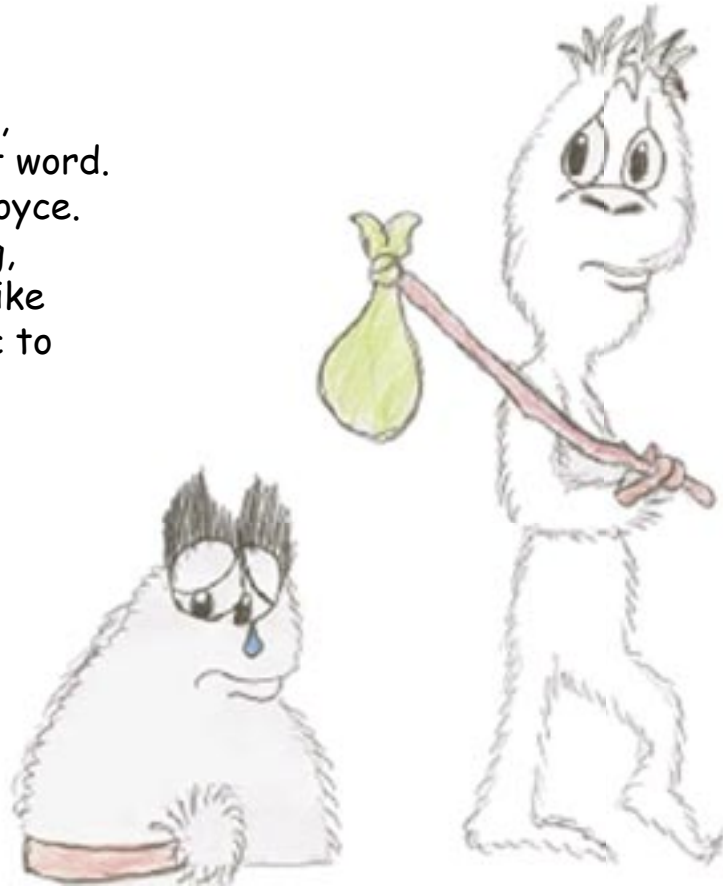
Madison Gabriella Dustinore,
the one girl in town who would
cry if he left.

She was five years old and
bright and pretty. And she
loved her Darryl. But, even
though he hated to make her
sad, Darryl felt he just needed
to go on this quest. He needed
to be a hero.



So later that night,
when everyone else was asleep,
Darryl left the village, without word.
Of course, he brought along Royce.
And as he left - sneaking along,
creeping along, he didn't feel like
a hero. Because, it's not heroic to
sneak away in the night.

But sneak he did, on
his tiptoes, because he
had to do something!
He hoped Madison
would forgive him.



"I need a sword and a steed, if I'm going to be a hero," Darryl said to Royce, the very next day. But dust horses are scarce (I'm not sure there are any dust horses, to be honest).

"What good is a hero without a horse?!" Darryl cried. "That's no hero, that's a zero!" He started to be sad again, then he turned and looked at his puppy Royce.

"Aha!" he said. "You will be the steed of my choice!"

Royce shook his head very hard which looked like a big, "No," in reply.

"I guess I can do without a steed for now" said Darryl, with a sigh.

There was still the matter of getting a sword, and, since there are few things smaller (maybe none) than dust, getting a hero's weapon would be quite tricky. Fortunately, Darryl was bold, brave and just. He would find a sword! "I will," he said. "I must!"

(Eh, hopefully before our readers get bored.)

Many days later, and having traveled far past the village, he found no sword, no steed, and not even a villain to fight. His quest seemed hopeless, which made him even sadder.

The only thing he had was his dust puppy Royce, maybe not the strongest thing for a hero to defend, and yet, for puppies, he was the bravest and truest friend. A cute lil' fuzzy dust's best friend.



Day after day they searched until they were both hungry and tired. Darryl was pulling at his hair in frustration. And every night, Royce turned and tossed.



"Oh that's enough! This is pointless. Let's just go home!" said Darryl, heaving a big sigh.

But when they turned to go back, what they saw gave them a start! There was nothing familiar! "Oh no!" shouted Darryl. "Royce, we are lost!" Lost and quite frightened, to say in the least.

Then Darryl saw a giant mountain that was big but with holes.

"Must be a cave" thought Darryl scratching his head.

In actuality, this "mountain" was an old, gray cushioned chair, and the "cave" was a hole right at the top.

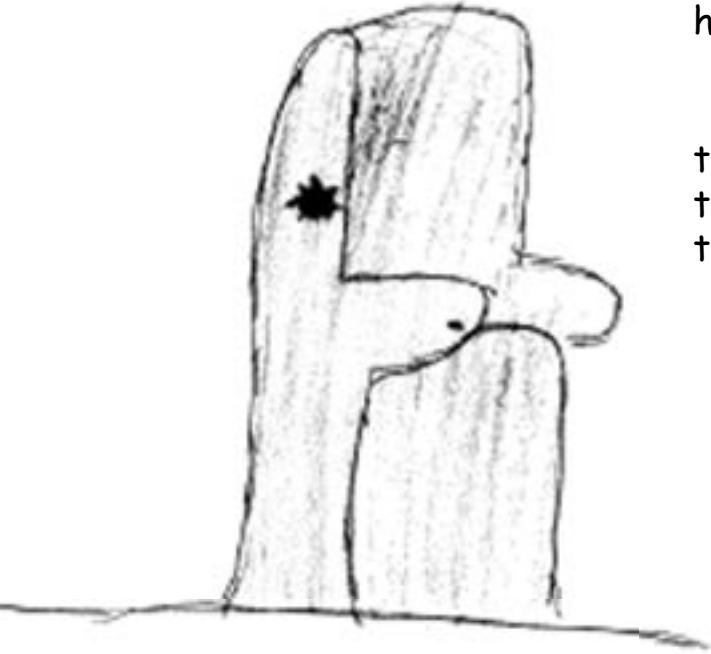
Then Darryl thought, "Hey! If I climb to the top of this mountain, I might be able to see the way home!"

And Royce barked a yip and a yap.



So Darryl told Royce to wait, and the pup obeyed. And Darryl began to climb the chair-mountain, while Royce watched, with his tail wagging away.

And Darryl was doing it, he was climbing, the mountain! Up and Up, into the air! It was tiresome and hard to do, but do it he must... to save himself and Royce.



Finally, after a long, long while, he reached the top. And his eyes brightened at a wonderful sight.

He cried out for joy, and Royce barked "Yip, Yap, and Yop."

Because as he looked forward, he saw it...the town, not far off! And he smiled, a smile so bright, Royce saw it all the way down on the floor.



And he yelled, "We're almost home!" with all of his might - he smiled so hard he thought he would pop!. And Royce wagged his tail, harder and harder.

Suddenly, inside the cushion came a mean growl, and then . . .

For publication:

In his first effort, emerging young author Paul Schifferli tells a tale of the young Dust boy Darryl, who yearns to be a hero. With his dust puppy Royce and with help from Dust Buzzard Belfax, his journey takes him through the microscopic world of dust in the average family home. On the way, he gets lost, outwits Dust Beasts and eventually, saves the Dust Town from Baron Von Vacuum.

Using variable rhyme schemes, the text of the book is rich, active, and full of dry humor, sure to engage readers both young and old. At times, the narrative and dialogue are punctuated by comments from the author to the reader directly, adding to the fun of reading it out loud.



The illustrations by the author are bold, partially-colored sketches. Although they are not fully realized, they are quite effective in giving the reader an energized representation of the central actions and relationships in the story.

Darryl's Daring Deeds will appeal to advanced 4-8 year old children and their reading partners.

Cass Clarke
Education Director
Just Buffalo Literary Center