



The  
MUCH MORE  
MAGNIFICENT  
SEVEN

**A Truly Magnificent Story!**



**This is a story called  
THE MUCH MORE  
MAGNIFICENT SEVEN.**

You have probably heard of a group of cowboys called THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, but THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN were nothing compared to THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, a group of seven truly gifted and fabulous individuals named Aisling, Conor, Erika, Evan, Jack, Natalie and Nira.



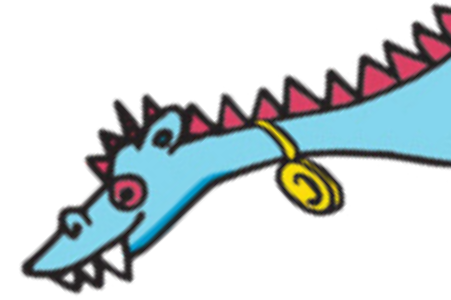


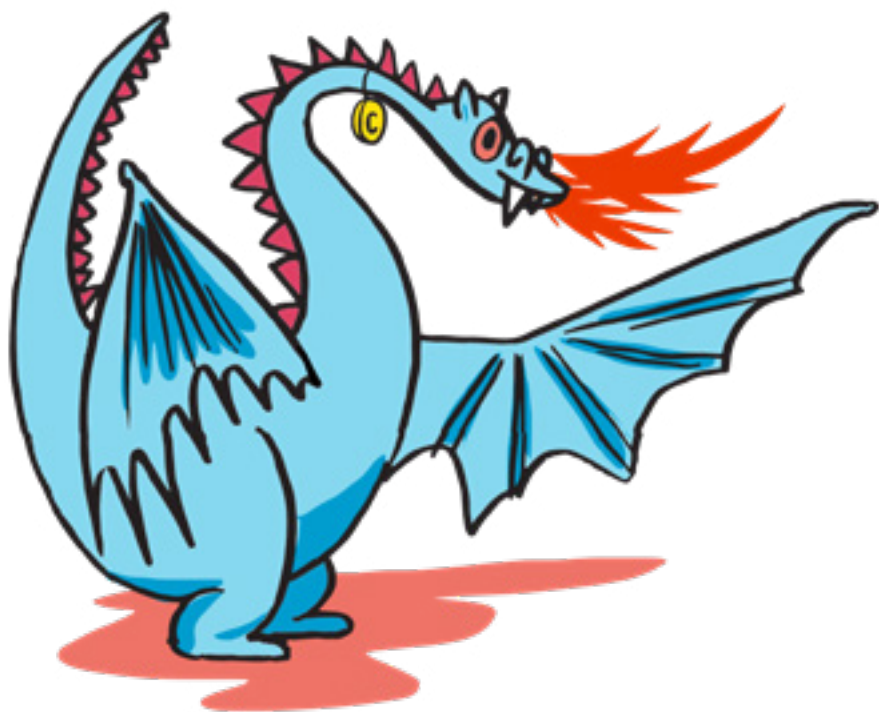
**AS OUR STORY BEGINS,** Conor and Erika are trying to summon Conor's pet dragon. Conor has trained his dragon to do all sorts of fancy tricks. Even though Conor's dragon has managed to master sitting, rolling over, making funny noises and baking pancakes with his fiery breath, he is still quite shy, so he doesn't always like to come out. In fact, he may only appear when he hears Erika calling out a super special dragon greeting in her friendly and calming voice, while beating her friendly and calming drum, **"HIYA!"**



Conor's dragon seems to be particularly shy today. Fortunately, Natalie is amazing with animals. One of her best friends in the world is her dog, Biscuit.

Natalie loves her dog so much that she even shares her food with him... or at least doesn't seem to mind when Biscuit steals it from her!





The dragon shows the children all of the tricks he's learned from Conor, but after all that activity, to-ing and fro-ing and up-ing and down-ing, the dragon is very thirsty. He uses his claw to make the lámh sign for **'drink'**. Now, if the dragon had done a lámh sign to communicate his thirst to THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, they wouldn't have had the faintest idea what he was talking about. Yul Brynner might have shot him in the leg.



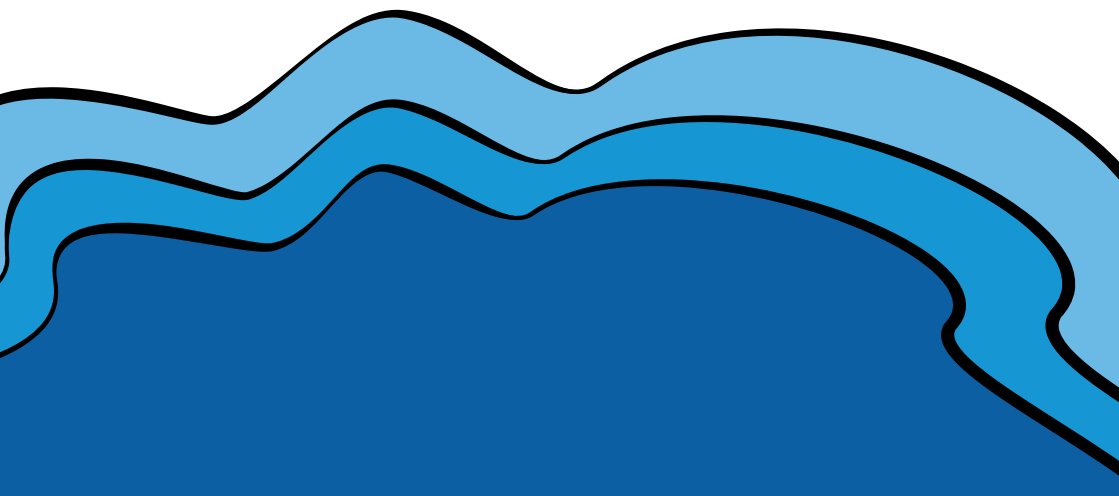
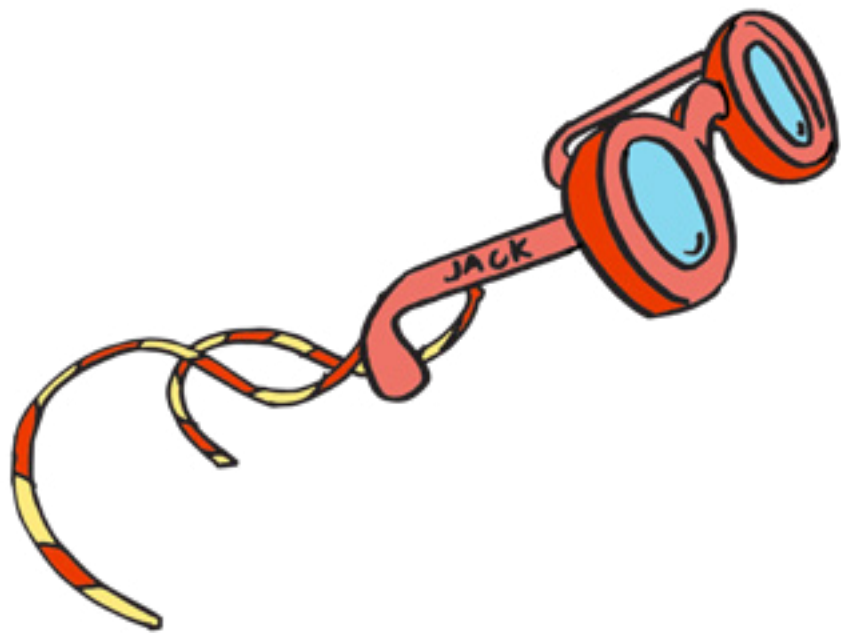
But this is THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, so you may be darn sure that there is someone here who understands lámh. Not only do they understand it, they can communicate using lámh too.

Jack signs **'okay'** to the dragon and **'follow me'**, and leads him to a pond so he can drink.



Now, if you know Jack, then you probably also know that he adores mischief. Whenever he is near a body of water, he likes to pull off his hearing aid or glasses and throw them in. Jack loves throwing glasses so much, that his grandad Tommy, who is one of his favourite people, made Jack a pair of glasses tied to the end of a string. So now, whenever Jack gets the temptation to fling his spectacles, he can pull the string to get them back.





As Jack waits for the dragon to have his drink, he just can't resist it: he throws his glasses right into the centre of the pond! But, as he tries to pull the string to get his glasses back, they seem to be stuck on something. But what could they be stuck on? Some reeds? A sunken boat? Trapped inside the belly of a trout?

Out of all the children in THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, Aisling and Natalie are the ones that love water the most. They make their unicorns giddy up and they ride to the water's edge. Natalie and Aisling dive into the water and swim downwards, following Jack's string right to the bottom of the pond. But what are Jack's glasses caught under?



There's something glowing from the pond bed.

**“Oh my goodness”**, think Natalie and Aisling,  
**“it is a star!”** Natalie and Aisling fetch the star and  
the glasses and bring them back to the surface.

**“Oh thank you so much for  
dragging me out of that pond”**,  
says the star.

**“I thought I was going to be stuck  
at the bottom forever. You really  
saved me.”**



**“You're very welcome”**, says Nira.

**“But how did you end up at the  
bottom of the pond?”**

The star explains that it had wanted to be a star on Earth  
instead of just a star up in the sky. The star said that there  
were rumours in the sky about stars on Earth having  
an amazing life. He had heard that stars get to wear make-  
up, be in movies and on stage, play sports! And everybody  
cheers for them and applauds and throws flowers and  
screams: **“we love you!”**

He said it made him sad, because no one even waves  
at the stars up in the sky. But then, as the star was on  
his way down to Earth, he realised that there were two  
meanings to the word star and that he had it all wrong.  
The stars he had been hearing about were celebrities,  
which were a different kind of star. And just as he found  
that out, he fell straight into the pond.

The star said that he supposed he might as well head  
off home, back to the sky. The children all felt a little bit  
bad for him. **“Oh don't worry”**, said the star,





**“I got to meet all of you.  
Thank you so much for rescuing  
me, and because you did, I’m  
going to grant you all a wish!”**

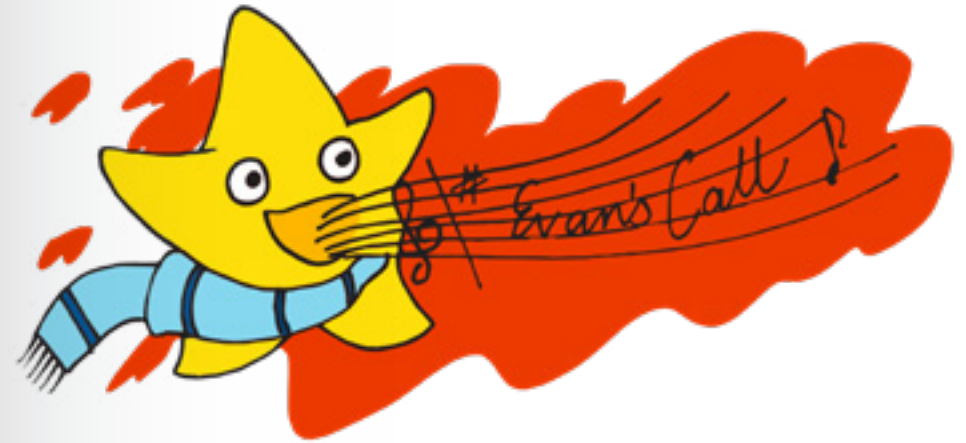
Nira came forward and told the star not to leave until THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN had helped him to feel like the kind of star he wanted to be.

**“How will we do that?”**, asked Aisling.

**“With MAKE-UP!”**, said Nira.

Nira loves make-up and she expertly applied her favourite bright red lipstick to the star. **“Oh my goodness”**, said the star, **“I really do feel a bit like a movie star! Thank you Nira.”**

Next Evan, who loves rugby and football, came forward in his unicorn chariot. He explained that THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN had decided to use their wish to give the star the experience he wanted so much: to feel like a huge star, with an audience of people cheering and clapping. But for that they need a crowd, and so that is what he wished for.



And, with that, blazing lights came on and an audience of smiling, happy people appeared. There were so many people that the star was a little overwhelmed, but Evan assured him that it would be fine.

The audience were cheering and whooping and then, knowing how much Evan loves rugby, spontaneously began to sing 'Evan's Call'! The star and THE MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN had never experienced anything quite like it.



When everything finally calmed down, the very happy star thanked the children. He said,

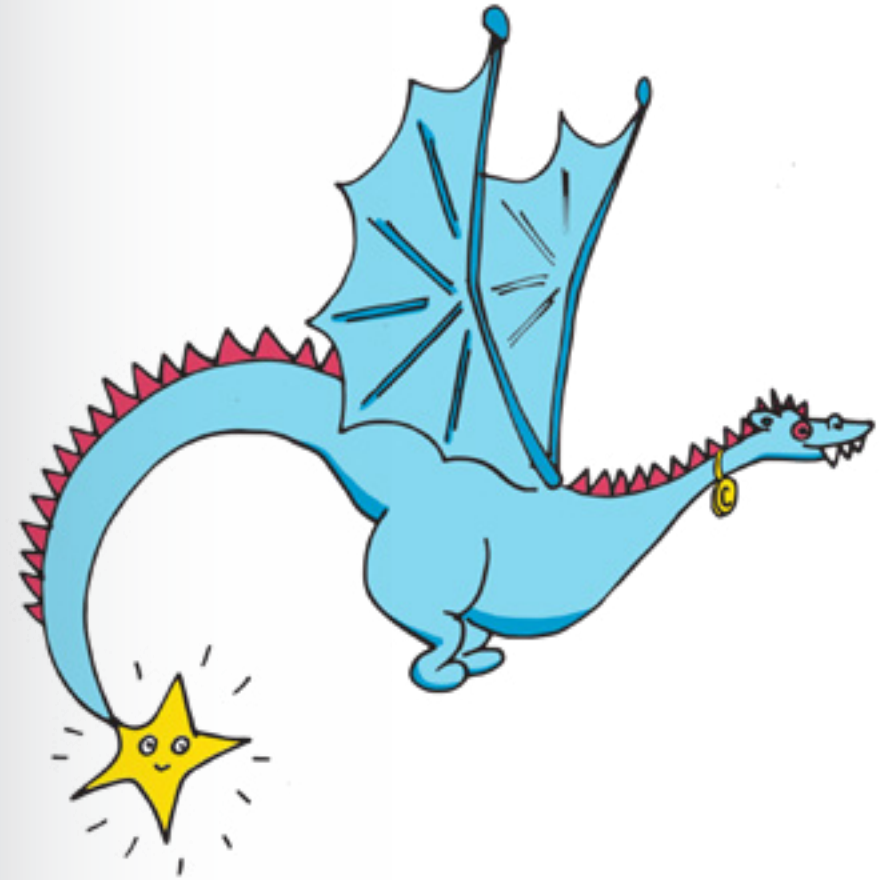
**“I cannot believe that you used your wish to make my wish come true. That’s amazing. It is so kind. You really are MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT than any other seven that I could imagine.”**

The star couldn’t believe his luck. Tears of joy caused his make-up to run down his golden star body. He was ready to go home.

**“Oh...”** said the star,  
**“How will I get back into the sky?”**

**“My very well-trained dragon will help you”**, said Conor.

Erika summoned the dragon once again: **“HIYA!”**, and the star hopped on the dragon’s back. As it swooped up into the sky, the MUCH MORE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN waved goodbye to their new friend.



**★ THE END ★**



For several years, the Gallery's Education Department has been proud to work with LauraLynn Children's Hospice, facilitating sensory, arts-based workshops for their attendees. LauraLynn is Ireland's only children's hospice and provides palliative care to children with life-limiting conditions and their families across Ireland. Their holistic approach provides support to the whole family, allowing patients to be children and parents to be mums and dads.

On May 25 2018, seven magnificent LauraLynn children were the stars of a full, wheelchair-centred original production in the Abbey Theatre. This was a unique opportunity for the children to perform on the Abbey stage and was a truly collaborative project, with wheelchair design by the National Gallery of Ireland and music performed by the National Concert Hall and Kids' Classics. Working with the children and their families, storyteller Paul Timoney devised this magical story, that was wholly inspired by the children's lives. The resulting performance was an unforgettable occasion for everyone in attendance that day. It inspired an accompanying display at the National Gallery in the hope that visitors could also experience some of that magic.

The Much More Magnificent Seven are: Aisling Moloney, Conor Flynn, Erika Cawley, Evan Swayne, Jack Harmes, Natalie Maria Racovita and Nira Bouzid.

This display is in memory of Conor Flynn, who passed away earlier this year.

With special thanks to: Paul Timoney, The Abbey Theatre, The National Concert Hall, Kids' Classics, Illustrator Holly Pereira, DesignWorks, Antti Viitala and Boys + Girls, and all of the families and staff of LauraLynn.

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**LauraLynn**  
IRELAND'S CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

 NATIONAL  
GALLERY *of*  
IRELAND