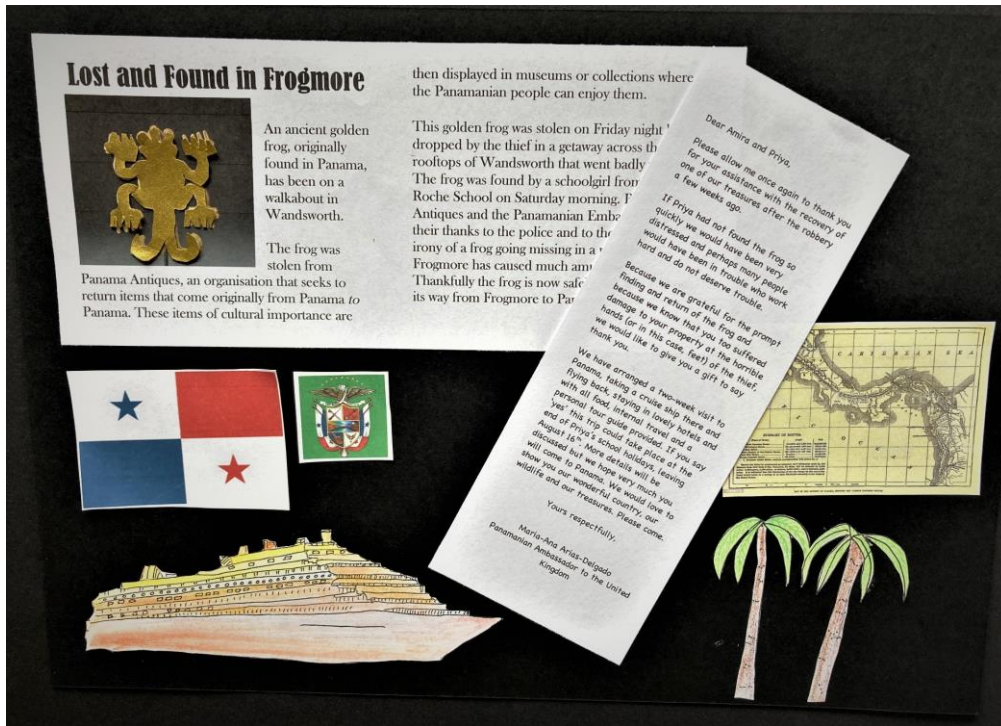


TEN WORD TALES EASTER SPECIALS

The Panama Frog

by The Story Spinner

CHAPTER 5



Back home Amira made mint tea and, while the green leaves infused and the minty smell filled the kitchen, Priya told her about the excited Panama Antiques lady and the golden frog being a thousand years old.

For the next few days, Sam kept visiting with news. Priya was expecting she might have to identify a suspect from his leg but this didn't happen. The police were however interested in the design Priya had seen on the sole of the shoe and the fish pattern on the sock.

George came round with three pots of marmalade, which was delicious. Amira went back to working in the basement on her party projects. Priya talked to Hamish and Sasha who were very jealous of her adventures. She took Jack for long walks in Wandsworth Park and spent time researching Panama in the library and online, just for fun. Everything settled down into the quiet summer holiday Priya had once feared. Now it felt comfortably *safe*: nothing exciting but nothing frightening.

A news report came out with the headline, Gold Frog Lost and Found in Frogmore. Priya's mum had asked that their names should not be used. Reading it, Priya felt as if the adventure had happened at a distance, to someone else.

One day, Priya had been at George's with Jack, pickling spices, when she arrived home to find her mum looking shocked, holding a letter. Sam was there, grinning, so she knew not to worry.

"I've brought news and a letter," he said. "We've caught the man who came through the ceiling. We arrested him yesterday and the

nasty scrapes on his leg and the mark you described on the sole of his shoe confirmed it. And he confessed.”

This did not seem a reason for her mum to be shocked.

“What’s in the letter?”

Amira passed the letter to Priya.

As she read it, Priya sat down too. She was so surprised she felt very shaky. Panama Antiques had written to thank her again and offered a trip to her and her mother to show how grateful they were: an all-expenses paid trip to Panama at the end of the holiday. Sam was offering to look after Jack.

“You *said* something might happen” Priya said to her mum, “And it did.”

“I don’t even know anything about Panama,” said her mum, “Apart from the canal ... and maybe the hats ... and I think they have sloths.”

“You can look for sloths,” said Priya, though she loved sloths too, “but I will be keeping an eye out for frogs.”