



Santa's Workshop

ADVENTURES FROM THE NORTH POLE

BOOK 01

The Long Way Round

As told by

Imogen Quillworth

KEEPER OF THE STORY LIBRARY

The Long Way Round

Told by Imogen Quillworth

Keeper of the Story Library

SantasWorkshop Press

Copyright

© 2026 Robert Gloster. All rights reserved.

Published by SantasWorkshop.ie. Free to read and listen to. Reproduction, redistribution, adaptation and commercial use require written permission.

Created with care at Santa's Workshop. Original storytelling and creative direction by Santa's Workshop. Illustrations and character voices produced using AI technology.

Contents

Chapter 1: A Map for Magnificent Things

Chapter 2: Two Noisy Boots

Chapter 3: Nellie's Piece of Sky

Chapter 4: Room on the Other Side

Chapter 5: A Smaller Star

A Map for Magnificent Things



Jasper pushed his wooden toy across the workbench.

Its wheels turned without a wobble. He caught it before it reached Nellie's paint pot and tried it once more, just to enjoy the smooth little roll.

Nellie lifted her brush from a blue curl on another toy. She held it towards the light, checked the fine end of the pattern and smiled.

Their afternoon's work in the Great Making Hall was finished.

"Bakehouse?" Jasper asked.

"After I've cleaned this brush."

He began putting his tools away. Then he found a fresh sheet of paper beneath his elbow.

“We could take the long way.”

Nellie swirled her brush in the water.

“How long?”

“An expedition. Magnificent sights. A map of everything we discover.”

“I'd like a walk,” she said. “And I've got a pencil.”

Jasper drew a star. He made each point long and splendid, until it occupied a good chunk of the sheet.

“What's that for?”

“Our biggest discovery.”

“You've found it already?”

“I've found where to put it.”

Pip Merryweather came to inspect their toys. She checked Jasper's wheels and Nellie's painted curl before setting both toys carefully down.

“Good work.” She glanced at the paper. “Is that another toy?”

“A map,” said Jasper. “We're going to the Bakehouse by expedition.”

“Do take your warm things. If you wander up towards the Stables, stay outside and give the reindeer their quiet.”

“We're looking for a view.”

“That should be quiet enough.”

Nellie dried her brush and put it away. Jasper folded the paper, taking care not to crease his magnificent star.

Then he unfolded it. The star was too big to avoid.

“A folded discovery,” Nellie said.

“Only until we arrive.”

They fetched their warm things. Jasper tucked the map safely inside his coat, with his pencil beside it.

He hoped the village had something very large waiting for him.

Two Noisy Boots



Cold air pinched Jasper's nose as they stepped outside.

Beyond the village roofs stood the snowy hills. He looked at them while Nellie pulled her scarf snug.

“One day I'd like to find out what's on the other side,” he said.

“Today I'd like to find out what's on this side.”

They walked towards Lantern Square. There were lanterns above the cobbles and a Christmas tree in the middle, its branches carrying little heaps of snow.

Jasper took out the map.

“A magnificent beginning.”

He sketched the tree above his star. The top nearly touched the paper's edge. He gave the lower branches plenty of room too.

Nellie glanced from the drawing to the tree.

“Where will everything else go?”

“Round it.”

She stepped onto a patch of snow.

Crunch.

Jasper stepped onto a clear cobble.

Squeak.

Nellie stopped.

“Again.”

He looked down at his boot, then took another step.

Squeak.

She stepped beside him.

Crunch.

They tried a slow pair of steps, then a quick pair. Jasper's boot squeaked late and Nellie laughed.

“You missed your turn.”

“My boot wasn't ready.”

“We've made an orchestra.”

“A very small one.”

“Two boots will fit on the map.” Nellie took out her pencil. “I'll draw them.”

Jasper held the sheet open. Between the tree and the star, there was less white paper than he'd expected.

He looked towards the northern hillside. From higher up, they could see all the roofs together.

“Could we save that space for the big view?”

“I want to remember our boots.”

“We'll put them in after.”

Nellie glanced at the blank space again. She slipped her pencil into her pocket, then made one deliberately crunchy step.

Jasper followed.

His boot squeaked, but this time she didn't answer it.

Nellie's Piece of Sky



They wandered between the cottages. Jasper watched the rooftops ahead, wondering how many would fit into the view.

Then Nellie called him back.

“Come here. Look up.”

Between two sloping roofs was a narrow patch of blue. A curl of chimney smoke drifted into it and hung there for a moment.

“It's got its own frame,” Nellie said.

Jasper stood beside her. One roof leaned in from the left and the other from the right. The sky between them was small enough to hide behind his mitten.

“We could see much more from the hill.”

“I like this piece.”

The smoke curled tighter. Then a breeze pulled its end, stretching it into a wavering thread.

“Quick,” Nellie said. “Paper.”

Jasper unfolded the map. He pointed to a gap beside the tree.

Nellie held her pencil over it.

“I couldn't fit even a tiny cloud there.”

The smoke slipped behind a roof.

“It's gone,” said Jasper.

“I saw it.”

She turned the sheet over. The back was empty.

“I'll draw it here.”

Jasper almost said that it was the wrong side. But Nellie had already chosen it, and there was certainly room.

They stopped at a low wall with a dry patch on top. She rested the paper there and drew two crooked rooflines, leaving blue sky between them.

Her pencil caught the smoke's curl. A little trailing line showed where the breeze had pulled it away.

Jasper looked from the drawing to the roofs.

“You've kept the bit that escaped.”

“That was the bit I wanted.”

She handed the paper back once she had finished, then stayed for one more look. Jasper waited beside her.

Another wisp of smoke appeared.

This one went the other way.

Nellie smiled. "We'd need a second drawing for that."

They left it curling in the sky and walked on.

Room on the Other Side



The hillside air was colder. They kept well outside the Reindeer Stables, as Pip had asked, and found a place to look down over the village.

Jasper stopped with both feet planted in the snow.

“There it is.”

The roofs gathered round Lantern Square. The tall Christmas tree looked tiny from up here. Lanterns made little golden spots below them.

Nellie stood beside him.

“That is a good view.”

Jasper spread the map across his hands. He drew the first roof.

It touched a branch of his enormous tree.

He tried a second roof. That one sat inside the star.

He held the paper farther away.

“I’ve put a cottage in the Christmas tree.”

“It would be difficult to open the door,” Nellie said.

He rubbed out the little roof. A grey smudge remained.

Perhaps the village could fit round the edges. But then there would be no room for the hill, and there was still nowhere for Nellie’s boots.

Jasper turned the map over.

Her sky drawing sat near the top. Below it stretched a wide, clean space.

He looked back at the view. From up here he couldn’t find the gap between the roofs. It was too small. Nellie had seen something he would have missed altogether.

“I kept saying later,” he said. “Then I filled the paper.”

“I wanted some of it too.”

He nodded.

“Could I draw the view beside your sky?”

“Yes. Keep the bottom for our orchestra.”

This time he began with a short line. He added small roofs and a small tree. Whenever he finished a bit, he checked the space before starting the next.

There was room.

Nellie drew two boots underneath. Little sharp marks surrounded hers. Beside Jasper's, she wrote a tiny "Squeak".

"Mine has something to say," he observed.

"Mine has been saying it all afternoon."

He laughed. Then he turned to the crowded front and wrote, beneath the giant star:

"Turn over."

Nellie added "Please".

Jasper obeyed immediately.

A Smaller Star



Back in Lantern Square, Nellie stopped beside the noticeboard.

A neighbour was folding a piece of paper. She pressed one fold, turned it and pressed another. When she pinched the middle, the points opened into a little star.

“Oh,” Nellie said. “Could you do that slowly once more?”

The neighbour flattened the paper and showed them again.

Jasper watched the points rise.

“That's going on our map.”

“I'd like to draw how it happened,” said Nellie.

She put their sheet on a dry patch of wall nearby. First she drew a flat piece of paper, then the folded star beside it. Jasper leaned close enough to see, leaving her drawing hand free.

He took out his pencil.

A star needed long, splendid points.

He started to reach across the remaining space, then stopped.

Nellie's folded star still needed an arrow from the flat sheet.

Jasper drew a little star beside hers. He left room for the arrow and for something else, though he didn't know what yet.

Nellie glanced at it.

"That one fits."

"So does the next discovery."

They crossed to Miss Bramble's Bakehouse.

Inside the Front Shop, warm air reached their cheeks and fingers. Once they had their buns, Nellie spread the map on a dry counter and drew one last picture: a bun with two pencils beside it.

Jasper looked over the whole sheet.

There was his village, Nellie's sky, their noisy boots and the paper star. On the front, his enormous tree still had a cottage-shaped smudge in its branches.

"We could invite people on a walk sometime," he said. "Bring lanterns. See what they find."

"I'd like that," said Nellie. "They'd notice different things."

"We'd need more paper."

"For everyone."

She folded their map, leaving the giant star on the outside.

Jasper picked up his bun.

“What do we call the expedition?”

Nellie took a bite before answering.

“The long way round.”

He tried a bite of his own.

It had been an excellent way to the Bakehouse.