

Ewa Marszałek

# FRANKIE

and  
the Wax

Illustrations:  
Julia Sarapata de Carvalho

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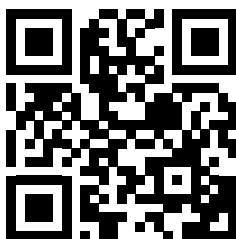
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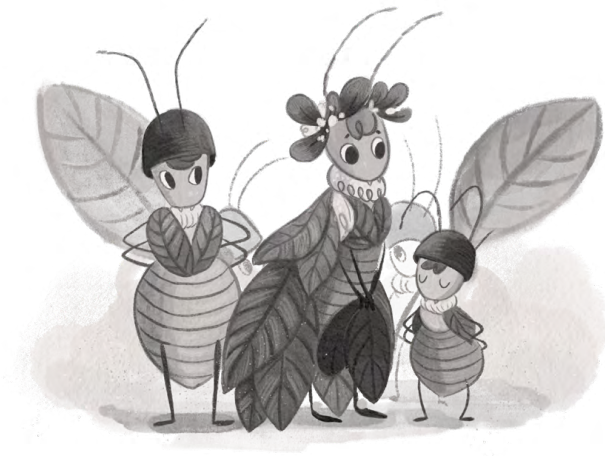
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*To Oskarek, Sara and Kai.*

*Mum*

# The Earth in 2746

Frankie lived in a time when humans and animals understood each other and no one knew the meaning of the word **war** - no one except ants.



# Chapter 1

## An Emerald Ant

‘Mum, what is **war**?’, Frankie asked one day.

Ms Gabriela Spokojna never heard the word before. How would she? The world she shared with her husband and son was a fairy tale, only for real. For three centuries, people had lived in harmony with nature. What’s more, ever since they learned to talk to animals, the division between the human world and the animal world disappeared. They have all become one big family.

If someone had told Frankie’s mum that people used to eat meat, and animals used to hunt each other, she certainly would not have believed it.

‘I don’t know what **war** is, sonny. Where did you hear the word, to begin with?’



‘From Miranda the ant. She visited me last night.  
She was really cool’.

‘So you liked another ant’, mum giggled.



Frankie was known for his fascination with these industrious insects. He was well versed in their language and habits. He could watch anthills for hours. He always felt that these creatures guarded a great secret. They had communicated with humans for a long time but never had a chat with people. That is why Frankie was so surprised when, the previous day, he saw a lone emerald ant which clearly wanted to talk to him.

Gabriela could not help but notice that her son was very emotional meeting this “cool” ant, so she stopped giggling and waited patiently for more details to come. She did not have to wait long, Frankie told her everything instantly.

‘It’s not about liking it, mum, I was just curious.’

‘What species does it come from?’, asked Gabriela matter-of-factly.

‘The thing is that it must be a representative of a completely new group.’





Frankie's mum knew that for her son, a new species of ant was another interesting challenge. He would certainly want to learn all about it.

'She was green, with a pretty, emerald body. She wore a waistcoat made of thick leaves. She wore a cap, like a swimming cap only it was way too big and too stiff for the ant.'

'An ant wearing a green waistcoat and cap? This is new!' Although Gabriela preferred to learn about new species of herbs and spices, she understood her child's excitement. 'Why do you think that ant of unknown species came to you?'

'Well, she came to ask for help in that **war** of hers.'

Gabriela felt that the **war** must be some friendly person in need.

'Did you agree to help?' she asked.

'Sure! Right away!'



‘Oh, that’s very kind of you. Helping others is very nice. The next time you see this cool ant, be sure to ask how you could help this **war** to make her happy.’

The boy was looking out for the emerald creature all day. He could not wait to start helping. The ant did not appear until after dark. She entered Frankie’s room silently and crouched on his desk. For some inexplicable reason, she whispered.

‘Are you asleep?’, the ant asked quietly.

‘No, I was waiting for you. I’m glad you came again.’

‘Yesterday you promised to help. Are you ready?’

‘Sure I am. My mum very much encourages me to cheer up the **war**. Just tell me what I need to do to make your friend happy and I’ll get started right away.’

The ant didn’t know what to say. After all, **war** is no friend - quite the opposite. Perhaps Frankie was referring to other ants of its species?





‘Frankie, I don’t quite understand which of my friends you mean. You must know that there are many of us. We, the emerald ants, handle one difficult task: we protect the world.

Frankie certainly did not expect that. He had no idea why the world was protected. And from whom, for that matter. However, since the ant said it protected the world, that was it.

‘Does **war** also protect the world?’, asked the boy, intrigued.

‘Of course not’, replied the ant.

‘Then you and the **war** are not friends?’

‘No, we’re not!’, denied the emerald insect with a passion.

For Frankie, there was only one conclusion.

‘Ant, if **war** has no friends and doesn’t protect the world, it probably can’t defend itself either.’

The six-legged creature opened her eyes wide in surprise, and Frankie went on:

‘That, in turn, means that this **war** needs my help a lot more than I thought. Let’s go to it right away!’

Stunned, the ant watched Frankie jump out of bed, get dressed, grab his schoolbag where he kept all his treasures (i.e. tools for observing anthills), and head for the door.

‘Are we going or not?’, he urged his new friend.

‘We should talk first. I want you to understand what this is about’, the ant said seriously.





‘You’ll tell me everything on the way’, replied Frankie hurriedly.

‘You’re not telling your mum that you’re going on a trip?’

‘You’re right’, the boy admitted. ‘I’ll leave her a note and then we’ll go.’

## About the author



Ewa Marszałek (born in 1980 in Tczew) read Polish literature and sociology at the Faculty of Philology and History and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Gdansk. For many years, she worked for the IT industry. She pursues

her liberal arts passions by writing fairy tales for her three children. She debuted in 2021 with a Christmas story entitled “The Little Spider from the Bethlehem Stable.”

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