

ELASTIC ISLAND ADVENTURES

Elastic Island Adventures: Jewel Lagoon

By Karen McMillan

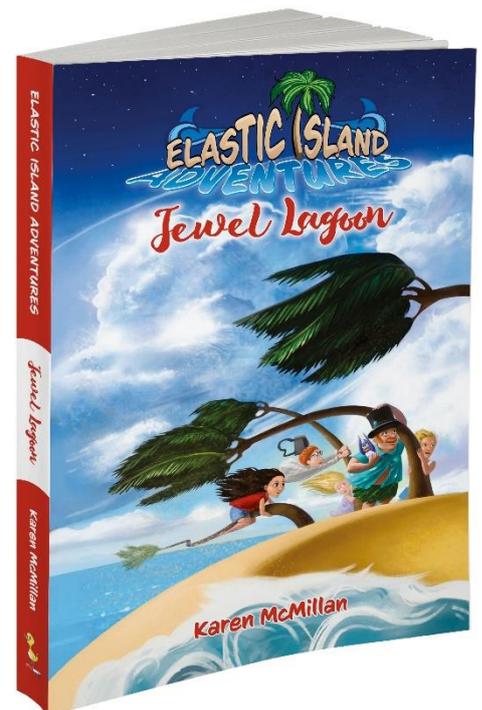
Published by Duckling Publishing

About the Book

Elastic Island Adventures: Jewel Lagoon is the first in an exciting series, a fantasy action-adventure set in the South Pacific. Kiri, Jed, and twins Emma and Ethan discover an 'elastic' island that sends them pinging across the ocean to a variety of destinations.

Landing at Jewel Lagoon on Trinity Island, the children quickly find themselves in trouble after being captured by an Ape Army. Kiri and Jed manage to escape, but Emma and Ethan are taken to the mines and are forced to work alongside the children of Trinity Island, cruelly imprisoned.

If the children can make it to the other side of the island where Princess Makana still reigns, there might be hope to make it out alive. But even with help from the colourful creatures they meet – Pangali the Platypus, Olaf the Giant, and Big Wig and Wee Wig Knockulous – will they be able to return home safely?



In each book of *Elastic Island Adventures*, four children travel via the Elastic Island service to different tropical destinations. In each book, they face different problems, and they must work together with the help of local creatures to make it home safely.

Every time the children ride Elastic Island, they must do a challenge to pay for their passage. In *Jewel Lagoon*, someone has to sing a song. In each book, there is always a different parrot helping Mr Jollybowler who runs the Elastic Island service. In this book, it is Rinaldo the Parrot.

Each book also features one unusual real-life creature, in *Jewel Lagoon*, this is a platypus.

About the Author

Karen McMillan lives in New Zealand and is the author of 17 books, published in nine countries, a mixture of fiction, non-fiction and children's books.

Her non-fiction titles include *Everyday Strength* with co-author chef Sam Mannering, *Unbreakable Spirit*, *Love Bytes* and *Feast or Famine*. Karen has ghost-written *From the Blitz to the Burmese Jungle and Beyond*. Her fiction titles include the bestselling novels *The Paris of the East*, *The Paris of the West* and *Brushstrokes of Memory*. Karen is also the author of the popular *Elastic Island Adventure* series for children, which is in early development to be made into a series of animated movies. Karen wrote *Elastic Island Adventures* purely as a fun family project, and some of the characters are inspired by stories she wrote as a child that were serialized in the children's pages of a nationwide New Zealand Sunday newspaper. She is also working on two spin-off series, one featuring Blong the Cat, the other the very naughty frivals.

Karen is the resident book reviewer on The Cafe TV3 and appears regularly in the media. She has been a speaker at many festivals and events, including the Going West Festival, the Devonport Arts Festival, the Tauranga Arts Festival, and Brisbane Book Week in Australia (thanks to Creative NZ Funding).



Writing Style

Jewel Lagoon is an action-adventure story full of nail-biting drama, but also with lots of humour. Themes include building resilience and confidence, anti-bullying, fighting against injustice, dealing with anxiety, being yourself and developing your talents, kindness and caring for others. The *Elastic Island Adventures* series encourages creativity, where children can enjoy the theatre of their minds!

Four engaging and relatable children feature in each story. Feisty, outspoken Kiri, who often acts before she thinks. Emma, her best friend, shy, bookish and dreamy. Ethan, Emma's twin brother, who loves gadgets and inventing things and who is ever-so-annoying. Jed, the new boy in town, a born leader and athlete.

The text is in third person past tense. *Jewel Lagoon* is written for the 8 –12-year-old age group, but younger or older audiences will also enjoy this action-packed story.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. What do you think the tone of the story might be?
- How has the author set the scene on the first page?
- In the first chapter, what do you learn about Kiri, Emma, Ethan and Jed's personalities?
- What are your initial impressions of Elastic Island when the children are stuck out at sea on page 19? What would you do if you were in this situation?
- After meeting Mr Jollybowler, who runs the Elastic Island service, they are given a choice of destinations on page 27. What destination would you choose and why?
- On page 29, the children learn they must sing a song to pay for their passage. What song would you choose to sing?
- What do you think it would be like to ride the Elastic Island when it is moving? Describe how you would feel and what it would be like.
- The children find some distinctive shells and pebbles on the beach of Jewel Lagoon on page 33. They will be important to the story later on, but do you have any ideas of why?
- We meet the Chief on page 37. How would you describe his personality?
- What are some other names for The Land of the Long White Cloud? (page 38)
- The children get dressed up and enjoy a feast on page 45. If you were at this feast, what would you want to wear and what would you like to eat?
- On page 54, the Chief speaks in a strange language the children don't know. This is a real language, can you find out what it is?
- Have you noticed the colour scheme in the Chief's castle? Can you name the three jewel colours that keep appearing? (page 64)
- In Chapter 6, Kiri and Jed meet Pangali the Platypus. What do you know about this unusual real-life creature? How accurate is the fictional platypus compared to a real platypus? What things are the same, and what is different?
- By Chapter 7, you will probably realise that Jed is often hungry. What would you eat if you were starving that you wouldn't usually eat?
- On pages 88 - 90, Jed encounters a giant centipede. What do you know about real-life centipedes?
- In Chapter 8, Kiri and Jed decide to go and visit Olaf the Giant, even though they have been warned he is dangerous. They do this because they want to help Pangali the Platypus. Do you think they are brave, or foolhardy, and why?
- In Chapter 8, we meet Olaf the Giant for the first time. Can you describe his personality? Do you think he is too unkind about himself with the things he says? What would you say to him if you met him?



- On page 108, we meet Big Wig and Wee Wig Knockulous. The author created these characters when she was ten years old. Do you have a character you have created that you'd like to appear in a story or book in the future? Can you tell us about this character or characters?
- On page 109, we discover the Big Wig and Wee Wig are wearing perfume. What do you think this perfume smells like?

- On pages 120 -123, Emma, Ethan, Kiri and Jed are reunited in the mines – but even though they are in danger, they discover the local children are in an even worse predicament than them. Why is that?
- At the start of Chapter 11, the four children need to make a decision. Should they put themselves in more danger and try to help the local children, or should they go home? Debate the pros and cons of each option.
- The boys go to extreme measures to wake Olaf the Giant on pages 136 – 137. Were there other options for waking Olaf?
- In Chapter 12, Kiri finally finds the Jewel Egg that they have been seeking, the one thing that will save the local children if they can get it to Princess Makana. Can you draw or describe the Jewel Egg?
- In Chapter Thirteen, the children are attacked by bats. But what are bats like in real life? Do they deserve the bad reputation that they often have?
- The children make it to Free Bay, where Princess Makana reigns on pages 163-166. Can you describe in what ways Free Bay is different from Jewel Lagoon?
- In Chapter 14, the Jewel Egg is restored to its holder up high on Black Mountain. Can you describe Black Mountain before and after it is restored? The most significant transformation is Princess Makana herself. Can you draw or describe what Princess Makana was like beforehand, and then afterward?
- On pages 187-190, we discover why the shells and pebbles are important. How important was it to restore sight and sound to the children? Can you describe how the local children and their parents would feel?
- By page 199, do you believe the Chief has got what he deserved? Has justice been done?
- At the end of the book, the children decide to go on another adventure. Would you go on another adventure too? Where would you like to go if you could go anywhere?

