

## Karen and the Lost Keys

Karen heard a tinkle as something hit the pavement. She saw it was a key, but couldn't tell where it had come from. The street was empty. Perhaps, a bird had dropped it, maybe a magpie, they were attracted to shiny things. She examined the key, surprised by its strange shape, unlike any key she had seen before. As she turned it over, it seemed to flash though there was no sunlight to reflect.

When she arrived home, she showed the key to Mummy.

"This does look very special," Mummy said. "Tomorrow I'll hand it in at the Police Station, someone will have lost it and hope its been found." She put the key on the mantelpiece before giving Karen a drink and a biscuit.

Shortly afterwards, Stephen came back from school crying.

"One of the bigger boys snatched my briefcase, locked it with its key and threw the key into a holly bush and I couldn't find it." He said, tears still running down his cheeks.

"Don't worry," Mummy said, "I'm sure we have another key."

She found the box of spare keys but after trying every suitable one she couldn't unlock the case.

"What about the one I found?" Karen said.

"I think it's the wrong shape," Mummy said but Karen fetched it anyway. It looked a different shape now, in fact just like a briefcase key. She tried it in the lock and opened the case. What a lucky find.

Later, Daddy suggested a family treat and they drove to the cinema. After the film, back at the car, Daddy discovered he had somehow locked the car keys inside the boot. Of course, they didn't have the spare key with them. They would have to call the AA and hope they could unlock the car. Daddy couldn't say how long it would be before help came.

Karen felt a vibration, a continuous jingling in her pocket, something was knocking against the coins she had in there. She remembered she had pocketed the found-key after opening Stephen's case.

"Would this work, Daddy?" she said, handing him the key.

"Of course not," He said giving it back to her.

"Please let me try." Karen said, noticing the key had changed shape again before pushing it into the car door and unlocking it.

Everyone gasped. The key was magical. Perhaps, it could open any lock, Karen thought. Maybe they should keep it.

She heard a loud clang as she got out of the car, the sort of noise when you dropped a coin down a street drain. The key seemed to have fallen through a hole in her pocket. Daddy fetched a torch. They looked everywhere but couldn't find the key. Karen checked her pockets again, there were no holes. She went to bed thinking perhaps you can only have a magic key if you didn't know it was magic. But she realised they had been lucky to have it on a day they needed its magic.