

## Alarmed!

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Another wet morning, and Alfie is outside trying to decide (I just peeked through the window at him; that's how I know this) whether to walk through and fracture all my new-blooming tulips, or to concentrate on the muddy patch over by the hydrangeas, so that he can come in and run through the house leaving footprints.

My late son's late golden retriever had been trained to pause in the doorway and lift each paw to be wiped clean and dry in turn. Alas, one cannot train a wiggly, exuberant Tibetan puppy to do that. It is more a matter of grabbing at him as he dashes through the door.

I am back in Cambridge after spending Tuesday and Wednesday in Maine, finishing up book revisions and mailing them off; then, after seeing a weather forecast that predicted heavy rain starting Thursday night, I drove home Thursday afternoon and am now working on the book illustrations here instead of there. (Just pen and ink sketches to decorate each chapter)

When I left the farm, I turned off the water pump as I always do, and set the security alarm. On Friday, starting at 7:50 AM, the alarm went off, the police went up to the house; and then, over the course of the next four hours, the police were dispatched four more separate times. Clearly something is wrong with the system, and I have finally reached the people who installed it, and they have deactivated it and will go up and take a look to see what's wrong. (Burglars take notice: this is happening as I speak.)

But in the meantime, the local police force now hates me, I am certain; and when an ax murderer is creeping up my stairs some night, and I stealthily call them from my hiding place under the bed, they will say to each other, "Oh, *her*. Don't even think about going up there." They will pour another cup of coffee and put their feet back up on their desks.

Hey! Doesn't this sound like a children's story?

*There once was a shepherd boy who was bored as he sat on the hillside watching the village sheep. To amuse himself he took a great breath and sang out, "Wolf! Wolf! The Wolf is chasing the sheep!"*

(I am currently an expert on Aesop, having just used fables as the theme of Gooney the Fabulous, newly released)

Tomorrow I head to New York and on Monday night will attend the PEN AMERICAN annual fundraising gala, held at the Museum of Natural History. On top of being a very worthy cause for fundraising.....the promotion of free expression through literature worldwide....it's an occasion to see a number of good friends.

But now, back to my sketches. Twenty chapters, one illustration for each. I have fourteen done so far. (But who's counting; right?)

Tags: Untagged