

WINNER 2nd Prize: The Word Wasps by Steven Kirby

Can I tell you a secret?

Words are like we humans. They live, breathe, feel, they have moods. They are also very appreciative - especially the unusual ones - and if a reader bothers to look them up they will repay the kindness.

Always.

Brave words.

For three such words, now was their chance.

Betty learned three new words a day. Not many indeed, but it was a greater effort than most readers go to.

She also enjoyed using them in speech.

“My layabout of a son... he’s so indolent” She would say to her bookclub cronies.

Betty knew she sounded ridiculous but didn’t care.

As usual, Betty had dozed off, her book resting on her chest.

It would emerge there was no better place.

Her husband, Eric, slept in the next room. They had not fallen out of love. He just snored appallingly.

BILLIGERENT first realised the danger.

“Betty... her heart has stopped” he shouted aggressively.

“She’ll be fine” chimed SANGUINE.

Buy INDOLENT, uncharacteristically, became agitated. He was very fond of Betty.

“Simple We call WASP..... page 151”

The cacophonous buzzing couldn’t fail to waken even Eric, a deep sleeper.

And wonderful, clever, brave word wasps

On the wall they formed a message for Eric

IT’S BETTY..... CALL AN AMBULANCE

Betty survived and she and Eric enjoyed five more years of marital bliss until she succumbed to the heart problem.

Betty was buried along with her colossal vocabulary.

Then, quite out of nowhere, a swarm of wasps. The mourners became agitated.

“It’s ok” smiled Eric “They’re invited”