



Faelan the Wolf

Faelan the Fearless (Book 3)

By Juliette MacIver

Illustrated by Kieran Rynhart

• Reading • Writing • Social Studies • Friendship

Synopsis

When respected Pack Leader Bardolph Lupus dies, his son Weylin is set to take the Stone. After the funeral feast, Faelan heads home, fretting about how he's going to fulfil his promise to his chicken friend Avian to help her get her large flock through wolf territory to the plateau in the Lockjaws. He has a sudden idea and runs to Varg's boundary where Varg's pack is patrolling. Here, he collects the fire-starting kit that Avian left for him. Leaping into the Great Oak, he discovers a blackened branch. From here, Faelan travels back through his own territory and up into the lockjaw Mountains in search of blinder cones. He knows he can use these, with the help of fire, to create a blinding powder which he hopes might help him protect the chickens. Later, when a storm breaks, Faelan shelters in a cave and happens to discover Ulfred the lame. After some confusion, Faelan discovers that Ulfred is his long-lost father, banished into the Lockjaws for a crime he didn't commit. Faelan learns the true story of what happened, and that Bardolph is Ulfred's brother! He also learns more about his mother Zeeba and her best friend, Pouletta, who is also a chicken – and the mother of Avian.

Meanwhile, Avian brings her flock over the river, well disguised with coal and scent-masking. Faelan meets her, and they set off through the trees, where Faelan encounters Wolfgang and Lobo, who have been tracking him. He wards off Wolfgang by declaring that the chickens are a small species of fire-breathing dragon. Just then, Varg attacks Faelan, who notes that he's wearing the sacred Moonstone of Faelan's pack. Varg tells Faelan how Zeeba shamed him by encouraging his mate to leave him, so he is going to kill Faelan, the last of Zeeba's line. Fortunately, Faelan's friend Flora the skunk comes to his rescue.

Tala, Ralph, Luna and Seffine leap into the fight with Varg and his wolves. Then Avian dive-bombs Varg and his gang with flaming feathers. Before long, Varg attacks Faelan again, but this time lightning sets the Great Oak ablaze. Faelan finds the Moonstone on the ground, attaches it round his neck, then lures Varg up the burning tree. As Varg leaps to cross the blackened limb, Faelan flings blinder-cone powder at him. Varg falls onto the branch, cracking it in two. He drops and is speared on the mouflon skeleton's horn below. Weylin appears and tries to take credit for Varg's death. All the pack arrive with him, and he declares the Anointment ceremony must take place immediately, as it's now midnight. When the Pack Seer Granny Beowulf asks pointedly if any wolf has reason to object to Weylin's Anointment, Faelan bravely objects, revealing that Ulfred is the real heir to the Stone and that he is still alive. Ulfred appears and tells the true story behind his banishment. He declares he'll abdicate as Pack Leader in favour of Faelan. Weylin is furious. But then Faelan abdicates in favour of Weylin's sister Tala, making himself Chief Advisor.

Once everyone has departed, Faelan races to the border and helps Avian get her flock to the plateau. Then he returns to the pack and is surprised to hear Tala extend full protection in the territory to Avian and Pouletta, as well as Flora. Tala and Faelan hatch a clever plan to reconcile Weylin to the pack, inventing a role of Advisor for Beautifications to appease his pride. Finally, Faelan plays his harp for all and, to complete his well-deserved happiness, Ulfred unexpectedly decides it's time to return to the pack.

About the Author

Juliette MacIver is an award-winning children's picture book author of many children's titles such as the wonderful Marmaduke Duck series, *Henry Bob Bobbalich*, *Grasshoppers Dance*, and most recently, *Duck Goes Meow*. She has twice won the picture book category for the New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults and in 2023, she received international recognition in the form of a prestigious White Raven. She is the six-time recipient of the Storylines Notable Book Award and has received multiple nominations for NZ, Australian and US children's book awards.

Juliette has a Masters Linguistics, and a Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. She lives near Wellington with her husband and four children.



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

Writing Style

Faelan the Wolf: Faelan the Fearless is the final book in this fantasy animal trilogy written for the 9+ age group. The author has written this story in the third person past tense with highly descriptive sentences that bring the fast-paced scenes to life. Faelan is the main reoccurring character, and in Book #1, he starts off as a timid misfit wolf who can see only how he differs from the other wolves in his pack. By the end of Book #3, he has developed into a brave, wise and faithful wolf who celebrates those differences and shows great leadership and respect towards the other wolves in his pack, as well as his non-wolf animal friends.

This book begins on page 1 with Weylin, the soon-to-be Pack Leader, threatening Faelan. The text sets the tone for what to expect from the 15 action-packed chapters. The illustrator's map on pages 8–9 is from Books #1 and #2 and helps you to familiarise yourself with the different features in the Wolfdom and the land beyond. The book is divided into chapters, with each chapter beginning with a lovely black-and-white illustration done in an ancient Gaelic style. The author takes you along on an exciting adventure with her descriptions, dialogue and action as Faelan sets out to rescue a thousand enslaved barn chickens with his chicken friend Avian. At the back of the book, the author also takes you on a behind-the-scenes tour of her writing and how she came up with some of the wolf and bird names. She also provides a link to her website where you can find more Fun Faelan Facts and Fiction (www.juliettemaciverauthor.com).

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Questioning helps students develop a deeper understanding of a book. Encourage the students to check their understanding of the relationships between the characters and the events that occur. Encourage them also to make predictions and inferences and relate these to their own experiences. Discuss the themes of the book, such as bravery, friendship and unlikely allegiances, and how the author develops the themes throughout the book and series. Use the following questions to help promote discussion.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back cover. Then read the text on page 1.

- Do you think that Faelan is naturally fearless? Why or why not? Who else is fearless in the trilogy?
- Why was Faelan not scared of fire like the other wolves?
- Why might Faelan be holding a burning cone?
- Who are the two wolves on the back cover?
- Do you think Faelan will keep his promise to help Avian rescue the large flock of enslaved chickens? Why or why not?
- How does the text on page 1 set the tone for the book?

COMPREHENSION:

- Why did Faelan's eyes widen when he went into the innermost cave? (p.11)
- How are Faelan and Granny Beowulf alike? (p.12)
- What kind of wolf do you think Faelan's mother was? Do you think she might have been similar to Faelan? (p.12)
- Weylin likes embroidery, and Faelan had kept that secret from the wolf pack. What does that tell you about what kind of wolf Faelan is? (p.16)
- Why is Weylin so intolerant of Faelan's un wolflike behaviours when he himself has un wolflike behaviours? (pp.16–17)
- Why do you think Tala was wailing? (p.18)
- Why did Faelan burrow under his quilt instead of joining in and howling with the other wolves? (p.19)
- Why was gathering in broad daylight an unusual sight for the wolf pack? (p.20)
- Why did Faelan feel an unexpected flicker of sympathy for Weylin? (p.20)
- The wolves lower their heads and fold one leg beneath themselves. What is this a sign of? (p.23)
- What does the word 'deference' mean? What other word could the author have used? (p.24)
- Why would Faelan want to talk himself out of going to Varg's territory? (p.26)
- The author describes Avian as 'The Liberator of Slaves'. How else could she have described Avian? (p.31)
- How do you deal with things that are irrevocable, or can't be changed? What helps you to accept a situation that you don't like? Do you think that Faelan is going to accept Weylin as Pack Leader? Explain your answer. (pp.32–33)
- Why did Faelan want the small, hard cones? (p.36)



- Who do you think is in the cave calling Faelan's name? (p.36)
- Chapter 4 is entitled 'The True Story'. What truth do you think Faelan might be about to hear from the large wolf? (p.37)
- Why did Faelan feel the breath leave his body? What did he realise at that moment? (p.39)
- The author described the immense sadness and heaviness that Ulfred felt as 'like a blanket of stones'. This is a simile, which is a comparison of one thing with another using the words 'like' or 'as'. What other similes could describe the sadness and heaviness that Ulfred was feeling? (p.39)
- What emotion did Faelan glimpse in Ulfred's eyes when Ulfred began to tell his version of the story? (p.40)
- Why was Faelan relieved not to be the son of Varg? (p.40)
- How do you think Faelan felt when he learned that his mother befriended a chicken just like he had done with Avian? (pp.42-43)
- Rafe told Ulfred and Zeeba to run when the farmer pointed his gun at him. What does this tell you about his personality? (p.45)
- Predator-prey friendships are unusual, but they can happen. What is a predator usually born to do? Did Faelan behave more like a predator or prey? (p.53)
- Ulfred told Faelan that he had the power to choose what was right. How was this good advice? Do you think this advice might help you when you are older? (p.54)
- Do you think Faelan and Avian have the right skills to pull off the Great Escape? Why or why not? How is working as a team better than struggling to undertake a task alone? (p.67)
- How did Avian prepare the flock of chickens for the Great Escape? (pp.72-74)
- Why was a lively Irish war song not the best choice of song to play to the chickens? What effect did the lullaby have on the chickens? What song would you have played to the chickens to keep them calm? (p.75)
- What do you remember about where the Great Oak is located? Use the map to help you. Why is the tree's location dangerous? (p.80)
- Why did Wolfgang leap backwards when Faelan lit the kerosene-soaked feathers? (p.83)
- Who do you think will come to Faelan's rescue when Varg announces that Faelan is about to die? Explain your answer. (p.89)
- Why was Wolfgang surprised to see that Faelan had fought off Rezso? (pp.93-94)
- Who or what might have set the Great Oak ablaze? Think back to Granny Beowulf's second prophecy. What could the 'great being' be? (p.97)
- Why might Faelan have gone on the dead limb of the Great Oak when Varg was chasing him? (p.99)
- What did Varg mean when he said that he will finish Zeeba's line? (p.103)
- Why did Varg look surprised just before his death? Was he frightened of dying? Or maybe surprised that Faelan had it in him to undertake such a plan? Explain your answer. (p.105)
- Why did Wolfgang give Faelan a bewildered look when Faelan said that Granny could fix Wolfgang's broken leg? (p.109)
- When Faelan objected to making Weylin the Pack Leader, what do you think he planned to say next? What would you have said? (p.115)
- Why might Ulfred have thought that making Faelan the Pack Leader might destroy him? What made Ulfred change his opinion about that? (p.119)
- What does the word 'abdicate' mean? Think about the word and the context of the sentence. (p.121)
- What does the word 'decree' mean? (p.126)
- Who do you think might be Varg's long-lost son? Which wolf acts like Varg? (p.130)
- How did Faelan show that he was a wise leader when it came to how he stood up for and defended Lobo? (p.132)
- How do you think Varg's pack will react when they see that their leader has passed away and learns that Faelan was responsible? Will the pack try to attack Faelan's pack now that he and Tala are the leading wolves? (p.133)
- What do you think Faelan's idea will be? Would you have done the same as Faelan? Why or why not? (p.138)
- How do you think Weylin felt, deep down, when Faelan announced that all friendships and pastimes would be permitted, even if they were un-wolflike? Do you know someone who has not 'followed the pack' and by doing so has helped to make positive changes in his or her school or community? How did he or she achieve that? What personal traits does it take to do that? (p.139)
- Why do you think Faelan suddenly felt lighter than he had in months? Have you ever felt lighter and relieved when you have done or said something that had been playing on your conscience for a while? (p.146)
- Why do you think Faelan's father returned to the Wolf Village? How had Faelan played a part in that? What can we learn from how Faelan, Tala, Avian and Ulfred conducted themselves? (p.147)



Activities

ACTIVITY 1: MY MOONSTONE POWERS

The Moonstone in the story is a sacred stone that brings out the power and qualities that a wolf possesses within. When Varg wore it, he became even more bent on revenge and violence. If Weylin wore it, he might also make sure he pursued revenge and banished Faelan from the pack. What would happen if you wore the Moonstone around your neck? What qualities and powers are within you? Design and draw your own unique Moonstone and then label around it the powers that you possess. Your powers might include kindness, bravery, optimism, confidence, resilience, flexibility, patience, adaptability, leadership, compassion and so on.

ACTIVITY 2: A PASTIME POSTER

Many of the characters in this fantasy animal trilogy had different pastimes. Faelan loved spending time playing the harp and growing vegetables in his garden. His friend Ralph liked to collect feathers, while Avian, his special chicken friend, enjoyed singing. Even his enemy, Weylin, had a secret love of embroidery. Imagine that you are starting a club. Choose one of the aforementioned pastimes, then design a poster to encourage others to join your club. Include information such as what day and time you meet up, what you do during club hours, the age of the members, the membership fee and so on. There could also be information about a personalised membership photo ID card, members signing up for a quarterly newsletter and special rates if you sign up a friend.

ACTIVITY 3: A WOLF FAMILY TREE

A family tree is a visual chart that shows all the people in a family over many generations and how they are connected to one another. Throughout the three books in the trilogy, we learn about the different wolves that make up Faelan's pack. Use the books to help you create a wolf family tree. Remember that Faelan learns in Book 3 that his father is Ulfred and not Varg. Design the family tree with Bardolph Lupus the Eighth at the top of the tree. List all the adult wolves, their mates and their offspring. For example, Luna, Seffine, Lowell and Lupette are Rollina and Marrok's offspring. Label all the wolves' names. You could design your tree with a wolf theme.

ACTIVITY 4: THE PROPHECIES

Granny Beowulf gave Faelan three prophecies: 1: *By fire shall a small being come to his aid.* 2: *By fire shall a great being also give aid.* 3: *By a ring of fire shall the true Leader be known.* Pretend you are Granny Beowulf. Write three prophecies that you would tell Faelan based on what happened in the book. You could also have fun and write a humorous prophecy along the lines of the one Faelan thought about on pages 26–27: *By fire shall Faelan prevent two slaving wolf packs from eating a thousand chickens, and also shall he stop his own father from finishing him off.*

ACTIVITY 5: ONE ACTION, TWO STORIES

There are often two sides to one story. Young Bardolph thought that he saw what happened at the chicken run the night that Rafe was shot by the farmer. However, he had not heard what Rafe had told Ulfred and Zeeba to do when the farmer appeared or how they were, in fact, trying to *remove* all the rocks and pebbles from the hole in the chicken coop so that Rafe could escape. Choose another scene in the book, such as when Varg and Faelan were up in the Great Oak. Briefly describe what actually happened. Then have one of the book's characters see the scene from a distance and offer a different perspective. Describe what the character *thinks* that he or she sees and hears.

ACTIVITY 6: PICTURE THAT!

When you read a book, you conjure up many pictures and scenes in your mind. Everyone will conjure up something different, depending on their own personal experiences. When the author wrote the scene about a creature coming to Faelan's aid as he was fighting Varg, she described the creature as a 'valiant chicken-comet' with 'a terrifying tail of fire'. Draw what you see in your mind when you read these words.

Written by Janine Scott