



The mystery of the missing socks

A story written by Céline Person and illustrated by Marie Mignot.

Waiting in front of the washing machine, Lisa watches her pair of red socks spinning around. At the end of the spin cycle, she opens the door.





Oh no, there is only one red sock!

Lisa pokes her head inside and shouts, "Hey! Is there someone in there?"

As no-one answers, the little girl runs to her bedroom, puts on her astronaut outfit, then dives into the washing machine's drain hose.

Spl^oosh!

A fish with silvery fins stares at her. Lisa asks him,

"Excuse me, would you by chance have seen a red sock ?"

"Red, did you say? Yes, I saw it passing by here barely ten minutes ago."

"Thanks," says Lisa. "And do you know where it went?"

"The place where all socks go," replies the fish hurriedly.

"Straight ahead, you can't miss it. I'm off. My bus is about to leave!"

Lisa keeps going. Suddenly she hears a voice say to her,
“Fancy a tea or maybe a coconut juice?”

A hippopotamus, sitting in a comfy armchair, is sipping a seaweed tea.

“Do take a seat,” the hippopotamus says, pointing to a sagging old couch.

Lisa asks, “Would you by chance have seen a red sock ?”

“Yes, it passed in front of me... let’s see now... exactly nine minutes ago.”

“Do you know where it went?” Lisa adds.

“Of course,” the hippopotamus replies.

“It went to the place where all socks go. Goodbye!”






Lisa sets off again.

She sees a huge door in the distance.

The little girl finds herself face to face with a penguin, blocking her way.

"Where do you think you're going, young lady?" he asks, a little huffily.

Lisa is annoyed. "I'm looking for my sock ," she replies.

"So give me the password," the penguin demands.

Lisa is astonished.

"The password? But I don't know it!"



The penguin frowns and says, "You are about to enter the **secret kingdom** of the odd sock collector. What is the password? Hurry up, I don't have all day. My bath is cooling down."

Lisa makes a guess. "Umm... Tap? Washing powder? Washing machine?"

The penguin shakes his head. "Come on," he says, "what were your socks like?"

Lisa thinks a while, then says, "Oh, I know! **Holey sock!**"

"Ah, finally!" says the penguin, and he opens the door.



And there, mouth open, she discovers, hanging from long clothes lines, thousands of socks, in every size, in every colour, new or worn, holey or patched-up. And amongst the thousands of socks is a giant, sitting on a gigantic stool, behind a gigantic sewing machine.

When he spots Lisa, he says to her kindly, "Hello, little girl. Come over here."

Lisa shyly goes forward. Suddenly, she stops and asks, "So you're the sock thief?"
The giant stops sewing. "I'm not a thief," he says.

"It's just that my feet are so big that I can't find any socks my size.
So I pick up a few socks that are thrown into washing machines.
I cut them up and sew them together. That's how I make my very big socks.
How do you like this one?"

"Very smart," says Lisa with a smile.

Then, the giant serves the little girl **a gigantic hot chocolate.**

Before saying goodbye, Lisa promises to help her new friend to never have cold feet.





Lisa goes back up the drain hose. She says goodbye to the penguin, the hippopotamus and the fish along the way.

At last, she climbs out of the washing machine.

What an adventure! She's ready for bed...

But that night, just before she brushes her teeth, she takes one of her favourite socks and tiptoes back to the washing machine. She drops it inside the machine, then whispers, "Goodnight!"

THE END