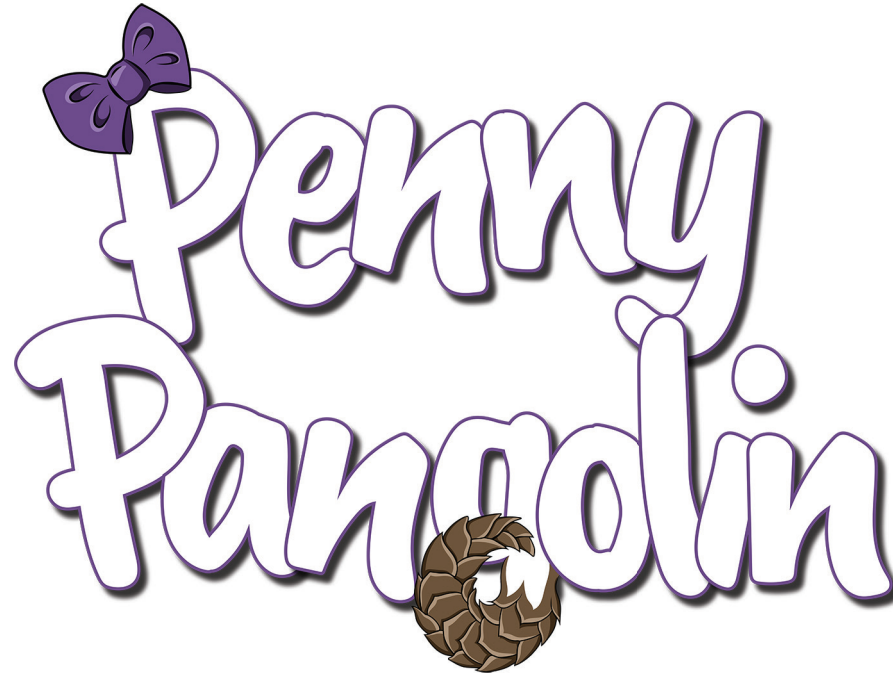




and the Missing Ant Cake

Written by Wayne D. Kramer

Illustrated by Jade Zivanovic



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Library of Congress Control Number: 2023902818

Revised First Edition.

ISBN 978-1-955997-06-5 (hardback)

ISBN 978-1-955997-07-2 (paperback)

ISBN 978-1-955997-08-9 (ebook)

Illustrations by Jade Zivanovic, copyright © 2023 by Heroes of Time Productions

Published by Heroes of Time Productions

www.heroesoftime.com

www.pennypangolin.com

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Kramer, Wayne D., author. | Zivanovic, Jade, illustrator.

Title: Penny Pangolin and the missing ant cake / written by Wayne D. Kramer ; illustrated by Jade Zivanovic.

Other titles: Missing ant cake.

Description: First edition. | [Louisville, Kentucky] : Heroes of Time Productions, LLC, [2023] | Series: Penny Pangolin. | Audience: ages 4-8. | Summary: Penny's favorite lemon-ant cake dessert is in trouble! Her neighbor, Edith Aardvark, steals the cake and puts herself in danger, forcing Penny to choose between what she feels is deserved and what is right. Leaning on themes of forgiveness, grace, and the consequences of actions, friends will ultimately come together in a happy twist ending.--Publisher.

Identifiers: ISBN: 978-1955997065 (hardcover) | 978-1955997072 (paperback) | 978-1955997089 (eBook) | LCCN: 2023902818

Subjects: LCSH: Pangolins--Juvenile fiction. | Aardvark--Juvenile fiction. | Cake--Juvenile fiction. | Desserts--Juvenile fiction. | Forgiveness--Juvenile fiction. | Choice (Psychology)--Juvenile fiction. | Decision making--Juvenile fiction. | Friendship--Juvenile fiction. | CYAC: Pangolins--Fiction. | Aardvark--Fiction. | Cake--Fiction. | Desserts--Fiction. | Forgiveness--Fiction. | Choice--Fiction. | Decision making--Fiction. | Friendship--Fiction.

Classification: LCC: PZ7.1.K6965 P465 2023 | DDC: [E]--dc23

Written and Edited in the USA

Illustrated in Australia

Formatted in the USA

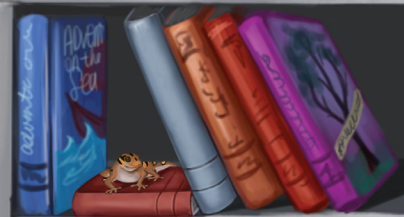
Printed in China, where pangolins roam

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For Dawn, Brooke, Holly, Ivy, and Jade



Penny Pangolin woke up bright and early. She got dressed and ready, excited for the day. Her friend, Vin lived **far away** and was coming to visit. She wanted to do something special to welcome him.



She thought and she thought.

She slurped up an ant from
the floor, and suddenly she
had the **perfect idea**.



“Mom! Can we make your famous
lemon-ant cake for Vin?”

“Great idea!” said Mom.

She opened the pantry.

“Let’s see. We’ll need
salt, sugar, spices,
baking powder ...”



“...and eggs!” squealed Penny. She ran outside to the pheasant coop. Penny’s family kept the **best pheasants** in the village, with the friendliest birds and the biggest eggs. Very carefully, she gathered a few eggs and carried them back into the kitchen.





“Hmm,” said Mom. “We’re still missing one ingredient.”

“I know!” Penny answered. “Ants!”

Back outside, Penny imagined she was a jungle cat on the **prowl**. She knew to stay out of the real jungle because of the dangerous animals there, but it was always fun to pretend.

Slinking around the yard-jungle, Penny sniffed out an ant colony. She jabbed her powerful claws into the dirt, stirred up the ants, and captured them in a trap.



Just then, Penny heard a **voice**. “Why do you need all those ants?” It was Edith Aardvark, her neighbor. “You always take all the ants and leave none for us!”

“We’re making Mom’s famous lemon-ant cake for my friend, Vin,” replied Penny.



“There’ll be nothing left for me to snack on,” Edith **grumped**.

Penny felt a bit upset. She thought Edith just didn’t want to look for her own ants. “There are plenty of ants for everyone,” said Penny.
“Just dig around.”



Penny took the ants inside. She helped her mom mix all the **ingredients** and bake the cake. Its sweet, citrusy smell filled the room.

It was quite possibly the best ant cake they had ever made.



“Something smells terrific!” Vin
said when he arrived.

Penny **clapped**. “We made you
our special lemon-ant cake!”



They went into the kitchen with **eager stomachs**.

Vin looked around. "Where's the cake?"



Penny **gasped**.
“It’s gone!”

“Look!” cried Vin.
“Someone must have
taken it.”



The friends followed the trail of crumbs along the village road.

Another one of Penny's neighbors, Tammy Tapir, noticed what they were doing. "Earlier I saw Edith running toward the **jungle** with a cake," she told them.



The crumbs led into the jungle, but there was no sign of Edith.

“Doesn’t Edith know that the jungle is **dangerous**?” asked Vin.





“Maybe we should tell someone,” said Vin.

Penny couldn't stop thinking about the cake that Edith had stolen. It had been such a **perfect cake**, and now it was gone.

“She got herself in there,” Penny huffed.
“She can get herself back out!”



Then they heard a **rustle** of leaves from just inside the jungle.
A black panther leapt from the bushes with a hungry lick of his
lips. "I've never had pangolin before!"

Penny and Vin knew just what to do. They rolled themselves tightly into balls.

Curious, the panther batted at their **hard and spiky scales**.



The panther tried to bite Penny.
“This is like eating a **pinecone!**”
he yelled. “I’ll go find something
else to eat.” He bounded off
into the jungle.



“We’d better go in after Edith,” Penny said.

“I thought you didn’t want to help her because she stole your cake,” Vin said.

“I don’t,” Penny said. “But she’s still my neighbor, and she doesn’t have **protective** scales like we do.”



They found Edith sitting on a log, about to enjoy the lemon-
ant cake. Before they could **warn her**, the black panther
appeared with a hungry grin.



Edith was so startled that she **threw** the cake
right into the panther's face.



As the panther wiped the cake from his eyes, Penny and Vin wrapped themselves around Edith to protect her.



“Not aardvarks, too!” the panther spat. With a **frustrated hiss**, he ran away through the brush.

“Thanks for protecting me,” said Edith.

“That’s what neighbors do,” replied Penny. “We look out for each other.”

“I’m so **sorry** I took your cake,” said Edith. “Now it’s ruined.”



“You shouldn’t have taken it ... but I have an idea.
We can make another one. And, this time, we can all **share** it!”



Penny, Vin, and Edith gathered up the ingredients together.
They even used ants from Edith's yard.

And, this time, it really was the **best** lemon-ant cake ever!



What is a Pangolin?

Pangolins are the only mammals that have scales on their body. These scales are made of keratin, the same substance in your hair and nails, and they help to protect pangolins from predators.

Termites and ants are their favorite food. With their long sticky tongues, pangolins can eat up to 200,000 of these bugs in a single night!



Pangolins are nocturnal, which means they are most active at night.

A baby pangolin is known as a pangopup.

The name pangolin comes from the Malay word “pengguling,” which means “rolling up.”

How Can You Help?



Pangolins are threatened with extinction, which means they could disappear from Earth. In some parts of the world, such as Asia, their meat is considered a luxury food, even though capturing pangolins is illegal.

In some traditional medicines, pangolin scales are believed to provide health benefits, although there is no scientific data to support this claim.



But there's good news! Some people are working to help pangolins. Organizations such as the Wildlife Conservation Network are dedicated to helping endangered animals, including pangolins.



[SavePangolins.org](https://www.savepangolins.org) provides details about conservation, training for rangers, rescue centers, and ways to support efforts to help the pangolin population.

Look for more wildlife in Penny's story...



Chlorogomphus
Miyashitai
Dragonfly



Vietnamese
Mossy Frog



Vietnamese
Gecko



Grass Moth



Common
Pheasant



Vietnamese
Mouse Deer



CRITTER COMPENDIUM

Scan the QR Code
below to learn
all about Penny's
favorite critters.



About the Author



Wayne D. Kramer lives in the southern Indiana countryside with his wife and kids.

The idea for Penny Pangolin came to Wayne one day while discussing an interest in creating a series of children's picture books with his family. Pangolins, in particular, had always fascinated the kids. Wayne enjoys brainstorming new Penny ideas with his kids over smoothies at the coffee shop.

He graduated from the University of Louisville in 2005 with a Bachelor of Business Science. He has visited nearly 40 countries and 25 states in the US. He especially loved visiting Hobbiton in New Zealand.

Wayne is also author of the "Heroes of Time" adventure fantasy novel series. All of his works, including signed copies, are available from shop.heroesoftime.com.

About the Illustrator



Jade Zivanovic lives in rural Victoria, Australia with her husband and pets.

Jade has always enjoyed creating pictures that help to tell a story and has studied under prominent artists, also gaining a diploma in concept art and visual storytelling.

Her works hang in private collections across Australia, the US and Europe. She has also been awarded placings in art shows, her favorite being a People's Choice Award, as she always considered herself an artist for the people.