

The background of the cover is a dark, atmospheric scene. The sky is a deep, vibrant purple, with a bright, ethereal light source in the upper center that casts a powerful beam of light downwards, illuminating the scene. In the lower portion of the image, the dark silhouette of a building's roof is visible. On the side of the building, the word "TRUTH" is faintly visible in a light color. To the right of the building, the dark outlines of trees are silhouetted against the purple sky.

AURA CHILD

THE INCREDIBLE STORY
OF A SPECIAL GIFT

A I KAYMEN

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AURA CHILD

The incredible story of a special gift

A I Kaymen

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Dedicated to my parents, for all their love.

About this book

This is one of the most astonishing books you will ever read, the story of a very special child.

Everybody has a gift, but some are more special than others. And some are perhaps more of a curse than a blessing. Imagine growing up seeing the world in a completely different way to everyone you know, in a way that nobody - even your own family - can understand or will even acknowledge...

You see every person's energy field around them, and you watch how it changes as they speak, as they eat... you can even watch their thoughts. You walk down a busy London street, blink, and find yourself in the medieval farm that was once there - and you converse with the spirits of that time and place.

You can't tell anyone. They'll think you're mad. They already call you a freak. So how do you live with your special gift?

The Author

A I Kaymen was born and raised in Edgware, north London. She has degrees in Political Science and in Diplomacy, has travelled over three continents, and has worked in the public sector as a statistician and analyst. She is also an amateur athlete and an artist. This is her debut book, brilliantly imaginative and asking all of us some very searching questions.

Prologue

I know I am a baby. I stare in wonder at my pudgy, dimpled hands awkwardly grabbing the air in front of me. The warm sun beats down on them and the cotton sombrero on my head casts a circular shadow that follows me as I crawl towards my mother. I am frightened of its darkness but the faster I crawl, the faster it seems to move too. Whichever direction I go in and however fast, so the round shadow travels too.

My mother is sitting on a low wall bordering the rear of the garden. She's making a clicking sound with something she holds in her hand. I stop for a while to watch her and enjoy the pleasure of the cool lawn on my naked knees. She smiles and I continue my awkward journey towards her as she coos at me unintelligibly. The presence of my mother confuses me sometimes. She means love and safety, yet I know that she is not a celestial being.

I use the wall to heave myself up into a standing position, groaning a little with the concentration and immense effort of the action. My hands grip the brick to take some weight off my weak leg muscles. I'll have to relearn this concept of weight. Right now it's important to discover what my mother's doing before my knees buckle. She begins talking to me in a language I don't yet understand but I know the words are directed at me because of the lilting and gentle tone she adopts.

She snips a twig from a plant and I watch as the little bubble around it turns a dark red. The plant is angry. My mother gets up to tend to my crying sister but I continue to watch the plant. I can't heal it yet with this useless infant body, so I reach out to touch it, willing it to gain some comfort from my touch. The bubble immediately changes from red to a pale gold and lets out a blue streamer from its pruned stump, like a phantom limb. Strong hands suddenly pick me up and I am hoisted over my mother's shoulder. I decide that I really do not want to be here.

I have always felt like an island in the sea of humanity.

This earliest memory of my life on Earth is one I seem to have kept for good reason. It is the exact moment that I knew I was separate to other people, that I existed in harmony with nature rather than humans; the exact moment it hit me that I was mortal and subject to the limitations - physical, emotional and spiritual - that we all experience with each rebirth. It's a horrible realisation that you're again at the mercy of everyone and everything, knowing that you'll only be back in safety when you die - and that can only be earned by living and learning the lessons you chose for this life.

Canons Park

Every place on Earth has its own unique vibrational energy.

I hated the house from the moment I set foot in it. Perhaps it was the fear that comes with beginning a new life and leaving familiar territory, but as I ascended the stairs one by one, the queasiness in the pit of my belly grew stronger. The small corridor leading to my new bedroom seemed to open in front of me like a big yawn and I suddenly felt an irrational fear of being swallowed alive by it. I turned around to check that my mother was still there. She wasn't, but I could hear her yelling orders at Dad to move boxes more carefully.

Turning back towards the door, I gently pushed the handle down. The door creaked open outwards and didn't stop until it banged against the adjacent wall and stuck there. Silence followed and I stood at the entrance to the room wondering if that was a bad omen of things to come.

I sat on the floor amongst the neatly labelled boxes that had been left there, and looked up at the walls and ceiling. Although it was bright and sunny outside, the room seemed dingy somehow and bubbly reflections of light danced on the surfaces around me as if I were under water. The atmosphere was thick and I had the odd feeling that time had stopped. I listened and watched. The room was small and cubic. It gave the impression of being a place where someone could be forgotten or left to die. The pipes running through the walls made frustrated clanging noises and the gossamer curtains whispered as they danced on the draught coming from the windowsill. My room had a story to tell me but I was too afraid to listen.

Somebody died here, I thought to myself as I sat, anxious and shivering, too scared to formulate my thoughts into words for fear that they might unleash a terrible fate onto me.

Then the house suddenly came to life as Mum entered through the front door, setting down bags and yelling for anyone within earshot to put the kettle on. She had an abnormally loud voice, though it seemed strangely distant upstairs in my room. It didn't matter as long as she was somewhere in the house with me. I knew I was safe then.

Later that morning as I helped Dad reconstruct a bed, I asked, "Dad, do you like this house? Don't you find it creepy? What made you choose it?"

"Well, it's exactly the kind of property that your Mum and I were looking for... blast this goddamn thing... sorry, you didn't hear that... it's just what we were looking for - period features, run-down, a project we can really... Look, do you mind bunking with your sister tonight?" Dad always went off on a tangent. I waited a few moments for him to continue but he said nothing.

"But Dad, why didn't you ask us what we thought? This house doesn't even have a loo." I had begun to whine and knew that at this point he would either switch off or cut the conversation short. He had a selective attention span.

"Because we didn't think you'd be interested. We saw the property and had to put in an offer right away - and the loo's outside by the kitchen door." Full stop. He was losing interest already.

"That's not a shed, Dad?" I asked incredulously.

"Nope. You'll have to take a loo roll from Mum before you go. Okay?"

"Okay," I sighed.

Taking a step back, I watched as he fiddled with the plastic packaging around the screws. From as far back as I could remember, Dad had been the one saving grace in a world otherwise full of weird people who never noticed the same things I did. Most importantly, he always warned me when Mum was in a bad mood or hid me behind the furniture when she was on the warpath. I studied him in detail: the pale skin, overgrown and greying hair, eyebrows that were so faint they were sometimes invisible and the look of intense concentration as he battled with the plastic bag. I often looked for

traces of myself in him, since I knew from an early age that I didn't resemble my mother in the slightest. He was the only person who had a blue aura, unlike anything I'd ever seen yet somehow familiar. To me he signified home, although I wasn't quite sure what that meant yet. All I knew was that he and I were very alike - and unlike all the rest.

"Dad, am I adopted? I don't mind if I am."

"No, why do you keep asking? Don't listen to your sister. I was there when you were born and you're definitely ours. Do you want to be adopted?"

"No, that's okay, thanks."

Dad had set out all the component parts on the floor as a forensic scientist might lay out tools. He studied them for a moment, rubbed his chin and then picked out a small plank of wood and a screw.

"Actually, we bought you at the Pound Shop," he said, trying to turn it into a joke the way he usually did. I didn't always understand his jokes, but the blue that surrounded him became so soft and comforting that I would often pretend that I did just to bask in it.

"I thought the milkman delivered me one morning. That's what Mum said." I started to giggle and Dad followed suit.

My parents had chosen to move during the summer holidays so that their children could be bonded into slavery for six weeks. Free labour meant the money saved could be redirected towards the house. We spent the rest of the afternoon in comfortable silence, unpacking boxes and assembling furniture.

I watched Mum unpack the crockery and arrange it in the newly disinfected kitchen cupboards. Every movement was forced, without consideration. If the crockery had been eggs, every piece would have smashed. She slammed the doors shut and yanked them open again. Every so often she would mutter something under her breath in French.

If those were eggs, I thought, she would have smashed two dozen by now, that's 24 eggs. According to the recommended allowance we can eat a maximum of four per week. So my family would lose one week's

allowance plus one person would lose a second week. That's probably me. I'm the runt of the litter who hates eggs.

My gaze drifted to the top of her auburn head where strange little bubbles were dancing about a hand span above her. Unlike ordinary bubbles, they didn't float upwards and burst. These bubbles bounced a little above her or stayed put, as though they were parts of a weird headdress attached to her by an invisible mesh. Sometimes a new one would burst out of her head, shoot up and come to a standstill.

They're angry thoughts. Mum is analysing something that has pissed her off. Those bubbles are what swear words look like.

She turned to face me suddenly with dark, angry eyes and a menacing frown. I moved further back behind the door frame until only my head and fingertips were showing. She was still lost in thought, so I smiled at her to diffuse her rage. It worked. She dropped her shoulders and smiled back, looking a bit embarrassed.

"Vaness... Genevieve." She always said Vanessa's name first as a reflex, even when my brother Marcus or Dad were standing in front of her. Dad had circumvented the problem by giving us all totally unrelated nicknames. The only problem with that was that it ruined our credibility in public.

Mum washed her hands and gave me a finger of shortbread. I hated shortbread. To avoid an argument I waited for her to turn away before slipping it into my pocket. I often pocketed food that I didn't want to eat. This brilliant idea regularly backfired on me when I forgot to remove the food before putting my clothes in the laundry basket.

Well, I've been around for nine years and my tastes haven't changed. They'll have to stop giving me food I dislike. It can't be that difficult.

Dad walked in, obviously searching for something. He was hungry. I could tell by his body language that he needed to eat something and fast.

"Here!" I said, fishing the shortbread out of my pocket and dusting it off.

"Thanks, Tiger." Unlike me, Dad ate anything, even if it came with pocket fluff.

“I gave that to you.” Mum was raising only one eyebrow, which meant she was peeved again.

“I wanted to save it for Dad. Anyway, I’ve never been keen on shortbread.”

With a sharp intake of breath, Mum continued with the crockery. A dart flew out of her head and smacked Dad in the stomach. It travelled so quickly that I didn’t catch the colour. Dad’s stomach began to make a churning sound and he reached for the indigestion tablets he kept by the biscuit jar.

“So don’t eat what’s been in people’s pockets!” Mum snapped. Dad put his arms up as if to concede defeat, and left the kitchen.

“Why are you standing, staring at me like this?” she roared. The bubbles above her head had joined together to make up a dark, monstrous helmet.

“Come on, Tiger, let’s go to B and Q,” came Dad’s command from the front door. I scampered out of the kitchen and accompanied him to his DIY heaven.

That night I lay on the floor of my sister’s bedroom, unable to sleep, staring at the Artex ceiling. At nine years old I was acutely aware of how little my sister enjoyed my company and how she put up barriers whenever I approached her. As a baby I had watched the cloudiness around her grow thicker until I could no longer see through it, and then I would cry.

I watched her sleeping for a long time. Vanessa was the antithesis of me; at eleven she already liked make-up and designer clothes and spent far more than she ‘earned’ doing chores. Very pretty and popular, she could hold the attention of a crowd without effort. She was fascinating to me and I spent most of my early childhood following her like a tail.

My thoughts were rudely disturbed by a loud moo. Heart pounding, I leapt to my feet and silently scuttled downstairs to find a large cow standing in the hallway staring back at me. As I reached out to touch it, a man with heavy boots appeared.

“Here’s the one that got away,” he said to the cow, then to me: “Shouldn’t you be in bed? Whose child are you? Look like a gypsy.”

“Get lost!” I hissed defensively.

“Genevieve Kelly, how dare you speak to me like that! And look at me while I’m shouting at you.”

I turned round to find Mum glaring at me, hands on hips. The slivers of light from the streetlamps outside penetrated the patterned glass of our front door and illuminated random parts of her face. They made the furrows on her forehead appear deeper than they actually were.

“Mum? I wasn’t talking to you. It was him. That man.”

“Which man? Was there a man here?” asked Dad picking up the ‘phone. Mum trembled. She was enraged rather than scared.

“Yes, he had a cow with him.”

Dad slowly put the ‘phone back on the charger and looked over at Mum. She hadn’t taken her eyes off me. Suddenly, they both looked pale and frightened.

“Go to bed,” commanded Mum.

As I went upstairs I heard them whispering to each other and could just about make out what they were saying.

“It’s happened again, hasn’t it? We need to do something...”

“I think we need to take her to the doctor...”

“...before she gets older and it affects her life...”

“It isn’t normal, for God’s sake...”

I knew exactly what they were talking about. This had happened before when I was five years old. I’d burst into tears at our family Christmas dinner after seeing some emaciated, dirty children carrying heavy crates from one end of the room, through the wall and down the road. Every so often they were whacked by a bearded man with a stick and a pocket watch. Mum had been terribly embarrassed and tried to explain to everyone that I’d been feeling ill and must be delirious (I was fine, of course). Dad thought I’d fallen asleep and had a bad dream (though I’d been running around and chatting until it occurred).

“They think I’m not normal,” I muttered to myself as I climbed back into the sleeping bag. “What’s normal anyway?”

“You’ve ruined my beauty sleep...” Vanessa moaned.

The next morning was bright and I awoke to the sound of twittering birds. I could smell something burning and, assuming it was breakfast, decided that now was the perfect opportunity to test out the escape routes in our new house. I was just about to stick my leg out of the bedroom window when Vanessa pulled me back in by the seat of my pyjamas. The elastic in my knickers made a stinging twang as they hit my backside, putting me in a bad mood with her for the rest of the day. The air around me turned a smoky, dark red.

Why does she find it so difficult to think before she does anything? I thought angrily.

“Marcus is coming home for the weekend and you know what that means.”

I’d stopped listening to her the moment I realised she was complaining. I was averse to any kind of moaning, whinging, whining and complaining. That tone of voice sent me flying into a contained rage which meant I found it difficult to see past the dark red clouds for hours. So, instead of allowing my blood to boil and anger to fester, I would simply stop listening. I watched as Vanessa’s mouth moved and no sound came out. It was like watching a silent movie - all the drama was there but without the clichéd and smart-arsed dialogue. She was not very logical and the fractured nature of the energy around her reflected that. Whilst watching Vanessa become more and more animated, I realised how much of one’s message could be communicated without words.

“Genevieveeeeve, are you listening to meee?”

“No,” I said, and walked out of the room leaving her squealing. Downstairs, Dad was crouching on the living room floor with an extended tape measure in his hand.

“Hi Dad. Has Mum burned breakfast?” I asked.

“Morning, Tiger. No, she’s not back from shopping yet,” he answered, taking a pencil from behind his ear, scratching his neck with it and putting it back again.

“Thought I smelled something, that’s all.”

“Listen Tiger, about last night, you were dreaming or sleep walking, weren’t you?” he suggested, looking like a hopeful child in a sweet shop.

“Yes,” I sighed. I didn’t want Dad to worry or be hurt. He was the only ally I had at home and the only family member I actually understood on an energetic level. It was best to keep him on-side and happy.

Marcus was due to arrive after breakfast and I wanted to make sure that I wasn’t at home when he did. It was not that I hated Marcus, I just found him utterly repulsive. He was loud, used foul language for no reason whatsoever and was surrounded by a grey, smelly cloud that apparently only I could see. He offended my already established and delicate female sensibilities, and every time he hugged me a small part of his grey cloud would cling to me like thick cobwebs. The next day I would feel drained and invariably develop a cold. So I ate, washed and dressed at breakneck speed and had climbed over the garden fence before anyone could stop me.

About a half mile down the road was Canons Park, in which was an old walled garden. I loved being alone outdoors and liked to think of myself as an explorer. The trees often had bubbles around them that made me feel warm and safe. I could talk to birds and watch the wildlife without running the risk of being bullied by other children (as was often the case before we moved). As I approached the rear entrance of the park, I saw a man sitting on a bale of hay, eating what looked like a large pasty. It was the same man I’d seen in our house the night before. He was very dark-skinned, lean and blond, with heavy boots and a funny-looking overcoat. I couldn’t tell if he was tanned or just dirty. He had pale blue eyes that were fixed upon me as he ate.

“I’m sorry I told you to get lost. You scared me with your cow, that’s all. What’s your name?”

“Matthew,” he said, motioning for me to sit down next to him. Before I could react, he threw an apple that audibly bonked me on the forehead and fell into my lap. I wondered if my head was hollow. Matthew shook his head and laughed silently. I noticed he had some back teeth missing and a scar running from his ear to the corner of his mouth.

“Where did you get that?” I asked, pointing at the white streak on his face.

“One of the horses kicked me. They don’t take well to being hoofed sometimes. Sorry about the cow, she must’ve wandered into the wrong field. I usually let them pasture by the old oak tree back there.” He got up and stretched. I watched him walk away, feeling the thud of his heavy footsteps grow fainter.

“Can I see your horses one day?” I called after him.

“Course you can,” he called back, without turning around.

I could hear Mum calling me in the distance, tempting me back with fig rolls. *She must be close by*, I thought to myself. *I’d better get going.*

Mum was very efficient and didn’t believe in superfluous gestures of affection such as hugging, kissing and using the words ‘I love you’ in any context. She communicated love to her children through home-cooked food, good clothes and keeping us tidy, and later by an avid interest in our academic studies once we were old enough to take care of ourselves. I preferred her this way because I never felt smothered, though Vanessa often resented her for it.

As I jumped back over the fence I caught the distinct scent of Marcus and groaned. My foot got caught and I landed on Dad’s new sweet peas, bringing the trellis down with me. I groaned. Being in trouble twice in two days was not a good idea, especially when both parents were suffering from ‘moving-home syndrome’. I resisted the idea of lying to them and just hoped that Dad wouldn’t notice until the next day and that a freak storm would hit Edgware that night and take the blame for me.



Canons Park

The National Lottery
Parish Lottery Fund
Hornsea Golf Club



- WC
- Drinking Water
- Public Phone
- First Aid
- Emergency Services
- WC
- Drinking Water
- Public Phone
- First Aid
- Emergency Services
- WC
- Drinking Water
- Public Phone
- First Aid
- Emergency Services

The History of the Park
Canons Park was established in 1880 as a private golf course for the Hornsea Golf Club. It was later opened to the public in 1920 and became a public park. The park has a rich history and is a popular destination for residents and visitors alike.

“There’s a good side to all situations - you just have to look for it”, I muttered to myself, mimicking Dad’s voice. “This might even work to my advantage. Mum will get angry, we’ll fight and I’ll be grounded or have an excuse to escape. I can bypass Marcus!” I picked the remaining bits of debris off my trousers and slunk in through the back door. Bizarrely, Mum was not back yet although Marcus was. He was leaning against the kitchen counter, sipping a cup of coffee. The greyish cloud surrounding him was darker today, and tinged with an odd yellowish green. I would learn later that this is what marijuana does to you.

Maybe I was imagining Mum’s voice and just craving fig rolls, I thought.

“Hey, Gene,” Marcus said, waving his hands half-heartedly.

I abhorred being called Gene. Every so often somebody would subject me to a tuneless rendition of *Singing In The Rain*, thinking themselves very smart and original as they did so. Irritation surfaced as I stood looking at Marcus; little spots of dark red were floating away from my belly, up to my throat and across to my brother. He smiled slightly and ran his hands through his overgrown mane of hair. Marcus was a good-looking male version of Mum, but it wasn’t often I could see beyond his cloudiness and misery. We’d spent a lot of time together when I was little but I could only remember small snippets of that whereas I recalled every detail of my interactions with Vanessa. Only scent and sounds brought back memories of Marcus and I was indifferent to them. Before he went to university his room would reek of fags and smelly socks, so how he got away with being Mum’s favourite was beyond comprehension. He was a slob and it was a miracle that he bathed every day.

Mum thundered in with several bags of shopping and a mini tree.

“Genevieve! I’ve got fig rolls for you! Genevieve...” she bellowed, as she turned round and realised I was only inches away from her mouth. My ears popped. “Why are you standing there while I’m shouting for you? Oh, Marcus, my Marcus,” she cooed, turning towards him. “Welcome home. Have you got laundry?”

Fig rolls were a sign that I was not in the doghouse after last night. Had Mum been angry, there would have been no mention of them and breakfast would have been Weetabix without chopped banana. We made a beeline to the kitchen where Mum quickly and efficiently put the groceries in their designated places and began to heat pans. I noted that Marcus did not offer to carry any of the shopping or the mini tree.

I loved observing people and mealtimes were good for that. My sister and brother were very alike in looks and mannerisms. They both licked their knives and had Mum's features, although Vanessa reminded me of Dad too when she smiled. They barely interacted with one another on any level other than the odd word, and I got the feeling that Marcus thought Vanessa was pointless. In fact I would watch the cloudiness around my brother become more compact when Vanessa was around, as though it were blocking her out. It never did that with me. On the contrary, it would try to surround me as though containing me in a kind of imaginary embrace and I'd become frightened. As I sat there waiting for everyone to finish eating, I again wondered why I didn't resemble either of my parents. The only thing I'd obviously inherited was Mum's sole bad feature, her hair. *Guaranteed to provide at least an hour of aggravation for any hairdresser. It has a life of its own and will not be tamed*, I thought, as my eyes followed the swirling mistiness around me.

"Stop staring at me, you little shit," said Marcus, a second before Dad clipped him round the head. After lunch I was able to avoid Marcus, which suited me fine, as he stayed downstairs talking to Mum about how broke and miserable he was. But then Dad discovered the trellis and all hell broke loose. Amid the ensuing pandemonium I was given strict instructions to stay out of sight so I obediently walked out of the front door and walked the mile and a half to Joe's house.

Joe had been my best friend since we both wet our pants during story time at Little Stanmore Nursery. He was fascinating to stare at. His skin, hair and eyes were all the same shade of mocha brown.

Sometimes a wonderful orangey cloud, which was particularly clear and dense after he'd been playing football, would emanate from his limbs and chest. He made me happy and I would often stand near him just to absorb some of his energy.

He lived with his parents and brother in an ordinary semi with ivy growing over the front façade. Every year his brother would be hoisted up onto his dad's shoulders to cut the ivy away from the windows. It was a comical sight, a grown man barking orders to a tottering adolescent with clippers. I did ask why they didn't just hire a gardener. Joe's mum explained that after coming here penniless from India, her husband didn't see the point in spending money unnecessarily and put it in a college fund for the boys instead. She herself had been disowned for marrying a coloured man. Their garage was full of odd bits and scraps, as Joe's father spent his spare time inventing useless but fascinating things.

"Necessity is the mother of invention, kids," he would say, as he ushered us out of the garage and arranged his safety goggles.

As I arrived I could see that Joe was attempting to water their front garden, his skinny, endless limbs glistening with water. His clothes were wet too and he looked dishevelled, but to me he appeared as bright as a ray of sunshine. I guessed that he hadn't checked where the hose was pointing before switching the mains on. He looked so confused that I couldn't stifle the giggles that began to bubble up. Joe turned towards me, and I was drenched within seconds.

"Sorry! I wet myself too, see," he said, furiously pulling wet tendrils of hair away from my eyes. "I don't know how it happened." I had a theory about Joe's clumsiness: he was born on April Fool's Day and was jinxed from birth. We grinned at each other and I began to sneeze.

The land on which we walk is the only true constant in an ever-changing world. Never claim to own it.

I didn't see Matthew again until later that month. As per usual, I was wandering around the park touching the trees when I chanced upon

his stables. He was grooming his horses so I chose not to disturb him. Instead I stood behind the stable door and watched him through a gap in the wood. From what I'd seen of him, Matthew looked ruthless and cold at the best of times, his steely eyes pierced straight through you and searched your soul without betraying any hint of emotion. He'd be a terrible person to make an enemy of. Had he admitted to murder, it would not have surprised me in the slightest. Today, however, I saw a different Matthew, tenderly running a brush down a horse's flank and following each stroke very gently with his other hand.

"Come out, whoever that is behind the door and speak to me, man to man!" he bellowed, as he turned on his heel to face the door. One of the horses bucked a little, startled at the sudden change in his voice. The others didn't seem to care, perfectly secure in his company.

"I would if I could, but I can't because I'm not a man," I said, as I tugged at the heavy door and stepped inside. "How did you know I was there?"

"Because you were blocking the light. I know every hole and space in my door. By the way, you're standing in a fresh one."

I looked down to find that my sandals had disappeared into a horse pat. Matthew strode towards the door, scooping me up on the way and flinging me over his shoulder. As I looked back, his horses were all staring at me and I could read jealousy on their faces. Matthew stood me on a tree stump as he pumped water onto my bare feet and then my sandals.

"When are you going to teach me to ride a horse?" I asked.

"When you're older and stronger. The horse wouldn't feel your weight enough right now. People make the mistake of thinking they can just jump on a horse and go. Then they complain when they fall off and break their bones. There's much to learn first. You have to bond with the horse so that you trust each other. Anyway, you're not tall enough either."