



Lynne
Reid Banks

Best-selling author of
The Indian in the Cupboard

THE
RETURN
OF THE
INDIAN

Illustrated by William Geldart

A Defeat



OMRI EMERGED CAUTIOUSLY from the station into Hove Road.

Someone with a sense of humor and a black spray can had recently added an *L* to the word “Hove” on the street sign on the corner, making it “Hovel Road.” Omri thought grimly that this was much more appropriate than “Hove,” which sounded pleasantly like somewhere by the sea. Omri would have liked to live by the sea, or indeed almost anywhere in the world rather than Hovel Road. He had done his best to understand why his parents had decided to move here from the other house in the other, much nicer, neighborhood. True, the new house was larger, and so was the garden. But the area was a slum.

Omri's father objected strongly to Omri's calling it a slum. But then, *he* had a car. He didn't have to walk half a mile along Hovel Road to the station every day, as Omri did to get to school, and again—as now—to get home in the gloomy afternoon. It was October and the clocks had gone back. That meant that when he came out of the station it was practically dark.

Omri was only one of many children walking, playing or hanging around in Hovel Road at this hour, but he was the only one who wore school uniform. Of course he took his blazer and tie off in the train and stuffed them into his schoolbag, but that still left his white shirt, black trousers and gray pullover. However he mussed them up, he still stood out among the others he had to pass through.

These others all went to a local school where uniform was not required. Under other circumstances, Omri would have begged his parents to let him change schools. At least then he wouldn't have been an obvious outsider. Or maybe he would. He couldn't imagine going to school with these kids. After a term and a half of running the gauntlet of their mindless antagonism every working day, he regarded them as little better than a pack of wolves.

That group waiting for him on the corner by the amusement arcade. He knew them by now, and they knew him. They waited for him if they had nothing better to do. His passing seemed to be one of the highlights of their day.

Their faces positively lit up as they saw him approach. It took all his courage to keep walking towards them.

At moments like this, he would remember Little Bear. Little Bear had been only a fraction of Omri's size, and yet he had stood up to him. If he had felt scared, as Omri did now, he never showed it. Omri was not that much smaller than these boys. There were just so many of them, and only one of him. But imagine if they'd been giants, as he was to Little Bear! They were nothing but kids like himself, although several years older. Except that they weren't like him. "They're rats," he thought, to rouse himself for battle. "Pigs. Toads. Mad dogs." It would be shameful to let them see he was afraid of them. He gripped his schoolbag tightly by both handles and came on.

If only he had had Boone's revolver, or Little Bear's knife, or his bow and arrows, or his ax. If only he could fight like a cowboy or an Indian brave! How he would show that crew then!

The boy he had to pass first was a skinhead, like several of the others. The cropped head made him look somehow animal-like. He had a flat, whitish face and about five gold rings in one ear. Omri should have detoured a bit to be out of range, but he would not swerve from his path. The skinhead's boot shot out, but Omri was expecting that and skipped over it. Then a concerted movement by the others jerked Omri into evasive action. Speed was his only

The magic continues . . .

IN THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD, a boy named Omri discovered a magical world when he brought a three-inch-high Indian named Little Bear to life. Now, in THE RETURN OF THE INDIAN, Omri tries to see his friend Little Bear again, only to find himself in the middle of a whole new series of astonishing and dangerous adventures—from which he may never escape!



“Highly recommended!” —*School Library Journal*

“As well told and captivating as the previous book with perhaps even more humor and more complicated predicaments.” —*The Horn Book*

“Lynne Reid Banks has a delightful imagination coupled with unusual sensitivity. Long may she write such engaging novels.”

—*St. Louis Post Dispatch*

*Read about all the exciting adventures of
Omri and Little Bear*

- 1. THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD**
- 3. THE SECRET OF THE INDIAN**
- 4. THE MYSTERY OF THE CUPBOARD**
- 5. THE KEY TO THE INDIAN**

US \$5.99 / \$7.99 CAN

ISBN-13: 978-0-380-70284-8

ISBN-10: 0-380-70284-3



9 780380 702848



HarperTrophy®

An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers

Ages 9 up

Cover art © 2003 by Michael Koelsch

Cover design by Hilary Zarycky

Cover © 2003 by HarperCollins Publishers Inc.