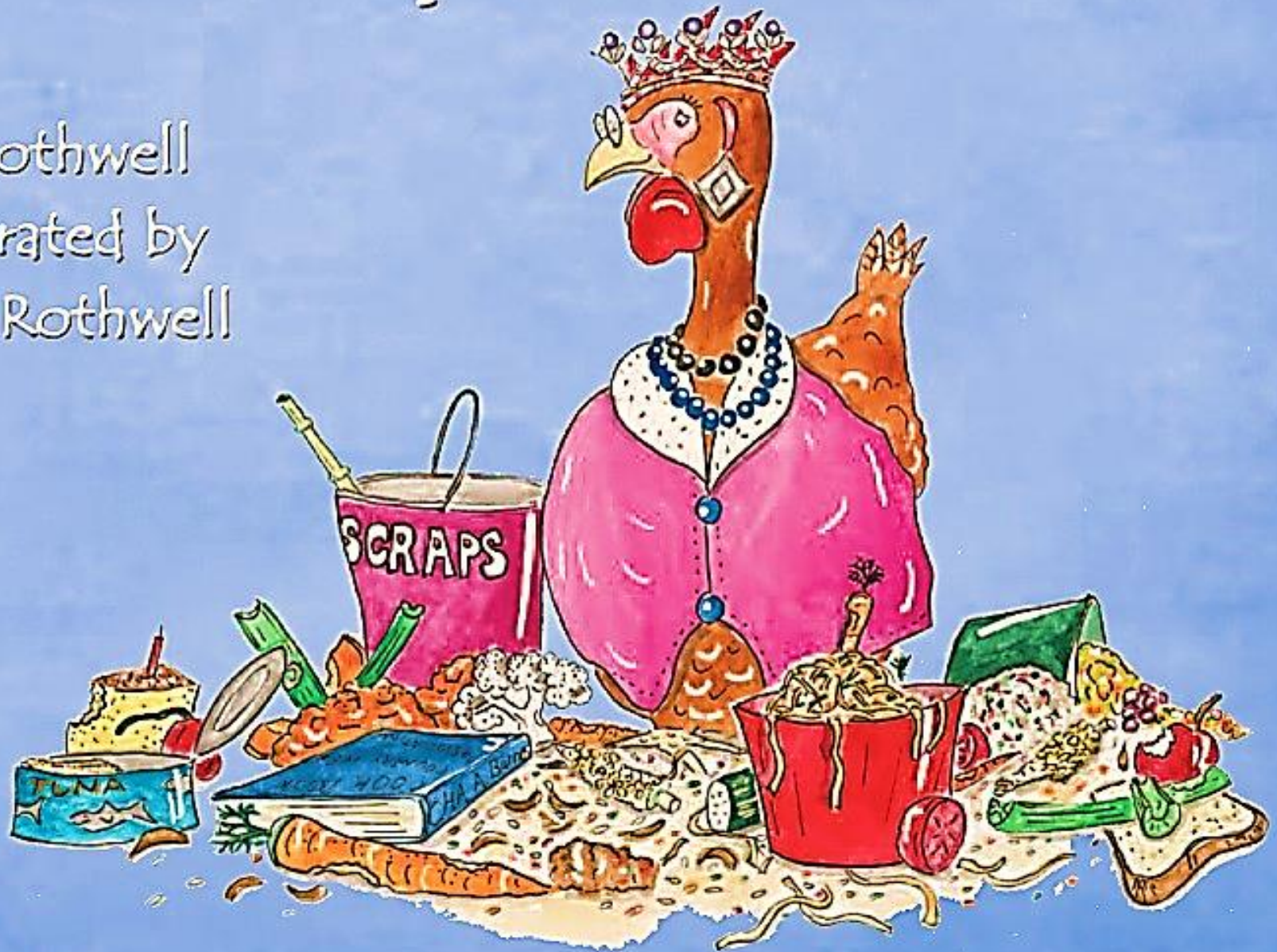


Penelope Plume

Jo Rothwell
Illustrated by
Bryce Rothwell



Penelope Plume



For Parker & for Harry
To Nick Duigan – for making a difference
&

For all the plucky Penelope Plumes – embrace the chaos!

Once again Ned the wombat is coming along to read this story with you.
Ned has Asperger's Syndrome, or ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder).
For more information on ASD go to www.amaze.org.au

It occurred to me, as the mother of a child on the 'spectrum', that so many resources and books on ASD are defined as just that. My aim is to write, not only a fun children's book that anyone can enjoy, but to help create awareness and inclusiveness regarding ASD. Please do not place this book on a shelf of ASD resources. It belongs alongside everyday kids' books and utilised by all.

You will make a difference if you dare to be ASD aware.

Look out for further books by Rothwell Publishing:



Published by Rothwell Publishing
9 Clarke Ave, Warburton, Victoria, Australia, 3799
Tele: 61 3 59665628
www.rothwellpublishing.com

First published 2014

Text copyright © Jo Rothwell 2014

Illustrations copyright © Bryce Rothwell 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

Typeset by Artforme

Printed by Everbest Printing Co. Ltd

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Rothwell, Jo, author.

Penelope Plume / Jo Rothwell ; illustrated by Bryce Rothwell.

ISBN: 9780987391711 (hardback)

For children.

Chickens--Juvenile fiction.

Wombats--Juvenile fiction.

Children's stories.

Rothwell, Bryce, 1966- illustrator.

A823.4



Just a few notes and observations...

My son was diagnosed with Selective Mutism and Aspergers Syndrome in 2003. Initially I felt overwhelmed, not only with the diagnosis, but with the conflicting information from various resources and experts. You learn from such resources what is considered 'normal'. I quickly realised however, that chasing 'normal' was like chasing a rainbow. The sooner I began to accept and embrace the differences, the less frustrating and confusing it was for all. Now I enjoy all the colours of his amazing self.

I have never thought ASD to be a disability. It simply means my son has challenges in regards to certain aspects of his life. So I read the books and went to the workshops and put the tools in place. I created schedules, colour co-ordinated school books, visual charts, social stories, rewards charts, stress charts, food charts, routine charts – we needed a larger fridge door! Some of it worked for a while, and some of it didn't. That is the nature of ASD. What works for one, may not work for another and what works today, may not work tomorrow. We still rely on practical aids, however now the emphasis is for my son to take ownership and understand they will be lifelong tools.

More recently we sought help from a wonderful psychologist who introduced us to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). It is not specifically used for ASD, but unlocks so many of the ASD shackles. Understanding that whilst you cannot control what you think or feel, you do choose your behaviour. A meltdown is a choice. One of the most important points however, is to learn to handle stress. It is often our natural instinct, as a parent, to create less stressful situations. This all seems fine at an early age, but the challenges come in thick and fast when they are older. My child doesn't live on planet ASD; he lives in a world where he will be challenged to fit in, and where stress is prominent. He will not always have someone beside him interpreting ambiguous statements, or giving him precise instructions. He will become frustrated with so many everyday issues. I don't want my son to learn to run away from stress, I want him to learn how to **handle** stress. To that end we have been practicing many techniques, such as mindfulness training, that have made a huge difference.

One of the most important gifts I can give my son is teach him self acceptance and to have faith in his own beliefs and values. My advice to other parents, carers or teachers... Understand how debilitating anxiety can be. Teach them the tools they need to exist in 'our' world. Make allowances but not excuses. Understand that behaviour is a choice. Help them strive for independence. Don't remove stress, teach them how to handle it. Celebrate their amazing minds and embrace the differences.

You may have noticed by now that you don't have to be on the spectrum for this to be relevant.

Life doesn't happen to you, it happens for you – now sit back and enjoy the ride.

Jo Rothwell

Penelope Plume

Jo Rothwell

Illustrated by
Bryce Rothwell



My name is Ned the Wombat. Sometimes my thoughts might be different from yours and sometimes I need a little help from my toolkit. BUT... it is perfectly okay to be different! I am going to read this story and share my thoughts.



Penelope Plume from McAlister's farm,
was known for her style, she was known for her charm.
Her taste was imPECKable, she was posh, she had flair,
and she strutted the yard with her tail in the air.



That chook thinks she is the boss...but I am the boss!





That Monday began as all Mondays did;
food scraps were flung by the McAlister kid.
The clucking increased, the frenzy, the flurry,
as chickens scratched wildly at last night's red curry.



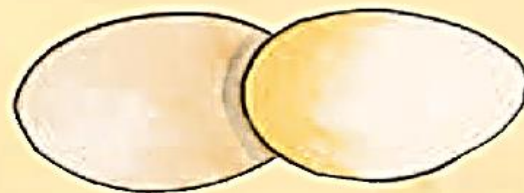


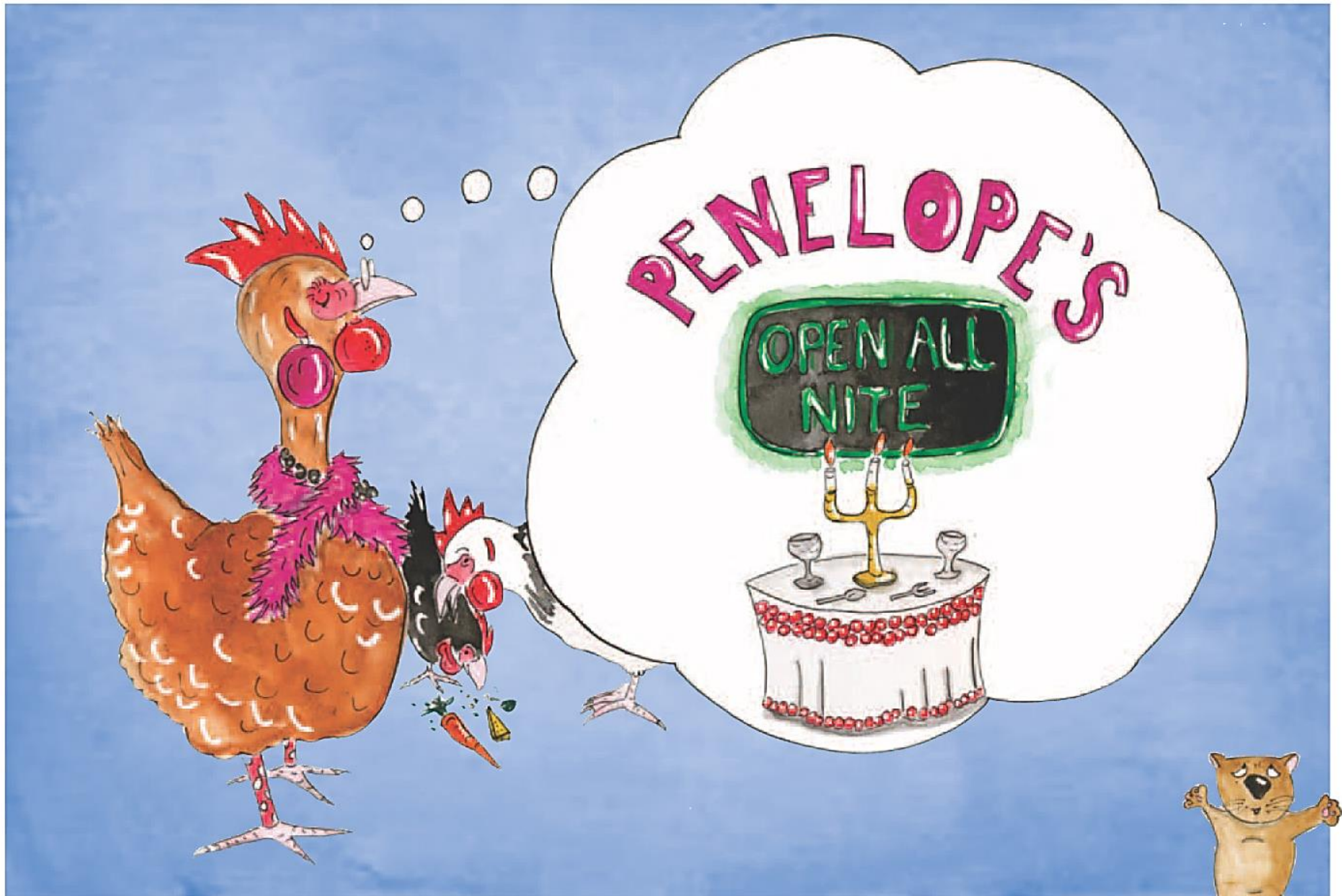
There are no rules here and I need rules. Why don't they take it in turn to eat properly?



Penelope observed this hullabaloo.
She had a chook thought, as chooks often do.
'What if our meals were cooked with great care,
and served on platters of fine silverware?'

'Instead of this scramble, this chaos, this rush...
where combs are parted and feathers are crushed,
mealtimes would be a tasty delight...
at Penelope's the Restaurant - Open All Night!'





Okay...am I the only one here who knows that there is no point opening all night because chooks sleep all night?





Penelope proceeded to work on her plan,
with help from Roxee and with help from Roxanne.
They organised tables with red sequined cloths,
and bright table lights that encouraged the moths.





Chickens don't sit at tables, people. Who wrote this nonsense?

Penelope put on her jewels and her crown,
and sat planning the menu in her pink dressing gown.
She aimed to create the most scrumptious of dishes;
delightfully tasty and extremely delicious.

Selecting ingredients to make the best meal,
from half eaten carrots and brown apple peel.
Mash from a pumpkin and a chunk of zucchini,
corn and tomato and cooked fettuccine.



This is good...she is writing a list. I need to use lists a lot. Well done chooky!



BUT...I HATE pumpkin!



This is just a sample of our latest story **Penelope Plume**.

She has a hardcover, a strong spine and lots of plucky pages filled with more feathers to tickle your thoughts.

I hope you enjoyed this snippet and perhaps will consider purchasing her complete tale...when she has flown home to roost in late October.

Thank you

Jo Rothwell