

## The Unfinished Manuscript *(a Forward by Sarah's Sisters)*

Our first look at Sarah's story idea was late at night in Austin, Texas, at a 2007 Sister Gathering. "I'm working on a children's book," Sarah said, then opened a computer, pulled up an image, and, like magic, we were in Paper Land. There was red-haired Dolly marching through a forest of spiky cut paper, trees stuck with stamps, an undergrowth of doilies, and a gauzy stream bordered with folded gum wrappers. The scene was filled with quirky detail, but it came together to create a magical place, a real location in a fabulous world. Dolly was having an adventure, and our youngest sister Sarah was making it come alive for all of us.

Sarah regularly shared her ideas, images, and draft manuscripts for her "Dolly book" with her sisters Suzanne, Kate, and Ann. The four of us brainstormed together during our annual Sister Gatherings, and Sarah frequently asked each of us for advice and counsel--by phone, email, and during our separate visits to St. Louis. In the difficult days after Sarah passed away, Ann decided the three of us had to finish the manuscript. We worked through drafts, revisions, almost-final edits, new revisions, and last-minute changes. If ever there was a labor of love, it surely was our working together and individually with Sarah and, later, as a sister threesome to see her vision realized.

We are all writers, and we each had something special to contribute in addition to sister support: Suzanne's ability to realize characters and plot based on her years of writing fiction; Ann's background of writing and teaching, plus her tenacity and essential organizational skills; Kate's patience, eagle eye for detail, and her editorial experience. Working together on this book after Sarah died helped each of us heal and helped us continue our sisterhood together.

The story is Sarah's. The three of us have tried to finish her manuscript in a way that honors and does justice to everything she created--her characters, her plot, and her vivid landscapes. Sarah's vision will live for a long time in this beautiful book. Our writing contributions are our gift to our beloved sister.

For further information or for media interviews please contact:  
Robert Fishbone  
robert@onwardisbest.com  
314-692-2900