

## REVIEWS for eSide, a Journey through Cyberspace,

Reviewer: Sally Odgers in P.I.O.

The Good-Luck-Conch has its home in Kate's café, and brings good luck to Kate, her daughter Sam, and the customers. For the first time, prickly impatient Sam has made a good friend, Melody, and Kate and Melody's mum, Elaine, are equally happy in one another's company. All is going well, until the Good-Luck-Conch disappears. Suddenly everything goes wrong- the café waiter Manny breaks his arm and many of the customers suffer misfortunes as jobs are lost and opportunities snatched away. The girls suspect Hecate Badminton, the landlady, of stealing the conch. After all, Hecate is a bad witch, and her white cat, Rani, has the disconcerting habit of changing into a hungry snow leopard at intervals. tGF, a *real* magician, turns up at the café and provides the girls with a Monitor, a magical gadget which may help them find the Good-Luck-Conch. The girls use the Monitor, and, along with Melody's dog, Billy, end up in eSide, the weird world inside Hecate's mainframe computer. Here they meet strange beings, some friendly, some not, who help or hinder them on their dangerous quest for the stolen conch and the luck of the café and, by extension, of the town of Squeaky.

The story is split into five parts, which cleverly mimic the levels in a computer game. The characters, animals that used to be human and humans that used to be animals, reflect on the human condition, but their alienation means the girls never quite know who to trust. Even when Hecate is defeated the doubt remains- as tGF says, good must triumph but evil never entirely goes away.

eSide is an exciting and highly original story. The girls make believable friends, and the story kept this reader guessing until the end.

Goldie is presently working on: 'eSide 2: Further Journeys in Cyberspace'.

## “eSide: A Journey Through Cyberspace”

Reviewed by [Alison Peters](#) for “buzzwords”

(<https://www.facebook.com/alisonpeterswriter?ref=hl>)

Sam and her best friend Melody live in the colourful beachside town of Squeaky. Sam’s mum Kate runs the Conch Café, the bustling meeting place for Squeaky’s weird and wonderful collection of residents. There’s Bob Rampol, the friendly senior citizen who watches the world from his favourite spot on the café’s balcony, waiter Manuel Alphonso Demetrious, world famous opera singer Mrs Canzone, and the Affington brothers - muscle bound twins who run the local fitness centre.

But all is not well in Squeaky. Mrs Canzone’s lost her voice, the twins’ fitness centre is failing as client after client suffers sprains, strains and breaks. Manuel (or Manny) has burned his arm so badly he can’t work in the café, and Kate is struggling to keep the place running on her own.

It seems a dark cloud hovers over Squeaky, but Sam and Melody suspect there’s somebody behind the town’s run of bad luck- the terrifying Hecate Badminton. Hecate has one thing on her mind - Eternal Life. And it seems Sam and her mother Kate have the secret right there on the counter of the Conch Café...

When the café burns to the ground, Sam and Melody are forced into action - armed only with a rudimentary understanding of Tae Kwan Do and a mysterious monitor given to them by magician, The Great Franco, the girls venture into strange virtual worlds where they meet Hecate, and confront evil head on.

*eSide* is a tale of witchery and digital adventure told with quirky humour. Goldie Alexander’s story is dense, with scenes and detail lovingly rendered in a unique voice. Mid to upper primary readers will enjoy the novel’s cast of crazy, nasty, nutty and nice characters, and intricately imagined virtual worlds.

**Review by Talilah aged 11.**

I just wanted to tell you about your new book eSide.

I just finished reading it and it was fabulous! I loved it and every time I went to read it I couldn't put it down!! I love the way you have written it and it is very well done!

You have done a wonderful job! The book is very descriptive and interesting. The moral of the story is really fascinating and as soon as i started reading it i wanted to find out what would happen! I think you have done exceptionally well and you should be very proud! I really want to read more of it and I would rate it 100 out of 100!!! the characters in the book were very interesting and I loved every one of them, it looks like you would have had a very fun time writing this book and I am glad I got the chance to read it!

You have really inspired me to start writing some more stories and I hope to read more of your books in the future!

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**Review from "READING TIME":**

"Ever held a shell to your ear? This effective cover portrays the conch as a sea shell entry to other worlds including cyberspace. E-side means the layers of electronic worlds where the characters have a series of imaginative adventures. Could be a great class serial as there are several stories within a story and lots to discuss.

Even the names like Hecate have symbolic links to other mythology. Initially set within the cafe, which gives it a 'foody' base, Goldie Alexander knows how to keep the plot moving and the characters involving."

*eSide: a Journey through Cyberspace*

Reviewed by Anastasia Gonis [www.kids-bookreview.com](http://www.kids-bookreview.com)

Sam and her mum Kate have made a new life for themselves in Squeaky, a coastal town where Kate runs the local café. What keeps the business going is the Good-Luck-Conch which has sat on the counter for years.

When the Conch is stolen, accidents begin happening to the customers that frequent the Conch Café. The landlady, Hecate Badminton, an evil witch, is the primary suspect. Then when the café burns down, things go from bad to worse. Sam and her friend Melody with Billy the dog, decide that together they will go in search of the Conch because Sam has had enough of moving around, especially now when she has finally found a best friend.

The girls are given a Monitor by their magician friend tGF who helped at the café when their waiter Manny had his accident. Equipped with this and their wits, they set out on an adventure which takes them into Hecate's mainframe and from there they're forced into eSide, a world of computer generated places filled with half-people, half-animals, that have the faces of their café customers and who have become part of Hecate's computer graphics; all victims of her obsession with power and control.

The girls and Billy are challenged at every turn to find escape routes and press ever forward. They prove to be resilient, courageous and resourceful, never losing sight of their goal to reclaim the Good-Luck-Conch and bring down Hecate.

This is a highly imaginative, fast-paced cyber-adventure full of fantasy and mystery presented in five parts. Ideal for the age 8+ age group.