



**JUVENILE FICTION**

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**Marty Chan**

For more information on this book or author or to contact the author directly email: [promotions@thistledownpress.com](mailto:promotions@thistledownpress.com)

## BARNABAS BIGFOOT- A CLOSE SHAVE

MARTY CHAN

The first book in the Barnabas Bigfoot Series introduces us to Barnabas, adolescent sasquatch, and his family and tribe who live in the woods of BC. The story is told in the first person by Barnabas, who is a wonderfully engaging and genuine character, immediately relatable to preteens. He is experiencing the normal pangs of growing up: physical changes, pesky girls, embarrassing parents. On top of all that he experiences what for sasquatches is a dire handicap: small feet. He is determined to keep this terrible flaw a secret.

Soon the peaceful, hidden society of sasquatches is being exposed to the human world, with dangerous results. The central story arc involves Barnabas' adventures when he is sasquatchnapped and finds himself having to be a sasquatch in a human, "baldface", world.

His friendship with a helpful human girl, Jamie, weaves in threads of multicultural understanding and personal identity, as Barnabas must sacrifice his unique sasquatch appearance to literally save his hide! Of course young readers will be able to identify with the fish-out-of-water flavour of these adventures: "Do I look normal? How will I fit in? Does how I look define who I am? What happens when my own friends reject me?"

Marty has created a social structure, history, and vocabulary for his sasquatch society that is accessible and fascinating. For example, over the course of the three books, readers will learn many sasquatch idioms, based almost exclusively on the race's hairiness. The series raises environmental questions as well by connecting the treatment of one's fellows with the treatment of the earth, the implication being that greedy and selfish behaviour toward other beings will naturally cause one to be greedy and selfish with one's environment, and vice-versa.

Novelist, playwright, television writer, and radio humorist, MARTY CHAN has been entertaining audiences across Canada for over 15 years. His first children's novel, *The Mystery of the Frozen Brains*, won the 2005 City of Edmonton Book Prize. The sequel, *The Mystery of the Graffiti Ghoul*, won the 2008 Diamond Willow Award. He was the story editor on the Gemini Award winning kids' series *Incredible Story Studio*, and he wrote "The Orange Seed Myth", a half hour television program that won the Gold Medal for Best Children's Television Pilot at the Charleston World Television Festival. His stage play, *Mom, Dad, I'm Living with a White Girl*, has been produced across Canada as well as Off Broadway in New York. Chan lives in Edmonton, AB.



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