



# Media Release

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## **Scaredy Squirrel Leaves His Nut Tree Kids Can Press Announces a Major TV and Multiplatform Development Deal**

(May 21, 2008 — Toronto, Canada) Scaredy Squirrel, that bestselling and endearing picture book character created by Mélanie Watt and published by Kids Can Press, will be making the move from page to screen. Kids Can Press announced plans to develop its highly successful book series *Scaredy Squirrel* into a multimedia entertainment property.

Kids Can Press will collaborate with Nelvana Studios and Nelvana Entertainment to expand the reach of this popular character through a deal to produce a television series, develop animated shorts for on-air, on-line and on-mobile distribution, and launch an international merchandise and licensing program. Kids Can Press will continue to publish Scaredy Squirrel books while TV and media versions and licensing deals are developed. All participants are divisions of Corus Entertainment and working as part of the overall corporate strategy of leveraging company assets in publishing, broadcast and sales and merchandising to ensure success at home and abroad.

A publishing phenomenon from acclaimed Canadian creator Mélanie Watt, the series includes *Scaredy Squirrel* (2006) and *Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend* (2007) and the recently published *Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach* (2008). The fourth book in the series will be published in 2009. The first two titles have sold over 170,000 copies worldwide, while the rate of sale of the third book is outpacing the first two by 50%. The books have been published in nine countries around the world and have garnered numerous awards and award nominations. Part of the phenomenon of *Scaredy Squirrel* is that it has crossed publishing genres, becoming not only a book read to kids at bedtime but also an inspirational gift for anyone, young or old.

"*Scaredy Squirrel* gives kids a new kind of hero to cheer for," said Lisa Lyons, president of Kids Can Press. "Mélanie Watt has created a character who's instantly relatable and hilarious in his attempts to be brave. Kids and adults have made him a publishing hit and he's destined to become one of the funniest and most endearing screen characters, too."

The 26-episode animated television series and companion shorts will be produced in-house by Nelvana Studios. Production on the shorts will begin in summer 2008, with the full-length series to follow. Mélanie Watt will collaborate on the development of the television series. Nelvana Enterprises will be responsible for worldwide broadcast and distribution sales as well as the international merchandising and licensing program for the property.

"I am thrilled to be collaborating with Nelvana Studios and bringing Scaredy Squirrel to life along with my successful partnership with Kids Can Press," said Mélanie Watt, author and illustrator. "I'm amazed by the overwhelming response to my character and how readers of all ages are relating to his nutty adventures of self-discovery. His move to TV will be an exciting new leap for him — and for me!"

**About Kids Can Press and Corus Entertainment Inc.**

Kids Can Press is the largest Canadian-owned children's publisher, with an award-winning list of over 500 picture books, non-fiction and fiction titles for toddlers to young adults, including *Franklin the Turtle*, the most successful publishing franchise in the history of Canadian publishing, which has sold over 60 million books in over 30 languages around the world.

Kids Can Press is owned by Corus Entertainment Inc., a Canadian-based media and entertainment company. Corus is a market leader in specialty television and radio with additional assets in pay television, advertising and digital audio services, television broadcasting, children's book publishing and children's animation. The company's multimedia entertainment brands include YTV, Treehouse, W Network, Movie Central, Nelvana, Kids Can Press and radio stations including CKNW, CKOI and Q107. Corus creates engaging branded entertainment experiences for its audiences across multiple platforms. A publicly traded company, Corus is listed on the Toronto (CJR.B) and New York (CJR) exchanges. Experience Corus on the web at [www.corusent.com](http://www.corusent.com).

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