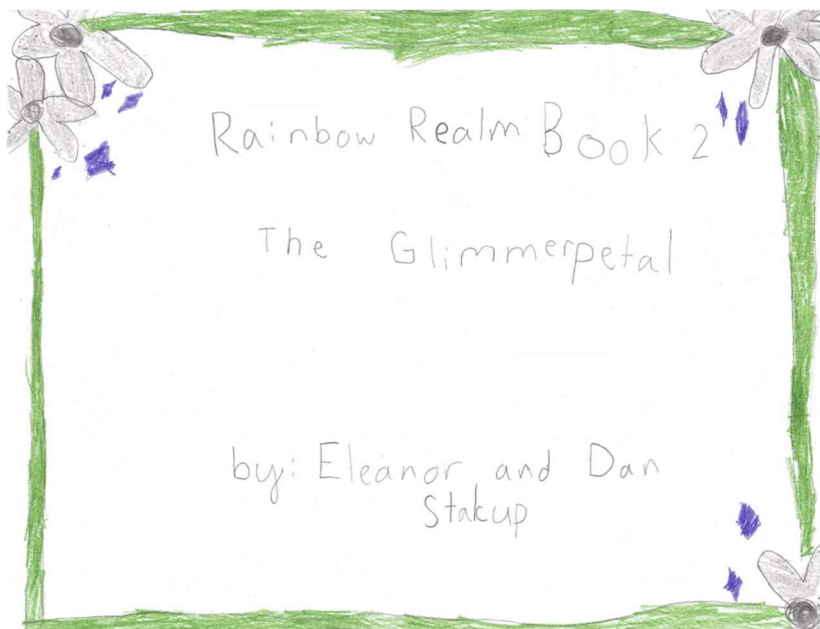


The Glimmerpetal
Rainbow Realm, Book 2



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Illustrated by Eleanor Stalcup

2025

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For Katy/Mommy and Gwen

Our best friends and companions!

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Prologue

In the Castle Dungeon

Greena, an evil witch, sat in her dungeon cell wondering again how it had all gone wrong for her. A few weeks earlier, she had put a plan into motion to take over Rainbow Realm that she had been working on for years. But it had all been foiled by the bravery and wit of Princess Gracie. Greena's evil spell had been broken and she had been arrested and put into the dungeon. She looked down at her hands, useless without her powerful potion ingredients. They'd taken those away, too.

The king and queen had sentenced her to stay so that she would never try to take over the kingdom ever again. They had taken away all of her potions and all of her magic items so she could not cast a spell to escape.

It was the middle of the night, completely dark, when she heard footsteps coming down the dungeon hallway. She looked up and saw the glow of a torch coming her way. A tall, cloaked figure stopped in front of her dungeon cell. The flickering shadows from the torchlight made it hard for Greena to see who was under the cloak.

"Hello, Greena," said the figure in a deep voice.



“Who are you?” said Greena.

“Don’t worry. We’re on the same side,” the figure said.

“What do you mean?” asked Greena.

“Both of us think Rainbow Realm should be under new leadership.”

“I don’t understand,” said Greena.

“I’m with... *them*,” said the figure.

Greena gasped. She knew who he was talking about.

“How did you get in here?” asked Greena.

“We have magic, too,” said the figure. “We have many powerful ways to get what we want. And what we want is for you to join us.”

Greena stared at the figure in disbelief, the bright torch causing shifting shadows all around her.

“You want me to join... *them*?” she asked.

“Yes. We do.”

“But I won’t be able to do much while I’m stuck in this cell. I don’t have any magic right now. And the whole dungeon is protected with a charm so the guards will know if I start using magic,” she said.

The figure reached into the cloak and pulled out something glimmering.

“Don’t worry,” said the figure. “They won’t even know you’re missing until you’re long gone. Then you can start making some of those powerful potions again.”

The shiny object in his hand was a key. He slipped it into a keyhole in the iron grate door, turned it, and swung the cell door open. Greena was free to go.

“We have ways of getting you out of the castle,” said the shadowy figure. “Follow me.”

Greena stood up, took a step towards the door, and for the first time in weeks, made her witchy cackle.

“Heeee heeee heeeeeee!”

Chapter 1

The Art Project

When Princess Gracie woke up on a Tuesday morning a few weeks later, she did what she did every morning. She got out of bed, changed out of her pajamas, put on her rainbow necklace, and put her magical compass and knife in her pocket. The morning light from the window filled her room. Like almost everything Gracie owned, it was decorated in rainbows.

The morning light also hit Gracie's most unusual feature, her flowing hair that was every color of the rainbow. Her hair had been these many colors since she was a baby.

Gracie walked over to the corner of her room and looked at the big project she was working on. On an easel was a large piece of canvas. The canvas was marked into nine squares – three rows and three columns. All of the outer squares had colorful flowers fastened to them that she had grown in her garden: There was one for every color of the rainbow, and a beautiful pink flower, too.

But the center was empty. She wasn't sure what should go in the middle, but she knew it needed to



be special. This artwork was going to be the gift for Gracie's little brother or sister when they were born in just a few days.

Gracie was very nervous about getting a new brother or sister. She had never had to share any of her toys or books. Her parents had always given all their attention to her. Sometimes when she imagined a baby crying, she wanted to cry herself. But she really wanted to be the best big sister she could. She didn't want to be mean or selfish, she wanted to be kind.

She was going to start taking care of her little sibling by having a great present for him or her when they were born. She would hang this piece of artwork in her little sibling's room so they could look at it and always know that Gracie cared for them.

But there was one problem. Her garden had only eight different kinds of flowers, and she had already used all of them to make a colorful pattern in the outer squares. What could she put in the center?

She went downstairs and to the dining room where her parents and some of the workers in the castle were already eating breakfast.

Her mom and dad were the King and Queen of Rainbow Realm. They smiled at her when she sat down. Her mom, who was pregnant, looked tired.

“Good morning, Gracie,” said the Queen. “What are you going to do today?”

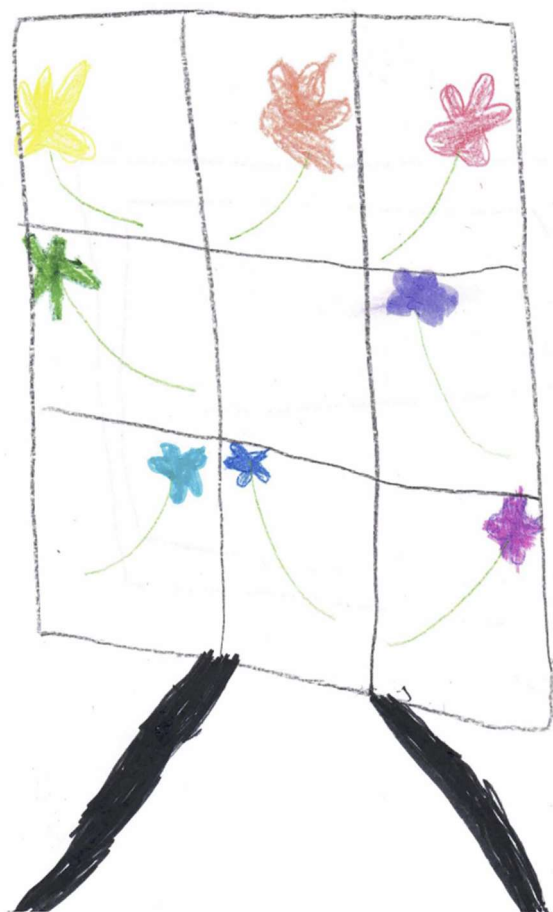
“I have a project I’m going to try and finish,” she said. “It’s for my baby brother or sister.”

The King smiled at her. “I’m sure whatever it is, you’ll figure out how to be a great older sister.”

Gracie sighed. She really felt like the artwork was missing something special. She was afraid that if she couldn’t find that missing piece, it would never be great. And if she couldn’t even make a great gift to give to her baby brother or sister when they were born, she would never be able to show how much she loved them when they looked up at the art from their crib every day. She wanted to be a *great* older sister, like her dad said. And making an amazing present was the way to show that.

The king and queen finished their breakfast and went to the throne room to get ready to spend the day helping people of the kingdom.

Still sitting at breakfast with her were two workers: Penelope, the castle’s head maid who often helped



Gracie, and Blackwell, who was in charge of landscaping and maintenance at the castle.

“There, there, Gracie. I’m sure you’ll find a way to finish your present,” Penelope said, picking up her porridge bowl and leaving to start her duties.

As Gracie was finishing up her own breakfast, Blackwell had an idea:

“I think I might know what you can use to fill the last spot on the present for the baby,” Blackwell said.

“What’s that?” Gracie asked.

“Rainbow Realm has a very rare and special kind of flower,” Blackwell said. “They say it shimmers like the moon reflecting in a lake or lightning during a snowstorm. It’s called the Glimmerpetal. I bet it would make the perfect finishing piece for your present. Make it truly great.”

“Wow,” Gracie said. “That sounds perfect. But where does it grow?”

Blackwell’s face fell. “Ah, that’s the problem. It can only be found in the woods, in a garden a ways down the path.”

Gracie gulped. She was not allowed to go into the woods at all, especially by herself. It was filled with creepy monsters and all sorts of evil things.

“I can’t,” she said. “I’m not allowed to go there.”

“Oh,” Blackwell said. “Do you want me to accompany you?”

“No,” Gracie said. “I have to figure this out myself. I’ll think of something.”

“Well,” Blackwell said, smiling and winking at her. “If you *do* happen to go into the woods, and you promise to be safe, I certainly wouldn’t report it to your parents.”

Gracie frowned and ate the last strawberry on her plate. She didn’t usually break the rules, but maybe once wouldn’t hurt.

Chapter 2

The Thorny Arch

After breakfast, Gracie peeked into the throne room to make sure her parents were fully occupied serving the people of Rainbow Realm.

Then she walked out the back door of the castle. She walked through her garden and through the field in her back yard to where the trees and brush started to grow thick.

The edge of the woods was marked by a gnarled, wooden archway grown over by green, thorny vines. Going under the arch was a dirt path.

Just in front of the arch was a sign:

“Beware: These woods are dangerous. The rulers of Rainbow Realm cannot protect you while you are within. Proceed at your own risk.”

Gracie gulped. She was starting to feel scared.

But the most important thing to her right now was becoming a great big sister, and the only way she knew to do that was to finish making a perfect present.



She took a step through the arch and into the woods. The shadow of the canopy of the trees covered her, and she immediately felt a little bit chillier.

Slowly, she stepped down the path. She saw some mushrooms, some squirrels with black fur, and some birds with dark red feathers that made her think of blood. It was all just a little bit creepier than what she normally saw around the castle.

She walked for a few minutes and the woods got thicker and thicker, creepier and creepier. Gracie was feeling even more scared. But anytime she did, she imagined a little brother or sister giving her a hug, and a warm smile on her parents' face as they said she was a good older sister.

As she walked, the plants looked less familiar: Dark green ferns with spiky leaves covered the dirt floor of the path. She saw a bush shaped like a witch's hat and covered with cobwebs. The bark of the trees was dripping with red sap that looked a little bit like blood.

At one point, she thought she heard something shuffle behind her. She turned around quickly to look, but didn't see anything. Maybe it was just a squirrel climbing in a tree or a bird flying by. She kept walking down the path, but listened carefully.

She had a prickle on her neck telling her that something... or someone... was nearby.

She walked for a few more minutes down the path, keeping her eyes open for the garden that Blackwell told her about. She wanted to pick the flower and hurry back to her castle as quickly as she could. Where she was walking looked stranger and stranger, and even though she hadn't seen any monsters, she had a feeling something was near.

Then she heard another rustling noise and looked over her shoulder. Something had darted behind a tree as she turned around. Something was following her.

Gracie froze. She didn't know what the creature following her was, but she knew she wanted to be far away from it. It might even be a monster. She started running further down the path, keeping her eye over her shoulder.

She was so focused on trying to see what was following her that she didn't notice a bend in the path. She tripped over a mossy green log and stumbled off the path and into a muddy lagoon. Her rainbow dress became soaked in brown mud. Gracie struggled to stand up in the slick, swampy muck.

As she stood up, she turned toward the path, and screamed.

A walking skeleton was standing there, staring straight at her.

Chapter 3

Kelly

Gracie shouted in fear and picked up a stone from the mud to throw at the skeleton. But as Gracie screamed, she heard another noise. She didn't know what the noise was for a moment, so she got quiet, and realized it was the skeleton screaming, too.

Gracie paused and looked closely at the skeleton. She realized that the skeleton looked like it was a girl. She was wearing some strips of fabric attached to her waist that looked like a skirt, and there was some stringy rope dangling from its head that resembled a haircut.

“Hello?” said Gracie.

“Hello?” said the skeleton, in a gravelly but gentle tone.

“Are you a monster?” asked Gracie.

“No. Are you a monster?” asked the skeleton.

“No! I'm a princess! Princess Gracie!” said Gracie.

“Oh. I’m a skeleton girl named Kelly,” said Kelly the skeleton.

“Are you going to attack me?” asked Gracie.

“No!” said Kelly. “Why would I attack you?”

“You were following me!” said Gracie.

“I was just curious about the visitor to our forest. We almost never have people come in here. I’m sorry if I scared you,” said Kelly.

Kelly’s voice was friendly. Not at all what Gracie expected a monster in the woods to sound like. She put the rock she was going to throw in the pocket of her dress.

“I’m sorry. I thought that everything that lived in the woods was scary,” said Gracie.

“The people who live here call it Sunset Forest,” said Kelly. “And only some of the stuff is scary in here. But I bet your castle is full of ugly monsters.”

“What? No!” said Gracie. “Just normal people, mostly. I guess parts of it are scary, like the dungeon that Greena escaped from.” She still got chills thinking about the fact that Greena hadn’t been



found in the couple of weeks since her cell was found empty one morning.

A scared expression filled Kelly's face. "Not Greena! She causes so much trouble. She uses her potions to take control of innocent creatures just wandering around Sunset Forest. But I haven't seen her in a while. Although I thought I heard her cackling a few nights ago."

"She tried to make herself queen of Rainbow Realm, too! And then she somehow escaped from the dungeon!" said Gracie.

"Whoa. That's creepy," said Kelly. "Is that why you came to Sunset Forest?"

"No," said Gracie. "I came to look for a rare flower called The Glimmerpetal. I need it to finish my present for my new baby sibling and prove I can be a good sister."

"Wow. That must be hard to find if you came into Sunset Forest looking for it," said Kelly.

Gracie nodded.

"Someone told me that it's planted somewhere in a garden in here. Do you know any gardens we can check?" asked Gracie.

“Well, there’s only one that I know about. Maybe it’s in there,” said Kelly.

“Can you show me where that is?” asked Gracie.

Kelly nodded and reached out a bony hand. Gracie grabbed the cold, hard hand, and Kelly pulled Gracie out of the mud. It felt strange to grab a skeleton’s hand, but Gracie could feel Kelly’s kindness.

“Follow me,” Kelly said.

The two walked further down the path for several minutes. Kelly occasionally pointed out interesting things in the forest: some pointy dark green ferns that criss-crossed like spiderwebs; a weeping willow tree with black bark and dry, brown leaves; a boulder shaped like the head of a snake.

After a while, they reached a clearing, and in that clearing was a huge garden unlike one that Gracie had ever seen before.

The royal garden that Gracie played in had mostly flowers and some vegetables, all of the plants brightly colored. But this garden in Sunset Forest looked totally different. The plants were all sorts of different, dark colors. Some of the plants were thin

and long like vines. Others were bumpy mushrooms. Some had strangely colored, jagged leaves.

Gracie and Kelly stepped into the garden, and Gracie couldn't help but look around in wonder. It wasn't the kind of beauty she was used to, bright and colorful, but there was something magical and enchanting about the variety of plants, their odd spectrum of colors, and the bitter aromas they were emitting.

And then she saw it, right in the center of the garden: A glittering, silver flower, whose petals spread as broad as her hand, right near the center of the garden. It was the Glimmerpetal.

Chapter 4

The Glimmerpetal

As Gracie looked at the flower, she felt a strange tingle in her fingers and toes. She took a few steps towards the flower.

“Do you think that’s what you’re looking for?” asked Kelly.

“I *know* it is,” said Gracie.

She couldn’t explain it, but she felt drawn towards the flower, as if there was something magical about it.

It was now right in front of her. She leaned down to get a closer look at it. Something that felt like static electricity was coming off of it.

She slowly reached down and grabbed the flower, firmly pulling it out by the bottom of its stem. As she did so, she felt her hands sliding through some ripple in the air for just a moment, like a door had opened next to her and caused an air current. And then it was gone, and Gracie had the shining flower in her hands.



“It’s beautiful,” said Kelly.

“There’s something strange about this flower. I think it will be perfect to finish my gift to my little sibling,” said Gracie.

It had a deep, sweet smell like a cross between fresh roses and baking blueberry muffins, and it continued to sparkle even though it was in the shade.

Gracie gently placed the flower in her bag.

“I have what I need,” said Gracie. “I’m going to go home now and finish my art project.”

Kelly started to reply, when they were interrupted by a voice in the distance. It was a man’s voice – loud, but too far away to hear what it was saying clearly.

Gracie whipped her head in the direction of the noise, and saw something that she hadn’t noticed earlier. A small cottage made of dark wood was in the distance, on the opposite side of the garden a couple hundred feet away.

“Did you hear that?” asked Kelly.

“It sounded like a voice coming from that building,” Gracie said, pointing.

Just then they heard a voice again, but this was a different voice. It was a woman’s voice this time, coming from the same place, as if in an argument with the first voice.

“It sounds like they need help,” said Kelly.

Gracie sighed. She was ready to leave the creepy Sunset Woods and go home, but she was a princess, which meant it was her job to help people whenever she could. She wondered if she still needed to even if she wasn’t in an area protected by her kingdom.

“Let’s go see what’s going on,” said Gracie.

“Okay,” said Kelly. “But I’ve heard scary noises coming out of that hut before. Especially at night.”

Kelly’s bones rattled as she said it.

Gracie gulped.

They walked toward the hut, and the voices got louder, but Gracie still couldn’t make out what they were saying.

They got to the front door of the hut, which was hanging open. There was a pot of creepy ferns on the front porch. The walls were made out of dark, gnarled wood. One of the windows had a sleeping bat hanging from it.

Gracie quietly stepped inside and looked for the two talking people.

But no one was in the hut. It was a cluttered mess of potion ingredients, some scattered on the floor and some resting on shelves on the walls around the hut. There was a table and a dark cauldron near the middle of the room. Near one of the walls was some sort of cage.

Gracie glanced over her shoulder and looked at Kelly. She shrugged and took another step in.

“WHAT’S your name?” came a high-pitched voice. The woman’s voice.

Gracie jumped in surprise and turned her head around looking for the person who said it.

“WHAT’S your name?” came a second voice, this one deeper. The man’s voice.

Gracie realized the voice was coming from the cage. She took a nervous step toward it and saw that

inside the cage was a very unusual bird. She has never seen one like it before

It was a large bird, about two feet tall, with black feathers. Grace saw a beak that was long, curved, and orange. It looked like pictures of a tropical bird that Gracie had seen in books, maybe a toucan.

But the strangest thing about the bird was that it had *two heads*. Two sets of eyes and two long beaks. And both heads were staring right at Gracie.

“*WHAT’S your name?*” squawked the head on the left, in a high pitched voice. The head on the right repeated it in a lower voice.

“I’m Gracie, and this is Kelly,” said Gracie. “Who are you?”

“I’m Doubloon,” squawked both toucan heads at the same time.

Chapter 5

Doubloon's Story

"I've never met a bird that can talk before," said Gracie. "Especially one with two heads."

"Why are you here?" said the head on the right.

"We came for this," said Gracie. She pulled the Glimmerpetal out of her backpack and showed it to the bird.

"Wooooowwww," said both heads of the bird in unison.

"That's the Glimmerpetal," said Doubloon's head on the right.

"Very rare," said the head on the left.

"Do you know its secrets?" said the head on the right.

"Secrets?" said Gracie. "No."

She looked over her shoulder at Kelly, who shrugged.

“The Glimmerpetal has magic powers—” said the head on the right.

“--*MAGIC powers!*” squawked the head on the left.

“It was planted by the one who lived in this hut,” said the head on the right.

“Who was that?” asked Gracie.

“A witch named Greena,” said the head on the left.

Gracie gasped. She and Kelly looked at each other in surprise.

“You mean... this is Greena’s hut? The one where she made a potion to try and take over Rainbow Realm?” asked Gracie.

“*GREENA’S hut!*” squawked Doubloon’s left head in agreement.

“For years, Greena has been trying to make an army of monsters to help her take over the world,” said Doubloon’s right head. “Some of the potions she made worked, some didn’t. Even the ones that worked only made little monsters like fanged fireflowers and grumpy gnomes. So she started growing the most powerful ingredient of all.”



“*MOST POWERFUL ingredient!*” squawked Doubloon’s left head.

“She searched for years to find a Glimmerpetal seed, and she was able to plant it and grow it. But she didn’t know its most powerful protection. Only a child can pick the Glimmerpetal from the ground once it’s grown. This is to make sure no grown ups use its powers for evil!”

“*GROWN ups! STEAL THE flower!*”

“And so now you have the Glimmerpetal. One of the most powerful things in all of Rainbow Realm. So what are you going to do with it?”

“*WHATCHA GONNA do? WHATCHA GONNA do?*”

Gracie stared at the silver flower in her hands. It really was beautiful. But she wondered what she would do with it. It was powerful enough that someone could raise an army of monsters with it. Wow! She would need to think about it. Was it worth putting into an art project just to show her little brother or sister how much she loved them? Or should it be used for something else that would help the kingdom?

Her thought was interrupted when she saw Kelly out of the corner of her eye exploring the hut.

“There’s some really weird stuff in here,” said Kelly.

Gracie recognized some of it. Just a month earlier, her own bedroom had briefly been Greena’s headquarters. There was a gazing ball, and potion ingredients piled on the shelves surrounding the hut, and a big cauldron in the middle of the hut, and Greena’s robes crumpled in a pile.

Seeing the robes made Gracie nervous.

“Maybe we should get going,” said Gracie to Kelly.

“Okay,” said Kelly. “But first, do you think we should free Doubloon?”

Gracie turned and looked at the two-headed bird.

“Doubloon, do you want us to let you go? Do you want to be free?”

“*FREEdom! FREEdom!*” said the left head.

Gracie reached up to the birdcage, fiddled with the latch until it unfastened, and swung open a door on the cage. Doubloon flew out of the cage, spreading its wide wings.

“*FLY with you! FLY with you!*” said Doubloon’s heads in unison.

Doubloon landed on Gracie’s shoulder.

“I’ll walk you back to the edge of the forest,” said Kelly.

“Maybe you can come to the castle and meet my parents and have dinner with us. We can play!” said Gracie. “You, me, and Doubloon. I don’t really have any friends at the castle who I can actually play with. That’s one reason I’m so excited to get a little brother or sister.”

Kelly stopped walking and gave Gracie a sad look.

“Creatures from Sunset Forest aren’t allowed near the castle,” said Kelly.

“Oh,” said Gracie.

She realized how lonely Kelly must feel. Even more lonely than Gracie, who at least had her parents and the workers from the castle like Penelope and Blackwell.

“Well, maybe I can change that rule,” said Gracie.
“You know, since I’m the princess.”

But their conversation was cut short by a loud roar behind them.

Chapter 6

The Two-Rex

Gracie looked over her shoulder and couldn't believe her eyes.

She was looking at a dinosaur.

Not just any dinosaur, but a giant, ferocious T-rex.

And not just any T-rex, but one with *two heads!*

For a moment, Gracie was too surprised to do anything. This day was getting weirder and weirder. And dinosaurs were extinct. How could there be one standing right behind her?

Then, both of the scaly heads took a deep breath and unleashed a loud roar.

Gracie and Kelly both screamed and started running. The T-rex took some stomps behind them.

"Why does everything in this woods have two heads!!?" shouted Gracie as she ran.

"Hey! I don't have two heads!" said Kelly.

“That’s true, I guess,” said Gracie.

“*TWO-rex! TWO-rex!*” said one of Doubloon’s heads.

Gracie had forgotten that Doubloon was flying with them.

Gracie, Kelly, and Doubloon wove around trees and through overgrown sections of the woods. Gracie tried hard not to stumble on the rocks. As they ran they heard the heavy stomps of the Two-rex behind them.

With each step, they heard the crunching of branches and roaring of the two-rex just a few steps behind them. Gracie felt its jaws snap behind her, but she pulled her shoulder away just in time.

The dinosaur had bigger legs than either of them, but was slowed down by bumping into all of the trees. Gracie and Kelly were able to keep just a few steps ahead of it.

Gracie was running out of breath. She wasn’t sure how much longer she could keep running from the dinosaur.



“Over there!” said Kelly, pointing to a cave in a nearby hill. Gracie used all her strength and darted right for the cave. The opening was barely tall enough for her to walk into. She had to crouch down a little. She practically dove into the opening, and heard Kelly right behind her.

They hurriedly crawled into the cave, Doubloon flying low behind them. The two-rex snapped with both of its heads into the cave, but couldn’t reach in.

Gracie was panting. She wiped sweat from her forehead.

“Something *crazy* is going on in here,” said Kelly. “There *never* used to be things this scary in the Sunset Forest.”

“I don’t think I’m ever coming back in here,” said Gracie.

As they caught their breath in the dark cave, whose ceiling was just a little bit above their heads, they watched through the opening of the cave as the two-rex gave up in its attempt to make Gracie, Kelly, and Doubloon its snack. It roared at them one last time, then walked away from the cave.

The light pouring in from the entrance illuminated the cave around them.

“I wonder where the fairies are,” said Kelly.

“Fairies? Why do you think there are fairies here?” asked Gracie.

“Didn’t you see the sign next to the cave?” asked Kelly.

Gracie shook her head.

“I was too busy avoiding the snapping dinosaur jaws,” she said. “I still can’t believe there were TWO of them! What did the sign say?”

“It said that this cave is for ‘fae.’ That’s another word for fairies. So this must be a place where fairies gather,” said Kelly.

“I’ve never met a fairy,” said Gracie. “Are they nice?”

“Oh yeah,” said Kelly. “Sometimes you see them floating around at sunrise. They look a little bit like butterflies, but if you see one up close, you can tell that they’re fairies. They are so beautiful, and they have magic powers that they only use for good.”

“That’s perfect,” said Gracie. “After being chased by a two-rex we could definitely use some good magic to help us out.”

Gracie heard a rustling deeper in the cave.

“I think I hear a fairy moving inside,” she said. “Let’s go check it out.”

Kelly and Gracie, with Doubloon, who had perched on Gracie’s shoulder, stepped through a narrow passage of the cave and into an open chamber that was dimly lit by torches.

“Hello?” Gracie said.

From a shadowy corner of the cave, out stepped someone much bigger than a fairy. She was wearing a long, black robe, a pointed hat, and she had green skin. She cackled.

“Heee hee hee!”

It was Greena.

Chapter 7

The F.A.E.

“GREE-na! GREE-na!” squawked one of Doubloon’s heads.

“You!?” said Gracie and Kelly in unison.

“Hee hee hee! It’s me!” said Greena.

“But where’s the fairy?” asked Kelly.

“There is no fairy!” said Greena. “This is an outpost for the F-A-E! We’re the *Fierce Agents of Evil!* A group of powerful villains working together to take over not just Rainbow Realm but ALL of the kingdoms!”

Gracie’s eyes widened in shock.

“We need to get back to the castle to tell my mom and dad about this!” said Gracie.

“You won’t be going anywhere until you give me what I need!” said Greena.

“We’ll never give you what you need to take over the kingdom!” said Gracie.



“Oh yes you will, hee hee hee!” cackled Greena. “I’ll let you and your friends go as long as you give me that flower you have in your bag.”

Gracie grabbed the Glimmerpetal from her bag. She looked down at it. For a moment she considered just giving the flower up. It would mean she could leave and get home. But then she thought about what would happen next: This flower was more powerful than any of Greena’s potions. She would use it to make an army of monsters, which she could use to take over not just Rainbow Realm but the whole world.

Her eyes adjusted to the darkness, Gracie could see past Greena. Deeper into the cave was a chamber that had been turned into an evil laboratory. It was filled with potion ingredients, some suits of armor, a dusty bookshelf, and a table covered in a mess of spell scrolls and potion bottles.

Gracie started to turn to run to the exit of the cave when she heard the two-rex growling outside. She hesitated.

“Never!” said Gracie.

Greena’s eyes lit up with anger. She reached into her cloak and pulled out a potion.

“Well, maybe I’ll just have to crush you then!” said Greena. “I’ll drink this Super Size and Strength potion, and then I’ll squish you and take the flower!”

She uncorked the potion bottle and lifted the bottle up to her lips. Gracie started to panic. Her heart raced, and she looked around for somewhere else to go. She had no options.

But, just as Greena was about to pour the potion into her mouth, Gracie saw a colorful blur beside her. Doubloon swooped out of the air and snatched the potion.

As the bird grabbed the potion bottle, some of the potion splashed into the air and landed in one of Doubloon’s mouths.

At once, Doubloon started to grow. And it kept growing until it was the biggest bird that Gracie had ever seen. It was a bird the size of a horse, and it was still growing!

“Ummm...” said Kelly in amazement.

“Let’s get out of here! Grab onto that giant bird!” said Gracie.

Doubloon flapped its wings towards Gracie and Kelly, lowering its necks. Gracie wrapped her arms around one neck while Kelly grabbed onto another. The giant Doubloon flew closer to the exit of the cave. It could only barely squeeze through the opening, but it paused when Greena called out.

“No!” shouted Greena. “I’ll have to use my most powerful potion! Eeeevilness Potion!”

She pulled another potion out of her pocket and tossed it to the corner of the room. When it hit the ground, the bottle shattered and potion came pouring out. It formed a hazy green smoke cloud.

A moment later, Gracie heard some metallic clanking. Some shapes emerged from the smoke cloud. They were suits of armor! They walked and moved as if a person was inside the armor. Four evil, ghostly suits of armor stepped out from the green haze, each holding a weapon: One with a sword, one with a lance, one with a spikeball on a chain, and one with a battle ax.

The armor started clanking towards Kelly, Gracie, and the extra-big Doubloon.

“Let’s go! Now!” Gracie said.

“*HERE WE go!*” Doubloon squawked from one of its heads. It flapped its wings, and Gracie, Kelly, and Doubloon flew towards the exit.

Chapter 8

The Crazy Battle

Doubloon flew towards the exit. They heard the suits of armor clanking behind them. As the light from the front of the cave greeted them, they heard the growling of the two-rex and smelled its stinking breath.

“Uh oh,” said Kelly.

“Doubloon, please don’t let us get eaten!” said Gracie.

As they reached the exit, Doubloon curved upward. Gracie felt herself pulled down by the gravity, and she gripped Doubloon tighter. The two-rex’s heads snapped toward them, but just missed.

“*TOO high! TOO high!*” said Doubloon, as it flapped its wings trying not to get bitten. It fluttered just above the sharp fangs of the two-rex.

But the two-rex got suddenly distracted. Behind it came the four cursed suits of armor. Their metal creaked as they stomped out of the cave.

“Now would be a good time to escape,” said Gracie.

“Not so fast!” came Greena’s voice. She stepped out of the cave, too. She pulled a blue potion in a circular bottle out of her pocket and threw it up at Doubloon. The glass from the potion bottle shattered as it hit Doubloon’s oversized talons.

Some drops of the potion splashed on Doubloon. Doubloon started to shrink, bit by bit. Soon Doubloon was back at normal size, and Gracie and Kelly tumbled to the ground.

“That’s my curse antidote!” said Greena. “It undoes my other magic!”

Kelly poked Gracie and leaned into her. “If we can get some of that antidote, we can make the suits of armor stop chasing us.”

Gracie nodded.

“Let’s go look,” said Kelly. She pointed back to the cave they had just left.

“What?” said Gracie.

“The curse antidote will be in there,” said Kelly.



The girls turned back towards the cave and ran to the entrance, Doubloon right behind them.

“Get them!” said Greena.

The suits of armor turned and started marching back toward Kelly and Gracie who were headed to the entrance.

“Hurry!” said Gracie. The clanking suits of armor had almost caught up to Kelly and Gracie, when a huge red blur smashed the suit of armor with the

sword. It was a giant tail. The two-rex was back! And it was still angry.

The other suits of armor turned towards the two-rex and started swinging their weapons at it in defense.

“Ugh, I’ll have to get you myself,” Greena said.

But as Greena stepped towards Gracie and Kelly, the two-rex knocked one of the suits of armor into her, and her cloak got stuck on its lance.

Kelly and Gracie scrambled back into the cave and toward the potion shelf to find an antidote.

“It’s a blue potion in a circle bottle!” shouted Gracie.

She frantically looked in one shelf while Kelly looked in the other.

“I found one!” said Kelly, grabbing a bottle off of the shelf.

“Great!” said Gracie. “Let’s go stop the evil magic! Quick!”

They ran toward the front of the cave. The closer they got, the louder the chaos of the battle outside

became. The two-rex's thick scales were clashing against the suits of armor.

Kelly took the potion and chucked into the mayhem. A blue fog emerged as the bottle shattered and the potion splattered across the ground. The fog enveloped the suits of armor as well as the two-rex.

Gracie couldn't believe her eyes at what happened next. The two-rex started shrinking, its two heads strangely merging into one. It grew smaller and smaller until it turned into an ordinary red lizard, the kind that liked to sit in the sun. The curse placed on the lizard to make it into an evil soldier had lifted. There was no more two-rex.

Meanwhile, the suits of armor started to creak loudly, their joints growing stiffer, their limbs growing more still. Eventually, the four suits came to a complete stop, and then a moment later, clattered to the ground in a pile of metal.

"We did it!" exclaimed Gracie. "Now let's run before Greena finds us!"

But it was too late. A glass bottle of potion flew through the air, thrown by Greena from the shadows of the cave. It hit the ground right next to Kelly, and its eerie purple and orange contents

emerged like an exploding ghost. The evil magic wrapped around Kelly.

For a moment, Kelly had a scared look on her face. Then she collapsed to the ground, lifeless.

Chapter 9

The Glimmerstone

“Nooo! Kelly!” screamed Gracie.

She ran over to where Kelly lay on the floor. But on the ground, she just saw a crumpled pile, resting on the strips of fabric that Kelly had been wearing. The bones didn’t move, and they didn’t even hold together. Gracie could tell: This wasn’t Kelly anymore, just a pile of bones.

Greena took a step towards Gracie.

“You’ll be giving me that flower now, Princess!” said the witch.

Gracie felt very angry. She had only known Kelly for a short time, but she already thought of her as a friend. And Greena had just destroyed her with a spell, the vilest potion she had ever brewed.

“I’ll *never* give this flower to you!” shouted Gracie.

“Oh yes you will,” said Greena. “Or it will be the end of your precious bird, too!”

Gracie looked in horror as Greena emerged from the darkness into the torchlight. Her arms were

wrapped around Doubloon, a crooked dagger held to one of the bird's necks.

Gracie's insides tightened. She did not want to lose another new friend the same day that she lost Kelly.

She had no choice. She reached into her bag, pulled out the shining silver flower, and held it forward. Greena grabbed the flower with greed. She held it up in triumph with one hand as Doubloon struggled in her other arm.

"At last, I have the Glimmerpetal. Its power will be all mine!" said Greena. Then she cackled her meanest cackle yet. "Heee heeee heeeeeee!!!"

Even in spite of her sadness, Gracie was curious.

"How can you use its power? It's just a flower. Do you use it as a potion ingredient?" asked Gracie.

"No, silly girl!" said Greena. "You must activate it with a rare stone that is also magical. It's called the Glimmerstone! And luckily..... The Fierce Agents of Evil already have one! We were just waiting for some foolish child to bring the Glimmerpetal to us!"

Gracie groaned in sadness. She had fallen into Greena's trap.

“Luckily, you will get to see its power in action,” said Greena. “I don’t want you to try anything sneaky, so I am going to keep you in my sight. Follow me down the path, deeper into the cave!”

Gracie gulped. Greena gestured forward, into the spooky darkness ahead. She thought for a moment about running away, but then looked at Doubloon, scared and squirming in Greena’s arm.

A pit of sadness filled Gracie’s stomach. She had let Kelly be destroyed by evil magic, Doubloon be captured, and she had even let Greena get the Glimmerpetal, which she would surely use to take over Rainbow Realm.

How could she ever be a good big sister if she couldn’t take care of her friends for even one day? How could she be a princess who takes care of the people of the kingdom if she was always making things worse?

In despair, she started to walk forward into the darkness. She could think of nothing else to do except keep walking.

Step by step she moved through the dark cave. The light from the torches grew dimmer and dimmer as

she got deeper into the cave. She heard Greena just a few steps behind her.

Eventually, the cave got so dark, she could barely see her hand in front of her.

Gracie felt a change underneath her feet.

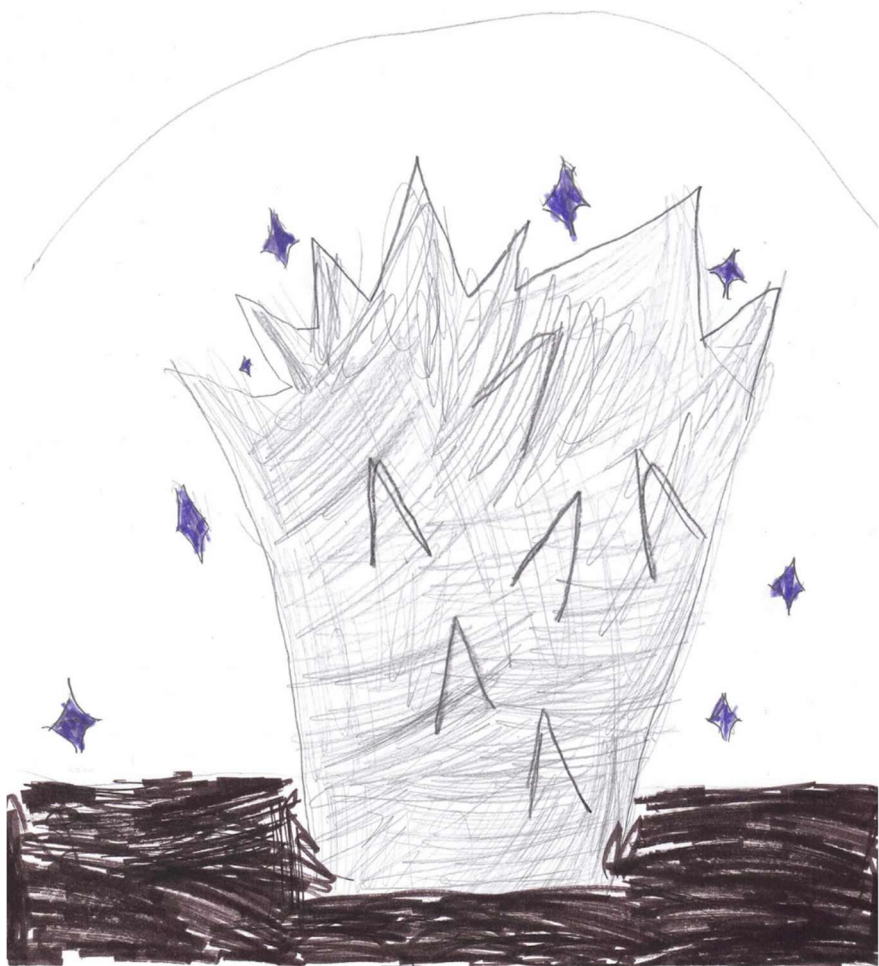
“We’ve reached the stairway into the Glimmerstone’s chamber,” said Greena. “Step carefully.”

Gracie gingerly put her foot forward and found the next step down. Step by step, she descended into the heart of the cave. She lost track of how many stairs she walked down. It must have been at least a hundred.

Finally, she found the sturdy stone ground at the bottom of the stairs.

“Keep going,” said Greena.

Gracie continued walking forward, and noticed a slight sparkling in the distance. With each step, the cave became lighter, and at last she could see the source of the sparkling in front of her. It was a giant stone, as big as a boulder, larger than the throne in the castle.



The stone was the source of the silver light, not a torch or lamp. The magic radiating off of the stone was obvious. It was silver, not like metal but like a misty morning, and jagged like a broken piece of glass.

The stone looked like it was growing out of the ground. Dirt and pebbles surrounded it, and it plunged even wider and deeper into the ground, as if someone had dug and mined around it. It reminded Gracie of a mushroom, the way it sprang out of the ground but still connected with the earth below.

The Glimmerstone took Gracie's breath away. It was beautiful and powerful like a rushing river.

Chapter 10

The Spell of Life

Greena stepped past Gracie and toward the Glimmerstone.

“At last!” said Greena. “I will be able to cast.... The Spell of Life! The Glimmerstone and The Glimmerpetal, the two most powerful magic items in Rainbow Realm, of magic below and magic above, will combine!”

“What will it do?” Gracie asked. “What are you going to do to the kingdom?”

Greena smiled a wide, nasty grin. The silver light from the Glimmerstone reflected off of her crooked teeth.

“The Spell of Life is one of the most powerful spells known to magic users. We will summon all the creatures and all the dark objects throughout the land to this cave, turn them into vile monsters, and make them our army! Then the kingdom will be ours. And not just Rainbow Realm – but the whole world!”

Gracie’s jaw dropped open. She had once had a glimpse of what Greena’s rule of Rainbow Realm

would look like. It was scary and evil, and she didn't want it again. But one thing confused her.

"You said, 'we'? Who is 'we'?" asked Gracie.

"The Fierce Agents of Evil, foolish girl. Have you not been paying attention? We have agents and allies scattered throughout all eight kingdoms. We will make the people of the world follow our every evil command!"

Greena had managed to take over the kingdom for a night, somehow escape, and now create an evil army by herself. Gracie shivered imagining a whole team of evildoers.

"Enough chat, time to activate this magic!" said Greena. She held up the Glimmerpetal and slowly moved it toward the stone.

Gracie felt the air in the cave crackle, like lightning was about to strike and thunder was about to boom. The growing magic in the cave overwhelmed her. She didn't want to watch. She cowered, squatting down and sticking her hands in her pockets.

Something hard and cold bumped up against Gracie's hand in one of her pockets. She grabbed it

and pulled it out. For a moment, she didn't know what it was, but then she remembered.

It was the stone she had picked up when she first met Kelly and thought she was dangerous. Gracie had stuck the stone in her pocket, and it had stayed there all throughout her crazy day.

Gracie barely had time to think about what to do. She just did it.

She took the stone and threw it as hard as she could right towards Greena.

The stone flew through the air and hit Greena's arm before the Glimmerpetal touched the Glimmerstone.

As the stone made contact, Greena's arm recoiled back, and the silver flower went flying in the air. Greena used her other arm to grab the spot that the rock had hit.

In that instant, Doubloon managed to break free. Without hesitation, Doubloon swooped and grabbed the Glimmerpetal with one talon, swerved and grabbed the rock that Gracie had thrown with the other talon, and brought both back to Gracie.

Gracie slid the rock back into her pocket in case she needed it again, and held the Glimmerpetal in her hand.

The idea hit her all at once – Greena had said that the spell could summon items and bring them to life. Gracie wondered if she could do the same.

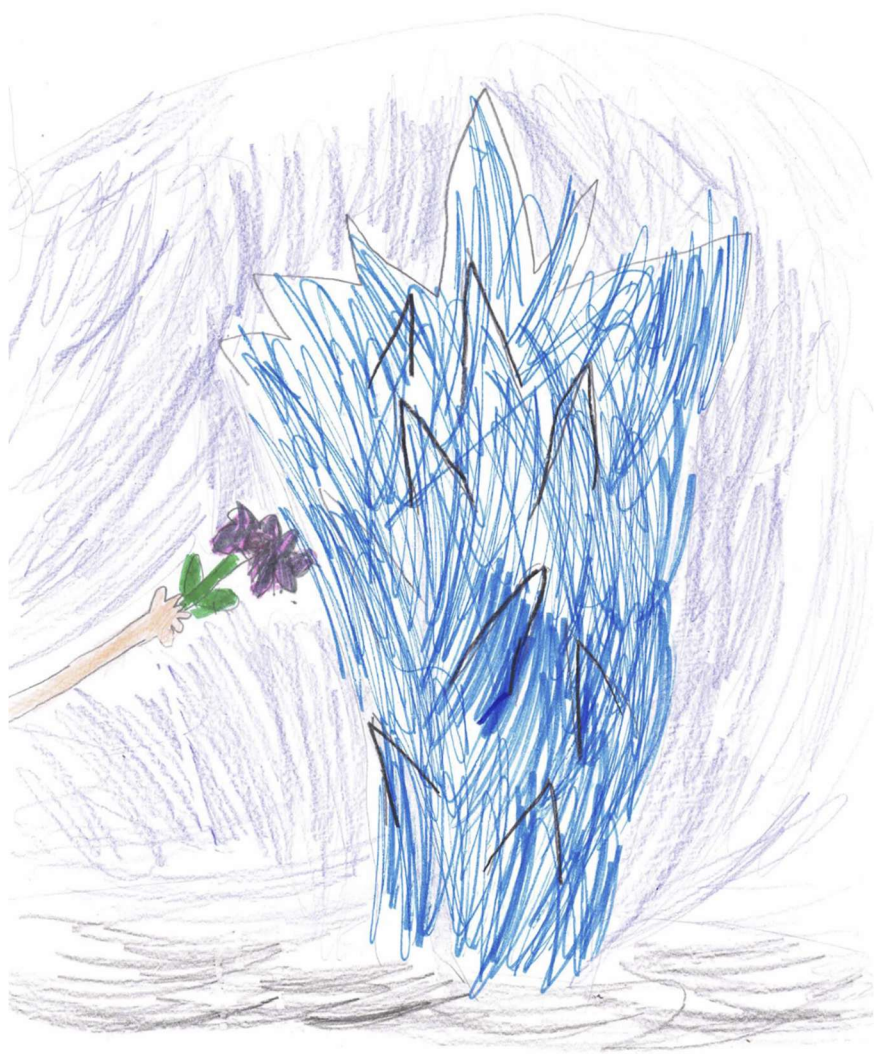
She ran forward and touched the flower to the flickering boulder. Then, she shouted her command:

“Magic of the Glimmerpetal and Glimmerstone: Bring me Kelly’s bones and bring her back to life!”

The flower and the stone both started glowing in a new way. The flower looked light pink, the stone looked light blue, shining as bright as a full moon. The light hurt Gracie’s eyes after so much darkness, but she couldn’t look away.

The pink and the blue started flowing together, combining into a lavender pool of light.

Then, it exploded like a firework. Gracie instinctively turned her head away, but it was only a magic ripple in the air. The light surged back the direction that Gracie and Greena had come from, and a few moments later, something came soaring through the air.



It was Kelly's bones. They stopped just in front of the Glimmerstone and floated in the air. The blue and pink light from the magic wrapped around the bones. It was just like how the evil orange and purple magic had wrapped around it a few minutes earlier, but this time it brought life back instead of taking it away.

The bones took a familiar shape, and the light dissipated.

Kelly stood in front of them, alive and well. Gracie smiled with joy at the sight of her friend.

The last sparkle of magic evaporated from the air. The Glimmerpetal, once silver and flickering, wilted into a dark brownish-gray, its magic gone forever. The petals drooped, dry and brittle, and fell off the stem.

Chapter 11

The Trapdoor

Kelly looked up at Gracie, smiling. She was alive!

“What happened?” Kelly said. “Did the two-rex bonk me?”

Gracie laughed with relief.

“No, it was Greena’s spell,” Gracie said.

Though she was glad her friend was safe, Gracie couldn’t help feeling a small tinge of disappointment. The whole reason she had journeyed to the Sunset Forest was to find the Glimmerpetal, but now it was gone.

A loud noise pierced the cave. Gracie turned and saw Greena with a twisted look on her face. She was angry and sad and shouting at the top of her lungs.

“My plan! My army! The kingdoms under our control! Ruined again!” shouted Greena.

She grabbed a small potion vial from her cloak and threw it towards Gracie and Kelly. It missed, but

shattered and caused a venomous green smoke cloud.

“We need to run!” said Gracie. Kelly nodded, and took off deeper into the hallway.

Gracie wasn’t sure it was a good idea to run deeper into a cave that might lead to a dead end, but she followed Kelly at a sprint. Doubloon soared just behind her. The torchlight grew dimmer and dimmer as they bolted into the depths.

She heard Greena chasing them, but still several lengths behind her, so she continued running as fast as she could.

Just as she started to run out of breath, she noticed a fragile ledge of rock. Mid-stride, she stomped on it, and it crumbled into some round stones that she brushed in the middle of the path behind her. A few seconds later, she heard Greena slip on the round rocks and fall further behind.

But before long, Kelly and Gracie found themselves at the end of the cave. The torchlight was so far behind them that all Gracie could see in front of her was a dark wall of stone. She could hear movement in the distance. Greena would be not far behind them.

“What’s that?” asked Kelly, pointing up.

Gracie looked and saw a string dangling from the ceiling. It was connected to a patch of wood on the ceiling, looking manmade rather than part of the cave.

“I think it’s something we can climb to. Let’s do it! I’ll lift you!” said Gracie.

She squatted down, and Kelly stepped forward, putting her foot, wrapped in a leather shoe, on Gracie’s hands. Gracie boosted Kelly upward, and Kelly grabbed the dangling rope. A segment of the ceiling creaked open, and a wooden step ladder slipped down, as if an entry into an attic.

“It’s like a trapdoor of some sort,” said Kelly.

“Greena’s right behind us. Let’s go up,” said Gracie.

Kelly looked nervous but nodded and started climbing the rungs. Gracie followed behind her.

The area they climbed into was still dark, but better lit by some torchlight coming from the walls.

Gracie gasped in surprise. She recognized it. It was the hallway connected to the castle dungeon. This must be how Greena had escaped weeks ago!

“This is the castle that I live in! I wonder why it’s connected to the F.A.E. cave! Let’s run and get some help!” said Gracie.

“But... I’m not supposed to be in here,” said Kelly. “Creatures from the Sunset Forest aren’t allowed to enter the castle grounds.”

“It’s alright. I’ll make sure nobody does anything bad to you,” said Gracie.

Kelly nodded, and they took off running down the dungeon hallway. They ran past the dungeon cells, almost all of which were empty, and rounded the corner to the stairs to head to the front hall.

Gracie was running so fast that she nearly crashed into someone as she rounded the corner. It was Blackwell, the worker in charge of maintenance and landscaping for the castle. Gracie was glad to see a friendly face.

“Blackwell!” said Gracie. “Thank goodness I found you. There’s a trap door hidden at the end of the hallway that we just climbed through, and now Greena the witch is chasing after us!”

Blackwell grimaced and looked carefully at Gracie.

“Did you get the Glimmerpetal?” asked Blackwell.

“Yes, but that’s not important right now!” said Gracie.

“Where is it?” asked Blackwell.

“What?” asked Gracie.

“The Glimmerpetal. Where is it? Do you have it with you, or was it used to cast the Spell of Life?” asked Blackwell.

“I used it to revive Kelly here,” said Gracie, pointing to Kelly. “I know, it’s disappointing that I can’t use it in my art project. But we can talk about that later! Let’s go get the guards to arrest Greena.”

A dark look of worry passed over Blackwell’s face.

“What? Oh no! What happened to the flower? Can the spell be cast again?” asked Blackwell.

Gracie hesitated. Something was strange about Blackwell’s concern about the flower.

“I don’t think so,” said Gracie. “The flower withered and the petals fell off. I left it behind.”

Blackwell's expression changed to fury.

"Noooooo!" he shouted. "No! Our plan is ruined!"

"Ummmm.... Blackwell?" said Gracie. "What's going on?"

Blackwell laughed. Not just any laugh. An evil laugh. She might even call it... a cackle!

"Silly princess," said Blackwell, a manic gleam in his eyes. "I was the one who set Greena free! I told you about the Glimmerpetal because we needed a child to pluck it from the ground!"

Blackwell winked at her, just like he had this morning.

Gracie's heart sank.

"No! Blackwell! You betrayed us?" said Gracie, her voice quivering.

"You foolish royals think you are so much smarter than everyone else. But we will take over Rainbow Realm!" said Blackwell.

"What do you mean, 'we'?" asked Gracie.



“The F.A.E.! I’ve been posing as a worker for three months, and none of you even suspected me! But I’m really a wizard, and one of the leaders of the F.A.E.! I’m more cunning than the rest of you combined. Ever since Rainbow Realm and all of the other kingdoms outlawed our powerful dark magic, we’ve been plotting revenge. We will make this kingdom and every kingdom one run by the dark powers you tried to destroy!” said Blackwell.

Gracie gulped and staggered a few steps backward. She felt like the two-rex had knocked the wind out of her. She couldn’t believe it.

“And since you destroyed the Glimmerpetal, which would have given us our magical army... I’m going to destroy you!” said Blackwell.

Chapter 12

The King and Queen's Big News

Blackwell snapped his fingers, and sparking red magic spouted from his index finger. He pointed it towards Gracie, swishing it back and forth as if he could crack it like a whip.

Gracie turned to run back down the hallway, but as she looked over her shoulder, she saw a shape emerging from the ground – Greena coming out of the trapdoor.

She was trapped! Blackwell coming at her from one side, Greena coming from another.

Gracie was about to scream for help, when she saw motion beside her.

It was Kelly! She dashed forward and threw herself at Blackwell's legs, grappling around his knees. The wizard stumbled and tripped forward.

Gracie didn't waste her chance. She leapt over Blackwell, pulling Kelly up by the hand as she passed. They took off running around the corner, deeper into the castle. Once again, they nearly bumped into someone else in the hallway.

This time, it was the king, Gracie's dad.

"DAD!" shouted Gracie. "We need help! Greena's back in the castle and Blackwell is actually an evil wizard!"

"I heard his confession as I was coming down the hallway, looking for you!" said the king. "Blackwell! I'm calling the guards! We'll throw you in the dungeon for this!"

The king stepped into the dungeon hallway, where Greena was standing next to Blackwell, who had risen and was standing again.

"Heh heh heh!" said Blackwell. "I don't think you will be!"

Greena reached into her cloak and pulled out a small vial filled with gray liquid. She opened it and poured it on the ground, where a thick fog formed.

The fog filled Gracie's lungs, and she started coughing. She tried to use her hand to wave it away from the front of her face, but it was thick like smoke from a fire.

"GUARDS!" she heard her father shout through a cough.



A few seconds later, the thick murk in the air started to lift. Gracie saw in front of her that Blackwell and Greena had vanished.

“Are you alright?” asked the king. “Should I have the guards arrest this skeleton?”

“What? No!” said Gracie. “She’s Kelly, and she’s my friend!”

“But the only skeletons nearby are from the dark woods near the edge of the castle,” said the king.

“I know, Dad!” said Gracie. “I went there! It’s really not that evil, just different. And it’s called Sunset Forest.”

“Really?” said the king, looking confused.

Their conversation was interrupted by the rattling of a guard’s armor as he ran down the hallway.

“Sire!” said the guard. “I heard your call. What is it?”

“A moment ago, Greena the witch was here, and she was aided by Blackwell, who betrayed us. He’s a treacherous wizard! I can’t believe we trusted him and put my whole kingdom in danger!” said the

king. “They disappeared. They must have teleported away with some powerful magic spell.”

“No!” said Gracie. “They just went down a hidden trapdoor at the end of the dungeon hallway. It leads to a cave. A cave that’s a hideout for the F.A.E.!”

Her dad shot Gracie a concerned look.

“Did you say the F.A.E.? The Fierce Agents of Evil? I thought they were just a legend!” said the king.

“They’re real, and they want to take over the kingdom. Actually, *all* the kingdoms!” said Gracie.

The king turned to the guard. “Gather as many of the guards as you can, and go see if what the princess is saying is true. Once you root out the cave, make sure that trap door is sealed for good, so nobody else can sneak in.”

The guard nodded and ran off.

Gracie’s dad shook his head and opened his eyes wide, as if he just remembered something.

“In that commotion, I nearly forgot why I was looking for you!” said the king. A big smile spread across his face.

“What is it?” asked Gracie.

“You’re an older sister now!” said the king.

Gracie gasped. “What?”

“That’s right!” said the king. “I wanted you to come and meet your younger siblings.”

“What? Did you say younger *siblings*? Like, more than one?” asked Gracie.

“Yes!” said the king. “Your mother had twins! A boy and a girl!”

“Woohooo!” said Gracie, jumping in the air. She didn’t even care about the F.A.E. anymore. “I can’t wait to meet them! Kelly can come with me and meet them too!”

“Are you sure?” asked Kelly.

“Positive,” said Gracie. “You just saved me from Blackwell!”

“Well, you saved me with the spell you cast,” said Kelly.

“I guess it’s easy to do whatever it takes to help someone when they’re your *best friend*,” said Gracie.

Kelly smiled, and wrapped Gracie in a big hug.

Doubloon, who had perched on a dungeon cell bar, flew out and landed on Gracie’s shoulder.

“*Sister!*” said one of Doubloon’s heads.

“*Brother!*” said the other.

“It seems like you’ve had quite the day,” said the king to Gracie. “Maybe you can tell me about it as you come meet your new family members.”

But then Gracie remembered that the Glimmerpetal had withered, and she felt some sadness.

“I didn’t get a flower to finish my art project. I don’t have a special present ready for my little brother and sister,” said Gracie.

The king smiled at her.

“It sounds like you looked after your new friends today,” said the king. “Being a good older sister isn’t about giving them things or showy expressions of love to convince everyone that you’re the best.

It's about caring for them and being there when they need it. It sounds like you'll be a *great* big sister to me."

Happy tears came to Gracie's eyes as he said this. What a crazy day this had been, and now it was coming to a happy close.

Chapter 13

A Growing World

Gracie's little brother and sister were named Elizabeth and Benjamin. Gracie decided she would call them Lizzie and Benny. Gracie's mom was lying in bed, and the twins were sleeping in cradles when Gracie came to meet them. She wanted to wake them up and say hi, but she knew she would get plenty of chances when she helped take care of them.

After Gracie and Kelly told the king and queen the story of their adventure, the king and queen decided that from now on, Rainbow Realm would help take care of the Sunset Forest. Gracie helped take down the sign at the edge of the thorny arch. The guards agreed to take turns patrolling the woods so that friendly creatures like Kelly would be protected from evil. The people of Rainbow Realm realized that just because the Sunset Forest looked kind of creepy, not everything in it was scary.

When the guards searched for Greena and Blackwell, no sign of either was found. Both the cave and Greena's hut had been cleaned out, all the potions and ingredients taken off the shelves. Wherever they had gone, they were probably

plotting with other members of the F.A.E. on how to take over Rainbow Realm and other kingdoms.

Gracie got a fancy birdcage for her room for Doubloon, but she took the front of the cage off so that Doubloon could fly around anywhere it wanted to. Gracie learned to love the sound of Doubloon's flapping wings, and even moreso, the bickering between the two heads.

Kelly and Gracie started playing together every day. In the morning, they would meet at the thorny arch and then find something to do either on the castle grounds or in the shade of the Sunset Forest.

When Gracie was cleaning up her laundry a few days after her big adventure, she found the rock in her pocket – the one she had almost thrown at Kelly and used to steal the Glimmerpetal back from Greena. She took it out of her pocket and looked at it. She noticed that it had a gold star on it, just like the feather she had found the first time Greena tried to take over on her tenth birthday. She put the rock on the shelf right next to the feather – something about the gold star called to her, but she couldn't figure out what.

A few days after her twin brother and sister were born, Gracie took the art project down from her room. She drew a rainbow heart in the middle. It

wasn't quite as beautiful as a Glimmerpetal would have been, but she knew it would remind Lizzie and Benny as they grew up that she loved them. She brought the art project across the hall to the twins' room and hung it on their wall above the cribs.

Kelly had been so brave and such a great helper, that the king and queen decided that she should be named the princess of the Sunset Forest. She would be responsible whenever the Sunset Forest needed someone brave to help take care of it, just like Gracie did for the castle. The royal artisans made a necklace for Kelly from beads made out of different materials from the Sunset Forest: wood from the thorny arch, glass filled with creek water, mudstone, and more. It sort of matched Gracie's rainbow necklace, with a strange and mysterious beauty.

Every day, Gracie went to bed knowing that Rainbow Realm had grown a little bit bigger and more wonderful. Not just in the places she could travel, but with the people and creatures that filled her life: her brother and sister, Kelly, and Doubloon. One day she even swore she saw a familiar lizard crawling across the castle wall, the one that had been the two-rex.



*Kelly's Necklace charms, left to right:
Doubloon's feather, a forest berry, a tree leaf, mudstone,
Glimmerstone shard, marble from Rainbow Plant, bat
scale, creek water in glass, wood from Thorny Arch*

But Gracie also knew that danger was just on the horizon: for her, for her kingdom, and for all the other kingdoms, too. The F.A.E. was surely plotting their next big scheme. And Gracie knew it would be an even bigger and more dangerous adventure to stop them. She just hoped the adventure would bring as much love to her world as the last one had.

The End

Discussion Questions

- ✿ At the start of the story, Princess Gracie is nervous about getting a baby sibling. Do you have any younger brothers or sisters? How did you feel when they were born? If you don't have any, how do you think you might feel if you had one?
- ✿ If you had a spell of life that could bring something inanimate to life, what would you use it on? A toy, a picture, or something else?
- ✿ Many aspects of this story involve surprising pairs: two of something. What are some examples of two of something in the story?
- ✿ Were you surprised when you found out that Blackwell freed Greena from her cell? How did you feel when you learned this?
- ✿ At the start of the story, Kelly and Gracie had different names for the forest near the castle and viewpoints about it. How did they each learn about each other's lives and worlds? What's something you have learned about somebody else's family, home, or culture?
- ✿ Gracie has worked very hard on her art project for her new sibling. What is a project or creation that you have worked hard on?
- ✿ The last chapter describes "a growing world" for Gracie. In what ways has her world grown? Where do you think she is headed next?

Acknowledgements

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Thank you to Lia, the O'Connors, Grammy, and everyone else who has asked us to write a second book.

Thank you to Mommy for proofreading the story and giving revisions.

Thank you to Mommy and Gwen for listening to the story and giving ideas.

How We Wrote It

This is a book by Eleanor and her dad, Dan. After we finished the first book about Princess Gracie, we decided we wanted to write a second book about her. We brainstormed ideas for several months, then made an outline of all the things that would happen in the story.

Next, we worked together to write a draft based on the outline, one chapter at a time, changing the outline as we had new ideas. For each chapter, Eleanor drew pictures, which Dan scanned and added to the story as illustrations.

When we finished our first draft, we read it out loud to Eleanor's mom and her sister, Gwen, who gave ideas on how it could be even better. Eleanor's mom also gave revisions. Then, we assembled the finished story into a book format we could print and share with other people.

To learn more about
Princess Gracie and get
updates on the next book,
you can visit:

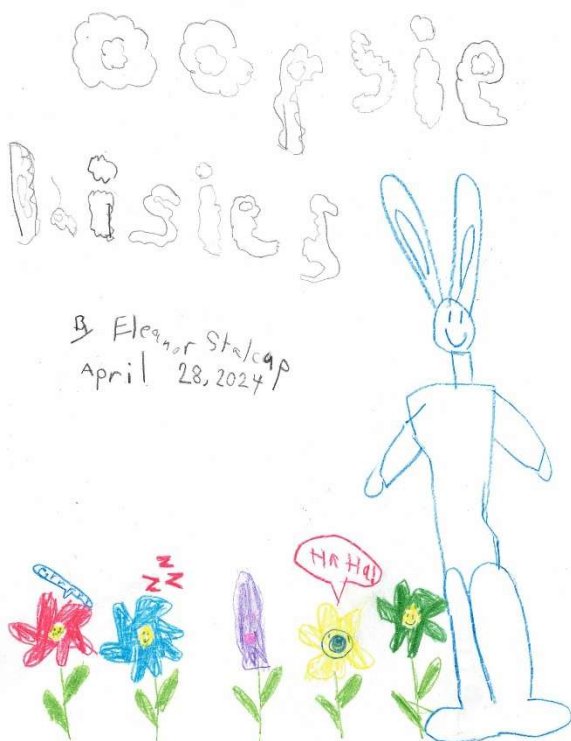
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If you liked the story,
please leave us a good
review.

Thank you for reading!

Love,

Eleanor S. → Dan



Play Poster
Oopsie Daisies
7th AFYP Student Playwrights Festival
Crayon/Pencil, 2024

Oopsie Daisies

Play Script by Eleanor

Thanks for buying our book. Here is a bonus that is only included in the paperback edition.

This is the script for Oopsie Daisies. It was written by Eleanor Stalcup in March 2024 with some help from her family to brainstorm, type, and revise it. It was selected for the 7th AFYP Student Playwrights Festival in April 2024. A stage reading was performed by Acting For Young People staff at the festival on April 28, 2024.

The recording of the stage reading is available at RainbowRealmBooks.com/play

*(The play starts in an open field on a spring day. It is empty except for a purple **LILAC**, who is about to sprout.)*

(After a moment, LILAC sprouts.)

LILAC

Ah, I love being a flower on a spring morning.

(Short beat.)

LILAC

I wonder where I have sprouted.

(Short beat.)

LILAC

It looks like a beautiful green field. Hello, green field!

(No reaction.)

LILAC

Hello, empty green field.

(No reaction.)

LILAC

Hello, *dumb* green field.

(No reaction.)

LILAC

Ohh, is that a fluffy bunny off in the dist... Aww, it's gone. I wish it had stayed.

(A moment passes.)

LILAC

Is this really where I belong? In the middle of nowhere? All alone?

(Another moment passes.)

LILAC

Well, I guess this is what life is like as a flower. Standing right here all by myself... Forever.

*(Four daisies, **RED, YELLOW, GREEN,** and **BLUE,** come hopping and making a lot of noise.)*

LILAC

What is that noise? Are those... moving flowers?

YELLOW

(in a robot voice)

We are... the Oopsie Daisies. Beep boop.

LILAC

You're ROBOT flowers?

GREEN

No, we're not robots. That's just Yellow being silly. She does that a lot.

YELLOW

ot everyone can be as cheerful as you always are, Green.

GREEN

Of course I'm cheerful! Life is awesome. I don't see why Red is always so angry about everything!

RED

I'm mad because everything makes me mad! The sun is too hot! The wind is too cold! How does Blue over there sleep through everything?

BLUE

(big yawn) What was that Red? Sorry, I was dozing off.

LILAC

Wait. I'm still confused. What are "Oopsie.... Daisies..."?

GREEN

We're just us! A friendly group of daisies that wander the world together.

LILAC

So you're moving flowers? Not stuck in a field?
Really?

YELLOW

Yeah yeah yeah! We even have a song about that.

LILAC

So you're moving AND singing flowers?

GREEN

Of course!

LILAC

Oh boy...

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED

(to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down")

Oopsie Daisies hop around

Hop around, hop around

Oopsie Daisies hop around

All day long!

LILAC

So you just pull your roots up and hop around?

GREEN

Yep, it's that easy.

BLUE

But it might make you tired.

LILAC

So I should just do it?

RED

Less talkin', more hoppin'!

(LILAC grabs one of her roots with both arms, and makes a loud tugging noise as she pulls it up.)

LILAC

Wow! I did it! I pulled out my roots!

(LILAC tries to hop, but her other root is still in the ground.)

YELLOW

Don't be a silly sunflower! You have to pull ALL of your roots out!

LILAC

All of them?

BLUE

Every last one. *(yawn)*

LILAC

I guess I'm doing this.

(LILAC grabs her other root with both arms, makes a loud tugging noise, and pulls her other root up.)

LILAC

Wow! I did it! I pulled my roots out!

(LILAC takes a few clumsy hops.)

LILAC

I can hop around, just like you!

(LILAC takes a few more confident hops.)

LILAC

(a little scared)

Oh wow... I can hop... anywhere?

(LILAC takes a few more hops, stomping particularly hard.)

LILAC

Take that, green field! Ha!

YELLOW

I bet you liked that, ya mean old piece of ground!

RED

Can we go already!?

GREEN

Be patient, she has to say goodbye to her best friend, the field, before she leaves with us.

LILAC

Wait a second... “leaves with you”?

GREEN

Of course! You’re an Oopsie Daisie now!

LILAC

I am?

RED

Yes. Duh. Now can we go?

LILAC

So I have to leave my field?

YELLOW

Yepsy-goo!

LILAC

But I’m not even a daisy. I’m a lilac.

BLUE

That’s O... (*yawn*)... K

LILAC

But where would I sleep?

RED

We use grass and bark to make tents, every night.
It's SO COMFY.

LILAC

This is happening so fast. I just sprouted. I don't
even know where I belong. Is it in this field? With
you? I'm not sure. What's it like being an Oopsie
Daisy? I mean, what do you even do?

GREEN

We have SO much fun.

BLUE

I have lots of dreams.

RED

I'm mad, mad, mad all day!

YELLOW

Silly stuff! Silly stuff! Silly stuff! SILLY STUFF!

LILAC

That sounds like a lot of different things. I'm not
sure. Maybe I can try some stuff that Oopsie
Daisies do. We can do it together and see if I like
doing it, and if I fit in.

GREEN

Sure.

LILAC

What should we do first?

RED

Well that's obvious. The most important part of being an Oopsie Daisy is hopping a lot! We already sang a song about that to you! Do we need to sing it again?

LILAC

Um, no.

YELLOW

I know! Let's do a hopping race. We can all go wobby doobby dopey, from eezy to geezy. *(Points from one end of the field to another.)*

BLUE

Do we have to? I don't think I mentioned it yet, but I'm starting to feel a little tired.

GREEN

Yes! It will help Lilac feel included. Let's all line up.

(Oopsie Daisies and LILAC line up together at one side of the field.)

GREEN

Three... two... one!

(The Oopsie Daisies and LILAC all start hopping together in a race.)

(LILAC stumbles after a few hops.)

LILAC

Awww! My roots got caught.

(BLUE wins the race.)

BLUE

Yahoo!

RED

What? You won, Blue?

BLUE

Just because I'm tired doesn't mean I'm slow.

LILAC

I'm just not very good at hopping I guess. I don't know about this.

GREEN

Well, that's okay. Let's try something else. Maybe we could all build a grass and bark tent. I bet you'll be good at that!

LILAC

Ok. We can try.

RED

Let's get building!

BLUE

...so I can get snoozing!

(The Oopsie Daisies and Lilac all start reaching towards the ground and picking up grass and bark, place it in a structure, and point at what they are building.)

RED

Put the bark there!

LILAC

Ok.

GREEN

And put some grass there.

LILAC

Sure. I'll just pull this tough piece of grass out of the ground. *(reaches and grunts)*

BLUE

Just be careful not to... (yawn) not to... (yawn)

LILAC

(stumbles backwards) Ahhhh! Ooof!

(All the flowers cover their heads as the tent falls down.)

BLUE

...not to knock over the tent when you pull it out.

RED

You knocked over our tent! Now we have to rebuild it!

LILAC

I'm sorry. I guess I'm not good at building tents either.

GREEN

That's ok. You might still belong with the Oopsie Daisies. Let's try one more thing.

YELLOW

(in a singsong voice)

Let's SHIIIIING!

GREEN

That's a great idea. Oopsie Daises love making up songs and singing about what we do.

YELLOW

I know! Let's sing the one about clapping our leaves!

GREEN

That's a great song! Listen to us, and then you try it.

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED

(to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")

If you're a flower and you know it, clap your leaves

If you're a flower and you know it, clap your leaves

If you're a flower and you know it, and your petals wanna grow it,

If you're a flower and you know it, clap your leaves

LILAC

Wow, that was really good. Should I try singing it?

YELLOW

(in a singsong voice)

Yes pleeeeeease.

LILAC

(clears throat, then sings in a squawking, bad singing voice)

If you're a flower and you know it, clap your
leaves

If you're a flower and you know it, clap your
lececeaaaaaaves...

GREEN

Umm, Lilac, hold on a second

LILAC

Yes?

GREEN

That was, well...

LILAC

Yes?

GREEN

Not the best.

LILAC

What?

RED

It was THE WORST.

YELLOW

It sounded like a mockingbird getting chased by a bear.

LILAC

Oh.

BLUE

It woke me up, at least.

LILAC

I can't hop like you. I can't build tents like you. I can't sing songs like you.

GREEN

It's ok, though. You can still come with us. You still belong with the Oopsie Daisies.

LILAC

I do?

YELLOW, BLUE, RED

(together)

She does?

GREEN

I think so.

LILAC

I don't think so. I think I belong by myself. In this green field. Nobody but me and maybe that bunny I saw in the distance a few minutes ago.

(YELLOW, BLUE, RED, and GREEN all gasp)

GREEN

Did you say... bunny?

BLUE

You're going to give me nightmares!

YELLOW

That's too silly even for me.

RED

Don't make something up like that!

LILAC

I'm not making it up. I really saw a bunny. What's the big deal about this bunny?

RED

Bunnies are the scariest thing in the world!

LILAC

Wow, really? It seemed cute to me.

GREEN

They are cute, but they eat flowers!

LILAC

Uh oh.

*(**BUNNY** slowly enters as **YELLOW** speaks of the horror of bunnies.)*

YELLOW

Yes. They are big, terrifying monsters. They have sharp teeth that destroy flowers! And carrots! Carrots! And they're scary and ugly and stinky and... wait, is there a bunny behind me?

BUNNY

Hello.

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED, and LILAC
Ahhhhh! Bunny!!!!

(The flowers start running in circles in panic)

BUNNY

Oh, are we running in circles?

(BUNNY starts running in circles, too.)

RED

She's going to eat us!

BUNNY

Who's going to eat us?

YELLOW

YOU'S going to eat us!

BUNNY

I'S going to eat us?

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED, and LILAC
YES!

BUNNY

No I'm not.

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED, and LILAC
What?

BUNNY

Can we stop running in circles now?

(All flowers and BUNNY stop running.)

LILAC

Hello, Bunny. I'm Lilac.

BUNNY

Hello, Lilac. I'm Bunna Gubba Gubba Goo.

LILAC

Um, can I just call you Bunny?

BUNNY

Sure.

YELLOW

I'm going to stick with Bunna Gubba Gubba
Goo.

BLUE

Just hearing that name makes me tired.

LILAC

I saw you earlier, crossing in the distance.

BUNNY

I was looking for a friend.

LILAC

Really? So am I! Maybe we can be friends.

BUNNY

I'm not so sure. Can I really be friends with a
flower even though I'm a bunny?

YELLOW

You mean "a Bunna Gubba Gubba Goo."

LILAC

Sure! Even though we're really different, we might belong together.

BUNNY

You think so?

LILAC

Yeah! Just look at my friends here, the Oopsie Daisies. They're as different as can be, but they belong together.

BUNNY

But they're all daisies at least.

LILAC

Well, once you talk to them, you will see that they are NOTHING alike.

BUNNY

And they're still friends?

LILAC

Definitely. Red, Blue, Yellow, Green. They're in perfect harmony. Oh, hey, I have an idea! They can prove it. Oopsie Daisies, earlier when I asked you what it's like to be an Oopsie Daisy, you all said very different things, but I think they could fit together. Try singing it as a song!

(To the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

RED

(singing)

I'm mad, mad, mad all day!

GREEN

(singing)

We have SO much fun.

YELLOW

(singing)

Silly stuff! Silly stuff! Silly stuff! SILLY STUFF!

BLUE

(singing)

I have lots of dreams.

BUNNY

Carrots, that's cool!

GREEN

Bunny, do you like to sing?

BUNNY

I don't know. I've never tried...

(Bunny clears throat)

BUNNY

(quietly)

If... if...

(Bunny takes deep breath)

BUNNY

*(To the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It", but
beautiful, opera-style voice)*

If you're a bunny and you know it, clap your ears

If you're a bunny and you know it, clap your ears

If you're a bunny and you know it, and your
carrots wanna grow it

If you're a bunny and you know it clap your

eeeeaaarrrrss

GREEN

Wow, that was beautiful.

RED

I don't even feel angry right now.

LILAC

Bunny, I'm glad you can sing, but that's not really
what's important to me. I don't even care if you're
a bunny and I'm a flower. We can still be friends.

BUNNY

Oh, hip hip hooray!

YELLOW

We can all be friends! Hippopotamus hoo-hay!

LILAC

Yes! I think I figured it out. Where you belong is anywhere you have friends. It doesn't matter if you're in a grass and bark tent, or in the middle of a dumb green field. So let's get hopping, friends!

(All characters hop off the field together, and sing together as they do so)

GREEN, BLUE, YELLOW, RED, LILAC, and BUNNY

(to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down")

Best friends like to hop around
Hop around, hop around
Best friends like to hop around
With each other!

Try your best!



Be kind!

About the Authors



Eleanor Stalcup is a third grader in Fairfax, VA. She loves to read, dance, make crafts, and play outside. She acts in Acting For Young People's musical showcases. Her plays were selected for the 2023, 2024, and 2025 Student Playwrights Festival. Her favorite books are the series Fablehaven, Wings of Fire, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, and Dog Man. The Glimmerpetal is the second book she has written and illustrated.



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