

Chapter One

Discovery in the Woods

“I’m so bored,” ten-year-old Sophie Watson whined. “Can we please go to the park?”

Dad turned from his computer to look out the window. “I suppose we could all use some fresh air,” he said, stretching. “Round everyone up.”

Sophie let out a whoop of joy before running around the house, yelling, “We’re going to the park!”

Max, the eldest, switched off the computer

game he was playing and searched out his shoes. Max loved outdoor adventures even more than video games.

“Everyone, get ready for the park!” Sophie continued shouting.

“Okay, okay! You don’t have to yell,” Violet emerged from the playroom with her hands covering her ears. Violet, the middle child, was much quieter than her older sister. Sophie’s take-charge personality sometimes came off as loud and bossy, but she had a tender heart and always looked after her siblings.

Parker, the youngest of the siblings, came bolting down the stairs at full speed. “The park! The park!” she yelled. She burst through the kitchen and into the mudroom to get her shoes.

Parker was the fearless one. Although her adventurous free spirit often clashed with

Sophie's protective nature, Parker loved her siblings dearly.

As soon as they were ready, the children burst through the door heading down the street toward the park. Their parents trailed farther and farther behind as the children raced ahead through the neighborhood.

"I'm going to the zipline," Max called out as soon as the playground came into view.

"I'm doing the monkey bars," Sophie said.

"Race you to the slide!" Parker challenged Violet, and off they all went.

Mom and Dad found an empty park bench to sit and watch their children scramble around the playground, laughing and teasing one another.

After several minutes, Max felt restless with the zipline. "Who wants to climb some trees?" he suggested.

"I do!" Sophie answered. The other two

quickly nodded in agreement.

They raced across the playground toward a patch of trees. Max climbed halfway up his favorite tree before the girls arrived below him, panting for breath. Sophie and Parker recovered quickly, instantly grabbing branches and hauling themselves up after Max.

Violet was much more interested in the budding flowers; she had no desire to compete with her siblings.

Crouching low, Violet investigated the flowers surrounding the trees. Red, orange, and yellow blossoms struggled to break through buds just beginning to open. Out of the corner of her eye, she caught a faint twinkling. Crawling through the grass, she searched for the source of the twinkle. A small fairy door hung loosely on the trunk of a large oak tree. The pink door was decorated in gems

of various shapes and sizes—flowers, hearts, circles, diamonds, and squares. The jewels sparkled as the sunlight danced across them.

“I found a fairy door!” Violet squealed.

“I want to see,” Sophie jumped down from the branches.

“Me too! Me too!” Parker practically slid down the tree trunk behind her sister.

Finding fairy doors dotted through the neighborhood was a favorite pastime of the Watson family. These small doors often came with several accessories helping to create a magical feeling for passersby. Tiny tables,



wishing wells, glittery mushrooms, and even tiny toy bicycles helped bring the imagination to life. This door was no exception.

“Look at how it sparkles,” Sophie commented, leaning in to take a closer look.

As they stood studying the door, Max caught movement out of the corner of his eye.

“What is that?” he yelled as the object flew directly over their heads. Max instantly reacted by whacking violently into the air. “That bug is huge.”

“Wait,” Violet grabbed at his arm. “It looks like a baby bird; maybe it fell out of its nest.”

The creature circled back toward the children. Instinctively, they ducked, covering their heads. With his head down, Max continued blindly whacking at the air above him.

“I think I got it,” Max yelled. “Something hit my hand. It bounced over that way.”

“Oh, no!” Violet hurried in the direction Max pointed. “I hope you didn’t kill it.”

“There, I see something,” Parker knelt in the grass, leaning in. “It’s colorful. It could be a giant butterfly.”

“It looks too big to be a butterfly,” Violet told her. “With its wing covering the body, I can’t make out what it is.”

Parker and Violet leaned further forward, quickly jerking back as the creature flew up towards them.

“A fairy!” Violet gasped. The creature now hovered in front of the younger girls.

Violet had been right; the fairy was no bigger than a small bird. Bright shades of pink and purple swirled around both wings. The fairy lifted an arm, motioning for the girls to follow her as she flew toward the fairy door. As they watched in fascination, the fairy placed a tiny key into the small, pink door.

The door sprung open, and the fairy disappeared inside.

“Should we follow her?” Violet asked with a shrug.

“How are we going to fit through there?” Sophie gave her a look of annoyance, gesturing toward the tiny opening in the tree trunk.

Parker ignored them and crawled toward the door. Reaching her hand inside, she felt around until her fingers touched the surface of something hard. She pulled the object out.

“The magic cube!” Max shouted excitedly, taking it from his sister’s hand.



The cube had a large lever on top, buttons on one side, and switches on another. The last time they'd found the magic cube, it had transported them to the North Pole.

"Wait, shouldn't we think about this first?" Sophie asked, reaching to grab the cube from Max. "You know what happened last time."

"Of course, I remember," Max moved the cube out of Sophie's reach. "We had an awesome adventure."

Before she could stop him, Max pressed buttons, flipped switches, and pulled the lever up and down. There was a sudden burst of light, followed by complete darkness as if a cloud had moved across the sun. Seconds later, the sun was shining again as if nothing had happened.

Parker looked back through the fairy door, surprised to see swirls of colorful light where there had been only darkness seconds earlier.

The lights reminded her of stars dancing through the galaxy. Curious, she reached her hand inside once more. Instantly, the entrance stretched up and over, creating a doorway they could all easily fit through. Without a second thought, Parker scrambled up and ran through the opening.

“Too late now,” Max gave a sly smile as he followed his youngest sister through the door.

“Come on,” Violet tugged Sophie’s arm. “What’s the worst that can happen?”

“I guess we’re about to find out,” Sophie mumbled.