



For Lily Grace Mutter

## Special thanks to Valerie Wilding

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# Emily Prickleback's Clever Idea

Daisy Meadows

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## CHAPTER ONE

# Gold in the Mist

Lily Hart put the box she was carrying gently down on the table. “This is my favorite part,” she said, tucking her short, dark hair behind her ears.

Her best friend, Jess Forester, stood next to her. It was an early Saturday morning, and the misty air was making her blond



hair even curlier than usual. “It’s one of the best things about Helping Paw,” she said. “Sending animals home when they’re better!”

Lily nodded. She felt so lucky that her parents ran the Helping Paw Wildlife Hospital in a barn near their house. She and Jess both adored animals and helped out there whenever they could. She carefully opened the box and smiled at the cute little hedgehog curled up inside. The hedgehog’s leg had been hurt, so its owner had brought it to Helping Paw.





Now that its leg was better, it was time for the hedgehog to go home.

Lily picked up the hedgehog and brought it over to its owner.

“Oh, Snicklefritz, I missed you!” the



young woman said. “Thanks, girls!” She cuddled the hedgehog closely and then went over to talk with Mr. Hart.

As Jess watched, something else caught her eye . . . a flash of gold.

“Look, Lily!” she exclaimed. “Did you see that?”

“What?” asked Lily.

Jess peered through the mist. “I’m sure I saw golden fur,” she said.

Lily felt a shiver of excitement. “Do you think it’s Goldie?”

Goldie was a beautiful green-eyed cat, and the girls’ special friend. She had taken





them on lots of adventures in Friendship Forest, a magical world where the most amazing thing happened—all the animals talked!

“Yes, there she is!” cried Lily. Both girls ran to the tall clump of rushes that grew beside Brightley Stream. They stroked the golden cat while she purred happily, rubbing against their legs.

“I wish you could talk in our world, Goldie,” said Lily. “I wonder if Friendship Forest needs help again!”

A horrible witch called Grizelda wanted to drive the animals out of the



forest so she could have it all to herself. Friendship Forest was full of beautiful trees and flowers, with the animals' beautiful homes dotted among them. Grizelda wanted to turn it into a dark, gloomy place that only a witch would like. The girls and Goldie had managed to stop her evil plans so far, but now Grizelda had new magical helpers—dragons!

With a swish of her tail, Goldie bounded toward the stepping stones and crossed into Brightley Meadow.

Lily and Jess followed her to the lifeless

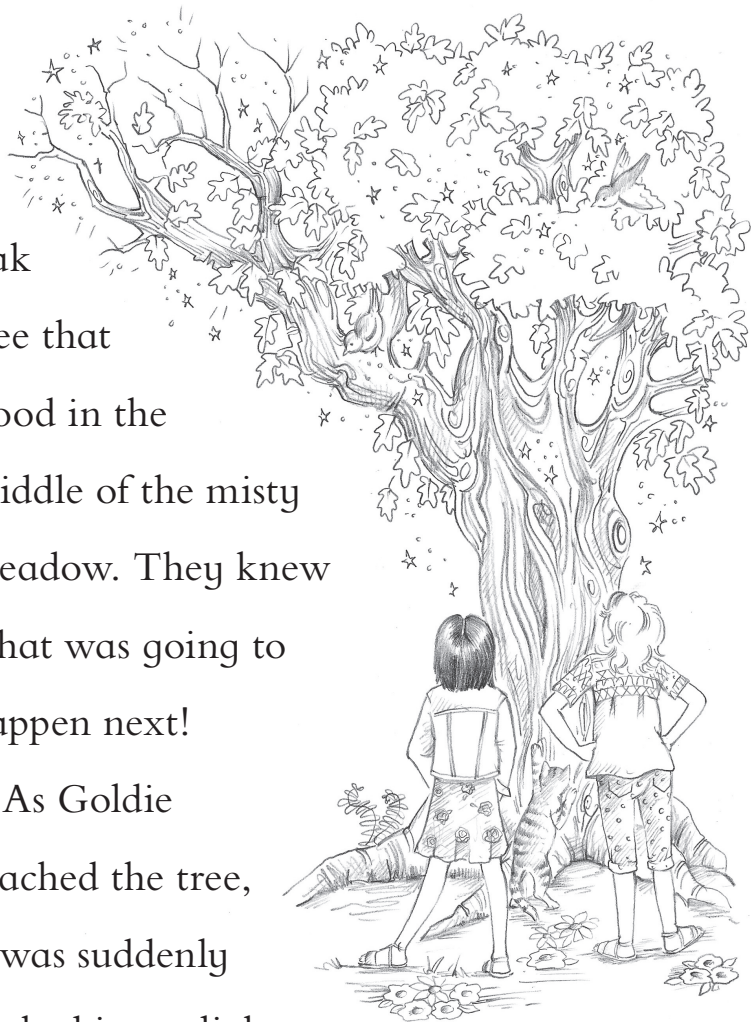




oak  
tree that  
stood in the  
middle of the misty  
meadow. They knew  
what was going to  
happen next!

As Goldie  
reached the tree,  
it was suddenly  
bathed in sunlight.

Leaves sprang from the branches and  
bright-yellow flowers blossomed in the



grass below. Butterflies and bees appeared from nowhere and beautiful birdsong echoed all around.

“It’s so exciting when the tree comes to life,” Jess squealed, as letters appeared, carved into the broad trunk. Jess and Lily held hands and read them together.

“Friendship Forest!”



As they spoke, a little door with a leaf-shaped handle appeared in the trunk.

