

A sunburst or starburst pattern of light rays emanates from the center of the page, creating a bright, glowing effect. The rays are of varying lengths and thicknesses, radiating outwards from a central point.

Magic[★]
Animal Friends[★]



For Maggie Rose

Special thanks to Valerie Wilding

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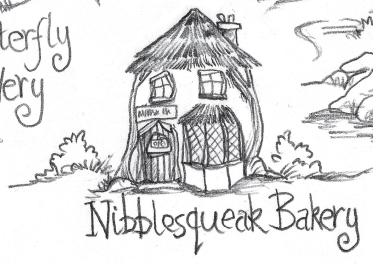
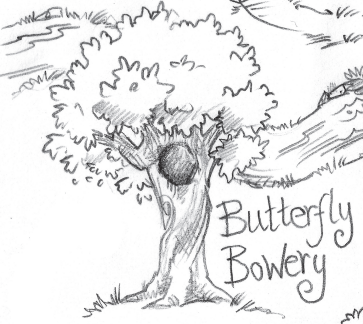
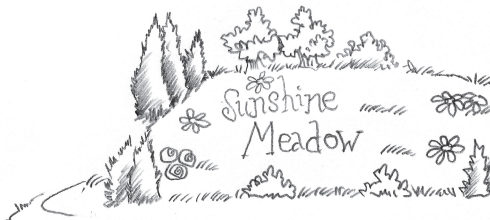
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Olivia Nibblesqueak's Messy Mischief

Daisy Meadows

Scholastic Inc.



Map of Friendship Forest



Woollyhop Shop



Harmony Hall Theater



Petal Hill



Garland Green



Treasure Tree



Cherry Tree Corner



Agatha, Glitterwing's Shop



Bluebell Brook



Sparklepaw Cottage



Slipperslides' Home



Coral Cove



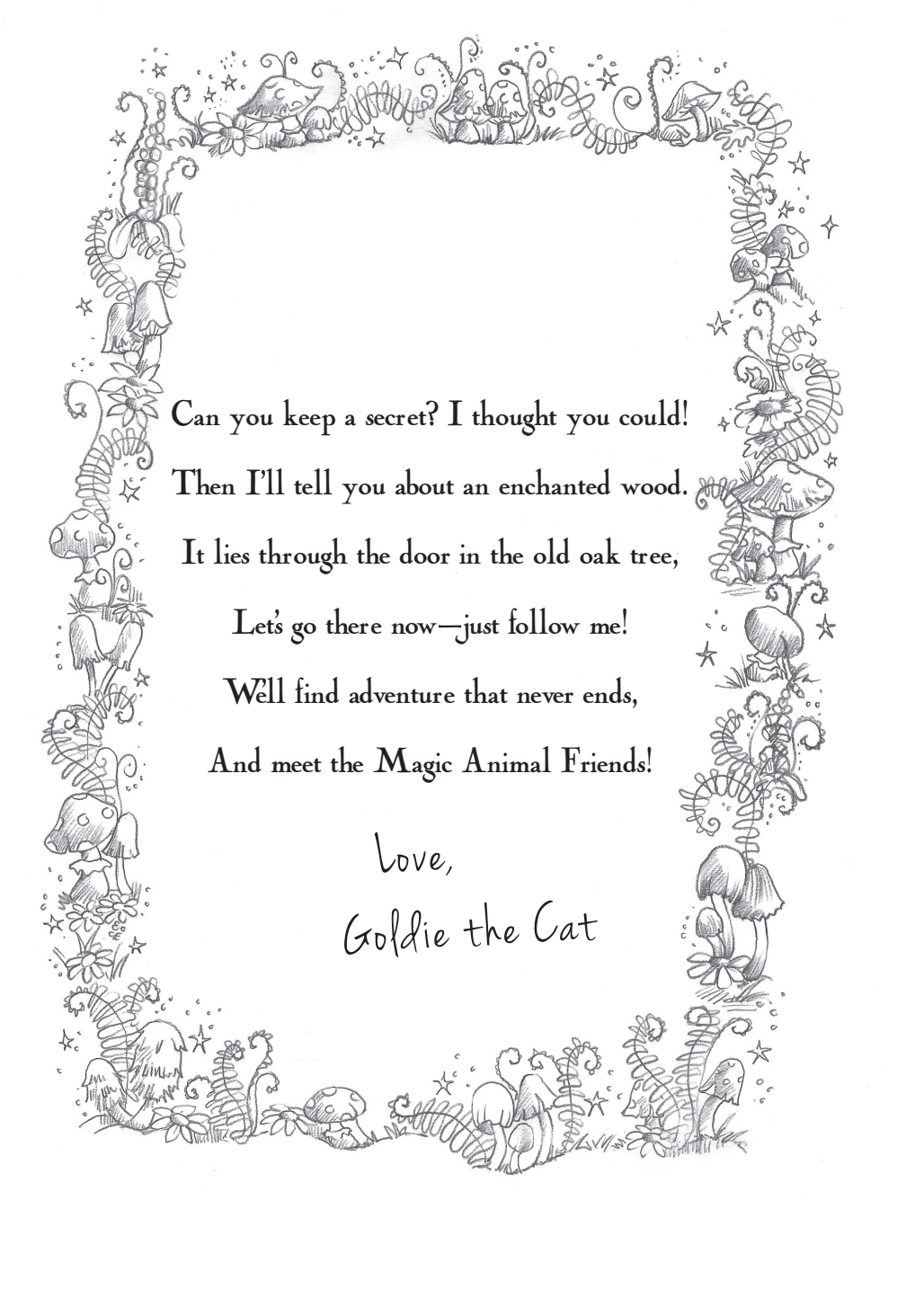
Grizelda's Tower



Witchy Waste



Summer Sands Beach



Can you keep a secret? I thought you could!

Then I'll tell you about an enchanted wood.

It lies through the door in the old oak tree,

Let's go there now—just follow me!

We'll find adventure that never ends,

And meet the Magic Animal Friends!

Love,
Goldie the Cat



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CHAPTER ONE

A Special Day

“I think these are ready,” said Jess Forester, sniffing the freshly baked animal treats that were cooling on the table.

“Great!” said her best friend, Lily Hart. “Now we can go and help with the feeding time!”

The girls packed up the treats and left



Lily's house, heading for the barn at the bottom of her yard. But this was no ordinary barn, it was the Helping Paw Wildlife Hospital, which was run by Lily's parents! Lily and Jess both adored animals and loved helping to care for them whenever they could. Luckily Jess only lived across the street from her best friend.

It was a bright autumn day and warm sunshine was glinting on the red and orange leaves in the trees. Lily's mom was putting fresh hay into the rabbit and guinea pig runs.

Lily held the treats. "Look, Mom! Dad



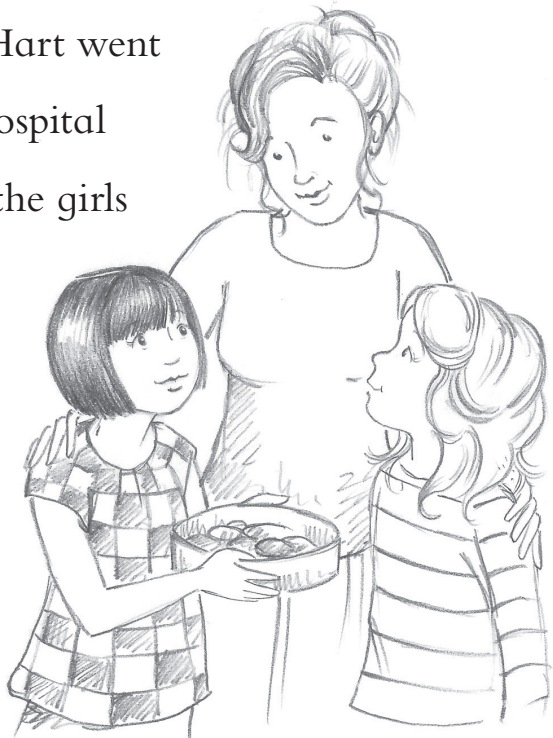


helped us make these treats from oats, grated carrots, and ripe bananas.”

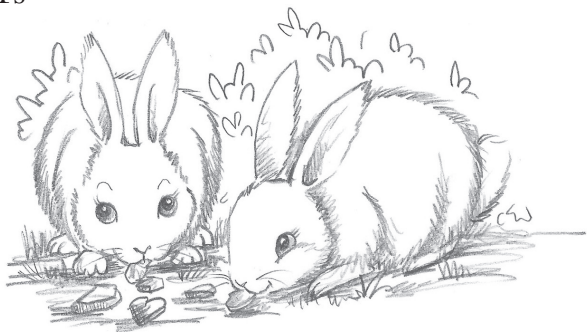
Mrs. Hart peered at them. “Mmm, they look delicious!” she said, grinning.

“They’re not for people, they’re for the animals!” Jess laughed. She knew Lily’s mom was teasing.

While Mrs. Hart went back into the hospital for more food, the girls put a handful of treats in the rabbit run. The bunnies’



noses went *wuffle wuffle* as they sniffed the air, their whiskers quivering, then nibbled the treats.



“Aren’t they sweet?” said Lily. “They remind me of the animals enjoying yummy food at the Toadstool Café.”

The girls grinned at each other. The Toadstool Café was in Friendship Forest, a magical world where animals lived in beautiful little cottages and dens. But the most amazing thing about Friendship



Forest was that all the creatures there could talk!

“I wonder when we’ll see Goldie again,” said Jess, thinking about the beautiful cat that took them to the forest. “It’s so much fun talking to the animals.”

“And sharing adventures with them!” added Lily.

They heard a soft mew. From behind a hutch a sweet golden face appeared, with eyes as green as new grass.

“Goldie!” the girls cried in delight. The cat bounded over and rubbed against their legs, purring. Then she turned



toward Brightley Stream, which ran at the end of the Harts' yard, and mewed again.

“She wants us to follow her,” cried Jess, her eyes shining. “We’re going back to Friendship Forest!”

Filled with excitement, the girls raced after Goldie, their feet rustling the leaves that lay all around. They went over the stepping stones that crossed the stream and into Brightley Meadow. Ahead of them was a huge, dead oak tree.

Right before their eyes, the branches burst into new life. Scarlet berries





hung from every bough and bluebirds swooped between the branches, singing a joyful song.



Goldie mewed and put a paw up to touch the tree, and some letters appeared, carved into the tree's bark.



The girls clasped hands and read the words aloud. “Friendship Forest!”

A door with a leaf-shaped handle appeared in the trunk. When Jess opened it, shimmering golden light shone from inside. Goldie ran through the doorway.

Jess grinned at Lily. “I wonder what adventure we’ll have this time?”

The girls’ hearts raced as they followed Goldie into the light, and their bodies tingled all over as they shrank, just a little.

As the glow faded, Jess and Lily found themselves in a clearing in Friendship





Forest. The air was warm and filled with the scent of cotton-candy flowers.

“Welcome back,” said Goldie’s soft voice.

The girls turned. The cat, now wearing a golden scarf, stood upright, as tall as their shoulders.



She ran to hug them.

“I’ve got a surprise for you!” she said.

Wondering what it could be, the girls followed Goldie. Their friend’s tail was twitching with excitement as they passed



little cottages nestled between tree roots and perched on branches. But none of their animal friends were waving from the windows like they usually did.

“Friendship Forest seems really quiet today, Goldie,” said Jess. “Is there something happening?”





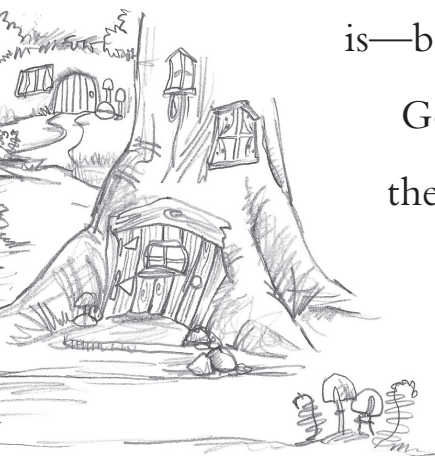
The cat smiled. “You’ll see,” she said.

As they reached a small clearing, a delicious aroma wafted toward them. Lots of different animals were crowded outside a pretty little pink cottage. Now the girls knew why they hadn’t seen any of their friends—everybody was here!

“Look at all the cakes and buns!” said Jess. “That’s what the yummy smell is—baking!”

Goldie smiled again. “See the sign above the door?”

“*The Nibblesqueak Bakery,*” Lily read.



“It’s the grand opening today,” said Goldie, “and the Nibblesqueak family are having a cake-decorating contest. Everyone’s invited.” Her green eyes shone. “Come on—let’s help them celebrate!”

