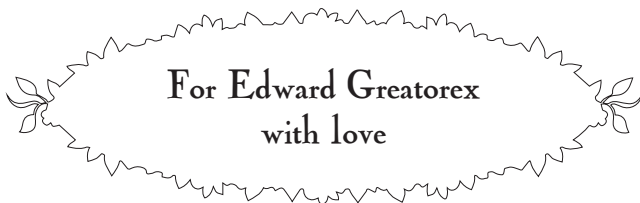


A sunburst background with rays emanating from the center, creating a bright, glowing effect.

**Magic**  
**Animal Friends**



## Special thanks to Valerie Wilding

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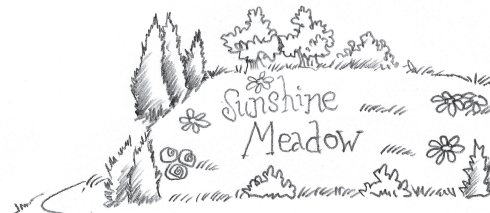
# Evie Scruffypup's Big Surprise

Daisy Meadows

Scholastic Inc.



Honey Tree



Sunshine Meadow



Mr. Cleverfeather's Inventing Shed



Toadstool Cafe



Goldie's Grotto



Toadstool Glade



Parasol Tree



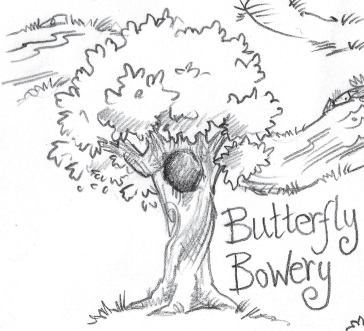
Mrs. Taptree's Library



Friendship Tree



Grizelda's Workshop



Butterfly Bowery



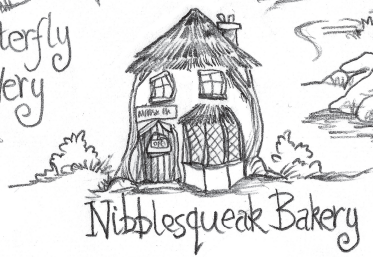
Rushing Rapids



Sparkly Falls



Entrance to the Caverns



Nibblesqueak Bakery

# Map of Friendship Forest



Woollyhop Shop



Harmony Hall Theater



Petal Hill

Garland Green



Treasure Tree



Agatha, Glitterwing's Shop



Cherry Tree Corner



Bluebell Brook



Sparklepaw Cottage



Slipperslides' Home



Coral Cove



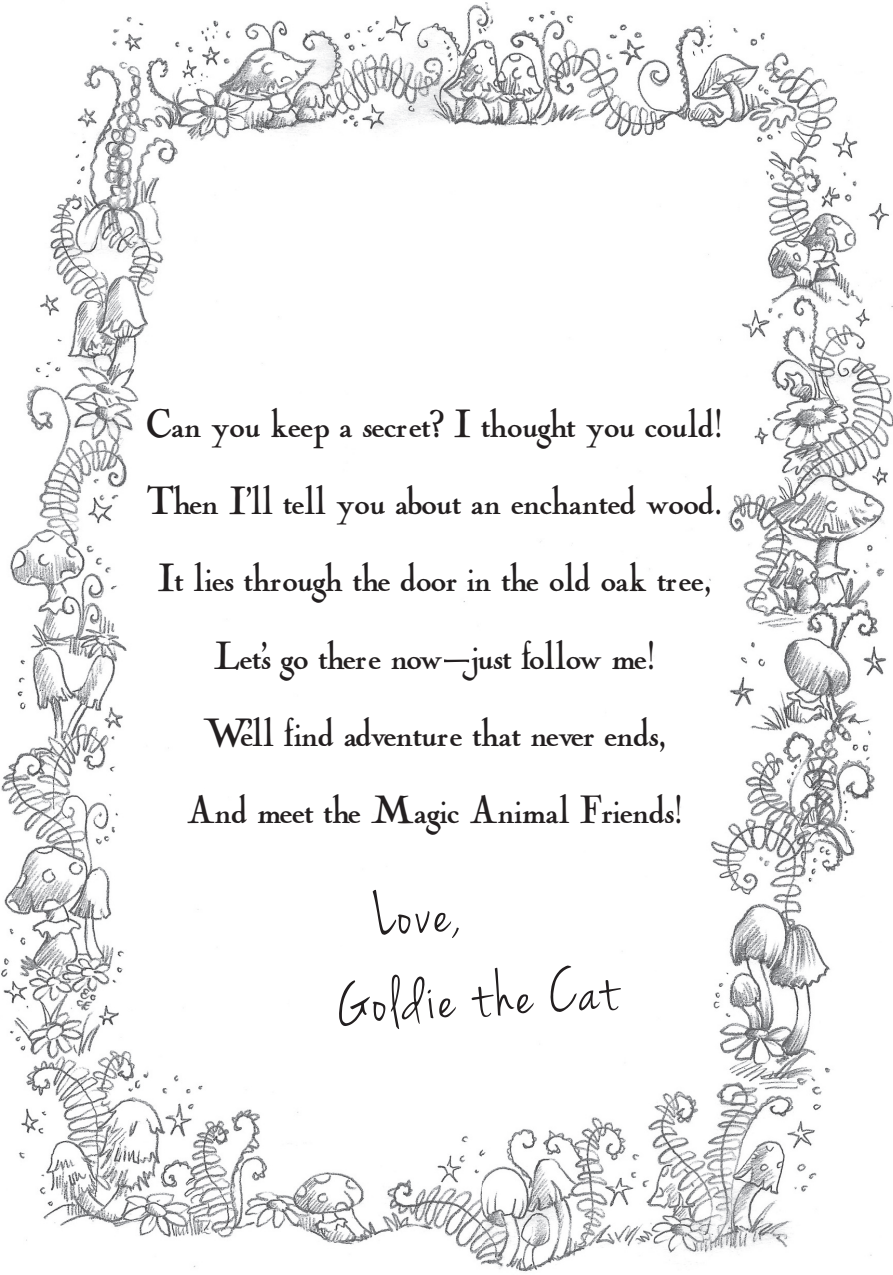
Grizelda's Tower



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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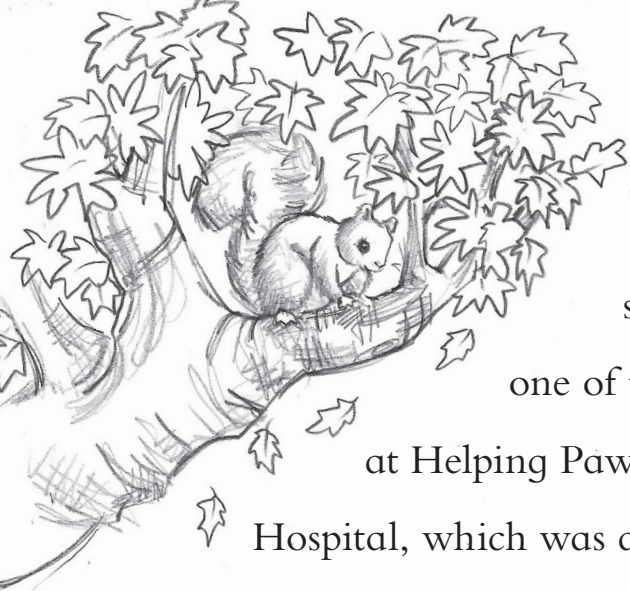
## CHAPTER ONE

# An Autumn Visitor

Jess Forester shuffled her foot through a pile of crisp, fallen leaves. “There are lots of acorns here!” she said. She and her best friend, Lily Hart, were in Jess’s yard, filling a box with fallen nuts.

“They’ll be a treat for the squirrel my mom and dad are taking care of,” said Lily.





The squirrel was one of the patients at Helping Paw Wildlife Hospital, which was across the street from Jess's house. Lily's parents ran it, and the two girls loved animals so much that they helped out whenever they could.

A flurry of deep gold leaves drifted down from the tree.

Jess caught one. "I love fall colors, don't you?" she said. "There's yellow and red and—look!" She pointed up through the branches. "There! A squirrel!" she said.

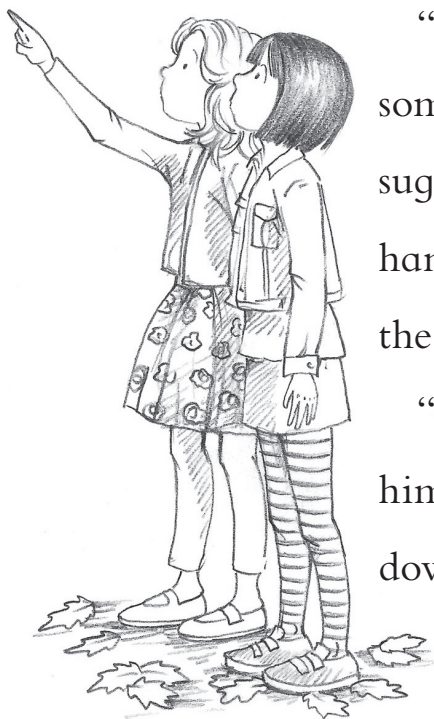




More leaves tumbled down as the squirrel bounded higher.

“He’s so sweet!” said Lily. “Maybe he’ll come to us if I offer him an acorn.”

She held one out, but the squirrel stayed on the branch, watching them nervously.



“He’s shy. Let’s leave some here for him,” Jess suggested, heaping a handful of acorns on the grass.

“I wish we could tell him it’s safe to come down,” said Lily. “After

all, we've talked to squirrels before in Friendship Forest!"

Jess grinned. Friendship Forest was a secret world where the animals lived in little cottages and visited the Toadstool Café and, best of all—they talked! One of them, a cat called Goldie, was the girls' special friend. She had taken them on lots of exciting adventures in the forest.

"I wish Goldie would visit us soon," Lily sighed.

Jess nudged her, pointing to a nearby tree. "She's here now!" she said in delight.

A pair of green eyes, the color of grass





in the evening sun, blinked from between the yellow leaves.

“Goldie!” the girls cried.

A beautiful golden cat leaped from the tree and ran to press against their legs, purring.



The girls bent to pet her.

“Does this mean Friendship Forest needs our help?” wondered Lily. “Is Grizelda causing trouble for the animals?”



Grizelda was a wicked witch. So far Jess, Lily, and Goldie had managed to stop her plans to take over the forest, but now Grizelda had four helpers—messy creatures from the Witchy Waste.

The Witchy Waste had once been a beautiful water garden, with willow trees, ponds, and waterlilies. Then Grizelda's creatures had made it as dirty as a landfill. Now she wanted them to help her make Friendship Forest messy and horrible, too, so all the animals would have to leave.

The last time Jess and Lily were in



Friendship Forest, Peep the bat from the Witchy Waste put a spell on Olivia Nibblesqueak, a sweet little hamster. The spell made Olivia as messy as Peep, and had started to turn her into a bat, too! The girls had managed to undo Peep's spell, but they knew that three more Witchy Waste creatures were waiting to cause trouble.

Goldie mewed as she turned toward the gate.

“Come on, Lily!” Jess hopped with excitement. “Goldie's taking us to Friendship Forest!”



The girls ran down the lane, hurrying past the wildlife hospital. Two baby rabbits sat up inside their pen, looking startled as the girls dashed by.

Goldie led them over the stepping-stones in the stream at the bottom of Lily's yard, and into Brightley Meadow. In the middle stood an old oak tree with bare, lifeless branches.

The Friendship Tree!

Jess and Lily shared an excited glance as Goldie reached the tree. Something amazing was about to happen!

Sure enough, leaves sprang from every





branch—but they weren’t the bright spring green they usually were. This time, the leaves unfurled in glorious autumn colors—red, yellow, orange, and gold. They glowed in the sunshine. Bluebirds and robins swooped down to feast on the scarlet berries that hung from every twig.

Goldie stretched up a paw and patted some words carved into the tree trunk. Jess and Lily read the words aloud: “Friendship Forest!”

A door with a leaf-shaped handle appeared in the trunk. Jess opened it, and



a soft golden light gleamed from inside.  
Goldie slipped through the door.

The girls held hands excitedly as they  
followed her into the shimmering glow.



A tingle ran right through them. Jess  
and Lily knew that meant they were  
shrinking, just a little.



As the light faded, they found themselves in a clearing in Friendship Forest. It was always summer in the forest, and today the warm air was sweet with the popcorn scent of nearby butterpuff bushes. Little cottages were tucked among the shady tree roots.

“It’s wonderful to be back,” Jess began, then gasped in surprise.

Every tree was covered in a glorious blanket of blossoms.

“Wow! There are so many colors,” said Lily, gazing up in wonder.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” said a soft voice.



The girls spun around. Their cat friend was standing upright, wearing her glittering golden scarf!

“Goldie! At last we can talk to you!” cried Lily as she ran to hug her.

“It’s a very special time in Friendship Forest,” said Goldie, smiling. “Today is Blossom Day!”

