

the Wish List

Keep Calm and Sparkle On!

By Sarah Aronson



Scholastic Press
New York



Copyright © 2018 by Sarah Aronson

All rights reserved. Published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.,
Publishers since 1920. SCHOLASTIC, SCHOLASTIC PRESS, and associated logos are
trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

The publisher does not have any control over and does not assume any
responsibility for author or third-party websites or their content.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or
transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying,
recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher. For
information regarding permission, write to Scholastic Inc., Attention:

Permissions Department, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.



This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either
the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any
resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events,
or locales is entirely coincidental.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data available

ISBN 978-0-545-94159-4

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

18 19 20 21 22

Printed in the U.S.A. 23

First edition, January 2018

Book design by Maeve Norton





Chapter One

Happily Ever After,
Happily Ever After Not

Dear Trainee, Welcome to Level Two! This is a friendly reminder to bring your wand and any remaining sparkles with you on Day One. Also, be sure to review the rule book, front to back. As always, we appreciate your cooperation! —The Bests

Isabelle sat on her bed and plucked the petals off the last drooping flower. As each one fluttered to the floor,

she whispered, “She’s happily ever after. She’s happily ever after not.”

Although she should have been busy getting ready for training (in other words, studying), Isabelle was stuck in a rut. Ever since the night of the Extravaganza—the big party at the end of every fairy godmother season—she hadn’t done anything, not even the things she enjoyed most. Things like chasing puffy clouds, running so fast it felt like flying, or snacking on yummy treats like chocolate puffs or strawberry swizzles. Isabelle even avoided the place she loved most: the cozy spot between the girlgoyles, the two stone gargoyles that looked like girls.

It wasn’t because she was mad at the girlgoyles.

Or because she felt particularly guilty for trying to break Rule Three C—the rule that said that *after the Extravaganza, all practice princesses will forget their fairy godmothers, no exceptions.*

Rather, it was because her foolproof plan was turning out not to be so foolproof after all.

Back in Level One, Isabelle had barely managed to make Nora happily ever after by, of all things, becoming her friend. This may not seem very magical, but Nora was a regular girl (and not a princess) and Isabelle wasn't all that studious. This still should have been the perfect end of the story, but then Isabelle learned about Rule Three C and had to do something fast. So she snuck out of the Extravaganza back down to Nora's house and left her an entire jar of magic-making sparkles (the ones Isabelle stole from Grandmomma) just in case Nora ever needed her.

Even Isabelle knew that leaving sparkles for a regular girl was against the rules. So to make sure there were no misunderstandings or slipups, Isabelle left them in Nora's memory box. She wrote a detailed note complete with instructions on how to use them. When she was done, she felt a bit smug. She figured she and Nora would be back together in no more than a couple of hours, maybe one day, tops.

But now vacation was almost over, and there'd been

nothing. No wish. No sparkles. Not even the tiniest inkling of magic. Isabelle stared at her unopened books. No one had to tell her she wasn't ready for Level Two training.

If that wasn't bad enough, her sister, Clotilda, was the fourth best fairy godmother. Morning, noon, and night, she knocked on Isabelle's door and asked questions like: "Are you sure I can't help you with anything?" and "Why do you always have to make everything so difficult?" and the most obvious one, "You don't want to embarrass Grandmomma, do you?"

Grandmomma (with the emphasis on *grand*) was the president of the Fairy Godmother Alliance. She was also in charge of pretty much everything, from training to the Extravaganza to the creation of the rule book itself. She also happened to be Isabelle and Clotilda's *real* grandmother so, no, Isabelle didn't want to embarrass her.

But, more than that, she didn't want to get in trouble, especially when Nora still had time to use the sparkles. The truth was, as long as there was still a sliver of

hope that Nora might make a wish, Isabelle didn't want to be disturbed.

Clotilda was not giving up. "Isabelle," she said, banging on the door even harder. "What's the matter? I'm not the enemy. And I'm not going anywhere until you let me come in."

If Clotilda wanted to come in, Isabelle couldn't stop her.

So instead, Isabelle changed tactics. "Just a minute," she said, opening her *Official Rule Book for Fairy Godmothers, 11th Edition* and propping it up on her desk. She scattered a whole bunch of papers on top of her bed. If Isabelle could convince Clotilda she was studying, maybe her sister would leave.

Unfortunately, Clotilda knew an unread book when she saw one. "For pity's sake, this is worse than I expected!" She picked up Isabelle's brand-new glasses from the floor and cleaned off the smudges. Then she tapped her wand on every piece of furniture until the whole room sparkled. She didn't bother fixing Isabelle's unruly hair. (She was

not a fairy godmother who enjoyed hopeless projects that didn't stand a chance of success.)

Clotilda opened the book to the section on Minimum Requirements for Advancement and told Isabelle to listen carefully. “To pass Level Two, you still need to be kind, determined, and full of gusto.” (In other words, all of the above.) “But you will also need to acquire fortitude, resilience, and laser-beam focus!” When Isabelle flopped onto her bed, Clotilda said in her most twinkly and annoying voice, “Most of all, you have to stop moping around about Nora! I know you really liked her, but it just isn't practical for her to remember you!”

Isabelle hated Rule Three C. “So it didn't bother you that your first practice princess forgot you?”

“Of course it bothered me a little,” Clotilda said. “But if you want to be a great fairy godmother, you have to deal with it. If it makes you feel better, your new princess—or regular girl—will deserve happily ever after, just like Nora did.”



It sounded logical in theory, but it felt all wrong. “But what if I’m not ready?” Isabelle asked.

Clotilda reached into her pocket and pulled out a small but fat envelope made of gold-foil paper. “Don’t worry, you don’t have to thank me.”

Isabelle tore open the package. She hoped she’d find something like dark chocolate with a coconut filling. Or maybe cinnamon cookies. But knowing Clotilda, it was probably something healthy, like dried fruit.

Or even more disappointing, a homemade card.

Across the front, it read: *For Isabelle: The Secret to My Success! Or: What you should have learned already, but probably haven’t, and don’t try to pretend you don’t know what I’m talking about.*

(She was so annoying. And smart. Clotilda clearly knew Isabelle *still* hadn’t read the rule book.)

Isabelle opened the cheat sheet. It was covered with glittery curlicues and hearts and stars—that was so Clotilda! Isabelle read:

Before you start Level Two, there are a few things you should remember:

- a) Everyone deserves happily ever after. Your only job is to give it and go. Don't look back. No matter what it looks like, you really DO get the right princess at the right time. Every time! Not just the first time!
- b) Don't take so long to get started! Dawdling makes everything harder. I shouldn't have to tell you, but sometimes happiness takes a while.
- c) Simple wand work is the best! I am happy to help you if you have questions or want to practice!
- d) Be nicer to Angelica and Fawn. They are the best in your class, and more important, they're just your age. Having friends is really important. Having friends who are great fairy godmothers is even better. You can help each other. But first, you must earn their respect. (You really don't want to be the worst!)

- e) Please don't leave sparkles unattended. I shouldn't have to tell you that sparkles are our most precious resource. So be careful with them. We can't lose a single one!

When she was done reading, Isabelle tried to act cool, calm, and collected, but it was hard. If wasting one sparkle was bad, wasting a whole jar had to be grounds for immediate dismissal to the Fairy Godmother Home for Normal Girls. (That was the place where unsuccessful trainees were sent to do non-magical tasks.) It might even be bad enough for Grandmomma to banish her, just like she had banished Mom all those years ago.

Isabelle held her breath. She was willing to grovel and confess and beg for forgiveness. But Clotilda didn't want to talk about the Home or sparkles. She was concerned with Isabelle's signature style. "Take out your wand," she said. "Pretend I'm your princess and I just made a wish."

Isabelle was happy to comply. She loved flicking and swishing her wand and twirling in a circle before granting a wish.

Clotilda rolled her eyes. “Just as I suspected—it’s way too fancy.”

Isabelle was confused. “But I thought fancy was the best.”

When Clotilda wagged her finger, she looked exactly like Grandmomma. “Fancy moves make fairy godmothers seem silly. If you want to be taken seriously, you have got to tone it down.” She held out her own wand. “Listen to me. And try and do what I do.”

First, Clotilda cut Isabelle’s twirl out completely. Then she cut her swish in half.

Isabelle practiced in front of the mirror. “I think this looks boring.”

“Well, I think you look like a pro.”

Clotilda made Isabelle practice the whole thing twenty-five more times, until her half swish was as fast as

lightning, her wand tap was snappier, and her style looked basically the same as Clotilda's.

“Now do yourself a favor and read the entire rule book,” Clotilda said in the bossiest voice ever. “Forget about Nora. And get a good night's sleep. Level Two is hard for everyone. So please keep calm! And be ready for *anything*. Understand?”

When Isabelle said, “Understood,” Clotilda (finally) left. Straightaway, Isabelle went to her secret hiding place, the cozy spot between the girlgoyles. But she wasn't going there to study. (She didn't even bother bringing her book.) First things first, she had to give Nora one last chance.

Isabelle looked up at the sky full of stars. She shouted, “Find the sparkles. Make a wish. I'm here. I'm your friend. I miss you.”

When nothing happened, Isabelle counted to ten. Then she counted to twenty. Even when she promised the stars she wouldn't break any more rules or be annoyed

by her sister—even when she promised to read every single rule five times—nothing happened.

It was time for Isabelle to face the facts: Her plan had failed. Isabelle had given away the jar full of magical, happiness-making sparkles (and risked everything she cared about) for absolutely nothing.

Nora had forgotten her. And now Isabelle needed to forget Nora.