

DRAGON GIRLS

Sofia the Lagoon Dragon

by Maddy Mara

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The last day of aquatics camp was here. The campers were celebrating by having a party at the nearby lagoon. Sofia curled her toes around the edge of the rock and looked around.

From the moment she arrived, Sofia could tell the lagoon was a special place. The water was surrounded by rocky cliffs and lush greenery.

It glittered like a precious jewel. There was an impressive waterfall that flowed over the rocks before tumbling into the lagoon. The camp counselors had decorated the tall palm trees with paper lanterns, making everything look truly magical. Best of all, to one side was a long table loaded with tasty things to eat and drink.

“Sofia! Coming for a swim before we eat?”

Sofia looked over. On the little beach were her cabinmates and new besties, Grace and Zoe. They waved at her. Sofia smiled and waved back.

Normally, it took her a little while to make



friends. But she had clicked instantly with Grace and Zoe. Maybe it was because they all loved water. Or maybe it was because they shared an amazing secret. The three girls had the ability to travel to a place called the Magic Forest. This was a beautiful land, ruled by the kindly Tree Queen. In the Magic Forest, Sofia

and her friends were no longer normal girls. They became Sea Dragons! As Sea Dragons, they had powerful mermaid-like tails that helped them swim very fast underwater. They also had strong wings so they could fly high above the treetops.

Sofia loved how she could roar as a dragon. For a start, roaring was fun. But it was more than that. The Sea Dragons' roars had amazing magical powers!

But the Magic Forest was facing a terrible threat. There was an evil Fire Queen, who was trying to destroy the seas surrounding the forest. She had kidnapped three Sea Keepers,

who were in charge of looking after the seas and keeping them in balance.

So far, Sofia, Grace, and Zoe had rescued two of the missing Sea Keepers: the dolphin leader and the sea turtle. Sofia couldn't wait to return and help rescue the third and final one.

"I'll be there in a sec," Sofia called to her friends. "I just want to do one dive."

Sofia loved diving. She had come to camp so she could work on her diving skills. She had learned a lot during the daily training sessions at the camp's dive pool. Just today, she had perfected her reverse dive. It had been so cool! She really wanted to try it out again.

The late-afternoon light was slowly turning the water from bright blue to purple. Low on the horizon, a full moon was rising. Sofia shivered with happiness. This was the perfect setting for a dive! Once again, she looked down. She had already checked with her dive instructor, Mel, that the lagoon was safe, and deep enough for diving. The water was so clear, she could see all the way down. The bottom of the lagoon was strewn with smooth pebbles that glimmered like treasure.

I'll dive down there and scoop one up, Sofia decided.

As she prepared herself to dive, she heard something. It was a song. At first Sofia thought

one of the kids down below was singing. Or perhaps the counselors were playing music?

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, come explore . . .

Then Sofia smiled. She had heard this song twice before and knew what it meant. She was going to return to the Magic Forest! She looked at the bracelet on her wrist. On the silver chain hung a white, fan-shaped shell. The Tree Queen had given it to her the first time she and her friends had visited the Magic Forest. Grace and Zoe had bracelets just like it.

Right now, Sofia's shell was glowing pale pink. Excitement bubbled inside her, but she

kept her breath steady and her mind focused. She ran through the steps of the dive in her head, making sure she had them straight. As she did so, she heard the song, louder than before.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, come explore.

“Don’t worry, Magic Forest. I’m coming!” Sofia murmured.

With a last steadying breath, she jumped up into the air. The colors of the lagoon swirled by in a blur as she somersaulted backward. Sofia plunged through the lagoon’s glassy

surface. Cool water rushed past her as she dove down to the lagoon bed. As she dove, the water seemed to change. It felt softer somehow. Then, as Sofia reached out for a gleaming stone, she heard the last line of the song.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, hear my roar!

Grabbing the stone, Sofia began swimming back to the surface. Above her, through the water, Sofia could see the wobbly outline of the full moon. It had a shimmery, silvery-pink glow to it. Sofia kicked hard, swimming up with all her might.

Bursting through the surface, she took a big gulp of air and looked around. A huge smile crept over her face. Just as she had expected, everything had changed!