Illustrated by Mike Love, based on
original artwork by Harriet Muncaster

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP
Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark
of Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

Copyright © Harriet Muncaster 2022

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First published in 2022

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press,
or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the appropriate
reprographics rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction
outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department,
Oxford University Press, at the address above

You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

ISBN: 978-0-19-277757-7

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Printed in China

Paper used in the production of this book is a natural,
recyclable product made from wood grown in sustainable forests.
The manufacturing process conforms to the environmental
regulations of the country of origin.

From the world of ISADORA MOON

MIRABELLE

and the Naughty Bat Kittens



Harriet Muncaster

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Chapter ONE

It was a grey and gloomy Thursday afternoon at Miss Spindlewick's Witch School for Girls. Rain coursed down the arched windows of the classroom and I shivered with delight. I love a stormy ride home on my broomstick!

'Don't forget!' Miss Spindlewick said as we packed our bags. 'You must arrive on

time tomorrow morning for the school trip. And make sure you wear sensible clothes!'

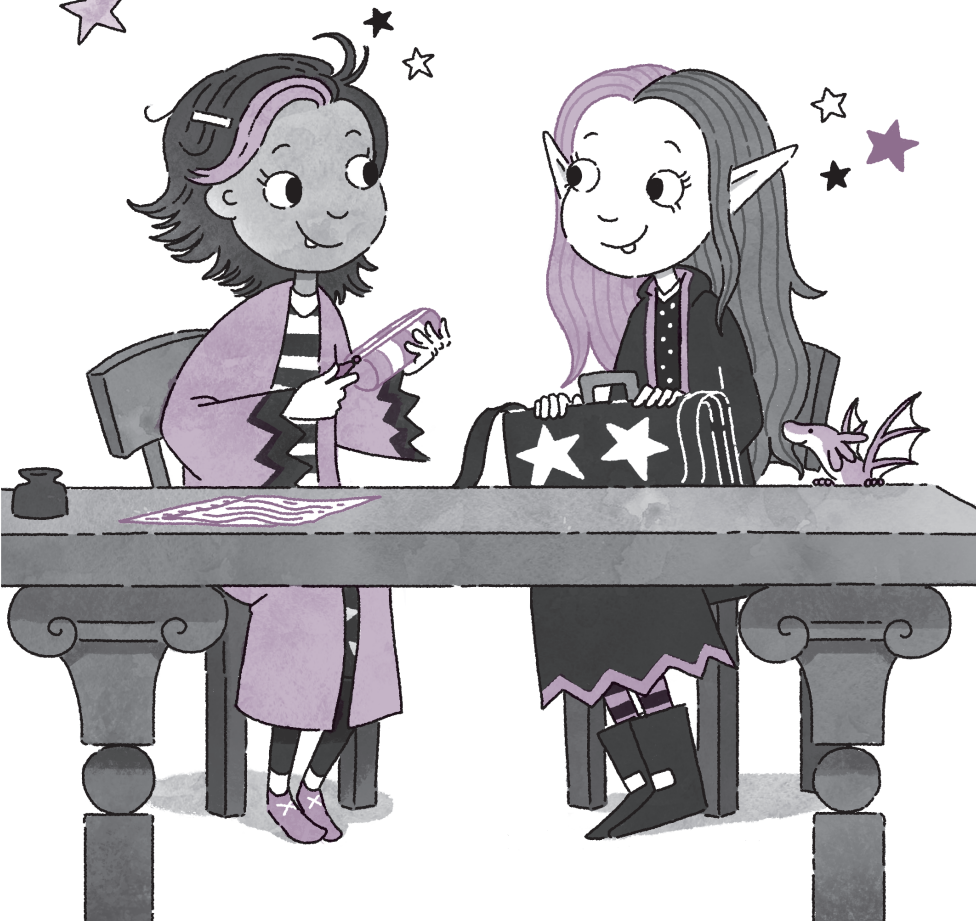
I hadn't forgotten. I had been looking forward to this trip for ages! We were going to a magical-creature sanctuary, deep in the forest. There were going to be all kinds of rescued magical creatures there that I had never seen before. The sanctuary looked after them until they were ready to be released back into the wild.

'I can't wait to see the broomstick-tailed goblin monkeys,' said my best friend Carlotta, as she zipped up her pencil case. 'They're going to be so cute!'

'I'm hoping there will be some bittens!' I said.

‘Ooh, yes!’ squealed Carlotta. ‘I’ve never seen a real bitten before.’

‘Me neither!’ I said.



Bittens are bat kittens. Baby bat cats! They have large fangs, and bat wings so that they can fly. Bittens are much bigger than normal kittens and they always have black or purple fur. Sometimes striped. They are my favourite creature of all the ones we learned about this term, and I chose to do my entire project on them!



'I'm hoping there will be some giant spiders!' said a witch called Lavinia, from the back of the classroom. 'I looove creepy crawly spiders!'

I gave a small shiver. Most witches

are not afraid of spiders. In fact, they eat them on their toast for breakfast! But I am half witch and half fairy. I don't *mind* spiders (as long as they're not giant ones!) but I definitely don't like eating them! Everyone in my class knows that I bring a special lunchbox full of fairy food into school every day. Sometimes Lavinia goody-two-shoes teases me about it, but I don't care! Fairy honey sandwiches are much tastier than spiders on toast!



I was just zipping up my bag to go home when Miss Spindlewick called me over to her desk.

'Mirabelle Starspell!' she said. 'And Carlotta Cobweb. I'd like a word with you both before you leave the classroom please.'

My excitement about the trip sank like a stone inside my tummy.

'What have we done now?' I whispered to Carlotta, as the rest of the class filed out of the room.

Carlotta shrugged as we made our way over to Miss Spindlewick's desk.

'Maybe she noticed we were messing around in potions class this morning?' Carlotta whispered. 'You *did* accidentally turn your hands purple!'

I quickly put my hands behind my back.



'Or maybe it's because Violet and Midnight were play-fighting all through the spelling test this afternoon?' Carlotta said.



Violet is my pet dragon and Midnight is Carlotta's silky, black kitten. They love playing together, but sometimes they distract the class during lessons. Miss Spindlewick is always telling Carlotta and me to train our familiars properly.

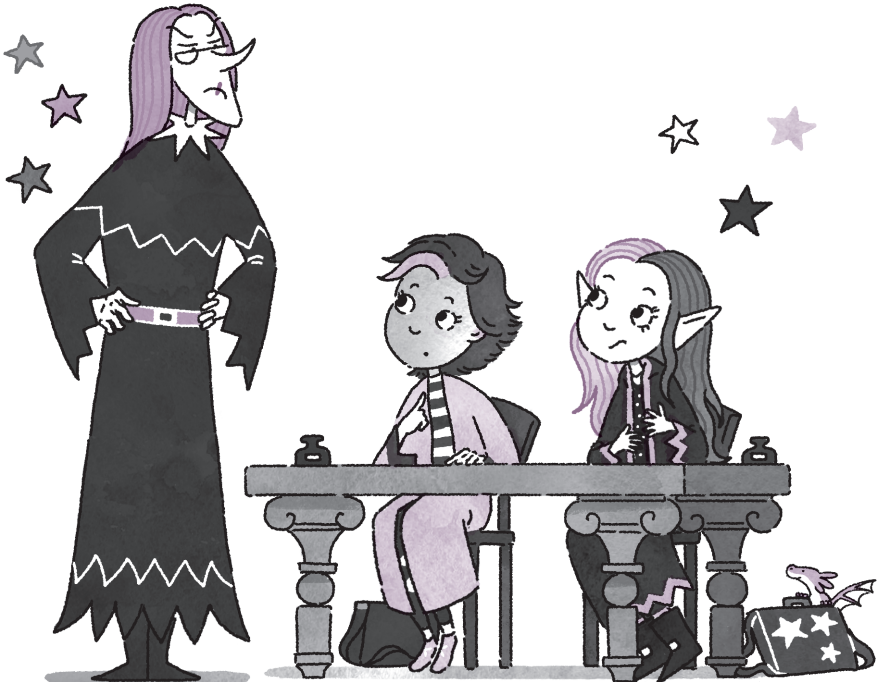
'Oh . . . yes,' I said, biting my lip anxiously.

The room was empty now. Miss Spindlewick stood by her desk looking tall

and spiky and imposing. Her eyes were like two black, glittering currants blinking down at us. She didn't look pleased.

'Mirabelle Starspell and Carlotta Cobweb! The two of you together are *trouble*.'

'What?!' gasped Carlotta, trying to look innocent.



I didn't say anything. It *was* sort of true. Carlotta and I don't mean to cause trouble together, but sometimes we just get carried away and things *happen*.

'You think I don't see you messing around in potions class?' said Miss Spindlewick. 'Or doing sneaky loop-the-loops in the air during flying practice? Or letting your familiars roll around on the floor together during a spelling test?'

I stared down at the floor, blushing.

'Well, I do!' said Miss Spindlewick. 'I see you both!'

She stared at us hard with her dark, witchy eyes. I felt myself shiver. Where was Miss Spindlewick going with this?