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Opening extract from

The Troublesome Tooth Fairy

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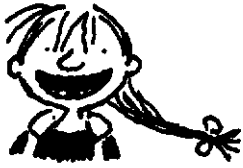
Chapter One



Jessica's granny wasn't like other grannies. She never ever wore a shawl or a flowery dress or sensible shoes to help bad feet. In fact, the day Jessica went to see Granny about her tooth,

Granny was wearing a cowboy outfit. Granny was in her kitchen but she wasn't doing granny things like knitting or cooking. She was dancing. It was a Tuesday and Granny went line dancing on Tuesdays.





"Granny," said Jessica, a bit excited, "it's happened!"

"That's wonderful," exclaimed Granny. Then she leant forward and whispered, "What has?"

Jessica smiled at her. Right in the middle of her mouth was a large gap.

"My tooth has come out!"



Jessica felt in her pocket and pulled out a small piece of tissue paper. Inside was a small but perfect white tooth, which, that morning, had been helping Jessica to eat an apple.



"That's marvellous," declared Granny, doing a short tap dance in her cowboy boots.

"I think this calls for champagne, don't you?"

Jessica nodded. She knew it wasn't real champagne but they had the drink in champagne glasses anyway.

"Are you going to leave it under your pillow?" Granny asked, while she poured the drinks.



Jessica nodded. "Oh, yes. My friend Katie got a pound for her tooth."

"Splendid," beamed Granny, "at last I can tell you."

"Tell me what?" asked Jessica.



Granny put the drinks on the kitchen table and sat down.

"About the troublesome tooth fairy.

I promised to keep it a secret till I had a grandchild of my own who lost a tooth." Granny settled down to her story.

"It happened to me when I was your age. I had a troublesome tooth fairy."



"Troublesome? What do you mean?" asked Jessica, wide-eyed and toothless.

"Well, it was all rather surprising. I must have been about six, maybe seven.





My tooth came out after a rather nasty fall from an apple tree. To be honest, I was lucky to survive at all."

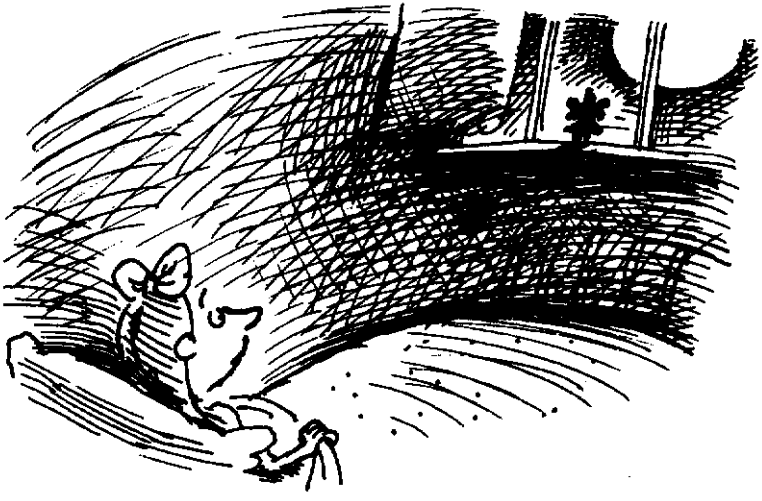
"Because of the fall?"

"No. Because of the tooth fairy. Oh, she was hopeless. A real first-timer." Granny took a sip of pink champagne before she carried on.

"It was the first tooth I had lost. At bedtime my mother wrapped it in a lace handkerchief and placed it under my pillow.



I remember I was so excited that I lay watching my pillow by the light of the moon.
But I must have fallen asleep because, the next thing I knew, the clock in the hall was striking four in the morning. I opened my eyes and saw a shadow at the window. A small, mysterious shadow . . ."



Chapter Two



It was the tooth fairy, but it was not the efficient leave-you-your-money-and-take-the-tooth fairy that I was expecting. No, this was a hopeless tooth fairy. A troublesome, trainee tooth fairy.

She was about fifteen centimetres tall and dressed in purple and silver. She looked lovely, but I didn't realize that it was because