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opening extract from

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Enid Blyton

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Meet the Faraway Fairies



Favourite Colour – Yellow. It's a beautiful colour that reminds me of sunshine and happiness.
Talent – Light. I can release rays of energy to light up a room or, if I really try hard, I can use it to break out of tight situations. The only problem is that when I lose my temper I can have a 'flash attack' which is really embarrassing because my friends find it funny.
Favourite Activity – Exploring. I love an adventure, even when it gets me into trouble. I never get tired of visiting new places and meeting new people.



Favourite Colour – Blue. The colour of the sea and the sky. I love every shade from aquamarine to midnight blue.
Talent – As well as being a musician I can also transform into other objects. I like to do it for fun, but it also comes in useful if there's a spot of bother.
Favourite Activity – Singing and dancing. I can do it all day and never get tired.



Favourite Colour – Green. It's the colour of life. All my best plant friends are one shade of green or another.
Talent – I can speak to the animals and plants of the Enchanted World . . . not to mention the ones in the Faraway Tree.
Favourite Activity – I love to sit peacefully and listen to the constant chatter of all creatures, both big and small.



Favourite Colour – Pink. What other colour would it be? Pink is simply the best colour there is.
Talent – Apart from being a supreme fashion designer, I can also become invisible. It helps me to escape from my screaming fashion fans!
Favourite Activity – Designing. Give me some fabrics and I'll make you something fabulous. Remember – If it's not by Pinx . . . your makeover stinks!



Favourite Colour – Orange. It's the most fun colour of all. It's just bursting with life!
Talent – Being a magician of course. Although I have been known to make the odd Basic Bizzy Blunder with my spells.
Favourite Activity – Baking Brilliant Blueberry Buns and Marvellous Magical Muffins. There is always time to bake a tasty cake to show your friends that you care.



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Introduction

Tucked away among the thickets, groves and forests of our Earth is a special wood. An Enchanted Wood, where the trees grow taller, the branches grow stronger and the leaves grow denser than anywhere else. Search hard enough within this Enchanted Wood, and you'll find one tree that towers above all the others. This is the Faraway Tree, and it is very special. It is home to magical creatures like elves and fairies, even a dragon. But the most magical thing about this very magical Tree? It is the sole doorway to the Lands of the Enchanted World.

Most of the time, the Lands of the Enchanted World simply float along, unattached to anything. But at one time or another, they each come to rest at

the top of the Faraway Tree. And if you're lucky enough to be in the Tree at the time, you can climb to its very top, scramble up the long Ladder extending from its tallest branch, push through the clouds and step into that Land.

Of course, there's no telling when a Land will come to the Faraway Tree, or how long it will remain. A Land might stay for months, or be gone within the hour. And if you haven't made it back down the Ladder and into the Faraway Tree before the Land floats away, you could be stuck for a very long time. This is scary even in the most wonderful of Lands, like the Land of Perfect Birthday Parties. But if you get caught in a place like the Land of Ravenous Toothy Beasts, the situation is absolutely terrifying. Yet even though exploring the Lands has its perils, it's also exhilarating, which is why creatures from all over the Enchanted World (and the occasional visiting human) come to live in the Faraway Tree so they can travel from Land to Land.

Of course, not everyone explores the Lands for

pleasure alone. In fact, five fairies have been asked do so for the ultimate cause: to save the life of the Faraway Tree and make sure that the doorway to the Enchanted World remains open. These are their stories . . .



Chapter One

Calm in Chaos

'AAAHHH!' wailed Pinx as a fierce blast of wind blew a flurry of butterblooms off the dress she was creating for Petal, who was standing patiently on Pinx's fitting pedestal.

'Silky!' Pinx huffed as she flew around the room after the flowers, 'I just pinned those on!'

'Sorry, Pinx!' Silky cried over her shoulder, but she was already far across the main room of the fairies' treehouse, riding behind Zuni on the back of Misty the Unicorn.

As Misty soared through the air, her mighty wings beat gust after gust. Although that caused a problem for Pinx, it was heavenly for Silky. She loved the feeling of the wind streaking through her long, blonde hair as Zuni urged Misty to dive, twirl and perform

all her most impressive tricks.

'This one's brand new,' Zuni grinned.

Silky screamed with delight as Misty executed a perfect loop-the-loop, the wind from which sent the butterblooms flying all over again. Pinx's face turned as pink as her zigzag pigtails as she roared in frustration, which of course made Petal laugh out loud.

'Oh, Pinx, it's OK,' Petal said in her most soothing voice. 'Let me help.'

She flew off the platform to chase the blooms. But although the two fairies tried, it was impossible to chase down all the butterblooms that filled the room. Several blooms floated down to Bizzy, who was very carefully opening the oven door. Her wild, black curls were spattered with dabs of flour, butter and spellulose, her secret ingredient for Magical Message Muffins, which she had been trying unsuccessfully to bake all day.

'I think the key,' said Bizzy as she gingerly

took out the twelfth muffin pan of the afternoon, 'is to be silent and still while I say the final spell. Muffle-wuffle-rise-n-puff– AAAAH!'

A flurry of butterblooms floated down from above, followed closely by a swooping twosome of Petal and Pinx.

'I've got them!' both fairies shouted.

Bizzy looked up to see her friends dive-bombing towards her, screamed and raised the muffin tin above her head like a shield – a motion that sent the muffins springing out of the tin and on to the floor.

Muffins on the floor were an irresistible treat to the crowd of birds, squirrels and other small animals that liked to stay close to Petal. Just as the birds lunged for the muffins, Bizzy's improperly finished spell took effect, turning the treats into a dozen *puffins*.

The puffins squawked angrily, and then waddled and flew around the room, eagerly



searching for any morsels of fish.

This was life in the Faraway Fairies' treehouse. Ever since Silky had gathered her best friends to live in the Faraway Tree and join her on a mission to retrieve its life-giving Talismans, every day was a whirlwind of giddy chaos, with friends like Zuni and Misty, not to mention a rotating menagerie of Petal's animal friends coming round to

join in the excitement.

Only one fairy seemed completely serene in the midst of the insanity. Melody floated in the middle of the room and danced, unaffected by Misty's tricks, the snowstorm of blooms or even the sudden appearance of puffins.

'One, two . . .' she counted as she performed a perfect pirouette, moved into an arabesque and then did a double scissor-kick. Without missing a beat of the song lilting through her head, she deftly ducked out of the way of Misty, who was still carrying Zuni and Silky through her favourite tricks.

'Sorry about that, Melody,' Zuni called, but Melody didn't respond.

'Melody?' Silky said.

Melody didn't answer her either. She just screwed up her green eyes, concentrating even harder, then flew straight up in the air and spun around ten times in a row – a decuple twirliette – an almost unheard-of achievement

among Twinkletune Fairies. Melody's friends would have been stunned if they had noticed, but none of them had. Melody didn't mind. She just allowed herself a small smile and then turned her attention back to Silky and Zuni.

'Sorry, everyone,' Melody said. 'I just wanted to make the step perfect.'

Pinx and Petal had finished gathering up the butterblooms and Pinx was back to working on her latest masterpiece, but she turned to Melody with a grimace.

'I don't get it,' she declared. 'If you need to concentrate, why not practise in your room?'

But Melody was already working on another dance routine, and sang out her answer to the tune running through her head: 'I dance my best when I'm happy, and I'm at my happiest when I'm with all of you.'

Bizzy used her foot to close the oven door on her latest muffin attempt and then grabbed a puffin, adding it to the squawking foursome

already wriggling in her arms.

'But aren't we a Dilly of Decided Distractions?' she asked.

As if to prove her point, a puffin squirmed out of her grasp and flew straight at Melody, who grabbed it by its wings.

'You're not *very* distracting,' Melody declared, incorporating the puffin into her dance by spinning it twice around before giving it a deep dip. 'Besides,' she continued, twirling the puffin back to Bizzy, 'I can do anything I set my mind to.'

There was something in Melody's voice as she spoke that made Silky pay attention. It was a determination. Silky had heard it in her friend before, even when they were kids, but Melody had such a happy-go-lucky nature that it was easy to forget this other side of her. Intrigued, Silky flew off Misty's back to take a closer look. She saw the same Melody as always: long orange ponytail, open green eyes

and that straight-backed stance that Silky had always attributed to years of dancing. But now that she thought about it, maybe Melody's posture wasn't just training. Maybe it was a sign of her inner steel.

Silky smiled, looking at her friend with new admiration, but before she could say anything, there was a knock at the door. Silky opened it to reveal an enormous head teetering on a tiny body. The head was dominated by a shockingly large nose that ran all the way from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin, and two radar-dish ears that rotated quickly, picking up every sound within range. This was Cluecatcher, and there was only one reason why he would show up at the treehouse with such an anxious look in his eight eyes. Silky lit up with excitement.

'There's a new Land coming to the top of the Tree!' she gasped.

A wrinkled old woman cloaked in black



stepped out from behind Cluecatcher.

'Yes, there is,' Witch Whisper confirmed.

She stepped inside with Cluecatcher as all the other fairies stopped what they were doing to gather around.

'It's the Land of Music,' Witch Whisper

continued, 'and its Talisman is the Enchanted Harp.'

Melody gasped audibly.

'The Land of Music?' she cried. 'But I can't –'

Melody suddenly seemed to realise that everyone was looking at her in concern. She forced a smile and tried to sound positive.

'I can't wait!' she continued. 'I've always *dreamed* of visiting the Land of Music.'

She must have sounded convincing as everyone turned back to Witch Whisper. Everyone except Silky. Melody smiled wider to show her friend that she was fine.

'You all understand what's at stake,' Witch Whisper continued. 'The Talismans that tie the Faraway Tree to each Land of the Enchanted World must be returned to our Vault. They are the Tree's life force. Without them, the Tree will die. And if they fall into the wrong hands . . .'

'*Talon's* hands,' Pinx interrupted venomously.

She still hadn't forgiven the evil Troll for ruining the dress that she had made for Princess Twilleria's Sweet Centennial Ball.

'He'll be after the Harp,' Witch Whisper warned. 'He's desperate to control the gateway to the Enchanted World.'

DING!

'Oh!' Bizzy cried, and zipped back to the oven, where she gingerly removed the muffin tin, closed her eyes and concentrated, chanting, 'Muffle-wuffle-rise-n-puffle!'

POOF! The muffins puffed up to twice their size.

'It worked!' Bizzy cheered. 'And now we can finally read our Majorly Monumental Magic Muffin Message!'

She ripped open a piping-hot muffin and pulled out a small scroll from inside. Bizzy managed to unroll the warm note and read it aloud: 'Tread lightly where you don't belong, lest sorrow be your only song.'

Pinx wrinkled up her nose.

'What does that mean?' she asked.

'It means . . .' Melody began nervously, but an excited Bizzy cut her off.

'It means we shouldn't be Hopelessly Hapless Homebodies when we have a Massively Momentous Mission in the Land of Music!' she cried. 'Let's go!'

Bizzy flew off towards the Ladder at the top of the Tree, with the other fairies following close behind. Melody came last, and when Silky turned, she could see that her friend's normally pale face had turned absolutely white. Silky flew close to Melody.

'Is everything OK?' she asked gently.

As soon as Melody heard Silky's concern, she banished all doubt from her face.

'It's great!' Melody beamed. 'I'm right behind you.'

But Silky wasn't reassured. Something about the Land of Music was bothering



Melody horribly, but *what*? What could be so terrible that Melody couldn't share it with her closest friends?