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Opening extract from

Third Term at L'Etoile

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Welcome back, Story-seeker, to the third term at L'Etoile.

How we've missed you over the Easter Holidays! You'll be happy to know that Molly, Maria, Pippa and the rest of the L'Etoile gang are back for more friendship, fun and mischief.

As they reach the end of their first year at L'Etoile, the girls are filled with excitement and apprehension about what lies ahead. Molly's got that huge Warner Brothers film audition, the dreaded Lucifette is back from LA with an even more hideous sidekick to stir up a whole heap of trouble, the pressure's on for the first years to raise more money than ever before at the L'Etoile annual charity event and don't forget the nightmare of exam week.

Will our fabulous friends get through another term without ending up in hot water? There's only one way to find out, Story-seeker, so what are you waiting for? Turn the page and get yourselves back to L'Etoile!

Love,
Holly and Kelly Willoughby x

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One Good Turn Deserves Another



Molly stood shivering with cold and nerves at the top of the casting studio steps in London. She couldn't believe the day had finally arrived for her big audition for a Warner Brothers film.

'Come o-o-n, Mimi!' she said to herself, breathing out a cloud of chilly morning air. 'Where *are* you?'

Much to Molly's dismay the ever-obliging Eddie, her dad's chauffeur, had dropped Molly off at the studio only twenty minutes earlier, and then, at Maria's request, had whisked her away on a mystery errand. Molly was totally fed up. She always needed Maria near her to steady her nerves when she was about to face something really important or scary.

How could her twin sister leave her this morning, of all mornings?

Jiggling on the spot, she checked her watch for the millionth time. 'I can't believe she's been gone this long. I bet she's off to get some pointless cable or adapter or something for one of her many gadgets,' she said out loud. Just as Molly was about to lose her temper and start ranting about responsibilities and priorities, she was distracted by a shadow shuffling in the doorway at the end of the studio block.

Trying her best not to look as if she was staring, she started pacing up and down the steps so that she could get a better look. She was sure it must be one of those urban foxes she'd been reading about. Suddenly a large, round, hairy face peered out from a pile of blankets and newspapers. *Oh my gosh, it's not a fox at all! He must be absolutely freezing*, she thought to herself. If she felt cold after only twenty or so minutes hanging around outside, how must he feel after an entire night? Not caring that she was so obviously staring now, she watched the man go about his business, and was shocked to see how passer-by after passer-by walked past him without even looking in his direction. It was as though he was invisible, as insignificant as a dirty old carrier bag lying in the

gutter. Suddenly Molly gave an enormous sneeze, and the man looked right at her.

'Bless you!' he grunted in a low, gravelly voice.

Molly was mortified. How could this poor man with nothing still be so gracious?

'Thank you, sir,' she answered loud enough for him to hear her.

All of a sudden, the Fitzfoster Bentley pulled up in front of the studio steps.

'Moll! What are you still standing outside for?' Maria asked urgently as she threw open the car door. 'Get in at once! You've already got the sniffles and it's hardly a summer's day out here. Think of your voice.'

'Mimi, where have you been? Five minutes you said! That was nearly half an hour ag—' Molly stopped dead in her tracks as she saw the gorgeous, fresh-faced Pippa emerging from the other side of the car.

'You heard your sister, Molly Fitzfoster! Now do as you're told. You have the audition of a lifetime ahead of you.'

'Pippa!' Molly squealed, running over to hug her. 'What are you . . . how did you . . . but what about . . . ?'

'Sur-prise!' Maria said, relieved that Molly was no longer cross with her for being late. 'You've been so nervous about today, Moll, that Pippa and I thought

two heads might be better than one to calm you down this morning, so we've been plotting all week how to get her here in time.'

'Oh, Molly, it's totally my fault we're late,' said Pippa. 'My first two trains were cancelled for some rubbish reason or another. I knew you'd both be hopping mad, but I couldn't do a thing about it. Poor Mum had to listen to me moaning the whole way.'

Molly smiled her biggest smile, happy to have her favourite girls with her on this important day. 'Oh, don't worry about that now. I was just feeling sorry for myself. I can't tell you how wicked it is to have you both here. Even my butterflies have butterflies!' She clutched her tummy and winced.

'Poor Sally was desperate to come along too, Moll,' Maria said. 'But we just couldn't risk her being seen as part of Team Molly and bumping into Lucifette at the audition.'

'Don't remind me!' Molly groaned. 'I still can't believe she's managed to wangle herself the same casting. WATC?'



We're sure you're used to Molly's little Mollyisms by now, Story-seeker, but just in case, WATC = what are the chances.



'Have you seen the little Hollywood witch yet?' Pippa asked, looking glum at the thought of her first run-in with Lucinda since exposing her as a complete fraud in front of everyone at the Christmas Gala two terms ago.

'Not yet, thank goodness, but I'll bet she's on her way, bringing those thunderous black clouds with her,' Molly answered, looking up at the cluster of rain clouds making their way across the blue skies above the studio. Pippa and Maria giggled.

Lucinda's return from LA had been playing on the girls' minds. They were all dreading it. Not because they were scared of her . . . well, at least the twins weren't, but they couldn't speak for the rest of their year group. No one could face another term of treading on eggshells, waiting for it to be their turn to be bullied by Lucinda. The second term at L'Etoile, when Lucinda had been in LA, had been such a happy time for them. They'd had fun, without any of the spiteful misery.

'Come on then, *Mollywood*. Let's get this show on the road. You can't put this off forever,' said Maria with a wink.

As Molly turned to take her sister's hand, secretly loving *Mollywood* as a nickname, she remembered the

homeless man, and looked over to see him watching them.

'Just a minute,' Molly said. 'There's something I've got to do quickly.'

She raced down the steps to the car and tapped on the window.

'Eddie, have you got any money that I could borrow, please? I'll pay you back, I promise.'

Eddie popped open the glove compartment and, as luck would have it, a ten-pound note came fluttering out.

'Perfect!' Molly said and bolted over the road to Café Graceybelle.

'What *is* she up to, Maria?' asked Pippa, confused. One minute they were catching up and next, Molly had run off on a mission!

Maria smiled. She could read her sister like a book and as soon as she'd witnessed Molly lock eyes with that man, she knew exactly what she was up to.

'You'll see, Pips. You're about to see why Molly is our mother's daughter,' she said.



Every moment she had without her girls, Linda Fitzfoster spent fundraising for various charities, Story-seeker. She truly had the kindest heart and used her family's wealth and influence for those in need.



Moments later, Molly came out of Café Graceybelle with a large steaming cup and a bulging paper bag. Being careful not to slop any tea, she made a beeline for the man. She slowed down as she got closer to him. After all, he was a stranger and you couldn't be too careful. But Molly couldn't help herself. She just wanted to try and help him warm up, and the fact that he'd said *bless you* when she'd sneezed gave her every confidence that there was a nice person underneath all that street dirt.

'E-e-excuse me, sir,' she said timidly. 'I wasn't sure if you have sugar in tea so there's some sachets in the bag – and something to eat too.'

The man seemed to have difficulty focusing on her, as though his eye-sight was bad. Eventually he smiled up at her and took the bag.

'Two sugars,' he said gruffly, taking a slurp of tea. And 'Ahhhhh,' as he devoured a crumpet dripping with butter.

Molly was slightly surprised at how tubby he was for someone who seemed to be so hungry, and thought how ordinary he might look after a shower and in some clean clothes. Feeling a bit braver, she asked his name.

'Calum,' said the man in the same gruff way.

'It's very nice to meet you, Calum,' Molly said. She'd been thinking how it must feel if no one even

cared enough to ask your name. As she turned to walk away, she looked back and gently placed the change from the ten-pound note on his blanket.

'It's not much, I know. But might do for a few more crumpets. Good luck, Calum,' she said and ran off to join Maria and Pippa.

'Molly, you are too cute!' Maria said.

'Yes, that was such a lovely thing you did. You've inspired me. I'm going to try and be much more thoughtful towards others this term,' Pippa said.

'And to think you'll be ten pounds down on your next *www.looklikeastar.com* order! Now that's what I call a sacrifice!' Maria joked.

Molly blushed and swiped her sister playfully with her script, secretly feeling very pleased with herself.

All of a sudden a big black limousine came careering round the corner and screeched to a halt.

'LU-CI-FETTE!' the trio groaned in unison, taking a step back into the shadows so they could watch without being seen. The three girls shook their heads in despair as they watched the little Hollywood princess step out of the car.

'Oh my days, look at her hair!' Molly blurted out. 'She looks like a skunk with those platinum blonde streaks. I've never seen anything like it bef—' But

before she could say another word, the long-suffering Marciano driver opened the other passenger door to what could only be described as Lucinda's evil twin. The second person had the same dreadful streaked hair-do, but was shorter and had a meaner face than Lucinda – if that was possible!

'Someone tell me I'm not actually seeing what I'm seeing! Are there really two of them?' Pippa gasped. 'Has she been cloned? Is that what they're doing in LA these days?'

'I think, girls, you're looking at – to quote lovely Sally – the *horror-hog*, that is, Lavinia Wright, daughter of the infamous American talk-show host, Tallulah Wright. Sally told us at the end of last term. Don't you remember?' Maria said calmly.

'I remember it. I'm looking at it. But I don't believe it. At least I don't think I want to believe it!' Pippa said with a gulp.



Pippa, Story-seeker, was secretly terrified of Lucinda since the Christmas Gala exposure and had been dreading her return. Seeing not one, but two Lucindas arrive had almost given her a heart attack. She knew she had to get a grip before term started, or they'd smell her fear and take her down!



'Oy!' came a booming voice from down the street.

Molly grabbed her sister's shoulder in shock as they saw Calum swaying towards them, waving his fists. He'd been drenched from head to toe by muddy water as the Marciano car had sped off.

'Oy, I said!' Calum shouted again, pointing to his soaking wet clothes. 'Do you know how cold it gets, sleeping outside overnight? Who do you think you are?'

'Do you hear something, Lavinia darling?' Lucinda rudely cut across Calum.

'I most certainly cannot *hear* anything, Lucie sweetie, but I can certainly SMELL something!' Lavinia replied, looking directly at Calum and holding her nose. 'Come on, darling, let's get inside, before we catch some disease or other from this tramp.'

And with that, the two disgusting brats swooshed around on their badly fitting kitten-heels and headed for the steps.

The twins and Pippa were astounded. Maria had to physically hold Molly back from jumping to Calum's defence.

'Not now, Molly, this is his battle. You can't fight them all – especially not this morning. Quick, slip inside before those two get there and find a quiet spot

to get your head straight for your audition . . . we're right behind you, Moll . . . GO!' Maria ordered.

As Molly disappeared into the studio, she and Pippa shrank back even further against the wall so as not to come into direct contact with Lucinda and Lavinia. They just couldn't face it. Not yet. Not until they'd had an entire car journey to L'Etoile to dissect and discuss exactly what they were dealing with – now that the enemy had doubled.

'We'll be ready for them, Pips. Don't you worry,' Maria said confidently, noticing Pippa's distress.

'What?' Pippa said, distracted.

'Lucifette and Lavatory,' Maria said with a giggle, amused by her new nickname for Lavinia. 'They won't get the better of us, I promise.'

Pippa grinned for the first time since the limo had arrived.

'Luci and Lavi! Love it! Bring it on, Mimi!'

