



Gabriella
the
Snow Kingdom
Fairy

For *Alex Goodfellow*, with lots of love
Special thanks to Sue Mongredien

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Rainbow Magic Limited, c/o HIT Entertainment,
830 South Greenville Avenue, Allen, TX 75002-3320.

ISBN 978-0-545-10614-6

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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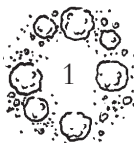
First printing, September 2009



“We’re going to try out the slopes,” Kirsty Tate called to her mom. “We’ll be back for lunch.”

“See you later!” Rachel Walker shouted to her mom and dad.

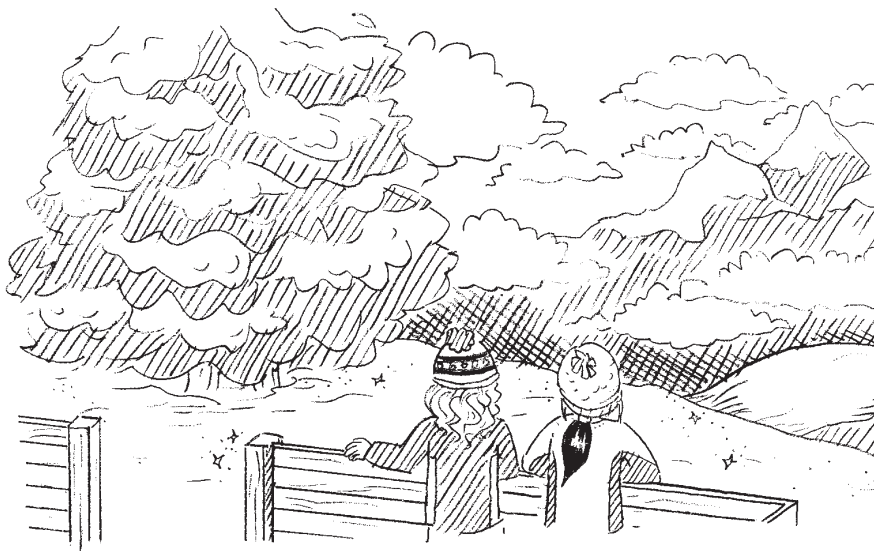
The two friends grinned at each other as their parents called back good-byes. Both girls were wearing new ski outfits,





knitted hats, and gloves. Kirsty pushed open the door of the ski lodge, and they stepped out into the bright sunshine.

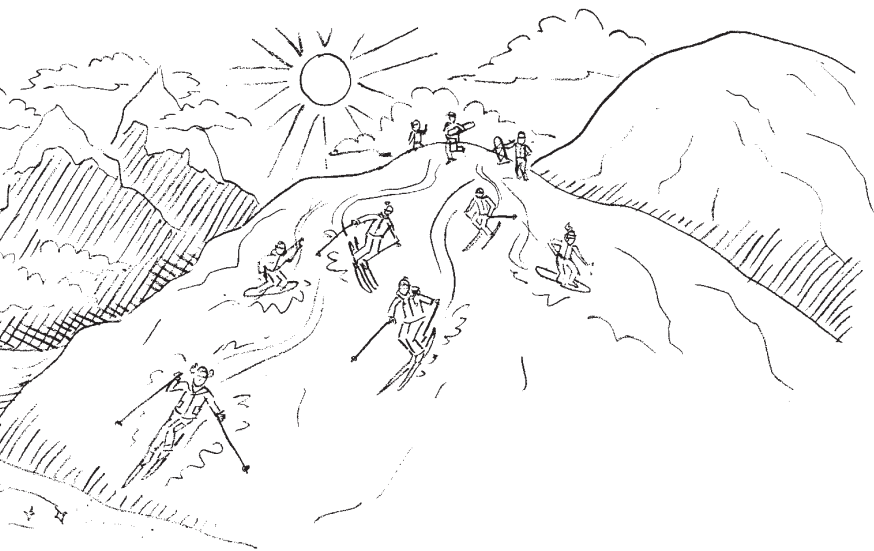
Mountain peaks rose majestically all around, covered in thick white snow. Skiers were already racing down the slopes in colorful groups. Other people were careening around on snowboards, sun glinting off their snow goggles.

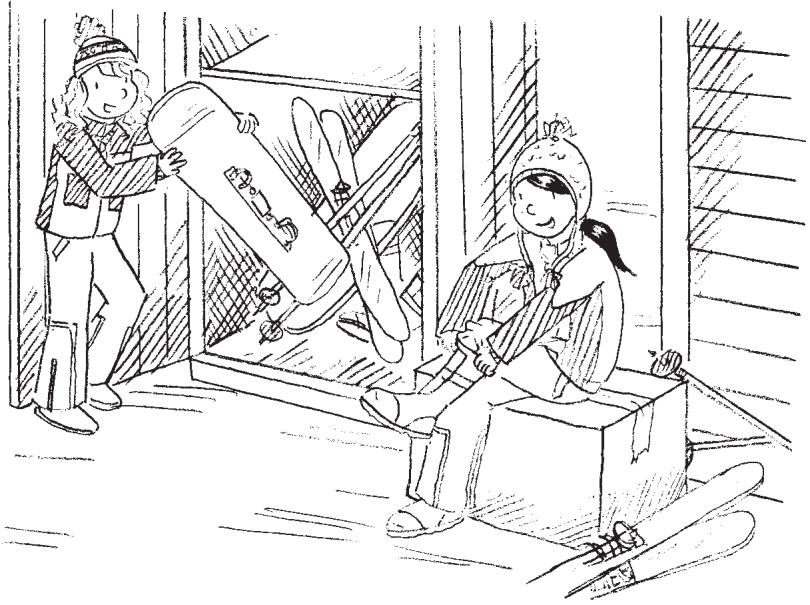




Rachel couldn't stop smiling. "It's so fantastic being on vacation with you again!" she said.

Kirsty nodded. "I know," she agreed, linking arms with her best friend. "All this snow, and the Winter Festival starts in a few days, too!" She beamed. "And you never know, we might meet a fairy. We always have such magical adventures when we're together!"





The girls' parents had rented them each skis and a snowboard. Rachel and Kirsty went to find them in the small shed at the side of the lodge. "I'm going to try my skis first," Kirsty decided. She grabbed a pair of ski poles, skis, and special ski boots, and sat down to put them on.



“I’ll try the snowboard,” Rachel said eagerly. She picked up a turquoise board that was long and slender, with round ends.

When the girls were both ready, they found a small slope to practice on.

“*Wheeee!*” Kirsty squealed, pushing off. “Here I go!” She flew down the slope, but wobbled at the end and crashed sideways in the icy snow. She got to her feet gingerly and rubbed her legs.

“My turn now. . . . Yay!” cried Rachel,





standing on her board and riding downhill. It was tricky keeping her balance, and she tumbled into the snow. “Ow!” she cried, as her elbow hit a particularly icy patch. “This snow isn’t very soft, is it?”





Kirsty shook her head. “Look at that girl over there,” she whispered, helping her friend up. “The snow’s so crumbly, she can’t even build her snowman!”

Rachel watched the girl struggle with her snowman nearby. The snow wasn’t clumping together. Instead, it fell apart into ice chips.

“Maybe we should leave skiing and snowboarding for later,” Rachel suggested.

“How about a snowball fight?”

“You’re on!” Kirsty laughed as she quickly unstrapped her skis.

The girls started making snowballs, but the snow didn’t stick together very well.





And then, when they threw them at each other, the snowballs were so hard that they really hurt!

Rachel had just opened her mouth to suggest they try something else, when she saw a snowball flying toward her face.

Before she could duck, the snowball burst apart in a puff of sparkling snow crystals.

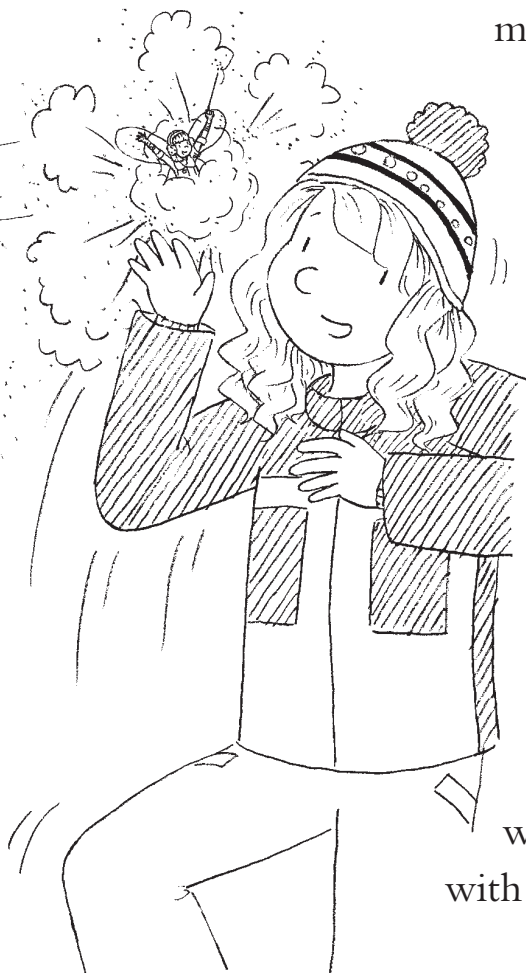




Rachel jumped in surprise. Hovering in midair, right where the snowball had been, was a fairy!

“Oh!” gasped Rachel. “Hello! Who are you?”

The fairy had chestnut-brown hair and fluffy white earmuffs that were shiny with silver glitter. She wore a purple coat with a red-and-purple striped dress





underneath, red leggings, and purple snow boots.



“I’m Gabriella,”
the fairy said, as she
curtsied. “Gabriella the
Snow Kingdom Fairy.
And I’m really glad
to see you here!”

Kirsty hurried over.

“Hi, Gabriella,” she said
to the tiny fairy. “I’m Kirsty.

Is everything all right?”

Gabriella shook her head sadly.

“No,” she said. “Jack Frost is up to his
tricks again! He’s stolen my special
magic snowflake, which makes all the
snow soft, fluffy, and white. Now that it’s
missing, snow everywhere is much harder
and icier.”





“We noticed,” Kirsty said. “How did he get your snowflake?”

“Well, every year on the first of December, I hang my magic snowflake on the Christmas tree outside the Fairyland palace,” Gabriella explained. “But this morning, the snowflake was gone — and there were goblin footprints all around the tree. I’m sure Jack Frost ordered his goblins to steal it and hide it in the human world.”

“We’ll help you look for it,” Rachel said.

“Thank you,” Gabriella said gratefully. “I’m afraid it’ll be difficult to spot. The only clue



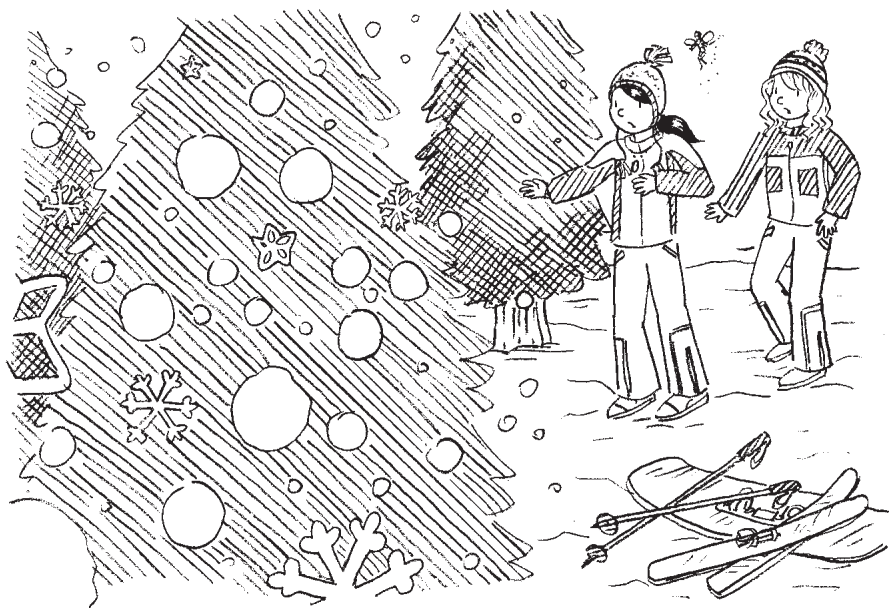


will be a patch of snow that looks perfectly sparkly and fluffy. That could mean my magic snowflake is nearby.”

Kirsty gazed around, then frowned as she noticed that it was snowing over a nearby pine forest. “How weird,” she commented. “It’s snowing there — but not here!” Gabriella swung around to see.



She tilted her head as she looked carefully at the falling flakes. A smile appeared on her face. “They look like perfect snowflakes to me,” she declared.



“Does that mean . . . ?” Rachel began excitedly.

Gabriella nodded. “I’m sure my magic snowflake must be in that forest. Let’s go and look!”