

Chapter One:

The Fairy Kingdom

There are countless secrets that come into our lives, some are innocent, unpredictable and a few may be extremely sinister and mysterious. Within the beautiful, tranquil, fairy kingdom hides many dark ones. Far beyond the forest of thorns, live the black fairies. They are jealous, mischievous and extremely curious. Zartou is the most notorious meddler of his clan. It wasn't long before the news reached to all corners of the kingdom that the fairies were celebrating Chelsea and Carter's arrival. Zartou became determined to find out who and what they were and why they were in the kingdom. The fairies try to avoid any contact with him and do not venture out of their safe haven. Chelsea and Carter had no idea just how far into the fairy's kingdom the beauty continued. They were oblivious of any evil that might be lurking. Chelsea could not shake the feeling that something was amiss.

As night advanced around them, they rested in their quiet surroundings. Chelsea had a difficult time shaking off her concerns. They were not aware that Zartou and his guide Marpod were moving in on them which they were only able to do during the night. Because daylight distorted their vision, they had to hide when the sun was at its brightest. They were extremely small and resourceful. They were able to hide inside tree trunks, mostly. But their little size hindered traveling; their journey could take days to progress to the fairy kingdom. Marpod was the guide. He navigated them into and out of areas that they either explored or wanted to attempt to attack. With each flutter of their little black wings they approached nearer to their destination. They had never seen humans before. Of course, the fact that Chelsea and Carter were only half-human was not known. It was doubtful that they had ever seen one of those either.

It was extremely rare that Chelsea and Carter were allowed beyond the forbidden entrances in the first place, because the only way past the vortex was with Fairy magic, and then only in unique cases.

The sun came up on another day of celebration and Chelsea and Carter awoke. They stretched, got up and started gathering fruits from the trees to eat for breakfast; it had been quite awhile since they ate. Suddenly the fairies came flying towards them all in a flutter they sensed the approaching Zartou. The fairies were all wound-up; many were in the trees watching and waiting for anything that might emerge out of the ordinary. A fairy flew over to Chelsea and explained telepathically.

“Zartou is coming! He is a black fairy and does not want you two here. We must hide you! It is not often that they venture this far from their own clan. They live deep within the Kingdom, but they heard the news of your arrival; they are very anxious, and that makes Zartou unstable.”

“What should we do? Is he harmful? How dangerous is he?”

“We don’t know for sure, but he is known to be quite unpredictable. We must not take any chances.”

There is one thing you must know... You have to leave your Amulet behind; the power of it does not work in our Kingdom. You can wrap it in your old clothes we will keep it until you leave to return home. That way there will be no chance of Zartou or anyone stealing it as you sleep. And trust in this... He loves pretty trinkets”

Chelsea could communicate outright to the fairy, but they still had to speak telepathically to her for some reason. Chelsea listened to everything that the fairy told her and agreed. She wrapped it amulet up in her clothes that had been washed in the stream. Then she handed them over to the fairy.

Carter was still clueless to what was taking place; Chelsea walked over to him and said.

“We have to leave”

“Why?” he asked.

“Because I just found out that the fairies safety might be in jeopardy with our existence here. Word has gotten out somehow and a black fairy named Zartou is headed this way. There is no way of knowing what will happen if he spots us.”

“Zartou? What kind of name is that? You did say it is another fairy?”

“I would assume so...that is what she said, well... actually she called him a black fairy. What else would he be, silly? This is the fairy kingdom. All I know is that he is closing in on us. Come to think of it, Carter, we didn't take the time yet to figure out just how big the kingdom is.”

“No, we haven't; you are so correct, so what are we waiting for?” he said in a curious tone.

“We should start exploring and stop them in their path, and draw them away from here.”

“That's not a bad idea, Carter; we can start out as soon as we eat breakfast. I am so hungry.”

“Okay, sounds good to me.”

Chelsea and Carter sat down near the pond and ate berries off of vines and drank nectar from the flowers. They had no intentions of revealing to the fairies where they were going. Chelsea Packed up a few fruits and nuts and they started walking out into the vast and

mysterious, unfamiliar kingdom, they had to vigilantly make sure they were not spotted by the black fairies. After what seemed like hours and as the sunset, they noticed an area with really soft grass and leaves. It was partially hidden. They chose to use this spot to rest. Chelsea was about to fall asleep under the moon light, when a fairy flew quietly over to her and softly whispered in her ear and reminded her to be careful.

“I must explain something else to you...the black fairies travel only during the night; they cannot do so during the day. You must stay hidden as you are now, until the sun rises.”

“Okay, thanks, Hey! How did you find us?”

We figured that your kingdom will be safer if you had no idea where we went.”

“I heard you Chelsea, I am able to tune into your every thought, and you seemed very anxious earlier. This entire world is the fairy kingdom, so we know all.”

“Okay, I will keep you informed if need be and thanks, for the information. The fairy looked a bit.

“Hey, Carter!” Chelsea said as she gently shook him, and started repeating what the fairy just told her. “We have to be very careful to walk during day light, that way we will have the advantage over the black fairies if they arrive with Zartou and his guide Marpod. They will not be able to sneak up on us.”

“Yes, I agree our foot steps will be longer and we could formulate more time than the tiny black fairy’s wings could,” said Carter.

“Since they can’t venture out into the daylight they will be less likely to know that we are approaching on their location.” Chelsea said.

“So true, we really have to be careful.”

They walked for quite awhile until they came upon the mysterious Forest of Thorns. There was thick, prickly shrubbery surrounding them. They walked several steps until they could walk no longer. It wasn’t long until nightfall. It seemed that the days and nights in the kingdom were not as lengthy as on earth. Zartou and Marpod would be moving once the last ray of sun light vanished.

Chelsea was becoming antsy; something didn't feel quite right. She was sure that the black fairies had skills that were not known to her and she never felt comfortable since the awful encounters in the underworld, since then unless she was aware of what she was up against, she felt extremely uneasy. As Chelsea and Carter carefully and cautiously walked further, Carter observed a very undersized cave. He said softly to Chelsea, "Look at that cave." Her back was turned so at first she began to panic.

"OH NO! Not another cave!" Chelsea yelled out as she quickly turned, spun around and looked for it; she was not the least bit happy about the prospect of going into another one.

"Where is the cave, Carter, I don't see any cave?" she exclaimed nervously as she proceeded turning in circles looking for it.

"Chelsea, look over to your right and move straight ahead," Carter said soothingly. She did as he suggested, but she still could not see the cave.

"Calm down, don't worry it isn't the same kind of cave that we were in, this one is much smaller and more

like a bunch of dirt, tree limbs and well, to use a more uncommon word, gunk! Maybe referring to it as a cave was the incorrect word.” He said as he reconsidered his first description of it. Chelsea stood there looking at him as if he was daft, then she blurted out loudly,

“Gunk?” Chelsea made a face and repeated the word. “What is gunk?”

“You know gunk! Gross, dirty, sticky gooeey stuff,” he said laughing.

“Oh okay, if you say so,” she responded as she continued moving forward. Then she finally saw it, and yes...it was indeed quite tiny. She walked over and before she could check it out she heard a feeble voice.

“Did you say something?” she asked Carter.

“Uh...no, Chelsea, just talking to myself.” He had been mumbling as he explored that whole time. Chelsea found it quite annoying. They shrugged it off and went to investigate the so called cave. Carter got her attention and pointed it out. They walked over and paused to listen. They heard nothing at all.

It was apparent that there was an area opened around it, so Chelsea moved over and looked inside. She noticed how exceedingly small it really was and knew there was no way either one of them could enter it. so she started to walk away towards Carter, until she heard the tiny faint voice again. This time it seemed to be crying, Chelsea bent over and focused her eyes on how deep the cave might be. She got on her knees and reached in and touched something, it stirred. She considered turning away and ignoring the creature, but for some bizarre reason she felt empathy for it. She had a premonition and decided to try to communicate with it in the way that she usually did with the fairies, telepathically.

“Hello,” she said.

At first she received no response; she presumed that it was scared. So she considered using one of her powers to calm it with just her mind. She looked inside and to her astonishment she saw a tiny fairy.

She looked at it and calmly said in a reassuring way:

“It’s okay little one, are you alright? You can come over to me; it is safe. I will not harm you.”

After a few brief moments it climbed into her hand; as she started to pull it out it protested.

“NO, I cannot go out into the sun it will blind me!” Chelsea said, *“I’m so sorry.”* She searched her inner sight, which allowed her to see clearer into the darkness of the area and unexpectedly that power came forth for her. It was similar to using an extremely small flashlight and she saw that it really was a terrified male fairy. He was shivering. She used her one hand to softly hold and rock him a tad while trying to continue reassuring him at the same time. Her impulse to nurture surprised her and she figured that must be her inner spirit discovering maternal instinct.

“Hello, why are you in there?” she calmly asked. To her astonishment he answered her.

“I was following my brother Zartou and I lost him. I hate it when he leaves me behind. I am not a baby anymore. “

Zartou is your brother? We are looking for him.
she said.

The creatures of the kingdom know all. Don't worry I do not think that he will hurt anyone; he is nosey and jealous that the other fairies have you and he does not. Hey, what are you anyway?"

"We are humans. For the most part. "

"What uh... Is that exactly, for the most part?"

"It's a secret that can't be told at this time."

"Okay, well anyway, Zartou wants everything first and is quite greedy, that's all... Until!"

Chelsea couldn't respond to that last statement of his because he jumped in by asking.

"Are humans animals?" He started to climb closer to Chelsea's face as she bent inward more; he reached towards her and softly stroked her cheek.

"You are soft," he said as he became more trusting of her. Carter was still off exploring nearby.

"Thank you. To answer your question - No, well... we are descendants of animals and mammals, but we are not giants...All or most humans are tall.

I believe, as far as I am concerned, the jury is still out on that.”

“The jury?” he asked.

“Never mind, maybe later I will explain.”

She had a doubt that if she tried to explain everything at that time, such as the fact that she and Carter were merely half-human that he wouldn't understand her and might become scared again. After all, she and Carter were not quite sure they understood it all yet either. They had not taken the time to actually think about it to any extent.

“Oh okay,” was all he said.

Carter finally walked over to them and the fairy retreated further into the cave.

“Where have you been?” Chelsea asked

“I stopped to look at something. What have you found?”

“I found a friend, when you walked up he got scared and went back into the tiny cave. He is a little scared of us.

“Oh,” Carter said. Making a wrinkled face as if to say whatever, then after a few moments of clarity he replied.

“So you found a friend, huh?”

He stooped down and looked in; he couldn't see a thing then suddenly he let out a wail, followed by-

“OUCH!” Carter quickly jumped back and out of the opening.

“What kind of friend did you find, might I ask? Whatever it is just punched my nose!”

“My name is Griffter,” he told her as he stood in her hand.

“Glad to meet you Griffter. My name is Chelsea and you already met Carter.”

“You sure have a punch little one,” he said.

“I am strong.”

“I see that, Carter said, as he continued to rub his nose. Suddenly it dawned on Chelsea they were talking aloud without telepathy. How was that possible? She wondered. So she asked.

“How can you speak to Carter in our language?”

“Okay, yeah about that well...you see I can hear you and speak to you. I can transform all dialects; that is what our clan are able to do. I thought YOU needed to use that mind thing.”

“Mind thing?” They all began laughing. Well, Carter was sneering. Chelsea placed Griffter under the flap that the fairies made for her, they added a flap so she could place and save fruits or food that they should come across in their journey. Since she wanted to protect her new friend from the daylight, she only now realized how handy the alteration had become. The sun was no longer at its brightest, but still too bright for his delicate vision. They walked closer to Carter to examine his nose. She touched it and he flinched.

“Awww you’re going to be okay,” she said. Realizing that it had spilled over into taking care of Griffter and Carter, Chelsea decided she needed to explain to Carter what Griffter was doing in the cave and why she now had the fairy in her flap, so she said.

“Griffter was attempting to follow his brother Zartou with a guide named Marpod, but it seems that he was sneaking and got lost.”

“Zartou is his brother? Let me ask you this, is it only him that is searching for us and his guard Marpod or are there more? We most definitely do not need to be taken off guard!”

“I think that they are the only ones coming.”

“What did you hit me with anyway?” Carter asked.

“It really hurt.”

“Oh it was just my slingshot, my brother made it for me. I did not mean to hurt you. We have to use things like this when Zartou and I explore and encounter the wicked ones in this kingdom. Zartou always takes Marpod with him to help navigate, but I get quite frustrated. Then he took his slingshot and a pebble from his tiny pocket and flung it out from

beneath the flap. In a pint-sized rage, he said. et left behind it makes me so MAD!” He had become

“If anything comes up to hurt us I will pulverize them, even Zartou!” Curious, Chelsea lifted the flap, so she could see the fairy when she asked.

“Are there a lot of wicked ones around and why is your name Griffter? Is there any reason?”

“I have no idea...Maybe because I am great,” Griffter crossed his arms and lifted his head proudly. She dropped the flap back in place and changed the subject by continuing her interrogation on another topic.

“Where do you live?”

“Well...we live beyond the forest. We have to pass many unfriendly creatures and pinchy things and the Tree Castle!” he said, aloud almost too loud they thought.

“Shuuush” said Chelsea.

“We don’t want to alert your brother.” After what Griffter just said she wasn’t taking any chances. “No one that I heard about has ever been allowed in the

castle. King T-Roy lives there high up towards the sky he is the ruler of us all. It is yonder in that distance. He pointed in the same direction that they already were headed in. He keeps the princess Sierra in the sanctuary; since the queen disappeared, he will no longer allow his daughter out of the castle. The worst part is, she is in love with my gentler brother Parlioner, but the king will not allow them to be together. He thinks that my brother did something wrong. You see my brother and the king had an awful argument because Parlioner wanted to marry Princess Sierra and the king was against it, I never knew why.”

Chelsea was curious about Griffter’s explanation, but after chit-chatting and noticing that the sun was setting, Griffter came out from Chelsea’s flap and she placed him under a belt like object that she wore around her hip, made from dried and stretched tree branches. He would not be able to keep up with them as they walked; his little wings would surely tire sooner than their legs. They knew that they had to make better time and progress before the next daybreak. Not knowing

where Zartou might be hiding, and having to decide which direction to travel was a daunting task.

“I know just how to find him,” Griffter said.

“Obviously you have done this before, but does he always know that you are following behind him?” He changed the subject. After awhile he said.

“I know which way he traveled; I can sense him near by.”

“Wait; is he behind us or in front of us? This place is very confusing,” Chelsea said.

“He must have taken the path that leads to the Terrain of Tears,” said Griffter.

“Follow me, I will show you the way; he will be going around us, which is why we did not see him pass. He hides quite skillfully. We have to be very careful; it is dangerous. By getting too close to the waters edge could cause them to pull you in and you would vanish into the deep blackness, beneath the Terrain of Tears into their world.”

Then he whispered, *“The Megmers live there. No one has really seen any close up, perhaps just slight glimpses. They stay out of sight for the most part.”* Chelsea was fascinated.

“Their world? Are you telling me that there is ANOTHER WORLD!?” she repeated really loud. Griffter flew out from behind her belt and hid behind a bush because she scared him when she yelled. Chelsea felt bad and calmed down, but ever since what she and Carter had already been through, she had become rather edgy. She knew there had to be more worlds and universes. But it was all very overwhelming to her.