



Dragon Tea Party

Story by Mathias Dellaert
Illustrations by Siri Austvik

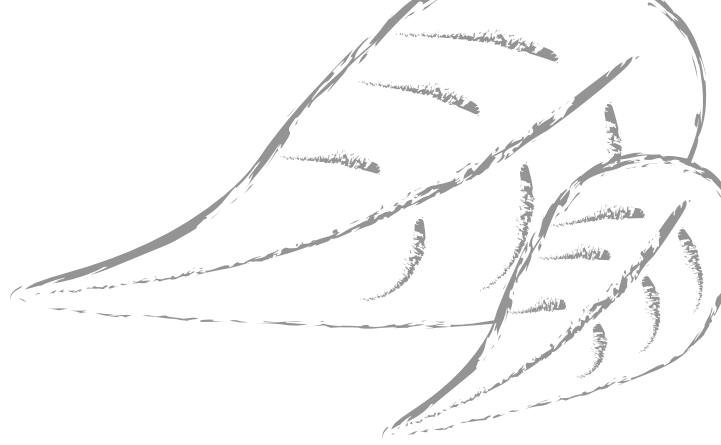


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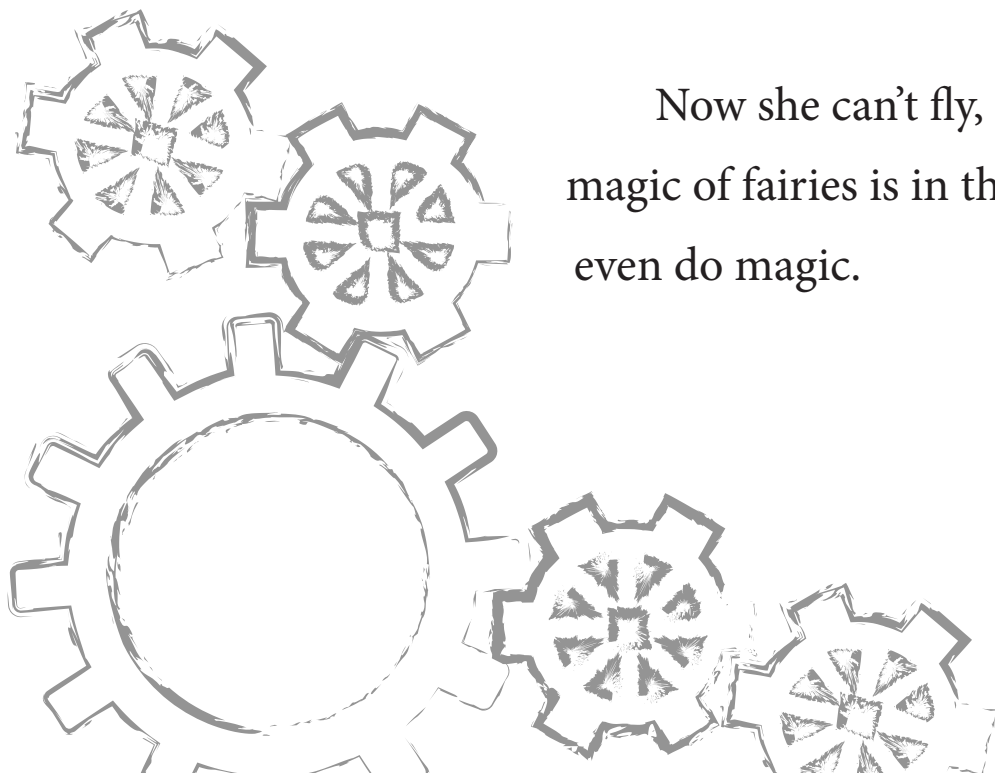
For Rune's fifth birthday.
For him, his friends, and classmates.



Beneath the roots of a large tree in the middle of Wood-on-the-Hill there's a large underground house. This is Liz's home. It's a beautiful house, with walls made from leaves and branches and even flowers in spring. Even though it's beautiful, it's strange that Liz lives there, because Liz is a fairy and fairies normally live high in the branches.

Liz is not like the other faeries. When she was little, one of her wings was wounded. Liz always says it happened during a fight with a dragon, but she doesn't really know. She was too young to remember.

Now she can't fly, and because the magic of fairies is in their wings, she can't even do magic.

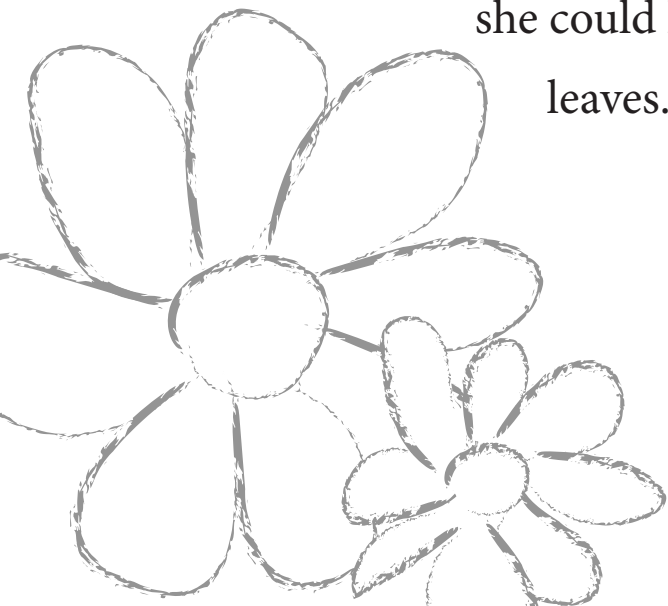




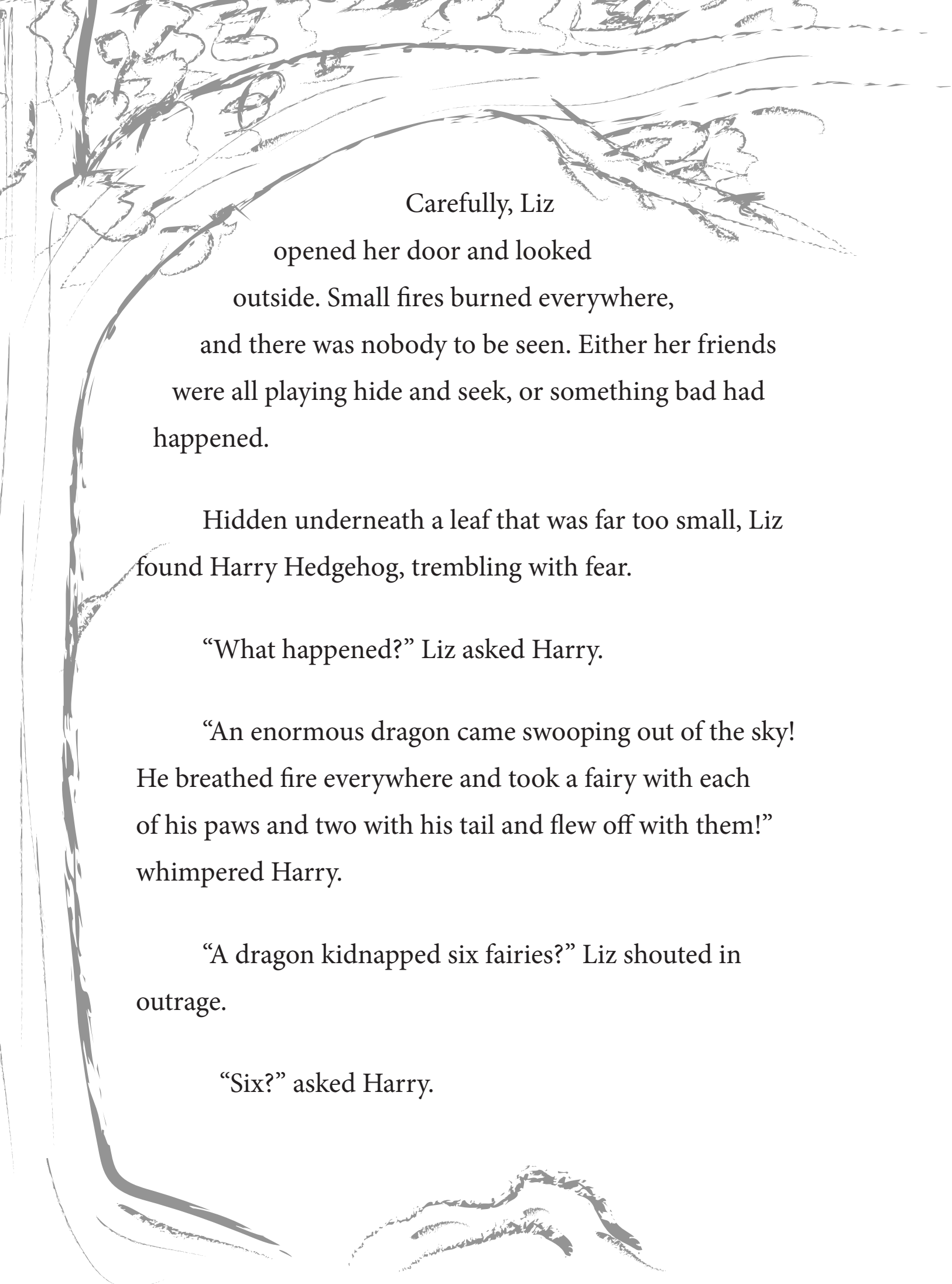
Liz doesn't mind that she can't fly or do magic. Her underground home is the best in the woods. It's packed with strange things that she's made herself. While the other fairies play all day, Liz builds gadgets for her adventures.

One day, Liz was busy making some sunglasses for Mrs Owl, when she suddenly heard a loud roar outside. There was so much noise that all the cupboards swung open and Liz fell flat onto the ground!

When Liz got up again, everything was quiet. Not a single bird in the forest was singing and she couldn't hear any of her friends that had been playing outside. All she could hear was the wind, and the rustling of leaves.







Carefully, Liz
opened her door and looked
outside. Small fires burned everywhere,
and there was nobody to be seen. Either her friends
were all playing hide and seek, or something bad had
happened.

Hidden underneath a leaf that was far too small, Liz
found Harry Hedgehog, trembling with fear.

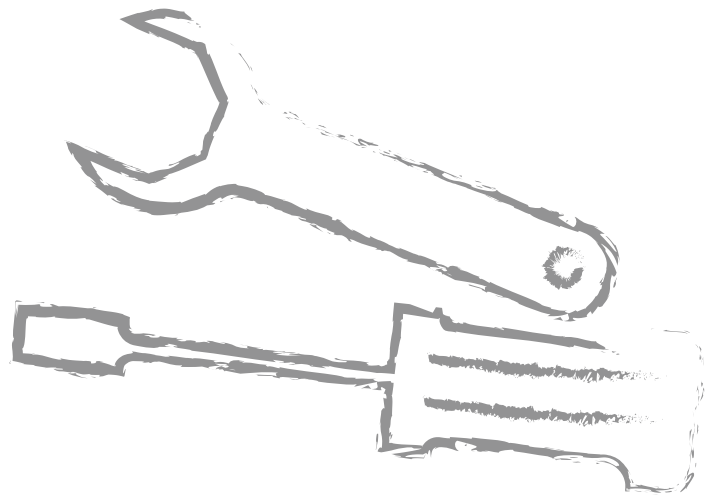
“What happened?” Liz asked Harry.

“An enormous dragon came swooping out of the sky!
He breathed fire everywhere and took a fairy with each
of his paws and two with his tail and flew off with them!”
whimpered Harry.

“A dragon kidnapped six fairies?” Liz shouted in
outrage.

“Six?” asked Harry.





“A dragon has four paws. Four with its paws plus two with its tail is six,” said Liz, who had always been very proud that she was good at maths. “But where did he take them?”

Harry shook his head. He had been hiding under the leaf the whole time and hadn’t seen anything.

Suddenly a voice came from up high in the tree. “The dragon is flying to the mountains.”

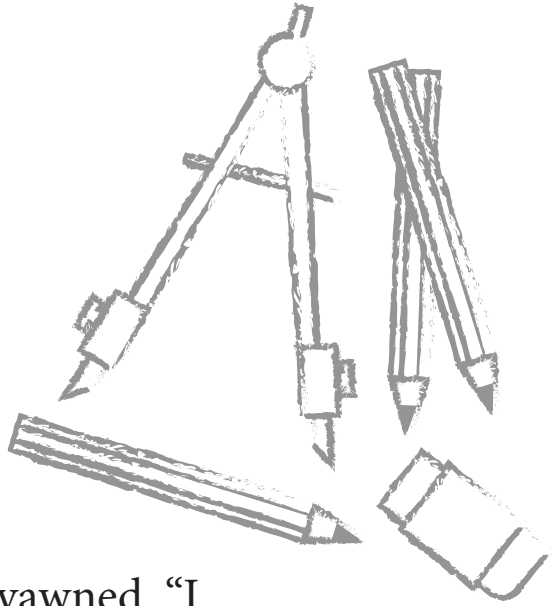
Liz looked up quickly. A large brown owl was sitting on a branch, rubbing sleep out of her eyes.

“Mrs Owl! Liz shouted. “Did you see what happened?”





Mrs Owl squinted her eyes.
“You know that I’m almost blind
when there’s this much light,” she yawned. “I
haven’t seen anything, but my ears are the best in the forest
and that dragon woke me with its noise.”



Liz quickly ran inside her house and returned with a
pile of things she had made: the sunglasses for Mrs Owl, a
bird-saddle and a water-drop-telescope.

“Could you help me save the fairies, Mrs Owl?” Liz
asked politely.

“I don’t know about that, they’re always so noisy,”
complained Mrs Owl, but she had already landed and stood
ready for Liz to put the saddle on her back. Mrs Owl always
loved joining Liz in her adventures.





A little later they were both up in the air. Liz sitting in the saddle and Mrs Owl wearing her new sunglasses. Now she could see everything as well as if it were night. Despite this, it was Liz with her telescope who spotted the first sign of the dragon, a big plume of smoke at the foot of the mountains.

Carefully they circled the smoke, but there was no trace of the dragon. A group of dwarves was putting out a tree that was on fire.

When they landed, the dwarves were too busy with the burning tree to tell them what had happened. Only when the fire was out were they able to help, but by then it was almost dark!



“A dragon?” asked the head dwarf. “Yes, we’ve seen a dragon. He came here a week ago to order six golden cages. Today he came to pick them up, but instead of paying he set that tree on fire with his breath!”

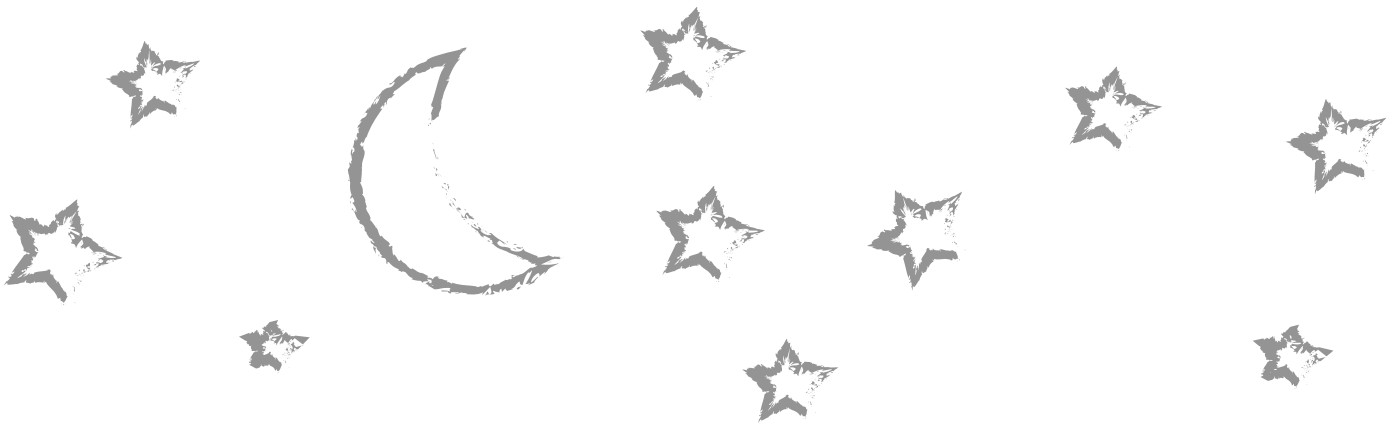
“Cages?” asked Mrs Owl, frowning. “Why would a dragon need golden cages?”

“I don’t know,” said the head dwarf. “When a dragon wants something, you don’t ask any questions. That dragon has teeth that are larger than my arm!”

Sadly, the dwarves didn’t know where the dragon went either. They were too busy putting out the fire.



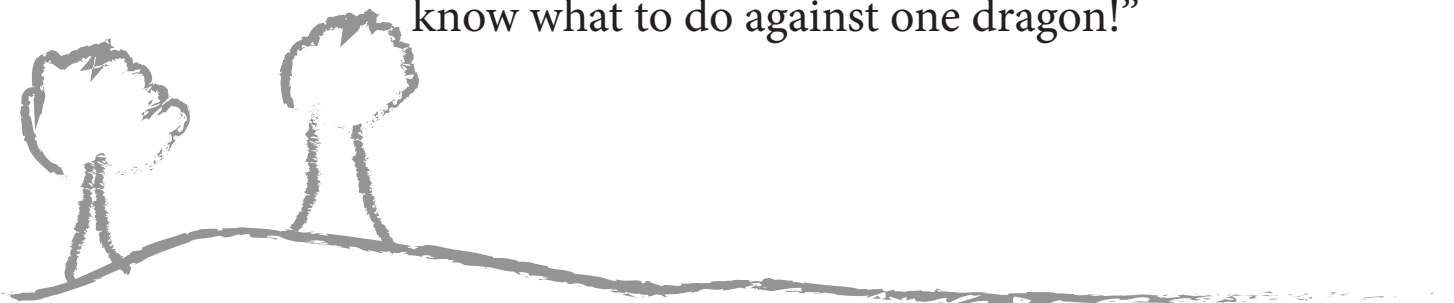




When they were back in the air, Liz and Mrs Owl had no idea where they had to go. It was now so dark that Mrs Owl could take off her sunglasses. Together they looked around. Suddenly, Liz saw a light on top of a mountain in the distance. They flew towards it quickly.

Mrs Owl landed in a tree above the light. Beneath them there wasn't just one but three dragons! They were sitting around a small camp fire above which a kettle hung. Around them stood six golden cages with a fairy in each of them. Fairies shine brightly in the dark, and everything was lit in six different colours.

“Oh no,” moaned Liz. “Three dragons? I didn’t even know what to do against one dragon!”





Liz climbed down and carefully sneaked towards one of the cages. One of her friends was sitting in it, looking very sad.

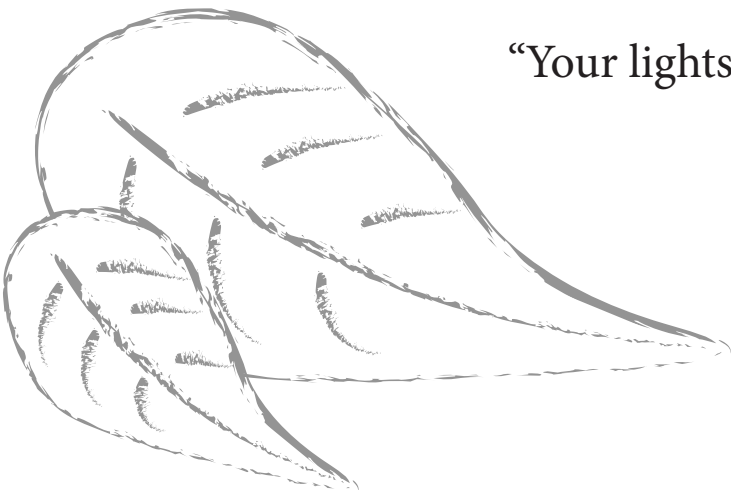
“Psssst. Bren. I’m here,” she whispered to the fairy in the cage.

“Liz!” shouted Bren when he saw her.

“Shhh! Not so loud!” whispered Liz, but it was already too late. One of the dragons had heard them and soon Liz felt hot dragon’s breath on her back.

“Hey! What are you doing?” the dragon shouted.
“Are you stealing my lights?” he growled angrily.

“Your lights?” Liz asked, surprised.





“Yes. I’m having a tea party and these are my tea-lights!”

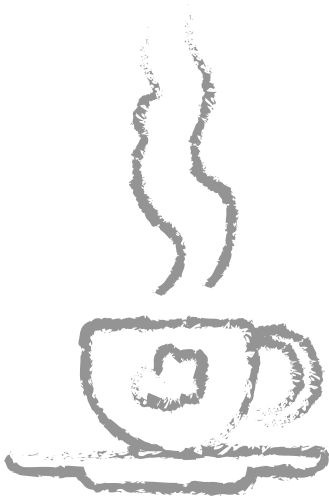
“But ... your lights are my friends!” shouted Liz. “You can’t just lock up fairies to light up your party.”

“Oh? And how are you going to stop me?” asked the dragon menacingly. Liz couldn’t answer that right away. The dragon was much bigger than her, and had very long and very sharp teeth.

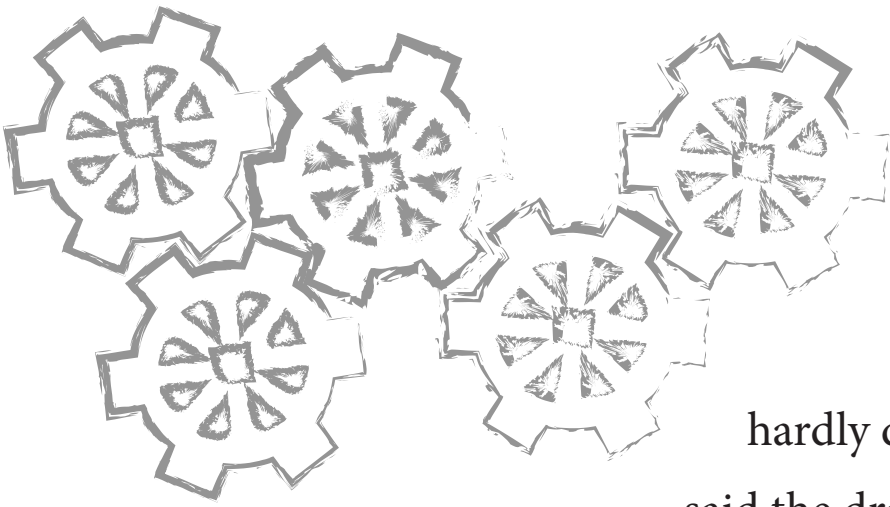
Liz put her hands on her hips. “How would you like it if somebody locked you up in a cage like that?” she asked angrily.

“I wouldn’t like it at all,” the dragon said. “That cage is much too small for a dragon.”

“Exactly!” said Liz. “It’s much too small for a fairy too! We need to be free so we can play.”







“Alright, but we can
hardly drink tea in the dark,”
said the dragon.

Liz thought deeply. She couldn’t fight three dragons,
and they wouldn’t let her friends go if they didn’t get new
lights to replace them.

“I’ll be right back!” she shouted at the dragons and
jumped on Mrs Owl’s back. Together they flew all around
the mountain looking for special coloured rocks. When they
had collected a whole bunch of them, they returned to the
dragons.

Liz put the rocks in a circle around the dragons. “Now
breathe fire on these rocks,” Liz told a dragon. When it did
so, the rocks started glowing brightly in many colours.

“Look! Now you have tea lights without having to lock
up fairies!”




The dragons were so happy with their new lights that they let all the fairies go and returned the golden cages to the dwarves.

Together with her friends and Mrs Owl, Liz returned to Wood-on-the-Hill. It was very late already, and it was time for Liz to go to bed.

Tomorrow there would surely be a new adventure.

The End



Liz is not your usual fairy:
because of an accident when she was
little, she can't fly or do magic. Despite
this, she loves adventures.

But what can she do when a
dragon comes to the woods?