

Chapter 1

The Fete



Katie shook out her great white wings.
“We’re owls again!” Moments earlier, she’d been a blonde-haired girl – now she was an elegant snowy owl!

Eva, now a barn owl, swivelled her pretty, heart-shaped face around, taking in the beautiful woodland surrounding them.
“And we’re back in Blossom Wood!”



Alex, a little owl and the smallest of the three, hopped along the branch of the Moon Chestnut tree, ruffling her brown feathers. “And it’s gorgeous!” It was as if someone had scattered tons of pretty confetti all over the wood – for the trees were coated in blossom, as far as their eyes could see. Yellow, pink, purple, red, blue, lilac. It was an incredible sight!

The three best friends had, just minutes before, been girls in Katie’s garden. Then they’d found the special white feather inside the hollow chestnut tree trunk. It had magically transported them to the Moon Chestnut tree in the middle of Blossom Wood, and changed them into owls once again!

“Look, there’s Bobby!” Katie leapt off the high branch and soared towards the

badger on the ground. Her huge wings swooped in the still spring air and her talons tingled with the excitement of flying again.

Eva went next, spreading her light-brown wings to float slowly to the ground. It felt fantastic to be able to flutter in the air once more.

Alex was the last owl to jump from the tree. She flapped her little wings quickly, darting between the branches and grinning with happiness.

“Hello, dearest owls,” said Bobby, beaming.

Alex landed with a rustle on the blossom-covered ground, and smiled back.

“Hi, Bobby,” said Eva, stroking the petals on the floor with her wingtips. “It’s SO pretty in the wood right now. I mean, not that it isn’t always pretty, of course!”



Katie turned her head almost all the way round – first to the left, then to the right, looking for clues. The badger left the feather out for them when there was a problem in the wood and he needed their help. “So, Bobby, what’s the matter?”

Bobby’s grin stretched even wider across his stripy face. “Ah, now, my

wonderful owl friends, I very much hope you don't mind ..." he began in his gravelly voice.

Eva tilted her head to one side. What was he going to say?

"... but I thought you might like to attend our springtime fete today!"

"Don't *mind*?" hooted Katie. "That sounds brilliant!"

Bobby clapped his black leathery paws together. "Oh, that's marvellous! You see,



it's such an extra-special time in Blossom Wood that we really didn't want you to miss it.”

“I can see that.” Alex spun her fluffy little head round to look up at the trees. “It's beautiful!”

But Eva was frowning. “It's spring here? That's weird – at home, it's autumn, and cold and—” Eva stopped when she realized Katie and Alex were staring at her. Then she remembered – Bobby didn't know they were from a completely different place, where they were not owls, but girls.

Alex quickly changed the subject. “Can we help with anything for the fete?”

Bobby's black eyes twinkled. “Oh, you owls are so generous. I'm sure there are woodlanders who'd love some assistance. Perhaps you could help the caterpillars

put up the silk bunting they've made?
They're having trouble hanging it..."

"Oh, yes, please – could you help, owls?" Wilf the caterpillar's tiny voice floated across from a nearby hedgerow.

They looked over. Hundreds of ants carried beautiful silvery silk bunting on their backs while bright-green caterpillars held it at the ends, jumping up and trying to hook it on to the hedge. Every time, it came floating back down.

"No problem!" Katie hopped over to the ants and caterpillars and took one end in her little black beak. Eva rushed over to hold the other end, and they flew up to the top of the hedge and hung it neatly, tying each end around a branch to secure it.

"There!" said Eva, clapping her wings at a job well done.



Meanwhile, Alex had spotted a group of honeybees trying to carry something down from the Moon Chestnut tree. She flapped her small brown wings and zoomed up towards them. “Can I help?” she asked shyly.

Bella, a bee they’d met the first time they’d visited Blossom Wood, peeped out from behind a large straw basket. Alex

knew that Bella was even more timid than she was.

More than twenty bees were trying to lift the basket from the branch where it balanced, but it toppled about, not looking very safe *at all*. “Oh, Alex, that would be really kind – thank you,” Bella buzzed.

Alex moved up until she was hovering above the branch and ever so slowly clutched the basket handle in her talons. Making sure she gripped it tightly, she fluttered her wings and glided gently to the ground, the bees buzzing along behind her. As she flew, the most amazing honey smell wafted out. *Yummmmm.*

“What’s inside?” Alex asked as she nestled the basket carefully on the ground. “Honey cookies!” the bees replied. “Honeycomb!”



“Honey jelly!”

“And honey juice!”

Bella flew up to Alex’s ear. “Don’t forget, you can have as much honey as you want,” she whispered. Bella had promised the owls unlimited honey after

they'd helped save the Moon Chestnut tree. It was the most important tree in the wood, because it was the oldest, and everyone believed it was magical. It had been brown and droopy and dying the first time they'd been here – but now it was healthy and full of life.

Alex grinned at the thought of delicious honey jelly. “I’ll make sure I come and find you at the fete!”

Just as the three best friends were gathering back together, a little black furry ball rushed past. “Is that who I think it is?” Katie asked in surprise.

Eva blinked. “Pete?!” The mole hated leaving his home, so it was very strange to see him running around like this. They’d had to persuade him to move house quite recently, when they’d realized it was Pete’s tunnelling around the Moon



Chestnut tree's roots that had made it ill.

Bobby, who'd been organizing the fireflies into lights for the fete, nodded. "He seems to have turned over a new leaf, at least for today's fete – he's going to open up his home for the rest of the woodlanders to enjoy!" To encourage Pete to move, the rabbits had built him an exciting new place to live, with roller-coaster tunnels, slides and all sorts. Really,

it was more like a theme park than a home!

“I wish we had something we could donate to the fete, too,” hooted Alex.

Eva sighed. “Oh yes, the rose-petal necklaces I made last week would’ve been perfect!”

“Hang on.” Katie’s orange eyes glistened as an idea popped into her head. “Could we go home to get them?”

“I’m not sure ... would we be able to come back right away?” Alex worried.

“Absolutely!” said Bobby. “I’ll leave the feather out just as soon as you’re gone. Then, once you’ve got the necklaces – which sound delightful, by the way – you’ll be able to return immediately!”

“That’s sorted, then!” Katie was already soaring up to the branch of the Moon Chestnut tree that would magically take them home.

Eva and Alex fluttered into the sky behind Katie. As the three best friends landed at the top of the tree, they smiled down at the busy woodlanders darting about the forest. Happy chatter floated up into the air from all around.

They waved to Bobby, calling out, “See you soon!”