

Learning to Fly



by Tatum

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# Prologue

I was weightless, floating below wispy clouds. The wind blew in my face and my hair was a brown streak behind me. I dipped, letting my fingers skim the leaves on the tallest trees. I could hear my wings fluttering so fast they were humming. *This is freedom*, I thought.

As I dipped lower and lower, the wind caught me and pushed me down harder than I expected. I crashed into the ground, skidding across the harsh dirt. I tried to twist over but one of my torn wings got caught on something. *My wings*, I thought. Then with the pain and terror I started to sob. It turned into great big gulps. With tears streaming down my face, I looked over my shoulder. My back was bleeding in some places but I hardly noticed. What I did notice were my wings. They were twisted and ripped, totally deformed in some places. Their magical glow was gone and I knew they would dry up soon.

I moaned, anything that would stall the fact that I would never fly again.

# Chapter I Going to Town

Today made 50 (Ten human year's equal one fairy year and, frankly, I like to exaggerate things). 50 years without flying. 50 years with broken wings. 50 years mending fairy clothes. Happy anniversary to me. I adjusted my goggles. I always wear them, whether they help me see better, (which they do) or not. I walked (my, have I come to loathe that word) to the window.

I sat on the window seat, looking out at the fairies flying around, getting food, water or medicine. I envied them. At the very beginning it was a little fun because I couldn't do any work, but after that, it was just depressing. I plucked a petal off of an apple blossom outside my window. As it fell, I recalled the terror I had had that day 50 years ago. Terrified not of getting hurt, but of the consequences of my fall.

I spotted Dandelion Starfire making her way to my pebble house. She was carrying a small box. I quickly threw on my tunic and slid into a pair of different leggings. Dandelion was just knocking on the door when I had put my hair in a ponytail. I walked over and opened it. "Hi Pru", she said shyly.

For some reason I found myself blushing with shyness as well. "You can come on in", I said. Dandelion walked in and sat down on the edge of the couch. I sat down next to her.

"I brought you breakfast", she said, handing me the box. "It's a berry muffin and dandelion milk. In my namesake." She couldn't help adding.

"Thanks", I said, surprised that she had done this for me. I took a bite from the muffin. "This is really good!" I exclaimed.

"Thanks. Are you going to do anything today?" Dandelion asked me.

"Not really, why?" I asked. *Maybe she wants to take me somewhere*, I thought.

“Um, no reason. I just wanted to know if you could go to the lake with me today”, she said, lowering her gaze shyly. Hmm. I pondered this. I *could* stay home and wallow in self pity. But Dandelion’s eyes showed hope and kindness. She seemed fragile and would make a good friend. And I wasn’t going to hurt her feelings by saying no.

“Sure I’ll go”, I said taking another bite of my muffin. “Like I said, I’m not doing anything today. And it might be fun. I’ve always liked swimming.” Dandelion smiled.

“I’m glad you’re coming”, she said smiling. “It’s a little lonely without anyone else.”

“That makes two of us”, I said, sympathizing.

“Yeah. You should finish your breakfast. No eating on the way. It’s a safety hazard. You know, you can’t swim after you eat until 45 minutes have passed.” I laughed. I could feel this was going to be a good friendship.

When we walked outside, I braced myself for the stares and whispers. Instead, almost no one noticed. Everyone was acting normal. Some boys were seeing who could be kicked in the shins really hard without crying though. Some fairies almost said good morning, but decided not to.

“Pru!” said Dandelion. “You’re spitting venom and shooting daggers. Relax!”

“Okay.” I relaxed my shoulders and laughed at some of the things Dandelion said. As we walked through Cherry Square I jumped into a mushroom when Dandelion tickled me. Two cute little black eyes popped open and it started squeaking hysterically. “Aaaah!” I felt a pink flush crawl up my neck. “Dandelion do you know which-” But Dandelion was rummaging in her bag, looking for something. The mushroom, not very happy from being woken up, was still squeaking. Its squeaks were attracting the eyes of fairies. “I’m sorry

little guy!” I said. I rubbed one of its cream colored spots and it stopped squeaking.

“I guess I don’t have it”, Dandelion said closing her bag. We kept walking. “I have to buy stuff for lunch because I didn’t pack one”, Dandelion said, stopping at a vendors stand. I peered over her shoulder to watch when a rough hand slapped my shoulder.

## Chapter 2 The Lake

“PRU! Long time no see how’s it been? You found that cure yet so I can have my best messenger back?” A gruff voice said (shouted is a more appropriate word).

“No”, I said drawing myself up to my tallest. That voice was the voice of my old boss Bark the Bold (who burped). But the rest of us just called him Barky.

“Where’s your spunk kid?” He asked. “Did ya lose it?”

“No”, I said again. “50 human years washed it away.”

“Well your attitude’s still there, how come that didn’t wash away, huh?” He eyed me playfully with his light blue eyes. *He just wants to get something out of me, I thought. But I won’t let him.*

“Because”, I retorted. “Something still has to be there.”

“HA HA! There’s my girl!” Barky shouted, slapping my shoulder again. “Alright, well I’m off. Ain’t actually supposed to be talking while I’m delivering, but then, I’m the boss!” He lumbered off, chuckling to himself.

“Who was that?” Dandelion asked.

“*That*”, I said, watching my boss loudly laugh with another fairy, “was my old boss Barky.”

“Oh, Okay”, Dandelion said. Then, she suddenly blurted out, “you were a messenger?”

“Uh huh”, I said.

“I never knew that”, Dandelion said. “You never told anyone.”

“Well it’s been a long time”, I said. “50 years.”

“You are not over 50 years old”, Dandelion said. “You are 13 fairy years old and are exaggerating how long your wings have been... temporarily damaged.” I noticed the pause between “been” and “temporarily damaged”.

“Well I’ve not had wings for 50 human years”, I said, smiling.

“Excuses, excuses,” Dandelion said, rolling her eyes.

“Alright, fine”, I said, throwing my hands into the air. “It could have been worse.”

Dandelion laughed. “Good, now you can stop complaining.” She opened her bag. “Tell me what you think of lunch.” I looked in. There was a loaf of bread, tomatoes, some spices, smoked fish and butter cup cheese, all wrapped up in herbs.

“Looks delicious”, I said. “Are we having sandwiches?”

Dandelion smiled. “Uh huh, and I was thinking we could wrap up the cheese in the herbs and just put that on the sandwich. And then we could grind up the spices and press them into the bread.”

“What do you do for a living again?” I asked, surprised that she had so much cooking knowledge.

“Third chef in command and here’s my card to prove it”, Dandelion said, whipping out a thin rectangular piece of wood that read: “Dandelion Starfire, Third Chef in Command at White Leaf Hollow, Birch tree, floor A.”

“That’s a lot of information on one little card”, I observed.

“Are you stalling?” Dandelion asked. “Stop stalling and come on!” She grabbed my hand and we raced out of town.

When we got to the lake shore, it was around noon so I sliced up the bread, fish and tomatoes. Dandelion was wrapping up the cheese and grinding



the spices. When we were done, Dandelion and I spread the ingredients on the bread. Then Dandelion cut up the cut up the sandwiches into little squares.

“It looks nicer and is more fun to eat”, she said, seeing my confused expression. As I took a bite of my sandwich, I suddenly thought of Dandelion in a human chef outfit, with a white apron and a puffy hat.

The sandwiches had a fresh, juicy taste to them, due to the tomatoes and spices. Suddenly, Dandelion stood up and pointed to the lake. “Look Pru, a naiad!”

I turned to where she was pointing and a great splash of water hit me in the face. “What the-!” I spluttered. I took my goggles off and wiped them off on the only dry spot on my shirt. I heard giggling and another splash as droplets drizzled down on me.

I shoved my goggles on to see Dandelion push a lock of sopping wet hair out of her face. “It looks like they want to play Pru”, she said simply. She took off her shoes and dove off the shore. I, being reluctant, slowly took off my shoes and my goggles.

Suddenly, a girl of about my age jumped straight out of the water and pulled me in. “Ahhh-” I gurgled. Bubbles were streaming out of my mouth. The naiad took a bubble and shaped it around my mouth. I gasped for air.

“Hey, Pru!” I twisted around.

Dandelion was doing summer-salts in the water.

“What?” I replied. My voice sounded echoey, like I was in a cave. I curled up in a ball and pushed water over my shoulders. I succeeded in spinning away, flailing my arms.

The naiads giggled and twirled around perfectly, mocking my sloppiness. I tried again and again until I got it right. Ha! I did it! I triumphantly did ten summer-salts and swam over to Dandelion.

“When was the last time they did this?” I asked.

“This morning,” Dandelion said, stretching. *They still seem rather hyper,* I thought.

“I’m kind of tired, Dandelion.” I said truthfully. “Maybe we should go back up.”

“Okay, she replied. We swam back up.

After breaking the surface I gasped, “IT’S COLD!”

“Yep,” Dandelion said. “Do you want to go home, Pru?” I pushed my goggles up my nose.

“Frankly, yes”, I replied shivering.

“Oh, and by the way,” Dandelion said, wringing out her hair. “Why didn’t you just wear those in the lake? Then your eyeballs wouldn’t have frozen.”

“I don’t know, maybe I just didn’t want to lose them,” I replied, slipping on my shoes. “They’re my only pair, and I’m blind as a bat without ‘em.”

“Oh,” Dandelion said. “Well, we’d better get home then.”

“Yeah, and get dry,” I added, shaking my sopping wet ponytail.

When I got home, I grabbed a towel off a hook on the wall and put it in my hair. Then I changed into a fresh set of clothes. When I was dry, I opened all the windows in my little house. I’m a really tidy fairy and I like everything crisp and neat.

I took in all my laundry and folded it up to put in my drawer. Then I folded back my closet door to reveal my pine desk. I straightened my writing utensils and paper, and then I closed the closet door.

I put bunches of lavender in a vase and set it on my windowsill. I reorganized my books by height and dusted the shelves.

I went into my room and tidied up the light blue blankets over my mattress.

I walked around the house. With all the windows open and a vase of flowers in every room, it smelled crisp and fresh.

After I had dinner, I went to my second closet. As you know I'm a mender, but sometimes I take things home to work on. All that was in there was an old, pretty dark blue and gold dress. I needed to change the waist size from a size ten to a size eight. I unraveled the threads in the back, snipped a bit of the cloth, and then sewed it back up. I slipped the dress onto a mannequin with a waist size eight. A perfect fit.

The dress was for a fairy named Sunny Bluebird. She was supposed to come over tomorrow to pick it up.

I changed into a pair of old leggings and a different shirt and climbed into bed. I grabbed the book I was reading, (The forest of secrets) and started where I left off. With the hum of Bumblepuffs and the flickering lights of fireflies popping on and off, I quickly fell asleep.

## Chapter 3 A Duchess Visits

I woke up and yawned. Sunlight was streaming through the windows. I crawled out of bed and dressed in a white and purple dress. I checked the doorstep for mail there was a box and a few envelopes.

I took them inside, setting the envelopes on the counter. I put the box on the table and read the return address. It read, "To Pru, from Dandelion. To keep you company."

"Hmm." I pried open the box. Inside was a tiny kitten. It was pure gray, except its tummy and paws, which were white. It was completely normal except for the fact that it had butterfly wings. "Oh my", I whispered. I gently lifted the kitten out the box. It squirmed and gave me an annoyed meow. I rushed to my desk, grabbing a sheet of paper. I scribbled a note to Dandelion. This is what it read;

*Dandelion, are you out of your mind?! Why on Earth would you send me a cat in the mail? But if this isn't a packaging mistake, thanks a LOT.*

*-Pru*

*P.S. Come over to my house this afternoon.*

I rushed out to Dandelion's house and dropped the letter on the door step. I raced into town to buy some fish and meat for the cat. I noticed that all the other fairies were looking at me.

When I got home, the kitten/butterfly was sleeping on the chair, twitching its tail. "Uh... come here kitty!" I called hopefully. The kitten stretched and jumped off the chair. It strode over to me purring. I set the meat

down and picked her up. “What should I name you?” I wondered aloud. The kitten twitched her monarch like wings.

I looked outside. Birds were perched on an apple tree, not far from my window. “Apple,” I said suddenly. “Since you’re a girl, I’ll call you Apple Blossom.” Apple purred on my lap, as though she enjoyed it. I smiled. I picked up the bag of meat and took it to the kitchen.

Later, I heard a knock on the front door. Apple was sleeping on the rug near the door. I nudged her with my foot to move her. She darted away with her tail in the air. “Sorry”, I muttered.

I opened the door to reveal a fairy in blue leggings and a yellow and white tunic. “I’m Sunny Bluebird and I have an order for a ball gown”, she said politely.

“You can step right in”, I said, holding the door open. Sunny walked in and sat down. I walked to the closet and took out the dress. As I handed it to her I remarked, “This is in pretty good condition for such an old dress.”

“Yeah”, Sunny agreed. It’s been in the family for a LONG time though. But my mom kept it in the back of her closet in case she needed it. I guess she doesn’t need it because now it’s mine.”

“So it was your mom’s dress?” I asked a bit confused. “Is she really old or something?”

“No!” Sunny said, laughing. “It was my great-great-great- great-great-great; I don’t know *how* many greats, grandmother.”

“Ohhhh”, I said. “THAT would make more sense.” Suddenly, I felt a little thirsty. “Do you want something to drink?” I asked Sunny.

“Oh, sure”, she said. “Do you have any iced tea?”

“Yeah, I think so”, I said. I walked to the cellar and pushed open the door. I walked down the stairs and found a jug of iced tea. I brought it back up and poured two glasses. I took the glasses into the living room. “I have a feeling that you’re going to tell a story”, I said, sitting down on the couch.

“Well,” Sunny began earnestly. “When my something greats grandmother, oh and I think her name was Rose, was a young lady, there was a ball in the Oak Castle, you know the one on pine tree lane?” I nodded. “So when she was invited to the ball, went to the seamstress’s shop to have a ball gown made for her. The seamstress mixed up her dress with someone else’s or something because the dress that Rose got wasn’t the one that she asked for. But she had to wear it to the ball because she didn’t have any other gown to wear.”

“When Rose got to the castle, a knight lifted his visor to her. He remarked how pretty her dress was. They danced as partners for the whole night, fell in love, and they eventually they got married.”

“So, why are you getting it now?” I asked.

“My mom says she’s too fat to wear it anymore”, Sunny said, grinning. I laughed. “Plus the fact that there’s a costume party three days from now and I’m going as a duchess.”

“There’s a costume party three days from now?” I asked.

“Yeah, you can come too if you want”, Sunny said. She pulled out an invitation.

“Cool”, I said taking the invitation. “Can I invite someone else?”

“Sure”, Sunny replied. Then apple walked into the room, her eyes lazily half closed. “Awwwww, who’s this?” Sunny asked, picking Apple up.

“That’s my cat, Apple”, I said, petting her between the ears. She purred happily.

“Can she fly?” Sunny asked, nodding towards Apple’s wings.

“Wow, nice friend you got there” Sunny said.

“Yeah”, I agreed, watching Apple play with a lock of Sunny’s hair. Then Sunny happened to look at the clock.

“Holy smokes I’m late!” Sunny yelled, jumping up. “I’m late for the newspaper!” She grabbed the dress and flew out the door.

“That was random”, I said to Apple. She rubbed against my leg, purring. I walked into the kitchen to make lunch with Apple trailing behind me.

## Chapter 4 A Naiad and Some Whispers

After lunch, I heard another knock on the front door. I opened it to find Dandelion standing on the doorstep. “Hi!” I said, smiling. “You can step on in.” Dandelion stepped in and sat down on the couch.

“I got your note”, she said. “Can I have another look?”

“Sure”, I said. I clicked my tongue and wiggled my fingers. Apple came hopping into the room fluttering her wings really hard. When she saw my fingers she stopped hopping. She crouched down and crept towards my fingers. Wiggling her rear end, she eyed my fingers for quite some time. Dandelion was watching with a smile playing on her lips.

Suddenly, Apple pounced. I quickly drew back my hand and bopped her on the nose with my finger. Dandelion laughed. I picked Apple up and held her in my lap. “So why did you do that?” I asked Dandelion. “I mean, why did you get me a flying cat?”

“Oh. Well after you went home, I thought you might be lonely because nobody is friends with you except for me.” *Oh*, I thought. *That was... unexpected.*

“So as I was walking home, I stumbled upon this little stray. Then I gave her a bath, since she was dirty, and left her on your doorstep.” I looked at Apple. She was curled up on my lap, purring.

“She doesn’t look like a stray”, I said.

“I know”, Dandelion said “She’s technically a stray, but she could be wearing a disguise or something.”

“Oh! Speaking of “disguises”, do you know Sunny Bluebird? That pretty girl with the blonde hair?”

“Yeah I know her”, Dandelion said.



“Good because she came over today to pick up a ball gown. And when I asked her about the dress she told me it was for a costume party.”

“Ooo, a costume party”, Dandelion said excitedly. “Did she invite you?”

“Yah and she said I could invite a friend too.” I reached over and grabbed the invitation that Sunny left and handed it to Dandelion. With a quick glance, she handed it back.

“What’s wrong?” I asked. “Do you not like it?”

“No it’s just that I read the whole thing”, she said.

“Seriously?” I asked, not really convinced.

“Yes! I *swear* that I *did* read the invitation in ONE glance.”

“Really?”

“No I was just messing with you.” I rolled my eyes. “Alright, I’ll stop goofing off.” I handed her the invitation. Dandelion read it carefully, then exclaimed, “It’s in three days?!”

“Yeah, and I could help you make your costume if you want”, I told her.

Dandelion scooted over and hugged me. “Thanks!” she said happily.

“I’m basically a seamstress”, I said shrugging. “Do you know what you’re going to go as?”

“Pru, could you make me a dryad costume?” Dandelion asked. “The dress would be orange, and there would be different colored leaves at the hem, collar, and sleeves.”

“Sure”, I said. I walked to my sewing table and took some thread and a needle from a drawer. “You can pick out the cloth that you want for the dress”, I said.

“Okay”, Dandelion said. She looked at the colors for a minute, then returned with orange, red, yellow, green, brown and a dull purple.

“Nice choices”, I said. I picked up the needle and scissors and started to make the dress. When the dress was done, I said to Dandelion, “You can help me with this part.”

“Thanks”, Dandelion said pulling up a chair. As we cut the cloth into leave shapes, Dandelion asked, “What are you going as?”

“I’m going as “Whispering Shadow” from my book. She’s just this girl who goes around in a black cloak and has soot on her face. But the creepy thing about her is that you can’t hear her at *all*. She just sneaks up on you.”

“Creepy”, Dandelion said. Then, to change the subject, “Are you done with your leaves Pru?”

“Yep, here, give me yours and I can sew them onto the dress.” I took the leaves and sewed them onto the dress. “Here you go”, I said, handing Dandelion the dress.

“Thanks Pru!” Dandelion said. “I have to go to work. My boss yells at me if I’m late.”

“You’re welcome”, I said. “See you at the costume party.” Dandelion flew down the street to go cook for the fairies of White Leaf hollow, Birch Tree, Floor A.

I closed the door and turned around to see Apple sitting on the floor, twitching her tail expectantly. “Geez!” I exclaimed. “It’s just one thing after another today.” I scooped her up and took her into the kitchen to feed her.

## Chapter 5 A Strange way to Spend 48 Hours

“Today’s the day!” I scooped up Apple up in my arms. That was about the 700<sup>th</sup> time I had said those words today. Then I looked at my wall clock. “Apple it starts in an hour!”

I hurried to my bed room and put my black tunic and leggings. I threw on the cloak and rubbed some soot around my eyes. I looked at the mirror. *I think that I did a pretty good job*, I thought. I grabbed my coat and left for the costume party.

By the time I got there, it had already started, so I looked around for Dandelion. Soon I spotted her by the refreshments table talking to a fairy with short, dark brown hair and was wearing a cloak. I walked over to them.

“Hi Dandelion, hi . . .” I stopped. I know a lot of people’s names but I didn’t know this fairies.

“Hi I’m Pebbles and I know who you are, you’re Pru! I know that because Dandelion told me so. She’s going as a dryad and I’m going as that weird creepy dude from “The Forest of Secrets” so what are *you* going as?” she said, all *very* fast.

“Ummm, “the Whispering Shadow” from “The Forest of Secrets”, I said, a bit bewildered.

Just then, Sunny came up to us three. “Hi Pru!” she said, smiling. She was wearing the ball gown but had added gold gloves that came up to her elbows. Her hair was done in an elaborate braided crown, and was wearing a lot of jewelry.

“Hi Sunny”, I said. “You look a lot like a duchess right now.”

“Thanks! I love your Whispering Shadow costume, it looks great!”

“How did you guess?” I asked. “Just about 20 different people asked me why I was only wearing black.”

“Dandelion told me”, Sunny confessed. I turned to look at Dandelion who gave a sheepish shrug.

“I guess it doesn’t matter”, I said. “We should enjoy the evening.” And so we did. The four of us stayed together for the whole time and I found myself telling other people about what happened on that day when my last message was never delivered. I recalled how Barky, (my old boss) as I was told, threw up when he saw my blood and then started crying when he heard about my wings. Everyone liked that part I think.

I went with Dandelion to complement the chef, (I especially did on his berry cheese cake) and ask for the recipe for his mint ice cream (“only to make at home” Dandelion had said when he got suspicious).

Eventually, it was time to go. “Bye guys”, I said, as Dandelion and I went to go get our coats.

“Oh, wait Pru!” Pebbles ran up to me, her hood making her look like a bat. “Can I come over to your house tomorrow?”

“Okay, sure”, I said.

“Thanks.” She ran back to Sunny. Dandelion and I started too walked home, talking about the evening as we did so.

When I got home, even though it was late, I didn’t go to sleep. Instead, I put on my pajamas and took a long heavy box from my closet. Something that I’ve never told anyone is that I paint murals in the basement. I do them only for important things that happened because there’s limited space.

Today was important, I decided. Because today I knew that people didn’t care that I can’t fly. They accepted it and treated me like everyone else. That doesn’t mean that I won’t miss flying. I’ll miss it plenty. It’s just that I have to move on in life. It happened and it’s over, and it could have been worse to.

I opened the box that held my paints and brushes and started painting.

I woke up to Apple licking my hand. “Stop it that tickles!” I yanked my hand away. Apple leaped off the bed and ran off. I got out of bed and changed into my favorite tunic and leggings. I nabbed a muffin from the counter and

grabbed my book. I sat down on the window seat to read since Pebbles visit would be the highlight of my day.

My book is about two dryads who have to save their forest from getting chopped down by nasty humans.

It wasn't long until I heard knocking on the front door. The knocking didn't cease until I opened it. "Hi Pru, how do you do? I'm doing fine except that I'm hungry. Can you make sandwiches please?" You know, I'm starting to think that Pebbles just talks fast normally.

"Hi Pebbles, sure I could make sandwiches", I said. Pebbles jumped into a chair as I walked to the kitchen. I grabbed the jelly, butter and bread. I was making the first sandwich when I heard Pebbles.

"Hey Pru, you only have one chair." Oops

"I'm sure there's an extra downstairs", I said absentmindedly. "Could you go get it please?"

"Sure." I heard her chair scrape and her foot steps to the basement door. She was halfway down the steps when I remembered.

"NO!" I cried, jumping up. "Don't go down there! I, um, have mice! Uh huh, big mice! They always skitter over your feet. It's disgusting!"

"Hey Pru I got the- WHOA! Who did that? And that and that and that and that and that? Cool! Hey Pru who did these big paintings? Hey that's funny, that one looks like last night."

"Ohnoohnoohnoohnoohnoohno", I said, yanking my pony tail. Just then, Pebbles came up the stairs with the chair.

"Hey Pru, I didn't see any mice but I saw these huge paintings on the walls. Did you do that?"

I sighed. "Okay you caught me. I wanted to keep it a secret but you found out."

“Found out? I didn’t find out anything. You told me to go down stairs and I looked at the *wall*.”

“Yeah, not my best choice. But could you keep it a secret? I wanted to show people when I was done and-” Suddenly the door slammed open.

“Have you seen Dandelion Starfire?” The responsible fairy said, mopping his brow.

“No, why?” I asked a little alarmed.

“She went missing a few hours ago and nobody can find her.”

“What?!” I exclaimed. “What did she was doing last?”

“That she was going to go pick berries but-”

“Pebbles we’re going to Blackwood hollow. It’s where Dandelion goes to pick black berries.”

“But-”, Pebbles swallowed her response. We both knew Dandelion could be in danger. But then, unexpectedly, Pebbles picked me up and we *flew*.

When we got there the usual DANGER sign was gone. Pebbles put me down and we carefully ventured in. because if we made more noise than necessary the results could be more than unpleasant.

We had been walking for more than an hour when my pointy ears heard a faint cry for help. “Dandelion!” I hopped lightly through the trees. An old trick of being a messenger, don’t touch the trees and they won’t touch you. Pebbles followed my lead; she was as light as a cat on her feet.

When I first saw Dandelion, I thought she was hugging the tree, and then I realized the tree was pulling her into its bark. I shuddered to think about what was on the other side. At least I knew what to do.

“Dandelion, it’s me, Pru. Pebbles is here too.” I heard her give a relieved sigh.

“Thank you. It’s pulling me in and I don’t know how many times it’s done this so please don’t talk about what’s on the other side.”

“Agreed”, I said. “Pebbles lie on your stomach and grab my legs.” Pebbles did so. “Okay, Dandelion I’m going to grab you around your waist and it might tickle, but try not to move.” Dandelion nodded.

I put my hands around her waist and pulled. She almost came out, but her arms were still stuck. I pulled again and this time Dandelion tumbled on top of us. We sat in a surprised tangle of limbs, and then ran away as fast as we could,

## Chapter 6 The End of a Long Week

The four of us were sitting in a circle with blankets wrapped around us. Sunny had invited Pebbles, Dandelion and I to her house to spend the night. We had all accepted, since it was a clear getaway from all the questions, and that Sunny would be patient and nice.

We were sitting in a circle to talk about the day Dandelion got stuck in a tree.

“Why did you go so far in?” I asked.

“I was only picking blackberries around the fence, like always, and then I thought I heard someone inside the forest. I followed it to the tree, put my ear to its bark, and it started to pull me in.”

“Hey Pru, how did you know what to do?” Sunny asked.

“Stuff like that happened when I was a messenger”, I said. “We would get called to go get them out.” Just then, Pebbles yawned loudly. “Maybe we should go to bed”, I said, yawning also. Soon all of us were yawning. We giggled and lay down on our blankets. I yawned one last time and fell asleep.

The next day, after I went home, I checked the mail. There was only one little package. I took it inside and opened it. Out popped a little green vial. There was no return address. On the tag attached to the vial read; cure for wings. It was signed, Anonymous. I uncorked it and trickled some onto my wings. The wrinkles smoothed out and the tears healed. I trickled the rest onto my wings. They completely reformed. I fluttered them and my toes lifted off the ground. I flew out of my house and did a little loop. I couldn't wait to tell my friends what had happened.