



Chapter One



Do you go on school outings? Ever since we've been at Silver Towers we've had one trip out after another. Our headteacher, Queen Samantha Joy, says that it's good for us – and they usually do end up being quite fun! But we were **SERIOUSLY** excited when Queen Samantha Joy told us we



were going to go to King Rudolfo the Third's private Museum of Royal Life. My big sis went there when she was at Silver Towers (she's at Ruby Mansions now) and she said it was AMAZING! She saw the Poisoned Apple, and the Crystal Slipper, and the Spinning Wheel – and loads of other really fantastic things.

Lady Albina (she's Queen Samantha Joy's secretary, and organises us with about fifty thousand lists every single day) heard me telling my friends about the museum after morning assembly was over, and frowned



at me. She's always frowning, unless she's talking to Queen Samantha Joy.

“Princess Alice, I do hope you don't think you know everything already!” she snapped.





I heard Princess Diamonde snigger, and whisper, “SHE doesn’t, but WE do, don’t we?” to Gruella, but I pretended I hadn’t heard.

“Oh no! I really don’t,” I said, and curtsied to Lady Albina.

“I’m glad to hear it! That is how mistakes are made! Tomorrow you will be divided into groups. Each group will have a questionnaire to complete, and tiara points will be awarded for the best entries. And—” Lady Albina looked even more disapproving – “King Rudolfo has offered a prize. A **QUITE** unnecessary kindness, if you ask me.”



“A PRIZE?” We clustered round Lady Albina. Even Diamonde and Gruella looked excited. “Please, Lady Albina – **WHAT** prize?”





Lady Albina sniffed. “The winning group will be invited to take part in King Rudolfo’s Annual Royal Parade. They will, I understand, ride in the Golden Pumpkin Coach.”

A royal parade! And a golden pumpkin coach! It sounded SO wonderful. We couldn’t help talking about it every time we had a spare moment in between lessons, and that night we were MUCH too excited to sleep.

“We will be in the same group, won’t we?” Daisy asked. It would be SO awful if we weren’t.”

“Of course we will be,” Emily



said comfortingly. “Lady Albina chooses by dormitories.”

“Hurrah! for the Silver Rose Roomers!” Katie cheered. “And you know all about the museum, Alice – so we’ll have a really good chance of winning.”

I shook my head. “I only know what my big sis said.”

“Is everything in glass cases?” Charlotte asked. “Or can we touch them?”

“NO!” Sophia looked horrified. “Imagine touching a poisoned apple!”

Emily giggled. “We’d all fall over and look as if we were dead,



and have to wait to be kissed by a handsome—”

She was interrupted by a knock on the door, and Fairy Angora appeared. She’s our school Fairy Godmother, and she keeps an eye on us all.

“Too much noise, my precious darlings,” she said. “It’s time to go to sleep!”

She waved her wand, and a drift of twinkly sparkles floated into the air...and I suddenly couldn’t keep my eyes open a second longer.