



Chapter One



Do you ever feel as if a Big Black Cloud is hanging over your head? Well, the day after my birthday was like that. Isn't that awful? Even though my parents had sent me the most completely GLORIOUS pearly pink dress and a PERFECT matching tiara, I couldn't feel excited.

All of us in Rose Room had been worrying for weeks about what we were going to wear for the end of term Grand Assembly, so it was LOVELY of my parents to send me something so utterly gorgeous – but it meant I’d be different from my very best friends. That made me feel

TERRIBLE! They’d all raved about my beautiful birthday gown, of course, but I knew that secretly it MUST have made them feel worse.

I’d opened my parcel at breakfast, and I couldn’t help noticing the tiny pause before they told me how lovely it was.



And then Perfecta said in a REALLY nasty voice, “Who’s going to be the biggest show-off on Saturday, then?” and Floreen said, “SOME people are just SPOILT!”



But that wasn’t the only reason why I had a Big Black Cloud. I was worried about my tiara points. Honestly – I was worried sick.

“I just KNOW I’m going to be here in first year for ever and ever and EVER,” I said as I stood staring out of the recreation room window.

“Me too,” Katie sighed. She came to stand beside me. “I got five minus points yesterday. I went down to the stable to see the ponies that pull the silver coach, and I forgot to wipe my boots when I came back in.

Queen Mum Mattie gave me a HORRIBLE row.”

“You did have loads of straw in your hair as well,” Sophia pointed out.

“AND you pinched all the sugar lumps from the tea trolley,” Alice said. “Perfecta was FURIOUS!”

“Serves her right,” said Charlotte. She gave me a comforting smile. “Do stop worrying, Emily. You must have more tiara points than Perfecta and Floreen.”

“But do any of us have enough to join the Tiara Club?” Daisy asked. Nobody answered.

We couldn’t, because we really and truly had no idea. We were meant to write our tiara points in our homework diaries, but we were ALWAYS forgetting!



And even when we DID remember we added them up all wrong. (Especially me.) Up until now we'd just hoped for the best, but all of a sudden it was SERIOUS! The Grand Assembly was the most important day of our lives, because that's the day when we'd find out if we'd won our places in the Tiara Club. And it was ONLY TWO DAYS AWAY!!!! It was SO scary!!!!



“Maybe,” Alice said hopefully, “we could ask Fairy G how many points we’ve got?”

Charlotte made a face. “She won’t say. I asked her the other week.”

“She just said Perfect Princesses shouldn’t need to worry,” Katie sighed.

“What if we asked if we need to do just a LITTLE bit better, or a LOT better?” I suggested.

Daisy shook her head. “We can’t! She’s in bed with a horrible cold.”

“Can’t she magic it away?” I asked.

“I don’t think she can use magic on herself,” Sophia said. “She can only—”

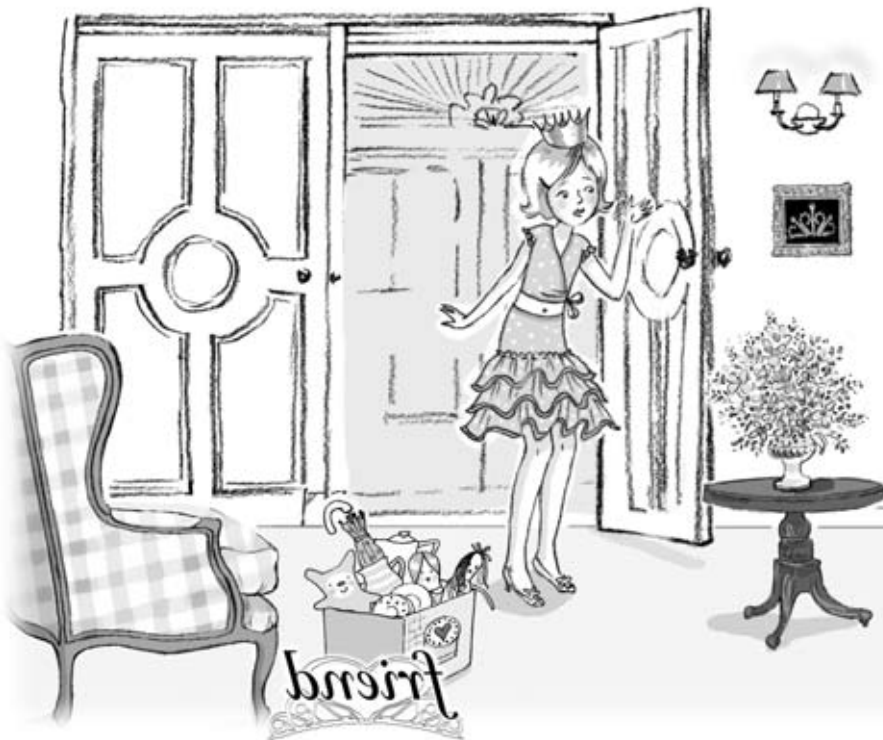
CRASH!!!

The recreation room door FLUNG open, and Princess Jemima came zooming in, her eyes WIDE.

“Have you HEARD?” she gasped. “Fairy G’s going away!” We stared at her.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“She’s been so poorly that Queen Gloriana’s sending her off to stay with one of her sisters!”





Fairy G's sisters, that is, not Queen Gloriana's. And we've got a supply teacher instead and she's called Fairy Angora!" Jemima stopped to take a breath. "Queen Gloriana says we've all got to go to the Great Hall to meet her so you've got to come NOW!" And she shot off again at high speed.

We looked at each other in astonishment. Apart from Queen Gloriana, Fairy G is MUCH the most important person at the Princess Academy. She's the one who looks after us, and tucks us up in bed at night. She teaches



loads of lessons as well. She's really good fun, even if she does swell up HUGELY when she's angry! Queen Gloriana is OK, but she IS a bit scary.

I don't know about the others, but I felt quite wobbly. It was a bit like when I'm at home and my mum has to go off for a royal tour, and I get left behind.

"I DO hope she gets better soon," I said. Charlotte nodded.

"Do you think she'll be better by the end of term?" Sophia asked.

"If she isn't," Daisy said, "who'll tell us about our tiara points?"



Alice shrugged. “Queen Gloriana, I should think. Come on! Let’s go and check out – what was her name?”

“Fairy Angora,” Katie said, and we trooped out of the recreation room and along the black and white marble corridor that leads to the Great Hall. As we came through the door Queen Gloriana was walking onto the stage, and beside her was the most BEAUTIFUL fairy!