

Chapter 1

Fancy Dress



“Da da da-da, da, da da-da!” sung Katie, as Eva shuffled along the attic in an old wedding dress. The train was as long as the dress itself, and Alex grabbed it from behind before Eva tripped up on it.

“Whose dress was this?” Eva asked as she spun around at one end of the attic, pulling Alex with her. “These sleeves



are huge!” She looked at the lacy, puffy material and giggled.

“I think it was my gran’s.” Katie laughed. “She and Grandad got married in the eighties. Mum’s is in here somewhere too!” Katie stuck her head into the fancy-dress box and began pulling out all sorts of dresses, skirts and hats.

Meanwhile, Alex let go of the wedding dress train and went over to the little attic window. She sighed deeply and rolled her big brown eyes. “Alfie’s still out there!”

Eva scooted over to stand beside Alex and pulled back the veil on her head over her brown bobbed hair. “Why does he have to play right next to the tree trunk?”

“Because that’s what brothers do,” came a mumbling from the fancy-dress box. “Anything that’s SUPER annoying!”

The three best friends desperately wanted to look inside the hollow tree trunk that lay at the bottom of Katie's garden. They were waiting for a special feather to be left out for them. A feather that would magically whisk them away

to the incredible Blossom Wood. But Alfie had set up a hideout beside the tree trunk, and they didn't want to check inside it with him around – because he might wonder what they were doing and find out about their secret adventures.

“The feather could have been there all morning,” said Eva, her green eyes wide. “And we don’t know!”

“Aha!” Katie’s head emerged from the box, and she spun around to her friends, her blue eyes glistening. “But maybe I could distract him with this!” She held up a cowboy hat in the air.

“Good plan, Katie,” said Alex in her soft voice. “He’s so going to want to wear that hat!” Katie passed it to Alex and she plopped it on top of her black curly hair, which was done up in a bun. As Alex turned back to the window,

it wobbled about on the bun like a spinning plate.

Katie jumped up and joined Alex, pushing down the dusty sash window and cupping her hands to her mouth. “Alfie, look what we’ve found!”

Alfie's blond head popped out between the folds of a red sun lounger he'd made into a tent. "A cowboy hat! Brilliant! Can you bring it down?"

Katie shook her head and grinned.
 “Um ... no, sorry. You’ll have to come
 and get it!”

“You’re so annoying!” Alfie replied, slithering from his hideout like a snake into the long grass.

Katie turned to Eva and Alex. “Come on – quick!”

Alex tossed the hat to the floor like a frisbee, and they jumped down the



rickety attic stairs as quickly as they could, with Eva still in the wedding gown. Alex grabbed the train again – Eva was without a doubt the clumsiest of the three friends, and Alex didn't want her to trip on it!

As they reached the landing and swerved around the bannister towards the stairs, Alfie appeared at the bottom. He climbed up the wooden steps like a monkey, shouting, "Where are you going?" as the girls passed him the other way.

"None of your business!" Katie said as she ran down the hallway. They darted through the kitchen towards the back door, Alex still holding the wedding train tightly.

"Ooh, who's the lucky groom?" Katie's dad joked as he pulled a can of tuna out of a kitchen cupboard. "Don't be

too long – lunch will be ready soon. Or should I say the wedding breakfast?”

Katie sighed. Her dad was always making silly jokes.

“We won’t be long,” Alex told Katie’s dad politely, knowing that even if the feather was there, and they were whisked off to Blossom Wood, no time would pass at home. They wouldn’t need to worry about being late for lunch.

Alex jumped out of the door last and ran down the garden behind Eva, past the rose bed, rabbit hutch and greenhouse. Katie was already diving into the hollow tree trunk, but Eva and Alex were much slower – the wedding dress slowed them down as they ran, although it was quicker than taking it off. It had taken them ages to lace up the back of it!

“Quick,” echoed the voice of Katie

from inside the trunk. “It’s here!”

As she shuffled across the lawn, Eva tingled all over. They were going to Blossom Wood again! She climbed into



the trunk more carefully than normal, not wanting to damage the wedding dress. In the darkness, Katie's cheeks were ruby red with excitement, framed by her long blonde hair. Katie held a glossy white feather in one hand, and took Eva's hand with the other.

“Where are you going?” came Alfie’s voice as Alex jumped into the tree trunk last and grabbed Eva’s outstretched hand. Katie’s younger brother was chasing after them – they’d only just made it.

Holding hands, the three best friends shut their eyes tight, and waited for the familiar spinning and swirling to begin...